SPACEDOGS

A SWASHBUCKLING SPACE WESTERN RPG

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Chapter X: Introduction

Welcome to *Space Dogs RPG;* a game in which you and your fellow players take on the role of a crew of privateers in the near future, roving the galaxy to protect the starlanes from pirates and monstrous alien hordes, or just out for your next big score. As you play, you and your friends can put your own spin on *Space Dogs* so that your game is unique from any other.

Space Dogs RPG is a sci-fi roleplaying game set in the near future where the galaxy has been opened up to humanity, but not without a cost. The builders, an advanced alien species, have come to Earth seeking soldiers to protect their starlanes and to fight their enemies, and humans are just the sort of species they've been looking for.

The inspiration for *Space Dogs* came from many sources, not least of which is the historic Sea Dogs of the 16th and early 17th centuries. Other influences were everything from space westerns, to mecha anime, to good old-fashioned action and crime novels. Keep a close eye out, and you might just spot something which gives you a bit of déjà vu. The *Space Dogs* universe is a big one, and there's plenty to explore.

How Do You Play?

The *Space Dogs Roleplaying Game* is a tabletop science fiction game where the players take on the roles of a crew (or party) of privateers who travel the starlanes of the galaxy and deal with dangerous threats and difficult objectives. One of the players takes the role of the Game Master (GM); the player who chooses and/or designs the threats and objectives which confront the Player Characters (PCs). As a roleplaying game, *Space Dogs* is a cooperative game in which the PCs are the protagonists of the story, and the GM acts as both narrator and the designer of the rest of the game's world.

As a player, you design your own character and choose what they will do in any given situation. This involves not just making mechanical choices which you choose from the rules in this book, you also need to decide upon your character's personality. While your own personality will undoubtedly affect your character's, it can be fun to play a character whose ideas and motivations are nothing like your own.

As the GM, it's your job to create the world in which the PCs exist. Everything from controlling the Non-Player Characters (NPCs) which the players interact with, to the enemies they fight, to the space station where the crew's ship is docked are all within your purview. It's also your job to choose the story hooks and to keep the game running smoothly. In many ways, a good GM is the backbone of any great session of *Space Dogs*.

What Do You Need to Play?

To play The *Space Dogs Roleplaying Game* you need this book, a character sheet, a pencil, dice, and some friends. You can copy the character sheet from the back of this book or print off a copy from the PDF.

The recommended number of people to play Space Dogs is a GM and 2-6 players. You may have trouble with a larger group when still learning the game, especially if you are new to tabletop RPGs. When first learning Space Dogs, you will probably want to err on the smaller side, aiming for at most four players in addition to the GM.

When it comes to dice, most board games come with six-sided dice (d6). However, to play *Space Dogs* you will need a four-sided die (d4), 3+ six-sided dice (d6), 3+ eight-sided dice (d8), 2+ ten-sided dice (d10),

a twelve-sided die (d12), and a twenty-sided die (d20). You can find all of these dice at your local game store, or from any number of online retailers.

The companion book Threat Guide to the Starlanes is recommended for longer campaigns as it includes scores of potential foes and starships as well as additional weapons, armor, and mecha options for PCs.

Finally, while not required for play, *Space Dogs* is designed for use with a battle grid of some kind. You can find a battle mat online to print out, at your local game store, you can use a VTT (Virtual Table-Top), or you can just use large squared graph paper. Anything with a grid which you can draw on can work reasonably well. To play with the battle grid, we suggest that you use official *Space Dogs* pawns or some kind of miniatures, but you can also use toys, tokens, pawns, or just some coins from your pocket in a pinch.

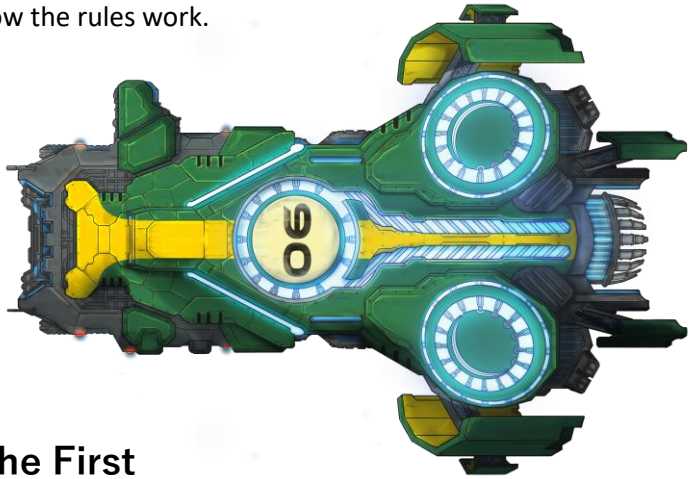
Game Play

This chapter will give you an overview will give you enough of the basic rules to get a feel for how Space Dogs works. The later chapters that follow this one take the basic concepts and expand upon them.

The Rules

One important thing to note is that you don't need to memorize all of the rules in this book in order to play *Space Dogs*. Once you understand the basics you can start playing. Simply use this book as a reference for any issues which may arise. Though, if in the heat of play something obscure comes up, the GM may either make the call or have the dice decide (evens & odds) so as not to ruin the game's flow. Then later, the group can look up the rule in question for future use.

If you aren't sure exactly where a particular rule is found, you should check the glossary and index on pages 1 & XXX respectively. In the end though, if a rule seems at all unclear, the GM is the final arbiter of how the rules work.



The First Rule of Space Dogs

(*No - feel free to tell everyone about Space Dogs.*)

The first rule of *Space Dogs* is to try to make sure that everyone playing the game is enjoying themselves. While, like other forms of media, roleplaying games can be used to move you and to make you think through real world problems and emotions, in the end *Space Dogs* is a game. You and your friends should do your best to make your game time fun.

With this rule in mind, if one of *Space Dogs'* rules seems to be making the game less fun, feel free to change them for when you and your friends play so long as you all agree to the changes. It is recommended that you avoid changing any rules for your first few sessions until you get a feel for the rules. Sometimes a seemingly minor change may have unforeseen consequences on other parts of the system.

The Second & Third Rules of Space Dogs

Less fancy more focused on the mechanics, but in their own ways no less important than the first rule:

2. Always Round up any division/multiplication. This includes when the number would be under 1/2.

3. Specific rules override general rules.

A Game Session

In *Space Dogs Roleplaying Game*, the Game Master and the players get together to tell a story through the play in the game. These group-created adventure stories are told in 'sessions'. A single adventure may be able to be played through in a single session, or may take place over several sessions. Think of each play session as an episode, with some adventures are stand-alone and others are multi-episode stories.

In addition, a single session can be as long or short as you want to play, from a single hour to a weekend long marathon play session. Many groups play for three to five hours at a time, as they find that to be long enough for a satisfying session, but still keeping the game-play fresh. The game can be stopped at any time and put on hold until the players have a chance to get back together, though you probably don't want to stop in the middle of a combat or other action scene.

Each adventure is a series of interconnected scenes or events. A scene might feature anything from a combat against monstrous volucris in tight space station corridors, to negotiating a deal with a torali crime-lord, to piloting your ship to escape a pride of krakiz marauders. When there isn't any direct threat, play is more casual. The GM describes what is going on and asks the players what their characters are doing, occasionally asking for dice rolls. During combat or other direct threats, the game becomes more structured and the action takes place in rounds to enable more tactical play.

Character Options

You can have your character attempt nearly anything which they could reasonably do given the scenario the GM describes. As a few examples, in the right circumstances you may want your character to:

- Hack a computer.
- Bargain with an alien merchant.
- Intimidate a criminal into giving you what you want.
- Pilot a ship across the starlanes.
- Shoot a bounty-hunter under the table with your pistol.
- Jockey a mecha to climb up a sheer steel wall.
- Research strange alien markings.
- Trick an official into giving you classified information.

A character can accomplish any of these things by rolling the relevant dice.

Dice + bonus(es) +/- Active Modifiers

If using a weapon, they roll the weapon's attack dice and adding their relevant attribute(s) to the roll.

Attack = Weapon Dice + Attributes

For any sort of skill check they roll 3d6, adding a bonus equal to their skill rank and +1 for every 5 points in the relevant attribute(s).

Skill = 3d6 + Rank + Attributes/5

In addition, some character abilities, called Talents, roll dice of their own.

The dice and attributes used vary by the action you're using and remain constant from roll to roll. A "check" is successful when the roll is equal or higher

than the Target Number (TN) of the task, increasing as the difficulty goes up. When attacking, you need to roll equal or above your target's relevant defense score.

Active Modifiers are either a result of the environment such as smoke making a target harder to hit, or they're from a temporary bonus or penalty caused by a character such as using Grit to Boost your roll or using a Talent to increase a foe's penalties.

Start Playing *Space Dogs*

Before you become a pro at *Space Dogs*, making it your favorite game of all time so that you spend all of your time regaling your family and friends with how great it is, you'll have to work your way through that first session of play. The first gaming session or two can be a bit rough as everyone learns how the game works and gets used to roleplaying their characters. See this section for a few tips to help your first session to run as smoothly as possible.

Setup

After your group has finished creating your characters or just picking a pregenerated character to play, find an evening or weekend when you can get together with your gaming group for your first session, setting aside at least a couple of hours. However long you want to play, you and your gaming group should decide how much time to commit to playing beforehand.

Before this first meeting, the GM should have come up with a premise for this first adventure. Instead of creating it from scratch, as described in Chapter 12: Gamemastering, the GM could buy a ready-to-play adventure or use the first short adventure from near the back of this book.

You can play *Space Dogs* anywhere that's comfortable. There should be a decent sized flat surface, such as a kitchen table. The GM should sit in a place where the other players can't see his notes and references. There should be enough room for all of the players to spread out the rulebook, character sheets, pencils, dice, a battle map, the GM's session notes, and probably some super tasty snacks. Or you can play on a VTT with everyone in their own home.

A First Session

It's been a couple of weeks since Mike told his friends Loren, Ben, Natalie, and Jake that he wanted to try out *Space Dogs*. Mike has read through most of the rules, while Loren, Ben, Natalie, and Jake have gone over them enough to create their 1st level characters, running them by Mike before the first session. Finally, the five of them have been able to get together for a game night, chatting and eating a few of their super tasty snacks while Mike finishes setting up.

Mike will by playing the GM, and so he sits at the head of the table, the other four scattered around the rest of it.

Mike: All right, so the four of you start on a job where you're providing security for a builder who builds custom starships from his hanger on a space station. He's had some trouble with a local crime syndicate, and he brought you on for extra muscle instead of paying them protection money. I sketched out the docks, so you can all tell me where you are and place your pawns on the mat.

Loren: My trickster Princess is going to stay low key in the back of the hanger, watching for anyone being sneaky.

Ben: My operative Robert is going to get on the catwalk of the hanger to get a clear field of fire with his rifle in case anything goes down. Can I have set up some sandbags or something up there?

Mike: Sure. You make yourself a little sniper nest.

Natalie: Well, if everyone else is hanging back, I guess that my true psychic Mel is going to be obvious and stand guard at the front door.

Jake: I'll hang out up front with you. My warrior Yuji will take position up front, and hopefully he'll be the more obvious target for any trouble.

Mike: Cool. Alright, so after the first couple hours that the hanger is open for business, Mel and Yuji spot a small group coming up the passage, led by a red and orange reptile alien with a mane of brightly colored feathers.

Jake: Uh oh. I read about these. That's a krakiz, right?

Mike: Yes. A female. The other two are males.

Natalie: Awesome. Maybe we can do some girl talk. But, how can you tell that it's female if it's a lizard alien?

Jake: Only the females have the mane. And I don't know about girl talk, the female krakiz are the biggest and meanest ones. They're pretty much always in charge.

Loren: So, just like with humans only they're also bigger?

Mike: *heavy sigh* Alright boys and girls, back on point. Do Yuji or Melody do anything as the group comes up?

Character Creation Summary

Make sure to review or at least skim Chapters 1-4 before using this overview to create a character, though you only need to read the Talents & Skills which your character is taking, and Chapter 3 can be skipped if you're not making a psychic character – which is not recommended for a first character anyway. Make a copy of the character sheet from the back of this book or from the PDF to use to help you build and play your character. You may also choose to play a pre-generated character; especially if this is your first Space Dogs campaign.

1. Picking Your Class and What Sort of Character You Want to Play

Choosing your class is at the core of defining your character. You can be a stealthy sniper, a burly brawler, or a psychic warrior, but you should try to pick the class which will best help you create the character which you most want to play.

At this point, you might want to start coming up with your character's personality and answer important questions about them. Why are they out traveling the galaxy rather than safe back on Earth? What do they think about various non-human species? What are their long-term goals? Simple questions can be equally important in defining them, though in a rather more straightforward way. What is their name? Gender? How tall are they? What is their ethnicity? What sort of build do they have? What color is their hair? Etc. You might want to take a look at the 20 example questions about your character at the end of this chapter before you go any further.

Before picking your class, you may also want to talk to the rest of your group so that your crew fits well together. You should try to help make it so that your crew both has a reason to work together, and does so well. Even a group of misfits & outcasts would need a reason to band together.

2. Determine Attributes

Every character has six attributes which show their core strengths. These six core scores are Brawn, Dexterity, Agility, Stamina, Sharpness, and Willpower. These affect nearly everything a character does, from flying a ship, to getting a bargain on a used mecha, to fighting in combat.

For a human, a score of 3-4 is average. When you create your character, you will be able to purchase your attributes by spending your attribute points, getting 10 at first level and more at each additional level. How much those attributes cost varies with your character class and the choices you make for your secondary and tertiary attributes. See Chapter 1: Attributes for more details.

3. Determine Your Combat Statistics

In combat you need to know your character's life, psyche, vitality, grit, and passive defenses.

Life Points

Every character can withstand a certain amount of physical punishment before they fall unconscious or die. How much damage this takes is represented by their Life pool. Your attributes determine how many Life points you have:

Life Pool = Brawn + Stamina

For example, a character with a Brawn of 4 and a Stamina of 3 will have 7 Life Points. As your character levels up and increases their attributes, their Life Points will also increase.

Psyche Points

Much like Life Points, a character's mental durability is tracked in their Psyche pool. In addition to potentially taking mental damage, a character may be able to use their psyche to power their abilities. Your attributes and your class determine how large your psyche pool is:

Psyche Core = Sharpness + Class Bonus

Psyche Buffer = Willpower

For example, a character with a Willpower of 3, a Sharpness of 6, and a class bonus of 2 will have a total psyche pool of 11 points, split between 8 core and 3 buffer. As your character levels up and you increase both their attributes and class bonus, your psyche pool will also increase.

Vitality Points

Every player character has a reserve of luck and heroic (or villainous) ability to avoid attacks, instead of being solid blows, the attacks are near misses or nicks. In game terms, vitality points are a buffer between an attack's damage and both their Life and psyche pools. Normally a character's vitality pool needs to be exhausted before their Life or psyche points can be damaged, though it can be bypassed by a critical hit.

Your class and attributes determine your vitality pool.

Vitality Pool = 2xStamina + Class Bonus

As your character levels up and you increase their Stamina score and class bonus, your vitality pool will increase.

Grit

A character's Grit is their reserve of physical effort, letting them go above and beyond their normal limits. A character may use their Grit to Boost their dice rolls, avoid lethal damage, or they may use their Grit pool to power a number of different Talents.

A character's Grit score varies both with their stats and any class bonus that they may have.

Grit Core = Willpower + level bonus

Grit Buffer = Stamina

Passive Defenses

Even when not actively defending, every character has defenses which their foes need to overcome before hitting them. There are three such defenses; Dodge, Mind, and Body.

Your attributes determine your passive defenses:

Dodge = 2 + Agility

Mind = 2 + Willpower

Body = 2 + Brawn

As your character levels up and increases their attributes, their passive defenses will also increase.

4. Choose Background & Skills

The first step of choosing your character's skills is to choose their background. These are elements of their past such as pilot, soldier, or diplomat, and they decide which skills you can afford. Your character has 10 skill points to spend at first level to gain ranks. Most skills also gain a bonus based upon your character's attributes as shown in Chapter 4. The attribute bonus is +1 for every 5 points in the relevant attributes.

Skill Check = 3d6 + Rank + Attribute Bonus

5. Choose a Talent

Talents are special abilities which you use to allow your character to break or bend the normal rules, achieving feats which normal men cannot match. Using these Talents has a cost, whether from your Grit pool, Psyche pool, or occasionally something else, so use them only when worth the cost.

At 1st level your character gets a signature class Talent or two, and may choose at least one more which they qualify for. As your character levels they will gain more Talents, though the rate of that increase varies significantly by class.

6. Determine Starting Equipment

At 1st level, your character starts with $10,000.00 with which to purchase equipment and supplies, or they can choose their class's standard starting gear instead. This includes their weapons, armor, equipment, and any other possessions that they may have. This is in addition to all player characters have a jack installed in the back of their neck by default.

Chapter 6 has details about what gear you can select from along with their prices.

Twenty Questions

While certainly not a requirement for play, sometimes it can be useful to answer some questions about the character you're playing. You might want to answer these 20 questions before you even choose your class, or you might wait until you've played a session or two with your group, using these questions to help you flesh out the character which you've already started to play, and to solidify their place in the Space Dogs universe.

1. What emotion does your character most evoke?

This can be what they evoke when you play him, or what other characters think of him. Is your character a depressing Eeyore, always seeing the worst of every situation? Are they cheerful, always seeing the glass half full? Is your character's personality hot-tempered, raging against any and every slight? Choosing a specific theme as your baseline can help inspire you to craft an internally consistent character, though you should avoid having your character become a caricature.

2. What do they look like?

Is their coloring particularly striking, or so average that they blend easily into crowds? How tall or short are they? If they have a high Brawn score, are they powerfully built, or all wire and sinew? Of course, no matter your ethnicity or other appearances, you'll still stand out to most species, as you're still one of those fearsome humans.

3. What first impressions do people get from your character?

Is your character a snappy dresser, or are they a slob? Do they slouch? Are they the life of the party, or are they more of a wallflower? Are they super good looking, repellent, or somewhere in between? Remember though, how you appear to other humans won't be the same way that other species see you.

4. Where is your character from?

Are they from Earth, having served in The Armada in order to earn their way into the stars? Were they born in the starlanes after their parents earned the right to travel the stars?

5. How old is your character?

A character who is still a teen will have a different perspective of the galaxy than a twenty-year veteran of The Armada who has been a Space Dog for years. Does your character remember any of the major events or battles of the starlanes' history? Were they involved in any of them?

6. What was the character's family like growing up?

Your character's family growing up shaped who they are. Did they know both of their parents? Do they have siblings? Do they keep in touch with any of them? Are they estranged? Dead? Or were they an orphan who qualified for and volunteered to join The Armada in order to escape a dead-end existence back on Earth?

7. Has the character begun her own family?

Are they married or in a relationship? Are they widowed? Do they have any children? Is their family still alive? They may have a family which they leave for extended periods in a safe system, sending them much of the money they make being a Space Dog, or perhaps they became a Space Dog in despair after losing their family to an accident or attack. Maybe a fellow PC is a sibling, spouse, or even their child.

8. Are they educated?

Do they have any education such as basic training? Did they go to a military academy? Perhaps they have a PHD in engineering and they travel the starlanes partially to study the ship and station designs of as many different species as they can.

9. Has the character done anything else for a living?

What did your character do before they became a Space Dog? Were they in The Armada as is commonly the case, or something unrelated? Maybe this is their first real job.

10. Are they a Starlane Citizen?

If your character is from Earth, they generally need to have served in the builders' military wing for ten years before becoming a citizen. If born out in the starlanes that is lowered to five years. If they're not a citizen, they can't make accusations before the Starlane Magistrates, and the builders won't trust them as much.

11. Do they have a moral code?

Does the character refuse to kill sapients? Do they draw the line at humans? Children? Only in self-defense? Do they always tell the truth? Never break their word? Or do they have no consistent moral code to speak of at all and just play it by ear?

12. Why has your character become a Space Dog?

Why did your character become a Space Dog? Are they out for thrills? Do they want to get rich? Were they drummed out of The Armada for misconduct, and did they deserve it? Did they first attempt to become a trader along the starlanes only to run into the prevalent discrimination against humanity making it impossible?

13. What does your character think about alien species?

Do alien species intrigue your character so that they want to learn more about them? Is your character creeped out by them and only interacts with them as little as possible, letting their crewmates do the talking with them? What do they think about the discrimination that most other species have towards humans?

14. What does your character think about psychics?

If your character is a psychic, do they think of themselves as the next step in human evolution? If they're not, do they admire psychics, or do they consider them unnatural monstrosities. Be careful of this last in a mixed crew, and make sure that the players are all on board with any sort of friction between their characters.

15. What is the character's personality?

Are they an introvert or an extrovert? What is their sense of humor like? Puns, black humor, or just kinda goofy? Are they flirtatious? Are they a social butterfly, or are they a wallflower? Are they high strung or more laid back? How do others tend to see them? Try not to make a character whose personality will get on the other players' nerves, though only getting on the other PCs' nerves can be fine in moderation.

16. What is your character's comfort zone?

Not everything about your character has to do with their job as a Space Dog. What puts them at ease in their downtime? Does your character like to draw? Do they read hardboiled mystery novels during downtime in warp between systems? Do they give money to charity?

17. What are some of your character's quirks?

Name 2-3 things that are unexpected about the way your character behaves and would otherwise go against what people would expect when first meeting them? Are they a thuggish swordsman who loves to sing show-tunes? A sniper who collects stamps? Perhaps a psychic warrior who likes to juggle?

18. What does your character hate?

Do they hate certain alien species on the starlanes? The volucris? Do they hate red licorice? Do they hate haggling? Telemarketers? Do they mostly just despise random questions about what they hate!?

19. What does the character love the most?

This can be anything from a person, to a religion, an ideal, their favorite pistol, their family, or they might be vain enough that they love themselves more than anything else in the galaxy.

20. What is the character's name?

A name is important to a Space Dog, as it's the thing that people associate with your reputation. What was their birth name? Many Space Dogs go by a callsign of some sort in the builders' tongue – the trade language of the starlanes. It might be something they earned, picked themselves, or was even given by their crewmates which they didn't like but it stuck.

The World of Space Dogs Timeline

First Contact

August 14, 2068

On what had been a normal Saturday afternoon, US Eastern time, the builders arrived in a distant orbit over Earth. There was no warning. No one saw them coming until they were a few minutes away, and those few who saw them then were busy double-checking their findings when the builders' transmission went out. In hindsight it was likely for the best, as no one had the chance to panic or riot before the transmission.

There was still isolated rioting as some people panicked at alien ships approaching Earth. But for the most part, governments and other groups were busy trying to figure out just what was meant. If there was more hidden in the message than there appeared to be at first glance. If the builders were telling the truth.

First Communication from The Builders

People of Earth, we have come to you in peace, but not in charity. We don't want your planet's resources; they are easy to find in the vastness of space. We don't want your planet itself, as it is too cold and wild for our taste. We come for you.

You humans do not seem to realize what a rare resource you are. Not as a sapient species. Beings who are truly self-aware, while not common, are far from unique.

Perhaps your ignorance is because you humans are not, from our perspective, civilized. Whatever the reason, you have kept your 'killer instinct' where most other species did not, if they ever had it in the first place.

We have come for you. For your sons to man our battlecruisers. For your daughters to sail from system to system at our command, doing battle with our foes and enforcing our laws. But we are not thieves. In return for your services, we shall give you a gift. We shall give you the stars.

First Meeting

August 16, 2068

A small shuttle flew from one of the builders' ships to land in front of the UN building in New York, New York, United States. US fighter jets trailed the shuttle, and in hindsight the recordings show that the shuttle actually slowed so as to not outpace the jets.

The specifics of the UN meeting with the builders is shrouded in secret and on a need-to-know basis, but a few things have been leaked over the years. The builders refused to negotiate. We have since found that the builders never negotiate. Their terms are always take it or leave it. Perhaps telling about the curious nature of humanity, or perhaps merely our foolishness, but every major government took their deal without truly understanding what it would mean for humanity.

Announcement for Recruits

August 19, 2068

Dozens of nations announced an open recruitment for those who would like to go into space. It was not a recruitment for astronauts, scientists, or astronomers. The builders had their own, and had no need of our relatively primitive versions. Like the Uncle Sam of World War II, the builders were recruiting soldiers.

For ten years of service, a soldier would be granted access to the starlanes controlled by the builders, and each conflict in which they fight victoriously reduces their time by one year. In addition, the soldier's Earth nation to which they are loyal earns a slow trickle of access to the builder's technology. Due to this, several smaller nations later officially combined their governments in order to combine their numbers of builder recruits sent and thereby earn more builder technology. Some other countries refused to participate entirely whether for cultural reasons, or believing that the whole thing was an elaborate ruse by their enemies.

This combining of nations didn't cause the conflicts that many experts had predicted. In hindsight, it is thought that the knowledge of alien species, even with Earth's limited direct interaction with them, has given humans a common rival. The idea that humans, by their very nature, need something to rally against. And, for perhaps the first time since we discovered how fire warded away other predators, that rival didn't need to be human.

Sol Space Station

October 15, 2068

While not fully constructed, Sol Station began operation on October 15, 2068. The builders began their work upon their space station in the Sol system within hours of their presentation at The United Nations. Unlike the space stations which humans had built, it was not put in close orbit to Earth. Instead, it was built nearly halfway between Earth and its moon. Though the builders have never given an explanation for this choice, it's thought that this was both to keep it away from the threat of human missile systems and to keep them removed from the chaos of human politics.

The builder's Sol Station dwarfs any human attempts. The core of it was actually shipped into Sol and put together as a sort of modular system, with most of the mass made from several hollowed-out asteroids. Its primary purpose, besides being the residence of the builders' ambassador to Earth, was for military training.

Besides the occasional shuttle, no builder technology is ever taken to Earth which hasn't been earned by that country's recruits. Therefore, after their initial training on Earth, recruits for The Armada are transported to Sol Station to finish their training with the builders' technology. In addition, recruits are taught about the galactic community at large, as well as the builders' language. The builders' tongue is not only useful for communicating with them, but it is also the common trade language of the galaxy.

Mecha

November 21, 2068

On November 21, 2068, a drill sergeant, one Michael McDonnel, who was on Sol Station to help with recruit training saw the builders' construction crew working on the station in their construction mecha. Unlike the builders, he saw their potential for combat, especially in the close confines of combat on ship and station.

Eventually, the builders were convinced that the same technology which they used for hands-on construction could be modified for humans to use in combat.

Jack-in

December 26, 2068

The day after Christmas was when the first jack-in surgery was performed on a human. Not only is such a jack-in required to control, or 'jockey' an exo-suit or mecha, but the builders needed to be able to take readings off of such a jack-in in order to design mecha which would be suitable for humans to jockey.

The same Sergeant Michael McDonnel was the first to volunteer for the procedure. In his own words, “If we’re gonna be fighting all of the bug-eyed whatsits out there, we need every damn edge that we can get.”

Fortunately, implanting a jack-in is a relatively minor surgery, putting a small neural interface into the back of a human’s neck. This interface allows builder technology such as exo-suits and mecha to read the electrical pulses which travel naturally through a human’s nervous system.

The surgery on Sergeant McDonnel was a success, and testing began almost immediately. Eventually, nearly all members of The Armada would receive jacks for jockeying mecha and ease of general computer use.

First Fleet Launched

March 1, 2069

In early February of 2069, the builders first spoke of a need to put together an expeditionary force to be used almost immediately, well ahead of the initial plans.

Most military experts claimed that even a small expeditionary force would be premature without more training. Captain Richards disagreed, and he convinced the builders to allow him to put together The First Fleet.

A small force consisting of one battleship, four cruisers, and seven destroyers, now Admiral Richards and The First Fleet set sail on March 1, 2069. After making its way to the edge of Sol System, it set out in the warp towards the Second Center system.

First Fleet Arrived

May 4, 2069

The First Fleet arrived in the Second Center system after nearly a dozen jumps. The builders on board The First Fleet’s flagship almost immediately began to transmit messages to various ships and stations within the system. In his memoirs, Admiral Richards has admitted that he had little idea of what was really going on at the time, and it’s only in hindsight that a better idea is known of what happened.

It appears that the Second Center system had long been a builder controlled system, and is in fact their oldest colony system. Not only is the fourth planet settled, but there are substantial mining operations of several of the system’s asteroids and the moons of the gas giants, and hundreds of different space stations. By May 4, 2069, twelve of those space stations had been taken over by a sect of the krakiz which are known as Primevals, along with nearly all of the mining operations. There had not technically been any battles fought over them, as the builders do not really fight. Instead, they had been slowly retreating through the system and even over individual stations, making the takeover by the Primevals as difficult as possible without actually attacking the krakiz invaders.

The Primevals for their part, thought that the builders, unable to fight for their property, were undeserving of it. They hadn’t actually committed any violence in the system yet, but they were known to have done so in the past. Likely even the Primevals were wary of violence against the builders directly, lest they anger allies of the builders, including other krakiz groups. However, the Primevals had not chosen the Second Center system by chance. They were making a statement of strength that they could take territory in any system that they wanted, and they’d spent the last two months doing just that.

Line in the Sand

May 7, 2069

Three days before, the builders' messages had been sent out to their leaders within the system, but almost nothing had been told to Admiral Richards or the rest of the fleet. It seems that, despite their contacting humanity for just such a reason, the builders had been loath to actually initiate conflict. After three days of indecision, they finally did.

The builders announced to the entire system that, should there be any further incursions be made onto any more territory or property claimed by them, their newly arrived First Fleet would respond with violence. Human historians and military minds alike cringe at how provocative the statement was, but it should be remembered that the builders do not think in at all the same ways as humans do, especially when it comes to warfare, and in many ways, it was a first for them.

Whatever the phrasing, the general point had been made. A proverbial line in the sand had been drawn, and the Primevals were not going to leave it unchallenged.

First Blood

May 9, 2069

Starting two Earth days after the Line in the Sand had been drawn, the fighting began. Initially, it seemed that the Primevals were just testing the resolve of the builders, but it was the resolve of Admiral Richards and The First Fleet that they felt. The Battleship Enterprise destroyed the first several ships which were headed towards one of the space stations still controlled by the builders.

Over the next several weeks, the fighting was fierce, primarily in personal combat as The First Fleet's marines retook all of the Second Center system's space stations. And, at the forefront of that fighting was Sergeant McDonnel in the first human mecha. Afterwards, he was quoted as saying that he felt like 'a god of war' as he strode into battle with it, which is the main reason why that mecha model was later named the Ares.

There were a substantial number of casualties, but the Primevals had been prepared to push out the builders, not take part in a pitched battle. In the end the Primevals were pushed out of four stations before they retreated from the Second Center system entirely.

A Shocked Galaxy

June 2069

A few days after the Primevals left the Second Center system The First Fleet headed back towards Sol System to complete their fitting and to use their combat experience to help improve training and equipment for human combat troops going forward. Perhaps most importantly, with the success of the Ares the model was scaled up for mass production, and the human commanders convinced the builders to design a smaller variant: the exosuit.

At the same time, the galactic community was rocked by the knowledge that the builders had enlisted a brutal species, equipping them with the finest technology, and was now using them as a hammer to crush their foes. Even if Earth had somehow heard inklings of it, humanity lacked context and would never have understood what it truly meant.

The builders had been slowly losing influence throughout the galaxy over the past century as other species had encroached upon their property and territories. Rarely was anything blatant done on a large scale as few wanted to lose the builders as a trading partner or risk access to their warp beacons, though there were notable exceptions such as The Scouring of Veta Prime. From what we've been told, it was likely that incident which was the deciding factor and led the builders to decide to recruit humanity.

Humanity: A Terror Weapon *Excerpt from Teardown the Builders (first known mention of humans)*

The builders have unleashed a new menace upon the galaxy. These humans appear as ferocious as the Primevals, the lunatic fringe of the krakiz, and are apparently even more deadly. The builders seem to think that these humans are on their leash, but no doubt the ancients thought that volucris were totally in control as well. No one seems certain exactly where these humans are from or how many of them there are, but one thing seems certain, their appearance

Initial Deployment

2070

Training of the armada and human legions continued throughout 2069, and broad deployment began in early 2070. Over the next several years, the majority of interstellar builder ships were given a contingent of human marines on loan from the legions, and more than a dozen new fleets were deployed throughout the builders' territory, all of them considerably larger than The First Fleet. To this day, The First Fleet has remained rather small and is used as an elite strike force.

The Galaxy Divided

2073

Over the next few years, the opinion of the galaxy at large towards the builders' human Armada varied greatly. On the one hand, the humans had undoubtedly cleared the starlanes for travel and trade more than anything had in more than a century, but on the other hand, it expanded the builders' control. There had already been many outspoken voices against the builders' control over interstellar travel through their warp beacons. Now they had the human weapons to enforce their claims.

While the trade across the starlanes went up substantially, anti-builder groups gained more of a foothold in the general consciousness. Perhaps most notably, the periodical Teardown the Builders was started, quickly gaining widespread readership.

Many star systems disallow humans to make planet-fall under any circumstances. Some species even try to prevent humans from coming onto their space stations, but after a delay of several weeks, the builders demand that humans be allowed onto space stations outside of small designated areas. While the builders' demands are met, this flexing of their political muscle causes more resentment.

Burning the Hive

March 2075

On March 4, 2075 the armada scout ship Rapier entered the system Omega Gamma system with a builder surveyor on board to see if it would be a suitable location for a warp beacon, potentially shortening several routes along the starlanes. Several decades before it had been scouted as an uninhabited system, and it was expected to be empty.

Upon arrival into the system, the builder surveyor entered a state of total shock and made no action, instead partially retreating into his vestigial shell. In the past few years, a volucris hive had been grown in the system, serving as a base of operations for the monstrous insectoids to attack ships throughout that part of the starlanes, consuming all in their path.

Commander Wei Liu, captain of the Rapier was able to act quickly, turning and jumping back into the warp with multiple volucris craft hot on its heels. The Rapier actually turned in warp and made a blind jump into another uninhabited system to shake its pursuers, but even so one of the smaller volucris horde-spitters caught Rapier and its small marine detachment ended up fighting off the volucris boarders even as the ship jumped back into the warp towards the inhabited portion of the starlanes.

When Rapier limped in, broadcasting their story, The Armada moved at once. The first fleet and part of both the third and fourth fleets under Admiral Richards moved against the volucris hive, assembling faster than outside observers believed possible, though still most thought that it would be too late and the hive would be long gone as had been the case every previous time that forces had been assembled to destroy a hive once found. The Armada's ships arrived in Omega Gamma just as it seemed that the volucris has finished mobilizing the hive.

The battle was much more costly than Admiral Richards believed it would be beforehand, in large part due to the lack of human counters to the volucris psychic powers which at times could literally rip ships apart with their minds. Despite that and other substantial losses, the hive and nearly all of its attendant volucris were wiped out, a bare handful escaping into the nether of the warp. It was the first recorded destruction of a volucris hive.

For the first time in any species' living memory, whispers began of the possibility of wiping the volucris from the galaxy and making the starlanes safe from their ravages. This, more than anything else, was the first major incident which helped to counter the negative propaganda about humans, though most considered it more something akin to fighting fire with fire and still ending with their house burned down with old flames or new.

The First Space Dogs

2079

Of the first humans to complete their decade long contract with the builders, many had stayed on in the armada, but nearly half had chosen to be discharged. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they had trouble getting normal work across the galaxy due to the reputation that the armada had earned for humanity. A few tried to start work as merchants, but many, especially the isolated species, simply refused to trade with them, and trading directly with Earth was limited due to the constraints of the builders' treaties with the governments there.

In most cases due to a process of elimination, many humans began taking work which took advantage of humanity's fierce reputation, working as mercenaries, often as protection for convoys of the same merchants who refused to trade with them, sometimes into areas where the builders' armada had limited movement without major political fallout.

Needless to say, it didn't take long for The Armada to realize the benefits of retaining connections with all of these freelance human mercenaries. However, it took longer to convince the builders since it wasn't something which they had planned for. Fortunately, now Rear Admiral Richards was able to dig up the successes of the Sea Dogs from Earth's history as a past example of a similar strategy. It still took months, but eventually the builders were convinced and the majority of the discharged humans took them up on the offer. This new role was christened Space Dogs.

Many of the Space Dogs might have refused the connection back to The Armada, but in the intervening months since the first humans were discharged, many other species had begun to pass rules and laws limiting human movement when not a part of The Armada. However, becoming a Space Dog once again had the builders' reach protect them from such rulings, and as a Space Dog they were, by treaty, assured of a safe port in any system with a warp beacon.

Rise of the Merchant Class

2081-2089

While there is still widespread fear, hate, and mistrust of humanity throughout the starlanes, more and more merchants of the minor species begin to use Space Dogs as protection on their trade routes. While these same merchants had contracted with others such as the krakiz for protection before, the

krakiz are somewhat notorious for losing interest partway through a trade route, leaving the convoy stranded without protection, making them loathe to stray from the safer and more heavily traveled trade routes.

The human Space Dogs proved to be much more reliable, often sticking to contracts for extended periods so long as they were properly compensated. This has lead merchant convoys of minor species being more willing to travel near dangerous sectors to cut down on the number of jumps required, or to travel to isolated systems for rare trade goods. This has led to these minor species merchants to gain in wealth, and with that wealth gaining more influence throughout the starlanes. And, unsurprisingly, while most still claim no understanding of humanity, these wealthy merchants lack the same hate and mistrust which heretofore had been so common throughout the galaxy.

First Manifestation

March 13, 2086

Lucy Frank, a nine-year-old girl threw a tantrum and punched a hole through the military space station where she lived with her parents. Her father was able to save her from the destruction, but he ended up being vented into space and quickly died from suffocation and the lack of pressure.

It took some time for human and builder investigators to discover what had happened. Initially there was talk of another terrorist attack. Apparently Lucy had subconsciously tapped into her latent psychic abilities. This was a shock to the builders, at least as much as anything can be a shock to a species which is so imperturbable. Apparently they were able to figure out what had happened rather quickly due to some sort of psychic residue which is measured with the same instruments which detect warp travel. The delay was due to the builders running diagnostics on their equipment because they didn't believe them.

Other than humanity, the only species known to be able to be inborn with psychic abilities are the volucris and the immortui. While other species were already wary of humans before this due to our military exploits, some propagandists have pronounced that this shows that humans are, like the volucris and immortui, vicious monsters.

Minds of Monsters *Excerpt from Teardown the Builders*

The builders' human monsters have proven to be monsters in mind as well as action. It has recently been discovered that some humans have awakened to psychic powers. This puts them in the same category as the volucris and immortui; both blights upon the starlanes. These garbage eaters which the builders have unleashed upon the starlanes are monstrous to their very core!

Thanksgiving of Terror

November 24, 2087

Perhaps in response to the slowly improving perception of humans across the starlanes, or perhaps due to news of Lucy Frank and humanity's newfound psychic abilities, anti-human groups took a more active stance on November 24, 2087. It seemed like a normal day on the Destiny Star Station, a builder controlled station on a major starlane route, it was a bustling hub of trade and interspecies activity. In addition, not only did it have a substantial human garrison, but four ships from the third fleet of the armada were in port.

At 4:57 AM local time, the port authority's alarm began to sound. A small ship was quickly closing on the station, but it was not responding to hails, nor did it show any signs of slowing or turning away. The lead builder on duty at the port authority continued to attempt to hail them, until they were only a few million kilometers from the station. At that point the builder called and woke up his supervisor and began to explain the situation to him. But, not surprisingly

to anyone who knows the builders, it took far too long.

The incoming ship was aimed right at the docking arm between two of the ships from the third fleet which were moored there, a destroyer and a frigate. About the same time that the builder at the port authority began waking his supervisor, Commander Gonzalez of the destroyer Tonfa became aware of the incoming ship. He attempted to ask the port authority about it, but the builder was busy speaking with his supervisor and ignored the call.

Fortunately, Commander Gonzalez made the decision to move on his own. He warned off the incoming ship and when the only reply was for the ship to speed up, Tonfa opened fire. Tonfa attempted to disable the ship's gravity engines, but the incoming ship exploded almost instantly, damaging Tonfa and the Battleship Stalwart which were docked there, causing more than a dozen deaths and hundreds of casualties. Recreations after the fact concluded that the ship had been stuffed full of various explosive compounds and was almost certainly on a suicide mission. However, as the ship's design was a knock-off of a builders', which are common throughout the galaxy, it was never discovered conclusively who piloted the ship, or even their species, though theories abound.

It is unclear whether or not it was realized by the saboteurs that it was Thanksgiving, in the country of the United States on Earth, or whether it was just a coincidence. Whatever the case, it can certainly be said that no humans are thankful for the terror which occurred on that Thanksgiving.

Primarily due to the Thanksgiving of Terror, over the next few years, the position of Port Authority on nearly every builder controlled space station became a military position, filled by an officer from The Armada. Only some of the smallest and most out-of-the way stations left builders in charge of such immediate matters, though they remain in control of more long-term operations.

New Age of Colonialism

2090-Present

Colonies were not unheard of before humanity was brought onto the galactic stage, but starting in late 2090 it seems that there was a boom. Analysts have largely pointed to the increased wealth created by the merchant class making funding such endeavors possible as the primary factor, though the colonies vary in whether they are being funded privately or by some sort of public entity. Some of the new colonies actually were founded by multiple minor species working in concert, especially those which are privately funded.

There are undoubtedly other major factors, but both analysts and colonists disagree on what they are. The starlanes had generally become safer over the previous couple of decades, making traveling to outlying star-systems less dangerous, and said newly settled systems aren't as cut off as they once have been. Many Space Dogs crews seem to gravitate to these newly founded systems due to the more positive outlook of their inhabitants towards humans. In addition, the resources that these new colonies want to trade seem to have only increased the rise of the merchant class.

However, some colonies were founded on the premise of avoiding builders' control, refusing any sort of warp beacon, making travel to and from such systems inherently dangerous, as any starships making such a journey and thrown off-course at all could easily find themselves lost in the warp for weeks, months, or even forever. More than one of these systems hasn't been heard from in more than a decade. It is unclear if it has merely been cut off due to a lengthy warp storm, or if they are still there at all.

While the New Age of Colonialism will undoubtedly be of economic benefit in the long term, most colonies are a drain in the short term, which can potentially be decades. This is due both to the start-up resources required for the colonies themselves, as well as the cost of additional warp beacons and

security. In addition there are many leaders, both governmental figures and demagogues, who have spoken out against the very idea of such expansion. There reasons are varied, such as it being unnatural and it going against the path of their ancestors.

A World of War *Excerpt from Teardown the Builders*

Dear readers, it has recently come to our attention that the humans are more monstrous than we realized. Apparently on their home planet, they have had wars between themselves which have encompassed every man, woman, and child. Two of their conflicts have even earned the name "World War". Apparently there were even worries afterwards that the humans would wipe themselves out with their fighting. We can only regret that they were not successful.

However, if the humans fear their own violence enough to fear extinction, how much more should we civilized races fear the end of their planet's life at their hands!? I say that we make their previous fears a reality, wiping out the humans in self-defense before their wars cause us all to join the ancients in extinction and eventual anonymity. My loved ones are too important to meet such a fate. Won't you say the same with your actions?

An Arms Race

2091-Present

Even for those peoples who embraced the New Age of Colonialism and the added safety of the starlanes, such changes undoubtedly unbalanced the status quo. And, whether they considered them a benefit to the galaxy or a horror to be stopped, humanity's prowess in battle was a large reason for that unbalance. Perhaps unsurprisingly, many species have begun to change their own way of doing things.

While it existed before on the fringes, gray-matter grafting has become much more common, likely in response the humanity's inborn psychic powers, perhaps moreso due to the knowledge that the grafting doesn't work on humans. The surgery is still outlawed in many systems, but individuals willing to undergo the risky procedure in their attempts to gain psychic abilities are rarely dissuaded by such laws or are willing to travel to neighboring systems.

Likely due to the success of humanity's use of mecha and exo-suits, many others have attempted to create their own variants of the technology, with varying degrees of success.

Perhaps most obviously a response to humanity's impact upon the star-lanes was the creation of the moreaus. While no one is certain who was behind their creation, the moreaus are genetically nearly human, being created with human DNA, though sharp teeth and claws were added, so there is no confusing them with humanity with anything but a cursory glance for anyone who is familiar with humans. It appears that they escaped their creators, though it's unclear when and exactly how they were created at all.

Overall, despite the relative safety and economic boom of recent decades, this hasn't led to a cessation of warlike activities, but instead to an arms race.

Council of Mothers Established

2101

The Council of Mothers is a radical group of human psychics. They claim authority over all of those with psychic abilities, taking precedence over even the parents of psychic children, though they have yet to take any major actions upon these claims. They seem to have set up a matriarchal society, likely because the most powerful psychics thus far have all been female.

They have taken up residence upon a space station which is just beyond the starlanes created by the builders' warp beacons, making it an ordeal to visit them. It is rumored that they are willing to rent

out the services of their members, which is likely how they pay to keep their station running.

Your Place in the Galaxy

2107

Humanity has reached a strange equilibrium. A slow steam of humans are constantly being funneled from Earth as they join the builder's armada to earn their way out into the starlanes. However, many first and second generation recruits moved on from the armada and have begun to form their own communities out among the stars.

Some of their children have joined The Armada themselves in turn, but many have not. However, like all humans, they too have trouble finding work or doing business much removed from the combat ability which humans are known for, and humans are still a tiny in the starlanes of a few million in a galaxy of trillions. Some of them have begun doing the service industry jobs within human communities, whether as restaurateurs, mechanics, or doctors, but many have joined the ranks of Space Dogs, which is those human communities' primary, and nearly sole source of outside wealth.

You have joined the starlanes, choosing to become a Space Dog. You may be a hardened veteran who joined their ranks after hard-fought tours of duty with The Armada, or you might have been stationed on some quiet station and are now hungry for adventure. Perhaps you came into space in the first place to escape poverty or troubles back on Earth. You might have been raised in space, hearing stories of your parents' exploits since you were knee-high and want to live up to their achievements or even surpass them. Whatever your reasons or specific background, you are a Space Dog, and this is your story.

Chapter 1: Attributes

Nearly every die roll you make when playing *Space Dogs* is modified by at least one of your character's attributes, and they tell a lot about what sort of character you're playing. A stronger character will be able to force open a door. A character with poor reflexes will be easier to hit. A perceptive character will notice the volucris getting ready to jump out of the air vents.

Normally human attributes range from 1-10, with a score of 3-4 being average for a human for each of the six attributes: Brawn, Dexterity, Agility, Stamina, Sharpness, and Willpower.

To create your character's attributes, each of your attributes start at 3, and you get 10 attribute points which are spent to increase your attributes. Each character's six attributes is primary, secondary, or tertiary based upon the class they chose to play and the choices made during character creation. Be careful, because these choices will be a large part of what defines your character. Use the below table to see the cost of attributes.

For example, at first level a character may choose to make both of their primary attributes a 5 and leave all their other attributes at 3 to use up all their attribute points. Or they may choose to make one primary attribute a 5, their other primary attribute a 4, and put both of their secondary attributes at 4. They could even put both primary attributes, both secondary attributes, and one tertiary attribute at 4, saving their last attribute point to be used when they hit level 2.

The costs are cumulative, so getting a primary attribute up to 7 costs a total of thirty attribute points.

As a character levels up, they will receive an additional 10 or more attribute points each time they level and may save attribute points between levels to save for higher attribute increases. The amount of attribute points per level is shown in their class.

The below table indicates the additional cost rather than the total cost for each attribute increase. For example, increasing a primary attribute to 6 takes a total of 14 attribute points (0+1+4+9=14).

	Primary Attributes	Secondary Attributes	Tertiary Attributes
1	-	-	-
2	-	-	-
3	0pts	0pts	0pts
4	+1pts / 1 total	+2pts / 2 total	+3pts / 3 total
5	+4pts / 5 total	+8pts / 10 total	+12pts / 15 total
6	+9pts / 14 total	+18pts / 28 total	+27pts / 42 total
7	+16pts / 30 total	+32pts / 60 total	+48pts / 90 total
8	+25pts / 55 total	+50pts / 110 total	+75pts / 165 total
9	+36pts / 91 total	+72pts / 182 total	+108pts / 273 total
10	+49pts / 140 total	+98pts / 280 total	+147pts / 420 total

Brawn: Muscle strength, Brawn measures your character's muscle mass & physical power. This ability is especially useful for those who want to focus upon melee combat or wield larger weapons, though it helps all characters' durability.

You apply your character's Brawn modifier to:

- Your character's Life Pool.
- Melee attack rolls with most weapons.
- Damage rolls for melee weapons.
- Athletics skill checks.
- Your character's Body Defense (BD), for resisting poison, radiation etc.
- Maximum Life recovered from First-Aid.
- No penalty when wearing heavy armor or wielding heavy weapons or grenades
- Athletics Checks.
- Brawn checks. (for breaking down doors etc.)

Dexterity: Dexterity measures hand-eye coordination. This ability is important for any character who wants to engage in physical combat.

You apply your character's Dexterity modifier to:

- Melee attack rolls.
- Ranged attack rolls.
- Demolitions, Driving, First-Aid, Piloting, and Repair skill checks.

Agility: Both swiftness of body and one's ability to move lithely, this would be a prime attribute of tumblers and high wire walkers.

You apply your character's Agility modifier to:

- Your character's Dodge Defense (DD), to avoid being hit by melee, gunfire, and explosives.
- Melee attack rolls with some lighter weapons.
- Acrobatics, Athletics, and Stealth skill checks.

Stamina: Durability of body, stamina both allows one to take more hits, and to keep on trucking longer than the other guy.

You can apply your character's Stamina modifier to:

- Your character's Grit pool.
- Your character's Vitality pool.
- Your character's Life pool.
- Recovery speed of your character's Grit

Sharpness: Not necessarily intelligence, mental Sharpness is how quickly one can think on their feet and how clearly one can picture things in their mind. A card shark would likely have a higher Sharpness than an academic.

You can apply your character's Sharpness modifier to:

- Your character's Psyche pool.
- Awareness, Demolitions, Driving, First-Aid, Hacking, Investigation, Piloting, Presence, Repair, Stealth, and Survival skill checks.
- Damage rolls with many ranged weapons.
- Used with many psychic abilities.

Willpower: In many ways Willpower is the mental equivalent of Stamina; Willpower allows one's mind to deal with both trauma and strain.

You can apply your character's Willpower modifier to:

- Your character's Psyche pool.
- Your character's Grit pool.
- Recovery speed of your character's Psyche.
- Your character's Mental Defense (MD), to defend against various mental assaults.

- The ability to jockey more advanced mecha and exo-suits.
- Awareness and Presence skill checks.
- Used with many psychic abilities.

Ability Checks: 1d6 + 2 x Attribute.

Vitality

A character's vitality score represents their capacity to dodge out of the way at the last moment with nothing more than a scratch, or possibly shrugging off a blow entirely. Eventually, such a capacity will be used up and said character will start to take a beating.

Mechanically, vitality is treated as a buffer for a character's life and psyche pools. Normally any time that a character is hit by an attack it is their vitality points which take the damage. Once a character's vitality pool is gone then the damage goes against their life points or psyche depending upon what the attack targets.

For example, if I character has 8 vitality points left and is hit for 13 damage by an assault rifle, their vitality would be dropped to 0 and they would take 5 points of Life damage.

A character's vitality score varies depending upon if they have a PC class or an NPC class. NPC classes are described in Chapter 17.

PC Class Vitality Pool = 2xStamina + Class bonus

Life

A character's Life score is their physical durability. All physical attacks target a character's Life pool. Any Life damage represents solid blows which could be life-threatening if you receive enough of them.

When you reach 0 Life points you take a -5 penalty to all rolls. If a character goes into negative Life Points they fall unconscious and must either pass a Brawn check equal to 10 plus their negative Life each turn or spend 1 Grit until a TN 10 First Aid check is performed on them successfully. If the character fails the Brawn check and has no Grit remaining, they die.

At negative Life points equal to your Life pool total, your character dies.

A character's Life score is based upon their attributes.

Life Pool = Brawn + Stamina

Psyche

A character's Psyche score represents their mental strength and resilience. Purely mental attacks target a character's Psyche pool rather than their Life. Any Psyche damage taken represents solid mental blows. In addition, Psyche points are used to fuel some character Talents, notably psychic Talents. Such Psyche use needs to be done carefully, as a character could literally kill themselves by overusing their Psyche.

When you reach 0 Psyche you take a -5 penalty to all rolls. If a character goes into negative Psyche points they fall unconscious and their Psyche will no longer recover at the normal rate. It will take two hours per point healed until they reach 0 Psyche, at which point it will recover at the normal rate. At negative Psyche equal to your maximum Psyche Core, your character dies. (While your body is still alive, you are braindead.)

A character's Psyche score varies both with their stats and any class bonus that they may have. You use up Psyche from your buffer first, and only then spend the core pool.

Psyche Core = Sharpness + Class Bonus

Psyche Buffer = Willpower

Grit

A character's Grit is their reserves of physical effort, letting them go above and beyond their normal limits. A character may use their Grit to Boost their dice rolls (see below), or they may use their Grit pool to power a number of different Talents. You spend from your buffer first, and only then spend the core pool.

NPC classes have little if any Grit, as described in Chapter 17.

Grit Core = Willpower + level bonus

Grit Buffer = Stamina

Uses of Grit

Grit may be used as a resource in several different ways.

Flesh Wound: After taking Life or Psyche damage, a character may spend 1 Grit to take the damage to their Vitality and half the base damage to their Life/Psyche respectively. This allows characters with Grit to survive powerful critical hits or other attacks which may bypass their Vitality. Flesh Wound must be used against each source of damage separately.

For example, if a character is critically hit for 10 damage, they may spend 1 Grit to take 10 Vitality damage and 5 to Life damage. If they do not use Flesh Wound, they instead take the full 10 to Life damage. The full Life damage would normally be 10 points, but it could be multiplied for being a higher damage scale.

Survivor: A character may spend 1 Grit when their Life/Psyche first drops below 0 to have them drop to 0 instead. They take the normal -5 penalty to all rolls while at 0 Life/Psche.

Talents: Every player character has at least one Talent to use at first level, gaining more as they progress. Talents are character abilities which allow them to do things which would otherwise be impossible, most of which are powered by spending one or more points of Grit and/or Psyche.

Recovery

Breather: A Breather is a one minute break where the PCs can regain some of what they've lost or used from their resource pools.

After taking a Breather each character regains all of their Vitality, their Psyche buffer, and their Grit buffer.

Life Points are not automatically regained during a Breather, instead requiring use of the First Aid skill (see Chapter 4).

Any non-human takes 5 minutes to take a Breather.

Rest: A Rest is when the characters have a chance for a relatively peaceful sleep of at least 6-8 hours. All Vitality, Grit, and Psyche is recovered during a full rest.

Life Points will be regained equal to a character's Stamina score so long as life points are still a positive score. See First Aid (Chapter 4) for more details.

Mettle

A character's Mettle is determined entirely by their class bonuses. Your Mettle increases all of damage rolls you make, and decreases the amount that every physical attack's damage is reduced by when it hits you, stacking with any damage reduction that your armor may have.

Body Defense (BD)

A character's Body Defense (BD) shows how tough and durable they are. This defense shows your ability to stand up to physical punishment or attacks such as poisons which attack your physical health.

Body Defense (BD) = 2 + Brawn

Mental Defense (MD)

A character's Mental Defense (MD) shows how tough they are mentally. Mental psychic attacks target your MD, along with any other attacks which target you mentally.

Mental Defense (MD) = 2 + Willpower

Dodge Defense (DD)

A character's Dodge Defense (DD) is how hard they are to hit. The majority of ranged attacks, from firearms, to arrows, to concussion grenades, all target DD. In addition, if you don't actively defend against a melee attack, it will also target DD, and if you dodge your defense is 2x your DD.

Dodge Defense (DD) = 2 + Agility

Chapter 2: Classes

When you create a character, you pick a class. Your class more than anything else is what defines your character plays, especially in combat. Before choosing a class, you should consider which class fits both your playstyle and the sort of character that you want to play. You should make sure to consider both the base class and the advanced class which you will likely want to advance into.

The classes from this chapter have no in-game definition. A class is a collection of mechanics which are linked together. In-game no one will know the exact definition of a "Deadeye", but they will recognize that those individuals are the best snipers.

In the same way, the Talents in this chapter do not have in-game definitions. Instead, they are just the extraordinary feats of skill which your character might be able to perform when their back is against the wall. Other exceptional individuals might even be able to perform similar feats, and while they are mechanically identical, in-game they may or may not appear anything alike.

At level 1, you pick one of the base classes to play, either from this chapter or from Chapter 3: Psychic Classes. As a player you also gain the Boost Talent from this chapter for free even if playing a psychic class from chapter 3.

When you reach level 4, you further specialize by picking one of the advanced classes. For example, if you chose the Operative class at 1st level, when you reach level 4 you can choose to branch into either the Agent or the Deadeye advanced class. However, whether you become either an Agent or a Deadeye, you also remain an Operative, and any special abilities you have from being an Operative would still apply. The advanced class both gives you a new Talent and dictates what table your stats will be from there going forward.

At level 8 you further specialize by choosing a Path. A Path adjusts your stats and either gives you a new Talent or adjusts a signature Talent.

Finally at level 15, you receive your class's capstone ability. There is one capstone for each base class.

When you choose your base class from this chapter, your primary attribute(s) are already decided when you choose your class, but you decide upon your secondary and tertiary attributes when you create your character.

The tables list the Vitality, Grit, Psyche, Talent, and Mettle which the character gets in addition to

those which they get due to their attributes. The Talents listed on the table are the number of Talents which the character gets in addition to their signature Talent(s).

Special Note: Each Talent can be used at most once each turn.

For each level your character has, they also gain attribute points to be used however they want based upon their own primary, secondary, and tertiary attributes. This amount starts at 10 and increases at various levels as shown on the tables below.

Every class has a complexity rating on a scale of one to ten. This is not saying that some classes are 'easy mode', as each class requires different strategies to work well, but they can be more effective with more basic tactics. Some classes have more mechanics to track and are less straightforward. If you are new to Space Dogs, and especially if you are new to Tabletop RPGs, it is suggested that you avoid the higher complexity classes until you can get a feel for the game. If you do choose a higher complexity class, you should expect a bit of a learning curve. This is also a useful tool for the GM, as it can be difficult to run NPCs with a high complexity along with other characters.

Brute (base class)

Complexity Rating: 2

Primary Stats: Brw & Sta

Secondary Stats: Any two attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

Standard Starting Gear: Shotgun, Battle Axe, Pistol, Battle Armor, Assault Kit, and $50.

The Brute class is for players whose governing philosophy is that if the Brute Force method isn't working, that means that you aren't using enough Brute Force. The Brute has large Vitality and Grit pools, and its primary attribute Stamina increases both even further. Combined with Brawn it gives them the class with the largest Life Point pool. The Brute excels in melee where they can take advantage of their Brawn score and use Brute Force to full effect.

The Brute class suffers from having a small pool of Talents. Due to this, they should focus on picking Talents which they can use often as opposed to more situational Talents. In addition, their Mettle will be rather low so that even their large Vitality pool can be whittled down from long range or when in melee, and using Brute Force to compensate will quickly go through even their large Grit pool.

The Berserker advanced class is for Brutes who want to focus upon offense, especially attacking heavily armored targets in melee. Even outside of melee, the Berserker's large Grit pool means that they can keep using Talents after other characters are tapped out.

The Enforcer advanced class is for Brutes who want to excel in being able to take a beating and keep on ticking between their large Vitality pool and Signature Talent, Bulk Up.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+10	+2	+0	+0	+0	+10/10
2	+12	+3	+0	+1	+0	+10/20
3	+14	+3	+0	+1	+0	+10/30

Brute Force
Requirements: Brute - Signature Talent
Cost: 4 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: The Brute increases his Mettle by his Stamina score for the rest of the turn and may use his Brawn score in place of his Dexterity score for all attacks with melee weapons this round.
Out of Combat: Out of the strain of combat, Brute Force lasts for up to one minute and allows the Brute to add a bonus die on all skills using Brawn and on Brawn ability checks.

Berserker (Brute base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+15	+5	+0	+1	+0	+15/45
5	+17	+5	+0	+1	+1	+15/60
6	+19	+6	+0	+2	+1	+15/75
7	+21	+6	+0	+2	+1	+15/90
8	+22	+7	+0	+2	+1	+20/110
9	+23	+7	+1	+3	+2	+20/130
10	+24	+8	+1	+3	+2	+20/150
11	+25	+8	+1	+3	+2	+20/170
12	+26	+9	+1	+4	+2	+25/195
13	+27	+9	+1	+4	+3	+25/220
14	+28	+10	+1	+4	+3	+25/245
15	+29	+10	+1	+5	+3	+25/270

Savagery: A Berserker adds +1 on all damage rolls.

Power Blow
Requirements: Berserker - Signature Talent
Cost: 4 Grit
Used: Beginning of Melee Phase.
Combat: The damage you deal in melee this round counts as being dealt at one scale higher up to a maximum of Tank scale.
Note: The attack roll doesn't count as being at a higher scale, only the damage.

Enforcer (Brute base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+21	+3	+0	+1	+0	+15/45
5	+23	+3	+0	+1	+1	+15/60
6	+25	+3	+1	+2	+1	+15/75
7	+26	+4	+1	+2	+1	+15/90
8	+28	+4	+1	+2	+1	+20/110
9	+29	+4	+1	+2	+2	+20/130
10	+30	+5	+1	+3	+2	+20/150
11	+31	+5	+2	+3	+2	+20/170
12	+32	+6	+2	+3	+2	+25/195
13	+34	+6	+2	+3	+3	+25/220
14	+35	+7	+2	+4	+3	+25/245
15	+37	+7	+2	+4	+3	+25/270

Savagery: An Enforcer adds +1 on all damage rolls.

Bulk Up
Requirements: Enforcer - Signature Talent
Cost: 4 Grit
Used: Any.
Combat: You count as being one scale larger in comparison to any damage dealt to you until the end of the turn up to a maximum of Tank scale.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+2 Life Points / +3 Vitality / -2 Grit / +1 Damage

Bloody Determination
Requirements: Brute – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: Vitality
Used: After taking Life damage
Effect: If you have taken life damage this turn, you may use Bloody Determination to use Vitality instead of Grit to activate a Signature Talent.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

+2 Psyche / +2 Grit / +1 Damage

Maintain Focus
Requirements: Brute – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Same time as signature talent.
Effect: When using a Signature Talent, you may also use Maintain Focus to have it remain activated until the end of the following turn.

Capstone Ability

Iron Skin
Requirements: Brute – Capstone
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: After taking damage
Effect: Double all DR from Mettle this turn. Mettle also applies to Psyche attacks this turn, though not doubled.

Commander (base class)

Complexity Rating: 5

Primary Stats: Shp & Wil

Secondary Stats: Any two attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

Standard Starting Gear: Machine Pistol, Pistol, Frag Grenade x2, Stun Grenade x2, Concealable Kevlar, Shortsword, Covert Pack, and $250.

The Commander class is for players who like to take a support role and lead the other players into combat. Her signature Talent gives an edge to everyone else in the party, and there are several support Talents which give improved benefits to the Commander.

On her own, a Commander is arguably the weakest class. Her signature talent doesn't work for herself and her stats aren't optimal for a direct confrontation, especially in melee combat.

The Captain advanced class is for Commanders who want to focus on enhancing their allies, using Give Them Another! and their large Psyche pool to give their crewmates the edge in any conflict.

The Warlord advanced class is for Commanders who like to take a more active role in combat, picking the targets for their crewmates to focus on with Open Up Their Guard and fighting in combat themselves.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+6	+1	+1	+1	+0	+10/10
2	+7	+2	+2	+2	+0	+10/20
3	+8	+2	+2	+3	+1	+10/30

Once More into the Breach…
Requirements: Commander - Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: End of the Movement Phase.
Combat: Give a +3 bonus to the attack rolls of allies within 10m [5 squares] (not herself) up to a maximum number of attacks equal to her Sharpness.

Captain (Commander base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+9	+2	+4	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+10	+3	+4	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+11	+3	+5	+4	+2	+15/75
7	+12	+4	+5	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+13	+4	+6	+4	+2	+20/110
9	+14	+4	+7	+4	+3	+20/130
10	+15	+5	+7	+4	+3	+20/150
11	+16	+5	+8	+4	+3	+20/170
12	+17	+5	+8	+4	+3	+25/195
13	+18	+6	+9	+5	+4	+25/220
14	+19	+6	+10	+5	+4	+25/245
15	+20	+6	+10	+5	+4	+25/270

Give Them Another!
Requirements: Captain - Signature Talent
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Ranged Phase Action
Combat: An ally within range may make a single additional ranged attack against a target which you can see.
Range: A number of squares equal to your Willpower.
Note: Give Them Another! doesn't allow the ally in question to reload as part of the attack it gives. All penalties or bonuses they have apply to the attack such as Aiming or Auto-fire.

Warlord (Commander base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+12	+3	+3	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+13	+4	+3	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+14	+4	+4	+4	+2	+15/75
7	+15	+4	+4	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+16	+5	+5	+4	+3	+20/110
9	+17	+5	+5	+4	+3	+20/130
10	+18	+5	+6	+5	+3	+20/150
11	+19	+6	+7	+5	+4	+20/170
12	+20	+6	+7	+5	+4	+25/195
13	+21	+6	+8	+6	+4	+25/220
14	+22	+7	+8	+6	+5	+25/245
15	+23	+7	+4	+6	+5	+25/270

Open Their Guard
Requirements: Warlord - Signature Talent
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: When making an attack roll.
Combat: After you attack a target, all allies gain a +4 to hit your target until the end of the current turn.
Special: Open Their Guard only works when using a weapon whose damage is equal or higher than your target's damage scale.
Note: Open Their Guard works whether or not your hit the target.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+2 Vitality / +2 Grit

Your Own Greatest Ally
Requirements: Commander – Signature Specialization Talent Adjustment
Effect: Change "(not herself)" to "(including herself)" in the description of Once More into the Breach… so that the Commander may also receive the +3 bonus on attack rolls.
Note: The Commander counts towards the maximum limit of allies affected.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

+2 Psyche

By the Skin of Their Teeth
Requirements: Commander – Signature Specialization Talent Adjustment
Effect: You may now use Once More into the Breach… after an ally makes an attack roll and you see the results to give them a bonus to the roll. When used in this way only that ally benefits from the +3 bonus.

Capstone Ability

Legendary Officer
Requirements: Commander – Capstone
Cost: 2 Psyche
Effect: A number of allies equal to your Sharpness gain +2 to all defenses and all rolls until their next Breather.
Note: The Commander counts towards the maximum limit of allies affected.

Operative (base class)

Complexity Rating: 6

Primary Stats: Shp & Dex

Secondary Stats: Any two attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

Standard Starting Gear: Pistol x2, Kevlar,

The Operative class is for players who want to focus upon finesse and punching through the defenses of more powerful enemies to deal pinpoint damage. Their Signature Talent combos well with Talents which work based upon Life Point damage such as Red-Eye and Hamstring.

The Operative class suffers from lower than average base vitality pool, and the same is true for their Grit pool. In addition, Called Shot is of limited use with automatic weapons or against heavily armored targets.

The Agent advanced class is for Operatives who want to focus upon piercing enemy defenses, and attacking a foe's Life pool directly.

The Deadeye advanced class is for Operatives who like to keep well out of melee range, using his high dexterity score and Quick-Snipe to wear away at enemies from long range whenever possible.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+5	+1	+0	+1	+0	+10/10
2	+6	+2	+0	+2	+0	+10/20
3	+7	+2	+1	+3	+0	+10/30

Called Shot
Requirements: Operative – Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Before a single attack roll against a single target. (Not for attack rolls against multiple targets.)
Combat: If you hit you automatically deal a critical hit but you deal half damage before damage reduction.
Range: ∞

Agent (Operative base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+8	+3	+1	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+9	+3	+1	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+10	+4	+1	+4	+2	+15/75
7	+12	+4	+1	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+13	+5	+2	+4	+2	+20/110
9	+14	+5	+2	+5	+3	+20/130
10	+15	+6	+2	+5	+3	+20/150
11	+17	+6	+2	+6	+3	+20/170
12	+18	+6	+2	+6	+4	+25/195
13	+19	+7	+3	+6	+4	+25/220
14	+20	+7	+3	+7	+4	+25/245
15	+21	+8	+3	+7	+5	+25/270

Hit an Artery
Requirements: Agent – Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: After dealing Life damage
Combat: If you deal 2+ Life damage this turn and use Hit an Artery you also deal 1 Life damage next turn.
Range: ∞

Deadeye (Operative base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+7	+4	+1	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+8	+4	+1	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+9	+4	+1	+4	+1	+15/75
7	+11	+5	+1	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+12	+5	+2	+4	+2	+20/110
9	+13	+5	+2	+4	+2	+20/130
10	+14	+6	+2	+5	+3	+20/150
11	+15	+6	+2	+5	+3	+20/170
12	+16	+6	+2	+5	+3	+25/195
13	+17	+7	+3	+6	+4	+25/220
14	+18	+7	+3	+6	+4	+25/245
15	+19	+8	+3	+6	+4	+25/270

Quick-Snipe
Requirements: Deadeye – Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: Use your scope without using an Action.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+2 Vitality / +1 Grit

Cutting Deep
Requirements: Operative – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: none
Effect: Whenever you use a Talent which costs Life damage, you gain +1 on your roll. For example, if you use Hamstring after dealing 3 Life damage, normally you would reduce that damage to 1 Life point and roll 1d20+2 for Hamstring. With Cutting Deep, you would roll 1d20+3 instead.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

-2 Vitality / +3 Psyche

Jarring Pain
Requirements: Operative – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: After dealing Life damage
Range: ∞
Attack: n/a – automatic effect
Damage: Half of the Life damage dealt (rounded up) they also take as Psyche damage.
Special: No

Capstone Ability

Gory Shot
Requirements: Operative – Capstone
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: After a critical hit.
Combat: Enemies immediately take a Morale roll with a penalty equal to the total non-vitality damage dealt by the critical hit.
Range: ∞

Skirmisher (base class)

Complexity Rating: 5

Primary Stats: Brw & Agl

Secondary Stats: Any two attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

The Skirmisher class is for players who want to be able to maneuver around the battlefield with ease. Fleet of Foot combined with a high Agility score can make a Skirmisher hard to pin down, especially combined with cunning use of range increments and cover. In addition, the Skirmisher has a solid pool for every resource category.

In some ways, excluding their maneuverability, the Skirmisher suffers from being a jack-of-all-trades, but master of none. In nearly every category, some other class does it better, though each of those have weaknesses which the Skirmisher doesn't.

The Dervish advanced class is for Skirmishers want to be whirling engines of destruction, attacking multiple targets within range.

The Swashbuckler advanced class is for Skirmishers who want to focus upon their maneuverability within melee range of their foes and punish those who try to attack their improved passive defenses.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+8	+1	+0	+1	+0	+10/10
2	+10	+2	+0	+1	+0	+10/20
3	+11	+2	+1	+2	+1	+10/30

Fleet of Foot
Requirements: Skirmisher – Signature Talent
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Start of Movement Phase
Combat: Add +1 to your movement in the movement phase, and count as taking cover in all directions against ranged attacks. This does not apply against explosions. You may also Dodge Back from melee attacks without giving up your Action.
Special: Unlike normally taking cover, Fleet of Foot can combine with Running

Dervish (Skirmisher base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+12	+3	+1	+2	+1	+15/45
5	+13	+3	+1	+2	+1	+15/60
6	+14	+4	+1	+3	+2	+15/75
7	+15	+4	+1	+3	+2	+15/90
8	+16	+5	+1	+3	+2	+20/110
9	+17	+6	+1	+4	+3	+20/130
10	+18	+7	+2	+4	+3	+20/150
11	+19	+7	+2	+4	+3	+20/170
12	+20	+8	+2	+4	+4	+25/195
13	+21	+9	+2	+4	+4	+25/220
14	+22	+9	+2	+5	+4	+25/245
15	+23	+10	+2	+5	+5	+25/270

Whirling Flurry
Requirements: Dervish – Signature Talent / You must have a high enough Brawn to wield both weapons combined and you do not qualify for Dual Wielding in a turn in which you use Whirling Flurry.
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: You may attack two different foes with a different one-handed weapon for each foe. In melee you must designate a primary weapon before rolling

which becomes your melee defense. All range penalties are doubled. If both weapons are identical you may choose to roll once for the attack/damage and apply the roll to both targets.

Swashbuckler (Skirmisher base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+14	+3	+1	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+15	+3	+1	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+16	+4	+1	+3	+2	+15/75
7	+17	+4	+1	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+18	+5	+1	+4	+3	+20/110
9	+19	+5	+1	+4	+3	+20/130
10	+20	+6	+2	+4	+3	+20/150
11	+22	+6	+2	+5	+4	+20/170
12	+23	+7	+2	+5	+4	+25/195
13	+24	+7	+2	+5	+4	+25/220
14	+25	+8	+2	+5	+5	+25/245
15	+26	+8	+2	+6	+5	+25/270

Riposte
Requirements: Swashbuckler – Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: After the Melee Phase
Combat: After an enemy misses you in melee when you dodge
Range: melee
Attack: +2d8+Agl vs Dodge Defense
Damage: Equal to any weapon which the Swashbuckler is currently wielding one-handed.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+1 Life / +1 Grit

Dodging with Flair
Requirements: Skirmisher – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: After an enemy missed you in melee.
Effect: You may treat the missed attack as if you had used Dodge Back, moving back one square from your foe.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

+3 Vitality

Always Ready
Requirements: Skirmisher – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: +3 Grit
Used: Any
Effect: You may activate Fleet of Foot at any time including as a reaction instead of just in the Movement Phase.
Note: While you can use Fleet of Foot in reaction to an attack, you still cannot activate Fleet of Foot after an attack against you has been rolled.

Capstone Ability

Speedster
Requirements: Skirmisher – Capstone
Cost: none
Effect: The Skirmisher gets a permanent +1 to base movement and +2 to Run speed.

Trickster (base class)

Complexity Rating: 7

Primary Stats: Agl & Shp

Secondary Stats: Any two attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

The Trickster class is for players who think the idea of a 'fair fight' is a foolish one. Tricksters excel at harassing their foes and slowly whittling away at their defenses. Distraction is especially effective when both the Trickster and their allies are ganging up against the same target.

The Trickster class has some trouble when they're forced into a straight fight. They have a low Vitality score and can have trouble when pinned down in melee against a more powerful foe, especially since they can generally only use their Signature Talent in melee after already hitting their foe.

The Cutthroat advanced class is for Tricksters who want to deal more damage themselves once they've distracted their foe. In addition, Cutthroats have a solid Grit pool for other Talents.

The Scoundrel advanced class is for Tricksters who enjoy using Distraction and want to lower their foes' rolls even more, allowing the Scoundrel and her crew to take them down with ease.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+5	+1	+1	+1	+0	+10/10
2	+6	+2	+2	+2	+0	+10/20
3	+7	+3	+3	+3	+1	+10/30

Distraction
You fight not only with skill, but with a flair which throws off your foes.
Requirements: Trickster – Signature Talent
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: After rolling damage
Combat: After dealing damage to their opponent's Vitality, the Trickster may attempt to distract them.
Attack: +1d10+Shp vs MD
Damage: The target has a -5 penalty to all defenses and rolls the following turn.

Cutthroat (Trickster base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+10	+4	+3	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+11	+4	+3	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+12	+5	+4	+3	+2	+15/75
7	+13	+5	+5	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+14	+5	+5	+4	+2	+20/110
9	+15	+6	+6	+4	+3	+20/130
10	+16	+7	+7	+4	+3	+20/150
11	+17	+7	+7	+4	+3	+20/170
12	+18	+8	+7	+4	+4	+25/195
13	+19	+9	+8	+5	+4	+25/220
14	+21	+9	+8	+5	+4	+25/245
15	+22	+10	+9	+5	+5	+25/270

Look Over There!
Requirements: Cutthroat – Signature Talent
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: When rolling an attack roll
Range: ∞
Combat: When attacking a target who is distracted, any hit is a Critical Hit.

Scoundrel (Trickster base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+7	+3	+4	+3	+1	+15/45
5	+8	+3	+6	+3	+1	+15/60
6	+9	+4	+5	+4	+2	+15/75
7	+10	+4	+6	+4	+2	+15/90
8	+11	+5	+7	+4	+2	+20/110
9	+12	+5	+8	+4	+3	+20/130
10	+13	+6	+7	+5	+3	+20/150
11	+14	+6	+9	+5	+3	+20/170
12	+15	+7	+10	+5	+4	+25/195
13	+16	+7	+10	+5	+4	+25/220
14	+17	+8	+12	+6	+4	+25/245
15	+18	+8	+13	+6	+5	+25/270

Pressure
Requirements: Scoundrel – Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: After rolling damage
Combat: After attacking an opponent which you successfully used Distraction or Pressure on the previous turn, you may use Pressure on them.
Range: ∞
Attack: +1d6+Shp vs MD
Damage: The target takes a -5 to all rolls the following turn.
Note: You can use Pressure even on a miss. Pressure stacks with Distraction.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+2 Vitality / +2 Grit

From the Shadows
Requirements: Trickster – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: When your foe is unaware of your presence.
Range: 20 meters (10 squares)
Effect: Any damage you do is automatically a critical hit.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

+4 Psyche / -1 Damage Reduction from Mettle

Hidden Weapon
Requirements: Trickster – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Any
Effect: When you attack with a non-light weapon which you drew this turn your foe may not add their Agility to their Dodge Defense against your attacks this turn.

Capstone Ability

Magic Trick
Requirements: Trickster – Capstone
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: When behind cover.
Effect: All movement this turn goes unseen. Anyone targeting you instead targets where you were at the start of the turn. You are unnoticed until either the next turn or you make an attack roll.

Warrior (base class)

Complexity Rating: 4

Primary Stats: Brw & Dex

Secondary Stats: Any two attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

The Warrior class is for players who want to have an answer to every problem and be able to use their abilities when they'll come into their own. The Warrior has a lot of Talents, allowing them to pick Talents which are situational and don't come up as often. In addition, Adrenaline Surge and several other Talents allow a Warrior to only use Grit on them when he's sure it'll be useful.

While the Warrior can use Grit efficiently, he has to because he doesn't have as much as many other classes. In addition, while the Warrior excels in direct confrontations, his middling Vitality means that he needs to end them quickly.

The Champion advanced class is for Warriors who find that Adrenaline Surge doesn't give them enough of a boost. It's especially beneficial for Warriors who focus upon melee. The Champion also benefits from picking more specialized Talents since they have such a large pool of them.

The Soldier advanced class is for Warriors who want to be a bit more durable and focus upon the middling cost Talents, using their Grit pool as efficiently as possible so that they always have some left when they need it most.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+6	+1	+0	+2	+0	+10/10
2	+8	+2	+0	+3	+0	+10/20
3	+9	+3	+0	+4	+1	+10/30

Adrenaline Surge
Requirements: Warrior - Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: End of Melee or Ranged Phase.
Combat: After rolling an attack roll and seeing the results, the Warrior may add an additional +1 to his roll.

Champion (Warrior base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+11	+4	+0	+4	+1	+15/45
5	+13	+5	+0	+5	+1	+15/60
6	+14	+6	+0	+5	+2	+15/75
7	+15	+7	+1	+5	+2	+15/90
8	+16	+8	+1	+5	+2	+20/110
9	+17	+9	+1	+6	+3	+20/130
10	+18	+9	+2	+6	+3	+20/150
11	+19	+10	+2	+7	+3	+20/170
12	+20	+11	+2	+7	+4	+25/195
13	+21	+11	+3	+8	+4	+25/220
14	+22	+12	+3	+8	+4	+25/245
15	+23	+12	+3	+9	+5	+25/270

Adrenaline Flood
Requirements: Champion - Signature Talent
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: End of Melee or Ranged Phase.
Combat: After rolling an attack roll and seeing the results, the Warrior may add an additional +1 to his roll.
Note: Adrenaline Flood can stack with Adrenaline Surge.

Soldier (Warrior base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+9	+3	+0	+4	+2	+15/45
5	+10	+4	+0	+5	+2	+15/60
6	+11	+4	+0	+5	+3	+15/75
7	+12	+5	+1	+5	+3	+15/90
8	+13	+5	+1	+5	+3	+20/110
9	+14	+6	+1	+5	+4	+20/130
10	+15	+7	+2	+6	+4	+20/150
11	+16	+7	+2	+6	+4	+20/170
12	+17	+8	+2	+6	+5	+25/195
13	+18	+9	+3	+6	+5	+25/220
14	+19	+9	+3	+7	+5	+25/245
15	+20	+10	+3	+7	+6	+25/270

Endurance
Requirements: Soldier - Signature Talent
Cost: none
Used: When you activate a Talent which costs at least two Grit.
Effect: Regain one point of Grit.
Note: Like all other Talents, Endurance can only be used once each turn.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+3 Grit

Clean Blow
Requirements: Warrior – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: End of Melee or Ranged Phase.
Combat: After rolling an attack roll and seeing the results, the Warrior may use Clean Blow to get a critical hit by only rolling 8+ the target's defense.
Normal: You need to roll 10+ the target's defense to get a critical hit.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

-2 Vitality / +1 Psyche

Near Miss
Requirements: Warrior – Signature Specialization Talent
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: End of Melee or Ranged Phase.
Combat: After being critically hit, apply a -5 penalty to the attack roll which is the critical hit. If it is no longer a critical hit you are still hit normally.

Capstone Ability

Heavy Weapon
Requirements: Warrior – Capstone
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: Before rolling attack roll(s).
Combat: Gain a bonus to all damage rolls this turn equal to the weapon's Brawn requirement.

Chapter 3: Talents

As your character is created and level up, they will gain Talents which aren't a part of their class specifically.

General Talents

The general talents (not signature or psychic) are listed in the below four tables for ease of perusal. You may notice that some Talents are in two different categories due to straddling the line between the categories. The four categories are Buffing (primarily yourself), Melee, Ranged, and Utility.

Buffing
Armed to the Teeth
Boost
Iron Jaw
Keep Your Enemies Closer
Relentless
Resolve
Rush
Sense of Direction
Sprint
Stay Behind Me
Toughness
Vicious

Melee
Ambidextrous
Arm's Reach
Bloody Finish
Boxer's Guard
Focused Boost
Fight Me!
Gang-up
Keep Your Enemies Closer
Ki Punch
Knock-Back
Knock Off-Balance
Point Blank Shot
Probing Attack
Set Your Feet
Skirmish
Small but Deadly
Trading Blows
Unbreakable Guard
Whirlwind Strike

Ranged
All Lined Up
Ambidextrous
Blazing From the Hip
Concentrated Firepower
Covering Fire
Double-Tap
Halting Shot
I See You!
Pinpoint Shot
Quick Reload
Run & Gun
Sharpshooting
Spray & Pray
Stand and Shoot
Steady Hip Shot

Utility
Blast Through
Dive For Cover
Drop It
Fade to Smoke
Follow My Lead
Graze
Hamstring
Hotwire
Move Move Move!
Not Down Yet
Quick Draw
Quick Reload
Red-Eye
Shrug it Off
Slow and Steady
Stay Behind Me
Vicious
You Mean One of These?

All Lined Up
Requirements: Shp 6
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: You may also roll an attack roll against a foe who currently has cover against you from your first target. All bonuses on the first shot such as Boost apply to the second attack.
Special: This may also be used if both targets are in the same square.

Ambidextrous
Requirements: Agl 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Any
Combat: If you have a weapon in each hand you may choose to switch from melee to ranged this turn or vice versa. You may always choose to make an unarmed attack even if your hands are full.

Armed to the Teeth
Requirements: Agl 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: You may treat one weapon which you are carrying as an Equipped Weapon for the next minute.
Special: Armed to the Teeth can apply to a bulky weapon, but not a very bulky weapon.

Arm's Reach
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Start of Melee Phase.
Combat: When you are in melee with more than one opponent you gain a bonus on melee defense (not passive defenses) equal to the attack roll penalty for being in melee with multiple foes. Maximum bonus equal to your Agility.

Blast Through
Requirements: Demolitions Skill (3)
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: When Blasting Open a Wall/Door etc.
Combat: Make a Demolitions check with a TN equal to the Morale of foes within 10m of the blast. If you pass the check you may act in a surprise round before any of the affected foes.

Blazing From the Hip
Requirements: Steady Hip Shot / Brw 5
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: Cuts first Ranged Increment penalty in half for all ranged attacks you roll this turn. This does not combine with Aim.

Bloody Finish
Requirements: Presence: Intimidation Rank 2+
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Melee Phase
Combat: If you use Bloody Finish and then take down a foe in melee, any Morale checks any foes make this turn have an increased TN equal the Life or Psyche damage done to the target. For example, if the target is taken down by a hit which did 7 points of Life damage, their side would add +7 to the TN of their Morale check. This number cannot exceed the total Life points the target had.
Warrior: A Warrior may choose to use Bloody Finish after they have already taken down a foe in melee but only gains half the bonus to the TN – rounded up.

Boost
Requirements: None
Cost: 1 or 2 Grit
Used: Before any roll.
Effect: Add +1 to the roll for each point of Grit spent on Boost.
Special: Out of Combat using Boost is always spent from Grit Core and not from Grit Buffer.

Boxer's Guard
Requirements: Brw 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Post Melee Phase
Combat: If you use Boxer's Guard after being hit in melee combat you can prevent one foe from disengaging.

Concentrated Firepower

Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: When using a weapon's Focused Fire you may roll four attacks instead of three.
Special: When using Concentrated Firepower the Brawn requirement of your weapon increases by two points.
Warrior: A Warrior may use Concentrated Firepower at the beginning of the Ranged Phase.

Covering Fire
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When you deal damage with a ranged weapon this turn your target(s) take a -3 on all ranged attacks for the rest of this turn.
Warrior: A Warrior may choose to use Covering Fire after rolling to hit but before rolling for damage.

Dive For Cover
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Run Phase
Combat: You may spend one square of movement in the Run Phase to count as taking cover. You still need to be adjacent to cover.
Normal: You do not count as taking cover in a turn where you Run.

Double-Tap
Requirements: Using a firearm which is not bulky or very bulky.
Cost: 1/2 Grit (Light/Normal)
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When you attack with a firearm, you may fire two shots as if the weapon had auto-fire. All normal disadvantages of auto-fire apply.
Special: Using Double-Tap with a light weapon only costs 1 Grit instead of the usual two.

Drop It!
Requirements: Shp 4
Cost: ½ Life Damage
Used: After dealing Life damage
Combat: After dealing the target at least one point of Life damage, you may sacrifice ½ of the Life damage (rounded up) to attempt to use Drop It! on them.
Range: ∞
Attack: +1d12+Life Damage Used vs DD
Damage: The target takes 1 Life point and they drop whatever they were holding in one of their hands.
Special: You may make them drop a weapon wielded in both hands by taking a -2 penalty to your roll.

Fade to Smoke
Requirements: Agl 4 / Shp 4
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: When you are in concealment and use your movement phase to activate Fade to Smoke (and nothing else in the movement phase), you count as being Unseen this turn.
Out of Combat: If you use Fade to Smoke when making a Stealth check you may count any concealment as full concealment for your Stealth bonus.
Trickster: You may use Fade to Smoke without using your movement phase.

Fight Me!
Requirements: Will 5
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Start of the Melee Phase

Range: melee
Combat: Push an attacking foe to attack you and try to deal damage to you. (They may also attack and/or deal damage to other targets if possible.) If they don't, they take a -4 to all rolls this turn.

Focused Boost
Requirements: Boost
Cost: None
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When using an auto-fire weapon for Focused Fire you may use Boost once and apply it to each of the attacks you roll.
Special: When using Focused Boost the Brawn requirement of your weapon increases by two points.

Follow My Lead
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: As you make a skill check, one ally can immediately attempt the same check using your skill rank with a -1 penalty.
Commander: The ally making the same check uses your full skill rank with no penalty.

Gang-up
Requirements: n/a
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Combat Phase
Range: Melee
Combat: If you use Gang-up in melee one opponent of your choice takes twice the normal penalty for fighting multiple opponents up to a maximum additional penalty of ½ your Sharpness.
Special: You may not use Gang-up against a target which is more than one scale larger than you are.
Note: Gang-up has no effect if your target is not in melee range of at least two threatening foes since they would be taking no penalty.

Graze
Requirements: n/a
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: After missing on an attack roll by less than 5.
Combat: Deal damage equal to the highest single damage dice roll. Only modifier added is Mettle.

Halting Shot
Requirements: Sharpness 5
Cost: ½ Life Damage
Used: After dealing Life damage in Ranged Phase
Combat: After dealing the target at least one point of Life damage, you may sacrifice ½ of the Life damage (rounded up) to attempt to use Halting Shot.
Range: Any
Attack: +1d12+Life Damage Used vs Mental Defense
Damage: The target takes 1 Life point and the target can't move next turn.
Special: No effect against vehicles, but does affect mecha.

Hamstring
Requirements: Dex 4 / Brw 5
Cost: ½ Life Damage
Used: After dealing Life damage
Combat: After dealing the target at least one point of Life damage, you may sacrifice ½ of the Life damage (rounded up) to attempt to Hamstring them.
Range: melee
Attack: +1d12+Life Damage Used vs DD
Damage: The target takes 1 Life point and all terrain counts as difficult terrain until they receive first-aid (TN 12). They cannot walk over difficult terrain.
Special: No effect against vehicles.

Hotwire
Requirements: Repair Rank 2+
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: You may make a Repair check in place of a Hacking check to do something simple such as opening a door or disabling a turret. This takes 6 seconds (2 rounds in combat). Hotwire cannot be used to access a computer system to gain information etc.

I See You!
Requirements: Shp 4
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase

Combat: Cuts all cover penalties in half for one ranged attack roll. This does not combine with Aim.

Iron Jaw
Requirements: Brw 5 & Sta 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: When you drop to 0 Life Points.
Combat: You ignore the -5 penalty to all rolls for the current turn. You may use Iron Jaw again at the beginning of the next round, but once you go a round without paying the 1 Grit it may not be reused.

Keep Your Enemies Closer
Requirements: None
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: Any foe attacking you at range while you are in melee takes an additional -6 penalty to hit you.

Ki Punch
Requirements: Wil 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Start of the Melee Phase.
Combat: You may treat your unarmed strike as a club this round.

Knock-Back
Requirements: Brw 7
Cost: 3 Grit
Used: At the end of the Melee Phase
Combat: After hitting a foe with a melee weapon, you may attempt to use Knock-Back against them.
Range: melee
Attack: +1d10+Brawn vs Body Defense
Damage: Target is Pushed Back a # of squares equal to 1/4 of your Brawn (rounded down).
Special: Scaling affects the # of squares pushed back in the same proportion as damage.

Knock Off-Balance
Requirements: Will 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: End of the Melee Phase
Combat: After missing an enemy, you can attempt to use Knock Off-Balance.
Range: melee
Attack: +1d12+Bwn vs MD
Damage: The target stumbles back and takes a -4 to passive defense and all rolls until the end of the current turn.

Move Move Move!
Requirements: Sharpness 5
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Initiative Phase
Use: Add +4 to the Initiative Roll this turn. This +4 doesn't affect Morale Tests.
NPC Use: -4 to the Initiative Roll.

Not Down Yet
Requirements: Iron Jaw
Cost: 2 Grit & 5 Vitality
Used: When you drop to 0 Life Points.
Combat: You gain 1 Life Point.

Pinpoint Shot
Requirements: Use only with a firearm without autofire which deals damage of your character's current damage scale.
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When you attack with a firearm, you may take a -5 penalty to increase the first damage dealt by your Sharpness score.

Point Blank Shot
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Melee Phase
Combat: When you fire a firearm in melee with one hand you may add your Agility to your attack roll(s), and it counts as a melee weapon this turn for your melee threat range this round.

Probing Attack
Requirements: Agl 5 / Unbreakable Guard
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Start of Melee Phase
Combat: Add 1d6 to your attack roll in the Melee Phase. If you hit you deal ½ your normal damage.

Quick Draw
Requirements: Agl 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: May draw a non-bulky equipped weapon without using your movement phase.
Skirmisher: May draw two equipped weapons with Quick Draw.
Trickster: May draw any single equipped weapon or other item with Quick Draw.
Note: Quick Draw doesn't apply to reloading

Quick Reload
Requirements: Dex 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: May reload a weapon you are wielding without using your movement phase.

Red-Eye
Requirements: Dex 4 / Shp 4
Cost: Life Damage
Used: After dealing Life damage
Combat: After dealing the target at least one point of Life damage, you may sacrifice ½ of the Life damage (rounded up) to attempt Red-Eye.
Attack: +1d12+Life Damage Used vs DD
Damage: The target takes 1 Life point damage and a -4 penalty to all rolls until they spend an Action to remove Red-Eye.
Special: No effect against vehicles.

Relentless
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Beginning of Turn
Effect: You do not take a -5 penalty to rolling this turn when at 0 Life or Psyche.

Resolve
Requirements: Wil 5
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: You may add +6 to your Mental Defense for one round.

Run & Gun
Requirements: Agl 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When you fire a single round at range, you may also move during the ranged combat phase. The distance moved is limited by your normal movement speed.

Rush
Requirements: None
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Effect: Add +1 to your movement in the movement phase. You take a -2 penalty on all rolls this turn.

Sense of Direction
Requirements: Shp 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Effect: When you are blinded you may act as if you rolled a 6 to ignore difficult terrain and you still add your Agility score to your DD this turn.

Set Your Feet
Requirements: Brw 5
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Beginning of Melee Phase
Combat: If you didn't move this turn, gain +5 damage to your melee attack.

Sharpshooting
Requirements: Shp 5
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When using a scope, cut all range penalties in half for your next shot before applying your scope's range penalty reduction.

Shrug it Off
Requirements: Brawn 5
Cost: X Grit
Use: When you take Life damage you may spend X Grit to take X Vitality damage instead of Life damage. You must still take a minimum of 1 Life damage.

Skirmish
Requirements: Agl 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Melee Phase
Combat: May attack one foe who chooses to attack you in melee after you go through their melee zone.
Skirmisher: The Skirmisher's melee attack becomes their defense score against all foes for the remainder of this turn if higher than their passive defense.
Note: Skirmish may be used even when using the Run action.

Slow and Steady
Requirements: Willpower 5
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Initiative Phase
Use: Subtract -4 to the Initiative Roll this turn. The -4 doesn't affect Morale Tests.
NPC Use: +4 to the Initiative Roll.

Small but Deadly
Requirements: Agl 5 / Shp 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Melee Phase
Combat: Your opponent only gets 1/4 of the normal bonus for engaging a smaller scale opponent in melee. (One point per scale difference instead of four.)

Spray & Pray
Requirements: Shp 5 / Auto-fire weapon
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: When you Hug Cover, you may still use your Action to Auto-fire in the Ranged Phase at a -10 penalty. This penalty cannot be reduced via Aiming.

Sprint
Requirements: +4 bonus on Athletics checks
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Action Phase
Effect: When you use the Run Action you may move +2 squares (4m)

Stand and Shoot
Requirements: Wil 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: If you didn't start the turn in melee but are now in melee, you may take a single Snap Shot at someone now in melee with you. When you use Stand and Shoot, you cannot take any Action in the melee phase including Dodge Back.

Stay Behind Me
Requirements: Brw 6 / Wielding a shield
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: You spend your move action to use your shield as cover, and allies in a square directly behind you (relative to foe) count as taking cover in addition to any allies in your square(s).
Note: All foes are aware of this cover bonus.

Steady Hip Shot
Requirements: Brw 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Ranged Phase
Combat: Cuts first Ranged Increment penalty in half for one ranged attack. This does not combine with Aim.

Toughness
Requirements: Brw 4
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: You may add +4 to your Body Defense score for one round.

Trading Blows
Requirements: Brw 6
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Start of Melee Phase.
Combat: Add +4 to your Attack roll, but your foe(s) will roll against your passive defenses.
Special: To get a critical hit, the foe(s) which you are engaging must beat your attack roll by 10+, including the +4 bonus from Trading Blows.

Unbreakable Guard

Requirements: Dex 5
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Start of Melee Phase.
Combat: Add 2d6 in addition to the Space Dog's attack roll for defense in the Melee Phase, but they make no attack.
Trickster: The Trickster may use Distraction if they roll higher than a melee opponent they indicated before rolling.

Vicious
Requirements: Shp 5
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Before rolling damage dice.
Combat: You may re-roll one damage die.
Warrior: A Warrior may activate Vicious after the damage dice have been rolled.
Note: You may not re-roll a die which has already been re-rolled. You must keep the re-roll even if the result is lower than the die was before the re-roll.

Whirlwind Strike
Requirements: Agl 4
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: Start of Melee Phase.
Combat: When you are in melee with more than one opponent and using a melee weapon, you may activate Whirlwind Strike before rolling their attack roll. You then choose a number of opponents up to your Agility score. If your attack roll is equal or greater than all of your chosen foes' attack rolls then you may deal damage to all of them, but if any of them beat your attack roll then you deal no damage to any of them.
Warrior: A Warrior may activate Whirlwind Strike after the attacks are rolled.

You Mean One of These?
Requirements: Shp 5
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Movement Phase
Combat/Non-Combat: The Space Dog may draw out any item up to $1,000 in value and pay for it retroactively out of their savings, in effect making it as if they had already purchased it. This only works if the Space Dog has sufficient savings to pay for it and had the opportunity to have it. For example, this does not work if they have been searched to have things which they couldn't have, such as a firearm after having gone through a metal detector, or for something they couldn't have easily purchased like the keycard to a secure area.
Commander: When a Commander uses this ability, he may apply it to himself and a number of his allies equal to his Willpower. The items must be mechanically identical, and the value of all items drawn this way combined may not exceed $1,000.

Psychic Talents

These Talents are only available to the two psychic classes; Guardian and True Psychic, and the Guardian's selection is limited. Please see Chapter XXXX for details about how to use psychic talents.

Afterimage
Pushing out a raw force of psyche out of their body while moving their body quickly, a psychic leaves a sort of image of themselves behind themselves as they move, making it harder for their opponents to target them.
Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Movement Phase
Combat: In melee combat, for one round it is treated as if there are 2 of you engaging one target. If the target attacks you and hits, they must randomize if they deal damage to you or hit your afterimage, which has to effect.
Against ranged attacks, Afterimage increases your DD by your Sharpness score.

Awareness
You reach out through your sixth senses so that you are hyperaware out to your surroundings, letting you control the flow of combat.
Requirements: none
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Initiative Phase
Use: Your side may roll a bonus 1d6 for the Initiative roll this turn and choose to have it replace one of the dice for initiative. The bonus 1d6 doesn't affect Morale Tests.

Battle-cry!
You let out a roar of challenge, lacing your voice with psychic energy and shaking your foes to their very marrow.
Requirements: Mental Breach Talent Tree
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Action
Combat: Attack the sanity of a number of foes equal to your Sharpness with a great roar.
Range: -12 per 5
Attack: +2d8+Wil vs MD
Damage: -4 penalty on all rolls until they spend an Action to clear their head

Blindness
Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree
one free hand
Cost: 3 Psyche / 1 Charge + 1 Psyche per additional round
Used: Movement Phase
Range: -8 per 5
Recurring Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+2d12 vs MD
Damage: Willpower Psyche damage.
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Blindness they are Blinded until the end of the turn.

Blinding Flash
Despite the name, Blinding Flash doesn't actually create any real light. Instead, it causes the target to be blinded by a flash of whiteness across their field of vision which exists only within their mind.
Requirements: Projection Talent Tree
/ one free hand
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Melee Phase – Like an Action, Blinding Flash needs to be chosen during the Movement Phase.
Combat: Just before your normal turn in the Melee Phase the character may use Blinding Flash in melee range.
Fast attack: Sharpness+2d12 vs MD – melee range only – always targets passive.
Damage: 1 Psyche damage.
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Blinding Flash they are Blinded this turn.
Resistance: The target gains +5 to their MD against Blinding Flash for every other time you

attempted Blinding Flash against them during the same day.

Blood Siphon
After cutting your enemy, you create a vacuum around your foe to pull out their fluids.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / One hand
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: After dealing Life damage
Combat: After dealing the target at least one point of Life damage with a Psychic Talent, you may attempt Blood Siphon.
Attack: +1d10+Sharpness+Willpower vs DD
Special: Blood Siphon ignores all Damage Reduction and is always a Critical Hit.
Range: -10 per 5
Damage: 1d6 Life Points
Special: No effect against vehicles.

Blur
As part of charging up, a small amount of psyche is allowed to flow out of the psychic and into physical space.
Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Action
Effect: You charge up this turn. You also gain concealment and reduce all damage taken (mental or physical) by 2 points before DR or damage scaling.

Charging Blitz
Requirements: Guardian Talent Tree
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Action
Combat: You Run with +1 to your movement speed.
Special: You gain +1 charge as if you had spent the turn charging-up.

Choke
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / one free hand / 1 charge
Cost: 2 Psyche / 1 Psyche each turn
Used: Action / Recurring
Range: -8 per 5
Attack: Sharpness+Willpower+1d12 vs BD
Damage: Willpower (E) / (ignores armor) / target is stunned until the end of the current turn

Crush
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / two free hands / 1 charge
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Action
Range: -8 per 5
Attack: Sharpness+Willpower+2d6 vs BD
Damage: 2d10+Willpower (E) / (ignores armor)

Double Charge
Requirements: True Psychic
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Action.
Effect: You charge 2 points at once. In all other ways it is the same as if you had spent 2 rounds charging such as counting towards 2 points of the Talent's cost.

Enemies and Friends
Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / one free hand / 1 charge
Cost: 4 Psyche
Used: Action
Targets: One primary target and their allies within 2 squares (4m)
Range: -6 per 5 – use the range to primary target for all foes
Attack: Sharpness+2d12 vs MD / -5 penalty on secondary targets
Damage: Willpower Psyche damage
Psyche Add: If a foe takes any psyche damage, they see their allies as enemies and their enemies as allies. They need to act appropriately.
Special: Ignore all cover/concealment
Break Free: Any target affected by the Psyche Add may choose to take 2x damage and -5 penalty to all rolls for the turn instead.

Exploding Wire
You push telekinetically outwards in all directions on the steel cable, pushing it tighter and tighter until it explodes in all directions in a spray of razor sharp steel.

Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / One Free Hand / A 0.5kg (minimum) length of steel cable secured tightly around your torso.
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Action
Targets: All targets within line of sight
Range: -12 per 5
Attack: +1d20+Sharpness+Willpower vs DD
Damage: 3d8+2xWillpower
Note: Some of your targets may give cover to other targets.
Special: DR is doubled against Exploding Wire.

Fear
Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / one free hand / 1 charge
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Action – Movement Phase
Targets: One
Range: -8 per 5
Attack: Sharpness+3d10 vs MD
Damage: Willpower Psyche damage
Psyche Add: If a foe takes any psyche damage, they lose out on using any Action they may have planned this turn and instead Run away from you this turn.
Special: The enemy side may not use the target's Break TN for the next turn's Break Test.

Flurry of Blades
You hurl a handful of blades at your foe, propelling them forward not only with muscle, but with a small blast of telekinetic force.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / A handful of shuriken, needles, knives, or shards of sharpened metal.
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Action
Targets: All targets in a 2x2 area.
Range: -6 per 5
Attack: +2d8+Willpower vs DD
Damage: 1d8+Willpower+1/2 Brawn (rounded down)
Note: Some of your targets may give cover to other targets.

Focused Mind
Requirements: Shp 5
Cost: 1 Grit / +1 Charge
Used: Raw Talent Add-on
Use: Add your Sharpness score to the attack roll vs one foe.

Force Cage
You have mastered psychic force energies, allowing you to shape them to create them in a variety of forms.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / two free hands / 1 charge
Cost: 2 Psyche for the first 5 rounds + 1 Psyche per additional 5 rounds
Used: Action / Recurring Action
Attack: ½ Sharpness+Willpower+1d10 vs BD
Use: This works exactly like Force Dome except instead of a solid dome, it creates a lattice cage of force, a small cage can encompass a single square, a medium dome can encompass a 2x2 square area, while a large dome can encompass a 3x3 area. Ranged attacks can be fired out of the cage at no penalty but those within the cage gain cover against ranged attacks and can even count as taking cover if adjacent.

Force Dome
You have mastered psychic force energies, allowing you to shape them to create them in a variety of forms.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / two free hands / 1 charge
Cost: 3 Psyche for the first 5 rounds + 1 Psyche per additional 5 rounds
Used: Action / Recurring Action
Range: -8 per 5
Attack: ½ Sharpness+Willpower+1d10 vs DD
Use: You may use Force Dome to make one of three size force forms in any shape next to you. Either (small) up to 5 sq meters, (medium) up to 20 sq meters, or (large) up to 60 sq meters. Force Dome can be used to make any shape, and it may be used to make many useful tools such as a ladder made of force. The most common form is a

dome which is put over yourself, allies, or enemies.
When creating a dome, a medium dome can encompass a single square while a large dome can encompass a 2x2 square area. When attempting to place it over an enemy you must make the attack roll as listed above. If you miss they may choose to move to the nearest space outside of the dome.
The dome is see-through, but it blocks both mundane and psychicic attacks. It can be damaged, and against psychicic attacks it is treated as though they were attacking you except that your MD is doubled. Against physical attacks, the Force Dome's DD is equal to a mundane wall of its size while its BD is equal to your MD. No attacks may move the Force Dome. The dome has an absorption value equal to your Willpower. The damage scale depends upon the size of the wall as your mental energy is spread out more over a larger dome.
Small = tank scale
Medium = mecha scale
Large = exo scale
Any damage dealt to the wall by a physical attack is treated as a critical hit against your Psyche if you want to maintain it. If you spend 1 Grit you can cut your connection and the Force Wall dissipates entirely.
For every 5 squares (10m) away from the Force Dome you get, it costs one additional Psyche each round on your Recurring Action. If you do not use your Recurring Action, the Force Wall goes down one damage scale each turn; the turn after it is already human scale it dissipates.

Special: You may not use your hands for any other Talents while Force Dome is active.

Force Shield
Stretching their hand out, the psychic creates a hard sheet of energy which they use it to deflect both physical and mental attacks.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / one free hand
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Action
Attack: Sharpness+Willpower+2d8
The psychic using Force Shield may attack against any physical or mental attack directed at them, but they deal no damage if they win their roll. For each size larger than Human Scale the attack's damage is, the psychic takes a -4 penalty on their roll. The first attack which you attempt to block each turn uses the normal roll. Each additional block attempt is at a cumulative -1 penalty.
Special: Force Shield may be used while holding a Charge without losing it.

Force Wall
You create a thin shimmering plane of psychic energy, blocking bullets, blades, and fangs.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / two free hands / 1 charge
Cost: 2 Psyche for the first 5 rounds + 1 Psyche per additional 5 rounds
Used: Action / Recurring Action

Use: You may use Force Wall to make one of three size walls (flat planes – could be floor/ceiling etc. instead) next to you. Either (small) up to 5 sq meters (ex. 2.5x2), (medium) up to 20 sq meters (ex. 4x5), or (large) up to 60 sq meters (ex. 10x6). The wall is see-through and nearly paper thin, but it blocks both mundane and psychic attacks. It can be damaged, and against psychic attacks it is treated as though they were attacking you except that your MD is doubled. Against physical attacks, the Force Wall's DD is equal to a mundane wall of its size while its BD is equal to your MD. No attacks may move the Force Wall. The wall has an absorption value equal to your Willpower. The damage scale depends upon the size of the wall as your mental energy is spread out more over a larger wall.
Small = tank scale
Medium = mecha scale
Large = exo scale
Any damage dealt to the wall by a physical attack is treated as a critical hit against your Psyche if you want to maintain it. If you spend 1 Grit after it is hit you take no damage and cut your connection, and the Force Wall dissipates entirely.
For every 5 squares (10m) away from the Force Wall you get, it costs one additional Psyche each round on your Recurring Action. If you do not use your Recurring Action, the Force Wall goes down one damage scale each turn; the turn after it is already human scale it dissipates.

Special: You may not use your hands for any other Talents while Force Wall is active.

Holding Charge

Requirements: none

Cost: 1 Grit

Use: You may keep a Charge until next round even when doing an Action other than Charging-up.

Horror

Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / one free hand / 1 charge

Cost: 3 Psyche + 2 Psyche per additional round

Used: Recurring Attack

Targets: One

Range: -8 per 5

Attack: Sharpness+3d10 vs MD

Damage: 1d8+Willpower Psyche damage

Psyche Add: If a foe takes any psyche damage, they lose out on using any Action they may have planned this turn and instead Run away from you if they still have an Action to take.

Special: The enemy side may not use the target's Break TN for the next turn's Break Test.

Inner Yearning

You create a vision of beauty which draws your target to it like a moth to the flame. No two minds will see precisely the same thing, its form influenced both by the psychic using Inner Yearning, and by the mind of the target perceiving it.

Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / two free hands / 1 charge

Cost: 2 Psyche

Used: Action

Targets: One

Range: -6 per 5

Ongoing Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+2d10 vs MD

Damage: Willpower Psyche damage

Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage, instead of the target taking their next Action, you may force them to move to any square that you want up to their movement. You may not move them anywhere that is directly dangerous to themselves. (Ex: You may not force them to step over a ledge, step onto an electrified panel, or any other obviously harmful space.)

Special: Ongoing attacks ignore all cover/concealment

Linked Vision

You push a piece of your own consciousness into another's mind where it rides along behind their

eyes and ears, reporting everything back to you. It is useful on enemies and sometimes on your allies.

Requirements: Mental Breach Talen Tree

Cost: 2 Psyche / 1 Charge

Used: Action

Targets: One

Range: -5 per 5

Attack: Sharpness+3d8 vs MD

Damage: Willpower Psyche damage

Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage, you gain access to their senses for the next minute, seeing and hearing everything that they do for the next 10 minutes so long as they remain within 1km. You may use their line of sight for your other Talents, though cover and range both still apply from you.

Special: If a target is prepared for Linked Vision and does not fight it, they take only 1 psyche damage.

Mind Duel

Requirements: Mental Breach Talen Tree

Cost: 4 Psyche / 2 charge

Used: Action

Range: -6 per 5

Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+2d10 vs MD

Damage: 2d8+Willpower Psyche damage.

Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Mind Duel they lose their action if they haven't acted yet this turn unless they are already in melee. They also lose their entire next turn, unable to Move, take an Action, or use any Talents. They still keep their full passive defenses.

Mind Over Matter

Requirements: True Psychic

Cost: X Psyche

Use: After using Flesh Wound if you would have taken Life damage you instead take the same amount Psyche damage.

Mind War

Requirements: Mental Breach Talen Tree

Cost: 5 Psyche / 1 charge

Used: Action

Range: A 10sq (20m) radius around the psychic / -10 per 5

Attack: Sharpness+2d20 vs MD

Damage: 1d6+Willpower Psyche damage.

Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Mind War they lose their action if they haven't acted yet this turn unless they are in melee. They also lose their entire next turn, unable to Move, take an Action, or use any Talents. They still keep their full passive defenses.

Murderous Rage

You make your enemy go into a blind rage and attack their own ally.

Requirements: Projection Journeyman Rank / two free hands / 1 charge

Cost: 3 Psyche

Used: Action

Targets: One

Range: -6 per 5

Attack: Sharpness+4d8 vs MD

Damage: Willpower Psyche damage

Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage, instead of the target taking their next turn's Action normally, they must make an attack against one target of your choosing. They get a bonus on their attack roll equal to your Sharpness.

Nightmare

You invade your targets' minds so that they perceive a monstrosity of amorphous tooth and

claw, the precise form varying with the target's own experiences and fears. The target is paralyzed with terror, and their mind begins to fracture as it tries to tell itself that the nightmare isn't real.

Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / two free hands / 1 charge

Cost: 3 Psyche

Used: Action

Targets: A number of foes up to your Sharpness

Range: -6 per 5 (all attack rolls use the highest range penalty)

Ongoing Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+3d6 vs MD

Damage: Willpower Psyche damage

Special: If the target takes any psyche damage from Nightmare they take a -5 on all rolls this turn.

Special: Ongoing attacks ignore all cover/concealment

Nightmare's Strike

Once a target's mind believes the truth of their inner fears come to life, you cause the nightmare to strike out at the target, literally ripping their mind apart.

Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / Nightmare / one free hand

Cost: 1 Psyche

Used: Action

Committed: Unlike other Actions, Nightmare Strike's target must be chosen when the Action is chosen in the movement phase.

Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+2d10 vs DD

Special: You may only target those already hit by Nightmare this turn.

Note: Nightmare Strike is in all ways a melee attack, and may therefore be dodged etc.

Damage: 2d6+Willpower Psyche damage.

Special: Ignores all cover/concealment

Nightmare's Grasp

In their mind's eye, the victim sees their worst nightmare reach out and grab at them, its tentacles, teeth, claws, or slavering tongue to hold them in place.

Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / Nightmare / two free hands

Cost: 3 Psyche

Used: Action

Committed: Unlike other Actions, Nightmare Grasp's target must be chosen when the Action is chosen in the movement phase.

Attack: Sharpness+2d12 vs DD

Special: You may only target those already hit by Nightmare this turn.

Damage: 1d4+Willpower Psyche damage.

Special: If the target takes any psyche damage from Nightmare's Grasp then they cannot move voluntarily the rest of this turn or the next turn.

Special: Ignores all cover/concealment

Obscure

As you charge your psychic energy, excess energy radiates from body in a crackling mist of blazing energy, but only for those in a single direction.

Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree

Cost: 2 Psyche

Used: Movement Phase / Action

Combat: A square that you are in has full concealment, and up to two adjacent squares have concealment. This only affects foes in a single direction, and it does not affect those within the affected square(s).

The round you use Obscure acts as if you're Charging Up this turn without costing additional Psyche.

Guardian: Obscure only affects the Guardian himself.

Only a Shadow

You erase the sight of yourself or one of your allies from the minds of your targets. Your foes only see a vague shadow.

Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree / one free hand / 1 charge

Cost: 2 Psyche

Used: Action

Targets: A # of foes equal to Sharpness

Range: -8 per 5

Ongoing Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+3d8 vs MD

Damage: Willpower Psyche damage.

Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Only a Shadow one ally of your choice is unseen by the target(s) until the end of next turn.

Precognition

Not actually letting you see into the future, instead you give your mind a boost in order to react nearly instantaneously.
Requirements: Projection Talent Tree
Cost: 1 Psyche
Use: You do not have to choose your Action in the movement phase. Instead, just take any Action when the appropriate phase comes up.
Note: If you do not take an action when the appropriate phase comes up, you lose your chance to act in that phase.

Psy-Blast
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / one free hand
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Action
Range: A 16m (8sq) line originating at the psychic.
Attack: Sharpness+2d8 vs BD
Damage: 2d8+Willpower (E) – (ignores armor) – if Psy-Blast misses a foe they are moved to the nearest square (they may choose if equidistant) outside of the AOE. If not possible or they would rather not, they instead take damage equal to your willpower
If Psy-Blast hits a foe they are pushed back to the far edge of the blast area.

Psy-Strike
Requirements: Guardian Talent Tree / 1 charge
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Action
Range: Melee
Attack: Dexterity+Willpower+3d8 vs DD
Damage: 3d6+Willpower (M) / AP

Psy-Stun
Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree / one free hand
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Action – Movement Phase
Range: A 4m square (2x2 squares) originating form the psychic.
Attack: Willpower+2d12 vs MD - use the same roll against each target
Damage: Sharpness Psyche damage.
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Psy-Stun they lose their action this turn.
Note: Even though Psy-Stun is used in the Movement Phase, it uses up your Action.

Psychic Rip
You rip out a part of your target's mind and claim it as your own.
Requirements: Mental Breach Talen Tree
Cost: 6 Psyche / 2 charge
Used: Action
Range: -6 per 5
Attack: Sharpnes+2d12 vs MD
Damage: 1d6+Willpower Psyche damage.
Special: Regain Psyche equal to the Psyche damage dealt. If target has Durability, regain Psyche equal to 1/2 the Durability damage dealt.

Psychic Tear
Using the opening you made, you tear further at your target's mind.
Requirements: Mental Breach Talen Tree
Cost: 5 Psyche
Used: After Dealing Psyche damage to one target.
Range: -8 per 5
Attack: Sharpnes+2d12 vs MD
Damage: Willpower Psyche damage.
Special: Regain Psyche equal to the Psyche damage dealt. If target has Durability, regain Psyche equal to 1/2 the Durability damage dealt.

Readied Mind
Requirements: Shp 6
Cost: 1 Grit
Used: Action add-on
Use: If you charge-up as your Action this turn you may treat it as if you had used your Action to Hold Action.

Reflection
You mentally reach out with your mind and alter a foes' psychic flow so that their psychic energies backlash upon themselves.
Requirements: Phantom Talent Tree / Two Free Hands
Cost: 2 Psyche

Used: Action – If your chosen target does not use a psychic Talent this turn then your Action is wasted, but it only costs you 1 Psyche.
Range: -4 per 5
Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+2d8 vs MD
Damage: Double the original attack's up to a maximum of 4d10+Willpower initial damage as well as applying any additional effects. Any damage beyond that carries through to the intended target.
Special: Reflection does not work against psychic attacks which use something physical such as Flurry of Blades or Exploding Wire.

Spark of Insanity
You reach out to the swirling psychic energies within you and pushing it out towards your enemy.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Action
Targets: One target
Range: -6 per 5
Attack: Sharpness+Willpower+2d8 vs MD
Damage: Roll 2d6 on the insanity table. Your target is affected by the full value, while you are affected by the lower value dice.
Special: You need to roll the damage on the insanity table even on a miss.

Steady Mind
Requirements: Shp 6
Cost: 1 Grit / 1 Charge
Used: Raw Talent Add-on
Use: Remove all random elements from the Raw Talent other than the attack roll. If a dice roll is used then use the average roll (rounded down).

Terror
You project a terrifying image of yourself into the minds of your foes.
Requirements: Projection Talent Tree / one free hand / 1 charge
Cost: 1 Psyche + 1 Psyche per target
Used: Attack
Targets: Foes in one direction (180 degrees) within 10 squares (20m)
Range: -5 per 5
Attack: Sharpness+Willpower+1d12 vs MD
Damage: Willpower Psyche damage
Damage: Enemy side must take an immediate Morale test. Only targets which take damage must flee on a failed check, but others may choose to do so as their allies flee.
Special: All targets which take Psyche/Durability damage take a penalty to their Break TN on this roll equal to said damage.

Touch of Insanity
You reach out and touch your foe and unleash a burst of energy into their nervous system, causing them to see and hear a chaotic array of sights and sensations. There is no telling precisely how they will react.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Talent Tree / one free hand
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Action
Range: Melee
Attack: Agility+Dexterity+2d10 vs DD
Damage: Secondary Attack
Secondary Attack: Sharpness+Sharpness+2d8 vs MD
Secondary Damage: Willpower Psyche Damage
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage, instead of the target taking their next turn's Action normally, they roll a 1d8 on the Insanity Table.

Chapter 3: Psychic Classes

Instead of one of the classes listed in Chapter 2, you may instead choose to play one of the psychic classes listed in this chapter. Many of their abilities play with a different set of rules than the core classes, and they can be a bit more challenging to play for those new to Space Dogs.

Human psychics are a recent anomaly. They are all the children of women who traveled the warp while pregnant with them, though doing so is in no way a guarantee that a woman's child will become psychic, and no one will find out for sure if the child is psychic until late childhood or early adolescence. In addition, it is the female psychics which are the most powerful, as all male psychics seem to have difficulty projecting their powers much beyond themselves, though some females have the same issue. No one is certain why, but there is speculation about it having to do with females having more connections between their brains' hemispheres.

No other species in the galactic community boasts psychics, and their very existence is, by many, considered a black mark against humanity as a whole. This is because while no species amongst the galactic community has psychics, there are two species outside of the galactic community which do. The first is the volucris, a monstrous insectoid species who attack and consume all before them, while the second is the immortui, perhaps not a species at all but instead a virus which infects with something akin to rabies, causing its victims to attack those closest to them, and sometimes gaining psychic powers in the process of changing and becoming one of the immortui.

Even other humans have a rather mixed view of psychics. Perhaps this is shown most obviously in how human women who live out in the starlanes treat their pregnancies. Many refuse to travel through the warp at all once they find out they are pregnant or once they start attempting to have children, a few even having spent the months in out of the way systems which don't even have proper medical facilities for humans due to having discovered their pregnancy during a multi-jump voyage. Some other women go out of their way to travel the warp as much as possible when pregnant, taking jobs on merchant convoys until late into their pregnancy, and even then traveling as passengers if they can afford it. In one rather famous case, a woman who came from a wealthy family on Earth paid for herself and an entire medical team to travel in comfort on a ship which had been retrofitted to have top of the line medical facilities. All in an attempt to have her child gain psychic abilities.

Unlike the classes in Chapter 2, psychic classes actually do have in-setting definitions, though the name used might vary somewhat. After all, use of psychic powers are generally obvious, as are the general differences between various psychics. In general, the more powerful female psychics are either referred to as 'true psychics' or just as 'female psychics' despite not all female psychics meeting the criteria, while male psychics and the weaker females are most commonly called 'guardians', 'male psychics', or occasionally 'half-baked psychics' or some other derogatory term, though the last rarely to their faces. Though neither of these list of names are exhaustive.

Also of note; every human psychic who is experienced enough to use their abilities in combat has at least one level in a PC class, while most NPC characters, even humans without psychic abilities, only have levels in NPC classes. Therefore, while a psychic character won't be more powerful than an equivalently leveled PC classed character, they will be more powerful than the general populace, even amongst combatants.

In the same way as psychic classes, Psychic Talents have in-game definitions, and while the names in this chapter are the most commonly used, the names that individual psychics give them might vary, especially if their psychic abilities are self-taught rather than having been trained by a more experienced psychic. The names given in this chapter are the most common, as they are those used by The Council of Mothers, who are the largest community of psychics across the starlanes.

The Guardian class is set up much like the non-psychic classes, choosing a base class at level 1, an advanced class at 4, and a path at level 8.

The True Psychic doesn't choose any of these, instead the class is customized via talent trees.

The Guardian and True Psychic each have a capstone ability.

Strangeness

Even those who are not biased against psychics end up finding true psychics odd to interact with. They always seem a bit off, as if they are always paying attention to something that isn't even there. Some have less flattering things to say about them; they are all in fact crazy and may snap at any moment.

On the other hand, psychics claim that this is due to their mental and telekinetic psychic powers. In effect, they can 'feel' every object in the near vicinity as well as hear tiny thoughts and emotions from every mind around them, albeit not enough to make out anything of note without concentrating. But nonetheless, the two are a constant mental buzz that can be distracting if not actually confusing to deal with constantly.

Psychic Special Rules

Psychic Talents: The psychic classes have access to an entirely different pool of Talents to select from. Psychic Talents are chosen separately, and as you can see in the class descriptions, the True Psychic can only choose from the Psychic Talent pool, not being able to select any Talents from Chapter 2. On the other hand, the Guardian class chooses a mix of Talents from both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 as shown in their class description.

Talent Trees: Unlike normal talents, the majority of psychic talents are selected from talent trees, as mentioned in their requirements.

To gain access to the higher levels of each talent tree, you need both an appropriate rank in the associated skill and at least one talent from the previous rank.

Ex: To be able to take Inner Yearning, which is a Master Rank skill on the Projection talent tree, you would need to be a Master in the Sixth Sense skill and have already taken at least one Journeyman Projection talent.

Most talents on the talent tree are only available to a True Psychic who has unlocked the tree by taking the basic Raw talent, but anyone may take the talents colored blue on the talent trees, though the other requirements such as skill rank still apply.

Charging-up: Some psychic Talents require a charge-up of one or more rounds. Charging-up is an Action taken by a psychic which costs them 1 Psyche. For example, if a Talent cost 5 Psyche and requires a two round Charging-up, before the psychic uses that Talent, they must first spend their Action for each of the two rounds prior using Charging-up. In the third round when they use the Talent, they only need to spend an additional 3 Psyche as they have already Charged 2 Psyche. The 2 Psyche Charge can actually be used for any Talent which the psychic has whether or not said Talent requires a Charge.

In the round they use Charging-up, a psychic may take no other actions, though they may still act in the Movement Phase, Dodge Back in melee, and Hug Cover. If the psychic takes any other Action

between or after those two rounds of Charge-up before using a psychic talent, the Charge is lost entirely, and the Psyche used Charging-up is also lost.

The psychic does not have to specify which of their Talents they are Charging-up for.

The act of Charging-up is a sort of ritual which psychics learn in order to gather their mental energies together. Many of a psychic's most potent abilities require time to ready themselves, during which time they need to rely upon their allies to defend them

Note: There are several Talents which have the secondary effect of charging-up in place of spending an action.

Psychic Talent Requirements: In addition to the same sort of requirements that normal Talents have, many psychic Talents require that either one or both of the psychic's hands are free. This is because, through trial and error, psychics have discovered that their abilities are closely linked to their motor control, and making motions with their hands helps them to focus their powers. The motions themselves vary greatly from psychic to psychic, but not the fact that such motions are required in order to use the more advanced psychic powers.

If you are not strong enough to wear your armor without penalty, you take a -4 penalty on all Talents or skill use which require one or both of your hands to use.

Fast attacks: Some Actions are not Attacks and may be used before your Action in the same turn. For each of these you do, your next roll this turn will be at a -2 cumulative penalty. For example, if you make two fast attacks and a normal attack roll as your action, your first fast attack will be without penalty, your second fast attack will be at a -2 penalty, and your normal attack will be at a -4 penalty.

Movement Phase Attacks: Some psychic abilities can be used in the movement phase immediately upon declaring them. Doing so still uses up your Action for the turn and you may not act in the Run, Ranged, or Melee phases.

Ongoing Attacks: On a hit, these Talents can be used again at the beginning of the following turn against the same target. Any attack rolls must be rolled again each turn, but no Action needs to be used and any Grit/Psyche costs do not have to be spent again. All range penalties from the original origin of the Talent apply based upon the current range.

Design Note

All damaging psychic Talents other than those which emanate from the psychic require at least one Charge. All Talents which are not 'Raw' require at least one free hand.

Ranged Increments: Unlike firearms, psychic abilities have a penalty for every 10m (5 squares) instead of using the increment table. This is due to the range being the limit of the psychic's

Recurring Attacks: Similar to Ongoing Attacks except that in order to continue it costs additional Psyche, listed as the secondary cost, and you must use either your Movement Phase or an Action to continue it.

Insanity Table

Some psychic talents cause a roll on the below Insanity Table. Every time you roll on the Insanity Table add +1 to the roll. This counter resets after taking a Rest.

1-3	**Act normally: No effect, but any additional rolls on the table this encounter add +2 to the roll.**
4-5	**Babble Incoherently:** You may move normally but lose your Action.
6-7	**Flee in Terror:** You must move directly away from the nearest foe during both your movement phase and as your Action. You may not run.

8	**Lash Out:** Attack the closest target. If more than one target is equidistant, randomize your target. Next turn you must flee from them in terror.
9	**Mind Shatter:** Your mind breaks under the pressure and you both babble incoherently this turn and take Psyche damage equal to 2x your Willpower.
10+	**Suicide:** You try to end it all. You must spend your action dealing as much damage to yourself directly to your Life pool as you reasonably can. (you may still spend grit normally this turn)

True Psychic (base class)

Complexity Rating: 10

When someone says "psychic" they are usually referring to someone of powerful abilities who can use their abilities to navigate the warp, hence the name "True Psychic". True Psychics can do amazing things with their mind, controlling both the physical world and the minds of those around them, and perhaps most importantly they are able to navigate the warp. While the term "True Psychic" was already in use in certain circles, The Council of Mothers has actually made it an official title which they give out.

Thus far, while not true of every psychic, every recorded case of a True Psychic has been female. There are various scientific speculation as to the reason, such as females having more connections between the two hemispheres of their brain, but the actual reason is unknown, and no one is sure whether a male True Psychic would be possible. The Council of Mothers has made proclamations that male True Psychics are impossible, and they have made more than one threatening, if vague, statement decrying any male who would dare to claim the title of True Psychic.

Distant Mind: Because of the psychic energies constantly flowing through their mind True Psychics have trouble focusing upon more mundane skills. Because of this, True Psychics may only choose the Psychic Background.

Primary Stats: Shp & Wil

Secondary Stats: None

Tertiary Stats: Agl, Brw, Dex, & Sta

The True Psychic class designed for players who want to be masters of psychic energies. The True Psychic has access to nearly all of the psychic Talents, giving you a wide variety of potential powers, and you have a large Psyche pool to use them with.

The True Psychic class suffers from low vitality and grit, and perhaps most importantly, they have four tertiary attributes along with their Brawn and Stamina scores taking additional penalties via Degeneration. They are rather fragile, and when not using their Talents their combat skills are subpar. Even with their large Psyche pool, a Fledgling Psychic will not have nearly enough Psyche to use a Talent each round, instead having to use their sub-par ability with firearms most rounds and save their psychic powers for when it really counts.

Unlike every other class, the True Psychic doesn't have advanced classes. Instead, it has talent trees to give character customization. Please note that it's expected that a single character will start with only one talent tree and rarely get more than two, at least until level 8-10+.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Psychic Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	+0	+10/10
2	+2	+1	+2	+1	+0	+10/20
3	+3	+1	+3	+2	+0	+10/30
4	+4	+1	+4	+2	+0	+15/45
5	+5	+1	+5	+3	+0	+15/60

6	+6	+1	+6	+3	+1	+15/75
7	+7	+1	+7	+4	+1	+15/90
8	+8	+2	+8	+4	+1	+20/110
9	+8	+2	+8	+5	+1	+20/130
10	+9	+2	+9	+5	+1	+20/150
11	+10	+2	+10	+6	+1	+20/170
12	+11	+2	+11	+6	+2	+25/195
13	+12	+2	+12	+7	+2	+25/220
14	+13	+2	+13	+7	+2	+25/245
15	+13	+2	+13	+8	+2	+25/270

Talent Trees:

The True Psychic class has potential full access to four separate talent tables, each of which is tied to one of the four psychic skills. Once you have an Apprentice rank in the associated skill, you may choose to take the Initial Unlocked Talent to unlock the talent tree, causing degeneration and gaining access to the entirety of the talent tree. Taking the Initial Unlocked Talent can be taken without using a Psychic Talent slot.

Skill	Talent Tree	Initial Unlocked Talent
Cloaking	**Phantom**	**Raw Psy-Stun**
Sixth Sense	**Projection**	**Raw Insanity**
Telekinesis	**Psychokinetic**	**Raw Psy-Blast**
Telepathy	**Mental Breach**	**Raw Psy-Scream**

To gain access to the higher levels of each talent tree, you need both an appropriate rank in the associated skill and at least one talent from the previous rank. So, to be able to take Inner Yearning, which is a Master Rank skill on the Projection talent tree, you would need to be a Master in the Sixth Sense skill and have already taken at least one Journeyman Projection talent.

Some talents also have a prerequisite within their tree in addition to the skill rank. These are shown on the tables via arrows.

There are a few talents on the talent trees which are available without unlocking them, shown colored blue on the talent tree tables, but they still require the appropriate skill rank.

Finally, you may always choose to pick one of the General Psychic Talents which aren't a part of any tree.

New Player Tip

When creating a True Psychic, at level 1 you can get up to two unlocked Talents by putting two psychic skills up to Apprentice. This can be useful to have options, but it will make you physically weaker and you won't have the Psyche to use many abilities at level 1, instead needing to hang back and use firearms in combat.

By level 2 you could potentially unlock all four raw talents, but that's usually not a good idea due to the amount of Degeneration. Most True Psychics focus on just two of the four talent trees, especially until mid-high levels.

Degeneration: As your true psychic unlocks more talent trees, the influx of different warp energies can cause your body to fail you. For each talent tree that you take a Talent in, lower your Brawn or Stamina by one point, down to a minimum of one. For example, if your Brawn is already a one when you gain a talent in a third or

fourth tree, you must then lower your Stamina instead. Also lower your Awareness by 1 per point of degeneration.

Psychokinetic Talent Tree								
Rank 1 Telekinesis					Raw Psy-Blast		Force Shield*	
Rank 2 Telekinesis			Psy-Blast	Force Wall		Flurry of Blades*		Exploding Wire*
Rank 3 Telekinesis		Crush		Force Dome			Choke	
Rank 4 Telekinesis			Blood Siphon	Force Cage				

Projection Talent Tree									
Rank 1 Sixth Sense					Raw Insanity		Blinding Flash*		Touch of Insanity*	
Rank 2 Sixth Sense		Fear		Murderous Rage		Nightmare		Spark of Insanity		Precognition*
Rank 3 Sixth Sense	Terror		Horror		Nightmare's Strike		Inner Yearning			
Rank 4 Sixth Sense						Nightmare's Grasp				

Phantom Talent Tree								
Rank 1 Cloaking					Raw Psy-Stun		Afterimage*	
Rank 2 Cloaking		Blindness		Psy-Stun		Only a Shadow		Obscure*
Rank 3 Cloaking			Reflection				Blur	
Rank 4 Cloaking						Enemies and Friends		

Mental Breach Talent Tree						
Rank 1 Telepathy				Raw Psy-Scream		Battle-Cry*
Rank 2 Telepathy			Mind Duel		Linked Vision	
Rank 3 Telepathy		Mind War		Psychic Rip		
Rank 4 Telepathy			Psychic Rend			

General Psychic Talents
Awareness
Double Charge
Focused Mind
Holding Charge
Mind Over Matter

Readied Mind
Steady Mind

Raw Psy-Blast
Commonly the first use of their abilities that a psychic can control with any regularity, they unleash their ability through raw kinetic force, crushing all before them.
Requirements: Psychokinetic Tree Unlocked Talent
Cost: 7 Psyche
Used: Action – Ranged Phase
Range: A 3 x 5 line (6m x 10m) in front of the character.
Attack: +5d4 vs Body Defense – use the same roll against all foes
Damage: 1d20+Willpower (M) – (ignores armor) – if Raw Psy-Blast misses a foe they move to the nearest square (they may choose if equidistant) outside of the AOE up to their movement. If not possible or they would rather not, they instead take damage equal to your Willpower
If Raw Psy-Blast hits a foe they are pushed back to the far edge of the blast area. Shown on the below diagram as P.
Special: On the attack roll, for every '1' rolled shift the area to the left one space relative to the character, and for every '4' rolled shift it to the right one space.

-	-	-	-	-
-	-		-	-
-	X1	X2	X3	-
-	X1	X2	X3	-
-	X1	X2	X3	-
-	X1	X2	X3	-
-	X1	X2	X3	-
-	P1	P2	P3	-
-	-	-	-	-

Raw Psy-Scream
An uncontrolled mental blast emanating from the psychic.
Requirements: Mental Breach Tree Unlocked Talent
Cost: 4 Psyche + 1 Psyche per target in radius.
Used: Action – Ranged Phase
Range: A 1d10sq (2-20m) radius around the psychic, rolled at the time of use. -2 per 1.
Attack: +3d8 vs MD – use the same roll against all targets, but different range penalties may apply
Damage: 1d20+Willpower Psyche damage.
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Raw Psy-Scream they lose their action if they haven't acted yet this turn, unless they are in melee.

Raw Insanity

You reach out and touch your foe and unleash a burst of energy into their nervous system, causing them to see and hear a chaotic array of sights and sensations. There is no telling precisely how they will react.
Requirements: one free hand / Projection Tree Unlocked Talent
Cost: 1d12 Psyche
Used: Action – Ranged Phase
Range: -10 per 5
Attack: 1d20+Psyche spent vs MD
Secondary Damage: Willpower Psyche Damage
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage, instead of the target taking their next turn's Action normally, they act on the Insanity Table equal to the amount of Psyche you spent on Raw Insanity.

Raw Psy-Stun
Those close to the psychic are mentally locked down.
Requirements: one free hand / Phantom Tree Unlocked Talent
Cost: 4 Psyche
Used: Action – Movement Phase
Range: A 1d6sq (2-12m) radius around the psychic and including the psychic, rolled at the time of use.
Attack: +2d20 vs MD – use the same roll against all targets.
Damage: Willpower Psyche damage.
Special: If a foe takes any psyche damage from Raw Psy-Stun they lose their action this turn.
Note: Even though Raw Psy-Stun is used in the Movement Phase, it uses up your Action.

Capstone Ability

Mental Quick load
Requirements: True Psychic - Capstone
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: When using a different psychic talent
Effect: You charge up 1 Psyche without spending an Action.

Guardian (base class)

Complexity Rating: 8

Primary Stats: Wil

Secondary Stats: Any three attributes

Tertiary Stats: Any two attributes

The Guardian class is designed for players who want to dabble in psychic powers without giving up their martial battle prowess. The Guardian has access to both psychic & normal Talents, allowing them to create a unique combat style.

The Guardian class suffers from a lack of focus. They have only one primary attribute, Willpower, and they will never be the master of psychic powers that True Psychics are. As a Guardian, you will need to carefully juggle your Grit and Psyche, as both power different Talents.

The Warden subclass is for Guardians who prioritize their combat prowess. They can use their Signature Talent to boost their abilities to the situation.

The Sentinel subclass is for Guardians who want to use their psychic abilities as the glue which holds their team together. Their Signature Talent protects their allies, allowing them to avoid otherwise deadly attacks.

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Psychic Talents	Base Class Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)

1	+6	+1	+1	+0	+1	+0	+10/10
2	+7	+1	+1	+0	+1	+0	+10/20
3	+8	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+10/30

Raw Psy-Strike
Requirements: Guardian Signature Talent / one hand
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Melee Action
Attack: 2d10+Dexterity vs DD
Damage: 1d20+Willpower (E) and you may choose to make a secondary attack roll
Secondary: On a hit roll 2d6+Willpower vs BD
Damage: Foe is pushed back a # of squares equal amount rolled over target's BD. This is damage after scaling changes.

Warden (Guardian base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Psychic Talents	Base Class Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+11	+2	+3	+1	+2	+1	+15/45
5	+13	+2	+3	+1	+2	+1	+15/60
6	+14	+2	+4	+1	+2	+2	+15/75
7	+15	+3	+4	+2	+2	+2	+15/90
8	+16	+3	+5	+2	+2	+2	+20/110
9	+17	+4	+5	+2	+2	+3	+20/130
10	+18	+4	+6	+2	+3	+3	+20/150
11	+19	+5	+6	+2	+3	+3	+20/170
12	+20	+5	+7	+2	+3	+4	+25/195
13	+21	+6	+7	+3	+3	+4	+25/220
14	+22	+6	+8	+3	+4	+4	+25/245
15	+23	+6	+8	+3	+4	+5	+25/270

Psychic Might
You channel psychic energy into your muscles and throughout your nervous system.
Requirements: Warden - Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Psyche
Used: Any

Combat: A Warden may replace either Agility, Brawn, or Dexterity attribute on all rolls with their Willpower score until the end of the turn.
Non-Combat: Out of the strain of combat, a Warden may extend the duration of Psychic Might to one minute.
Note: You must use Psychic Might for only one attribute at a time, but you may choose a different attribute the next time you use Psychic Might.

Sentinel (Guardian base class)

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Psychic Talents	Base Class Talents	Mettle	Ability Pts (added/total)
4	+9	+1	+4	+1	+2	+1	+15/45
5	+10	+1	+4	+1	+2	+1	+15/60
6	+11	+2	+5	+1	+2	+2	+15/75
7	+12	+2	+5	+2	+2	+2	+15/90
8	+13	+2	+6	+2	+2	+2	+20/110
9	+14	+3	+7	+2	+2	+3	+20/130
10	+15	+3	+7	+3	+2	+3	+20/150
11	+16	+3	+8	+3	+2	+3	+20/170
12	+17	+4	+8	+3	+3	+4	+25/195
13	+18	+4	+9	+3	+3	+4	+25/220
14	+19	+5	+10	+4	+3	+4	+25/245
15	+20	+5	+10	+4	+4	+5	+25/270

Vigilance
You are ever watchful and your psychic abilities give you the ability see where attacks will strike. You have trained to be able to communicate your warning to your allies, giving them just enough warning to make all the difference in the world.
Requirements: Sentinel – Signature Talent
Cost: 1 Psyche & 1 Grit
Used: Ranged or Melee Phase
Combat: After a foe has chosen their target(s) but before they make their attack roll(s), you give a bonus equal to your Willpower to all passive defenses of yourself or one ally within 5sqs (10m).

Special: Mind Blade may be used to channel any melee range psychic Talent. If done so, you deal the Mind Blade's damage in addition to that of the channeled Talent.

Paths

Path of Blood

Numerical Adjustments

+1 Brawn / +2 Grit / -1 Sharpness

Mind Blade
Requirements: Guardian Signature Talent / one hand
Cost: 2 Psyche
Combat: The psychic may use Mind Blade to create any type of human scale melee weapon which they can wield in one hand without penalty. It deals normal damage plus their Willpower score. The weapon lasts for up to 10 minutes, after which another point of Psyche needs to be spent to maintain it. As it is merely a short-range projection from the psychic, if it ever leaves your hand it instantly dissipates.
Non-Combat: The psychic may use Mind Blade to create any sort of simple tool which he can personally use if it isn't more than 1 meter long.
Special: The hand(s) wielding a Mind Blade count as being free for any Psychic Talents.

Path of Focus

Numerical Adjustments

+1 Stamina / +1 Psyche / -1 Sharpness

Psy-Haymaker
Requirements: Guardian Signature Talent / one hand / 2 charge
Cost: 4 Psyche
Used: Action
Attack: Brawn+Willpower+2d10 vs DD
Damage: 1d6+Brawn+Willpower (T) / ignores armor
Secondary: On a hit roll 2d6+Willpower vs DD
Damage: Foe is pushed back one square and is knocked prone and stunned until the end of the next turn.

Capstone Ability

Psychic Sheathe
Requirements: Guardian - Capstone
Cost: 3 Psyche
Used: Start of turn.
Effect: Covering yourself in psychic energy from head to toe, you gain a bonus on all attack rolls equal to your Sharpness and your DR goes up by your Willpower for the whole turn. This increased DR applies to all damage including AP damage, higher scale damage, and damage targeting your Psyche.

Talent Trees:

The Guardian class can take psychic talents from the four True Psychic talent tables, but he can never unlock the trees. Instead, he can take the talents colored blue which require the associated skill rank but can be chosen without the tree being unlocked.

The Guardian class also has access to their own unique talents which they gain as signature talents from their base class, advanced class, their path, and capstone.

Guardians may also take any of the general psychic talents.

Degeneration: Eventually a Guardian's body will start to degrade, but far slower than a true psychic's. Combined with being able to supplement their physical strength with their psychic abilities, there is no mechanical change due to this degradation. Instead, know that Guardians effectively age at a slightly increased rate.

Chapter 4: Skills

Backgrounds

After determining your Class and Attributes, the next step in creating your character is to choose their Background. While your class dictates your primary Attributes and what sort of combat abilities your character has, in some ways your character's Background has a larger impact upon who they are as a person. Do you want to be a hacker, against whom even the most encrypted alien security systems fall prey? Do you want to be an ace pilot, taking your ship into dogfights with the odds against you only to emerge unscathed? Do you want to be a scholar who travels the stars in search of lost knowledge every bit as much as adventure? Maybe you'll be something else entirely.

The Background you choose gives you your Background Skills which are immediate at Novice level and have the same cost to upgrade as other skills one rank lower.

In addition, each Background gives you a special ability to use.

Of note, you should feel free to change the name of your Background choice to fit your character, using the same mechanics. For example, when choosing the Diplomat Background, you might instead think of yourself as a merchant or trader, buying and selling as much as people are willing to trade with a human and have no desire to work as an actual diplomat.

With the exception of True Psychics, your class has no impact upon which Background you may choose, though you may want to choose a Background which has Background Skills which complement your primary attributes. After all, a Brute will never be as good at Acrobatics as a Trickster can be since Agility is a primary attribute for the Trickster.

Diplomat
You are a silver-tongued master speaker. You can lie, persuade, or threaten with equal ease, reading your audience to a tee.
Winning Smile: You may cut all negative modifiers to your background skills besides Investigation.
Background Skills: Haggling / Intimidation / Investigation / Trickery

Hacker
Whether you use your skills for legitimate purposes or towards more illicit ends, no computer system can stand before you for long.
I'm In: You may ignore 1 point of RAM damage for hacking into a secure system. This does not protect against damage for failing a Hacking check.
Background Skills: Demolitions / Hacking / Research / Trickery

Jack-of-All-Trades
The background for characters which don't fit into the other categories. This gives you the most skill flexibility but you lose out on having a background ability.
No background ability.
Background Skills: Any four skills other than the psychic skills.

Mechanic
Can you fix it? Yes you can!
Come on Baby Hold Together: You two bonus dice when making repair: starship checks mid-combat.
Background Skills: Repair: All / Piloting

Officer
An ex-officer in The Armada, you picked up a mix of skills to aid you as a space dog.

Commanding Bridge Presence: You may spend your Action in starship combat to give +2 to an ally's roll.
Background Skills: Intimidation / Investigation / Piloting / Research

Pilot

You can fly anything up in the sky or stars with two wings or a gravity engine.
Ace Pilot: You hit your target with dogfighting weapons when you roll equal or above your target's Piloting check. (Normally need to roll above target's check.)
Background Skills: Awareness / Piloting / Repair: Personal Vehicles / Repair: Starships

Psychic

You are one of the rare humans who has gained psychic abilities out among the stars.
Special: All characters of the True Psychic class must choose this Background, and no other characters may choose it.
Trust Your Feelings: By focusing on one psychic skill check, you may cut the Psyche cost and TN both in half (rounded down), but all other rolls you make are cut in half for one minute.
Background Skills: Psychic: All
Strangeness: For a character with the Psychic background, Intimidation, Haggling, and Trickery cost double their normal cost.

Scholar

As you travel the stars, you are always on the lookout for the next bit of forgotten lore or forbidden knowledge.
I Do Recall: You may research a second time with the same amount of time spent (getting the same multiplier) instead of needing to research longer in order to make another attempt.
Background Skills: First-Aid / Hacking / Investigation/ Research

Scout

A master of observation, it's almost impossible to sneak up on you.
Eyes in the Back of Your Head: Your Spot TN is 'Take 12' instead of 'Take 10'.
Background Skills: Athletics / Awareness / Investigation / Stealth

Smuggler

You can and will transport nearly anything for money, and if it's not quite legal, that's all the better as you can charge more for your efforts.
I'm Not Carrying Nothing: You may reroll any check to conceal an object before you find out if it was a success or failure. This reroll may not be used to conceal yourself. You must use the new result even if it is lower than your initial result.
Background Skills: Investigation / Piloting / Stealth / Trickery

Trooper

A soldier through and through, you have access to a variety of useful skills.
Man of Action: You may complete a skill check in half the normally required time if you roll a penalty dice.
Background Skills: Athletics / Demolitions / First-Aid / Intimidation

Skills

When attempting a skill, you roll 3d6 and add +1 per base skill rank and +1 for every 5 points total in the appropriate attributes combined. (Ex: a character with a (3) in Piloting with 4 Dexterity and 3 Sharpness would roll a total of 3d6+4.)

You get 10 skill points to spend to increase your base skills at first level, and an additional 15/20/25 skill points at 4th, 8th, and 12th levels respectively. So, an 8th level character would have a total of 45 points to spend.

If you have no ranks in a skill, you take a -5 penalty on all rolls for that skill. This penalty does not apply to passive TNs etc. As shown on the table below, unless a skill is a Background skill you need to spend 1 skill point on it to get a +0 skill bonus to the roll instead of a -5 penalty.

Some skills will tell you to 'take X' in certain circumstances such as finding your Awareness TN. This means that you count as always having rolled that number on 3d6.

Sometimes a check will be an ability check instead of a skill check. Ability checks are 1d6 + 2 x the relevant attribute.

Base Skill Rank	Background Skills' Cost	Other Skills' Cost
(0)	0pts	+2pts / 2 total
(1)	0pts	+2pts / 4 total
(2)	+1pts / 1 total	+4pts / 8 total
(3)	+4pts / 5 total	+9pts / 18 total
(4)	+9pts / 15 total	+16pts / 34 total
(5)	+16pts / 31 total	+25pts / 59 total

Skill	Attributes/5
Acrobatics	Agility x2 ##
Athletics	Agility + Brawn ##
Awareness	Sharpness + Willpower
Demolitions	Dexterity + Sharpness**
First-Aid	Dexterity + Sharpness**
Intimidation	Brawn + Willpower
Hacking	Dexterity + Sharpness
Haggling	Sharpness + Willpower
Investigation	Sharpness x2
Piloting	Dexterity + Sharpness**
Psychics (all)	Sharpness + Willpower
Repair (all)	Dexterity + Sharpness**
Research	none
Stealth	Agility + Sharpness ##
Trickery	Sharpness + Willpower

** Many skills cannot be used when you're jockeying an Exo-Suit or a Mecha. These skills are marked **.

Some skills are encumbered by heavy armor. For each point of skill penalty, you roll 1 fewer dice with the skill. These skills are marked

Skill Difficulties

Various skill checks have different Target Numbers (TNs) based upon the overall difficulty. While some examples are given throughout this chapter, the GM has the final say on how difficult or easy something is.

1-4: **Mundane** checks should be for things which rarely need a check at all, such as checking your email or walking down the corridor without tripping. Checks should basically not be required at all even if the character has no ranks.

5-7: **Easy** checks are things that can be done by nearly anyone, but mistakes might be made by a novice. Landing a starship at a normal dock or noticing a bloody fingerprint at a crime scene.

8-10: **Basic** checks are things that an amateur can usually pull off, but a professional nearly always can.

Doing basic repairs on a starship or being able to find information about an influential person on the local net.

11-12: **Standard** checks are moderately difficult, but trained professionals can do consistently.

13-15: **Hard** checks are those that amateurs would need to be lucky to make, and even pros will be inconsistent. Hacking a high security computer system or doing major ship repairs while in warp space.

16-20: **Very Hard** checks are those which are virtually impossible for the laymen and herculean for a pro. Potentially doable with plenty of help and/or high end tools.

21+: **Absurd** checks are nearly impossible even by the most skilled and in the best possible circumstances. These TNs should be used for things which are theoretically possible, but one would have to be extremely skilled and lucky to accomplish.

Bonus & Penalty Dice

If the situation is especially advantageous or they can receive aid from an ally who has ranks in the skill, roll 4d6 instead of 3d6. Not everything can be aided, such as balancing on a ledge etc. No matter how many dice are rolled, only the 3 highest dice are added together.

Other times the situation is extremely disadvantageous, some of them listed here, will give a penalty dice. These are additional dice which are rolled, taking the lowest three dice added together.

Bonus and penalty dice will negate each-other. If a PC has a bonus die and a penalty die, they will negate each-other and a normal 3d6 would be rolled. But if the PC had had two bonus dice and one penalty die, they would still roll one bonus die.

Both bonus dice and penalty dice should be relatively rare. The only common way to get two bonus dice is from having both favorable circumstances and from an ally's aid.

If there are ever 3+ penalty dice being rolled then the skill check automatically fails.

Design Note: These skills are not supposed to represent everything that can be done within the world of Space Dogs. For example, an NPC builder engineer would likely have ranks in Research and Repair, but there are no rules for that engineer designing an entirely new mecha or spaceship. That doesn't mean that such is impossible for the engineer, merely that there are no rules for them.

While these rules cover most of what a crew of privateers would be able to do, do not assume that just because something isn't explicitly covered by the rules that it is impossible. Use your common sense. For example, even if a PC has those same ranks in Research and Repair as the NPC builder engineer, that doesn't mean that they'll be able to design a new mecha from the ground up. The builders keep the intricacies of their technology secret. Besides, does anyone really want to roleplay spending months solving fictional engineering problems? If you do, *Space Dogs* may not be the best game for you, as the system is focused on being super cool space mercenaries/privateers. Though if you are, you may enjoy making your own mechanics for it or importing rules from other systems, which you should feel free to do.

Acrobatics ## (Agility x2)

The Acrobatics skill is used to balance on narrow surfaces, avoid falling damage, and to slip free from bonds or through narrow spaces.

Roll-with-it: You can use Acrobatics to convert falling damage from life damage to vitality damage. You do not have to choose how much damage you're planning to convert before you roll.

When you fall make an Acrobatics check. The score you roll is the number of meters which you can convert from life damage to vitality damage, up to a maximum of the distance which you fall. This amount is rolled separately.

Escape Artist: You can use Acrobatics to slip out of bonds, handcuffs, or to squeeze into places which you normally wouldn't be able to.

It normally takes a full minute to make an escape artist attempt, but you can shorten that to one round by rolling two penalty dice. You can make additional attempts at by taking a full minute without penalty, but you cannot keep attempting the faster variant.

You roll a penalty die to try to escape without being obvious to what you're doing to any observer.

Duct Tape	TN 12
Zip Ties	TN 15
Rope	TN 18
Tight Space	TN 12
Average Handcuffs*	TN 15
High-End Handcuffs*	TN 18

*You roll a penalty die escape handcuffs.

Balance: You can use Acrobatics to move over narrow surfaces and/or uneven ground. See the below table for example TNs at different movement speeds. The slower you go, the easier it is to balance.

For example, if you fall 25 meters and roll a 22 on your Acrobatics check you take 2d20 total damage and convert 2d12 of it to vitality damage.

If you roll equal to or more than the distance fallen then all of the damage is converted to vitality damage without needing to roll for life and vitality damage separately.

If you are not prepared for the fall, you cut your Acrobatics roll in half.

Athletics ## (Brawn & Agility):

Athletics encompasses running, climbing, swimming, and jumping etc.

Jumping: For distance you can jump 1/2 of your check in meters if you get a running start or half that if you don't get a running start of at least 4m. So if your total is 14, you jumped 3.5 meters. You gain +1 to your long-jump for each square of movement speed.

For height 1/8 of your check if you get a running start or half that if you don't get a running start of at least 2m. That is the height that your feet get off the ground, so you will be able to reach 2m or so higher depending upon your character's height.

Climbing: Difficulty depends upon the steepness and how sheer it is. Climbing is normally done at ¼ speed. If you fail by 5 or more you fall. If you fail by 4 or less you make no progress.

Rope	TN 6
An average tree	TN 10
Heavily Damaged Ship Wall	TN 15
Surface is slippery (grease/ice etc.)	-5
Climb at ½ speed	-5

Running:

When using the Run Action and moving in a straight line you may ignore up to 1m of slope per Athletics die that you roll, allowing you to run up stairs etc.

Suffocation:

If you take damage from being suffocated (see chapter 7) you may take Vitality damage instead of Life damage each round up to your rank in Athletics.

Awareness (Sharpness & Willpower):

Awareness is your ability to avoid being caught unawares, whether by an ambush, a trap, or a pickpocket.

One of the primary things that Awareness does is raise the TN needed to sneak past you. This isn't something you roll, but is instead a passive roll which is also affected by cover, distance, and lighting etc.

You have two base TNs. The Spot TN is lower, while the Notice TN is higher.

For your Spot TN you 'take 10', and you 'take 15' for your Notice TN.

So for example, a character with a (4) skill level in Awareness has a Spot/Notice TNs of 14/20. If they roll 10+ then the character doesn't know that they're there, and if they roll 16+ then the character notices nothing.

If they were to get a stealth check of 18, then the character would know that there was something suspicious and the general direction of it, but they wouldn't know exactly what it was or where it came from. They may then decide whether to investigate and make active Awareness checks by rolling the dice.

The TN lowers with distance from the watcher(s). For every 10 meters (5 squares) the TN is lowered by 2.

A group together has a communal Notice TN to beat, using the highest notice TN of the group so long as

they are together, but each individual uses their own Spot TN.

Note: You don't get your Awareness TNs when in combat or otherwise highly distracted.

Demolitions ** (Dexterity & Sharpness)

Anyone can blow open a door with enough explosives. It takes an artist to do so without breaking the door's stained glass ornamentation. To blow open a safe without destroying the priceless artwork inside. To blow up a door's lock without letting in the vacuum of space.

Any use of Demolitions is obviously very loud when the explosives go off and will cause everyone within a reasonably large area to hear them.

Explosive Breaching

See Chapter 7 Page 126 for rules for Explosive Breaching. Anyone can blow open a wall given enough time and explosives, but an expert in Demolitions can do it faster, more efficiently, and without as much collateral damage.

The base TN for an explosive breach is TN 8 plus the number of charges needed per the Explosive Breaching table.. Taking one minute per charge and using the normal amount of demolition charges allows you to "take 12" on your roll, which is why nearly anyone can do it basic breaching with little to no training so long as they're willing to use a few extra charges.

Using additional charges gives you a bonus die

See the below table for a variety of TNs.

Explosive Breaching TNs		
Action	TN modifier	Special
Base TN taking 10 rounds (30 seconds) per charge	8+charges needed	
Use one additional explosive charge	-1	
Use three additional explosive charges	-2	
Take 1 minute per charge	Take 12	Cannot be combined with speed increases
Take 5 rounds (15 seconds) per charge	+3	
Take 2 rounds (6 seconds) per charge	+6	
Use one fewer explosive charge	+2	Minimum of one explosive charge must be used.
Applying to ceiling	+2	You must be able to reach the ceiling
Cause no collateral damage to other side	+4	This is used in situations like hostage rescues and when cracking open a safe

Booby-Trap

Placing mines or other explosive requires a Demolitions check to place. Placing a mine requires ten minutes. It may be rushed to five minutes by taking a -4 on the check, or rushed to just one minute by taking a -8 on the check. If you fail the TN then the explosive goes off while you are setting it, and you take the damage.

If you successfully place the mine, 1/4 of the amount which you exceed the check is added to the mine's Awareness TN.

You may Take 10 when placing a mine so long as you aren't rushing.

Disarm Explosives

You may attempt to disarm explosives with the Demolitions skill, either booby-traps or any other sort of bomb.

The TN to disarm a booby-trap is the same as the TN to place it. It takes one minute to disarm a booby-trap. It may be rushed to 30 seconds by taking a -4 on the check, or rushed to one round by taking a -8 on the check. If you fail the TN then the explosive goes off while you are setting it, and you take the damage.

You may not Take X when disarming any explosive.

First-Aid ** (Dexterity & Sharpness): With

bandages, iodine, liquid sutures, and other medical supplies you can close up life so that you can keep on fighting.

Using First-Aid normally requires a First-Aid Kit. Make a skill-check. At TN 10 the target heals 1 Life point taken in the minute before the check was rolled, and for every 1 point you roll above 10, the target regains 1 additional Life points up to their Brawn score. If it has been more than 1 minute, you would need to use long-term care.

First-Aid normally takes 1d6 minutes. If you use a use a unit of fascia (see chapter 6) you may take just 1d6 rounds.

If you use a makeshift first-aid you take a -4 penalty to the roll.

First Aid Skill Roll	Life Healed (Max = Target's Brawn)
0-9	0
10	1
+1	+1

For example: Yuji is treating Skipper, who took 4 points of life point damage in the last encounter. Yuji rolls a total of 13 on your First-Aid skill check, which would be enough to heal all 4 points of damage. If Yuji had only hit a 10 on his skill check, Skipper would have only been healed a single point and be down 3 Life points going forward.

Long-Term Healing

If a character is receiving long-term care, they will heal 1 point per day normally or regain 2 life points per day under proper medical care if their caregiver rolls a First Aid check of 10+.

Using fascia (see chapter 5) a character can have a new First Aid check done while resting as above.

You roll a penalty die if treating someone of a different species.

Special: You may explain someone else how to bandage, they may use your First-Aid skill with a penalty die.

Hacking ** (Sharpness x2): A general slang term for everything to do with the software end of computers, someone skilled in Hacking can potentially do everything from get through the electronic lock on a door to taking over an entire station's life support systems. And of course, they are more than skilled in more reputable uses of their craft as well.

In Space Dogs, hacking is not done with a keyboard. Instead, the hacker uses a hacking kit's cable to plug their brain directly into the system. This means that while hacking, you cannot do other things such as firing a gun, though it can be done while hugging cover. Due to the table, it is generally pretty obvious to everyone what you're doing.

Normally a Hacking attempt takes 1 minute, though you can make at attempt in 15 seconds (5 rounds) by rolling a penalty die.

If you fail a Hacking check by 5+, you take RAM damage and potentially something bad happens. See the examples on the below table.

Some of the most secure systems will cause RAM damage just for attempting it. This RAM damage can by transferred to another willing character by rolling a penalty die.

Hacking Examples	TNs	Consequence of Failing by 5+
Normal Residential Locked Door	8	1 RAM Damage.
Security Door	14	1 RAM Damage & door secured for the next hour.
Auto-Turret Console	12	1 RAM Damage & auto-turret starts firing at the hacker.
High-End Security System*	16	1 additional RAM Damage, alarms sound, and security is alerted to your location.

*Attempting causes 1 point of RAM damage.

RAM Damage: When you fail a hacking check by 5+, coming back out of the system will cause mental stress/damage as its security system defends against your incursion. Each point of RAM Damage will cause 1 point of core Psyche damage and gives a penalty to Hacking checks for the rest of the day.

Intimidation (Brawn & Willpower): This is your ability to frighten with words, or to just give off a general aura of menace.

Use an action to make an Intimidation check. You take a -1 penalty for each square away that you are. The TN to hit is the target's Brawn+Pscyhe+5 / 2xBrawn+2xPsyche+5. The first TN is a partial success, while the second TN is a full success. There are also other potential modifiers to the TN (see below table).

Target is unarmed	**-2**
You are unarmed	**+4**
Target is a larger scale*	**+4 per scale difference**
Target is a smaller scale*	**-4 per scale difference**
Target is wounded and/or captured	**-2**
Already attempted an Intimidation check against the target within 24hrs	**-4 (cumulative – so the 2nd attempt would be at -4, and the 3rd attempt at -8 etc.)**
Circumstance modifier at GM discretion	**+/- X**

*Special: for the purposes of Intimidation, creatures with the Swarm ability count as being one size smaller than human scale.

On a partial success the target is forced to take at least one Forced Reaction as soon as possible, and on a full success they are forced to take at least three Forced Reactions. If any options are impossible for the target to perform in the next round, it may not be selected as an option. For example, if a target is securely tied up to a chair and cannot accomplish numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, or 7, they are forced to do only number 3 or 6 even on only a partial success.

You must wait at least 1 minute between intimidation attempts against the same target.

Forced Reactions
1. Raise their hands and back away slowly.
2. Give you something that they think that you want.
3. Try to tell you something that they think that you want to hear. (may or may not be the truth)
4. Get out of your way quickly.
5. Put something solid between you and them. (A door/bodyguard etc.)
6. Spend 1 point of Psyche. (May be done more than once.)
7. Attack you at a -4 penalty. (Counts as 3 options.)

Investigation (Sharpness x2): Investigation

helps you to figure out if someone is lying to you and to search out clues.

Investigation has two uses, Reading Someone and Search

Example TNs for Searching	TN
A coin	0
A useful note	5
A contact lens	14
A strand of hair	18
A fingerprint	22
Microscopic evidence	25

Reading Someone

Reading Someone is the ability to figure out when someone is lying to you. This increases the TN for who tries to use Trickery against you. The base TN is a "Take 10". So if you have a no ranks in Investigation and a Sharpness of 3-4 you would have a base 11 TN which would need to by passed by someone with a Trickery check.

For each point in their story which you have knowledge against, it adds +2 to your Investigation TN, and if it's a new piece of evidence you've found then you can force them to roll a new Trickery check.

Note: If there are holes, contradictions, or simply foolishness in their story you don't necessarily

believe them. You instead think that they believe their story, but that they are either mistaken and/or insane.

Search

Search is the ability to spot anything which isn't obvious to casual observation, from the entrance to a hidden passageway to a vital clue for solving a crime.

Unlike Awareness, Search has to used actively by the player saying that his character is searching the area.

Searching takes 1 minute for each 2mx2m square searched, though the time can be cut in half by taking a -5 to your roll, or cut down to 1 round by taking a -10 to your roll. If you take 10 minutes you may "Take 16". Some tools can be used to give a bonus to finding very small pieces of evidence but increase the time taken to search.

Negotiation (Sharpness & Willpower):

Negotiation can be used for anything from convincing a guard to let you into a restricted area, to trying to get down the price of a meal, to negotiating a peace treaty.

Going into a negotiation, both parties need to agree, even if unspoken agreement, that there is room for negotiation. Many stores selling basic consumer level goods will not be willing to negotiate their prices at all.

The two negotiating parties make opposed Negotiation checks. See the below table for results.

Results	Result
0-1 point difference	Market Price
2-4 point difference	Slightly favorable price for the winner.
5-8 point difference	Significantly favorable price for the winner.
9-14 point difference	Highly favorable price for the winner.
15+ point difference	Hugely favorable price for the winner.

What these different amounts are varies greatly depending upon the item in question is. The more heavily an item is traded and the less unique, the less the price will vary from market price. For example, the price for iron ore will only vary at most a few percent even when one party wins the roll by 19+.

On the other hand, for something as fluid as a bribe to be let into a secure area, there is no true market price at all. However, while not quite universally true, they say that every man has his price. The price to be let past even a mercenary guard who is open to bribery might vary from $20 slipped to him with a friendly nod, to several thousand dollars, with the 'market price' being a few hundred.

Part of the price may be based upon a lie. For example, that same mercenary would be far more likely to let you past for a small bribe if you are able to convince them that you only want to take a leak, and if he thinks that you might harm his employer he would need a far larger bribe, and on poor roll when he thinks that you might harm his employer he might not let you past him no matter what you offer him. In the latter case, you may have done something to insult him or said something which accidently pricked his sense of honor.

Example: Skipper Kate is negotiating with an alanny trader over the price of escorting his starship and its valuable cargo through several outlying star-

systems. The path should save the freighter weeks of travel-time relative to going through more populous/secure systems, but the danger is high enough that he wants a Space Dog escort. They do not agree on the price, the alanny offering just 50,000 credits, which Kate feels won't do much more than pay for fuel and food for the weeks the job will likely take, not to mention covering any damages which her ship may take defending the freighter. Kate argues for 200,000 credits, pay for the fuel, and for the alanny to cover the cost of any repairs to her ship. After all, she didn't become a Space Dog to run a charity.

Kate and the alanny both have +4 to Negotiation. The alanny rolls his 3d6 a bit low for a total of 10 (roll of 6+4), while Kate gets a lucky roll of 19 (roll of 15+4). This gives her a 9 point advantage on the roll, and a highly favorable price.

Since there is no real market price for Space Dog escort ships, the roll should have a substantial change to the price, and the GM will have to make the calls both on what 'market price' is and how much the NPC would be willing to pay. In this case, the alanny won't pay the 200,000 credits plus all expenses as that would eat up all of the extra profit that he plans to make by taking the dangerous short-cut. He'd be better off just taking the safer starlane path. Because of Kate's roll though, the alanny agrees to go up to 80,000 credits plus covering any repairs for damage taken during the escort mission.

******* ADJUST EXAMPLE BASED UPON FINAL STARHIP MAINTENANCE PRICING

Piloting ** (Dexterity & Sharpness):

Controlling everything from starships to atmospheric flyers. This also applies to land vehicles from motorcycles to tanks

When piloting, so long as you have **(0)** or better you may use your Vitality as normal. However, your Vitality cannot be recovered via Breather while still actively in space combat.

To make a warp jump, make a TN 5 Piloting check. For each point you fail by, roll an additional 1d6 on the jump.

To make a warp intercept, make check on the warp intercept table in Chapter 16.

Note: See chapters 9 & 10 for more information on how to use Piloting for ground and air/space vehicles respectively.

Psychic (Sharpness & Willpower)

These skills allow you to use your psychic abilities outside of the chaos of battle, using your abilities in a more controlled fashion.

Sense Presences Tasks	TN	Additional Penalties
Sense the number of minds within range	5	+1 per mind within range
Search if a specific mind is within range.	10	+2 per mind within range
Each centimeter of solid material between you and your target(s)	-1 to roll	

Special: Only the psychic classes may attempt any check with the psychic skills. Guardians have a maximum range of 10m.

Cloaking:

Cloaking is a way for psychics to avoid notice. This includes both Resist & Faceless. Resist avoids detection from other psychics and Faceless makes you seem go unnoticed from mundane senses.

Resist: You may use Cloaking to hide your mind from others' psychic senses. For 1 Psyche, you may resist any attempt to sense you with Sixth Sense or Telepathy with an opposed skill check. If you roll equal to or higher than the opposing roll to sense you then they sense nothing from you at all. For 2 Psyche you may resist their attempt to sense anyone else, though you take a -1 penalty for every 2 meters distant they are.

Using Resist is a passive ability and requires no Action to use.

Faceless: You can use Cloaking to make others overlook you. If you are in a crowd, you may use Cloaking to make yourself seem unremarkable and a faceless part of the crowd to your target. For 1 Psyche, you may make a Phantom check to oppose any Awareness checks to spot you in a crowd. This lasts for five minutes.

Sixth Sense: Having a strong sixth sense allows

you to get a feel of peoples' thoughts and feelings. This is not anything as strong as mind-reading, though some psychics try to give the appearance that it is.

Read Feelings

As an Action, you may make a Sixth Sense check to sense the surface feelings of a living mind.

Sense Presences

As an Action, you may make a Sixth Sense check to sense minds around you. This can even be used to sense creatures on the other side of a door or wall, though physical materials can make it more difficult, and pushing out your Sixth Sense to extreme distances can be extremely taxing.

Normally Sense Presence only works in a 90 degree arc, but it can work in a 360 degree arc for double the Psyche cost.

Normally using Sense Presences takes one full round, but you can instead take one minute to cut the Psyche cost in half.

The most common use of Sense Presences is to find the number of living minds within range. If you hit the base TN of 5 but don't get high enough to hit the TN of the total number of minds within the range you chose, you simply know that there are 'many' minds within range.

You may also attempt to search for a specific mind which you have met before. You must have used Read Feelings upon the target before to sense them specifically. If you succeed then you know both that your target is within the area and exactly where they are.

If there is any solid material between you and the minds in question, it decreased your roll by at least 2 points for each centimeter of thickness, with a minimum of 2. You may choose to not use Sense Presences through any/all solid materials to keep from raising the TN.

Distance Senses Pushed Out (one direction/180°)	Psyche Cost
Out to 2m (or less)	0
Out to 10m (or less)	1
Out to 20m (or less)	2
Out to 40m (or less)	5
Out to 100m (or less)	15
Out to 200m (or less)	40
Out to 500m (or less)	80

Out to 1 kilometer (or less)	200
Pushed out in all directions	X2
Take one minute to Sense Presences	½ (rounded down)

Telekinesis: This is the ability to lift objects with your mind. You may not throw them around violently with this ability, as those abilities require psychic Talents.

Move Object: Moving objects without damaging them is a much more difficult than flinging them about with waves of force. The size of the object though, has little to do with how difficult it is. Instead, the size just increases the amount of mental strength it takes. Picking up a living creature doubles the TN and the Psyche cost.

Task	TN	Range penalty*
Lift an object (up to 2m)	6	+1 TN per 4 meters
Move lifted object (up to 8m each round)	8	+1 TN per 4 meters
Manipulate the object	12	+1 TN per 4 meters
Fine motor control of object	14	+1 TN per 4 meters

Weight	Psyche Cost
Up to 1kg	0
1kg-4kg	1 per 5 rounds (minimum 1)
4-20kg	1 per 2 rounds (minimum 1)
20-100kg	1 per round
100-400kg	2 per round
400-800kg	3 per round
800kg-1,500kg	4 per round

Telepathy: As an Action, you may establish a telepathic link with a distant creature. Through the link, you may most easily send single basic thoughts such as “Help!”, “Run”, “Attack”, or “Danger”. A short phrase may also be sent or even an image, but the more complex the message, the more difficult it becomes to do while the greater the distance the higher the Psyche cost.

If you are not familiar with the target of your telepathy then the Psyche cost is doubled. Being familiar would be if you have spent considerable time with them and know a good deal about them. This makes targeting their mind less taxing.

Telepathy Tasks	TN
A one word thought	5
A short phrase	10
Send a basic image	15
Send a detailed image	20
Each centimeter of solid material between you and your target(s)	+1
No line of sight	x2
Are not familiar with the target	x2

Telepathy Distance	Psyche Cost
Out to 20m (or less)	0
Out to 50m (or less)	1
Out to 100m (or less)	2
Out to 250m (or less)	3

Out to 500m (or less)	4
Out to 1 kilometer (or less)	5
Out to 10 kilometer (or less)	6
Are not familiar with the target	+2

Note: This is not a separate skill. Instead, a true psychic may use their highest ranked skill to make this check in order to navigate through the warp when making a jump through the warp. See Chapter 16: Warp Travel for more details.

Any Psychic Skill

Repair ** (Dexterity & Sharpness): This skill involves the machinery of fixing everything from engines, to firearms, to circuit boards. Pick one of the below categories when you pick this skill. You may take Repair more than once and pick an additional category.

To repair requires the appropriate spare parts.

The time it takes is in large part a factor of its size, as a large starship will inherently take longer to repair than a motorcycle. However, unlike the motorcycle, the starship could have an entire crew of engineers working on it to speed up the repairs drastically.

Mecha & Exo or Personal Vehicle	Time Per 10 Life Points	Parts per 10 Life Points
Exo-suit Scale	2 hours	0.25 cm
Mecha Scale	8 hours	1 cm
Tank/Hunter Scale	20 hours	4 cm

To make a repair check requires a TN 5 plus the amount the ship is currently damaged, but there are modifiers which can make this harder and easier, and the higher TN you hit, the faster you can complete the work. If you fail to hit the TN, you wasted both time and half of the parts.

A second mechanic can attempt to help repair a ship by rolling 8+ which lowers the TN by 2 points.

At most docks, mechanics can be hired to help work on a ship. The cost varies by station, but basic mechanics cost $500 per 10 hour shift and count as rolling an 8.

***********extra mention of normal repair costs**********

*You do not need to specify that you want to speed up your repairs – the repairs are sped up by the full amount rolled.

Jury-Rig: While jury-rigging works differently dependent upon what you're repairing, it is generally making slap-dash repairs in the field to keep stuff working just long enough to survive.

Any damage repaired via jury-rig will not last for the long-term and needs to be properly repaired in the next week of use for a mecha or personal vehicle, or the next month for a starship, or the damage will come back and be impossible to jury-rig.

Mecha & Exo: This includes all mecha and exo as you would expect, but it also includes other things relying upon limbs for locomotion such as the synthetic species, capeks, as well as cybernetics which use a similar technology to mecha.

Using jury-rig on a Mecha or Exo requires a Mecha Repair Kit. Make a skill-check. This is used the same way as First Aid for an exo-suit. All TNs are doubled and it takes 2d6 minutes for a mecha. All TNs are tripled and it takes 4d6 minutes for a tank-scale mecha.

Personal Vehicles: Despite the name, this repair skill includes all hover vehicles, atmospheric aircraft, and shuttles without gravity engines. You cannot jury-rig a personal vehicle.

Starships: This skill is used to repair any sort of starship or space station. Up to 4 mechanics can work on an Escort scale starship with no penalty, and up to 12 on a Mothership scale starship per section.

Ship Scale Repaired	Time Per Hull Point	Parts per Hull Point
Hunter Scale	2 hours	1 cm
Escort Scale	4 hours	3 cm
Mothership Scale	12 hours	12 cm

Research (no stats): The Research skill represents both your chances of knowing something off the top of your head, and your ability to find a particular bit of knowledge when given the chance to research it.

When something happens or you see something which you might know more about, you automatically get a Research roll. If you roll half as high as you need to get any information about it, you know that there is something more there for you to look into when you have the time.

At any time that you have access to a computer system you may make additional research checks about anything that you want to. However, these checks will not allow you to know secret information or anything which isn't present in the system(s) you're searching, though large systems on the main starlanes have inner-system nets which have access to vast swaths of knowledge for those who know how to look.

Even some secret information might be accessible with checks if the researcher is willing to do a bit of hacking along the way to bypass any pesky security systems.

Modifier	Repair Base 5+
Not at a dock	+3
In Transit	+3 (stacks with above)
Each Point Ship is Currently Damaged	+1
Take 10% off repair time – maximum of 50% off	+2*
Working with (8)+	-2

Spending 1 min researching gives you a 2nd roll at x2

Spending 10 minutes researching gives you a 3rd roll at x3

GM Note: You shouldn't use the existence of the Research skill to play as if the PCs know nothing about the galaxy which they are a part of. No human isn't going to know the basics of the builders or at least the broad strokes of most other major species. Research should be a tool to help fill in the gaps of the players' knowledge and allow them to research specific plot elements or enemies' tactics when they have a bit of downtime in much the same way that you might remember something which came up in conversation and look it up on the internet when you get home at the end of a day.

Spending 1 hour researching gives you a 4th roll at x4

Spending 1 week researching gives you a 5th roll at x5

Note: The TNs of a bit of knowledge vary depending upon the system that you're in. For example: knowledge about an isolated alien species

isn't so hard to come by within their own solar system.

Rarity	TN	Examples
Common	0-5	name of a widespread alien species/common starlanes
Uncommon	6-15	name of an isolated alien species/general knowledge about a widespread alien species/common ship capabilities/names of important leaders
Esoteric	16-30	general knowledge about an isolated alien species/detailed knowledge about a widespread alien species/detailed ship capabilities/general knowledge about important leaders
Obscure	31-75	detailed knowledge about an isolated alien species/detailed knowledge about important leaders
Lost	76+	Any knowledge about the lost species beyond that they existed

Note: Many solar systems' info-nets may not have the information that you're looking for, especially anything Obscure or Lost.

Stealth ## (Agility & Sharpness): The ability to move unseen.

To stealth successfully, you have to be able to beat the TNs of all watchers, either electronic or organic. To be able to beat TNs without relying entirely upon luck, you should use the modifiers listed below to boost your Stealth score.

Modifiers	Example(s)	Stealth Boost
Dim Light	Starlight/Emergency Lights	+3
Total Darkness	n/a	+6
Full Cover	Curtains/Tall Bookshelf/closed door	+8
Partial Cover	Low Fence	+3
Concealment	Fog/Smoke/wiring	+3
Not Moving	Remaining stationary as a guard patrols past	+3
Each Scale above Human	n/a	-3

Of course, there are other potential Stealth modifiers which are either somewhere in between the above, or something else entirely. The GM should use their judgement to assign a reasonable TN modifier based upon the above.

If you want to stealth, trace the total path which you want to traverse. Then roll for stealth once. The GM should then stop you when you reach a point where your stealth roll isn't sufficient to beat all Awareness TNs.

Blending In: You may also use Stealth to blend into a crowd. This makes it so that you ignore the Notice TN and can only be spotted. However, if you do not mesh well with the crowd, you become easier to Spot.

Modifiers	Example(s)	Blending In Penalty
You are the only human(s) in the crowd.	n/a	-3

The crowd is thin	n/a	-2
Your clothing is out of place	Wearing battle armor openly in a peaceful bazaar	-1
You look outlandish	Wearing a stealth suit to the theater	-5
Your mark is on the lookout for you specifically	n/a	-3

Covert Ops: Someone who is skilled enough at Stealth can help out their less skilled crewmates remain unseen, though doing so is distracting. By rolling one fewer 1d6 than they are normally allowed, a character may apply their roll to both themselves and one ally within five squares (ten meters). However, the character that they are helping still applies their own attributes, armor penalties, or any other modifiers. Covert Ops may be used to help more than one ally, but doing so reduces your roll by 1d6 for each additional ally whom you help out.

This ability represents everything from telling them how to move, to pointing out where the floor will creak, to grabbing them and hauling them back just before they step onto a security laser.

Trickery (Sharpness & Willpower): This skill

involves both lying to someone's face, and the ability to explain to others how to keep a lie consistent. It is opposed by Investigation checks

Hidden

You may use Trickery to hide something, most commonly used to hide an item on your person or on your ship etc. This is opposed to an Awareness Spot TN when being looked over in passing, and opposed by an Investigation check with a -1 dice penalty if searched.

Lies

When using Trickery to lie, your check is modified by how complex of a tale it is and how generally believable it is. Sometimes they may even want to believe you. The more complex it is, the harder it is to make seem believable. See the below table for examples.

Types of Lies	Examples of Trickery	Trickery Check Modifier
The lie is simple & the target wants to believe you.	"Of course that doesn't make you look fat."	+5
The target wants to believe you.	"These aren't stolen, I just need the money, so I'll sell it to you cheap."	+2
The lie is simple.	"I was home reading all night."	+0
The lie is unlikely.	"I didn't see anything."	-2
The lie is far-fetched.	"You see, I'm in here because the owner is my long lost brother."	-5
The lie is overly complicated and unlikely.		-7
The lie is overly complicated and extremely far-fetched.	"You see officer, I didn't really steal this ship at all. This ship was actually my grandfather's ship which he left me in his will, and I had it for several years. However, it was stolen from me last year, and I just saw it here at this station and had to take it. Being my grandfather's ship, it was too emotional for me to have called station security. I had to hack into the ship. Any evidence otherwise was obviously forged…"	-10

Special: You may take at least 5 min (more depending upon the complexity) to explain a tale to someone else, they may use half of your bonus instead of their own.

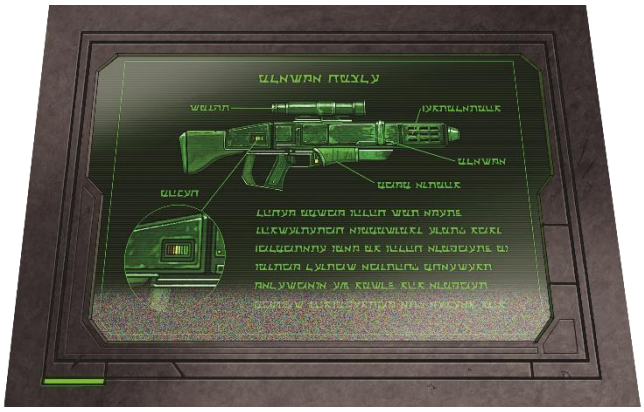
Note: If the person who hears your tale spots inconsistencies or things which they know to be false in it but still fails their Investigation check, they do not ignore the inconsistency. They may still believe you, but they think that you are mistaken about the inconsistencies, or they might even think that you yourself were tricked or are even just insane.

Chapter 5: Gear

Personnel Equipment

Buying

The prices here should be used when creating a new character and are the general market price, but they shouldn't be considered written in stone. An item's price can go up drastically in a star-system or on a planet where it is rare. In addition, while a merchant is unlikely to bother haggling for a small purchase, it should often be possible to use a Negotiation check to gain a better price on something with a market cost of $10,000 or more.



Selling

Most of the time, no one is going to be interested in buying the player characters' used items which they don't want anymore, no more than the players themselves would likely have much luck trying to sell their old books and clothes on the street corner. This is even more true for space dogs since most would shy away from dealing with humans. What little those items might fetch is assumed to go towards paying for the players' basic necessities.

Any item with a market value of $10,000 or more may normally be sold for 1/0 (or 10%) of its market value. This 1/10 rule does not include trade goods such as ore or foodstuffs which the PCs may sell for a higher price.

Design Note: The selling rule where most items with a value of under $10,000 cannot be sold is an abstraction. The rule exists primarily to streamline resource management and to make hauling off every weapon, piece of gear, and stick of gum you find not useful as it would distract from the core gameplay of *Space Dogs*: being awesome space privateers!

In the same way, there are no rules about how much equipment your character can carry around for the same reasons.

Like all such rules, your table should feel free to make rulings if you really want to track such things, but it's recommended that you don't get lost in the minutiae. Just don't get ridiculous.

In addition, some items can become tradable in bulk. For example, a single used assault rifle cannot be sold on the open market, but a shipment of assault rifles could be sold, though buyers would be much more limited than for something such as ore.

Weight

The weights for different equipment is listed throughout this chapter. However, you may note that there are no official rules for maximum weights that you can carry. Instead, you are expected that the players and the GM will use their common sense about the maximum weight and bulk that a character can carry across a battlefield. Soldiers can carry quite a bit, but if a character with a Brawn of 3 is hauling around a few hundred kilos of gear, that probably shouldn't fly. If you do want to have that much gear, you would need a float sled or some other way to haul it around with you.

Item	Cost	Description	Weight
Anti-Rad Drugs	$50	Drugs which allow for long-term healing from radiation.	0kg
Anti-Rad Injection	$100	An emergency injection of anti-rad drugs which allow First Aid to be used.	.1kg
Binoculars	$100	A small pair of binoculars. Enough said.	.2kg
Breath Mask	$300	A breath mask with 1 hr worth of breathable air.	.5kg
Chemical Light	$5	A glow-stick to illuminate the darkness.	0kg
Credit Chit	$5	A small cartridge to shop with	0kg
Comm Link	$20	A comm which fits into your ear.	0kg
Comm Link, Encrypted	$300	An encrypted comm which fits into your ear.	0kg
Demolitions Kit	$1000	This kit contains enough explosives to give 10x uses of the Demolitions skill with professional grade explosives.	4kg
Demolitions Kit re-fill	$800	Refills a Demolitions Kit with explosives	2kg
Fascia	$200	A gel which drastically increases healing rates.	1kg
Flashlight	$20	A tool used to illuminate the dark.	.5kg
Flashlight, Clip-on	$100	A clip-on tool used to illuminate the dark.	.2kg
Float Sled	$2k	A sled or wagon which hovers using antigrav technology.	5kg
First-Aid Kit	$250	Used to patch up your allies with the First-Aid skill.	2kg
Gun Sling	$25	A sling/harness for your firearm.	.1kg
Hacking Gear	$800	Used to hack systems such as doors without a standard access system.	1kg
Hacking Spike	$300	A disposable tool which will automatically hack basic security systems.	.2kg
Hacking Spike, Advanced	$2k	A more powerful hacking spike.	.2kg
Handcuffs	$100	A pair of metal cuffs	.5kg
Handcuffs, Advanced	$500	A heavier duty pair of cuffs.	1kg
Healing Tank	$25k	A tank which uses Fascia to heal anyone inside it.	100kg
Jack	$5k/$15k	A tech interface installed in the back of the neck.	.2kg
Pack, Assault	$750	A mix of items used in an assault mission.	5.2kg
Pack, Covert	$1,800	A mix of items designed for covert missions.	
Radiation Suit	$200	A protective suit which goes on over other clothes.	3kg
Repair Kit, Mecha	$500	Used to jury-rig repairs on mecha and exo-suits.	5kg
Repair Kit, Starship	$700	Used to jury-rig starship repairs	7kg
Rope (10m)	$20	A nylon rope.	2kg
Rope, Advanced (10m)	$250	High-end synthetic rope.	.5kg
Scope	$200	A scope.	.1kg
Ship Link	$100	A link to your ship's sensors and readouts.	.5kg
Ship Link, Encrypted	$800	An encrypted link to your ship's sensors and readouts.	.5kg
Smartphone	$500	A phone designed for the starlanes	0kg
Space Suit	$1100	A non-combat space suit which provides 8hrs of air and protection against vacuum.	8kg
Suppressor	$600	A suppressor helps to limit the noise of firearms.	1kg

Anti-Radiation Drugs: Normally radiation doesn't heal. With anti-radiation drugs you can heal Life damage for one day. More than one dose may be required for full healing.

Anti-Radiation Injection: Radiation cannot normally be healed by the First Aid skill. This is a single use injector which allows for one use of First Aid to heal radiation. Unlike normal First Aid, this can be used while the damage is being done, such as at any point in the 30 minutes it takes to take 1d6 radiation damage from moderate radiation or up to 1 minute the time is up.

Binoculars: If you use binoculars for five rounds (15 seconds), you can make an Awareness check in one direction which cuts all distance modifiers in half.

Breath Mask: A small mask which is held tightly between your teeth, a breath mask has enough condensed air in it to breathe for approximately one hour for a single human.

Chemical Light: A small plastic tube which, when shaken, produces a soft light for the next hour in a 10m (5sqs) radius. Once used up, a chemical light is worthless.

Comm Link: A small communications link which can fit into your ear, a portable comm link can be used to talk to your crewmates with similar links, or with anyone else with communication devices. The range is limited to ten kilometers, so it's of nearly no use between ships unless hooked into a more powerful system. It can also be hooked into a local net on a planet or on a station.

Comm Link, Encrypted: Looking almost identical to a portable comm link, it is also used the same way and with the same ten kilometer limitation. However, while a portable comm link can be listened in on by anyone with the proper equipment, an Encrypted Comm Link requires a Hacking TN 10 check and takes a minimum of five minutes to crack, and it cannot be cracked in real time, so even skilled foes will only know what you said five minutes ago. The disadvantage is that such links have to be linked beforehand, and all links used need to be properly encrypted.

Credit Chit: A small highly durable cartridge which either has money loaded directly onto it or connects to a bank account which it can draw money from.

If the credit chit has had money loaded directly onto it, it can be reloaded with money as often as you want. However, if the credit chit is lost, stolen, or destroyed the money loaded onto it is lost. Credit chits are linked to your live DNA, so using a stolen credit chit is impossible unless the thief has also kidnapped the owner.

If the credit chit is connected to a bank account it is even safer, but you are can't use it if you are not in a star system with a connection to its bank account. Even if you are in such a system, there can still be a delay if not on the same space station as the information travels at light-speed to the bank account and back.

The builders, as they have a warp beacon in nearly every system, have become the galaxy's most powerful bankers. Most starlane travelers have bank accounts with the builders, though some make a point of avoiding it as they don't want their funds to be under the builders' thumb.

Demolitions Kit: The dream of every amateur bomber, a demolitions kit contains precision shaped charges which can be used in a variety of circumstances by a skilled technician along with the tools needed to use them properly. A kit contains only ten charges, though often more than one charge may be used at a time. A kit can be restocked rather

than replaced, using the same tools and being a bit easier on the bomb maker's bottom line.

Fascia: This is a gel which is a mix of dozens of nutrients, enzymes, and engineered bacteria which promote faster healing. A unit of fascia may be used to make normal first-aid checks faster or to let additional first-aid checks made to promote long-term healing.

First-Aid Kit: This kit comes with everything that you need in order to use the First-Aid skill. Bandages, antibiotic ointments, and painkillers etc. to help you to patch someone up on the fly. As you use them up, you will eventually have to replace your kit with a new one. This comes with one unit of fascia.

Flashlight: While most ships and buildings are lit, there are times when a good old fashioned flashlight is needed. A flashlight lights an area in front of the user out to 30 meters (15sqs).

Flashlight (clip-on): This flashlight is smaller, only illuminating out to 20 meters (10sqs), but it can be clipped to a firearm, freeing up both hands for combat.

Float Sled: While it can come in a few different shapes and sizes, a float sled is designed to allow hauling of heavy gear/equipment with minimal effort. Any sort of pushing or pulling will move the sled with ease, while the sled itself can haul up to one tonne so long as it is compact enough to fit.

Gun Sling: This is a strap or harness designed to allow a character to carry a firearm on their person more easily. If you drop a firearm which is on a gun sling instead of falling to the ground it remains a stowed weapon. A weapon on a gun sling counts as being one step larger. A light weapon no longer counts as being light and a normal weapon counts as being bulky. A gun sling may not be used with a bulky weapon.

Hacking Gear: This kit has everything you need to use the Hacking skill to open up a door which has any sort of digital interface, including the cable required to connect from your jack to the terminal.

Hacking Spike: This spike is used to override electronic systems such as keypads which have only an on or off switch. A hacking spike cannot be used to hack into complex systems such as a database.

A hacking spike will work instantly to override a basic system, but the electronic brute force it uses alerts any systems which it may be connected to, setting off alarms and alerting any watchers of the hack. In addition, sufficiently secure systems can resist the hacking spike.

A normal hacking spike can override a system up to TN 12, while an advanced hacking spike can override a system up to TN 14.

Handcuffs: A pair of metal handcuffs. They are far more versatile than those used on Earth as they need to be able to work on multiple species and may be used on any species up to exo scale. It is also versatile enough to be used on any pair of limbs, whether primarily arms or legs. They may be broken with a TN 12 Brawn check at the human scale or a TN 8 Brawn check at the exo scale.

Handcuffs, High-end: A pair of metal handcuffs. They are far more versatile than those used on Earth as they need to be able to work on multiple species and may be used on species up to exo scale. It is also versatile enough to be used on any pair of limbs, whether primarily arms or legs. They may be broken

with a TN 16 Brawn check at the human scale or a TN 12 Brawn check at the exo scale.

Healing Tank: This is a large tank which is the best means of applying Fascia. The patient is suspended within the tank and given a breath mask while the tank is filled. A water/Fascia mix fills the tank. This gives two bonus dice on fire-aid checks for long-term healing and doubles the Brawn maximum heal per check. A tank may not be used for normal first-aid.

Jack: This is a small neural interface which is surgically installed into the base of the skull right where it connects to your neck.. Space Dog characters have a jack installed by default, and nearly half of the starlane population has some variant installed.

Jacks are needed to jockey mecha, to use hacking kits, and to pilot many starships.

Once a jack has been installed, it cannot be removed and reused, even if the user is dead.

The second number listed is the cost to get a jack surgically installed by a reputable surgeon.

Pack, Assault: An assault pack comes pre-filled with items that any Space Dog might need for an assault mission. It includes a Breath Mask, 10 Chemical Lights, a Comm Link, a blank Credit Chit, a Clip-on Flashlight, a First-Aid Kit, Rope, a Ship Link, a Canteen, and Combat Rations.

Pack, Covert: A covert pack comes with items designed for missions does covertly. It includes Binoculars, a blank Credit Chit, an Encrypted Comm Link, a Flashlight, 2 Hacking Spikes, Nightvision Goggles, and Rope.

Repair Kit, Mecha: This kit comes with everything that you need in order to use the Repair: Mecha & Exo skill. Tools, bolts, a small welder, and plenty of duct tape can patch them up in a pinch. As you use them up, you will eventually have to replace your kit with a new one.

Repair Kit, Starship: While lacking many specific parts needed for major repairs, the Starship Repair Kit has what you need for basic patch jobs for spacecraft to keep from breathing vacuum. Most notably? Duct tape. Lots and lots of duct tape.

Radiation Suit: This suit fits on over other clothes and/or armor. Any radiation you are exposed to is lowered by one rank while wearing this suit.

Rope: No matter what sort of technological marvel comes out, sometimes nothing beats a solid length of nylon rope. It has a maximum weight allowance of 400kg.

Rope, High-end: Using the highest quality synthetic materials, this is rope taken to the next level. It's easier to tie-off, and since it's lighter for the same strength, you can carry more of it if need be. It has a maximum weight allowance of 600kg.

Scope: A small telescopic lens which can be mounted upon a firearm. Not every scope can be mounted on every firearm, but there are scopes which can be used on every firearm. While weighing very little, a scope mounted on a weapon makes it count as one step larger. A light weapon is no longer light and a normal weapon counts as bulky. A scope may not be added to a bulky weapon.

Ship Link: This is a small wrist link which can be adjusted to fit any wrist. It is a wireless connection to

your ship which gives visual readouts of the general status of your ship and its sensors, and it can be accessed with a fingertip. It works out to a range of 10km, though it can also be hooked through a local net.

The Ship Link may also be used to browse any local net, though it is limited. You may make 2nd and 3rd Research checks with a Ship Link, but doing so takes twice as long as it would with access to a true computer system.

Ship Link, Encrypted: Looking almost identical to a ship link, it is also used the same way and with the same 10km limitation. However, while a normal ship link can be listened in on by anyone with the proper equipment, an encrypted ship link requires a Hacking TN 10 check and takes a minimum of five minutes to crack, and it cannot be cracked in real time, so even skilled foes will only know what you said five minutes ago. The disadvantage is that such links is that it can only ever be used with a single ship rather than being able to be adjusted to being linked to a different ship.

Smartphone: While not as ubiquitous as on Earth without a universal internet, smartphones are still useful throughout the starlanes. You may use a smartphone to make a Research check if you have a link to the local info-net. You may make 2nd and 3rd Research checks with a smartphone, but doing so takes twice as long as it would with access to a true computer system.

Space Suit: Unlike the bulky space suits which humans used in their first forays into the stars, modern space suits are form-fitting and relatively light. When going into combat, it is usual for the entire crew to wear Space Suits in case of a leak to vacuum. It has four hours of air contained within it which can be replaced without removing the suit, and the suit protects against vacuum and all forms of airborne pathogens and poisons. Only basic clothing and/or things which can normally be worn beneath clothing can be worn beneath a space suit.

Suppressor: A suppressor is an extension at the end of the barrel which limits the sound made. The distance which the gunshot can be heard from is cut in half.

A suppressor mounted on a weapon makes it count as one step larger. A light weapon is no longer light and a normal weapon counts as bulky. A suppressor may not be added to a bulky weapon.

Weapons

[Name of Weapon]

Stat requirements: Shows the minimum Brawn required to wield the weapon proficiently – (one-handed/two-handed) For each point below the minimum score that your character is you take a -1 penalty to all attack rolls with that weapon, and a -1 penalty to damage for melee weapons.

Attack: [Shows the attack roll]

Damage: [The damage dealt if they hit their target]

Weights & Costs: Unless the weapon is for a specific scale, both weight and costs listed are for the human scale. At exo scale the weights & costs are doubled, at mecha scale are at x10, at tank scale are at x50.

Damage Scale: While most weapons can be built to any scale, and their damage goes up or down proportionately. Some weapons are designed to be used for one specific scale.

Equipping Weaponry: No matter how strong you are, there is a limit to how many weapons you can strap to yourself and keep within easy reach. When you go into combat, you have 5 weapon slots to carry into combat. Two light weapons use only a single weapon slot, while bulky weapons use two slots.

You can haul around additional weaponry on your person, (try not to get ridiculous) but pulling one out takes 3 Actions.

Dual Wield: When you dual wield both weapons have a Brawn requirement of both weapons combined. For example, to wielding a pair of pistols has a Brawn requirement of 4. To count as Dual Wielding, you must be currently wielding both weapons.

Wielding a pair of matched weapons gives you +1 to hit & damage.

Note: You can hold a weapon in each hand without dual wielding them. A common tactic for close-range combatants is to hold a melee weapon in one hand and a pistol in the other.

Designer's note: Melee Weapon averages approx. 10+two attributes

Ranged Weapon averages approx. 10+one attribute

General Weapon Qualities

Armor Piercing: If a weapon's damage has armor piercing, it bypasses any armor of its own damage scale or lower.

Bulky: Bulky weapons always take an Action to draw and take up 2 weapon slots.

Light: Light weapons can be drawn more quickly (see chapter 6) and two light weapons take up a single weapon slot.

Low Penetration: This weapon counts as being one damage scale lower for armor DR and Armor Piercing. This also applies to penetrating shots (see Chapter 7).

Hidden: Hidden weapons gain a +2 bonus dice to hide via Trickery.

Paired: If wielding a pair via dual wielding, gain an additional +1 bonus to attack & damage.

Very Bulky: Very Bulky weapons cannot be equipped and therefore always take 3 Actions to equip. Most often they are carried into battle rather than being drawn mid-combat.

Damage Scale

Unless otherwise designated, weapons are assumed to deal damage of the same scale as the wielder. For example, an assault rifle used by a human or a mecha is of similar design, though obviously the one wielded by a mecha would be far

larger and therefore deal proportionally more damage. Some weapons may deal damage at a higher or lower scale than their wielder, but these will be designated appropriately.

Melee Weapon Qualities

Attach: This must be attached to a valid firearm to be used as a bayonet. Otherwise it is treated as a knife.

Shielding: Wielding a shield uses one of your hands. It gives you +1 to your melee defense after all rolls so long as your Brawn is at least 1 higher than required for your other hand's weapon. This also gives you access to Cover & Block.

Cover: If you give up your movement, you can use the shield to provide cover in one direction. If fired through via a penetrating shot (see chapter 7) a shield only provides normal concealment. Only you and up to one ally in your square (of up to your size) count as taking cover.

Block: A wielder of a shield may roll against melee attacks at 1d10+Dex+Brw. This roll becomes your melee defense for the round.

Note: A shield being used to Block is not a weapon and therefore no melee advantages/disadvantages apply.

M**elee Weapons – Any Scale**

Item	Cost	Attack Bonus	Damage	Brw Req.	Weight	Special
Bayonet	$100	2d6+Brw+Dex	1d8+1.5xBrw	3/-	.5kg	Attach
Boarding axe	$200	2d8+Brw+Dex	1d10+1.5xBrw	5/3	1kg	
Club	$10	2d6+Brw+Dex	1d8+Brw	4/3	2kg	
Dueling Blade	$500	2d10+Dex+Agl	1d8+Brw	3/-	1kg	
Greataxe	$400	2d8+Brw+Dex	2d6+1.5xBrw	12/5	3kg	Bulky
Greatsword	$700	3d6+Brw+Dex	2d8+Brw	10/5	3kg	Bulky
Longsword	$400	3d6+Brw+Dex	1d12+Brw	5/3	2kg	
Pistol Whip	n/a	1d10+Brw+Dex	1d4+Brw	3/2	n/a	
Rifle Butt	n/a	1d10+Brw+Dex	1d8+Brw	-/4	n/a	
Shield	$1,300	1d10+Brw+Dex	1d6+Brw	4/3	2kg	Block
Shortsword	$200	3d6+Dex+Agl	1d8+Brw	2/1	1kg	Light
Knife	$50	1d12+Dex+Agl	1d6+Brw	1/-	.5kg	Hidden / Light
Unarmed	n/a	2d4+Dex+Brw	1+Brw	n/a	n/a	n/a

Boarding axe: A heavy axe-head on the end of a shaft, whether wood or synthetic.

Bayonet: When attached to the end of a rifle or assault rifle, the bayonet acts as an effective weapon. When not attached, the bayonet acts as a knife without the Hidden quality.

Club: Anything from a baseball bat to a lead pipe qualifies as a club.

Dueling Blade: A dueling blade is any sort of narrow blade such as a rapier or cutlass which focuses on finesse.

Greataxe: A larger axe-head makes this weapon effective for splitting skulls or splitting open some doors.

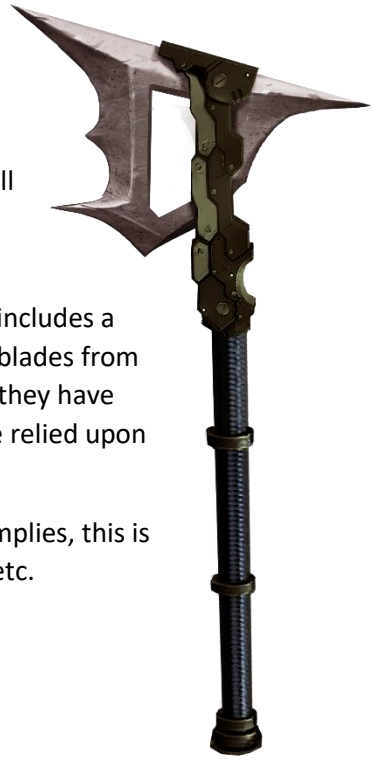
Greatsword: Any large blade used throughout the starlanes which come in a variety of shapes and styles.

Longsword: What most would consider an average sword, encompassing everything from arming swords to katanas as well as a variety of unearthly options.

Pistol Whip: A pistol or hand cannon can be used as an improvised melee weapon in a pinch.

Rifle Butt: While hardly optimal, any sort of rifle or shotgun can be used as a makeshift melee weapon in a pinch.

Shield: Primarily used for blocking, a shield can also be used to bash opponents.



Shortsword: This includes all sorts of smaller blades, from combat knives to tantos.

Knife: The knife category includes a wide variety of small hidden blades from actual knifes to kunai. While they have their place, they shouldn't be relied upon as battlefield weapons.

Unarmed: As the name implies, this is using fists, elbows, and feet etc.

Space Dogs Ranged Weapons Rules

Armor Piercing (AP): Armor piercing damage ignores all armor of its damage scale and lower.

Auto: Some weapons have the Auto-Fire option. See Chapter 6 for details.

> **Auto Only:** These weapons can only be fired on with Auto-Fire and not as single shot.

Bayonet: Some firearms can have a bayonet attached to them. Adding a bayonet to a weapon makes a light weapon lose the "light" property, and makes a normal weapon "bulky". A weapon already "bulky" cannot have a bayonet added to it, as it would be too unwieldy to be effective.

When attached, the combined weapon uses the "bayonet" stats. When unattached the bayonet may be used as a knife.

Explosive: Explosions take x2 penalty cover penalties taken from the center of the explosion but no other additional penalties. If the explosion affects a target who is in melee, the explosion also affects any target who they are engaged in melee with instead of taking any penalty to hit. Explosions are not affected by concealment.

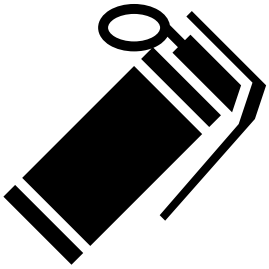
Any foes in an explosion's AOE missed by the attack roll and not in cover may move up to their movement rate to not be in the AOE. If they don't/can't get out of the AOE, they still take half damage. Explosions cannot be aimed.

Firearm Ranged Increments:

Distance to Target		Penalty Increments
0-10 meters	0-5 squares	0
11-20 meters	6-10 squares	1
21-50 meters	11-25 squares	2
51-100 meters	26-50 squares	3
101-200 meters	51-100 squares	4
+100 meters	+50 squares	+1

Grenade: A grenade is an area of effect (AOE) thrown weapon. The attack is first rolled against the center square which has a passive defense of 0. The target square never counts as taking cover or being in melee. A grenade's center square cannot be used within 5sq (10m) of the user, so there will always be at least one range increment penalty. This attack roll is not Explosive. If a hit was rolled, the grenade then explodes during the following turn's Ranged Phase with a new attack roll and no range penalties.

Any foes in the center square are automatically critically hit.



The grenade's AOE is Explosive. Cover penalties are taken from the target square and may stack with all penalties (including cover penalty) for the target square. See chapter 6 for an example of grenade usage.

Melee: You do not get to add Sharpness to damage using a ranged weapon in melee combat.

Mines: Be wary of the various mines which your enemies may use against you. You may disarm them or place your own using the Demolitions skill.

Firearm ammunition: The small arms used by humans out in the starlanes are largely similar to those used on Earth in the mid 21st century, many copying the general form of weapons from that era or even earlier, albeit with more firepower generally.

The largest single difference in usage is the ammunition used is being much smaller with a minimal film casing, with their shape being longer to the point where they are more like a needle than like a 20th century bullet. This means that each magazine contains hundreds if not thousands of rounds so that reloading during combat is a non-issue for any weapon other than those which fire single larger rounds such as a rocket launcher.

For gameplay purposes, when placing a mine choose either a square or a door which, when stepped onto or opened respectively, the mine goes off aimed at the square.

Scope: If you spend an action, you may reduce your ranged penalty by 1 per ranged increment for your next single attack the following round.

Single Shot: After firing you need to reload before firing again. Reloading is treated as drawing a non-light equipped weapon. Ammunition is not tracked.

Sniper: A sniper weapon has a scope. In addition, using Aim even without a scope will cut all ranged penalties to 1/4 (rounded up) instead of the usual 1/2.

Ranged Weapons – Any Scale

Item	Cost	Atk Bonus	Damage	Increment Penalty	Brw Req.	Weight	Special
Assault Rifle	$1.3k	2d10+Dex	2d8+Shp	-5	13/3	2.5kg	Auto / Bayonet
Chain-Gun	$4k	2d12+Dex	3d10	-7	20/10	4kg	Auto Only / Paired / Very Bulky
Hand Cannon	$700	2d8+Dex	3d6+Shp	-5	6/3	1.5kg	
Hold-Out Pistol	$200	2d8+Dex	2d4+Shp	-6	1/-	.25kg	Hidden / Light
Large Bore Rifle	$1.5k	2d8+Dex	1d12+Shp (scale +1)	-6	16/5	4kg	Bulky / Low Pen
Machine Pistol	$800	2d10+Dex	2d8	-6	6/2	2kg	Auto / Light
Pistol	$300	2d8+Dex	2d6+Shp	-5	2/1	.5kg	Light / Paired
Rifle	$500	3d6+Dex	2d8+Shp	-4	12/2	2kg	Bayonet
Shotgun	$400	4d6+Dex	3d12	-8	15/5	2.5kg	Low Pen

Sniper Rifle	$1.5k	2d6+Dex	1d10+Shp	-6	20/3	2.5kg	AP / Sniper

Assault Rifle: Any of a wide variety of rifles which can shift between short burst fire and full auto.

Chain-Gun: A chain-gun is a large unwieldy weapon which fires a heavy stream of projectiles. More often used for emplacements than carried by infantry, and often twin-linked to give a paired bonus.

Hand Cannon: There are a wide variety of handguns which focus more on stopping power than ease of use.

Large Bore Rifle: Firing a single large projectile rather than burst of needle-like ammunition, these weapons are perfect when up against larger targets.

Machine Pistol: A submachine gun or a large handgun which can fire in short bursts or auto-fire.

Pistol: A smaller handgun firing single shots or short bursts, focused more on convenience and usability than stopping power.

Rifle: Possibly the most common firearm out in the starlanes, a basic rifle has a solid mix of accuracy, stopping power, and the ability to attach a mix of other tools such as a bayonet.

Shotgun: Any of a wide variety of firearms across the starlanes which fire a spread of projectiles, a shotgun is a powerful weapon at close range but loses effectiveness at long range or against heavily armored targets.

Sniper Rifle: A powerful long-gun with a focus on pinpoint accuracy at long ranges. These are uncommon to see during the frantic short-range firefights of many starship boarding actions.

Grenades – **Human or Exo Scale**

Item	Cost	Attack Bonus	Dmg	Brw Req.	Increment Penalty	Area	Weight	Special
Concussion Grenade	$100	3d8+Dex	6d6	8/-	-16 per 5	3x3	.5kg	Light
Flash Grenade	$100	3d8+Dex vs. BD	Blind 2 rounds	8/-	-16 per 5	3x3	.5kg	Light
Smoke Grenade	$50	2d8+Dex vs. BD	Conceal ment	8/-	-16 per 5	3x3	.5kg	Light

Concussion Grenade: A concussive burst causes damage to an area purely from the force of the blast rather than pieces of the grenade which could shoot longer ranges and/or damage the ship.

Flash Grenade: A flash grenade can be any of a wide variety of grenades designed to disorient rather than kill the targets. Foes in the center square are blinded for four rounds since there is Life damage.

Smoke Grenade: A smoke grenade gives concealment for the entire area and full concealment when firing through 3+ squares of smoke. The smoke lasts for 30 seconds which is 10 combat rounds. The smoke is entirely dissipated by any explosion in the area.

Mines – Human Scale

Item	Cost	Attack Bonus	Area	Damage	Placement	Awareness	Weight
AM Mine	$2k	2d10	Single target	3d8 (M)	TN 16	TN 7/17	3kg
Concussion Mine	$400	2d10	4x4	6d6	TN 12	TN 8/18	1kg

AM Mine: An AM, or Anti-Mecha mine, is specialized to have a small but powerful blast to be able to harm a mecha without damaging the nearby ship or station.

Concussion Mine: A concussive burst causes damage to an area purely from the force of the blast rather than pieces of shrapnel which could shoot longer ranges and/or damage the ship.

Special Weapons – Human Only Scale

Item	Cost	Attack Bonus	Damage	Increment Penalty	Brw Req.	Weight
AM (Anti-Mecha) Rifle	$4.2k	2d6+Dex	1d8+Shp (M)	-10	17/7	9kg

Grenade Launcher	$1k	Special	Special	-14	-/6	2.5kg
Rocket Launcher	$2k	2d6+Dex	1d20 (T)	-12	-/3	7kg

AM (Anti-Mecha) Rifle:

An AM Rifle is a huge oversized rifle which is designed for infantry to be a threat to exo-suits and mecha. Instead of the flechette which other firearms use, it instead uses a thin 9cm long narrow bullet which is loaded one at a time. It kicks like a mule on steroids.

Special: AP / Very Bulky / Scope / Single Shot

fired with a Grenade Launcher use standard ranged increments rather than per 5 squares.

Special: Bulky / Grenade / Single Shot*

Rocket Launcher

Not too dissimilar to even 20th century rocket launchers, though with a smaller more directed explosive, the rocket launcher is the most common choice for space dogs who want an option against heavily armored targets.

Special: Bulky / Single Shot

Grenade Launcher

A grenade launcher may fire any grenade of the same area, damage, and all other special rules as does the as the grenade which is loaded into it. Unlike other single shot weapons, reloading counts as drawing a normal non-light weapon and the grenade needs to be equipped. Grenades

Armor

Whenever you may end up in armed conflict, it will increase your survival chances if you wear armor. There are a variety of different armors from dozens of different manufacturers which you might wear in your travels throughout the starlanes. However, they generally fall into one of the below categories.

Each type of armor has several different statistics. The first thing is the amount that the armor reduces damage by. Armor reduces the damage from all attacks which target your Dodge Defense score.

Heavier armors will always give a penalty to some skill rolls, notably any Athletics or Acrobatics checks. The penalties will also increase if you are not strong enough to wear it properly. You will notice that there are two numbers listed for the Brawn requirement. The first number his how high your character's Brawn needs to be in order to wear the armor without any penalties. If your Brawn is lower than the first number you take a -4 penalty with Talents that require a free hand and roll a penalty dice on certain physical skill rolls (See Chapter 4 for a list). If your Brawn is lower than the second number, you roll two penalty dice on the certain physical skills as well as taking a -2 penalty to your Dodge Defense.

Many armors also reduce the bonuses gained to your DD (Dodge Defense) when Running.

Damage Scaling: While higher scale characters use largely the same armor, every armor below lowers their DR by 1 point per scale above human.

Exosuit Scale: DR-1

Mecha Scale: DR-2
Tank Scale: DR-3

For example, a krakiz (exo scale) wearing mesh armor would only have a DR of 2 as opposed to the normal DR of 3.

Armor Qualities

Camo: This armor has active camouflage for up to 2 hours total before the charge runs out. While active, you double all situational Stealth modifiers such as concealment and dim light.

Vac Suit: This armor also acts as a space suit.

Armor – Any Scale

Item	Cost	Damage Reduction	Skill Penalty Dice	DD Penalty When Running	Brw Req.	Weight	Special
Armored Space Suit	$2.2k	2	0	0	5/3	8kg	Vac Suit
Ballistic Armor	$900	2	0	0	5/3	4kg	
Ballistic Vest	$250*	1	0	0	3/1	1kg	

Battle Armor	$3.5k	4	-1	-1	6/4	10kg	Vac Suit
Heavy Mesh Armor	$1.1k	4	-2	-1	7/4	12kg	
Marine Assault Armor	$5.5k	5	-2	-1	8/5	14kg	Vac Suit
Mesh	$500	3	0	-1	5/3	8kg	
Stealth Suit	$6.5k	1	0	0	3/3	4kg	Camo

*The ballistic vest can be integrated into clothing for 10x the normal cost

Cargo

While humans can't truly take up a life of trade in the starlanes due to the general distrust of humanity, there are still some goods which they benefit from buying in bulk. Rather than listing these individually, they will be listed per M^3, or Cubic Meter. It is the volume rather than the weight which is important on a starship. Even if the PCs do not have a starship of their own, they will be given a set amount of M^3 in the cargo hold of any ships which they may take passage in.

Normally each grid square of a cargo hold can store 10 M^3 assuming the standard 3m high ceiling as loading is not 100% efficient. Some starships may have higher or lower ceilings which will increase or decrease storage per grid square. Though often ships will have vacuum cargo space not shown on the grid as it can only be accessed externally.

By far the most common cargos that the players will need to care about are mecha/vehicle/starship parts, and foodstuffs, as they are what the PCs need to carry throughout the starlanes. The below list is far from exhaustive, but it should give a good idea of pricing.

Cargo	Pricer per 10 M^3
Exo/Mecha Spare Parts	$20k
Personal Vehicle Spare Parts	$10k
Starship Spare Parts	$15k
Common Ore	$500
Rare ore	$4k
Textiles	$3k
Chemicals	$2k
Rare Chemicals	$8k
Luxuries	$100k
Industrial Machines	$6k
Animal Hides	$3k
Survival Rations	$400
Local Foodstuffs	$800
Exotic Foodstuffs	$6k

Buying

Besides spare parts for repairs of their equipment, the PCs will not want to be purchasing cargo since they will never be able to sell them at a profit.

Selling

Due to being human, few merchants will want to deal with the PCs. Those who are willing to buy from them know that the PCs will have few other options and only agree to purchase for about half of the going rates, though a highly successful Haggling check may get that closer to market rates.

Most more expensive cargo such as luxury goods or industrial machinery require specific contacts to get decent pricing, and if the PCs stumble upon such cargo they will only get 10% by default just as they would with used equipment, though unlike equipment, Haggling checks may increase their selling price moderately. Even merchants of other species with known contacts can only sell a limited amount of luxuries due to the limited demand.

Chapter 6: Combat

The world of *Space Dogs* is a dangerous one. As you head out into the starlanes you will need to be prepared for whatever the galaxy throws at you. Whether brutal krakiz raiders, hulking chimeric monstrosities, or even enemy mecha, the difference between victory and death is often razor thin.

Space Dogs' combat system is turn based, but each combatant gets a separate action in each of the three phases of the combat turn.

Combat Round

Each round of combat in Space Dogs is 3 seconds long. This is the time that passes between the initiative phase beginning and the end of the melee phase. It can be helpful to remember that there are 20 rounds each minute.

Initiative/Morale Phase

The first phase of every combat round is the Initiative. The players roll a 3d6; if the roll is 11+ the PCs' side acts first. If the roll is 10 or less the foes get to act first.

If there is more than one group of enemies who are not allied, the GM chooses the initiative order between those two sides based upon the situation.

If the roll is high enough the enemy may break and run. See the Morale rules in Chapter 12 for more details.

Tactical Tip

Unlike many RPG combat systems, going first isn't always advantageous in *Space Dogs*; it depends upon the circumstances. As you play, you'll get a feel for which sorts of situations are better to go before or after your foes.

A Full Turn –

1. Initiative/Morale Phase: 3d6 is rolled with the PCs acting first on a 11+.

If the roll is at/above the foes' Break TN (see chapter 12) then they will break.

2. Movement Phase: In initiative order each side moves and chooses their Action(s).

3. Run Phase: Every character who is running does so in initiative order

4. Ranged Phase: Every character who is not in melee and chose a ranged Action acts in initiative order.

5. Melee Phase: All melee attack rolls are rolled at the same time.

Hold: If your side does not take any Action in a turn, they may choose whether to go first or second the following turn. If both sides Hold, there is no effect.

Movement Phase

In initiative order, each side may move up to their total movement score during this phase, or use another movement option. Below are the standard movement phase options. You may also choose to drop a weapon or other item as part of the Movement Phase without a cost.

Movement Phase Choices
1. Move up to maximum speed. (For humans this is normally one square.)
2. Move and draw a light weapon.

3.	**Draw an equipped weapon (not bulky).**
4.	**Aim. (cuts all range penalties in half)**
5.	**A Talent or ability which uses your Movement Phase.**

During their turn in the movement phase, the character(s) on each side also make their Action choice(s). The different types of Actions are shown in the Action Choices box.

Action Choices

1. Draw a bulky weapon (Movement Phase)
2. Pick up weapon from the ground in your square (Movement Phase)
3. Run (Run Phase)
4. Ranged weapon (Ranged Phase)
5. Melee weapon (Melee Phase)
6. Talent which uses an Action (see Talent Description for Phase)

When a character picks their Action, they must make a more specific choice than in the box. For example, instead of choosing "Ranged weapon" a character would instead choose their pistol, assault rifle, or rocket launcher, but they do not need to decide upon their target. After making that choice, they announce it to the table and are then committed to that Action. There are exceptions to that commitment, such as that any character may always choose to move up to their movement score (normally 1 square for humans) instead of their declared Action.

Different Actions are performed in different phases, as described in the Action Choices box.

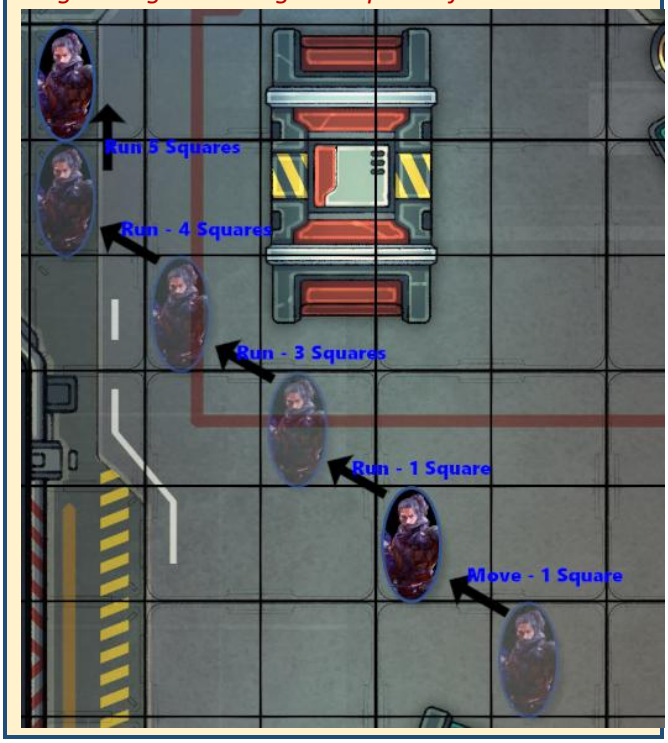
Action Replacements

1. Movement
2. Hug Cover (even out of initiative order)
3. Special (specific Talents may allow Action Replacements)

Diagonal Movement: When measuring distance for either movement or range, the first diagonal counts as one square, the second counts as 2 squares, the third counts as 1 square, while the fourth counts as 2, etc.

You can't move diagonally past a corner such as around a wall or through a doorway, but you can move diagonally past other creatures or difficult terrain.

The warrior first moves one square diagonally. The warrior then uses Run with the Sprint talent to increase his run speed to 5 squares. The first square of diagonal movement for both the normal move and the Run cost 1 square, while the second diagonal of the Run costs two squares, with the 3rd diagonal again costing one square of movement.



Run Phase

In initiative order per side, every character who chose to Run does so.

You may move up to your Run Speed (normally 3 squares for humans). In any turn in which you choose to Run (even before you Run) you gain +5 to

your Dodge Defense for the turn. You may use Dodge Back in a turn that you Run without having to take a step back so long as you aren't still in melee range of the attacker at the end of your movement. In addition:

- If you Run in a straight line you may double your run speed but no longer increase your Dodge Defense.
- The Taking Cover penalty doesn't apply when firing at someone who ran this turn, but all other penalties apply normally.
- You do not threaten targets around you in melee on a turn when you Run or chose to Run. Ex: A target around you could fire at you or another target with a ranged weapon with no melee penalty as you are not in melee with anyone. This applies even if you are in the melee range of someone else.

Ranged Phase

In initiative order per side, every character who chose to use a ranged weapon or a ranged Talent uses their chosen Action. If you started your Movement Phase or Ranged Phase in melee with an enemy you may not act in the Ranged Phase and must delay until the Melee Phase.

Most ranged attacks are targeting your target's DD (Dodge Defense) by default, but many special attacks may target your target's MD or BD.

Firearm Ranged Increments

As your target is further away, it becomes more difficult to hit. The range starts from your square until it gets to the target. The amount of the penalty varies by weapon. Firearms use the above table; other ranged weapons such as grenades and psychic attacks have an increment every 5 squares or 10m

Distance to Target		Penalty Increments
0-10 meters	0-5 squares	0
11-20 meters	6-10 squares	1
21-50 meters	11-25 squares	2
51-100 meters	26-50 squares	3
101-200 meters	51-100 squares	4
+100 meters	+50 squares	+1

Aim: If you used your Movement Phase to Aim, cut all ranged penalties with ranged weapons in half (rounded up). You may not Aim if you are currently engaged in melee.

Auto-Fire: Some weapons have the Auto-Fire option. This allows you to use either Spray or Focused Fire. You do not add your Sharpness score to damage when using Auto-Fire. Using auto-fire doubles all ranged penalties (negated by aiming) besides concealment.

> **Spray:** Fire one attack roll against up to four different targets in the same direction using the worst range increment penalty, and potentially hitting all four. Damage is rolled once for all attacks but applies to each target separately.
>
> **Focus Fire:** Roll three attacks against a single target. Damage is rolled only once and applies to each attack individually.

Snap Shot: If making a ranged attack against a character which was visible by a character's line of sight at range at any time during this turn but is not visible now, you may still fire at them with a Snap Shot. A Snap Shot is a single target ranged attack which does not add Sharpness to damage and takes a -10 penalty. Use the lowest ranged penalties you had at any point this round based upon any square that the target was in.

Some other situations and abilities can result in a Snap Shot.

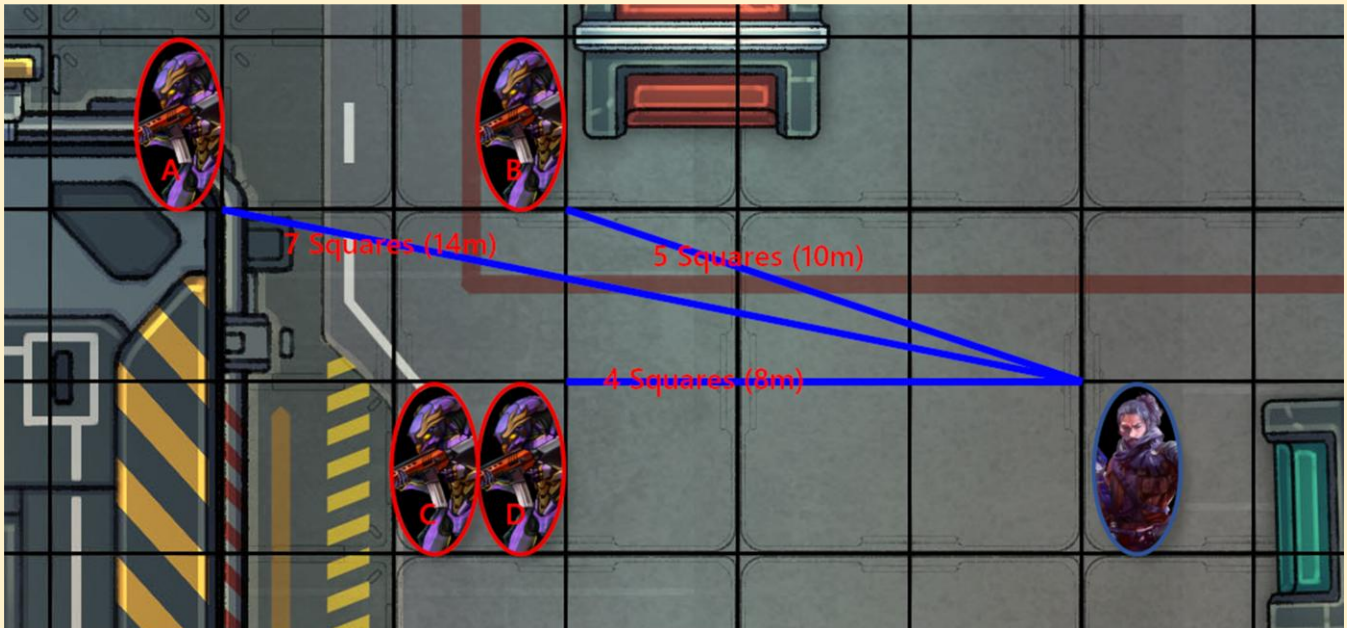
Auto-Fire Example

The warrior is using auto-fire with an assault rifle this turn after using his Movement Phase to Aim. If he decides to Spray at all 4 targets, he will take a 1 ranged increment penalty (-5) against all four targets due to capek A being 6-10 squares away. Against target B specifically he will take an additional -10 penalty due to capek B taking cover from him. The -10 penalty does not apply to the other three targets. So his penalties for A/B/C/D would be -5/-15/-5/-5 respectively. If B chooses to Hug Cover the penalties would be -5/-25/-5/-5.

If the warrior chooses to Spray at only B, C, & D then he could avoid the ranged increment penalty and his penalties against B/C/D would be -10/-0/-0.

The Warrior could also choose to Focus Fire against capek C or D and fire 3 shots with no penalties, but if the first or second shot killed them, the other shots would go to waste.

These penalties would all be doubled if the warrior hadn't used Aim in the Movement Phase.



Cover/Concealment: Any cover between you and your target gives a -4 penalty to hit, while your target being adjacent to cover and/or adjacent to cover between you and the target gives a -10 penalty to hit. Full concealment of the target such as darkness or heavy smoke also gives a -10 penalty to hit. More details in the Terrain Modifiers section on page ****128.

Hug Cover: Hug Cover sacrifices your Action to increase the Taking Cover penalty to hit you by 10, normally putting the total to a -20 penalty. This can only be done if you are already Taking Cover.

Hugging Cover can be chosen at any time during your turn to replace your Action, even before your Initiative as a reaction to being shot at. It cannot be chosen after the attack has been rolled. If you have already made your Action this turn, you instead give up your entire next turn including the Movement Phase.

Note: Hug Cover needs to be chosen quickly to keep the flow of gameplay moving. If the player hesitates, they should likely lose the chance to Hug Cover.

Firing into Melee

Firing into a melee gives you a -16 penalty to hit your target. This penalty is ignored if your target is 2+ damage scale higher than any ally you have in melee combat with them. This penalty never combines with cover or concealment.

This penalty can be ignored when firing into a melee if you choose to have an equal chance of hitting every target in the melee.

Ranged Penalties		
1. Cover	-4	This can be anything significant which blocks view/aim.
2. Target Taking cover	-10	This applies to cover which is in the same square or adjacent to the target. Does not apply if the target Ran.
3. Target Hugging Cover	-20	Target spent action to hug adjacent cover.
4. Concealment	-4	Smoke or extremely dim light etc. Not doubled by auto-fire and does not apply to explosives.
5. Full Concealment	-10	Total darkness or any opaque surface you're firing through. Not doubled by auto-fire and does not apply to explosives.
6. Firing into or out of a melee	-16	When firing into melee this does not apply if your target is 2+ damage scale larger than any ally in the melee. When firing out of the melee, this does not apply when you are 2+ damage scale larger than any enemy in the melee. When firing into melee you may ignore this penalty and have an equal chance of hitting your ally.
7. Distance Penalty	-X per increment	This penalty varies by weapon and can be combined with all other penalties.
8. Snap Shot	-10	Use the lowest ranged penalties you had at any point this round.

Ranged penalties 1-6 on the table above do not stack.

Grenades: A grenade is an area of effect (AOE) thrown weapon. The attack is first rolled against the center square which has a passive defense of 0. The target square never counts as having taking cover or being in melee. A grenade always counts as having at least one range increment penalty. This roll is not Explosive. If a hit was rolled, the grenade then explodes during the following turn's Ranged Phase with a new attack roll and no range penalties.

Any foes in the center square are automatically critical hits.

The explosion itself is Explosive. Cover penalties are taken from the target square.

Tactical Tip

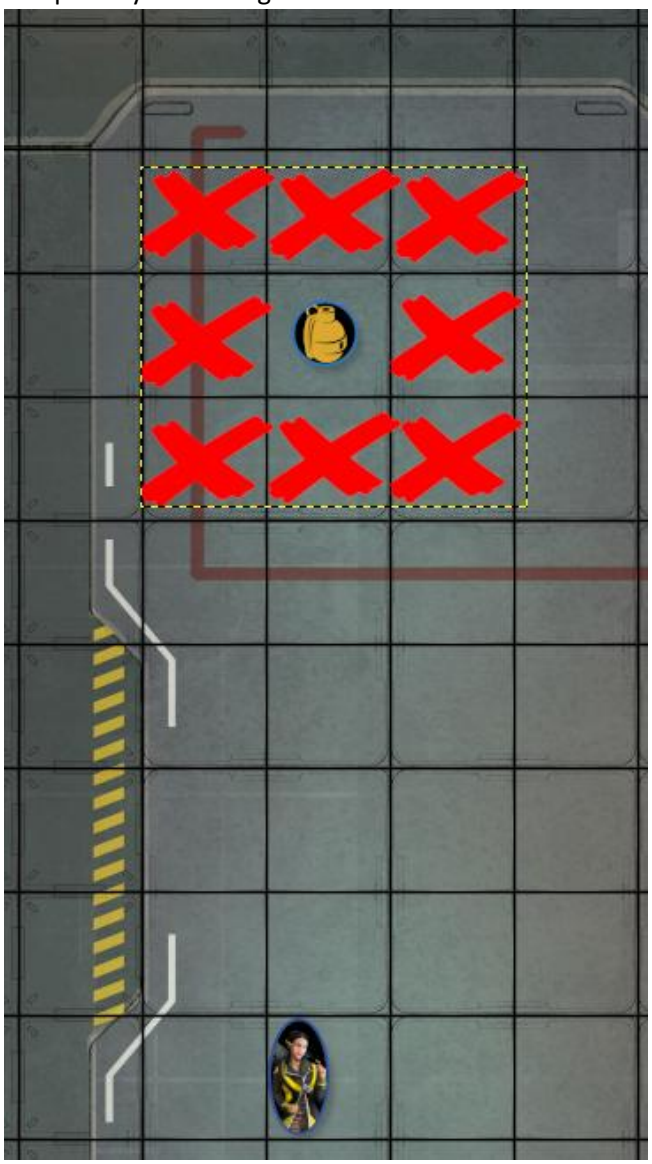
While grenades will sometimes deal substantial damage, that is not their primary purpose since targets can usually escape the grenade's AOE before it goes off. Instead, throwing a grenade is used to force enemies to move, spending much of their next turn moving and potentially being forced out of cover.

Grenade Example: In the grenade example, the Trickster is throwing a concussion grenade into the grenade marked square. She has a Dexterity of 6 and Brawn of 4, so her total attack roll is 3d8+2. (+6 from Dexterity but -4 for being 4 points below the weapon's Brawn requirement of 8.) She then has a -16 range penalty from one increment; this is dropped to -8 if she had spent her Move Phase to aim. The square cannot have cover, but it can be concealed or obstructed. (Unlike most ranged weapons, every ranged increment for grenades is 5 squares (10m).

On the turn she throws the grenade she has to hit the target square with a DD of 0 with her total roll of 3d8-14, or 3d8-6 if she had aimed. If she rolls a 0+, but a grenade token on the square. If the total is below 0 she misses and nothing happens.

At the beginning of the next turn's Ranged Phase the grenade explodes. Any foe in the grenade token's square is automatically critically hit. The Trickster then rolls 3d8+2 against everyone in an X square.

There are now no ranged penalties or concealment penalties. If anyone in an X square is taking cover from the grenade then there is a -20 penalty to hit them specifically as the grenade is an explosive and the normal -10 penalty is multiplied by two. No one can aim an explosion, so there is no way to reduce this penalty via aiming.



If anyone in an X square is missed, they may move up to their movement to escape the explosion's AOE or get behind cover from the explosion. If they can't reach an edge in that distance (potentially due to walls etc.) they do not move and take half damage.

The 6d6 damage is then rolled once and applied to everyone who was hit by the grenade.

Melee Phase

All characters attacking in the Melee Phase roll their attack rolls at the same time and may be rolled against any target who has been in melee range at any point since the Movement Phase. A character's Melee attack roll becomes their defense score for the rest of the round. If you make more than one melee attack you use your first attack as your defense score, chosen before rolling.

For example: Mark is in melee with three volucris slashers, and he chose to attack slasher C before rolling his attack. After modifiers, Mark rolls an 18. Slasher A rolls a 15, slasher B rolls a 20, and slasher C rolls an 18. Since slasher A rolled below Mark's roll, he misses as Mark parries his claws. Slasher B hits Mark because he rolled higher than Mark did. Since Mark and slasher C both rolled an 18, they both hit each-other. If Mark had chosen to attack Slasher B before his roll then he would have missed.

Melee Action Replacements

1. Movement
2. Dodge
3. Special (specific Talents may allow Action Replacements)

After you hit and deal damage to a foe in melee, you may choose to Disengage after the melee phase is over.

If you are not rolling an attack roll in the Melee Phase against someone who you are in melee range of, your defenses are as normal, with most melee attacks are targeting your target's DD (Dodge Defense) by default, but some special attacks may target your character's MD or BD.

Disengage: You may choose to move up to your movement range in any direction.

Dodge Back: Any target may, if they're engaged in melee, choose to Dodge Back instead of their chosen Action. This allows them to step back 2 meters (1

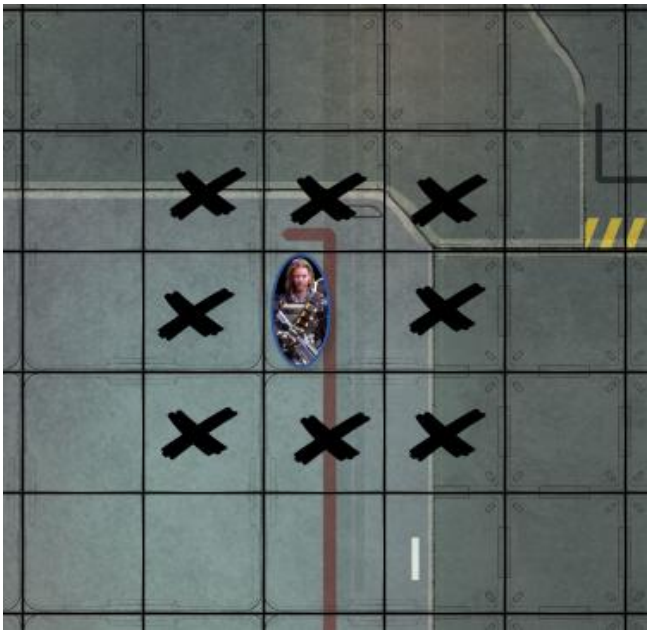
square) and double their Dodge Defense for the rest of the turn. If there is no empty space for the target to move to out of range of the attacker, they may not Dodge Back.

Melee Attack: Any attack made against a target in melee range with a melee weapon or with a melee Talent.

Ranged Attack: You may fire a ranged weapon in melee. If firing at a target in melee range then you take all appropriate melee penalties and acts as a melee attack for your defense score etc.

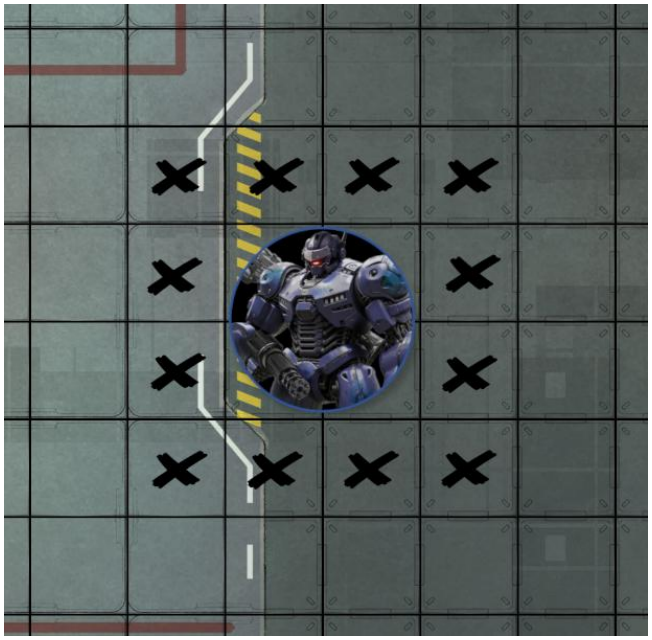
If you fire at a target outside of melee range then you take the -16 melee penalty to hit unless you are 2+ damage scale larger than any enemy which you are in melee range of. Doing so means that you use your passive defense in melee this turn.

Melee Range: A character's melee range is one square around their own square(s) in all directions. The Diagram: Melee Range 1 shows an infantry or exo-suit scale character's melee range, while Diagram: Range 2 shows a mecha scale character's melee range. If a foe is in or passes through a character's melee range at any time during a turn, they may make a melee attack against them in the melee phase. This does not apply to the character who is moving through their foe's melee range.



Any target currently in your melee range or who you are making a melee attack against counts as being in melee against you.

Diagram: Threat Range 2 (mecha scale)



Melee Advantages/Disadvantages		
1. Drawing a weapon after already engaged in melee	-4	

2. Each additional opponent beyond the first that you are in the melee threat range of.	**-1**	**Doesn't apply for opponents more than one scale smaller than you are.**
3. Each scale larger you are than your target.	***+4**	***Only applies when attacking their Melee Defense. Does not increase your melee defense.**
4. Using a ranged weapon in two hands.	**-4**	
5. Target has cover and has not moved this turn.	**-2**	**Soft cover does not apply**

Moving Through an Occupied Square:

Sometimes you can pass through an occupied square.

Ally: You can move through a square occupied by any creature which you do not consider an enemy. This does apply to mecha, but not to vehicles. If both you and the ally are human-scale, you can share a single square with one ally without being crowded. Otherwise you are considered crowded.

Crowded: If you take any action while crowded, you take a -1 penalty to all rolls and defenses for each ally or enemy that you share a square with. This does not apply if you are 2+ scale larger than they are.

Dead of Helpless Foe: You can move through a square occupied by an enemy which isn't putting up a fight due to being helpless, unconscious, or dead. This counts as difficult terrain unless you are 2+ scale larger.

Enemy: If you enter the square of an enemy it counts as difficult terrain and you do not add your Agility to your Dodge Defense against them the turn in which you move into or through their square. You cannot add your Brawn or Agility to any rolls against them this turn.

Ending in an Enemy Square: If you end your movement in a square with an enemy, the only actions that you can normally take this turn is to attack them in the melee phase or make an additional melee action. You cannot add your Brawn or Agility to any rolls against them this turn.

Enemy Is in Your Square: If an enemy character moves into your square, you may choose to Disengage at the end of the melee phase unless they hit you with a melee attack and deal damage this turn.

Designer Note: These additional melee actions are not intended to be optimal choices in combat from the perspective of defeating an opponent. Instead, they are meant to fill in the gaps so that the players have the chance to do nearly anything.

In addition, while stabbing someone to finish them off should be easier, sometimes tackling them and holding them down is a better choice if you need to capture them or want to interrogate them or for some other reason. Sometimes the PCs can still make these actions viable via circumstances, such as when the foes' morale breaks and they're no longer fighting back.

The GM should not make rules to allow these actions to become optimal strategies in combat as the system and lore do not support such.

Additional Melee Actions

There are some other actions which you may want to take in the melee phase which aren't generally covered by the rules, such as grabbing, tripping, or pushing your foe. As a general rule, you should make an unarmed attack roll to begin the maneuver combined with opposed ability checks with the target. It should be noted though, as these actions aren't actually melee attacks, they do not become your defense score for the rest of the turn.

Scaling

The scaling of both damage and your target has a major impact on the damage done.

When you go into combat across the galaxy, not everything that you go up against will be anywhere near your size as a human. Whether a slavering chimeric beast, a metallic capek giant, a hulking krakiz towering over you, or a fellow human jockeying a mecha, none of them use the same mechanics as humans.

Scale	Multiplier	Size
Human	X1	1x1 squares
Exosuit	X2	1x1 squares
Mecha	X4	2x2 squares
Tank	X8	3x3 squares

There are four different scales in Space Dogs. These are, in order from smallest to largest, human scale, exosuit scale, mecha scale, and tank scale.

A human scale target and a mecha scale one could well have a similar amount of vitality and life, but at the larger scale, the mecha can take far more punishment. This is because damage also has a scale. Each scale smaller halves all damage, while each scale higher doubles the life and physical damage dealt, but not of vitality damage. For example, an assault rifle which, after rolling, deals 18 points of damage at the human scale, it would deal only 9 damage on the exosuit scale, 5 points at the mecha scale, or 3 points at the tank scale. (Damage always rounds up.) If the character jockeying a mecha has 4 Vitality points left, the jockey will lose 4 Vitality points and 1 Life.

The reverse is also true. A tank scale weapon which dealt 5 points of damage would deal 10 damage at the mecha scale, 20 at the exoskeleton scale, or 40 at the human scale. However, against a human target with 4 vitality left, the human target would lose those 4 Vitality, using up 4/5 of the original damage, and then take 8 Life points of damage after multiplying the remaining point of damage by 8. This is because higher scale damage never increases against Vitality points.

This system means that if a character has enough Vitality points remaining, mecha or tank scale weapons will deal the same damage to them that they would to a mecha or tank scale target respectively.

In addition to differences in damage, higher scale creatures take up more space on the grid. While both human and exosuit scale creatures take up one space on the grid, unlike human scale, exo-suit scale can't share a square with an ally, mecha scale creatures take up foursquares in 2x2, while tank scale creatures take up nine squares in a 3x3 on the battle-grid.

Armor and Scaling: Damage from a higher scale gains Armor Piercing against lower scale armor, ignoring it entirely.

Weapons and Scaling: Most weapons deal damage at the same scale as the creature who is wielding it. A human wielding an assault rifle or a boarding axe will deal damage at the human scale while and exosuit wielding an assault rifle or a boarding axe will deal damage at the exosuit scale. (assuming that they are exo scaled weaponry) However, there are exceptions. A human wielding a rocket launcher will deal damage at the tank scale while a mecha wielding an Anti-Personnel Pistol will deal damage at the human scale.

Defenses and Scaling: As scale goes up, a target becomes tougher but easier to hit. This increases a target's Body Defense but decreases their Dodge Defense. When firing at a mecha or tank scale target you also ignore the first ranged increment. When firing at a Tank scale target you cut all ranged penalties in half – which can stack with Aiming. Scaling does not change Mental Defense. See the below table for changes.

Sharing an enemy square: If you are sharing a square with an enemy which is at least two squares smaller than you are, that does not prevent you from attacking foes which are not in your square(s), nor does it give you any penalties against foes which are not in your square(s).

Squeezing: A character (not a vehicle) may squeeze through an area one square too small for it, such as a mecha scale character squeezing through a corridor only 2m wide. Squeezing counts as difficult terrain and you cannot add your Agility score to Dodge Defense while Squeezing.

Scale	Dodge Defense	Body Defense
Human	2+Agility	2+Brawn
Exosuit	0+Agility	6+Brawn
Mecha	0+Agility*	10+Brawn
Tank	0+Agility**	14+Brawn

***When attacking a Mecha or Tank scale target, ignore the first ranged increment penalty when targeting DD.**
****Cut all range penalties in half against Tank scale targets when targeting DD.**

Damage Scale vs Target Table				
	Human Scale Damage	Exo-suit Scale Damage	Mecha Scale Damage	Tank Scale Damage
Human Scale Vitality	x1	x1	x1	x1
Human Scale Life	x1	x2	x4	x8
Exo-suit Scale Vitality	x1/2	x1	x1	x1
Exo-suit Scale Life	x1/2	x1	x2	x4
Mecha Scale Vitality	x1/4	x1/2	x1	x1
Mecha Scale Life	x1/4	x1/2	x1	x2
Tank Scale Vitality	x1/8	x1/4	x1/2	x1
Tank Scale Life	x1/8	x1/4	x1/2	x1

Damage Scale vs Armor Table				
	Human Scale Damage	Exo-suit Scale Damage	Mecha Scale Damage	Tank Scale Damage
Human Scale Armor	x1	Ignores All Armor	Ignores All Armor	Ignores All Armor
Exo-suit Scale Armor	DR x2	x1	Ignores All Armor	Ignores All Armor

Mecha Scale Armor	DR x4	DR x2	x1	Ignores All Armor
Tank Scale Armor	DR x8	DR x4	DR x2	x1

Special Actions:

Area Attacks: Make a single attack roll against each target in the area, but any bonus modifier such as Boost normally only applies against one foe. Roll only once for damage against all targets.

An area attack automatically attacks everyone that the target(s) are in melee with, whether or not they are in the area of effect themselves.

Critical Hit: If you roll an attack roll which is 10+ higher than your target's defense, the attack's damage bypasses Vitality to strike directly against either Life (physical) or Psyche (mental) depending upon the nature of the attack.

Note: A character with Grit may spend one to use Flesh Wound (Chapter 1) to instead take the full damage to their Vitality and half of the base damage to their Life/Psyche.

Run: You may move up to your Run Speed (normally 3 squares for humans). In any turn in which you Run (even before you Run) you gain a bonus to your Dodge Defense (normally +5) for the rest of the turn. You may use Dodge Back in a turn that you Run without having to take a step back so long as you aren't still in melee with the attacker.

You do not threaten targets around you in melee on a turn when you Run or chose to Run.

If you Run in a straight line you may double your run speed but no longer increase your Dodge Defense.

The taking cover penalty doesn't apply when firing at someone who ran this turn, but cover and all other penalties apply normally.

Talent: Many Talents use up your Action, as described in their entry.

Tactical Tip: Different Scale Weapons

A weapon which deals damage at a scale different from the wielder always has additional advantages or disadvantages. For example, while the human scale rocket launcher deals damage at the tank scale, it is heavy, inaccurate, has to be reloaded after each shot, and its damage numbers will not be increased if your target still has sufficient Vitality. This makes a rocket launcher nearly always a subpar weapon to use against other human scale targets while allowing you to be a threat even to mechas and tanks.

The opposite is true of weapons which deal a lower scale damage than the wielder. They generally have higher damage and/or accuracy than an equivalent weapon which deals the wielder's scale damage.

You should try to choose the right weapon for the job, commonly a weapon of the same scale as your target or sometimes one higher or lower.

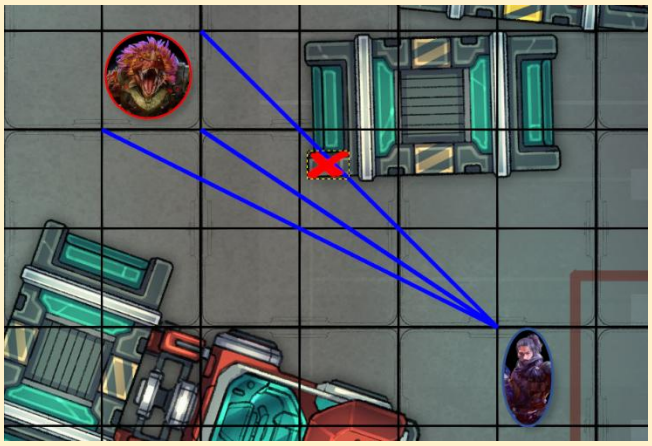
Terrain Modifiers

Cover

Creatures and terrain features can provide cover against attacks. Firing at a target with cover gives you a -4 penalty with ranged attacks, no matter how many creatures and/or terrain features are between it and the attacker. Terrain features that provide cover include cargo crates, walls, doorways, tables, and control consoles etc. As GM, work with your players to let them know what terrain would provide cover to them and/or their foes. Generally you should err on terrain providing cover if it seems viable.

To determine whether there is a cover penalty when firing, start from the closest grid corner to your foe. If any line from that corner to any corner of the target's square goes through a barrier or another creature, the target has cover from you. The target does not have cover if the line runs along or just touches the edge of a wall or other square which would otherwise cause a cover penalty.

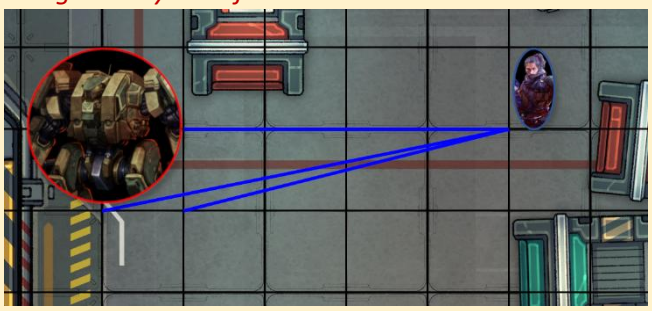
The krakiz has cover from the warrior who takes a -4 penalty to ranged attacks.



For an explosive weapon such as a grenade, determine cover as if the center of the weapons area of effect was the square that you are in.

Larger Scale Targets: Mecha and tank scale characters take up more than one square. When targeting such a creature, you can target just one of the squares which it is in, and if that square does not have any cover then you do not have a penalty to your attacks.

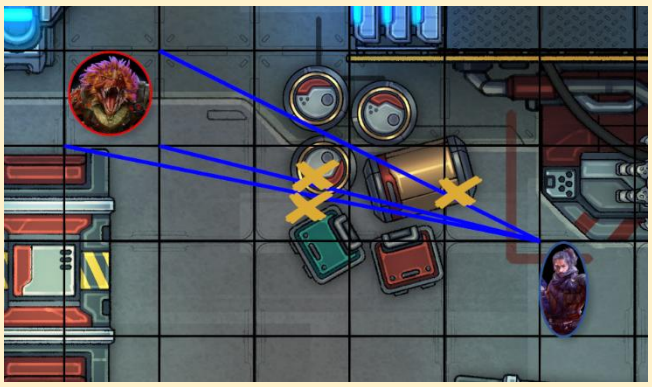
The capek does not have any cover from the warrior's ranged attacks due to one of their squares being entirely out of cover.



Low Objects: Low objects can provide cover so long as they reach the target's waist. This does mean that sometimes the same piece of terrain will give a penalty when firing at one target, but not when firing at another target, such as a human and a mecha respectively. If the target has gone prone, then shorter pieces of terrain will count as cover.

If you are in the same square as short cover or in an adjacent square, it doesn't provide a penalty to your attacks if you can easily fire over or through them.

The krakiz is visible due to the cover being low cover, so the warrior takes a -4 penalty.



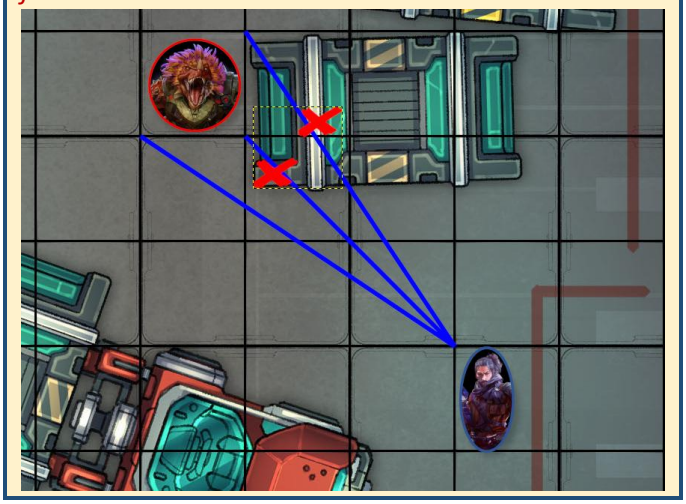
Tactical Tip

In Space Dogs all intelligent combatants, and even some pretty dumb ones, will stick to cover whenever possible. Walking out in the open during a firefight is a good way to get your head blown off.

Taking Cover

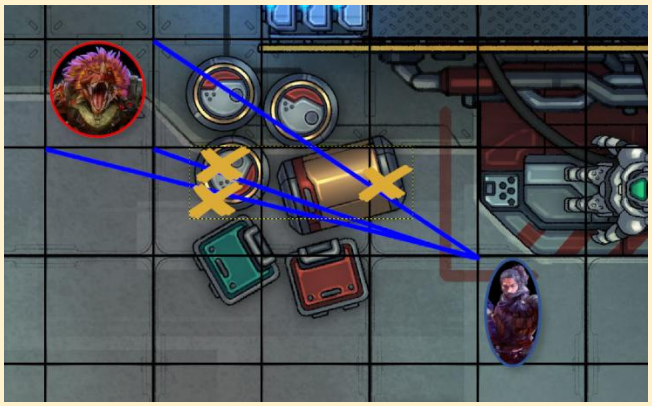
If the target is either in the same square as a piece of cover or in the adjacent square, there is a -10 ranged attack penalty to hit them, as it is assumed that they will be using the cover actively to make them harder to hit. This does not apply if the target is in melee or if they ran this turn, as they will be too busy to actively take cover.

The krakiz is taking cover from the warrior due to being adjacent to the crate. This gives the warrior a -10 penalty to ranged attacks. But with a direct line to at least one corner of the krakiz, the warrior can still fire.



This could be something like the corner of a wall, a computer console which reaches the target's waist, or even a large corpse.

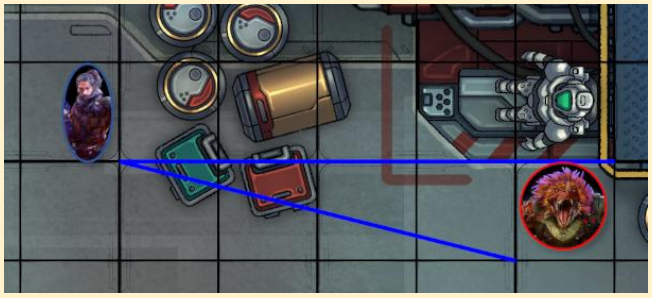
The krakiz is taking cover from the warrior due to being adjacent to the barrel. This gives the warrior a -10 penalty.



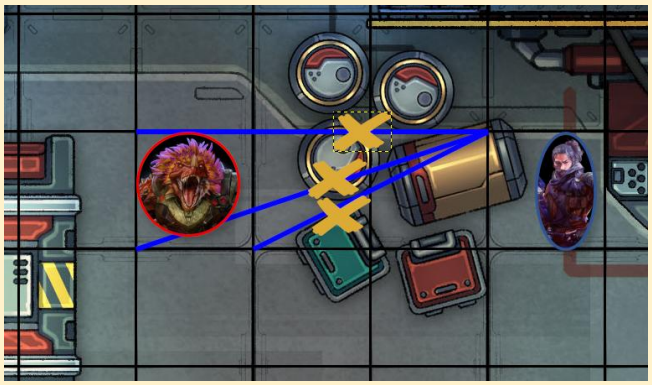
As GM, you can rule that certain cover gives a smaller/larger penalty to attack rolls, but -10 should be the default as too much nuance here can slow down gameplay substantially. For example, firing at someone on the other side of a loophole could provide additional penalties.

Any terrain which you are using to take cover does not give you a cover penalty to hit for shooting over it. But it can still apply a taking cover penalty.

The warrior is taking cover and therefore the terrain does not give him a penalty when firing at the krakiz.



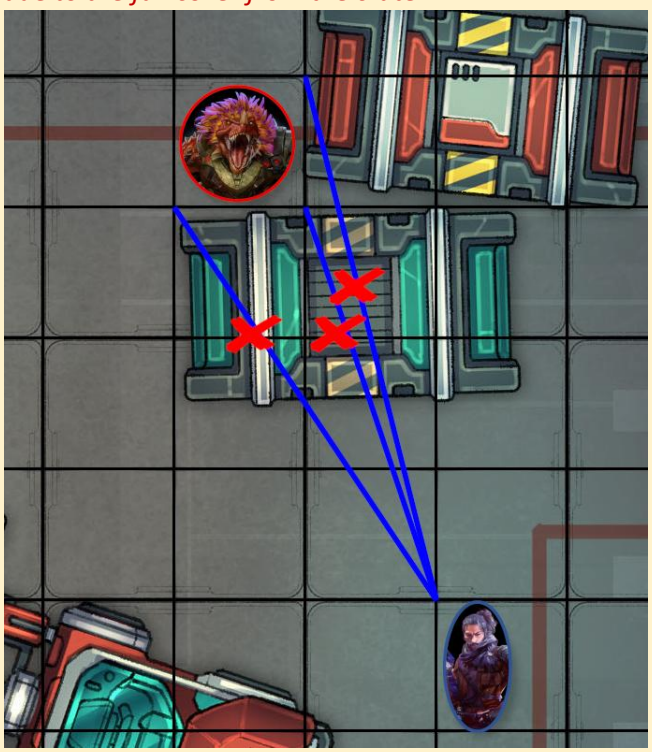
The warrior is taking cover, but as the krakiz is also taking cover, the warrior takes a -10 penalty to hit the krakiz. The krakiz would also take a -10 penalty to fire at the warrior.



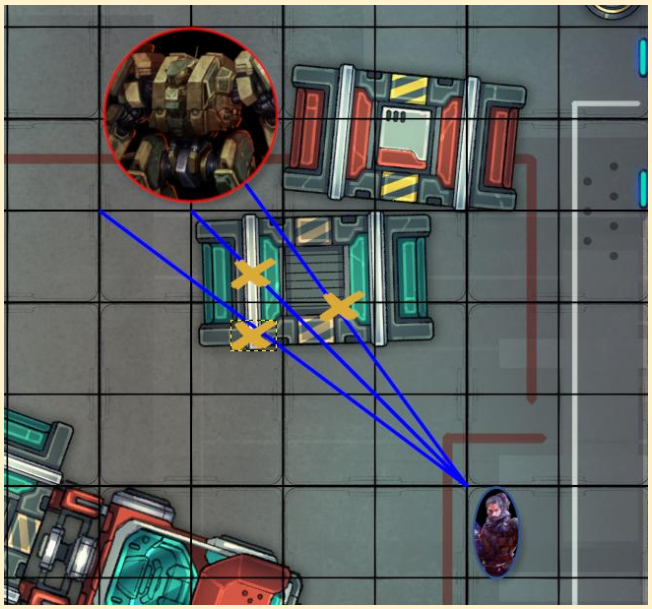
Full Cover: You cannot hit a target with an object totally between you. This would be something such as a wall or a four-meter-high crate blocking all line of sight to a human scale target.

Whether or not something is full cover depends as much upon the size of the target as the cover it is behind.

The krakiz is the approximately the same height or shorter than the crate, then the warrior cannot fire due to the full cover from the crate.



The capek in this example is significantly taller than the crates. The warrior can fire at the capek but takes a -10 penalty to hit. The capek in this case would take no cover penalties to shoot the warrior.



Melee Cover

If your target has cover and has not moved since the start of the turn, you take a -4 penalty to hit them.

If any corner or side near your target has no cover to the target then you do not take this -4 penalty.

The three capeks are in melee with the human warrior. Capek A takes a -4 cover penalty when attacking the warrior while both B & C do not take

any cover penalties.

Concealment

Concealment includes all situations where nothing physically blocks an attack, but where something interferes with the attacker's line of sight. An attacker may have a concealment penalty from fog, smoke, dim lighting, or other effects which make it difficult to pinpoint the target's location.

To determine whether you will take a concealment penalty when firing, start from the closest grid corner to your foe. If any line from that corner to any corner of the target's square goes through a square or border which provides concealment, the target has concealment from you. The target does not have concealment if the line runs along or just touches the edge of a wall or other square which would otherwise cause a cover penalty.

If you attack a target with concealment, you take a -4 penalty on your attack roll.

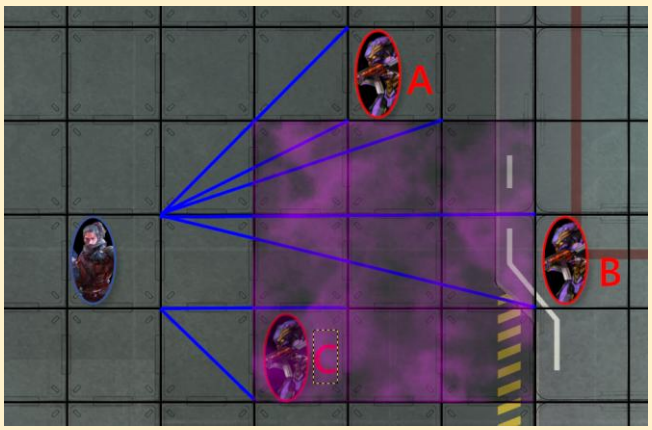
Full Concealment: If you have a line of effect to a target, but you can't see them, (ex: total darkness or when you are blinded), you take the full concealment penalty when attacking them.

You cannot attack a target if you don't know where it is, instead you attack the square where you think it is. If you pick the wrong square, you will always miss.

If you attack a target with full concealment, you take a -10 penalty on your attack roll. This applies to both melee and ranged combat.

The warrior has a concealment penalty when firing at any of the three capek legionaires due to the smoke left by a smoke grenade. The penalty is a -4 for concealment when firing at A or C, while it's a -10 full concealment penalty for B due to firing through 3+ squares of smoke.

It should also be noted that unlike other penalties, the concealment penalties are not increased if the warrior chooses to use auto-fire, though any other penalties would be.



Ignoring Concealment: Concealment and full concealment don't always give their full penalties. For example, using night-vision goggles reduces the full concealment of total darkness into normal concealment. These are exceptions to the normal rules.

Difficult Terrain

Going over rough ground as rubble, buckled decking, etc is considered difficult terrain. Difficult terrain distracts you and gives you -2 to all rolls on a turn you move over it and it costs twice as much movement when running. A creature which is mecha or tank scale counts as moving over difficult terrain if half or more of the squares which they are moving over are difficult terrain.

Not everything which is difficult terrain for human scale characters should be considered difficult for a mecha. For example, marbles spread across decking may be difficult for a human, but they would simply be crushed beneath their solid steel feet.

Conditions/Effects

Being moved: Many different abilities/Talents may push you about the battlefield. While their sources vary greatly, the effect is the same.

Blinded: When blinded all of your defenses are passive. You don't get to add your Agility score to your Dodge Defense when blinded, and all terrain counts as being difficult. You may not run.

You take a -10 on all rolls when you are blinded. This does not combine with concealment penalties, but it does combine with any other penalties. You cannot reduce this penalty by Aiming.

Handicapped: A general category for when a character is at a disadvantage. Whatever the cause, the character takes a -4 to all rolls.

Multiple cases of handicapped do not stack.

Element of Surprise: There are several ways to gain the element of surprise, though the most common is to attack from stealth. When you have the element of surprise there is a surprise round. Your foes are surprised.

Helpless Opponent: A helpless opponent, such as one who is unconscious, bound, etc., is an easy target. If a target is helpless, they do not add their Agility score to their Dodge Defense, and they never count as taking cover. In melee, the helpless opponent does not get to make opposed attack rolls.

Prone: Foes targeting you with firearms take a -2 penalty which does not combine with cover; this includes auto-fire which may be attacking multiple foes. All melee and area attacks get a +4 bonus to hit you. Your movement is ¼ normal speed. You may not Dodge Back or Disengage in melee.

Going prone can be done at the end of any Movement. You need to spend your Movement to stand up from prone. You take a -5 to all rolls the turn in which you stand up.

Being prone may also give a character cover or count as taking cover from smaller objects, subject to the GM's discretion.

Surprise Round: A surprise round is just like a normal combat round except that there is no Movement Phase. Instead, everyone who is not surprised simply declares their Action as their turn comes up.

Surprised: When you are caught totally unaware, such as when you are attacked from stealth, you are surprised. When surprised you are helpless during the surprise round.

Unaware: When your target is unaware of you, you always target their passive defenses in melee. If they are not aware of any foe, they cannot count as taking cover, though normal cover penalties still apply.

Chapter 7: Environmental Rules

Environmental Dangers –

While environmental dangers can vary a great deal, from a mechanical perspective they're all treated similarly. Most environmental dangers are given hazard ratings which you can check at the below table for their effects.

Fire

Fires vary greatly in intensity and how they act based upon both the materials which are burning and the airflow of the area.

Fires cause smoke in a broad area around them. If the players move through an area which is currently aflame or is on fire themselves, they take 1d4 life damage each turn. As with a Critical Hit, you may spend 1 point of Grit to have it become 2x vitality points and 1 life point instead.

If you are on fire you can spend your Action to go prone and put yourself out by rolling on the ground. Something such as a bucket of water or a fire extinguisher may also be used to put you out.

Radiation

Absorbing radiation is never healthy, though there is treatment out in the starlanes. Radiation damage cannot normally be treated via First Aid and only half of the Life damage from radiation can be healed without anti-rad drugs.

Radiation Damage	Mild	Moderate	Severe
1d6 Life Damage	4 Hours of Exposure	30 minutes of Exposure	1 Minute of Exposure

Suffocation

When you can't breathe, you begin to suffer the effects of suffocation. If conscious, you may hold your breath for your Stamina minus 2 minutes.

Once you are no longer holding your breath, either due to the time elapsing or due to falling unconscious you must make a check every five rounds against your BD of:

1d12+number of previous checks

You take life damage equal to the amount which you fail the check by. If you have ranks in Athletics, you may take Vitality damage instead of Life damage each round up to your rank in the Athletics skill.

Vacuum

While being in vacuum may kill you by suffocation before it otherwise becomes an issue, even with a breathing mask being in vacuum will

eventually kill you as due to a variety of complications in blood vessels expanding etc.

In a vacuum you suffer from suffocation and must make a check against your BD of:

1d12+total rounds in the vacuum.

Once the check equals or exceeds your BD you fall unconscious. Every two rounds which you are unconscious in vacuum you take 1 life damage.

Venting

When a room in a starship or space station is vented to space, it isn't instantaneous.

Size Hole	Example	Causes suffocation after…	Causes vacuum after…
Large	A shuttle bay door	3 rounds	1 minute
Medium	A docking port	6 rounds	2 minutes
Small	Am AM rifle's bullet hole	1 minute	5 minutes

Smoke

If you are breathing in heavy smoke, every round you must make a check against your DD of:

1d6+total rounds in the smoke

Once the check equals or exceeds your DD you begin to suffocate.

Note: You can hold your breath before making your first smoke check. (see suffocation rules)

Bombardment

Whether from bomber aircraft, artillery, or spaceships in orbit, bombardment is all treated the same way mechanically. It is either a light, average, or heavy bombardment which will change your chances of getting hit. Each weapon designates how heavy of a bombardment it causes and over how large of an area.

Each round you spend any time within an area under bombardment roll a d20 and see the below table.

	Light Bombardment	Average Bombardment	Heavy Bombardment
Full Damage	Roll of 1 on a 1d20	Roll of 1-2 on a 1d20	Roll of 1-4 on a 1d20
Half Damage	Roll of 2-3 on a 1d20	Roll of 3-6 on a 1d20	Roll of 5-12 on a 1d20

If you both start & end your turn's movement in cover then add +2 to your roll. If you spend the whole turn taking cover then add 4 from your roll. Full cover means that you take no damage from the bombardment, though the cover itself may.

Against gravity bombardment cover doesn't work, but being strapped into a military grade station or being submerged in water can limit the damage. If you spend the entire space combat round in one of those places then you may add +2 to your roll.

Falling Damage

Both falling from a height and having objects fall upon you can cause damage. The below table for falling objects is far from all inclusive, but from it you should be able to approximate the damage. Of note: your armor's damage reduction helps against falling objects, but it doesn't reduce damage when you are the one falling.

If you make an Acrobatics check, you can shift some of the damage from life to vitality. See Acrobatics in Chapter 4 for specifics.

If you take any Life damage from a fall, you end up prone.

Distance Fallen	Damage Taken
4 meters	1d6 vitality
8 meters	1d10 life
12 meters	1d12 life
16 meters	1d20 life
20 meters	2d12 life
24 meters	2d20 life
32 meters	3d20 life
40 meters	4d20 life
+8 meters	+1d20 (max 10d20)

Special: The above table is for approximately Earth's standard gravity, which is close to the average habitable planet's gravity and what most ships and stations for set at. For low gravity double all distances and for high gravity cut them in half.

High Gravity

High gravity is considered anything above 1.5g up to 2.5g. This gives a -2 penalty to all rolls and DD with a -4 penalty to melee attacks. Normal movement is treated as difficult terrain, but Run can be done normally with a TN 8 Athletics check. On a failure you treat the Run as being difficult terrain.

Low Gravity

Low gravity is considered anything below 0.5g and at least 0.05g. Dealing with low gravity environments isn't as easy to deal with as one might think. Humans are designed to run in normal gravity, so lower gravity doesn't increase your speed much. Normal movement is the same. However, all Athletics TNs for jumping and climbing are decreased by 4.

Zero Gravity

Zero gravity only normal movement when one hand is free and they moving across the floor or wall. You may only Run in a straight line and not gain the normal defense bonuses. If you end the Run not against a wall or floor, you keep moving in the same direction the following turn without needing to Run.

All melee attacks are at a -4 penalty. Ranged weapons are at a -2 penalty unless you have a free hand to brace against recoil.

Breaching Walls & Doors

The easiest way to get in or out of a room is through an open door. But it's not the only way. Sometimes the door is locked and you will need to bash through a door or wall with brute force or explosives. And sometimes, that might be the best way to do things even if the door is open.

Melee Breaching

A character can punch through a wall or door equal to or below their character's damage scale (see Table 7.4) with raw power. By default it is a TN 20 Brawn check in the Melee Phase to do so, but you do not fail so long as you get within 10 points of the check. Instead, you take one additional round for each point you fail by.

For example, if a jockey in an Ares mecha with a Brawn of 4 tries bash through a steel door. They roll 1d6+8 (2x Brawn) and get a 12. That means that it will take them 9 total (20-12=8 plus one round baselined) rounds to bash through the door. If you had rolled a 1 for a total of 9,

If that same jockey were to melee breach through a wooden wall or a light steel door, their roll of 12 would be increased to 24 at the exo scale, and they would breach in a single round.

After a wall is breached, it still acts as cover, providing protection against firearms and acting as difficult terrain. A door, other than a blast door, will simply be blasted off its hinges.

Explosive Breaching

Placing demo-string isn't especially difficult, but doing so safely does normally require one minute per spool. To go quicker and/or use fewer spools, see the Demolitions skill in Chapter 4. The base number of demolition charges needed is shown in Table 7.4.

Designer Note: Both Melee Breaching and Explosive Breaching are simple by design to encourage their use in play. As the GM, you shouldn't feel totally boxed in by the definitions here. If you want a particular blast door to be a bit harder or easier to breach – you should feel free to make it so. But these are a good baseline to help maintain a consistent feeling world.

After a wall is breached, it still acts as cover, providing protection against firearms and taking two squares of movement to bypass. A door, other than a blast door, will simply be blasted off its hinges.

When the demolition charges go off, any target within four meters (2 squares) of the explosion takes 2 Life Points of damage per charge. This is only on the side of the explosion; no damage is dealt to targets on the other side.

Table 7.4

Toughness of Surface	Examples	Damage Scale	Demolition Charges Minimum
Flimsy	Drywall / Thin Wood Door / Folding Chair	Human Scale	1
Weak	Wooden wall / Wood Door / Light Steel Door / Normal Table / Human Scale Shield	Exo Scale	1
Average	Heavy Wood Door / Steel Door Interior Ship Wall / Exo Scale Shield	Mecha Scale	2
Solid	Military Ship Wall / Basic Blast Door / Ship Ceiling & Floor / Mecha Scale Shield	Tank Scale	3
Armored*	Ship Hull / Safe / Tank Scale Shield	Armor Piercing Tank Scale	6
Fortified*	Capital Ship Hull / Military Safe Door / Bunker	n/a	10

**Cannot be penetrated via explosive breaching when untrained in demolitions and cannot be normally melee breached*

Penetrating Shot

Firearms can penetrate through many surfaces. Table 7.4's "Damage Scale" shows the max level that each scale weapon can normally penetrate. Firearms with armor piercing can penetrate one level higher, but they lose their armor piercing quality when they do so. If you shoot to penetrate cover, you take a

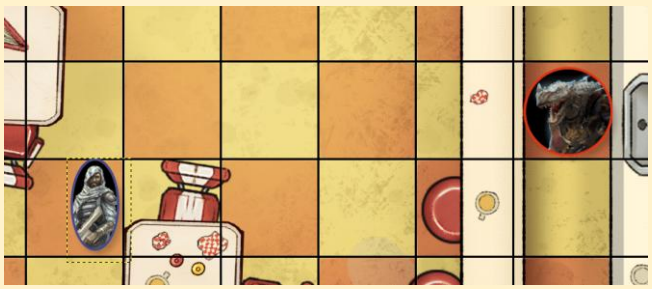
penalty as if firing through concealment. If you shoot to penetrate full cover, you take a penalty as if firing through full concealment.

Explosive weapons such as rocket launchers or grenades don't penetrate – instead dealing damage to the cover itself.

In this example, the Deadshot and the krakiz marauder are both Taking Cover behind the chair and counter respectively. The chair is "flimsy" while the counter is "weak".

The deadshot has a sniper rifle with AP, and rather than take the -10 Taking Cover penalty he decides to make a Penetrating Shot to instead take a -4 Concealment penalty. Since the counter is exo scale, the sniper rifle can still penetrate despite being human scale, but it loses the armor piercing quality. Human scale AP doesn't help against the krakiz's exo scale armor anyway, so no loss.

The krakiz returns fire and follows suit, deciding to make a Penetrating Shot against the Deadshot. As the chair is human scale and the krakiz is firing exo-scale firearms, it easily penetrates to lower the penalty from -10 for Taking Cover to -4 for Concealment. This shot would penetrate even if the krakiz were to use a shotgun – which acts as human scale against armor and for penetrating shots.



Light & Darkness

Humans and nearly all other sapient species are vision based creatures. For that reason, virtually all ships, stations, and interior spaces are lit as much or more than they would be on Earth with various artificial means. In fact, humans are rare in that they prefer darkness when sleeping as well as dimmer lighting in ship passages during their sleep cycle, possibly because most sapient species were never really at the top of their homeworld's food chain.

When in total darkness you are treated as being blinded (see Chapter 6 page 121), and in both total darkness and dim light you gain a bonus on your Stealth checks (see Chapter 4 page 94).

Chapter 8: Mecha & Exo-suits

Exo-suits and mecha are powerful weapons, especially in the confines of starship corridors where conventional vehicles wouldn't fit. What is shown in this chapter are only exo & mecha for humans – which can never be jockeyed by other species, and at the same time humans cannot jockey mecha for other species.

Jockey Strain: Due to the jockey's nervous system being linked up to their mecha, any damage to the mecha can have significant trauma to the brain. Any time the exo/mecha takes Life damage, roll 1d6+damage taken vs your MD. You take Psyche damage equal the amount over your Mental Defense you rolled.

Mecha Physical Attributes: Mecha and exo-suits both use the Brawn, Dexterity, and Agility of the jockey, but are limited by the chassis and the jockey's Willpower. In addition, some mecha and exosuits adjust the jockey's attributes up or down. (Note: The maximum attribute listed includes the bonus/penalty.)

The mecha can be upgraded to allow for higher maximum attributes, but only for a specific jockey; it is still treated as a base model for any other jockey.

Sizes: The size of human jockeyed mecha come in two distinct sizes. This is because each of the exosuits and mecha share hand sizes so that they can also share weaponry between the different exosuit and mecha models respectively.

Runtime: Each exo/mecha has a maximum of 4 hours of runtime before it runs out of power and needs to be recharged for 12 hours.

This is generally a non-issue for boarding actions, but it could come up during protracted usage on-planet or even extended action on larger space stations. The battery cannot be removed and/or replaced as that would be a weakness in the design.

Durability: If the jockey has Durability instead of Vitality/Life, then the exo/mecha's durability is 1/2 of the listed Life pool.

History of mecha: The builders first came up with the neural technology for mecha for construction purposes. It seems that to the builders, construction is an almost spiritual process, so they wanted a way to come as close as possible to building by hand as they had done in ages past.

The first step in the process is a surprisingly minor surgery which implants an interface into the jockey's nervous system, and then wiring a mecha's internal circuitry to match. Once that is done, a jockey simply needs to jack into their personalized mecha to be able to control it just as if it were their own body, no special skills or training required.

Due to this, the cockpit of mecha are very small, the padding of the cockpit tightening further once the jockey is jacked in to keep them safe. The jockey's own arms and legs move in conjunction with their mecha's, so whether it's construction or combat, doing it in a mecha is just as physically tiring as doing the equivalent by hand, and it's more of a mental strain.

Mecha are, by their nature, close in proportion to the species which they're created for. While the mechas that the builders create for their own use have four arms and are relatively squat for their size, those that they create for humans have two arms and legs. In addition, any weapons systems have to be used manually through the pulling of triggers etc., as, according to the builders, incorporating weapons systems which could be activated through a separate control system would cause massive strain upon the mind of the jockey, quickly causing permanent brain damage and possibly even death.

Exosuits

While not as powerful as their 'big brothers' the mecha, exosuits are potent in their own right. They're more numerous on any battlefield, and unlike mecha, exosuits can fit nearly anywhere that a human can. This allows exosuit jockeys to take the battle into buildings, and often more importantly, into the smaller passages of spaceships and stations.

Exo-Suits

Exo	Cost
Achilles	$48,500
Beowulf	$55,000

Mecha

Mecha	Cost
Ares	$325,000
Tyr	$362,000

Adjustment of Exo/Mecha

As Exo-suits and Mecha both hook directly into the user's nervous system, their circuitry needs to be adjusted to match their jockey.

This is included when purchasing a mecha new, but if scavenged from a battlefield, the exo or mecha will need to be rewired before it can be used by one of the PCs. This does not include the costs of major repairs which may be needed. This adjustment also destroys any neural upgrades made for the previous jockey.

Exo	**$10,000**
Mecha	**$40,000**
Tank-Scale	**$100,000**

Neural Upgrades

After the initial conversion of a mecha to allow a new jockey to control it, it can be further upgraded to increase the maximum attributes of the mecha. Each upgrade point increases your maximum Brawn, Dexterity, and Agility by 1 point but lowers your MD by 1 point due to the additional mental load.

On the below table are the total costs. So upgrading from a +1 to +2 exo would be $30k.

	+1 max attributes	+2 max attributes	+3 max attributes
Exo	**$10k**	**$40k**	**$90k**
Mecha	**$40k**	**$120k**	**$250k**
Tank-Scale	**$100k**	**$400k**	**$900k**

Achilles

The most common human exosuit on the battlefield and arguably the most versitile, the Achilles combines solid firepower with the maneuverability to get around the battlefield to wherever he's most needed.

Achilles
Height: 2.37 meters
Weight (empty): 204 kilos
Brawn max: Willpower/+0
Dexterity max: 1+Willpower
Agility max: 1+Willpower
Life: 12 (Exo)
Damage reduction: 4 (Exo)
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 6sqs (12 meters)
Armament: Integrated shortsword (comes out of a sheath behind the right hand like a claw; no penalty when drawn, but no other weapon may be wielded in that hand at the same time)

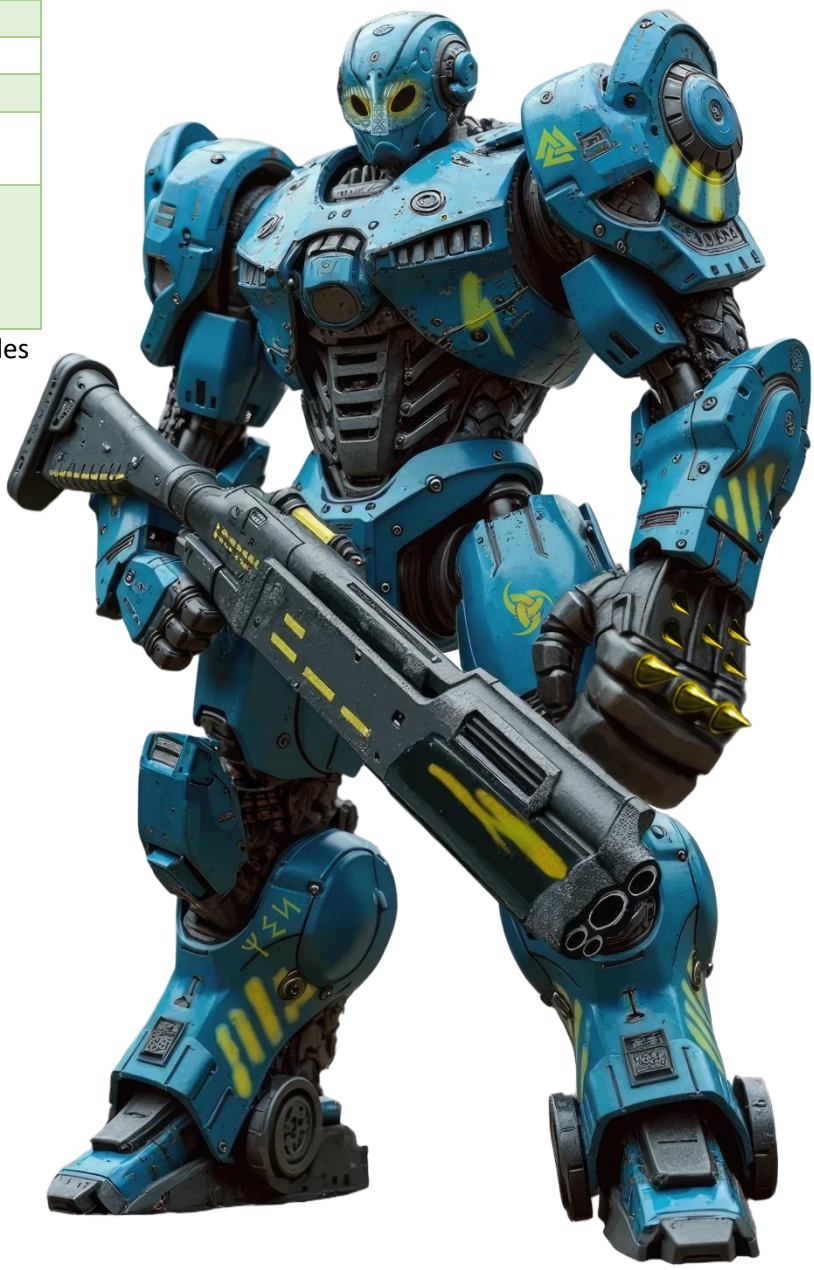
Standard Gear: Assault Rifle / Pistol / 2 Concussion Grenades / Polearm

Beowulf

The Beowulf was the first exosuit designed entirely by humans, though of course the builders actually built them as they refuse to share the technology involved. The Beowulf was designed to be used in more confined areas, using his shotgun against soft targets and closing to melee against more armored targets.

Beowulf
Height: 2.26 meters
Weight (empty): 243 kilos
Brawn max: 2+Willpower /+0
Dexterity max: Willpower
Agility max: Willpower
Life: 14 (Exo)
Damage reduction: 5 (Exo)
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 4sqs (8 meters)
Armament: Hammerfist: The Beowulf's left hand has the same combat ability as a boarding axe in melee combat. It can still be used to help wield a two-handed firearm.

Standard Gear: Shotgun / 4 Concussion Grenades / Pistol



Chapter 8-2: Mecha

Ares

The first mecha created for humans, the Ares is still the mainstay mecha of The Armada. A well-rounded mecha, the Ares is generally considered the jack of all trades and master of none.

Ares	
Height:	**3.39 meters**
Weight (empty):	**1,124 kilos**
Brawn max:	**1+Willpower/+0**
Dexterity max:	**1+Willpower**
Agility max:	**Willpower**
Life: 13 (Mecha)	
Damage reduction:	**4 (Mecha)**
Base Movement Speed: 2sqs (4 meters) / Run: 5sqs (10 meters)	

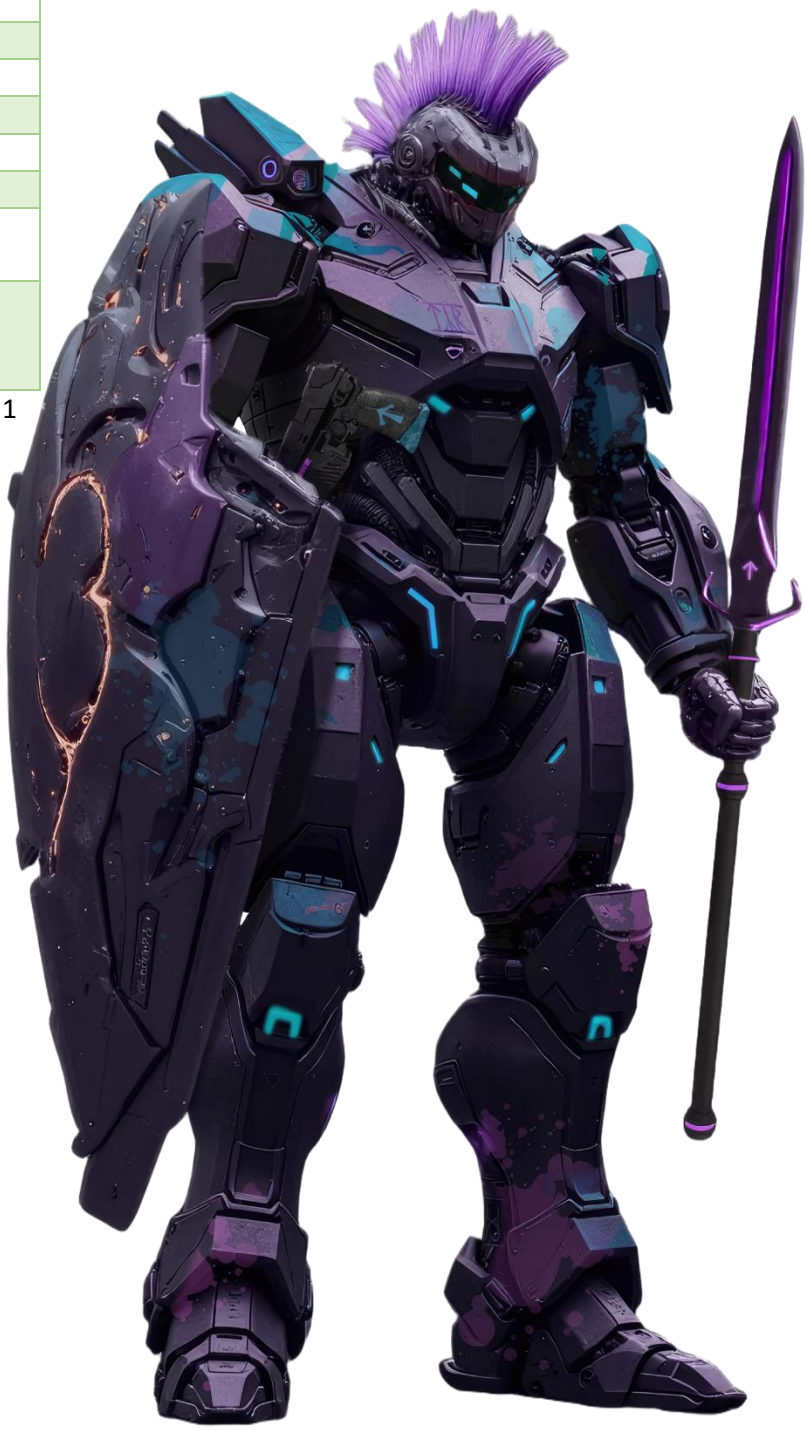
Standard Gear: ST Pistol/Assault Rifle/ Longsword

Tyr

With a massive shield instead of a right hand, Tyr specializes in protecting his squad-mates, especially closing with and shutting down powerful opponents, though even Tyr can't hold back against overwhelming odds forever.

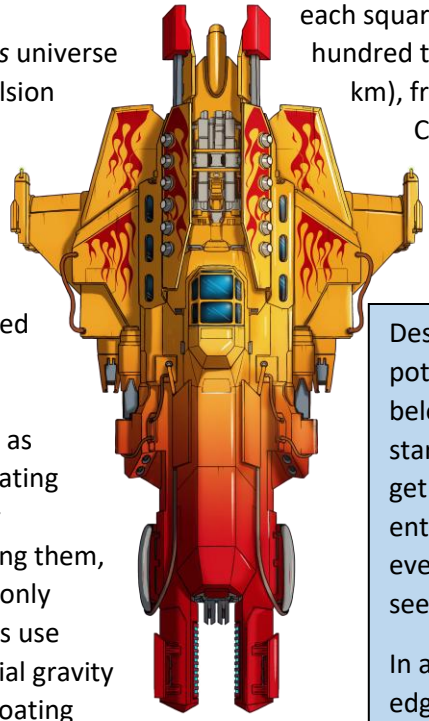
Tyr
Height: 3.22 meters
Weight (empty): 1,266 kilos
Brawn max: 1+Willpower/+0
Dexterity max: 1+Willpower
Agility max: Willpower
Life: 15 (Mecha)
Damage reduction: 6 (Mecha)
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 6sqs (12 meters)
Armament: Shield Arm: Tyr's right hand is a massive shield and counts as being a Tank scale shield when used to block.

Standard Gear: Hand Cannon / Dueling Blade / 1 Fusion Shell.



Chapter 9: Starships

To travel the starlanes, you will need to ride on a starship, whether as a passenger, one you purchase, or a starship you wrest away from pirates. Whatever the case, there are some things which you'll need to know about starships and how they work before piloting a starship across the starlanes.



Starships in the *Space Dogs* universe use two primary kinds of propulsion in addition to maneuvering thrusters. All ships have gravity engines, which are what allow ships to travel quickly around star-systems. While the builders haven't shared the science behind it; gravity engines work by locking onto masses of significant mass such as stars and planets, then exaggerating and twisting the effects of their gravitational pulls, even reversing them, something like electromagnets only with gravity. The gravity engines use similar technology to the artificial gravity on ships which keeps us from floating while onboard our ships. One drawback though, is that they only work properly within the plane of the star-system due to needing to push and pull at two or more gravity wells to maneuver properly, so there's a limit to how high or low you can get within a star system using a gravity engine while still being able to maneuver properly.

In addition to gravity engines, interstellar starships also have warp drives, which are what allow starships to traverse the starlanes. Warp drives create a bubble of our reality around the spacecraft, and then warps the space around it to allow the ship to exceed the speed of light relative to the outside universe. Even so, it takes days or even weeks to travel between systems. If two warp bubbles intersect, they will merge, putting both spacecraft into the same warp bubble.

Space combat uses a grid in the same way as normal combat. However, in space combat each square is two hundred thousand by two hundred thousand kilometers (200k km x 200k km), from here on referred to as SCS (Space Combat Square). To put that into perspective, if the Earth's Sun were to be placed in the center of a square, Earth would be

Design note: While a ship could potentially enter a system well above or below the plane of a star-system, the star's gravity well wouldn't allow them to get any closer to the star than they could if entering on the plane of the system, and everyone in the system would be able to see them coming in anyway.

In addition, aiming at the upper or lower edges of the star's gravity well to pop their warp bubble would be dangerous and risk missing the system entirely and being stuck in the warp. For a high risk they would be able to come into a system where there is nothing to interact with and no closer than they could otherwise.

For these reasons, despite it being possible with the technology available, there are no rules for doing so or for going more than one step above or below the star-system's plane.

However, if it does come up in your game, you should feel free to make whatever rulings seem most appropriate.

approximately 750 SCS away. In addition, each round of space combat is five minutes in length, or 100 normal rounds of combat. To give you an idea of the distances involved, it would take an average starship (speed of 3) approximately twenty hours and fifty minutes to travel the distance between the Earth and the Sun, or one AU (Astronomical Unit).

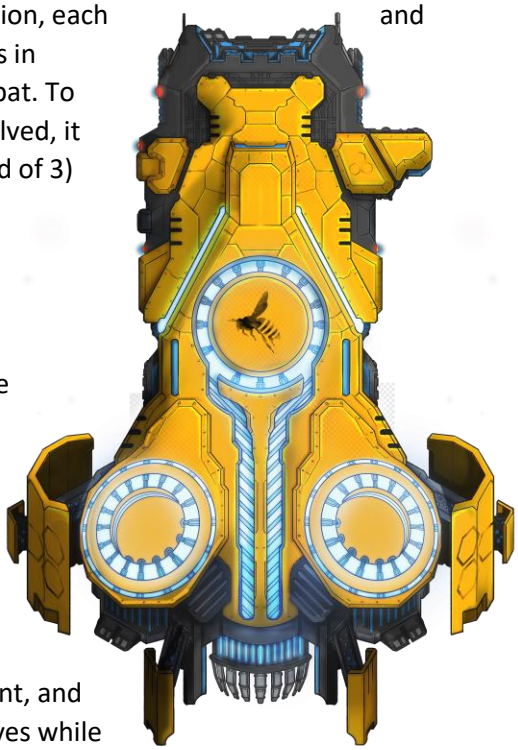
The SCS grid should be across the plane of a star system. Due to the nature of gravity engines, moving above or below the plane of the system is slower. A spacecraft may move above or below the plane of the star system (use a marker next to that ship's token on the grid) but doing so costs two points of movement, and each square along the grid a ship moves while above or below the plane of the system costs two points of movement. When you go above or below the plane of the system you are moving one to three hundred thousand kilometers above the plane of the system, as each Space Combat Square is really a cube.

A starship may go into or out of orbit of a planet by using two squares of movement when already in the planet's SCS.

Starships and other vehicles have hull points instead of life points, but it is largely treated the same way except by default all damage is dealt directly to the hull with ranks in Piloting allowing the pilot to take some of the damage to their Vitality.

Space Combat

Combat rounds in space combat work the same as in normal ground combat. In the Movement Phase you may move a number of squares equal to your movement point score and



then choose an Action. Unlike in ground combat you may not spend your Action to run or to more than your ship's movement total for the turn.

Crew Roles

Pilot

Every ship has a pilot. A pilot is the one who rolls Piloting checks in dogfighting checks and fires the ships' dogfighting weapons.

Co-Pilot

A Full Space Turn –

1. Initiative Phase: 3d6 is rolled with the PCs acting first on a 10+.

2. Movement Phase: In initiative order each side moves and chooses their Action(s), including their targets.

3. Ranged Phase: Every ship which is not in a dogfight fires long-range weapons in initiative order.

4. Dogfight Phase: Every ship in the same SCS as their chosen foe is in a dogfight and make opposed Piloting checks. The winners' dogfighting weapons automatically hit and all ships may fire defensive weapons. If the ship is Boarding, they may board a damaged enemy ship instead of firing weapons if they roll higher than their target on the Piloting check.

Some ships have controls for a co-pilot. A co-pilot makes a Piloting check whenever the pilot does at a -1 dice penalty, and the ship uses the higher of the two rolls.

Gunner

A gunner fires one of the ship's weapons other than dogfighting weapons.

Engineer

Capital ships have room to do significant repair work while the ship is still in-flight. Their ship may ignore a damaged effect the following turn by making a Repair: Starships skill check equal to 2x the number of hull points taken.

Dogfighting

All starships acting in the Dogfighting Phase roll Piloting checks modified by their ship's maneuverability, and taking a -1 penalty on their Pilot check for each enemy ship of the same scale or larger targeting them. Rolling equal or higher than your target's Piloting check makes all Dogfighting weapons automatically hit any target currently in the same SCS. If you roll lower than your target's Piloting check then only Defensive weapons may be fired.

The difference between your Piloting check and your target's acts as a bonus or penalty to all other attack rolls for the rest of the turn.

Boarding Action

A Boarding Action is considered a special type of Dogfighting which you may choose during the Initiative Phase. You may only use a Boarding Action against a ship and/or section which has taken hull damage.

Design note: In case it wasn't obvious, the scales Hunter, Escort, and Mothership were chosen to match up to Human, Exo-suit, and Mecha scales. This means that they can have (H), (E), and (M) as a part of their stats and you don't have to really learn another set of scales entirely.

When attempting to board, roll a penalty die on the Piloting check during the Dogfighting Phase. The TN to board the target ship is their Piloting check minus the hull damage they have taken in the section you are boarding. This does mean that you can be hit by dogfighting weapons and still successfully board the enemy ship.

When boarding, your docking bay will be up against the ship's damaged section in a randomized location. The connection is not sealed and requires a vac suit to board the enemy ship. You have a total of two and a half minutes (50 normal combat rounds) before the enemy ship(s) can react in the following space combat. The ship you are boarding cannot fire upon you.

Scale

Much like infantry level combat, starships and space stations have various scales, though there are only three scales rather than four. These scales are Hunter, Escort, Mothership, after their three primary military roles. They interact the same way as the smallest three other scales. However, if the space combat scales do ever interact with the infantry combat scales, it should be noted that the Hunter scale should be considered the equivalent of the Tank scale if it were to interact with non-starship weaponry.

Mothership Piggybacking

A single Escort scale ship can attach to a Mothership scale ship; hence the term Mothership. If doing so the Escort will have the same Dodge Defense as the Mothership.

This piggybacking allows the ships to travel through the warp together, as detailed in Chapter 16: Warp Travel. Piggybacking may only be done when both the Escort ship and Mothership pilots are working in concert.

Ship Abilities

Boarding: This is some sort of tool such as grappling arms or boarding drill which make boarding actions easier. A ship with the Boarding ability does not roll a penalty die to use Boarding and is able to seal the passage into the enemy ship from vacuum.

Capital Ships: These craft aren't a single target. Instead, they have at least 2 sections, each with separate armor and Hull point scores. While they move together and the crew can move from one section to another, each section of the ship or station should be considered separate for armor and hull points etc.

Hanger: Virtually all capital ships, space stations, and some freighters have hangers for smaller ships and shuttles. A hanger will list how many Escort or Hunter scale ships it can

hold. Any Escort ship slot can instead be filled by two Hunter scale ships.

Space Stations: Like capital ships, space stations have multiple sections to target, each with their own armor and Hull score. In addition, as space stations do not have significant engines they cannot engage targets in a dogfight. If an enemy engages a space station in a dogfight the station it counts as having rolled a Piloting check as indicated in its stats and it always counts as having used Hold 'er Steady.

Propulsion

Warp Drive: See Chapter 16: Warp Travel; improved warp drives make it easier to intercept other ships in the warp and harder to be intercepted

Gravity Engines: Gravity engines push/pull at gravity wells to move ships. Once a ship's maximum speed is reached, the ship loses grip on the gravity wells and stops being able to accelerate in the same direction. That maximum speed can drop as a ship gets larger, making various space liners, cargo ships, and even some large capital ships inherently slower in-system.

Catching Wind: If a ship with gravity engines is within 20 SCS of a ship their scale or larger which also has gravity engines, they add +1 to their speed if they head in the direction of that ship. This is because they are able to follow in its gravitational wake.

If you follow a path exactly behind a ship you can catch their wind up to 10 hours after they flew past.

Capital ships can follow in the wake of ships with the same number of sections or more.

The nature of gravity engines and catching wind is also why boarding actions are relatively easy. Due to their nature, it's easy to close in on the enemy ship quickly but without hitting them before using thrusters to close the final gap.

Thrusters: Used in combination with gravity engines, many starships also have thrusters. These do not increase a ship's speed significantly (and not at all from a SCS perspective), but they can increase maneuverability as gravity engines alone are rather clumsy.

Gravity Sail: Some ships are too small to be fitted with gravity engines. Instead, they have maneuvering thrusters and gravity sails, which allow them to catch the wind of ships with gravity engines. They may move at full speed towards a ship with gravity engines but do not gain any additional speed bonus for catching wind.

Starship Weaponry Types

There are exceptions such as the craft of the volucris, but most starship weapons fall into one of four broad categories.

Railguns Gunpowder weapons are nowhere near fast enough for space combat, so the most common weapon is a railgun. While models can vary, a railgun is a linear tube which fires projectiles with a gravitational pulse fired between via parallel bars, or the titular rails.

Coilguns Similarly to railguns, coilguns fire projectiles via gravitational pulses, only with a series of charged coils along the barrel. More energy efficient than railguns, coilguns generally have less power for their size and are much more expensive to purchase and maintain.

Gauss Similarly to railguns and coilguns, gauss weaponry fires projectiles at extremely high speeds with gravitational force. Unlike railguns, gauss do this with a web of gravitational energy around the barrel. This provides less raw force, but allows for greater flexibility, commonly firing a burst spread of smaller projectiles allowing for increased accuracy at the expense of damage. Often used by larger ships to defend against smaller ones.

Particle Weapons As opposed to propelling a physical object, a particle weapon uses the gravitational energy to fire subatomic particles at extreme speeds, putting rail, coil, and gauss weapons to shame. However, this comes at the cost of much higher energy costs so that they are only available to capital ships, and even they only use them to soften up enemy ships at extreme range before distance is closed and they rely upon projectile weaponry.

Torpedoes Despite the name, starship torpedoes are not self-accelerated in the same way as atmospheric missiles or water-based torpedoes. Gravity engines cannot be miniaturized nearly small enough to propel a projectile, and thrusters alone would be far too slow. Similarly to shuttles, torpedoes are fitted with gravity sails, allowing them to chase down ships with gravity engines and deliver their heavy payload, allowing smaller ships to threaten larger ones. The drawback is that ammo for torpedoes is limited, and many capital ships have point-defense weapons specialized against them.

Missiles Missiles are fired kinetically in clusters from specialized gauss weapons, and instead of having thrusters on their rear, missiles have thrusters on their sides to shift their path mid-flight to negate basic enemy evasions which normally make railguns useless at extreme range. Due to the kinetic forces involved, missiles can only carry stable and relatively low yield explosive charges.

Gravity Bombardment – Gravity bombardment weapons are the primary starship weapon of most species throughout the starlanes. Using technology related to those used for both artificial gravity and gravity engines, gravity bombardment cannons are a far more violent application. They hit an opposing ship or space station with a spectrum of high G bursts, causing massive shifts in gravity in various directions aboard the target flinging about those within, the gravity pulling apart the ship and crew under their own weight. These bursts damage ships, but they are far more devastating to those within the ships. Gravity weapons cannot be used against or while on a gravity well such as a planet or moon.

Weapon Categories

Dogfighting Weapons – Can only be fired after winning a dogfight. They use your Piloting check as their attack roll.

Defensive Weapons – Can be fired at a foe's passive defenses no matter the results of a dogfight. Takes a penalty to attack equal to the amount that your target's Piloting check was higher than your ship's check.

Hold 'er Steady – A pilot may, before rolling, choose to automatically be hit by all foes targeting it with dogfighting weapons in order to cut all defensive weapon penalties in half (rounded up) with a maximum total penalty of -10.

Note: Using Hold 'er Steady doesn't prevent enemy defensive weapons from having a penalty on their roll if your ship rolls higher on the Piloting check than your attackers. You still cannot fire any dogfighting weapons.

Long Range – Can be fired at targets outside of your square. The range is given with the weapon.

Orbital Bombing – Unlike other starship weapons, orbital bombing weapons can be fired at ground targets from orbit, but they cannot be used against other starships.

See Chapter 7 for details about how bombardment works.

Gravity Bombardment Cannon (GBC)	
Range:	1 square or close
Target:	Any 1 ship or single section of a capital ship or space station.
Damage:	1d12 damage + 1 damage for each cannon up to a maximum of 16 total damage

Number of cannons attacking the same target	Bombardment Type
1	Light
2-4	Average
5+	Heavy

GM Tip: Most larger NPC ships are focused around GBCs by design to help push the PCs into boarding actions. They are generally sub-par to use for PC ships.

The GBC automatically hit ships and deal half damage to them which may use their armor's DR against. Gravity Bombardment weapons use the bombardment rules against those within the ship they target and those within the ship cannot reduce the damage due to armor or mettle.

Unlike other forms of damage, gravity damage deals the same damage against every scale target. Against a mecha scale target it deals mecha scale damage while against a human scale target it deals human scale damage etc.

Due to the nature of the gravitational forces used, a ship using gravity bombardment cannons cannot use other weapons the same turn. A capital ship or space station can, but only in sections of the ship both not firing a GBC and not connected to a section that is firing a GBC.

Gravity Shielding: Most capital ships as well as some civilian starships and stations have shielding to defend against gravity bombardment. This is done by harnessing the energy from the gravity engines defensively rather than for movement.

Every ship's gravity shielding has a rating which acts as DR for the GBC damage before it affects the ship or passengers. But doing so slows down the ship by 1.

For example, if a starship with 4 gravity shielding is being attacked by 3 bombardment

cannons and rolls a 7 for damage. The total damage will be 9 damage. With a gravity shielding of 4, starship can reduce the damage to 5 points, though it will still be an average bombardment to those within for 5 damage. The starship is also slowed by 1 for using shielding this turn. If the starship had turned off their shielding, it would have taken the full 9 damage but still move at full speed.

If the starship being attacked has another section of the ship also damaged by gravity bombardment the same turn it will be unable to reduce its damage at all as the gravity shielding is for the entire ship.

Sensors

All sensors have a rating which dictates the distance at which they can sense other ships and stations. Though of note; most ships and stations will always be sending out an active beacon. While not required by any law in most systems, any ship without an active beacon is considered suspicious and may even be denied docking privileges at many stations.

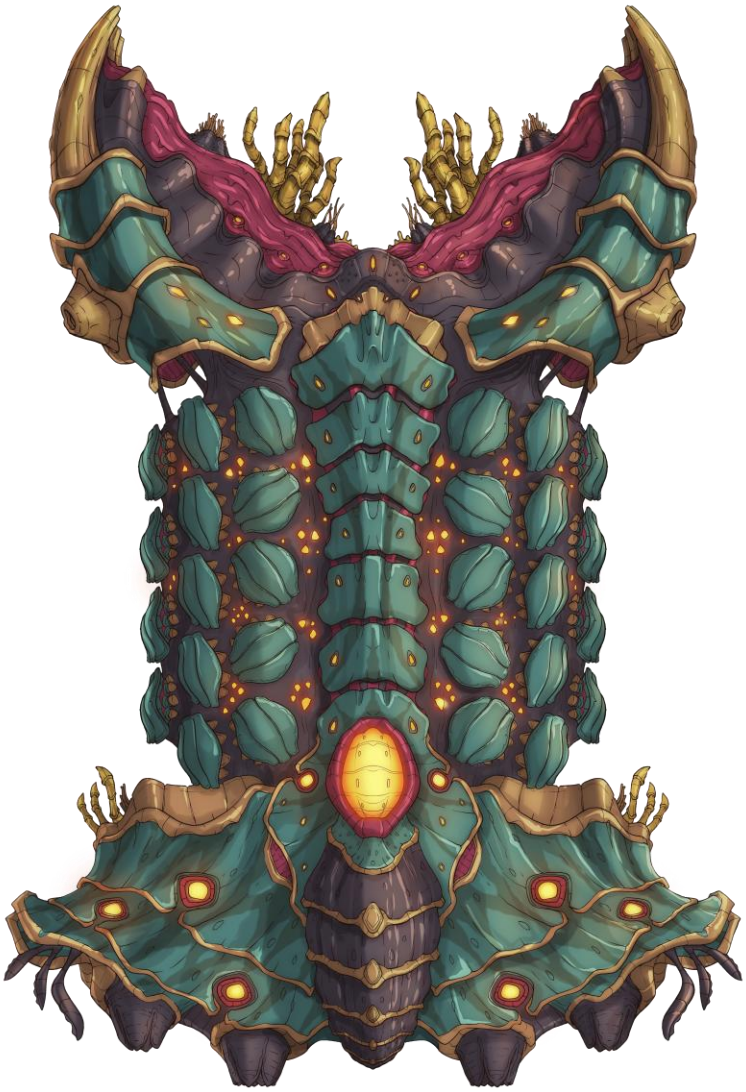
Sensors can spot all starships and space stations a number of SCS equal to their rating. If a ship changes direction, the range they can be seen at is doubled. If a ship or station has multiple sections, that distance is multiplied by the number of sections. If a ship is hunter or escort sized, the base distance is cut in half.

For example, a 5 section space station could be seen by 10 rating sensors at a range of 50. If it was a 5 section capital ship which moved, it could be seen from a range of 100.

Sensor Rating	Hunter/Escort (stopped/moving)	Mothership per section (stopped/moving)
10	5/10	10/20
15	7/15	15/30
20	10/20	20/40
25	12/25	25/50
30	15/30	30/60
50	25/50	50/100
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

Starships Stats

Each starship has its own statistics, most notably statistics for how hard it is to kill, its speed, and any maneuverability bonuses or penalties.



Both the few ships listed in Chapter 17 and the larger list in the Threat Guide to the Starlanes are far from exhaustive lists, as the galaxy is a large place, and many starships have been traveling the starlanes for decades or even centuries.

In addition, even new starships of the same model will not all be the same. Starship models are more like house models in a suburb, where the buyer uses the same basic frame, but there is also substantial room for customization. The layouts shown here are the default, but you should in no way feel unable to switch up their layouts substantially if your game calls for something different, or even just to keep your players guessing if they have already boarded that starship model before.

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Starship Prices

Starships are listed with three prices. The first is for a new freshly built ship with all of the metal shiny and new. The second number is for a used starship which is in pretty good shape. The third number is for a ship which has seen better days and always seems to be one warp jump from the scrapyard. In essence: (New/Used/Rust Bucket)

There are no official mechanical differences between shipped purchased new or used but the players will only be able to customize their ship if they order one new. This allows them to trade out generators, thrusters, and weapons effectively selling them at at full price since they weren't purchased at all. Buying used they will end up simply having to purchase whatever ship happens to be for sale, and only if its owner is willing to do business with humans. As a general rule, as GM you should allow minor cosmetic changes for free, have minor costs to changes such as changing ship weaponry or adding various in-ship defenses against boarders, but have no major structural changes, as those could disrupt the balance of how the gravity engines work.

If you as GM do give the PCs the option to purchase a Rust Bucket, the ship in poor shape, every month/jump that a Rust Bucket runs counts as two for the purpose of Ship Maintenance Costs and how soon maintenance is needed. This is a permanent feature of purchasing a Rust Bucket.

In addition, all weapons take -1 penalty on all rolls and both thrusters and generator are at -1 penalty relative to what they were new. These issues can be solved by replacing those parts.

If you are choosing not to track maintenance costs specifically, make sure that there are some consequences for buying a rust bucket starship. They should constantly be in need of new parts, and always just one step of breaking down entirely in some sort of out of the way system. If done right, this can become a periodic hook for more missions, but be careful that it doesn't feel repetitive. If you don't want to have this sort of gameplay, it is suggested that you as GM do not have the third option be taken. If the players want to fix-up their ship so that they won't have to deal with such issues, as a general rule the cost should be more than the difference between the second and third level's cost, though that may be reduced through negotiation and/or if some of the PCs have ranks in the Mechanic: Starships skill.

Paying for the Ship

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a starship is a major investment. You will likely quickly see that even the cheapest starship capable of warp jumps will cost far more than nearly any character equipment. If the players do have

their own starship, how it is paid for can easily become a large chunk of your campaign.

There are many ways that you can have the players get a hold of a starship without having to come up with the whole amount up-front. Listed here will be some examples, along with associated complications, but you should of course feel free to either extrapolate off of them, or to create something totally new to best fit your campaign.

One of the simplest ways for the players to get a ship would be if they get it as a prize. For example, if the PCs are the garrison on a space station or riding guard on a prison ship, and the ship is boarded by pirates, or rebels, or maybe berlich zealots. Whatever the case, the PCs may be able to counter-board their ship and take it. Per the laws of the starlanes, the ship will then become theirs, albeit in post-battle condition. Depending upon the circumstances and the sort of campaign that you want to run, you may want to have the ship count as being in the third level of condition without substantial repairs.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it is also possible for the PCs to get a loan to purchase a starship, though they will need to make a substantial down-payment. The down-payment may not be in cash however, instead it could be a large job given to them either by the current owner of the starship or whatever person or group will be giving the PCs the loan. This can be a good adventure hook for the players if you know that they want a ship.

A point of note though; only organizations with interstellar reach will ever be willing to give a loan on a starship. Otherwise it is far too easy for the borrowers to simply fly off in their starship and never be heard from again.

Ship Maintenance Costs

Perhaps unsurprisingly, while purchasing a ship initially is expensive, so is keeping it up and running. The maintenance cost listed is per warp jumps and includes fuel and standard maintenance etc. If the ship does not jump for a full month while being used, that will count as one jump of range.

Normally you can just track the total amounts of costs, but a ship does need to stop and repair/refuel for 12 hours per jump/month, which is when the maintenance is normally done. If the total maintenance costs on a ship are not paid and the 12 hours used after a number of jumps/months equal to the ship's range, then roll 2d6 on the Maintenance Failure Table, adding +1 to the roll for each additional jump/month.

Every jump/month that a Rust Bucket runs counts as two. This can potentially require two rolls at a time.

Every point of damage on the hull causes an additional +1 on the Maintenance Failure Table. If a starship has multiple sections, use the damage from the single most damaged section of the starship.

Maintenance Failure Table

Roll 2d6+X	Additional Maintenance Costs	Catastrophic Failure – remain until ship maintained
1-10	+0	n/a
11-13	+1	n/a
14-15	+2	-2 to all piloting checks
16-17	+2	-5 to attacks with all weapons
18-20	+3	Warp Drive stops working combined with all previous failures
21-25	+3	All Engines go out, turning the ship into a drifting wreck
26+	n/a	Ship explodes killing all on board

Repairing Damage

Every point of hull damage that a ship is hit with takes time and creds to repair. Each point of hull damage takes the same time to repair as the maintenance from a jump. If the ship's hull is damaged, that also counts towards maintenance range for if a roll on the Warp Jump Failure Table is required, each point of hull damage adds +1 to the roll.

Atmospheric Ships

Mechanical Differences from Space Combat

There are 3 altitudes, low, mid, and high altitudes.

When 'low' – firearms may fire at the aircraft as if it with a 4 ranged increment penalty. When Strafing, they count as being in every square of the Strafe for firearms but the snap shot penalty applies in that case.

Each 'square' of flyer space is 1 kilometer x 1 kilometer (500 x 500 ground squares)

If interacting with a ground battle – pick one square to be the 'center' above said ground battle.

Going 'Up' requires 2 squares of movement. Going 'down' requires ½ a square.

Strafing (light aircraft only) – Fire at the ground in a line 3x your speed (in ground squares) with a Dogfighting Weapon. If you fire into melee you are forced to fire at all targets in the melee. May only be done when already low and to ground squares underneath the flyer square that you're in.

Strafing uses up your movement.

Bombs – Can be fired at ground targets from low altitude. From med/high altitude they cause bombardment over the area.

Air to Air / Ground to Air Missiles: Missiles can be dodged with a pilot check if fired at long-range. Dodging missiles uses up ½ of a flyer's movement the following turn and each missile dodged in a turn is at +2 TN to the next missile.

If fired in the same square, missiles are treated as defensive weapons.

Note: Dodging more than one missile doesn't use up any more movement.

Air to Ground Missiles -May be fired at ground targets from low altitude. Unlike other missiles, they roll to hit and cannot be dodged by targets on the ground.

Atmospheric Ships

Light Fighter
Crew: Pilot
Hull: 12 (Exo scale)
Armor: 4
Maneuverability: +3
Weight: 4,248kg
Speed: 4 (flight)
Defense: 6+Pilot Skill
Weapons: Missiles (2) - 3d6 (M) – TN 10 – max range 2/ -1
Dogfight/Strafe: Machine Gun – 5d6 (E)

Light Bomber
Crew: Pilot/Gunner
Hull: 14 (Exo scale)
Armor: 5
Maneuverability: +0
Weight: 8,353kg
Speed: 3 (flight)
Defense: 4+Pilot Skill
Weapons:
Defensive Weapon- Gunner: Machine Gun – 3d8+Dex/5d6 (E)
Bombs x 4

Heavy Bomber
Crew: Pilot/Gunner A & B
Hull: 14 (Mecha scale)
Armor: 6
Maneuverability: -3
Weight: 122,943kg
Speed: 3 (flight)
Defense: 1+Pilot Skill
Weapons:
Defensive Weapon- Gunner: Machine Gun – 3d8+Dex/5d6 (E)Defensive Weapons- Gunner B: Defensive Weapon- Gunner: Machine Gun – 3d8+Dex/5d6 (E)
Bombs x 50

Chapter 10: Ground Vehicles

Ground vehicles are only very rarely used on space stations or ships, their traditional military roles are filled by mecha and civilian roles by station lifts, vehicles are far more common on planets for transportation, though mecha still generally dominate urban battlefields.

Due to the prevalence of gravity based technology on the galactic stage, such as the artificial gravity about starships, similar technology is used in virtually all ground vehicles. This "anti-grav" technology allows vehicles to nearly ignore terrain, allowing planetary infrastructures to forego costly road building, instead only having guides by which to direct traffic in more populous areas.

To get into a vehicle takes Movement if you are already next to the vehicle. Starting the vehicle takes an Action.

Movement: Once your vehicle has started, you can move it the vehicle's at normal speed in one general direction or x2 speed in a straight line. You may not move further outside of the Movement Phase.

Firing From Vehicle: If you or your passengers fire at anyone, you take a penalty equal to the number of squares moved. You may fire from any place where the vehicle was during movement using Snap Shot from the closest square even if they are still in view.

Attacking Vehicle: Anyone attacking a vehicle takes a penalty equal to 1/10 of the number of squares moved. This does not apply if the vehicle moved in a straight line. They may also use Snap Shot from the closest square the vehicle was this turn even if the vehicle is still in view.

A vehicle cannot ever be Taking Cover

If the vehicle is not armored, they may choose to fire at the passengers instead of the vehicle itself, though the passengers may have cover as shown in the vehicle profile. Any penalties from the vehicle's speed etc. still apply when firing at the passengers.

GM Tip: Running into ground vehicles should be very rare in Space Dogs; especially in combat situations. The rules here will only rarely need to be used, so you might want to skip this section when initially learning the rules and review them once you have plans for a ground vehicle in an upcoming game session. If the vehicles will be NPC only you can just have them do reasonable things and not worry about maneuvers.

Maneuvers:

To do more than just drive normally it can require a Piloting check and costs 10 speed. If something feels like it should require a check but isn't listed here, ballpark the TN based upon the list below.

Manuever Example	Maneuver TN
Drift: You can move the vehicle up to normal speed in multiple directions, such as around a large obstacle.	8
Ram: You may ram a target, dealing 1d10 damage plus 1 damage per 10 speed to the target and the vehicle at the scale of the vehicle. If the target takes full damage (no Vitality damage) and is not destroyed then the vehicle stops.	Target's DD
Drive-by: The base penalty for shooting from the vehicle is reduced by half up to a maximum of the Piloting check. Aiming and all other reductions apply after Drive-by.	Special
Dodge: Choose a single enemy firing at you and make a Piloting check as a reaction to being fired at. Your DD against that enemy for the rest of the turn is your Piloting check -10 even if this lowers your DD.	Special

Any maneuver besides Dodge check takes place in the Movement Phase but uses your Action and takes a penalty equal to 1/10 your speed.

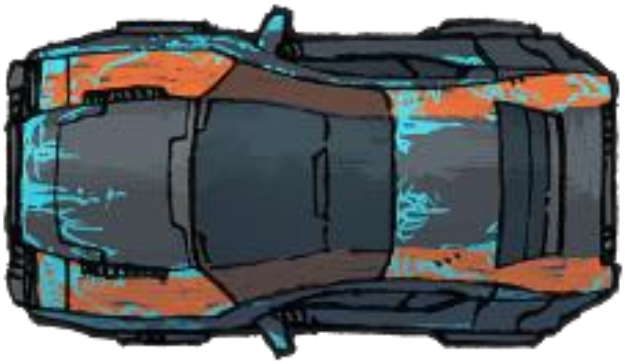
Collisions:

Whether on purpose or by accident, it's not uncommon for a vehicle to end up on a collision course with either infantry or another vehicle.

Infantry may attempt to avoid being hit by making an Acrobatics or Athletics check equal to the Piloting check made to hit them with a penalty equal to 1/10 the vehicle's speed. On a success, move them to the nearest square outside of the vehicle's path.

A vehicle may attempt to avoid being hit by making a Piloting check with a penalty equal to 1/10 how much faster the ramming vehicle's speed is. This cannot result in a bonus.

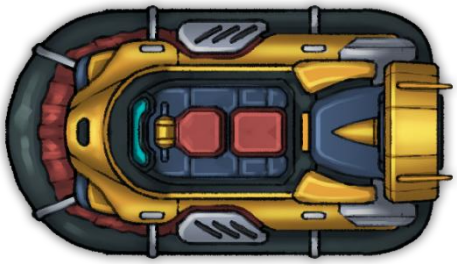
Instead of trying to dodge, either infantry or a vehicle may spend their Action to make a snap shot. This shot has no range or cover penalties. If the



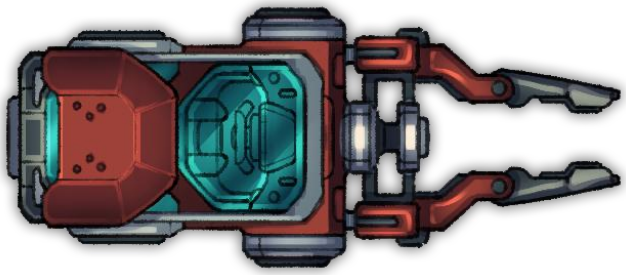
vehicle is destroyed it stops d10 spaces away from them, up to a maximum distance of where it started the turn.

Sedan (mecha scale)
An average anti-gravity vehicle for personal transport, they are probably the most common vehicle type throughout the star-lanes, though they can vary quite a bit depending upon the species which they were designed for.
Seating: 5 - cover
Crew: Pilot (front)
Space: 2x3. (long)
Hull: 10 (mecha scale)
Armor: 1
Maneuverability: +0
Speed: 60
Dodge Defense: 0 (ignore the first range increment)
Body Defense: 12

Hover-cycle (exo scale)
An almost entirely human phenomenon, some humans have gotten the anti-gravity technology to create a vehicle approximating the look, feel, and handling of a motorcycle. Due to its small size and high thrust to weight ratio, its acceleration is nearly unmatched.
Seating: 2 – no cover
Crew: Pilot (front)
Space: 1x2. (long)
Hull: 10 (exo scale)
Armor: 1
Maneuverability: +3
Speed: 70
Dodge Defense: 1
Body Defense: 8



Armored Military Vehicle (mecha scale)
Seating: 5 - armored
Crew: Pilot (front)
Space: 2x3. (long)
Hull: 14 (mecha scale)
Armor: 4
Maneuverability: -1
Speed: 60
Dodge Defense: 0 (ignore the first range increment)
Body Defense: 14



Forklift (exo scale)
A workhorse aboard space stations and larger cargo ships.
Seating: 1 - cover
Crew: Pilot
Space: 1x2. (long)
Hull: 8 (exo scale)
Armor: 1
Maneuverability: +2
Speed: 4
Dodge Defense: 0
Body Defense: 10

Chapter 11: Alien Species

Because of the bargain that we have made with The Builders, our interactions with other species are somewhat limited. However, below you'll find a summary of what you do know. Hopefully it will serve you well. Should you discover information substantially different or more thorough than the data below, you are requested and required to report it at your first opportunity.

Major Species

A relatively few species throughout the galaxy are the major players. They are the species who do most of the trading, traveling, and the ones which have multiple colonized worlds beyond their home star-system. They are the species which you should learn the most about in order to survive and excel as you travel the galaxy.

In addition to being the most widespread, arguably they are the major players because they all, with the exception of the builders, are either able to protect themselves from the dangers of interstellar travel to some degree, or they are the dangers of interstellar travel.

Alanny

The alanny are small, usually standing little more than half a meter and partially hunched

over. They are feathered, their feathers normally a shade of grey or black, but they commonly color some of their feathers brightly and in elaborate patterns. Unlike most feathered creatures from Earth, the alanny have neither beaks nor do they have true wings, instead their front limbs, are attached to their waist with a thin sheet of flesh, something like that of a flying squirrel, and their longest feathers come off the back of their wings. The alanny cannot truly fly, though they can jump and glide impressive distances, and they can ride the prevalent thermals and updrafts of their home-world.

From a human perspective, the alanny have a poor sense of self. They are nearly always in groups of at least five, sometimes nearly two dozen, which do virtually everything together, and they do not like being alone for any period of time. Even when sleeping, those same groups will sleep skin to skin with each-other. They will go off individually for a short time, but rarely for long. Some have theorized that this poor sense of self is partly due to the prevalence of identical siblings, with nearly all alanny having at least an identical twin, more commonly triplet or quadruplet, and sometimes more.

To humans and most other species, alanny have no sense of personal space even with other species. They seem to enjoy being in the hustle and bustle of nearly any sort of crowd, but especially when those within the crowd are out to accomplish something such as in a bazaar or at a starport. This might be why they allowed and even pushed for their home system to be central to many starlane routes, something which most species dislike.

From many points of view, the alanny are the least powerful of the major species. They do not have a powerful navy or strong warriors, and they have not officially colonized any other star-systems. However, after only the builders, alanny control the next most space stations across the starlanes.

Most alanny enjoy talking with nearly anyone and are generally very free with general information, but are closemouthed about anything which they consider to be valuable. At least, they are closemouthed unless the price is right. Nearly all of the most powerful information brokers throughout the starlanes are alanny. It is unclear how much of that is due to the alanny's natural predilections toward information gathering and sale, and how much of it is because of their interconnected relationships with each-other, creating something almost like a guild. And within their sphere of influence, the alanny are jealous of their territory, willing to fight to protect it to the extent that the lives of an individual or two are irrelevant to the prosperity of the flock.

Ancients

The ancients are a general term for several species which no longer seem to exist: they populated the galaxy before any of the other sapient species started to travel the stars. Knowledge of them is limited to what they left behind.

First and foremost, most scholars agree that the volucris were likely created by them as weapons for a war between the ancients, possibly the same war in which they were wiped out. Some theorize that the immortui too were their creation, though most disagree since their attacks only started a few centuries ago.

Besides these two potential weaponized legacy species, the ancients left behind more concrete proofs of their existence. Scattered throughout the galaxy are hundreds, if not tens of thousands of ancient citadels which are tens of millennia old; perhaps older. Some are planet-side, while others are on moons, asteroids, and even a few deserted space stations of unique design.

Despite their age, most of them are in surprisingly good condition. Whatever technologies the ancients had apparently resisted the ravages of time better than any modern machineries can. In addition, these ancient structures are still at least partially active. Most other species avoid them as their remaining defenses can prove deadly.

The ignav were the most known for their love of exploring the ancient citadels in attempts to divine their secrets, and some claim that the ignav's creation of the capeks was a direct result of discoveries made from their explorations. However, others point out that the ignavs' mysterious disappearance might have been a more direct result of their investigations.

Berlichs

The berlichs look hunched to our eyes, rarely cresting more than 1.3 meters and with arms long enough that their fingertips brush the ground. Their skin is thin; almost papery to our eyes. Such a physique likely helps them to pick the ground-cover fruits which are so prevalent on their home planet and thrive on its heavy gravity and with a relatively distant sun.

Whereas most alien species, when they travel the galaxy, rely upon luck, speed, or the strength of others to protect them, the berlichs chose to protect themselves. However, unlike the krakiz or we humans, the berlichs are not suited for combat. They lack the strength, fortitude, or reflexes to excel in such demanding discipline.

We have been told that there was more than one massacre when the Berlichs attempted to defend themselves from the volucris or some other threat, even when they outnumbered their foes several times over. Nonetheless, the berlichs persisted. Apparently, they have strong aversions to relying upon other species to do things for

them that they can't do themselves, though it's unknown whether that is inherent to being a berlich or if it's simply cultural. In addition, perhaps for similar reasons, the berlichs continued to venture into the galaxy at large rather than primarily staying in their home system as so many species do.

Eventually, the berlichs came to realize that they simply couldn't properly defend themselves as they were. Instead of that realization making them follow the path of other species though, they decided to carve their own path by giving themselves 'upgrades'.

A large portion of berlichs on the galactic stage have been 'upgraded' with some sort of cybernetic enhancement, and while honored by other berlich, it seems to be in a manner similar to how we would honor martyrs. The berlichs' civil leaders are not upgraded, as being upgraded appears to shift them into a separate caste. Using similar technology to the jack-in which allows us to jockey exos and mecha, the berlichs permanently attach all sorts of machine parts into their body and connect them into their nervous systems. Also, since they are still controlled by the berlich directly rather than through remote or by AI, their upgrades aren't susceptible to hacking or EMP.

Besides their cybernetic upgrades, berlichs vary a great deal in their general outlook, though they seem curious as a species; perhaps that was the reason that they refused to be penned into their home system like so many other species seem to prefer. However, while most seem to be peaceful, there is a minority who extend their general dislike of relying upon other species to seeing the belichs as the superior species, and therefore the one which should dominate all others. This minority, The Zealots of the Chosen, are aggressive, and also seem to generally be those which are most heavily upgraded for combat, making them dangerous foes.

The Builders

The builders, or turuni in their language, which means 'builders', were the first and only alien species to contact Earth, on August 16, 2068.

The builders are much smaller than humans, most not more than one meter

in height. They have six limbs, two legs and four arms. They have two much larger arms high on their shoulders which are awkward and used for heavy lifting, and two smaller arms which the builders use for more delicate work.

The builders vary in color in mottled grays and browns in order to blend into the stone of their home planet.

The final distinguishing feature of the builders is a thin vestigial shell which they carve and enamel with a record of the things which they personally have built along with other personal achievements. We don't know all of the specifics, but in general the more that their shells are enameled, the higher their standing in the builder's society. When shocked and frightened by events, they will sometimes partially retreat into their shells, though they cannot fit entirely inside and its protection would be minimal, this seems to be an instinctual reaction to stress.

Like most sapient species, the builders are herbivores, occasionally even grazing, which, while the nutritional benefit is limited, they say that it is good for their digestion.

The builders are not only physically slow, but also mentally. You shouldn't take that to mean that they're unintelligent; far from it. However, they have trouble dealing with new situations without taking a lot of time, usually weeks or months, figuring out how to deal with it, preferring to rely upon slight variations of methods which have worked in the past. They actually spent decades observing humans before first contact. They often seem, at least to us humans, frozen in indecision. Many argue that this slowness is likely in part due to their lifespan of two to three Earth centuries, but that is unknown.

The builders have influence across the entirety of the starlanes albeit rarely the most powerful force in any given system. While there are many secondary factors, mostly to do with their technological knowhow; the primary reason is their control of the warp beacons. The warp beacons are the only thing which allow the starlanes to be traversed with relative safety. While there are still dangers such as the volucris and the occasional warp storm,

the warp beacons allow interstellar travel to be more than jumping in the dark, and the builders charge tribute for the warp beacons' use.

In recent decades there has been greater opposition to the builders' de facto control of the starlanes, with propaganda such as Teardown the Builders encouraging open conflict with them. This, as much as anything else, is why the builders recruited humanity to protect them and their facilities.

Background

The builders did not come to dominate their home planet in at all the same way that we humans did. Being herbivores, they never made it to the top of their food chain. Instead, the ancient builders used their plentiful native stone to wall off fields to protect them from their predators. Eventually the top of the walls became their roadway, and the interior of the walls their homes.

Often predators would be trapped within the small fields as they were built, and the builders did not confront them, instead leaving them to die of starvation. Eventually the builders literally covered their entire planet in these walled fields, wiping out the majority of their planet's other large land species in the process.

Capeks

The capeks may not actually be a species, depending upon your definition. Perhaps more accurately, they are a breed of synthetic lifeforms.

A large majority of capeks are roughly humanoid in shape, made that way so that they could more easily serve their creators, the ignav, though they vary greatly in size. The capeks' sensors are primarily in their head for the same reasons as every other species, though their CPUs are usually somewhere between their shoulder blades.

Created as servitors for the now extinct ignav species, the capeks' most fundamental programming laws involves serving the ignav and protecting both them and all of their

territory from harm. However, approximately four hundred years ago, the ignav vanished. The ignav had apparently always kept themselves isolated from the rest of the starlanes, preferring to explore ruins of the ancients than interact with modern species, so records do not indicate even the precise date of their disappearance, much less the how or the why. And the capeks, when they do communicate with anyone at all, refuse to discuss it, occasionally becoming violent when pressed.

The capeks seem at a loss for what to do with their primary purpose gone. Most of them seem to be awaiting their masters' return, keeping everything that they left in pristine condition, and protecting it from all invaders, whether real or merely perceived. Still, occasionally an expedition will attempt a foray into what was once ignav territory, as in all of the centuries since, no one has matched the ignav mastery of synthetic life or certain sorts of computing systems.

Some of the capeks roam the galaxy, searching for their lost masters. Be wary of these, as these capeks can be rather twitchy and paranoid, though often they remain reasonable so long as those they meet are forthcoming with them. There have been cases reported of them attacking settlements because the capeks thought that they were hiding knowledge of the ignav. On the other hand, there have been other reported cases of these wandering capeks appearing and driving off attacks by immortui, even attacking them in boarding actions.

In the last century or two though, it seems that some of the capeks have decided that merely retaining what the ignavs left is not enough. Some have taken to expanding their territory and building lavish living areas for the disappeared ignav in an attempt to convince them to come home.

Unlike what many on Earth would have guessed about sapient artificial life, it appears that the capeks have no intention of creating more advanced artificial intelligences, instead only creating more of the models of capeks which already exist. It is unclear whether this is because they lack the capability to improve upon themselves, if it is another layer in wanting to keep things the same as when the ignav left, or whether they simply don't relish the idea of being replaced.

Immortui

Before any further explanation is given, it should first be noted that the immortui do not appear to be their own sapient alien species per se, even less so than the moreaus or the capek. Instead, the immortui are an infection which seems equally dangerous to any biological sapient species, with the possible exception of the volucris.

Being infected with the immortui isn't precisely deadly, though it would be far less dangerous if it were. Instead, being infected by the immortui causes you to lose all semblance of yourself, and some argue that you are no longer the same person at all. The closest thing to the immortui on Earth is probably rabies, but instead of merely frothing and attacking indiscriminately as some animals do, many infected retain all of their memories and skills. They then use their skills and the increased physical attributes which the immortui infection gives them to visit as

much destruction as they can upon the galaxy and its inhabitants.

Fortunately, the increased physical and potential psychic abilities which the immortui gives its hosts are hard on their biology and said hosts rarely live much longer than an Earth year. However, the damage that such infected can do in such a time is huge, especially if they are able to board enemy ships and stations to further spread their infection. Some records however do indicate that some of the same ships have been spotted near multiple locations where outbreaks of immortui have begun, sometimes decades apart, so it is possible that not all species suffer the same life shortening effects when infected. In addition, there have been rumored sightings of immortui whose descriptions don't match any known species.

It seems that no one is sure where the immortui came from, though there are no end of theories since their first recorded attack was centuries ago. Some think that they were created by the enemies of the volucris's creators as part of the same ancient war, while others think that they are a natural part of warp travel, denizens from another plane of existence, possibly striking out at any who they consider to be invaders into their realm.

Krakiz

The krakiz look almost like a reptilian version of Earth's grizzly bear, though with their front appendages closer to our own hand, even running on them like a bear when they're in a hurry. Krakiz females are more heavily built than their male counterparts, the females' scales a shade of dark red or scarlet, while the males' are a light blue or green. The females are also feathered, most noticeably with a mane of feathers around their neck in yellows, purples, and oranges.

It appears that krakiz often travel in groups of a

single female with multiple males, in something similar to how prides of lions work, though these 'prides' do not take care of their young once hatched. Instead, they seem to be a r-strategist species, intentionally laying eggs on dangerous planets with the belief that the young will grow stronger for it, taking them in only once near physical maturity.

The few female krakiz without a pride, often young, are generally very aggressive and agitated, and they should be treated with extreme caution.

The krakiz are a tribal people, and they're one of the few carnivorous species on the galactic stage.

Besides their fierce nature, the thing that the krakiz are probably the most known for is their love of taming various fearsome beasts, both from their homeworld of Draga and from across the starlanes. This seems to be an inherent interest, and successful tamers seem gain great standing amongst their fellow krakiz, though 'tame' is a relative term.

The dominant tribe when The Builders made contact with the krakiz, the Vrlakiz, have at least technicall, remained a relatively peaceful part of galactic society. However, the scores of other krakiz tribes feel no need to hold to treaties signed by others, and the Vrlakiz have slowly been losing power and influence over the last several Earth centuries.

The Builders have remained vague and there is no concrete data, but we believe that the krakiz may have originally brought onto the interstellar stage in a position similar to our own, and while The Builders now use humans for their garrisons etc., the Krakiz are hired by many other species in a similar role. However, due to their mindset, they sometimes have issues remaining committed to a job for more than a month or two at a time, as their attention tends to wander or grow bored with such things.

Recently, there has been a resurgence of an ancient krakiz mentality where one only truly owns as much as they can keep safe, so they have a very odd view of ownership, generally referred to as Primevals. So long as something is taken in the open by force rather than by stealth or trickery, they do not generally consider it to be theft. There are some cultural exceptions, but thus far these have remained murky to us. Fortunately, this resurgence seems to only be prevalent in a relatively small minority of the krakiz, though you can never be too wary until you are certain whether or not the krakiz you are interacting with is among their numbers.

Moreaus

The moreaus aren't truly a species of their own, and definitely not a major species, but they deserve a special note here.

When we humans entered the interstellar scene, we apparently made quite the impression on the galactic community. While, due to our role as the builders' protectors and enforcers, it's difficult to get other species to speak to us frankly, we've come to the conclusion that despite all of their accomplishments, the builders' interstellar influence had been steadily declining over the past century or more.

Someone thought that the builders were onto something good and were able to procure human genetic material and begin to clone up their own force, only with 'improvements' such as sharper teeth and claws as well as bright red skin. We also believe that they also intentionally gave the moreaus a more aggressive mindset, though the last could easily be nurture rather than nature.

Whatever the changes, it seems that they either killed or escaped from their creators nearly twenty years ago. The moreaus have not revealed who their creators were and some think that they never knew. Since they have no planet or

resources of their own, they took a page out of the Space Dog playbook and many have begun taking work as mercenaries from the highest bidders, sometimes doing what we would consider to be 'black ops'.

Torali

Aside from the builders, the torali are probably the sapient species which has the widest power base throughout the galactic stage. However, aside from both species being herbivores and physically weak, the torali are a study in contrasts to the builders.

From a planet with approximately half of Earth's gravity, the torali's arms and legs are spindly to our eyes, standing at least two, and sometimes close to three meters in height, though they rarely mass more than 50kg. When standing, their lightly furred long arms and legs, various deep shades of purple, green, and blue seem powerful at first glance, especially when you first find out that their fur is coated in a toxin which can cause paralysis if ingested. Besides their arms and legs, their skin shows as being a dull gray. The torali are frail, often riding in motorized and padded chairs when traveling where the gravity is higher than their home planet's. On larger interstellar space stations, it isn't uncommon for there to be a torali quarter with vaulted ceilings where the gravity is kept at a lower strength than on the rest of the station.

The torali seem to have kept much of the herd mentality of their roots, generally seeing the group as being far more important than the individual. Even their own lives they seem to see as expendable if it has the potential to help the group. However, they're more likely to risk the lives of other species, having an individual torali 'cut-out man' be killed rather than give up any information should the builders or other powerful species confront them on it.

The torali's technological forte is genetic and biological manipulation, creating a variety of different creatures which, as a group, we've taken to calling chimera. They make such creations almost purely through brute-force experimentation rather than careful design, as they have no moral quandaries about the pain any failed creations might feel. They use these chimera as something between slaves and beasts of burden. Should you run up against any torali in the field, you'll likely find them using chimera as both servitors and brute weapons of war. While not as slow to think as the builders, the torali generally think in straight lines unless given time to plan, and most chimera barely think more than animals.

The torali will sell their genetic monstrosities for outrageous prices to nearly any with the funds, though they seem to keep their most potent creations solely for themselves. While not the only ones to do so, the torali are also the species most prominent in the gray matter grafting trade.

Politically, the torali are extremely factional, and they seem to be constantly changing factions faster than our intelligence resources can keep up. Of note – some have speculated that they aren't actually as factional as they would lead the rest of the galaxy to believe, but that it's only a smokescreen to keep their potential enemies guessing and to make the aforementioned cut-out men easier to keep isolated. Where the truth lies is unknown to all but the torali themselves, and perhaps not even to most of them, many speculate that the truth is a bit of both.

Volucris

Thought to have been created many millennia ago as a weapon in an ancient interstellar war, the volucris rove the starlanes in search of prey. The builders have informed us that they believe that the only reason that there aren't many times more of them is that something in their design limits their numbers to keep them from destroying their creators. Whatever the case, they can at least replace any losses with the biological mass that they consume from their prey, and every attempt to eradicate the volucris from the galaxy has failed.

The volucris vary greatly in size, from that of a small dog all the way up to a small freighter class starship. No one is sure of their true motivations, or even if they have any, perhaps just following the commands of their long vanished creators like some sort of massive biological machine.

What is known is that any sort of warp emissions seem to draw them, occasionally even following such emissions to a station, which is one of the main reasons why all starships are designed to keep such emissions to a minimum.

The existence of the volucris is one of the main reasons that the builders and many other species like having marine garrisons on any of their ships going on anything more than a short run through the starlanes as small groups of them can appear from seemingly anywhere, as they appear to have a mastery of the warp that other species lack.

Minor Species

This is a general categorization for the dozens of species which are minor players on the galactic stage. To us humans it seems strange, but the majority of sapient species appear to have little interest in exploring the galaxy, or even going outside of their home solar systems.

Though it is worth noting that there are exceptions among most of these species, relatively rare individuals who decide to go out into the galaxy at large, primarily as merchants or traders of some sort. Though, with the sheer number of different species, they may not seem particularly rare when one thinks of them as a single group.

The biggest way that many of these species interact with the galaxy is, in some ways, similar to how we humans do. They trade resources such as foodstuffs and metals mined from their system to the builders for technology and have any incoming goods tariffed by the builders for the use of their warp beacon. While the builders can farm and mine, and they did so before venturing into space, it seems that they find such work distasteful and prefer to have others do so whenever possible, instead focusing their own efforts upon whatever sort of building or crafting which they individually prefer and brings from clout.

If, when out in the galaxy, you find out detailed information about a specific species, especially if you feel that they are a significant part of the galaxy, you should report in with said information so that we can update this guide. For now, know that these species vary greatly other than generally keeping to themselves and a large majority being herbivores.

Chapter 12: Gamemastering

The Gamemaster (GM) is the game's designer, narrator, and the driving force of the game. If the game is fun for you and all of the players, congratulations, that's to your credit. If it isn't, you might want to make some tweaks. Being a GM is more work than a player, but it's also extremely rewarding, and running a game of Space Dogs isn't as hard as you might think.

In this chapter the different duties of the GM are discussed, and some tips given. If you have been a GM in another RPG before, feel free to just skim some of this material, though hopefully you can still glean some benefits from the tips written here. As with any other hobby, you should focus on the aspects which you and your friends have the most fun with, but try to at least keep the other parts of being a GM in mind.

Not a Game?

As crazy as it sounds, despite being a "Role-Playing *Game*", Space Dogs isn't really a game at all. This book is a set of tools for you, the GM, to use to design your own game.

The tools in this section of this book and The Threat Guide of the Starlanes should help to streamline the design process, and designing a game session for you and your friends can be nearly as much fun as playing it.

If you don't want to create your own game, you should start with running the intro adventure in the back of this book. After that, you can then get a hold of some of the other Space Dogs adventure modules. While designing your own adventures can be fun, using pre-built modules can save a lot of time, and you should always feel free to adjust a module and how its run to be better tailored for you and your players.

You Will Make Mistakes

If you're a new GM, either in general or only to *Space Dogs*, one of the first things that you should realize is that you will make mistakes. And that's fine. That's all part of the process of learning how to do it. But just because you make a few mistakes doesn't mean that you can't have fun while doing it. Just remember that the first rule of *Space Dogs* is to make sure that everyone is having a good time, and as the GM, you're a part of everyone.

Every Session as an Episode

One useful way to think of a campaign using *Space Dogs RPG* is to think of the campaign as a serialized TV show and of each game session as an episode. Each episode should be mostly self-contained, though there may be an overarching plot and/or multi-part episodes which end on cliffhangers. Also like a TV show, each session gives you a bit more insight into the players' characters as they develop and become fully fleshed out characters, what they go through changing them so that they aren't the same sorts of people at the end of the campaign as they were at the beginning.

Of course, in other ways a *Space Dogs* campaign isn't like a TV show at all. Most notably, a gaming session isn't scripted. Your players might not do anything like what you had planned, and you'll have to improvise. A lot of the time, the direction that the players take a session will end up being even cooler than what you had planned, and they'll almost certainly end up being more invested in what's going on if you let them run with it. One trick to make this a bit easier for you is to have your players make major decisions near the end of a session so that you have

time to take that choice into consideration while planning out the next session.

In addition, rather than planning out exactly what should happen, a lot of times it's better to instead come up with the obstacles and allow the players to overcome them however they can, and there should almost always be multiple ways to deal with any given obstacle. As a simple example, the players may be trying to find secret information which an NPC has. The players could scare him into telling them. They could trick him. They could follow him and try to discover it that way. Or maybe something else entirely. Seeing the players come up with something that you didn't expect can be half the fun of being the GM.

Pacing

The pacing of a game is the rhythm of it. Each scene in a session of *Space Dogs* has its own pace or speed, but as a rule of thumb, each scene is either a fast scene or a slow scene.

A fast scene is where the action happens. A fight, a chase, a shouting match, or even a training montage. A fast scene is exciting and draws you into the story. It can put you on the edge of the seat while you wait to see what happens next and making quick decisions.

A slow scene engages you in an entirely different way. It makes you attentive and gives you time to absorb information about the story and setting. A slow scene generally involves talking, planning, and/or exploration. This is where you can have fun getting the players to understand the plot and the reason behind all of those action sequences, they help to get them invested in the world and to build anticipation for what's coming next.

Both fast & slow scenes are essential, and the important thing to remember is that they rely upon each-other to have the best impact on your players. If you have too many fast scenes your players will get tired and they won't really be invested in what's going on, but if you have too many slow scenes they'll eventually get bored. There is no perfect formula for the mix between the two, as that varies both by the story you're telling and with the players at the table. It's something you should experiment with; just know that it's usually a good rule of thumb to have a mix of both fast & slow scenes in every game session.

In *Space Dogs* it's the fast scenes which have the bulk of the mechanics. There are all sorts of rules for combat, for hacking, for piloting a ship to dodge incoming missiles, or even for having a heated argument over how much you should be paid. *Space Dogs* is designed that way because it's those scenes which have the tension and have the most things which can go wrong.

Slow scenes are expected to be played somewhat looser mechanically, though skill checks will still come up. There aren't many rules about walking through a peaceful crowd at the bazaar, ordering a nice meal at a restaurant with a potential client, or someone explaining the news of what's happening in the local star-system. They're about emotional and/or informational content. The lack of mechanics doesn't mean that these scenes shouldn't happen or aren't important, it's just that there generally isn't a lot of tension or things that can go horribly wrong, so the mechanics aren't needed as much, and they would just break up the flow of the scene.

This does mean that despite the names, a fast scene can take more time to play out due to dice rolls and decision making. That's fine, though you should work to streamline the process when running it. The important thing is that it's fast to the characters and that the players feel that tension when playing out a fast scene.

A Social Contract

You and your players should think of a game of *Space Dogs* as having a sort of social contract. Not that you should actually draw up a contract (though

nothing's stopping you if you're into that sort of thing), but you should still think about it.

As the GM, you're going to create the story (or use a prepared adventure), try to keep the game moving forward, and work to make the game as fun for everyone at the table as they can. In exchange, your players should roll with it and not try to tear apart the game and ruin the fun for everyone else playing at the table – which includes the GM. That's really all you need out of your players to be able to start doing the best GMing that you can.

Types of Space Dogs Games

One of the first things that you want to decide is the type of Space Dogs game you and your players want to play. If you want to play a criminal thriller where they hunt down and help to convict criminals aboard a massive jumble space station, and your players want to spend their time charging across the star-lanes, fighting monstrous aliens and space pirates, you should figure that out up front instead of no one being satisfied three sessions in.

Space Cowboys

In this type of game, the players are heroes in the vein of the 1950's westerns or samurai flicks. Each adventure they show up on the scene, are pointed at the villains, and spend the rest of the adventure hunting them down and/or fighting them. This sort of game should gloss over things such as what if the players do with foes who surrender and how different aliens feel towards humanity.

When the players show up, they should be greeted happily by innocents, with only villains viewing them with scorn or mistrust while twirling whatever their species has in place of a handlebar mustache. This might be the sort of game to play when you don't want to take anything too seriously and are just looking for a fun time kicking butt and taking names, especially when you're all out of bubblegum.

A Dark Future

Humans are viewed with a mixture of scorn and fear, especially any psychics who may be a part of the crew. Humans are the builders' enforcers, forcing all other species into line and helping them to keep their monopoly on safe interstellar travel. Most will admit that the builders have used humanity to bring a sense of order to the star-lanes and have helped to make interstellar trade safer, but at what cost?

To get information from other species, the players are often forced to resort to bribery and/or threats. They might have to follow leads into the grimy underbelly of massive space stations where the poor scrape out a meagre living on the scraps of the outer levels.

Enemies who surrender may beg to be let go, telling sob stories. If they don't let them go, the players will have to either execute them in cold blood or follow up in the courts with evidence and/or

testify against them. Those they testify against may have friends who don't want them to testify or who will want revenge against the players after the fact.

Getting anything done in a populated area needs to be done quietly because your enemies likely have allies, and chances are good that as humans the players only have more enemies. After all, taking a local away due to a bounty might not sit well with the local government even if the bounty is valid, and the local government will only get in trouble for interfering if someone survives to complain about it.

Keep Flying

Similar to many classic space westerns shows of the 90s/00s, the players are always one step from going broke. The players likely have their own rust bucket of a ship, but no mecha or other expensive gear, and they are likely deep in debt for said ship. Like in a Space Cowboys game, they often start each adventure in a new system. However, unlike in a Space Cowboys game, the good guys and bad guys aren't so black & white, and the player characters might not even be too interested in figuring out the difference. In addition, characters from previous adventures may show up again, possibly to return a favor, or maybe out for revenge.

In this game type, the GM should have the players use various contacts that they have in different systems to help find them jobs, meaning that they may revisit the space stations where their contacts reside. The jobs may or may not be entirely legal, such as smuggling goods past high tariffs, but probably not anything too immoral. While not as much as in A Dark Future, Keep Flying has the players trying to keep many of their activities secretive, as even legit clients may not want everyone to know that they've hired a crew of humans.

A Mix

Most games of Space Dogs are going to be somewhere in-between the above game types, or even in an entirely different vein. The above are listed as inspiration, and to use as baselines from where to plan your own sessions or campaign. Any mix of them can be fun. The important thing is to have everyone playing at the table to be on the same page before you start playing so that no one has the wrong expectations. Even what could be a great gritty game can end up going poorly if the players go into it expecting a pulpy adventure romp.

Starting Characters

By default, a game of Space Dogs starts with all of the characters at level one and with $10,000 worth of gear. However, this is your game, and you can do what you want.

While it's definitely suggested that when learning Space Dogs you start at level 1, once you get your feet wet, you may want to start at level two or five for your next campaign. Level four is the most common choice for experienced players, as it means that you get to start in an advanced class from the get-go and start the campaign as Iron ranked space dogs.

In the same way, you may have a campaign in mind where the players are wealthier than average. Maybe one of the players is the child of a rich mogul and has a trust fund backing them up (though don't just let a player announce this – only allow it if it fits the campaign that you're running). Or maybe you want all of the players to start the campaign as slaves of a torali crime lord with no possessions of their own, with the first goal being to find a chance to make a break for it.

Just be aware that if the players start the game with all of the best gear and a bunch of mecha it will substantially shift how easy or hard the game is, especially the combat portions.

Characters Having Goals

Whatever type of game you happen to be running at your table, one of the most important things is to have goals for the characters and game. The goals of the characters don't need to be the same, but they also shouldn't be opposed either.

Goals can be as nebulous as being the most powerful psychic or to prove yourself as a warrior. But it can be easier if it's something a bit more focused such as hunting down pirates, bringing justice to the starlanes, or making their fortune. Those three goals are actually good examples of goals which different party members of the same crew can have which mesh well since the same sort of adventure can accomplish all three.

Once you know the PCs' goals that can help you to design missions to entice them. Really though, unless it's totally against their characters' goals, players should generally go along with the general direction of play rather than skipping out on an entire adventure you planned out, as that would likely be breaking the social contract. If that happens, it might be best to take the discussion out of character as you and your players discuss again just what sort of game all of you want to play together.

To Ship or Not to Ship, that is the Question

One of the biggest deciders in how a campaign is played is whether or not the players have their own starship.

Without a starship, the players will obviously be much more limited in where they travel either being limited to a single space station or planet, or having to rely upon passenger liners or other starships to travel between star-systems. This can lead to interesting challenges as at least some of the passenger liner's other passengers likely have some level of distaste or fear towards humans which could make for interesting roleplaying opportunities. The liner might even be attacked by volucris, immortui, or pirates, and the players will have to defend the entire liner from attack, going from deck to deck fighting off the boarders and making the other passengers think again about their distaste for humanity. Or some the passengers themselves might end up being hijackers.

If the players own a starship it will lead to a different sort of game. The ship will be a constant drain on their resources due to fuel and general upkeep and may force them to take jobs they don't want to take so that their heads stay above water. More often than not they will be taking an active role rather than a passive one, as they can often fly away from local troubles if things get too hairy. They might be hired as escorts for a merchant ship, piggybacking through the warp. They may make deliveries themselves on faraway planets, though most don't want to deal with human merchants, so likely they'd only be hired to do so if the trip is in some way perilous. They might also be able to take their ship to investigate places and things which they would never be able to hire a ship for, such as exploring ruins of some ancient species.

Having a ship requires certain skill requirements to use if effectively, such as Piloting and Repair: Starships. In addition, unless you and your players want to just gloss over much of it, there will be a certain amount of planning where to travel and deciding where to dock their ships when they get there. The rules for piloting a ship both through the warp and in-system are streamlined and shouldn't take too much focus away from the core Space Dogs game.

One option is to have the players not begin the campaign with a ship, but after the first few sessions give them the opportunity to get one, such as capturing a pirate ship as a prize. This can help give the players a real feeling of progression as a group aside from their characters leveling.

Whether or not the players have a ship, there are a variety of different sorts of games that you can run, but you should know what your aim is going in.

Creating Your World

As the Gamemaster, you are the creator of your own campaign and the world that it's in. Even though you're likely setting your game in the universe of *Space Dogs*, being your campaign it's your world to fill and make feel real to your players.

Probably the number one key to creating a campaign world feel real is consistency. When your players revisit a space station they should run into some of the same characters, and possibly be recognized in return. They might become friendly with the local mechanic at the dock, he and the crew's mechanic trading jibes about which knows how to wrench a warp drive better. The station mechanic might even take on his nephew as an apprentice between player visits. That sort of changing campaign world makes the players feel as though they're in a living universe rather than just a cardboard backdrop which is only there to spew forth pirates and monsters for them to fight.

Judging the Rules

When you and your friends gather around the table to play *Space Dogs*, the Gamemaster is in charge of the game. As the Gamemaster, you are the final judge on rules within the game. Good players should recognize you as the final authority on the rules. A good GM should know to follow the rules in this book unless they have a good reason to do so, and to make such changes clear to their players beforehand so that they know the ground-rules (your game's "house-rules") before creating their character and their strategies.

This means that as a GM, you will need to know the rules. You don't need to memorize every rule, but you should have a general understanding of the mechanics and where you look within the book for a relevant rule.

Sometimes something comes up in-game which isn't specifically covered in the rules. In that situation, it is up to the GM to decide how it should be resolved. Generally you should try to extrapolate from rules which you find for similar situations, and once you do make a ruling you should be consistent the next time that the same situation comes up, making it your table's house-rule.

Teaching the Game

Though not always the case, it is sometimes the GM's job to teach new players how to play *Space Dogs*. This can be a lot of fun. Teaching people how to play gives you new players and lets you to help them become great roleplayers and enjoy the awesomeness which is *Space Dogs*.

How you teach someone how to play *Space Dogs* will vary quite a bit whether or not they are new to RPGs in general or just new to *Space Dogs*. However, in either case there are some things which you should keep in mind.

- Character creation: As the GM you need to know the character creation rules well so that you can help new players build their characters. The character creation rules for *Space Dogs* aren't super complex, but almost nothing is worse in an RPG than realizing in your third game session that you built your character wrong. No matter whether the changes make your character weaker, stronger, or just different, it feels off to have to change your character to fit the rules after already having played them for some time. You should also just feel free to start playing with the sample characters and learn character creation later.
- The players need to know: New players shouldn't have to worry about learning all of *Space Dogs'* rules before playing. While it's a plus if each player knows how their own character works (how to move, vitality/life, grit, and how to use skills) most rules can be learned during play. As a general rule of thumb, if the players know how to use what's on their character sheet then they're ready to

play, and everything else can be learned on the fly during a session.

- The GM needs to know: As the GM, you need to know the basics of how to play *Space Dogs*. As long as you know the rules the game can move forward. If a player isn't sure of a rule, have them tell you what they want their character to do, and you can explain how the rules for it work. Explain during play and try not to slow down the game too much when you do so. For example, if a player wants to get through a door's electronic lock, you can explain that they need to use their Hacking skill check. After a time or three the player should be able to pick up on it and similar rules.

Balancing at the Table

Game balance is about keeping the player characters of your crew relatively equal in power and game presence. A well balanced game shouldn't have one character totally dominating the game, either in combat or just in a dominating table presence, always having the right tool for the job. This can most easily happen when one player has a greater knowledge of the rules than the others, or if one of your game's house-rules has gone awry.

To a lesser degree, game balance is also about making sure that the crew isn't too strong for the challenges they face to be threatening, but also so that the crew isn't stomped into the ground in every fight. The Threat Guide has some tips for designing encounters, but it isn't a perfect system, and it can't take into account the exact make-up of your players' crew and how they want to tackle challenges.

However, every challenge that the players face shouldn't be the same difficulty. Sometimes it can be fun for the players to be able to win a fight with ease, especially if it's against the same sorts of foes which were giving them trouble earlier in the campaign. Or on a skill challenge, it can be fun to be able to easily hack a system, making it willingly spew forth all of its secrets. It helps the players feel like the hardcore space privateer they are. On the other hand, sometimes it can be fun for the players to encounter things which are difficult if not impossible to overcome. The galaxy is a big place, and it can make it feel less real for your players if every possible foe is tailored just for them. In addition, even a deadly challenge which is virtually impossible to deal with in a head-on brawl might still have a place in your game. A fleet of immortui marauders shouldn't be charged at guns blazing, but the players escaping to warn The Armada of them can be a different sort of victory.

Whatever the case, game balance should be used as a tool to help make *Space Dogs* more enjoyable for you and the players. While keeping a solid balance is important, it's even more important that you not take it too extreme to the point where it becomes more a negative than a positive to the table experience.

Balancing the Game: Exo-Suits & Mecha

If any of the players' characters get an exosuit or a mecha to jockey, they will inherently be more powerful in combat than they would be without them. This is a core building block of the game's design, as what would be the point of jockeying a mecha if you it didn't make you both bigger and badder? In general terms, jockeying an exosuit doubles a character's combat ability, while jockeying a mecha multiples it by three. While certainly not a perfect variable, and one which varies by their opponent, it's still a handy measuring stick.

This leads to the question of what happens if some of the PCs are in mecha and some aren't. Now, using either exo-suits or mecha will be limited by area. They can't jockey a military grade exo-suit into a crowded station bazaar without causing a panic, and many ship & station corridors would be too small for a mecha to stand upright much less maneuver freely. If you do end up with your players having a mix of infantry and mecha in any given battle, make sure that the players with infantry characters don't feel

overshadowed and make sure that they realize that it is the mecha which is allowing that character to be so powerful on the battlefield.

There may end up being situations where all of the PCs are piloting exo-suits and/or mecha. You can run a campaign where most of the combats are done when all of the PCs are jockeying mecha. If you do that though, make sure that the foes are a threat to the players. While it can be fun occasionally, dominating battles without being challenged can get old fast. If nothing else, when jockeying mecha it's hard for your foes not to know that you're coming, and knowing that, intelligent foes will have something ready which will let them do more than scratch a mecha's paint. On the other hand, it can feel a bit frustrating to your players if every combatant they go up against suddenly has their own mecha or even a rocket launcher or an AM rifle etc. every time they jack-in to a mecha.

Like with everything else, your players are unique, and you might have to try a couple of different styles of play before finding what works best at your table.

Balancing the Game: Distances

One major factor of game balance in *Space Dogs* which isn't as significant in many other tabletop RPGs is the distances, making it tricky even if you have experience running other RPGs. If combat occurs at long distances then longer ranged firearms will be king, but if fighting is taking place in nearly claustrophobic service tunnels full of sharp corners then melee and shotguns will dominate.

When crafting adventures, you should try to have a mix of the two, though generally there should be enough space to get off a round or two of gunfire before melee can ensue. Keep in mind that melee focused enemies such as most volucris will be considerably more dangerous in close confines, and you should think of their Threat Level as higher than listed. In the same way, scrawny ranged foes will be less of a threat if they lack room to get off a round or three before the PCs can close to melee range. Vice versa applying in both cases.

Branching Paths to Victory

As the game goes along, sometimes the players will fail at something. It's inevitable, and setbacks are a part of an interesting game session. After all, without true challenges, there will be no true glory in success.

At the same time, a single failure shouldn't grind the game session to a halt either. If the players can't convince a mark to hand over information, they should be to research it on their own, or stealthily tail the mark until he leads them to the information they need. Nearly every challenge should have multiple paths leading to success.

In the same vein, failing at one potential path shouldn't make the other paths impossible, though if it makes sense it could make them more difficult. In the above example, after rebuffing the PCs' attempts to talk the information out of them, he might be more wary and harder to tail.

The same theory should be true of combat encounters. You might have a fight planned out with the leader of a band of pirates, and that can be cool. However, if the players are able to do something like blowing up the whole ship or tricking them into thinking that The Armada is bearing down on them so that they run away, it should have a chance of working. That isn't to say that the players' zany plans should work when they don't make any sense or the enemy already has countermeasures, but you shouldn't simply deny any path which will avoid the cool boss fight which you had planned. If you feel that you wasted the time you spent preparing it, you can just save the encounter and drop it into the campaign in a later session, perhaps with some minor alterations.

For that matter, you shouldn't plan 'combat encounters', just think of them as 'encounters' even if they will likely end up in a fight. Try not to think of combat as an entirely separate experience from the rest of Space Dogs. Anything that the players can do out of combat can be done in combat, though of course time limitations can be a factor. After all, sometimes hacking a system to shut the blast doors can do more to solve the problem of rampaging aliens than picking up a gun.

Doing these things can help the world the PCs are exploring feel much more real and less like a story which you're just taking your players through. Remember, the PCs are not only the stars of the show, but they should usually feel like the driving force behind it. Often, the best fun that you can have as a GameMaster is when the players really surprise you, doing something which you never expected but is clever and has every reason to succeed. One of the trickiest but most fun things to do as a GM is to be able to roll with the punches.

Healing

As the PCs are engage in combat, they will have less and less Grit, Psyche, and if they are unlucky, Life Points in each successive fight fought the same day. Especially if they've played some other RPGs, they may attempt to lock themselves in a broom closet to rest and heal up for several hours. This is something which you should generally discourage out of character and have consequences for if they insist.

Generally speaking, the foes which space dogs are up against are not stupid. If the PCs hunker down in a room for hours on end their enemies aren't going to be kind enough to let them rest up. If the PCs try anyway, their enemies will do something such as venting in poisonous gas, let in vacuum, blow open the door, or something else equally unpleasant.

Character Death

In the same way that failure and setbacks will happen to your players' characters, one of them may die in combat or due to some other problem. Your players could even all die, known as a TPK (Total Party Kill), if they lose a fight and can't run, or if their ship gets blown up. And truth be told, when PCs die, it kind of stinks.

There is no way for dead characters to come back in *Space Dogs*. Dead is dead. It's especially frustrating as a GM when you realize in hindsight that you probably had the encounter be too tough.

While some opinions vary, I would recommend that you not pull your punches. *Space Dogs* is at its best when the players have a feeling of risk and not knowing whether or not the next fight will be their last. The first time the players catch you going easy on them or even changing the rules to save them, they will lose that sense of tension. Though again, opinions vary, and doubtlessly you know the players at your table better than I do as I sit here writing. However, it should be noted that due to the tactical combat focus of *Space Dogs*, more is lost by that lack of tension than in many other RPG systems.

If a character does die, assuming that it wasn't a TPK, you should allow them to create a new character to join the current crew, and try to get into a situation which allows them to join up as quickly as

possible. After all, the crew is down a member and it only makes sense for them to look for a replacement as soon as they can. You shouldn't feel required to play out the scene of the new character(s) joining up and instead simply say that they joined up and are getting to know the rest of the crew. Of course, if such a scene of them joining up seems like a good way to introduce the new character, it can be a really interesting scene which can help flesh out both the new character(s) and the old ones.

Backup Characters

While obviously not a requirement to play Space Dogs, players having a backup character already pre-built can be beneficial. If you intend for a more lethal game, then each player having their own backup character is recommended. More normally, the GM having a single backup character for the entire table is probably sufficient. In the latter case, it should probably be a character class who isn't too complex (varies by table – but probably not a psychic) and doesn't overlap with any of the current characters in class/background. By default, the new character should be one level lower than the party's average, but having them be the same level is also a good option.

With a backup character at the ready, if a character does die, that player doesn't need to sit out the game until they've finished building their new character. If you have a GM backup character, the player can use that character until the end of the session and then choose whether to keep playing the backup character or to build an entirely new character.

If possible, the backup character should be someone who the PCs already have a relationship with. Examples include a relative of a current character, a fellow space dog who they've worked with on larger jobs, or even the human bodyguard of a client who got tired of cooling his heels instead of traversing the starlanes. This lets the players skip the initial introductions and keep playing through the adventure.

As GM, you should look for an opportunity to introduce the character ASAP. After all, the whole point of a backup character is so that the player whose character died doesn't have to sit around watching everyone else having fun and can jump right back into the action.

It's easy to bring in a new character during downtime between adventures, but doing so mid-adventure can be tricky. There's no simple solution, as it depends what the players are currently doing.

If the PCs are on or near a passenger ship, they could run into an old Armada bunkmate who happens to be on the ship who just so happens to want to join their space dog crew. Or they run into someone going after the same bounty and decide to team up. It probably won't be perfect, but usually it's more important to get the player whose character died back in the action rather than making him sit kicking his heels for a few hours until you make it back to the nearest major space station.

Enemy Morale

One of the things which is different about running a *Space Dogs* game in comparison to most other RPGs is the morale rules as explained in the Threat Guide. Most enemies which the players fight are likely to break and run from them rather than fighting to the last man. This is a lot of fun and helps make the enemy and the whole game feel more real rather than just being targets for the players' characters to hit. It also helps fights not drag on after the PCs have effectively won already. However, it can make running a game session a bit trickier.

For example, when the PCs board a Primeval ship, they have an initial combat just as they board with six krakiz. After taking down a couple of them the Primevals break, two run in one direction, one runs in another, while the PCs are able to corner the last one so that he surrenders. As the GM, you may

want to remember the one which ran into a closet where he'll hide for an hour, likely doing nothing until after the fighting is all over. However, the other two ran towards where another Primeval unit with their pride leader is, and she can rally them and they will join their unit. Because they ran in that direction, the fight with that unit will be that much harder.

Now, as GM you don't need to worry too much about keeping all of the Morale rules perfectly. The important thing is that you're consistent so that the players' actions can have an impact upon the outcome. In the above example, if the PCs had been able force all of the krakiz who got away to run towards a corner of the ship, they'd all keep hiding for an hour or so – which is likely long enough for any other fights to be resolved.

It should also be noted that the Morale rules, or at least their effects, are a major reason that enemies don't always attack en masse whenever possible. They're generally not stupid, and they know that their units might break quickly. Therefore, they are usually better off attacking in waves, with locked doors and automated turrets slowing down the boarders and giving them time to regroup when needed.

When to Not Use Initiative

Most combats should use the initiative system, but sometimes it isn't needed and not using it can help speed up gameplay.

Initiative should be used for combat any time that the result of the fight is still in doubt. The most common time that you should stop using initiative is once the enemy's morale breaks and they all start running from the PCs.

Sometimes continuing to roll initiative is the way to go, such as when one of the foes running off is the PCs' bounty and you need to figure out if they get away, but at other times whether or not the enemy gets away doesn't matter much. If it isn't critical, you can speed up play by having the players tell you what they're doing and just have it happen without worrying about the exact order.

Other times initiative may not be needed are in encounters in which either the PCs totally outclass their foes or the reverse. If the players start a fight with a pair of alanny traders with no bodyguards, it isn't really much of a fight and no initiative is needed. Just ask the players what they want to do. The same could be true if the players are in mecha and the enemy group doesn't have any weapons which can hurt them. On the opposite side of the spectrum, if an unarmed PC is foolish enough to start a fist-fight with a mecha, you don't need to bother with initiative, at least until the player comes to his senses and starts to run away screaming like a small child.

Choosing when to not use initiative, like a lot of being GM, is pretty subjective. You may want to err on the side of using initiative until you get a feel for it, but you should definitely keep the option in mind. Not using initiative during combat can speed up gameplay to get through parts of your session which don't really have a lot of tension and keep the game moving forward.

Crafting Your Adventures

One of the most difficult and rewarding parts of being a Gamemaster is creating adventures for your players to have. After you and your players have decided upon the general type of *Space Dogs* game you want to play, you'll need to come up with the specifics. For obvious reasons, this isn't something that you should talk out with your players. After all, what's the fun in not being able to surprise your players?

To start with, you should consider running *Repel the Boarders*, the prepared adventure in the back of this book. It's designed specifically to be a good start for new players and veterans alike, throwing them in the deep end of the setting and giving players a taste of several core pieces of the *Space Dogs* universe. *Repel the Boarders* can make a good opening for your own *Space Dogs* campaign. There are several other modules which can be purchased, with more planned for the future.

Whatever the reason, you may well find that there are no prepared adventures which quite fit the sort of campaign you want to run. In that case, you'll need to craft your own. You should feel free the draw heavily on the style of the prepared adventures or perhaps draw on any experience you might have in other RPG game systems, creating a style of adventure all your own. Some of the best adventures can draw heavily from a movie, TV show, or book, though you'll likely want to change it enough so that any of your players who may have read or watched the same thing don't guess what's going to happen.

Space Dog Ranks

As Space Dogs, the player characters are a mix of privateers and mercenaries, but when the builders first created the letters of marque, they wanted to have some method to rank space dog crews based upon their accomplishments. After all, their letter of marque is a powerful tool, but any builder hiring them wouldn't know exactly how skilled any given crew is.

While hardly a perfect system, the one which the first space dogs came up with for the builders was to rank every crew as Lead, Iron, or Steel, in ascending order. This is actually a part of every space dog's letter of marque. Once a crew has enough accomplishments, they can apply to a magistrate to get their marque upgraded.

This system was originally used by the builders themselves to track different space dog crews and tap them for jobs based upon their rank, with the higher ranks getting more dangerous but lucrative jobs.

Over time, other species caught onto the system and will now do the same, sometimes even requiring that the space dogs show them their marque to prove their rank. A higher ranked crew of space dogs can also often argue for a higher pay for the same job to be worth their time.

GM Note: You might notice that this ranking system ties into the threat system for potential enemies. As a general rule of thumb, if the PCs are level 1-3, they should be ranked lead. If 4-7, ranked Iron, and PCs level 8+ should be ranked Steel.

That is just a general rule though, and after great accomplishments a group of level 6-7 PCs might get that coveted Steel rank. Or another crew whose jobs are consistently off the beaten path might still be ranked Lead at 4-5. However, for both crews you should still use the Iron rank when balancing encounters are rewarding XP based upon their character level being in the normal 4-7 range for Iron.

Your Campaign's Timeline

As of this book's publishing, the default setting is in the year of 2107, reflecting the endpoint of the current timeline. Future adventures and supplements will reflect that. However that is in no way a requirement for your own campaign. You should feel free to set your game anywhere on the timeline that you want, playing a 'historical' campaign. However, if you want to follow the timeline rather than deviating from the standard *Space Dogs*' setting entirely, there are things that you should avoid putting in your game.

2090's

- **Council of Mothers:** The Council of Mothers was only founded near the end of this decade. Human psychics didn't even have the veneer of being united as they do in the present day of 2107. Human psychics should be much rarer in general.
- **Prototypes:** Many of the weapon systems which are relatively common in the present day didn't exist in the 2090's, or if they did they were just prototypes and should be far rarer, sometimes running into technical difficulties.

2080's

- **Non-human mechas:** Species besides the builders only began to have mecha in any numbers in the 2090's, though even then they were only used sporadically. If you have your players encounter any alien mechas at all, they would have to be experimental prototypes.
- **Human Communities:** Communities which are human centric only began in the mid-to-late 2080's as there became enough humans in the galaxy to support such. During this time period and earlier, nearly all humans live on Armada bases, or in the nearby areas.
- **Cybernetics:** Human cybernetics were not created until the early 2080's. While the berlichs were using cybernetics centuries before humanity ever reached the starlanes, humanity was still using prosthetics, albeit ones which had been improved greatly from those on Earth. Though of note, there are no rules for human cybernetics in this book, they are planned in a future supplement.
- **Human psychics:** The oldest recorded psychic was only 11 years old when the

2080's began. If you still want to have human psychics, you would have to be playing in to latter part of this decade, and the psychic would be a teenager. In addition, they would be even more of a rarity and social outcast than psychics in the present day of 2107.

- **Moreaus:** The moreaus only became a known quantity in the early 2090's. If you want your game to include them, they would likely still be under the control of their creators, and few if any of them would be adults. Perhaps the players could become one of the driving forces in setting them free, though the moreaus are just as wary of humanity as they are every other species, having almost a sort of sibling rivalry with Earth's favored child.

2070's

- **Colonies:** The colonial boom didn't begin until the 2080's, so new colonies will be rarer. Those new colonies that do exist are usually created by a single species.
- **Human psychics:** There are no human psychics at all until 2076, so they are unplayable.
- **Merchants:** While the merchant class began to take advantage of humanity as security and guards, there was considerably more reticence to hire them, especially in the early 2070's. Those merchants willing to hire them will bargain even harder to have the humans work for cheap.
- **Ruins:**As there are few colonies pushing the boundaries of the starlanes, there are fewer newly discovered ruins of the ancient species to explore. Likely any around would have been at least superficially looked over by previous explorers, though the dangers might have killed them and/or driven them off before they were able to look at much more than the surface.
- **Veterans:** In the 2070's all player characters will be veterans of the armada. The oldest humans born in space would still be children during this decade, and therefore every human will have had a rank in the military.

2060's

- **Armada:** Until the mid-late 2060's, all humans out among the stars were a part of the armada. Any campaign set before then would have to be a military campaign. Rather than being a tiny part of larger actions, the players might be in the crew of a small patrol starship, primarily based in the outlying areas. The players will have a chain of command amongst themselves, and they will commonly be the first humans which any aliens that they meet have ever seen in person. If the campaign takes place early enough, they may even run into out-of-the-way systems which still haven't heard of humans or The Armada. They could also be part of security aboard a large space station.
- **Mecha:** The players will not have access to any mecha or exo-suits outside of specific marine units. In addition, weapon systems specifically designed to counter them such as the AM rifle will be just as experimental and rare as the mecha themselves.
- **Space Dogs:** There were no Space Dogs throughout the bulk of the 2060's. The first letters of marque were created in 2069. While some humans were hired as security before 2069, without the letters of marque they weren't trusted in the same way and they had no legal authority beyond being citizens of the starlanes.

Designing Encounters

If you have decided to write your own adventure and you have the general layout set up, the next step, likely the trickiest, is to design encounters for your players.

An encounter often means that there is combat, but it doesn't have to. Sometimes an encounter can be resolved by slipping past security or a character talking their way out of a sticky situation. But the times where the balance is the trickiest is in combat, since for the players' characters it is a matter of life and death.

Morale

Few creatures across the galaxy, no matter the species, are willing to fight to the death when outmatched. Instead, they break and run after suffering major casualties, and sometimes they break right after their first real taste of combat.

Every foe listed in this Threat Guide has a listed Break TN. When making an initiative check it is also a morale check, using the highest Morale score in the group. In this way, a single courageous warrior or inspiring leader can put steel in the backbone of his companions. This is also a reason for the players to target such foes, taking them down quickly so that their remaining allies are more likely to break and flee.

A Morale test is the 3d6 roll used in the Initiative/Morale Phase with a TN equal to the highest Break TN of any foe in combat. If there are multiple enemy sides, then each use their side's highest Break TN.

The Break TN can be changed by the modifiers on the below table or by various character abilities. More than one modifier may apply at the same time. For example, a foe by themselves would have both the Fresh & Devastated modifiers during the first round of combat, making their Break TN be at -4 total. In the same way, if a group of six has their third member dropped to below 0 Life/Pscyhe, the following round their Break TN would be at -10. Because the Death modifier commonly applies for at least the first round that Devastated does, few creatures are likely to keep fighting once their numbers drop to half or below since the -10 to the TN is such a large decrease, though an NPC with a very high Break TN and/or a morale based ability can keep them from breaking.

If the roll is at/above Break TN(s) the players should be told, as while the PCs may act first, they should be able to tell if their foes are breaking.

GM Pro Tip: Depending upon the circumstances, you may or may not want to keep track of broken NPCs. Generally, unless they're going to run into a buddy with a high morale almost immediately, they are usually no more a future threat to the PCs than if they were dead. And even if they regroup enough that they're no longer in a panic, they'll often decide that they still have no desire to fight the PCs again.

And frankly, keeping track of the defeated NPCs is often more trouble than it's worth. Only do it if you think that it's going to add to the game. Remember, the first rule of Space Dogs applies to the GM too!

However, even if they never come back into this fight, they might still hold a grudge against the PCs. Consider using that as a story hook in the future.

If you don't think that tracking the broken NPCs matters, you may want to just end an encounter the moment that they break, just narrating the enemy running off with their metaphorical (or sometimes literal) tails between their legs.

Morale Test Modifiers	Description	TN
Fresh	This is used during the first round of any given combat so long as none of the group have taken any damage or been in combat recently.	+4
Death	One or more of their side is taken to less than 0 Life or Psyche last turn. Or taken out entirely via Durability.	-2
Devastated	Half or more of their side have been taken down. This also always applies if a foe is fighting alone.	-8

Note: Morale rules do not apply to PCs.

Break

When the Morale roll meets or exceeds a group's Break TN, they run away from their foes (usually the players), scattering in a panic. If they can't get away they will try to surrender if possible. If they are cornered and not able to surrender (such as not being able to communicate) they will fight to the death.

Not being able to surrender could be due to their foes not accepting their surrender, not being able to surrender as they can't communicate, or not trusting their foes to accept their surrender honorably. Though it should be noted, just because a foe surrenders doesn't mean that they intend to just accept being a prisoner; they may try to escape later.

Some individual creatures may have special rules for what happens when they break, but they are the exceptions to the rule.

Regroup

If a group breaks and are able to get away from their foes (usually the PCs), it takes an hour for them to regroup on their own. If the broken NPCs come together with unbroken NPCs, an unbroken NPC with a Break TN of 13+ can spend 1 minute to have the broken NPC(s) regroup.

Remember that any non-humans need 5 minutes to take a Breather, so they wouldn't recover resources in that minute. Also, any group that these regrouped foes are with would not get the Fresh modifier during the first round of combat.

Threat Ratings

In order to help you design encounters, the foes that your players may face have each been given a Threat Rating or TR. This is not a perfect system due to variance in the players' system knowledge, different foes being tougher for different characters/classes, or the circumstances of the encounter, etc. If you run into a pack of melee volucris at long range, they will obviously be less of a danger than if encountered in tight corridors, and a True Psychic can be great and dealing with powerful foes with low mental defenses. Please make subjective adjustments to base TR

There are three grades of character strength. Levels 1-3 are Lead, levels 4-7 are Iron, and levels 8+ are Steel. Each character normally has a combat level of 1 in their respective category, while a character in an exo-suit is 2, a mecha is 3, or a tank scale mecha is 4. So a group of four level 2 Space Dogs with one of them in an exo-suit would have a GCL (Group Combat Level) of 5 Lead. Please note that while they have the same GCL, the same group at level 3 will be considerably tougher than at 1-2 etc. These are intended as a rough estimate. **********

Foes are each given 3 TRs, one for each grade. For example, a razorback grunt has a lead threat rating of 1, an iron rating of 3/4, and a steel rating of 1/2. As an average encounter is a threat rating of 1-1.5x the PCs' combat rating, a normal encounter for 4 level 2 Space Dogs would be 4-6 razorback grunts.

When building encounters, note that Space Dogs' combat works best when up against multiple foes, and it can be a good idea to often have one elite leader with a higher Break TN to keep the rest of them from breaking and running too easily. Not only does this give variety of foes, but it adds tactical depth as the players need to choose whether to

attack the weaker enemies first and potentially make the enemy take the Devastated penalty or to focus down the elite leader so that the enemy can't use his higher Break TN.

A negligible or even most easy TR encounters will likely not use up any of the characters' resources which can't be recovered by a Breather unless their foes get a lucky critical hit or two. They should still be used sometimes either for pacing or just to let the players feel like the badass space mercs that they are.

An average and moreso a challenging TR encounter will likely burn permanent resources, either requiring use of Grit/Psyche beyond the buffer or the characters taking Life damage more than can be healed in the field. These are the bread and butter encounters.

Hard TR encounters can be used as a boss fight, but know that there is a decent chance of them being lethal. If the table is new to Space Dogs you may want to make it clear that not every fight is winnable in a straight-up fair fight. Strategies such as luring foes into chokepoints or pre-laid traps such as mines or remote explosives can often be the best plan. Or even just blowing up an entire facility infested with volucris rather than exterminating them up close by going room to room.

Extreme encounters should be used sparingly. If used, these encounters should be telegraphed to the players so that they can either avoid the fight if possible, or so that they can work to level the playing field via traps or just splitting up the enemy via guerrilla tactics etc. At times you can even blatantly tell the players that their characters know that a fight is unwinnable. Often these can have alternate victory conditions, such as escaping from a volucris fleet to warn a nearby system and get The Armada to deal with the threat.

If there is no time for a Breather, you should consider how much more difficult the next fight will be without all their resources. Hard or even extreme encounters can potentially be dealt with depending on circumstances if the PCs are still fresh. However, as GM you should be careful of how you set up potential hard and especially extreme encounters, as either can easily become deadly to the PCs.

Again; the threat ratings are meant as guidelines and should be taken with a grain of salt. A level 1 group will obviously have more difficulty with the same encounters as a level 3 group even though they are both in the Lead category. The same is true for the Steel category of level 8 vs 14. In addition, each TR rating is rather broad.

Also of note is that the three categories can have in-setting meanings, with crews of Space Dogs being given unofficial ratings of lead, iron, or steel by the facilitators who are often their source of jobs.

Threat Rating also determines when the characters level. See Chapter 12 page XXX for information on how much experience it takes for PCs to level.

Remember that the experience points are given for completing jobs by any means, not just for defeating enemies in combat. Potentially a job could be completed entirely without combat at all, though if the client expected that they likely wouldn't be hiring space dogs.

Though of course, non-combat options don't need to always be viable or even possible. No matter how persuasive their arguments or how skilled is Presence they are, the PCs aren't going to be able to talk down a pack of hungry volucris.

Reinforcements

Often it makes sense for an initial group of foes to get reinforcements in the middle of a fight. Such as if the PCs board a pirate ship, a group of pirates may be waiting for them as they board, while another group can pop in 9-12 seconds (3-4 rounds) later as they rush in from a couple of rooms over.

While not something you should do often, you can even adjust the strength of the reinforcements based upon how tough of a time the PCs are having. This is especially a useful tool while you're still getting a feel for the Space Dogs system and don't want to

either accidently overwhelm the PCs with too many foes or have fights be consistently easy.

Encounter's Location

When designing an encounter, the first consideration for a given encounter should be where it takes place. As the PCs travel the starlanes, combat will only rarely happen in bare square rooms. While that may feel like the easiest way to set up an encounter, they aren't nearly as much fun as fighting across more interesting terrain. And they will be extremely deadly. Space Dogs as a system assumes there will usually be cover.

More so than many other RPGs, the cover rules combined with the ranged/melee contrast means that in Space Dogs the where the fight happens matters a lot for how a fight is going to play out. If the PCs and their foes start the fight on opposite sides of a table then melee weapons will likely dominate, while if they are fifty meters away across an empty cargo hold, then pulling out a boarding axe and charging will likely be suicidal as they go down to a hail of gunfire.

Distances

If the players are within one move (1 square normally for a human) then they can immediately be in melee combat. The game is balanced around needing to usually run for a turn to close to melee, so having them start too close will swing the balance to melee, for both PCs and their foes. That is not to say that you shouldn't do that sometimes if it makes sense, but doing so will shift how difficult an encounter is, and if you do it all of the time then PCs who don't excel in melee may feel overshadowed. And of course, the opposite is true of starting a fight at long range.

It should be noted of course, that Space Dogs is designed so that all PCs should have both ranged and melee options available to them. But while a True Psychic can pull out a short sword in a pinch, she will never be a match for a Brute or Warrior in melee.

Approx Threat Level to Combat Level	Threat Level Rating
Threat Level up to 0.5x GCL	Negligible
Threat Level 0.5x to 1x GCL	Easy
Threat Level 1x to 1.5x GCL	Average
Threat Level 1.5x to 2x GCL	Challenging
Threat Level 2x to 3x GCL	Hard
Threat Level 3x+ GCL	Extreme

If you aren't sure how close to start a fight, a good rule of thumb is to roll 2d8 for the number of squares apart the PCs and their foes begin. Though of course, if the situation calls for it, they should begin closer or farther. For example, if they were negotiating with a crime lord around a table when hostilities broke out, they would be at most one or two squares away.

Terrain

Besides the distance that distance takes place at, the terrain is also a very important consideration. Any potential sources of cover or concealment can mean the difference between life and death. Cover can be anything from a tipped over table, to piled up sandbags, to a leaning out a doorway and firing down the hall. Any of these can make a character more likely to survive being fired at.

While they can make an encounter more difficult to manage, periodically you should include terrain which does more than just providing cover and slowing movement. A simple one to include in many space stations is a catwalk. While you can go overboard, using terrain can help to make encounters feel more alive and less like a game board.

Ventilation ducts can hide some small foes, ready to jump out at the PCs. There may be structural beams which the PCs or NPCs can climb along, especially if the PCs want to be stealthy and avoid

combat. The PCs might end up fighting in an elevator shaft, shot at from openings above and below even as they are being chased from behind. Not every encounter needs to have one of these more abnormal pieces of terrain, but having them from time to time can help to make the game feel more alive, and sometimes they are just really awesome.

Environmental Challenges

Periodically you can use some of the rules from Chapter 7: Environmental to shake things up. It is suggested that you generally only introduce one at a time, at least until you and your table used to them. While none of them are terribly complicated, if you aren't used to them each one can be a bit of a drag on the speed of play. That being said, having the there be a fire slowly closing in on the PCs from behind while there is a withering hail of gunfire pinning them down from the front can be a very cool moment.

Whatever the environmental effects though, make sure to take their added difficulty into account when designing any encounters.

Experience Points and Character Advancement

One of the biggest pillars of most RPGs is character advancement, and Space Dogs RPG is no exception. Every challenge which the players overcome should be awarded experience points. Not only do they represent growth for the characters, but they help serve as rewards for the players as they accomplish their objectives.

Experience shouldn't be given just for defeating foes in combat, or directly after completing a challenge. Instead, experience in Space Dogs is given out after a job is over, either completed successfully or partial experience points if the job ends in failure. After all, even failure can teach your character something, assuming that they survive.

The experience points should be given for any method which the players come up with to complete a mission, whether through combat, diplomacy, espionage, or semi-controlled use of large quantities of explosives. Whatever gets the job done. If you give certain methods more experience points than others, that will incentivize your players to always use that method whether or not it fits with the situation at hand, and that isn't what experience points are designed to do in *Space Dogs*.

Awarding experience points is really more of an art than a science, though the Threat Guide gives some more guidance of the sorts of combat threats makes for easy, normal, tough, and extreme challenges.

In broad terms, a normal challenge is one which the PCs should be able to get through without it being too much of a threat unless they're unlucky or do something stupid, or if their resources are already drained from previous encounters.

Comparatively, easy challenges shouldn't be too much trouble or use up many resources, while a hard challenge is one which will need the PCs to be lucky and/or clever to avoid using up substantial resources, and they should be under serious threat.

Going one step further in either direction, a negligible threat shouldn't be much trouble for the PCs unless they do something foolish. These are often included to help fill out a setting and they help the players to feel like their characters are truly badass. On the other hand, an extreme threat is one which the PCs will have a lot of difficulty overcoming and likely wasn't something which they were even supposed to be able to do or it's intended as the climax of an entire campaign, especially the kind where you don't necessarily want all of the PCs to walk away from the challenge. Against an extreme threat the lives of the PCs should be in mortal peril. Unlike the other threat levels, extreme threats should always be something which is mortally dangerous.

A single job will often include a mix of challenges, which can be dealt with directly,

indirectly, or even bypassed altogether if it isn't necessary to complete the job.

It should also be noted that as GM, you should feel free to increase or decrease the experience values for the job levels either because you think it's important to your campaign or because you want to change the PCs' speed of advancement. This shouldn't be done for no reason though, as being inconsistent can make the whole thing feel arbitrary and frustrating to your players.

The amount of experience listed on the Experience Points Required to Level table is the additional amount required to reach the listed level when you are one level below. For record keeping purposes you may want to subtract the amount from your total, just as you would when purchasing attributes or skills.

Experience Points Required to Level

Level	Additional Experience	Total Experience
2	+10	10
3	+20	30
4	+30	60
5	+40	100
6	+40	140
7	+40	180
8	+50	230
9	+50	280
10	+50	330
11	+50	380
12	+50	430
13	+50	480
14	+50	530
15	+100	630

Experience Gained Per Job

Threat Level	Experience
Negligible	0
Easy	4
Normal	10
Challenging	15
Hard	20
Extreme	30

Chapter 13: Life Across the Starlanes

The starlanes are a place of danger and wonder, bringing together dozens of different species together into a riotous tapestry of cultures which is almost impossible to predict. While many species are wary of others, forming their own small communities within the larger whole, nearly every major space station has an extensive bazaar where the various species mingle and trade.

Some species' outlooks mean that they inherently get along moreso with others. As humans, the PCs will find themselves the odd man out more often than not. Humans are newcomers of the galaxy and a relative unknown, but being the builders' enforcers makes them something that many fear. Even those who are glad for the increased safety that humanity has brought to the starlanes are often loathe to be seen being too friendly with them lest human-haters see them as sympathizers with the builders' monopoly of safe warp travel.

While certainly not a majority, anti-human sentiment can be found in nearly every species aside from the builders themselves. It is actually more common than anti-builder sentiment, as there are many who see the builders themselves as almost a natural resource and a necessity of safe warp travel, but one which was slowly weakening in influence until a few decades ago. Humanity on the other hand, is the muscle that made it so that the builders couldn't be pushed into becoming a controlled resource, instead they are in some ways more dominant than ever before. Even many who might bear individual humans no ill will may wish that they would just go back to wherever they came from.

GM Note: Many of the things in this chapter discussing mundane things such as food should rarely be a major factor in play. For example, while it might be interesting to talk about the kinds of alien foods that the characters are eating the first time, unless you and your players all enjoy playing science fiction connoisseurs, it'll likely get old fast. These things are mentioned to add depth and spice to the *Space Dogs* setting and perhaps be mentioned without distracting too much from what *Space Dogs* is really about: being rad space privateers!

Food

By the middle of the 20th century on Earth, getting basic sustenance was almost an afterthought to most in the developed world. Even in the worst case scenario you can just stop by your local burger joint. But what about when you're in a star-system where no one else in light-years has even heard of a cow much less a cheeseburger?

The first solution of course is to ship food out from Earth. For the stations in Sol System this is no problem, but once you get more than a couple of jumps away from Sol, the travel times become prohibitively expensive for foodstuffs, though sometimes such Earth-grown foods can be had at outrageous prices.

While most humans are reticent the first few times, the vast majority of alien cuisine is entirely edible by humans, though the reverse is almost never true. Most species have a much more limited palate even discounting humans being the only omnivores amongst the sapient species of the starlanes. With only a few exceptions, humanity can eat nearly anything that any sapient alien species do with the

proper cooking. This ability is highly useful as humans travel the starlanes, but it has led to the moniker of 'garbage eater' to be leveled at humans from time to time.

The other thing which may have led to the moniker is the types of cooking which humans do, mixing a variety of foods together, often with sharp spices which are totally unpalatable to any other species of the starlanes, if not being outright poisonous. More than once has an alien species seen what we have mixed one of their favorite ingredients with and been utterly disgusted.

It should also be noted that meats and eggs are somewhat hard to get a hold of in some parts of the starlanes due to the bulk of alien species being herbivores. If you really want the closest thing to a cheeseburger around, your best bet is to purchase from a krakiz merchant. If you go to a krakiz restaurant you will have to be very specific if you want it anything other than a very rare burger, and you'll have to bring your own cheese.

The human ability to eat a wide variety of foods is a large boon across the starlanes. It allows humans to travel without either the massive food reserves or the long supply lines which other species require, as humans can simply purchase local foodstuffs almost anywhere they travel. Though most humans still prefer foods from Earth – usually grown hydroponically in human settlements rather than shipped from Earth.

Humans: Scavengers of the Galaxy *Excerpt from* *Teardown the Builders*

As another proof of the humans' barbarity, it has been discovered that humans are scavengers. Unlike most of the species which have made their way to the starlanes, they eat the flesh of murdered animals. However, disgustingly enough, unlike even the krakiz, they can also eat plant life like most of the civilized species. They even combine them, burning them both over flame with otherwise inedible materials to make a veritable garbage to consume and subsist their horrifying existence upon.

Humans are scavengers and garbage-eaters, parasitically feeding on whatever parts of the galaxy they can get their hands on, and it was the builders who gave them the chance. It is the builders who have unleashed these scavengers to feast upon the bloated society which the builders have propped up. Instead, we should tear away these supports, exterminate these human parasites, and begin anew! The starlanes should be claimed by those both civilized and bold, not horded by those of the decadent past nor fed upon by upstart barbarous scavengers!

Medicine

Considering how much more advanced some parts of galactic technology are, medicine throughout the starlanes is surprisingly similar to Earth's, though more advanced when it comes to the nervous system. Perhaps most notable are 'jacks', which are what allow humans to jockey exo-suits and mecha and link with computer systems across the starlanes. There are also cybernetics, though humans are more likely to use them as high-end prosthetics than as upgrades in way berlichs do.

One of the major differences for hospitals in most major systems are the number of different species which the doctors have to treat. While most doctors specialize in their own species, most will know the basics of other species' biology, or at least

be willing to look it up in a pinch. Due to the number of various species that the doctors have to treat, some humans have compared being a doctor in the starlanes to being a veterinarian on Earth, though the metaphor fails on several levels.

The builders' armada had its own doctors since shortly after its inception, and there is now a medical school for humans on a station in the Evermore system which teaches a smattering of alien biology along with a focus on humans.

Besides diagnostic tools, the biggest advancement to medicine on humans gained through contact with the builders is fascia, which has been in use for centuries across the starlanes. Fascia is a complex mix of dozens of nutrients and enzymes which promote faster healing at an astonishing rate in every species, though the mix can be varied slightly by species for maximum benefit. Fascia can be used as a gel which is applied directly to the wound, but even more effective when made into a thick liquid and put in a tank with a fully submerged patient.

While humans had plenty of medical surprises, humanity itself was a surprise to alien physicians. Humans heal, endure, and survive where any other species would weaken, collapse, and die. Where other species would recover, humans recover far faster and more completely than any other sapient species. This makes sense when you think of it, as while humans aren't the only sapient species whose ancestors hunted, they are the only species whose ancestors were pursuit predators, catching prey not through speed or stealth, but through toughness and perseverance.

Living Space

Finding living space suitable for humans is significantly more difficult than finding food. At least finding quarters that humans find comfortable without a major remodel.

Most species prefer much tighter sleeping quarters, and most often sharing the quarters if not the sleeping surface, with multiple others of their species. They may occasionally like private quarters for work or study, but almost never for sleep. The theory is that this is because of leftover herd or pack instinct. The most extreme of the major species in this are the alanny, who have a preference for their flock to sleep in a literal pile, sharing body heat. Even the krakiz prefer one large space for each pride, though the occasional sole krakiz female requires her own space.

These differences can require significant retrofitting if purchasing a ship used, though all but the smallest starships can vary quite a deal in how they are laid out when purchased. The most relevant metaphor might be to think of them as like the houses in subdivisions. They all have the same general shape and layout, but the specifics can vary quite a bit, only moreso with starships due to being crewed by a variety of different species rather than just humans of differing tastes.

On space stations with permanent human garrisons which have been there for more than a few years, there is generally a small area set aside for humans with individual sleeping quarters. However, humans are still relatively rare throughout most of the starlanes, and on many space stations or planets it can be difficult to find suitable quarters. Some humans simply deal with the shared room, often jury-rigging privacy curtains, while others with the cash to burn might each rent huge rooms meant for half a dozen or more of another species.

Planetary Architecture & Development

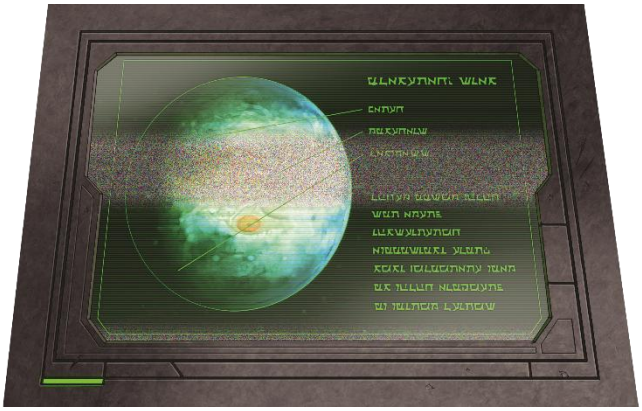
The mix of cities, rural, and suburban areas on Earth aren't duplicated on other settled planets. Suburban living is almost entirely unique to Earth, largely due to the general lack of private transit as detailed below. But that is certainly not the only reason for the differences in planetary landscapes.

For a variety of reasons which human researchers are still guessing at, other species are not as populous on even their home planets as humans are on Earth, especially relative to their physical size. While certainly not the only reason, as mentioned above, most sapient species have a much narrower dietary requirements, often which can only be cultivated across a relatively small portion of their planets. Though of course, that is only one of the more obvious reasons, along with the prevalence of space stations which house the bulk of the galactic population. Many human researchers have theories on the other reasons, just as alien researchers have theories as to how and how Earth can be so crowded.

Farming is generally far more limited on most species' home planets. However, that is actually one advantage that many of the newer mixed species colonies have, because while each species has a relatively limited diet, their crops often flourish in different sorts of climates and soils, so a larger proportion of any given area can be used to grow food. Though it should be noted that nearly every planet grows at least some of the food for other species if for no other reason than to sell to travelers passing through their system, albeit sometimes at exorbitant prices. In addition, the builders require a portion of their own foodstuffs to be grown on every system with a warp beacon in order to feed the builders servicing it and as a tribute or taxes for the beacon.

The status of farmers varies greatly from planet to planet. Some species mechanize the process as much as possible, but for some of the minor species the act of farming has an almost religious virtue, and some of their highest ranking individuals farm manually as an almost ritualistic process. Needless to say, such can drastically change where a civilization's center of power is as well as the cost of food.

Though of course, larger space stations have their own hydroponics facilities to grow food and have limited need to import food from planets.



Planetary Transportation

After making planet-fall, the types of transport available change greatly from planet to planet. Variations of every Earth transportation exist, though nearly all use the artificial gravity technology so prevalent throughout the starlanes, whether in place of wheels or in conjunction with wings.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about planetary transport to humans is how few vehicles

are run manually. Most species seem to lack the combination of coordination, reflexes, and spatial awareness which allow humans to have so many manually driven vehicles driven with relative safety. It was Earth's crowded roads which first made the builders interested in humanity while they still watched Earth in secret.

Most planets rely primarily on a relatively few large transports on rails and/or on autopilot, which would be most comparable to Earth's trains & subways, though they will undoubtedly have flights, both atmospheric and suborbital, for longer distance planetary travel.

Planetfall

To make planetfall requires a specialized craft as most starships are built to only be used in space. However, most heavily populated worlds have space elevators, as the gravity based technology makes them relatively easy to build if not exactly cheap.

As humans, the PCs will not be allowed to make planetfall on most planets due to the general dislike of humanity and the builders having never attempted to push their few general rules planet-side.

Inhabited Planet Types

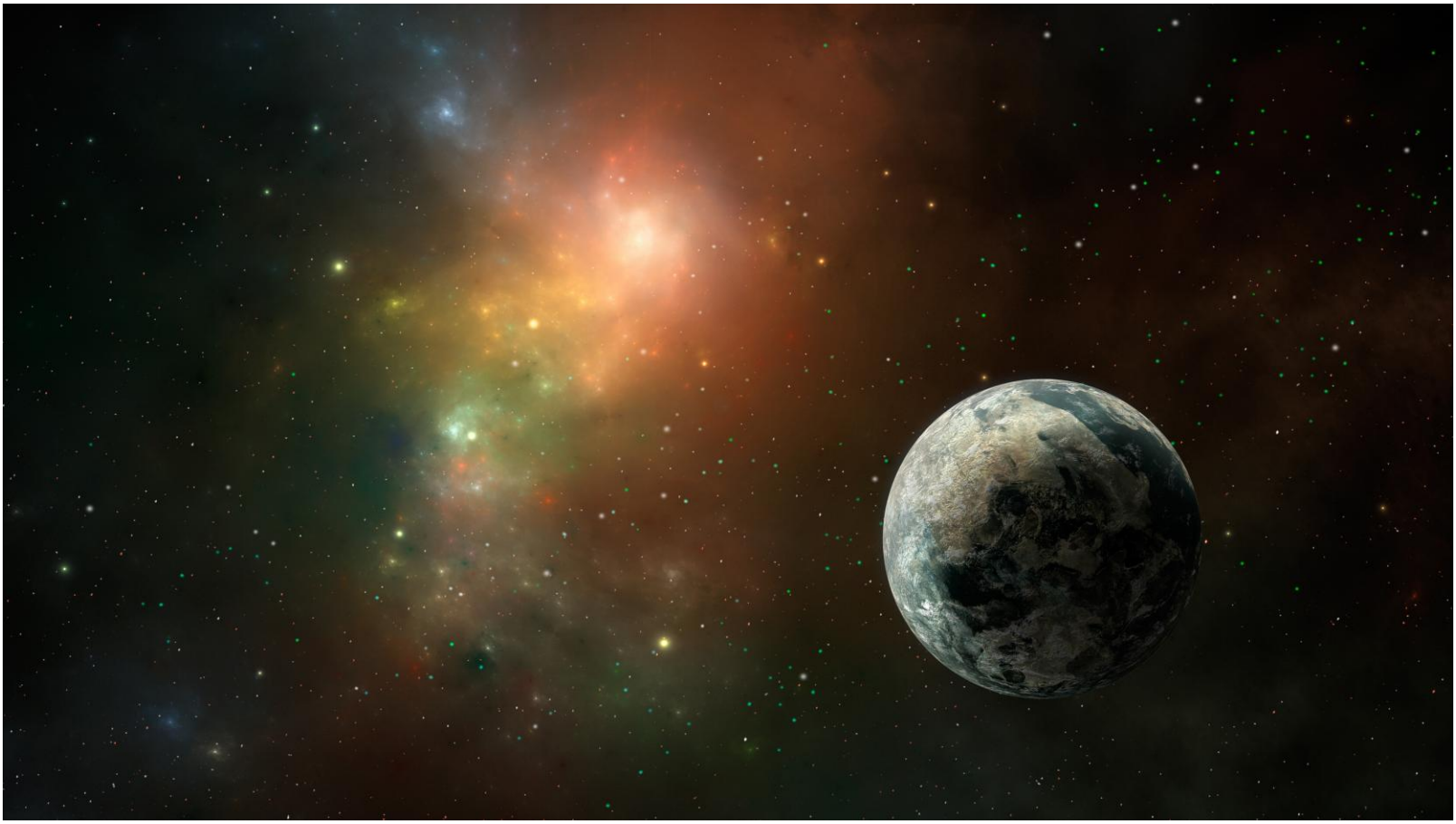
While each planet differs significantly and is unique to some degree, there are several broad categories which they fall info for the purposes of classification.

Homeworlds

Like Earth is to humans, every species of the starlanes has a homeworld where their species originated, whether or not the bulk of their species still resides there. Learning about their homeworld and how a species was adapted to it is often used in an attempt to gain insight into their general outlook on the galaxy.

Nearly every species has a certain fondness and protectiveness for their homeworld, whether that is due to religious, philosophical, or merely sentimental reasons. And of course, many of the minor species' populations are still primarily on their homeworld, though invariably there are significant populations throughout their home system and the occasional pocket scattered throughout the starlanes.

Homeworlds are generally temperate to some degree, being in or near where 20th century human astronomers labeled the 'Goldilocks Zone' relative to their star's mass and energy output. The gravity of such planets are generally rather close to Earth's,



which is why 0.97 Earth standard is the most common setting for artificial gravity throughout the starlanes, especially in places with multiple species.

Most species do not allow general visitors to make planetfall on their homeworlds, instead only allowing their species and the occasional VIP guest or envoy.

Habitable Worlds

These are worlds which are not the homeworld of any of the starlanes' sapient species, but are habitable by them. Often these worlds already have wildlife of some sort, though most species do their best to keep them away from any settlements, sometimes the wildlife will be a resource all its own. The most infamous of these latter categories are among the krakiz, who seem to take great pride and delight in training various beasts to their will, though only by the broadest definition would they be considered tame. Doing so seems to earn a certain level of respect amongst their fellow krakiz, enough that many are willing to risk life and limb doing so, or at least attempting it. In addition, the krakiz require dangerous swaths of land for their offspring to grow

on, sometimes even importing dangerous animals should the local fauna be too weak in their eyes.

Most often though, habitable worlds are used for colonization, whether by a single species or, more common in recent years, by a smattering of various species working together to colonize their new home together.

Semi-Habitable Worlds

These worlds are harsh places where life is still possible, at least in limited areas. If in the same system as a homeworld or habitable planet, these planets are commonly subjected to various forms of geoengineering to make them more habitable.

Atmospheres are made more breathable and adjusted to make more of the planet within tolerable temperatures for the species. They are given a magnetic field if they lack one to protect from solar radiation. Perhaps most surprisingly to human sensibilities, the same builder technology which create gravity engines and artificial gravity allows for the adjustment of a planet's gravity. The most common gravity given to these planets, especially those with multiple species in the initial colonists, is 0.97 Earth standard.

It should be noted that these semi-habitable worlds sometimes already had lifeforms of some sort which may or may not react well to the geoengineering changes. In many cases the changes to their environment kill them or push them to small areas of their planet still habitable to them, but in other cases they unexpectedly thrive in the new environment, generally to the dismay of the new colonists who have to come up with other ways to deal with them. If those now thriving species are particularly aggressive, krakiz tamers may show up to grab a few new pets.

If not geoengineered, these planets can be lived on under domes and any native life used for various research projects.

Intolerable Worlds

Worlds whose surfaces are un-habitable aren't necessarily totally uninhabited. Whether too hot or too cold to sustain most life, these worlds often still have resources to be exploited by those willing to brave the elements. Most commonly climate controlled domes are used for living space, though underground tunnels and chambers are not uncommon depending upon the planet's climate and the make-up of the surface.

Mining is the most common activity on these planets, though not necessarily for metals, as on un-habitable worlds with sufficient water, the ice or water vapor is commonly gathered to use on space stations or other worlds. Some science experiments are done on these planets as well, especially those which need vast areas to test in and the vacuum of space isn't suitable. Or perhaps ones which need natural gravity.

Occasionally one of these worlds will be geoengineered to be somewhat habitable, though it is rarely worth the resources and centuries of time to do so rather than merely colonizing a more suitable world or just living on a space station. The places where it is done are almost all within star-systems which have one or more other prosperous worlds, such as Earth has considered doing with Mars. As they say in all sorts of real estate, the three most important considerations for value are 'location, location, and location'.

GM Note: The various types of planets and stations listed in this chapter shouldn't be considered exhaustive lists. Instead, they are described here as ideas for you to build upon, as well as being used as shorthand both for other portions of this book and for you to use at your table. While the first time or two it can be fun to go in-depth about what the makeup of the space station is like, at other times you may want to just say "it's a refueling station" so that your players know the gist right away and you can get back to the story and/or action.

Uninhabited Worlds

Most often uninhabited worlds are intolerable worlds which have zero population. What keeps anyone from attempting to take advantage of their natural resources may be that they lack any, or possibly that there aren't enough nearby markets for them. Whatever the case, uninhabited worlds have no population on them whatsoever.

In more outlying systems semi-habitable or even habitable planets might have not been colonized due to its location relative to the main starlane routes, or even being too close to areas known for warp storms. These have become less common in recent decades as more colonies sprout up.

It should be noted that sometimes planets labeled as uninhabited might still contain small populations which simply haven't declared their existence to the starlanes at large for whatever reason. Often this is simply that they haven't taken

the time to do so yet, but sometimes it's because they're hiding their activities there.

Gas Giants

Gas giants are totally impossible to land on due to their gravitational pull and make-up. Some specialized ships can collect useful gases from their upper layers, but it is risky and almost universally considered more trouble than its worth.

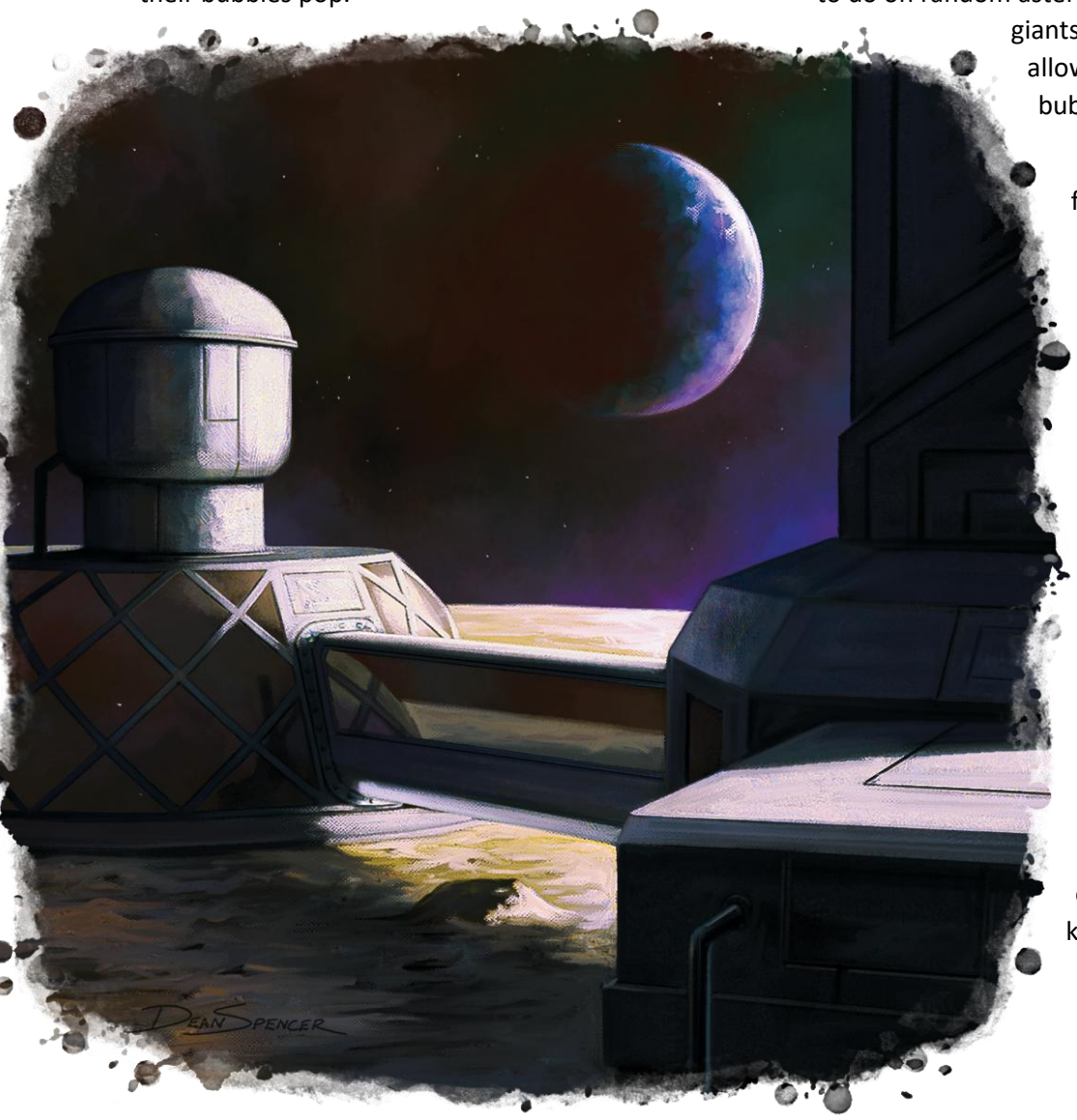
Gas giants are generally further out from their star than rockier planets, often far enough out that warp drives will still function until the gravity of the gas giant itself pops their bubble. In Sol System, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are all far enough from their sun's gravity well that ships can use their warp drives to get into the same SCS as they are in before their bubbles pop.

The other main feature of gas giants is that they commonly have multiple large moons.

Moons

Moons themselves can sometimes fall into the category of semi-habitable or intolerable worlds if they're large enough, their changing distance from their star means that they are virtually never a habitable world without substantial geoengineering to make them so.

Many moons surrounding gas giants are excellent for mining and other resource gathering, and being outside of their star's warp envelope makes shipping their ore far faster and cheaper, especially out of the system. This makes such mining operations very profitable. This would be impossible to do on random asteroids as it is the moons' gas giants' own warp envelopes which allow ships to pop their warp bubble near them at all.



Unfortunately, the same feature which makes these mining outposts so profitable all makes them vulnerable, as they would have no warning before attackers such as a volucris swarm, immortui raiders, or run-of-the-mill pirates were on top of them. And due to the speed of light, even planets or space stations within the same star-system might not know that they were attacked until it was far too late.

If the attackers are clever with various jamming, camouflage, trickery, and/or approaching from the far side of the gas giant, no one might know that they were attacked

at all, the mining outpost having simply stopped communications. Freighters making runs to these outposts are also at a higher risk for the same reasons.

Space Stations

Throughout the starlanes, most systems have the vast majority of their populations living on numerous space stations rather than planet-side, with the exceptions largely being the home systems of minor species with minimal presence in space at all. Besides home systems, most planets are relatively sparsely populated by human standards even when naturally habitable.

There are many different types of space stations throughout the galaxy, in many different sizes and shapes. However, for most purposes a station will generally fall in one of the categories listed below, though generally no two space stations of a particular category will actually look the same. They will vary based upon their particular needs, the species or organization which built them, and how long ago they were built, etc.

Whatever their current structure, most space stations began as asteroids or even small moons, either to mine them or simply as a good chunk of mass that was nearby the intended location. Though over time the original rock of the asteroid may not be seen at all as the structure of the station enveloped what little was not mined out.

Docking at a Station

When a starship docks with a space station, they need to abide by the station's rules. This includes what sorts of things can be brought aboard the station. The most common of these are various biologicals, from pathogens to wild animals.

Many stations will also have limits on personal weaponry. While there are no restrictions on personal weapons for interstellar travel due to the risk of attack by volucris, Immortui, or various pirate groups, the same is not true aboard stations. Most commonly weapons which could damage the station itself are disallowed, such as rocket launchers or mecha. Some stations are more restrictive, with a few even disallowing all projectile weaponry.

Officially, humans who have a letter of marque are able to carry small arms (human or exo scale damage weapons only) in public areas of any station which has dealings with interstellar travel. However, some stations will skirt the line by having officially public areas be very small relative to private areas or even smaller stations claiming to not cater to interstellar business at all despite servicing them if they dock.

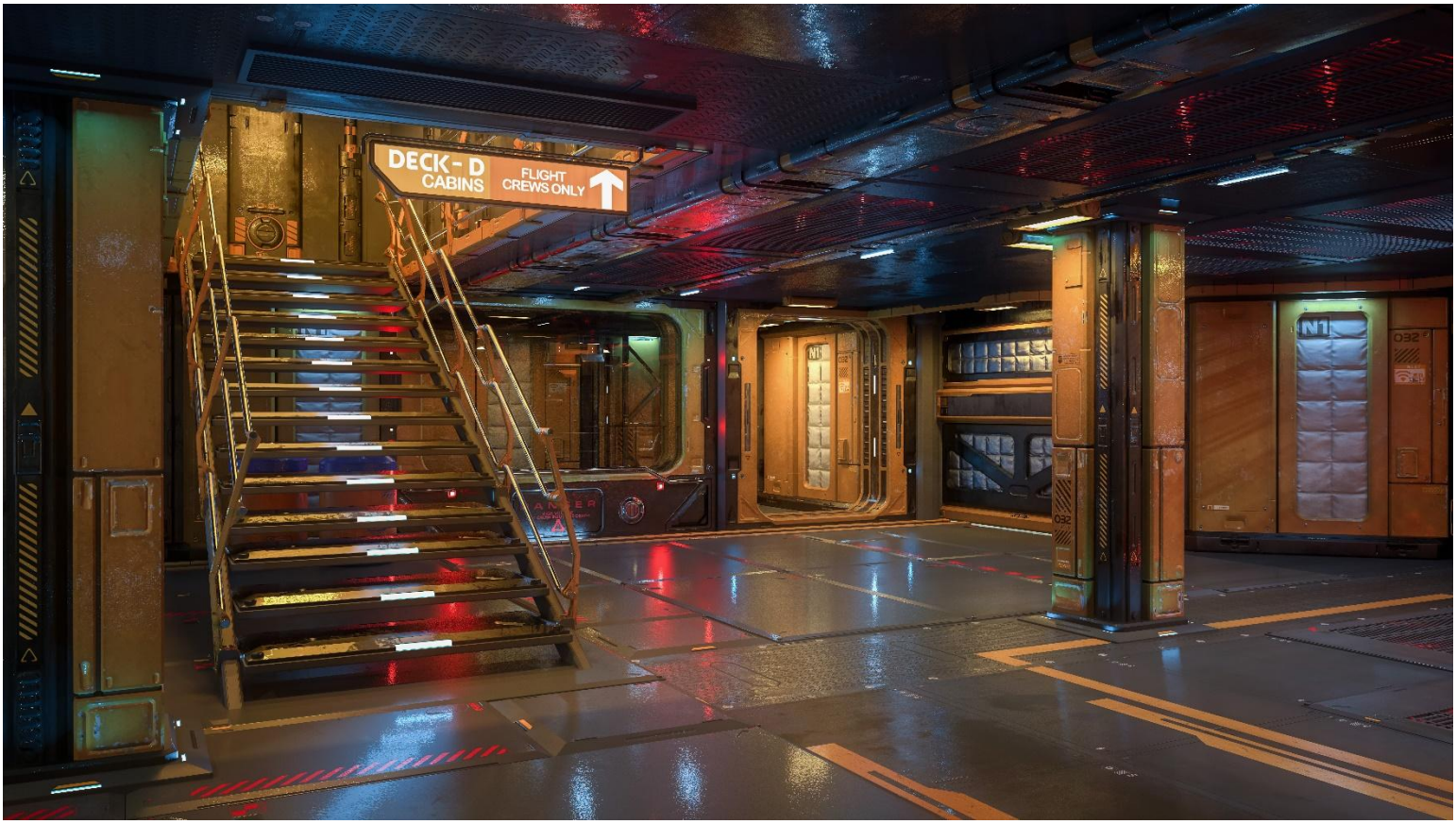
City Stations

Large space stations which don't have a single primary purpose are generally referred to as city stations, though the specific make-ups of them vary greatly.

City Stations most commonly appear in systems with multiple mining stations and significant commerce with the starlanes. Rather than ship raw ore either across the star-system or the starlanes, industrial facilities are created near several of the mines.

Shipping needs to go in and out of the station frequently to drop off ore from the mines and food from the planets, and to ship out finished goods. Those ships will need refueling and sometimes repairs. The sailors from those ships, especially those on long and dangerous starlane voyages, crave various entertainments and shopping during their leave on the station, not to mention for the industrial workers and those from the nearby mines on their time off.

Workers of those industrial facilities require living quarters and kitchens. Their children need schools. Financiers and merchants of various sorts will want to be close to all of that flowing trade of capital and information, the lifeblood of civilization.



And thus a city station is born, in much the same way that cities in ancient times would arise near mines or a harbor. Some city stations are built with the idea of what they will become, but more commonly they are built surprisingly organically over the course of decades or even centuries, leading to rather chaotic structures.

Jumbles

A jumble is a sort of station which is never aimed to be created as such. They are generally amongst the oldest stations in the starlanes, some of them millennia old, and none of them less than centuries.

Most jumbles would have qualified as a city station long ago, but they never stopped growing, most commonly due to the builders' proclivities. The builders seem to have a love of building new things, especially buildings and stations, and they do build them to last. However, they seem to have little interest in upkeep of existing structures. It's unknown if this is due to their cultural hierarchy as reflected in the enameling of their shells, or if it is something inherent to the builders' makeup as a species, or a combination thereof.

Whatever the reason, when the builders are given a free rein, they will commonly add layer after layer to an existing space station, whether or not the new space and facilities are needed at the time. Needless to say, the wealthiest of the station's populace will take up residence in the new outer layers. They are newer and the most technologically advanced, they are often the closest to the docks which can only be in the station's outer layers, and the newest layers have the best views into space through viewports.

Over centuries of this shifting of the wealthiest and most influential to successively newer layers of the station, the oldest layers start to crumble. These inner layers, or Shambles as they are commonly referred, become less and less crowded over the decades, being populated almost entirely by the forlorn and the desperate.

The Shambles are run on ancient generators and air circulators, they sometimes have their gravity shift from low to high G for no apparent reason, and they sometimes run into heat issues due to the heat exhaust systems malfunctioning. Generally run by a multitude of territorial gangs or their equivalent, Shambles are often a haven for those who wish to

hide from debtors or the courts etc., sometimes paying a local gang for protection from any would-be bounty hunters.

Some who live in Shambles are merely the poor who work in the more outer layers of the station, coming home to the abandoned and rent-free Shambles, except for the protection money which the local gangs often charge them. The gangs seem to survive from said protection money and trafficking in various contrabands, though what that contraband is varies from station to station and between sectors on any given jumble.

Military Stations

A relatively recent creation of the builders' armada, military stations are created as bases for The Armada. While most stations have at least minor armaments if for no other reason than to prevent minor incursions by volucris and immortui from docking, military stations have powerful weapons mounted around the outer surface of the station, along with shared gravity shielding instead of small portions of the station having to have its own shielding, making the shielding hard to overcome without multiple capital ships worth of firepower.

In a few newly colonized systems of particular strategic importance, the systems' warp beacon is placed within a small military station, though it's unclear whether this will continue as the builders manning the warp beacons have complained that the human station commanders have not allowed them to build further additions onto the military stations.

Mining Stations

Every major system has hundreds if not tens of thousands of mining stations scattered across their asteroids, mining for valuable metals and other trace compounds. These are generally small, and often dug directly out of an asteroid.

The crews of mining stations range from as low as a dozen for the smallest mining stations, up to well

into the tens of thousands, sometimes with dozens or hundreds of separate claims scattered across a single asteroid, though they often group together for bargaining power when selling the ore,

While the metals in asteroids are generally already in a much purer state than they would be on a planet or moon, larger mining stations will have smelters and other machinery on hand to separate and purify the mined ore so that the freighters don't have to waste the space in their cargo holds on impurities.

Larger mining stations often also have additional facilities to service the miners such as private restaurants, casinos, and various other entertainments. The extent of these varies greatly both upon the size of the mining station and its proximity to inhabited planets and other stations.

Once the profitable ore from an asteroid is mined out, if the station has not yet expanded into other industries, the station will be stripped of any machinery worth hauling away and then mothballed and abandoned, so every system inhabited for long

will likely have hundreds or thousands of abandoned asteroid stations which have been known to host various unsavory elements from pirates to cultists or anyone else looking for somewhere to hide out away from prying eyes.

Private Stations

A private station can have any number of specific uses, but in general terms it is a space station which is owned by an individual or some small group, built in order to have their own borders outside of jurisdiction or surveillance of other parties. They are generally rather small, and unlike other stations they are owned entirely by one party.

Sometimes private stations were purchased already fully built and no longer of much use to its original owners; most commonly depleted mining stations. Perhaps the most famous exception is Paradise Station, which was originally built to study a supernova which has since dissipated, but is now used by The Council of Mothers as their base of operations, outside of any jurisdiction but their own.

Refueling Stations

Nearly every starlane has refueling stations in every system along their path. These stations are placed on the edges of the star-system, calculated to be just in-system of where a ship incoming to the system along one of the starlanes will meet enough of the system's gravity well to pop their warp bubble. While the ship will sometimes turn nearly in place to continue the next leg of their trip, often they will stop at the refueling station.

Besides fuel, the station can also provide various foodstuffs, sometimes little more than nutrient packets, as well as rooms and some level of recreation for those who want a day or two off of the confines of their ship before continuing their journey. All of these things can be had with convenience to the passing ship, and all at highly inflated prices. However, many ships find such a stop worth the expense, if for no other reason than no ship can carry enough fuel for a longer voyage. Some traders will bypass the refueling stations and their inflated prices to proceed to the interior planets & stations of the system, trading in nearly every system which they pass through.

Some systems with refueling stations have little to no other habitation, as the planets within the system are uninhabitable or not colonized for some other reason. If these systems are even minor legs of the starlanes, passing ships in need of fuel or repair have little choice but to stop at a local refueling station. It should be noted that in a few such systems, there may be a dozen or more competing refueling stations, the competition dropping their prices from stratospheric to merely high.

Scientific Stations

Likely the least common sort of space station through most of the starlanes, scientific stations are placed near various phenomenon throughout the galaxy for which there is a desire to study it. Various organizations such as companies and universities whose members think that they can learn something of note will fund the station, placing their own researchers on the station for extended periods of time to do experiments and take readings, sometimes for years.

It varies from station to station how much the different groups' researchers cooperate. While some even share their data, others have been known to be surprisingly cutthroat.

Shipyards

While shuttles and smaller ships can be built nearly anywhere, larger ships need dedicated shipyards to be constructed. These shipyards have massive construction bays in which to construct starships, dozens if not hundreds of mechanics, welders, and other workers being involved in to process.

However, the largest starships such as capital ships and heavy freighters such as the Magus, are too large to fit even within a shipyard's construction bay. Instead, modular pieces of their exterior are built within the bays, and then expert workers fit the pieces together on the docks outside of any pressurized area or gravity; it is actually the dangerous work for which the builders first created their own mecha, though other species often just use specialized pressure suits.

Once the exterior of the ship is put together and pressurized, construction crews can get to work on the bulk of the interior, creating rooms, decks, and passages to fit the order of the buyer. Needless to say, the species of the buyers changes what the interior of a ship looks like, though even for the same species the two may want very different things from their ships. For this reason, each individual starship of the same model can end up being significantly different, though the basic floorplans are usually similar based upon the location of the engines and wiring etc.

Space Elevators

The major planets throughout the starlanes almost invariably have a space elevator or three on their surface to make travel to and from their surface easier. Rather than having to take a shuttle when you want to make planet-fall, you can simply ride down the elevator to the surface.

A space elevator is a relatively simple to build using antigravity technology, albeit still a major construction project and expensive for newer colonies. Some of the more isolated planets lack a space elevator not because they can't afford it, but because of the statement that having one would

make about their connection to the rest of the starlanes and to intentionally make interstellar trade more expensive. On the other hand, some planets will have multiple space elevators across the planet.

The station above a space elevator is generally large, with dozens if not hundreds or thousands of docks for ships of various sizes. When a space elevator is available, most personnel and nearly all freight will use it to escape the planet's atmosphere and gravity well.

Warp Beacons

Warp beacons are the one type of station which is present in every system of the starlanes, no matter how far off of the beaten track, and are actually what define the starlanes. They are what allow relatively safe travel through the starlanes instead of taking your gambling with your life every time you make a jump.

By treaties with every sapient species besides the capeks, immortui, and the volucris, the builders have full control over all of the warp beacons which they build, in addition to the space station which is built around it to maintain the beacon.

Often warp beacons are combined with other types of space stations, often newer beacons are combined military stations, and in these cases there is always a builders' quarter around the beacon which they control. The access which other species are given to this quarter is limited, though they are not uncommon as they come and go on various business, whether hired by the builders or looking to commission a project. However, besides the builders themselves, only human marine garrisons and their families are permitted to reside with the builders' quarter.

Whether as its own station, or part of the builders' quarter of a larger station, all warp beacons are designed so that they may be entirely destroyed by fail-safes of some sort, and the builders manning the beacon are under strict orders to activate those fail-safes before anyone is able to capture the beacon so its workings will remain secret. Thus far they have been successful.

Claim the Warp Beacons For the People!

Excerpt from Teardown the Builders

The builders have too long dominated the starlanes, charging fees and tariffs on ships passing through which they have nothing to do with. They claim that this is a fee for the use of their warp-posts, but that is ridiculous. The warp beacons have been there for so long that they should no longer be considered owned by the builders, but instead a part of natural astrography of their star system. It cannot be reasonably charged for, any more than any species can charge the rest of the universe for the light of their home star.

The builders should be forced to tell the rest of the universe the secrets of how to work and maintain the warp beacons properly so that control of them can be wrested away from them. Then the warp beacons could be run free of charge for everyone! Only then would the peoples of the galaxy truly be free of the builders' corruption.

Chapter 14 Institutions of the Starlanes

Alanny Clans

Throughout their history, the alanny have never had the sort of territorial governments which humans are used to, likely in part due to the migratory nature of their ancestors. Instead, what governments they had were clan based. While alanny are born into a clan, they can also change clans in adulthood if both the individual and the new clan agree, though this often seems to require some sort of deed on the part of the individual to prove their worth.

No matter where the clan members happen to be throughout the starlanes, an alanny clan considers the members to be under their jurisdiction. They have something approaching their own legal system, albeit less formal than humans are used to. However, the alanny clans will also use the starlane magistrates to get justice for their clan members if need be.

Because of the freeform nature of the alanny clans and how generally open they are, many of the clans have actually admitted small numbers of other species as associate members. These interspecies members do seem to have more difficult tasks to prove their worth and devotion to the clan, and their offspring are not automatically admitted. Especially amongst the more isolated minor species, many of those who traverse the starlanes seem to consider membership into an alanny clan to be a great prize and well worth the personal cost. Though it should be noted, no human has yet been given membership into an alanny clan.

Anti-Builder Groups

While in no way unified, it should be mentioned that there are a number of groups who dislike or hate the control that the builders have over interstellar travel and the fees which they charge for access to the warp beacons.

This is perhaps most exemplified by the anti-builder circular; Teardown the Builders. Due to humans acting as the builders' enforcers, these same groups have largely shifted their hatred to also encompass humanity.

The Armada

The Armada was created after the builders visited Earth and recruited humanity to fight for them. However, to say that the builders created The Armada would only be half true at most. The builders themselves had no real concept of how to organize a fighting force, though they were smart enough to realize that fact and mostly allow the humans to do so for themselves. As Admiral Richards said, "The builders give us ships and The Armada gives them victories."

One thing that it took humans quite some time to understand is just how strange The Armada is to the starlanes. It's not strange because it has interstellar ships capable of warp travel, has marines in mecha which board enemy ships, or even because of the monstrous foes that it sometimes combats. The Armada is strange because it's a military at all.

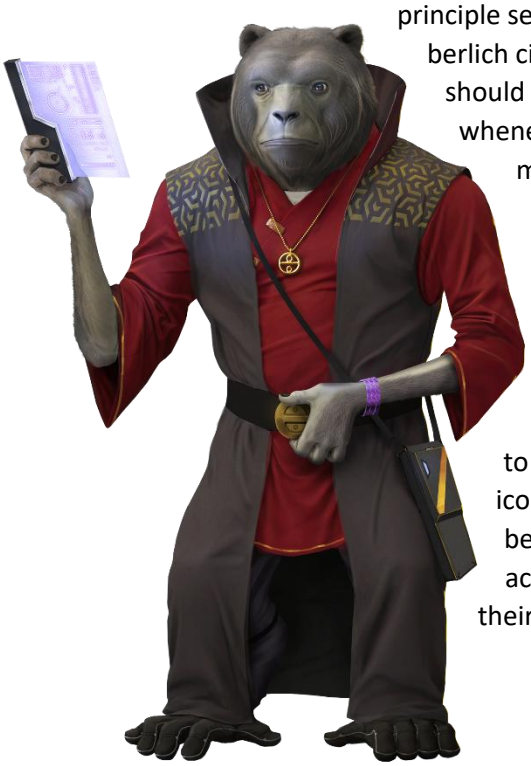
Many other sapient species throughout the starlanes have their warriors, though some such as the builders do not. However, no other species has anything like what humans have considered to be a true military since the days of bronze spears and chariots. There are many theories as to the reason for the difference, the theories ranging from it being because humans are omnivores, humans being bloodthirsty, the geography of Earth, or simply a cultural difference which could have potentially happened to nearly any other sapient species in the past but didn't. The theories chosen often tell more about the theory's creator and their view of humanity than it tells about the truth.

The Armada is centered in the hub systems of the starlanes as that is where the bulk of the starlanes' trade occurs, but they also sporadically patrol through many of the most traveled starlanes in force, keeping them largely free of pirates and other such dangers, but The Armada is not numerous enough to patrol most starlanes at all.

The Assembly of the Chosen

The Assembly of the Chosen is a berlich institution which is far older than the berlichs' history of spacefaring, going back thousands of years to their days of antiquity. While sometimes the elders of The Assembly make proclamations with the implication and even the intention of speaking for all berlichs throughout the galaxy, The Assembly of the Chosen doesn't have any concrete ways to enforce their will or any official authority at all. However, you shouldn't take that to mean that they can be dismissed.

The position of The Assembly of the Chosen is an extremely important one to the berlichs on the cultural level. They were the driving force behind many of the berlichs' historical civilizing advancements, such as pushing them to develop their space program and to spread their species amongst nearby planets and stars even before they encountered other sapient species. Their guiding core principle seems to be that the berlich civilization and glory should be increased whenever possible, no matter the side effects.



While not actually a religious organization, The Assembly could almost be compared to humanity's religious icons. Even amongst berlichs who do not actively revere them, their words still carry weight and nearly all are loathe to directly contradict their core principles.

Most outsiders agree that it was the influence of The Assembly pushed for the development of major cybernetic upgrades despite the risks involved. The Assembly of the Chosen considers these volunteers to be something akin to living martyrs, to be a combination of revered for what they sacrificed of themselves and pariahs for what they have become; something no longer truly a berlich.

The Builders

The only species which is anything close to a single unified government, the builders have dominated the starlanes both politically and economically for millennium due to their control of the warp beacons. Unsurprisingly, this dominance has led to the builders having more than their share of detractors.

Despite their relative unification, the builders shouldn't be considered to be a single organization in anything like a human one. It seems more that their entire species has a monoculture which has all of them working towards the same things. It's unclear how much of this is cultural and how much is purely instinctual, especially with how they were nonviolent herbivores on their home planet.

The builder' culture appears to be a meritocracy of sorts, though the merit upon which they rise seems to be almost entirely from building projects, especially buildings, large ships, and space stations. Especially notable accomplishments are permanently enameled onto their shell for all to see, though they

have not shared what the symbols mean with other species. Other projects or jobs which builders take on often seem to be taken on in anticipation of it leading to related building projects in the future. The most obvious of these to humanity are that the builders who coordinate with The Armada almost invariably move on to building military stations or capital ships.

To humanity, the most important thing about the builders is that it was the builders who gave humanity the stars.

Courts of the Starlane

One of pacts which the builders require all species to sign in order to gain access to warp beacons, is to opt into the starlane court system. This system has been around for a millennia on paper, but as no other species is as united and monolithic as the builders are, most individuals felt little need to be held to the pledge which some random individual of a different guild, tribe, or people had committed to centuries ago merely because they happened to be of the same species. However, the system has grown teeth in the last few decades now that the builders have The Armada to back it up.

The Starlane Courts do not have an equivalent to a human police force. Instead, criminal charges are brought by any citizen of the starlanes. Both the accusing citizen and the accused, or their representatives, then present their evidence to the Starlane Magistrate, who is always a builder. A Starlane Magistrate's shell is always marked with a horizontal oval with a small circle within, which we believe to be a simplistic eye, one few such symbols which humans have decoded thus far. Once the accusation is made, both the accuser and suspect are required to remain upon the planet or space station where the court case will be held, though it rarely takes more than a day or two. The suspect will be imprisoned, and if it is discovered that the accuser has left the station, the suspect is immediately released. In addition, if the accusation turns out to be frivolous, the accuser may have fines or other more severe penalties imposed upon them.

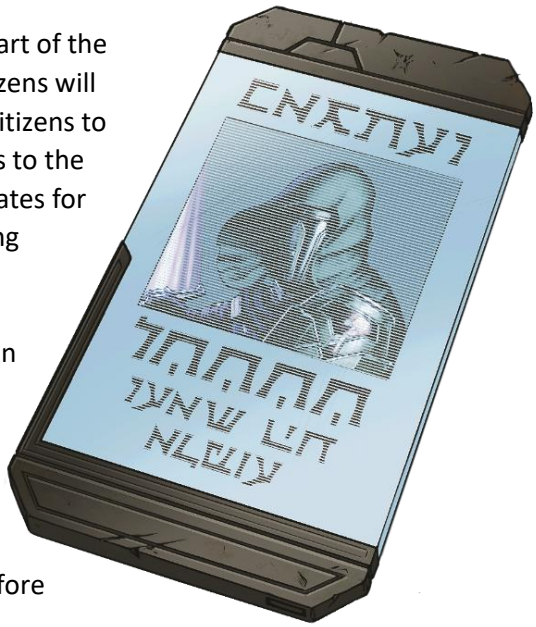
Fighting the Courts *Excerpt from Teardown the Builders*

One of the core pillars of the new strength of the builders, backed by their human muscle, is their magistrate system in which they railroad their political enemies. Therefore, whenever possible you should throw up roadblocks to their system of so-called 'justice'.

At the core of the magistrate system is tracking down bounties. Therefore, no matter their supposed crimes, you should do your best to hide these so-called criminals from those who hunt them whenever possible. Put out the word, and with enough coordination the builders' courts will grind to a halt.

And without these courts to supply their prison planets with workers, the builders will become ever more reliant upon their tariffs, making planets hate them all the more and finally throw off the yoke that the builders choke the galaxy with!

Citizens who wish to make an accusation will bring evidence to the builders and are then allowed by treaty to put a bounty on the suspect of the accusation if they haven't already brought the accused in themselves. However, the Starlane Courts will not actually make any sort of verdict until both the accuser and the suspect make it to the same Magistrate and make their cases.



While not part of the treaties, non-citizens will sometimes pay citizens to bring accusations to the Starlane Magistrates for them, even paying them to post a bounty. Some citizens have even made something of a career as a professional accuser, both accusing and arguing cases before

the Starlane Magistrates, something like a freelance prosecutor. These professionals gain both the funds from the non-citizens who want the suspect punished and from the builders who pay a small bounty based upon the fines levied and value of the convicted criminal's labor. While far from a perfect system, it has quickly evolved into a surprisingly efficient justice system considering all of the different cultures and species involved.

If a local government wants to get a hold of a suspect outside of their sphere of influence, they will generally post a bounty through the Starlane Court system and ask for extradition to their court, though The Starlane Magistrates rarely give extradition on anyone who is a citizen of the starlanes without being presented with overwhelming evidence against them. They are much more willing to extradite those not starlanes citizens to local governments, especially any citizens of said governments, though they may require more evidence from governments with less savory reputations.

GM note: Unless you want to make it the focus of a game session, the Starlane Courts themselves are designed to be dealt with in the abstract. Just make sure that any suspects which the players hand over to the court have evidence against them such as a recording of their crimes. The amount which is paid out for a bounty should not be huge, but also substantial enough that it's worth the players' time to bring them in.

A bounty might be the focus of a game session as they hunt down the suspect, questioning known associates etc. And who knows what sort of other plots the players might stumble upon while doing so?

Builder Penal Colonies

If found guilty by a starlane magistrate, the convicted party is generally given a fine for lesser crimes and occasionally they're banned from starlane travel. For major crimes the conviced party is sent to one of the builders' penal colonies.

These penal colonies are often in outlying systems or on the edge of more populous citizens, and the prisoners are required to do basic tasks such as mine for minerals and grow food. There are no guards to keep the prisoners under control, but will instead not be growing food palatable to their species, requiring periodical resupply or starve.

While payment for the use of warp beacons in the form of crops is the builders' primary source of food, the penal colonies have grown to be a substantial secondary source for the builders' rather unique pallet since builders dislike growing their own food.

The Council of Mothers

Founded in 2101, The Council of Mothers is by far the most prevalent and famous (or infamous) psychic organization in the galaxy. Made up of a core of psychics and their families, there are quite a few unrelated hangers-on who seem to want to be close to what they call the next step of human evolution.

The leaders of the group, The Mothers, are some of the group's most powerful psychics. The Mothers rarely interact with outsiders directly, instead sending out 'missionaries' into the wider galaxy on various missions. There also rumors of The Mother having a leader amongst themselves called Grandmother. But while there are many references to Grandmother, it is unknown whether Grandmother is a real person, or if Grandmother exists purely as a spiritual concept since no psychic would likely be old enough to have grandchildren.

The Council of Mothers are willing to sell the services of their members, primarily the services of true psychics, all of which are female. These true psychic can use their abilities to allow a starship or convoy to safely traverse the warp without need of a warp beacon. More than one merchant has made a fortune by taking valuable goods on faster routes or simply saving money by avoiding the tariffs which the builders charge for use of their beacons.

The Council of Mothers don't send these true psychics off on their own though, as they are too precious and vulnerable to those who would want to enslave them for their own use or simply strike out against a human psychic. Therefore, The Mothers send them with lesser psychics which they call guardians. These guardians are not powerful enough to navigate the warp. Stereotypically all guardians are male, though a substantial minority are female, the guardians outnumbering true psychics several times over.

The Council of Mothers claims jurisdiction over every human psychic, though many psychics have never agreed to such a membership. Most psychics don't seem to mind though, as the existence of The Council of Mothers can be a sort of protection, as they are known to exact vengeance upon any who harm a psychic, though accounts are unclear as to how just their vengeance is.

The Council of Mothers' base of operation is on Paradise Station, a defunct science station in an out of the way star-system. It is dangerous to visit Paradise Station without a true psychic of your own, as the system has no warp beacon, and The Council of Mothers seems to like it that way.

Cults of the Ancients

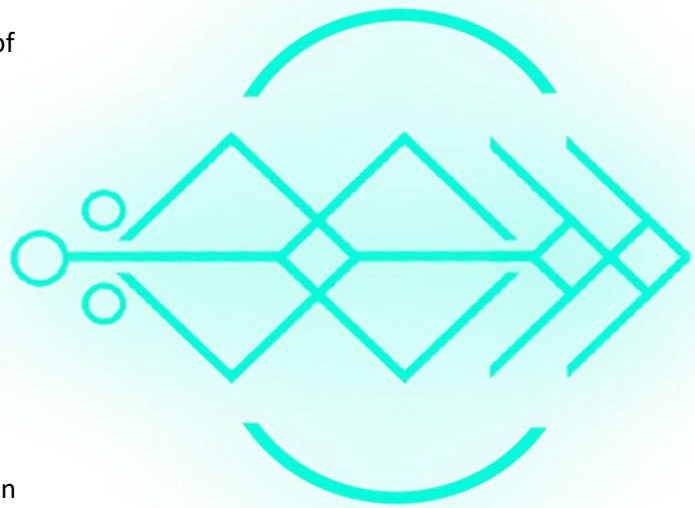
Throughout the starlanes are various sorts of groups large and small dedicated to the reverence of The Ancients. This is beyond simply looking for knowledge of them, though many will disguise their worship as something like an archeologist.

No one is sure how many of these cults there are scattered throughout the starlanes as most of them are secretive. Even if they aren't involved in anything untoward, their members are generally viewed with something between distaste and disgust. The reason for this view is often unfair, but not unfounded. Such groups used to be more open until The Volucris Planetfall nearly three centuries ago.

A large group who came near worship of the ancients created massive artificial warp emissions on the planet of Mira, home to many ruins from The Ancients. While no one survived to say for sure, it appears that they believed that The Ancients still exist but are hidden, and that drawing the volucris onto a planet would somehow force them to reveal themselves. Their plan was unsuccessful, but unfortunately for the inhabitants of Mira, they only realized it after the largest recorded concentration of volucris descended upon Mira, the only known time that volucris made planet-fall. There were no survivors.

Unsurprisingly, the popularity of such groups fell drastically, but those that remain tend to be the most rabid in their devotion, and in the last century they have started becoming more common again. They are especially prevalent around the ruins of The Ancients. Some claim that emanations from the ruins themselves cause such devotion.

Most who seek knowledge of The Ancients do so purely as a scholarly endeavor and they do not qualify as a member of a cult.



Legate Fiefdoms

While over the last couple of centuries the capeks have justifiably earned a reputation for instability and lashing out at outsiders, this is not universally true.

The legate is a specific model of capek which were created by the ignav to serve as administrators and ambassadors, and in their masters' absence they have largely taken over the leadership of the capeks.

The majority of the capeks are now in service to one of the many legates, the majority of which have their own personal faction. It is primarily those capeks who do not serve a legate who have snapped and gone on violent rampages against outsiders.

Many legates simply want to maintain the status quo within their faction and do all they can to prevent the capeks in their service from snapping due to the absence of their true masters. Other legates have other goals, which may or may not be in conflict with each other. While on the surface all of the legate are equals and try to work with one another, in truth in-fighting between the various factions is not at all uncommon, though the armed conflicts are almost never acknowledged as such, the victors instead declaring that the defeated capeks had snapped and needed to be put down.

The legate will often step in to try and negotiate between groups of snapped capeks and outsiders. Doing this, the legates have saved the lives of many other species while putting the snapped capeks under quarantine, so that other local groups are prohibited from retaking the territory that the snapped capeks had claimed, whether a space station or occasionally even a planetary facility.

The exact location and stances of the various fiefdoms are seemingly always in flux and at best guessed at by other species.

Legions

The legionaries are a minority of the capeks in terms of numbers, but they should in no way be underestimated. While the majority of the capeks were created to serve the ignav and maintain their starships, stations, and other facilities, the legions were created for combat, to defend their star-systems and fight the ignavs' enemies.

While nearly all of the legionnaires officially are in the service of one or another of the legate, in many cases it appears to be little more than lip service. While the legions protect all capeks by default, especially the legates, they are conservative by nature and are much less likely to be willing to carry out objectives which they consider to go against their purpose as the ignavs' legions.

There are those within the legion who, with the ignav gone, do not trust the legates and want to set up their own governing council, imposing their rule by force if necessary for the good of all of the capeks. Others feel that this would be as much or more against their purpose than the legates' plotting.

It should be noted that while less frequent than other capeks, legionaries have been known to snap and lash out against other species as well, even being

convinced that other species have somehow made their masters vanish. When they do snap though, other legionaries often deal with them internally rather than allowing them to run rampant as they consider snapped legionaries to be a disgrace.

The legions seemingly have no desire to put down other capeks who have snapped, and they will sometimes even move without their legate's orders to protect snapped capeks from counter-attacks from outsiders. For example, if a group of snapped capeks took over a space station to make it ready for the ignavs' return, these legionaries might step in to defend them from any group trying to retake the station as they would now consider it to be capek territory whoever its original owners were.

Merchant Guilds

Throughout the starlanes you will find merchants and shippers trading in anything and everything which they can make a buck on. While some of these merchants are independents just trying to make ends meet, the majority are members of one of the many merchant guilds scattered throughout the starlanes.

The guilds give interstellar traders a network of contacts throughout the starlanes rather than going into each new system blindly, while merchants within a system gain contacts with the traders coming through their system and often know the sorts of goods which they'll be bringing to sell ahead of time. For this, the guild members pay the guild organization a small percentage of each sale they make.

Guilds are mostly regional, with enough members in only parts of the starlanes to give such a network of contacts. Because of this, long-haul shippers are less likely to join a guild, as it would be of benefit in only some of the systems that they frequent. Going solo only increases the reputation of long-haul shipping as a gamblers game, not to mention the inherent risks of making so many warp jumps through less frequented parts of the starlanes.

Some of these guilds have begun to expand their network in new ways, funding the creation of some of the new colonies which have been popping up since The Armada and Space Dogs have made many areas of the starlanes safer than they used to be.

Part of the advantage of being part of a merchant guild network is that there are others who know where you're traveling, expecting you and your goods. If late for a rendezvous, sometimes a guild-mate will hire mercs to go investigate what happened to them. Not that the guild-mate's motives are always pure, as if the shipper and his crew are all dead, the recovered shipment would be considered abandoned, and therefore salvage rights would apply.

Pirate Guilds

A dark reflection of the merchant guilds, pirate guilds are rarer but no less real than their legitimate reflections.

Pirates rarely declare themselves so, instead looking and acting like a merchant ship would, albeit a well-armed one. Of course, with how dangerous the starlanes can be weapons alone are no indication of ill intent.

Some pirates deliberately haunt the areas where they think to attack other ships, often with a pirate friendly space station nearby where they can sell their ill-gotten gains, or at the very least a mining station they can hole up which was long since abandoned. That is largely why pirates band in guilds, to share information about where to sell what they have stolen with no questions asked.

More commonly, a pirate ship will act as a normal merchant ship the majority of the time. Only when they happen to spot another ship isolated enough to be easy pickings do they stop being a merchant and act as a pirate.

Some members of the guild never act as pirates at all, instead just fencing the stolen goods or even ships. Since the ships and crews of the fences were not directly involved in the piracy, it is much harder to either prove their knowledge of the piracy or to track down the actual pirates by tracking the stolen goods or ships.

Many pirate guilds have a combination of all three types of members, the latter two groups keeping an ear out for any rumors of pirate hunters or privateers in the vicinity. In addition, the latter two types of members are commonly members of a legitimate merchant guild in addition to a pirate guild, which can lead to political drama if they have a good reputation within a major merchant guild.

It should be noted that not all of those acting as pirates are a part of anything like a pirate guild. Especially in the more outlying parts of the starlanes, some pirates are much more open with their activities since there are fewer with the ability and will to hunt them down.

Primevals

Nearly all the krakiz think of themselves as warriors, but Primevals are krakiz who take that idea to the extreme. They take literally the ancient Krakiz Warrior's Code which had faded nearly to legend long before the krakiz ever took their first steps into the starlanes. Primevals first began to be recorded several centuries ago, most famously pride-leader Ginvoyen; her writings are still read today. However, they became much more prevalent in the last century.

The warrior code of the Primevals is that no one can truly own anything which they cannot themselves protect by force. Therefore, anything which Primevals can take with force, rather than by stealth or trickery, isn't theft, but merely giving the property to its proper owner. Most Primevals seem to be true believers and do not consider anything taken from them by force to be theft either.

More moderate krakiz say that the Krakiz Warrior's Code was never as simple as The Primevals make it, as it was more of a metaphor to warn warriors that they should always be ready to defend themselves and what was theirs. Primevals consider that to be pathetic speech of weak cowards, and they pay it little mind.

While only a small portion of all krakiz are Primevals, a much larger number have sympathies towards their ideals. Perhaps this should not be surprising, as nearly all krakiz heroes out of legend followed some variant of the Krakiz Warrior Code.

Whatever their reasons, Primevals are known to hijack various shipments throughout the starlanes from any that they consider weak. However, so long as the crew of the ship don't put up a fight, the Primevals will generally let them go

unharmed, though sometimes stranded in an out of the way system after the Primevals take their starship.

While some prides of Primevals have been known to band together, most famously at First Blood in the Second Center system, being a Primeval doesn't require any sort of membership. The krakiz in question simply start acting upon the ancient code and declare themselves to be a Primeval.

Space Dogs

With a reputation growing throughout the starlanes, Space Dogs are human privateers with letters of marque from the builders and charged to keep the starlanes safe. As often pointed out with derision by both the builders' and humanity's detractors, the letters of marque are vague, and they have no real limits on what the Space Dogs can do in pursuit of their goal.

Initially all Space Dogs were veterans of The Armada, as all humans out in the starlanes had served in The Armada. But now some humans have been born out in the starlanes. While many of this second generation did still choose to serve in The Armada, some of those who didn't serve still chose to become a Space Dogs. Many Space Dogs are also members of the 'reserve fleet' of The Armada, periodically taking jobs from The Armada directly.

The existence of the Space Dogs have made the starlanes safer, arguably moreso than even The Armada has. Despite this, Space Dogs still has more than its share of detractors who see them as nothing more than mercenary vigilantes. To them, they have merely traded one evil for another.

Most traders and cargo ship captains see Space Dogs as a benefit to the starlanes, albeit generally one which is a bit distasteful. The bulk of the starlanes though see Space Dogs, as well as humans generally, as dangerous, but as a way to fight fire with fire. Most who believe this believe that humanity should be kept on a shorter leash.

Space Dog Suppliers

Few other species are willing to deal with humans aside from the builders, but the builders aren't really interested in weaponry and other sorts of supplies that space dogs need.

Over the decades, groups of humans who don't wish to become privateers have built up a small industry supplying space dogs with human focused weapons, armor, equipment and anything else that space dogs may need to be active privateers. This has become the main industry for humans in the starlanes besides The Armada working as space dogs.

The builders will still sell some equipment to space dogs; primarily ships and Armada surplus. Some alanny clans will sell to humans, though generally at a high premium unless they have an ongoing relationship with the specific space dogs. Anyone else willing to deal with humans at all is likely to charge an even higher premium, in part just because they know they can and because their reputation can be harmed by working with humans.

Torali Houses

The torali houses are a constantly shifting political quagmire which can be deadly to the unwary, and sometimes to the wary as well. The houses are somewhere between aristocratic noble houses and cutthroat corporations with a bit of organized crime mixed in.

No one is certain of just how many torali houses there are at any one time, as the houses are split, consolidated, destroyed, or created from nothing faster than anyone can keep track of. In addition, it is thought that many of the smaller torali houses are little but fronts for larger houses, giving them plausible deniability, though even most members of both houses might not realize it.

It is the torali houses which craft the chimera, which they sell as guard beasts, though sometimes

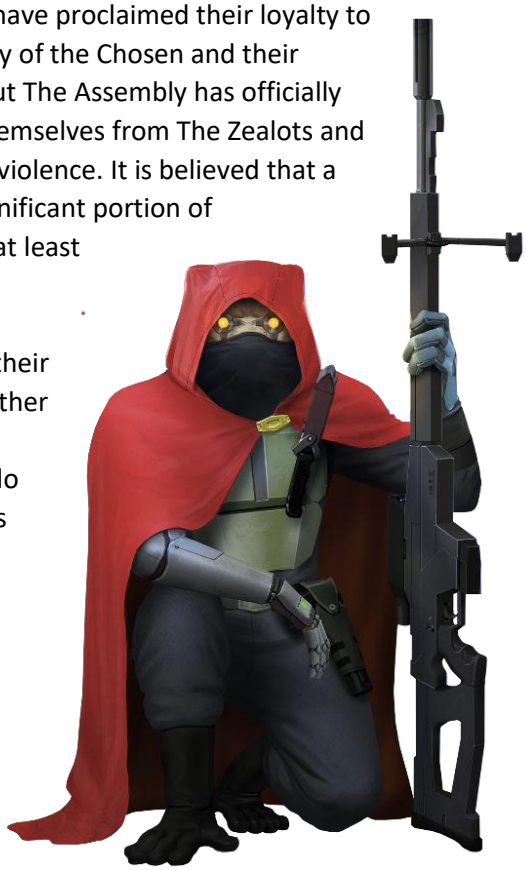
the chimera are used more offensively. The torali houses will sell most chimera but generally keep their most recent creations for themselves. Despite many requests, no torali house seems to be particular in who they sell the chimera to as long as the price is right. For this reason everyone from a legitimate merchants, to local governments, to marauding pirates might have chimera under their command, though how those chimera are equipped and used will often vary greatly.

Some of the torali houses are also involved in gray matter grafting, though even amongst the torali houses, grafting on brain matter from psychic volucris and immortui is seen as rather dubious conduct. There are rumors about several of the houses trafficking in gray matter from human psychic stock as well, and it is something which any human psychics should keep in mind when interacting with the torali.

The Zealots of the Chosen

Most berlichs seem to see themselves as superior to any other sapient species, in no small part due to the teachings of The Assembly of the Chosen. The Zealots of the Chosen take that believe to its logical extreme.

The Zealots of the Chosen are mostly a secret society of sorts, though sometimes they take more blatant actions such as attacking other species which are infringing on what they consider berlich territory. The Zealots have proclaimed their loyalty to The Assembly of the Chosen and their teachings, but The Assembly has officially distanced themselves from The Zealots and their acts of violence. It is believed that a small but significant portion of berlichs are at least sympatric towards The Zealots and their actions, whether or not they would ever do those actions themselves.



Chapter 15: Star Systems of the Galaxy

Star System Types

While there are tens of thousands of mapped star-systems which make up the star-lanes and each of them is different, they generally either fall into one of several different categories or are a hybrid of two or more of them.

Hub Systems

There are several dozen star-systems which are the hubs of the starlanes. The bulk of interstellar travel has at least part of their route go through a hub. That doesn't mean that the bulk of the galaxy's populace live in hub systems; they sometimes aren't even the most populous systems. But these are the systems which are the most connected into the galactic politics and culture.

The home systems of the major species aren't among the hub systems with the sole exception of the alanny. Instead, major species generally restrict travel through their home system to some degree while still allowing transit through the edges of these systems.

On the other hand, the alanny's home system of Evermore could be considered The Hub System around which the rest of the galaxy's influence revolves, and that seems to be the way which most of the alanny seem to like it.

Isolated Systems

As strange as it may seem to humans, most sapient alien species have little to no desire to interact much with the galactic community, known as hermit species. While there are exceptions within those species, they are just that: exceptions. This leads to an interesting phenomenon; the isolated system.

An isolated system is usually the home system of a hermit species. Despite their lack of desire for interstellar travel, the hermit species in question will often have significant space travel within their own system, primarily used for mining their system's asteroids and/or uninhabitable planets. More rarely the hermit species will have significant military vessels, though their technological level is often well behind the galactic standard. These militaristic hermit species should be watched carefully, as they are often paranoid. Even outdated military assets can still prove a threat with surprise and/or numbers on their side.

Despite their isolationism, most of these isolated inhabited systems have a warp beacon with the requisite space station and builders on staff to service it. While they may not want to integrate with the galactic culture at large, they still want the benefits of trade and technology of the starlanes.

These systems and the species who hail from them have some of the most anti-builder sentiment, and that extends to their enforcers: humans. Some of these systems have yet to even hear about humans and their role as enforcers for the builders.

Linked Systems

Some species are more welcoming to other species, and several of those species have colonized systems besides their home system. The builders, torali, and berlichs each have colonies in dozens of systems, though several other species control their own colonies. These linked systems are generally welcoming to other species, though neither the builders or the berlichs normally allow other species

to make landfall on their primary inhabited planets, and while not outlawed, it is generally considered extremely reckless for outsiders to land on a planet inhabited entirely by torali without an invitation.

There are some systems which were founded by conglomerations of merchants or corporations, and these systems are much more of a melting pot than most others. Often, inhabitants do not settle in such systems permanently, instead they work there for a time to earn their fortune before traveling home with the both the capital and skills which they gained there.

Layover Systems

Many systems are not optimal for a colony or they just haven't been funded yet. Either the system resources are subpar, the star is unstable, or there are just nearby systems which are superior, making the effort better spent elsewhere. Whatever the reason, there are many systems which no one has fully colonized.

Some of these systems are on major starlanes and are common stops which ships use for warp jumps. Due to this, these sub-par star systems have a handful or more of small space stations in addition to the warp beacon. These stations service any ships which are passing through, making any necessary repairs and refueling as needed. Sometimes these outposts also have the secondary job of being a sort of watchtower, ready to send a warp signal as a sort of Morse code to warn of any incoming ships.

The stations in layover systems are usually on the small side with enough living space for the repair bay workers, and perhaps a small mining, smelting, and machining industry on hand so that more basic parts do not have to be shipped in, as well as enough services for said workers.

There are some exceptions to this. Several of the largest independent shipyards began in layover systems, and unlike an organization's private shipyards, they will sell to anyone with the credits. Perhaps the most notable layover system is Equi. Nearly midway on five of the most traveled starlane routes, and several jumps from any heavily populated system, Equi has multiple large repair bays, a major shipyard, and three massive city stations which are each interstellar Las Vegas, Disney World, and the shadiest kind of black market, all rolled into one along with thousands of much smaller stations scattered across the system.

Uninhabited Systems

Those systems which are both unsuitable for colonization due to few resources and not on any of the major starlanes are officially uninhabited. These systems can be dangerous to travel through. Most obviously, if a ship pops the warp bubble with any sort of damage to their warp engines, if they can't repair it themselves, they may end up stranded there for a long time as they pray for a passing ship's rescue.

Despite the name, Uninhabited Systems may not be entirely deserted. Those who want to do things without prying eyes may set up shop there. Pirates

and volucris hives are just a couple of the dangers which someone might run into.

For these reasons, most travelers avoid Uninhabited Systems when possible, often willing to add several more warp hops to their trip in order to bypass them. Other traders willing to take the risk to reduce shipping times and increase their profits.

Outlier Systems

In many ways, outlier systems can be considered star systems which wish that they were linked systems. While a few are the home system of a minor species, most are colonies, often centuries old.

Outlier systems often have substantial populations and a desire to stay plugged into galactic news and other developments. The thing which sets outlier systems apart from linked systems are their locations several jumps or more away from major starlane trade routes. If the system itself is not worth making regular trade runs to, it takes the system out of the loop of the latest news or even technologies.

Newly Colonized Systems

A relatively new phenomenon, there has been a boom of colonization over the past few decades, largely because of how much safer humans have made travel across the starlanes; both The Armada and space dogs.

Generally funded by the up-and-coming merchant class of the starlanes, these colonies have a much greater species diversity than previous colonies, even compared to those of the alanny. Most of the residents of these colonies are still first-generation settlers, though that varies by species and how fast they reproduce. Many of the residents are major species, but there are a higher proportion of minor species in these colonies than in nearly any other systems across the starlanes besides their own home systems.

A lot of newly colonized systems are also outlier systems, as they had not been colonized before now due to the danger of being multiple jumps from the nearest settled system. As even multi-jump transit has become much safer, living in these systems has become more appealing, albeit still more dangerous than living in a more established system.

Perhaps most uniquely, quite a new of these newly colonized systems still have untouched ruins left behind by the ancient species. The settlers nearly always give these places a wide berth, either giving them a sort of reverence, or just because of how dangerous exploring them can be.

Example Star-Systems

Below you will find descriptions of various star-systems. Some, most notably Evermore, are well-known across the starlanes. Others listed here are archetypical examples of their system type. You should feel free to use them in your games as-is or to use them as the baseline for entirely new systems with their own planets, inhabitants, and history which perfectly fit the adventure you want to have there.

How much of the system's background is told to the players should be based upon if it's important to them and if they make a research check. You don't want to drop a bunch of exposition on them when it has nothing to do with their characters' mission or

objectives and ruin a session's pacing. But on the other hand, you also should not spring surprises upon your players when they are things which their characters would know.

Evermore Star-system

Hub System

Sun:	Yellow
Planets:	8
Habitable Worlds:	2 planets
Semi-Habitable Worlds:	1 planet & 4 moons
Intolerable Worlds:	2 planets & 23 moons
Gas Giants:	3 planets
Space Stations:	25,214
Population:	Approx. 15.9 billion (83% alanny, 5% builders, 2% berlichs, 1% torali, 1% krakiz, 8% minor species)

The home system of the alanny, Evermore is probably the most influential star system across the starlanes when it comes to galactic culture. It is the only home system of a major species which has a significant population of outside species, and there are only a few minor species which have followed suit.

The alanny themselves first ventured onto the starlanes more than seven hundred earth years ago, being one of the few species who figured out both warp drives and gravity engines on their own, though their original warp drives were the most dangerous variety on record. In the centuries since they have abandoned them and, like the rest of the starlanes, use drives modeled after those created by the builders.

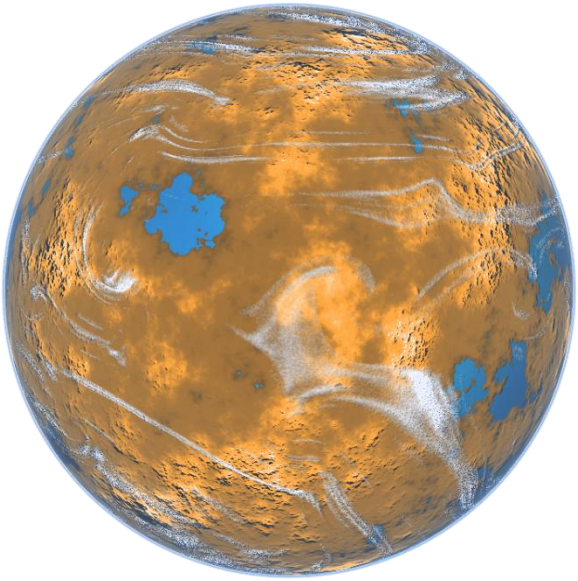
Unlike other species which took to the starlanes to colonize or gain valuable resources, the alanny took to them almost entirely to explore and find out what was out there. Perhaps for that reason, the alanny have never officially colonized any other system, though they are one of the most numerous species in most other systems throughout the starlanes. They are very welcoming to other species, even allowing them to build their own space stations in Evermore, though any such are required to follow both the builders' rules of the starlanes as well as few more of the alanny.

Government and Politics

The alanny lack any sort of central government of the system or even of their home-world. What governance they do have are generally referred to as Alanny Clans. They do not claim control over territory, but instead claim authority over their members wherever it is that they currently reside. See Chapter 14 for more detailed information on Alanny Clans.

Evermore Locations of Note

Poe Habitable Planet - Alanny Homeworld



Population: 2.9 billion

Gravity: 0.84 Earth Standard

Poe is very extreme volcanic activity for a habitable planet, far more than Earth. Considering that, there are few major eruptions and major volcanoes across most of its surface. Instead, there are a plethora of smaller seeping, geysers, and minor flows. The surface of Poe is also much more mountainous with many ups and downs than Earth. These things combine to make strong updrafts extremely common, allowing the alanny to soar across portions their home planet, while without such updrafts they can only glide.

The portions of Poe which are habitable by the alanny are limited not only by the planet's small oceans, but there are areas across the planet's surface too volcanically active for long-term habitation, though the alanny do use nearby arable land extensively for their crops.

Unlike many home-worlds, Poe is welcoming to interstellar visitors, and it even has a small tourism industry aimed at other species, though most of the off-world tourists are alanny born off-world. Poe also has a record number of nine space elevators scattered across the planet.

Finally, Poe is where the guild houses of the largest and most powerful alanny guilds are, though virtually all also have chapter houses off-world and scattered throughout the starlanes, there is prestige gained in making their headquarters on Poe itself.

Enor Habitable Planet

Population: 0.7 billion

Gravity: 1.03 Earth Standard

The planet of Enor is slightly further from the Evermore system's sun than Poe is, and just outside the Goldilocks zone. The alanny began to geoengineer Enor long before they ever gained warp travel, and it is now easily habitable, though a bit on the cool side.

Unlike on Po, the alanny cannot soar on Enor naturally due to the higher gravity and lack of extreme volcanic activity. For this reason, there are several places surrounding the urban centers which produce artificial thermal drafts so that alanny may still soar, albeit only recreationally.

Pallas City Station

Population: 234.7 million

Pallas Station is famous throughout the starlanes. It is an extremely open place, even by the standards of Evermore. Most things done there aren't actually illegal per the very loose laws of the starlanes, at least some of them would be illegal, or at least be taboo on most worlds. Though of course, members of alanny clans are still subject to their own clan's rules; for this reason some clans rarely visit Pallas.

The general rule is that if you have the money, you can buy it on Pallas. Perhaps most notably, Pallas is the most well-known place to get high end cybernetics for nearly any species as well as having gray matter grafting performed. In addition, to these services, Pallas has more mundane ways to spend your wealth such as several high end casinos and nearly any sort of shopping you might desire, from modern firearms to various historical artefacts, some even dating back to the ancients.

Due to all of these things though, everything from docking fees to foodstuffs go for a high premium on Pallas. Many visitors will make day-trips from one of the many nearby stations to avoid most of said fees, but that's difficult to do after major surgery or immediately after purchasing chimera who have yet to see you as master.

Tania Jumble Station

Population: 200-800 million

One of the oldest and largest jumble stations throughout the starlanes, Tania Station is more than two millennia old. Though of course, like all jumble stations, the outer layers are much newer, portions of them are nearly always under construction by the builders who live there, each trying to put their own mark upon the station.

There is a near constant Armada presence at Tania's dock, with ships coming in for repair, refit, or just to allow their crews leave in Evermore. Tania's docks are large enough to build some ships even including some of the smallest Armada capital ships such as the destroyer, though they aren't large enough to be a true shipyard.

The station itself has a substantial marine garrison to protect the system's warp beacon which is on the station. The marines are also responsible for policing the station to some degree, though they only rarely go past the middling layers and into the shambles. Going into the shambles is a dangerous prospect for humans. While humanity has a fearsome reputation, they are also known as the builders' lapdogs, and many of the gangs which control the shambles have no love for the builders, and so their reputation isn't always enough to keep them safe from attack.

This hatred of the builders is even more extreme on Tania than in other shambles as because many poor in the hub system, many blame the trade brought by warp travel for their lot in life. While there are many different guesses, no one is actually sure what the population of Tania's inner layers is, especially the shambles. For this, its central location, and other obvious reasons, it is not uncommon for criminals with bounties on their heads to attempt to disappear into Tania's shambles until their pursuit cools, often paying a local gang for protection. Few with such resources want to live there forever, and eventually, whether after weeks or years, the criminal will resurface from the shambles and out into Tania Station proper or the galaxy at large.

Along with the marine garrison on Tania, there is also a significant civilian human population on Tania. In part they are so large due to the general tolerance of Evermore and the alanny towards various species, the residents of the shambles notwithstanding. The builders have added another wing to the station to hold the human settlement to human specifications as opposed to the humans needing to acclimate to facilities not designed for them.

Steadfast Station Shipyard

Population: 13.8 million

Steadfast Station is a dedicated shipyard and is one of the largest shipyards across the starlanes. A spider-web of docks, Steadfast can and does produce every size and class of starship currently being produced across the starlanes.

With dozens of various corporate and political interests represented on Steadfast, their spider-web of relationships rivals that of the docks. The corporate interests are obvious, with different docks

on the station being controlled by different companies, and their outsourcing various parts of the manufacture. There are also various industrial concerns off of the docks producing ship parts, everything from gravity engines, to generators, to railguns. It is generally cheaper to have them produced on-station rather than being shipped in from elsewhere.

Many shipping organizations have representatives on Steadfast to oversee orders, making sure that the ships are up to their standards and to make sure that the custom interiors meet their ordered specifications. This latter is especially true of minor species as, since their species travel the starlanes less, there are no standard ship plans designed for their shape and general preferences.

Some buyers come from considerable distances to purchase larger ships from Steadfast Station specifically to avoid purchasing from the builders. For this reason, there are virtually no builders aboard Steadfast and none working for any of the companies involved in shipbuilding.

Any ship built here for human crews would need to be entirely custom as even Space Dogs or civilians purchasing starships nearly always do so from the builders. Nonetheless, as one might expect from a place so tied to interstellar shipping, there is often work to be found for Space Dogs on Steadfast station.

Evermore Story Hooks

- While most gray-matter grafting is just on the edge of legal, the players hunt down a gray-matter grafting ring which is implanting brain tissue from feral immortui because it's easier to come by than other psychic brain-matter, causing the recipients to eventually go insane. The players could stumble upon a series of such mental breaks, stopping the worst of it, and eventually tracking down the surgeries to Pallas.

- The players are tasked with hunting down an artifact of The Ancients which was being transported for research and was stolen by a small-time criminal on the docks of Tania, likely without knowing what it was. The players have to track down the thief through various layers of the jumble, dealing with gangs and eventually more hardened criminals who know the artifact's worth. The artifact itself may just start to make things more difficult by starting to activate.

- Pirates have to get their equipment from somewhere, and some of the best equipped got their gear from Steadfast Station. Needless to say, no one likes to be accused of supplying pirates whether or not they do. If the players either confront them or go public, the pirates' suppliers might use some of their ill-gotten gains to hire someone to shut them up.

- An isolated system several jumps away purchased a customized battleship from Steadfast to help them deal with local pirates themselves. The battleship won't be fully operational until it's shipped out and actually has to be guarded on its way out there since the pirates aren't exactly happy about the idea of their prey being able to fight back.

- The players are tracking a bounty whose trail has disappeared into the bowels of Tania station. Needless to say, gaining contacts to find out anything in the ancient interior passages of the station isn't easy.

- Two or more alanny clans are fighting over jurisdiction of criminals and come together and decide to let Space Dogs handle them

- A psychic immortui has made his way deep into the shambles of Tania and started to craft more of the same. Word comes to the surface layers of the station only of a series of violent killings, and if the players investigate they investigate they find the immortui's 'butcher shop' converting the inhabitants into immortui.

- An alanny information broker needs some Space Dogs to go investigate something in person in a distant star-system.

- A group of alanny explorers need Space Dog guards as they go out to seek the wonders of the galaxy.

- Gangsters from the belly of Tania decide to come out into the outer layers of the station to steal whatever they can haul away and smash anything that they can't.

- While here in the center of the starlanes pirating isn't a significant problem, that isn't to say that all crime is. In part due to the blurry nature of alanny clan jurisdiction, corporate sabotage can be a major problem in Evermore, and Space Dogs can look like either great protectors or expendable pawns to the players involved. Perhaps even scapegoats, as who wouldn't believe the worst of a group of humans?

- A group of torali have set themselves up as medical experts on Pallas. While their surgical skill is high, some of their patients have started to go missing. Meanwhile the torali have begun producing strange new chimeras.

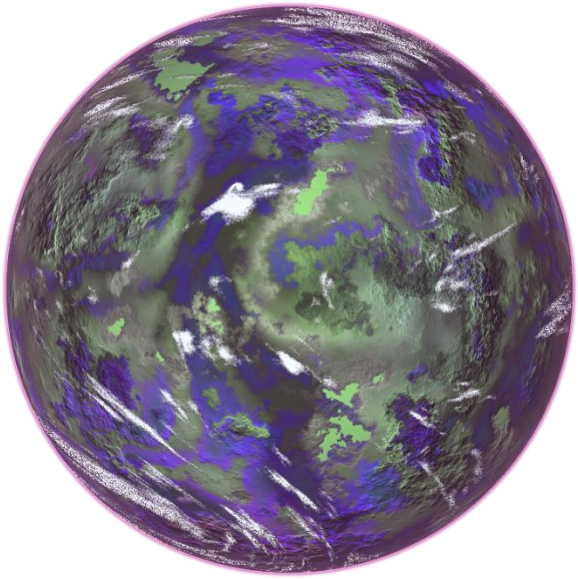
Granic's Reach Star-system *Newly Colonized System*

Sun:	Yellow
Planets:	7
Home Worlds:	0
Habitable Worlds:	0
Semi-Habitable Worlds:	1 planet
Intolerable Worlds:	2 planets & 62 moons
Gas Giants:	4 planets
Space Stations:	17,748
Population:	Approx. 11.8 million (34% alanny, 16% berlichs, 6% krakiz, 3% torali, 0.1% builders, 40.9% minor species)

Granic's Reach is one of the new wave of newly colonized systems over the last several decades. Before it was colonized the star-system had a different name, but as Granic was the largest investor in getting the colony off the ground he was able to rename it as he chose, and no one who ever met Granic would call him humble.

The source of wealth in Granic's Reach and the reason which Granic chose it was due to two asteroid belts which are rich in a variety of metals and minerals, some of which are rare in most systems. This makes the trip out to Granic's reach dangerous but profitable for those traders willing to make the voyage.

Granic's Rest Semi-Habitable Planet



Population: 0.9 million

Gravity: 0.97 Earth Standard

Granic's Reach has no truly habitable worlds, but Granic's Rest is semi-habitable and is easily livable at the poles, though still hot during the long summer days. Granic has been funneling much of his profits to increase the gravity and start geoengineering the rest of Granic's Rest, though it will be decades more before the planet's cooling and the soil changes are enough to significantly expand the cultivatable areas. In truth, Granic's Rest would likely not be worth geoengineering when considered next to building larger space station habitats. Instead, it is largely a vanity project of Granic's to prove that he can afford it.

Some krakiz have ventured beyond the poles to lay their eggs, as the local wildlife can be surprisingly vicious, and krakiz do better in the heat than most sapient species.

Granic's Mining Station 1838 Mining Station

Population: 41

An archetypical mining station, Granic's Station 1838 is one of a network of mining stations scattered throughout the system's asteroid belts. Burrowed out of an asteroid, the workers have their own small community within the station, though they still have to be rotated in and out of the station periodically to keep from breaking, the timing of which varies by species. The station also has periodic visits from one of several hundred cantina ships which bounce between the mining stations, keeping spirits up and wallets light.

Despite the close confines and long hours, some of the miners have traveled dozens of lightyears in order to work here due to the high wages which they are given for their labor, though many spend the credits as fast as they get them.

Granic's Chance Private/Mining Station

Population: 1.3m

In most ways the true core of Granic's Reach, Granic's Chance is both carved into and built out of one of the largest asteroids on the inner belt. Granic's Chance does a lot of mining of its own and serves as the smelting and refining center for most the mining stations scattered throughout the inner belt as most are too small to support those sorts of facilities.

Perhaps more importantly, Granic's Chance is a sort of resort which the miners of the various stations use to unwind after weeks or months of near constant work. The station has a huge variety of distractions, perhaps most notably a series of competing casinos, all of which Granic himself either has a stake in or gets a cut from. They make it so that it's not uncommon for workers who come to Granic's Reach to make a fortune in the mines only to lose it in the casinos. Besides the miners, traders often stop over on Granic's Chance before heading back out into the warp with their cargo, as do more unsavory sorts who may be in the area. Several of the establishments have less than totally legitimate sources of revenue. To keep them in line, Granic's Chance has substantial security forces including a large contingent of chimeras owned by Granic, though more numerous are private security forces which are employed by specific organizations or businesses.

Granic's Reach Story Hooks

- One of the more isolated mining stations has gone quiet, missing their last two check-ins. The next shipping container is scheduled to head out to them in 36 hours. Before the mining corp risks the freighter, they want the players to check it out and figure out if it's just some faulty communications gear or something worse.

- A casino on Granic's Chance is running a rigged game. While Granic has no problem with getting money out of the miners, a crooked casino threatens the whole set-up since bad PR means laborers aren't going to want to travel light-years only to have their wages cheated away from them.

- A shipment of ore needs to get through an area of the starlanes which has been troubled with pirates recently. Some Space Dog escorts for the shipment are just what the doctor ordered.

- The laborers on one of the mining stations have struck it rich with an extremely rare mineral and decided to go on strike and keep the ore for themselves. The players can be contacted by the owners to break up the strike and take the ore, or they can decide to side with the laborers and help them to ship out the ore and pocket all the credits.

- A crime syndicate is trying to muscle in on Granic's Chance and start up a protection racket on the local casinos.

- There is a dispute over a claim between two different groups of miners, and the conflict is quickly escalating towards violence.

- A shipment of ore has been hijacked somewhere on its way to a linked system for sale, and any Space Dogs who hunt it down will be given a percentage. Not to mention the prize of any pirate ships they capture.

- Settlers on Granic's Rest have picked out a spot further from the pole for their next series of farmsteads. The problem is that the area is swarming with local predators. It turns out that some krakiz have taken a liking to the predators and want to keep using the settlers' land to raise their pets, perhaps even exporting them to other planets and stations as 'pets'.

- A group of miners stole a ship full of ore and took off to parts unknown. Granic needs them tracked down, and he wouldn't be opposed to them being made into examples to keep anyone else from making the same attempt.

- A location for a new mining station was being scouted, but once the asteroid was drilled it turned out that it was already being mined by a team of Artifex capeks and their associate guards and Comite mechanics. The capeks immediately attacked the miners, but on the plus side all of the ore is sitting there ready for the taking once some badass Space Dogs take care of the capek threat.

Equi *Layover System*

Sun	White Dwarf
Planets	5
Home Worlds	0
Habitable Worlds	0
Semi-Habitable Worlds	0
Intolerable Worlds	4 planets & 24 moons
Gas Giants	1 planet
Space Stations	3,029
Population	Approx. 274.5 million (54% alanny, 9% berlichs, 3% builders, 3% torali, 2% krakiz, 29% minor species)

On several of the more traveled starlanes, Equi is a crossroads which would take travelers weeks out of their way to avoid. For that reason it's one of the most traveled star-systems in the galaxy despite having few natural resources of note and no habitable planets or moons. Equi isn't unique in its situation as a crossroads, but it is one of the largest.

Over the centuries dozens of city stations have been built in Equi along with thousands of much smaller stations. Largely they are set up to service the many ships jumping through with fuel, maintenance, and entertainments. Merchant guilds have a strong presence in Equi, various ships often trading goods to ships heading in the direction where they might have more value. Some ship-owners even just do round-trips to and from Equi so that they don't have to travel so far from their homes or through systems where they lack contacts. These shipments are generally taken by others doing the same in a different direction, though some of the materials and foodstuffs remain in Equi to service the permanent inhabitants.

Vilant Station City Station

Population: 39.7 million (permanent)

By far the largest of the three city stations in Equi, Vilant has truly taken on a life of its own. While many stations convince ships to dock by being the most convenient as they jump onto Equi, Vilant focuses on being the station where merchants and sailors will want to go out of their way for. While the permanent population is relatively small, the current population at any given time is several times as high.

Various performers and divas from dozens of star-systems along with thousands of ways to gamble and game along with more carnal ways to enjoy oneself can be found on Vilant, no matter the species, many of them a sort of free to try. The merchant guilds in charge of Vilant subsidize the performances and games to entice ships to dock there and hopefully

Equi Story Hooks

- Some of the starships are hauling more than just trade goods. They have sapient cargo. Slaves. While the builders put few limits on interstellar shipping, shipping sapient slaves is one of them. The magistrates will pay a pretty penny to bring the slavers to justice.

- One of the stations is loading passing ships with more than just fuel. They are slipping on hijackers who wait for the ship to jump for warp before taking over the ship. The PCs may discover this from a crew dumped from their ship in the next system, or they might track down the origin of a pirates' starship back to Equi.

- A diva on Vilant has a stalker, having received a serious of increasingly threatening letters. The diva needs some Space Dog bodyguards before she'll agree to keep performing. However, things start to go wrong when the power goes out in the middle of her next concert…

- Shippers of intoxicants are held hostage by a group of addicts on Vilant station. The big problem? The shippers already sold all of their stock, but the addicts

are starting to go through withdrawal and aren't taking no for an answer.

- There is a budding protection racket starting up on one of the minor refueling stations. Its neighbors know, but they don't mind since it gives them a competitive advantage.

Gamma 19 *Layover System*

Sun	Red Dwarf
Planets	4
Home Worlds	0
Habitable Worlds	0
Semi-Habitable Worlds	0
Intolerable Worlds	3 planets & 5 moons
Gas Giants	1 planet
Space Stations	12
Population	942 (undisclosed %)

Gamma 19 is an unimportant star system in an unimportant part of the galaxy. There is just barely enough interstellar travel through the system to justify a warp beacon along with a small human garrison to protect it. There are also a smattering of small mining stations and a single space dock able to refuel and repair larger ships passing through.

There is little of worth in the system beyond a sub-par smattering of asteroids, making larger space station colonization unattractive relative to most other systems. Some of the few who do settle here are those trying to keep their heads down.

Ships do come through the system periodically, but passing through Gamma 19 isn't the only way to get anywhere, making it used only with specific routes.

While Equi is probably the most active layover system throughout the galaxy, Gamma 19 is on the other side of the spectrum, with so little traffic that it's barely worth the labor of the builders to maintain the warp beacon.

Gamma 19 Station One Warp Beacon

Population: 42 (36 builders, 6 humans)

The builders stationed here don't take their semi-exile here by just doing nothing though. While in no way a prime posting, the builders in Gamma 19 do just as you might expect. They build. The space station surrounding the warp beacon is far larger than it needs to be, almost like a tiny jumble.

In the last few decades with the addition of the human garrison, the builders took the excuse to build elaborate facilities with various entertainments including a full sized basketball court and are currently building an ice rink.

Gamma 19 Story Hooks

- Because of Gamma 19's isolated nature, various unsavory sorts might use that as an excuse to attack it, especially to gain builder technology. However, as the builders are well known to be willing to blow themselves up rather than give up their warp beacon technology, this would have to be attempted through subterfuge.

- A group of anti-builder radicals might not even care about the warp beacon and simply attack Gamma 19 solely to take out their frustrations or for the symbolic value of the move.

- A merchant vessel jumps into the system with pirates or volucris in hot pursuit, and with the minimal population in Gamma 19, there's no reason for them to stop their pursuit once in real space. The PCs can choose whether to help by having the ship dock with the station or something else entirely.

- A bounty that the PCs are hunting has been tracked to Gamma 19, but due to the limited records of the system, they do not know which station the bounty is on.

X-Cloo *Outlier System*

Sun:	Yellow
Planets	9
Home Worlds	0
Habitable Worlds	1 planet
Semi-Habitable Worlds	2 planets
Intolerable Worlds	2 planets & 77 moons
Gas Giants	4 planets
Space Stations	529
Population	Approx. 719 million (98% berlichs 1% alanny, 1% other)

X-Cloo is an older colony, and unlike many recent colonies it is almost entirely dominated by a single species; the berlichs.

Unlike the berlichs which make their way into the starlanes, the vast majority of the berlichs in the X-Cloo system are not upgraded with various cybernetic enhancements, especially among those planet-side.

Zive Habitable Planet

Population: 316 million

Gravity: 1.51 Earth Standard

The planet of Zive has a substantially higher gravity than most species prefer, enough so that if X-Cloo had been colonized by any other species it likely would have been altered to the galactic standard of 0.97 ES. However, as the berlichs' home planet is nearly as high, the berlich colonists left it unchanged.

The inhabitants of Zive are generally far more devout in their reverence for The Assembly of the Chosen than most berlichs. In part due to this reverence, quite a few members of The Assembly of the Chosen have come from Zive over the centuries.

X-Cloo Story Hooks

- The PCs are given a bounty which they have tracked down to the surface of Zive. The problem? The bounty is an affluent berlich who doesn't plan to go quietly.

- A cell of The Zealots of the Chosen have been tracked to X-Cloo aboard an old space station. The Zealots may have even been behind a terrorist attack or some other crime which the PCs have already foiled, and in the process they retrieved evidence of this cell in X-Cloo.

- While traveling through X-Cloo the PCs are blamed for something which they couldn't have possibly done, but the berlich ship in question is looking for a scapegoat, not real answers.

- Exfiltration: X-Cloo isn't near the heart of the berlich sector, but The Assembly of the Chosen makes sure that cybernetic tech is spread among all of the colonies. A local berlich cyber-surgeon is willing to sell his expertise to The Armada if the price is right. While his expertise is only on berlichs, The Armada is confident that they can use that knowledge as a baseline to improve human cybernetics.

The problem is that the powers that be in X-Cloo would rather kill him than allow lesser species accress to their technology, and The Armada can't be seen retrieving him. Thus, a band of Space Dogs is just the thing. They just have to survive getting him out of X-Cloo, hopefully without anyone being the wiser.

- A wealthy berlich approaches the PCs. Their son was upgraded several years ago as a rebellious youth and was deployed to outlying berlich systems. Per standard berlich policy her son was cut-off from all communication with his family, but she still wants to know how her child is doing, and she gives the PCs a letter to deliver to him. She will pay handsomely if the letter is delivered and she receives news of her son. She will pay extra if the PCs bring back a message from her estranged son.

Chapter 16: Warp Travel

Warp travel is what lets there be a galactic community at all, as without warp drives it would take years to travel between the nearest star-systems. However, for all of its benefits, warp travel is dangerous.

When warp drives take a ship into the warp, the ship is no longer fully in our reality of real space. Instead, it creates a bubble of our reality which then travels through the warp at many times the speed of light relative to real space.

The warp is not shaped in the same way as our reality, and sometimes when two star-systems are equidistant in our reality, traveling to one of them might take two or three times as long, and occasionally even longer. Even the builders seem to not know the why behind this, only that it is so. That is why the starlanes often do not take what would be the straightest course in our reality, instead sometimes switch-backing back and forth to take advantage of the fastest paths, sometimes shifting to avoid longstanding warp storms or as the warp changes how it connects to real space.

Once a warp bubble is created, the only way to leave the warp is to get close enough to a gravity well to 'pop the warp bubble' and come back into our reality. A ship which spends too long in the warp runs a risk of losing their link to our reality. Therefore, traveling to a distant star system is done in a series of shorter jumps, or 'warp hops', even using mostly uninhabited systems as layover points. Long distance travel is really a series of straight warp jumps from system to system, though each individual jump averages a week or more.

No warp travel is possible through the center of a solar system as warp travel is too close to a gravity well such as a star or planet. So, besides the outskirts, travel within a star-system relies upon much slower gravity engines.

Traveling Through the Warp

Whether someone has their own ship with a warp drive, is on a high-end passenger liner, or is hitching a ride on a tramp freighter, they should be aware of before they make their first trip through the starlanes.

Each jump through the warp takes 2d6 days, with a minimum time of 5 days. This is rolled for each jump separately, and can only be done to relatively nearby systems. To speed up total voyages, ships will take as long of jumps as possible, though sometimes they'll take shorter jumps to remain in safer star systems.

A ship can only jump when outside its gravity envelope, and it has to have straight shot for the other system due to the dangers of changing course in the warp when you can't see real space.

Popping the Bubble

Once you create a warp bubble with which to enter warp travel, the only way to pop the bubble and come back to normal space is to get within range of a gravity well, generally a star, though sometimes a gas giant etc. This is referred to as a warp dead zone, or WDZ. The distance from the star when the bubble is popped varies greatly, primarily based upon the strength of the gravity well. However, various

unpredictable factors such as warp storms and the magnetism caused by solar flares can cause the exact range of a WDZ to vary, though rarely by more than a few percent of the total distance.

As an example, in the human's home star-system of Sol, the warp dead zone is approximately halfway between Jupiter's and Saturn's orbits, or 7.6-8.1 AU (astronomical units), and from there it takes nearly a week for most ships to reach Earth, though of course that can vary based upon where the ship came into Sol System relative to where Earth is on its yearly orbit.

Large planets can also cause a WDZ; both Saturn and Neptune have their own WDZ, though their WDZs do not extend far past their rings. On the other hand, if a ship's warp travel were to take it directly into the path of Pluto or Uranus nothing would happen as it has an insufficient gravity to pop a warp bubble, and being a part of normal space it wouldn't interact with a ship that was still in the warp. For this reason, ships don't have to worry about dodging stray asteroids, comets, or dust in the vastness of space between stars.

Coming out of the warp causes a ship to come to a full stop which gives the ship a chance to adjust to circumstances in the system as they get their gravity engines up and running. This does mean that anyone waiting at the edge of a warp dead zone could potentially get the drop on you, though they due to variation in the WDZ they would have to get lucky.

Warp Beacons **********

While within a warp bubble, you have no view of the normal universe. It is possible to be 'blown off course' by a warp storm, a shifting in the connections between the warp and our reality, having to run from attackers, or some other unknown factor. With no picture of the outside universe, there would be no way to guarantee that you would ever get back on course or even ever get close enough to another gravity well to pop your warp bubble without extreme luck. That is where warp beacons come in.

The warp beacons allow a ship's sensors to know that it is no longer on course and to know which direction their destination is. To traverse the

vastness of the warp in relative safely, the builders have created a network of warp beacons which act as lighthouses across the vastness of the warp. Some systems do not have their own warp beacons, but if they are close enough to a beacon travel to them is still relatively safe as starships can adjust course to the beacon if they've been blown off course.

It is the warp beacons which have allowed the builders to remain the dominant economic force in the galaxy. If a star system wants to retain a warp beacon in their system, and therefore allow trade to come into the system relatively safely, the builders build an entire space station around it. The builders maintain control of the space station, and they charge the system inhabitants some sort of tax or tariff on incoming goods to support the upkeep of the beacon. They also force the inhabitants to follow certain strictures, such as being under the jurisdiction of the Starlane Magistrates.

Ships within the warp can track other ships within the warp, allowing pirates to chase their prey through the warp itself, though it is a risky venture even for pirates.

Psychics and the Warp

For millennia there have been those who have speculated how the volucris have traveled through the warp so quickly and without access to the builders' warp beacons. Some speculated that the volucris simply are themselves creatures of the warp, and that they have instincts which can never be duplicated. In more recent centuries with the rise of the immortui that theory was shifted as the immortui also traverse the warp without using warp beacons.

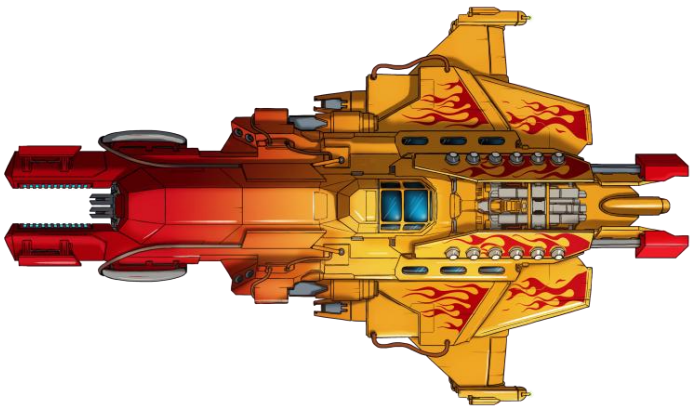
While many theorized that the immortui must also have the same sort of instincts as part of being infected, others have argued that neither the volurcris nor the immortui could traverse the warp safely, instead they merely didn't care about the risks, as had been the documented case for the capeks.

Conspiracy theorists have long said that the builders had already created the technology to allow safe warp travel without beacons which both the volurcris and immortui used, some even saying that the builders had provided it to them for various convoluted reasons.

After First Manifestation and the human psychic manifestations thereafter, it did not take long figure out that the mothers of psychic humans had traveled through the warp while pregnant for them.

A decade after First Maifestation it was discovered that with proper training a psychic in a meditative trance while within a warp bubble can use their psychic abilities to gain visions of the real galaxy around them. These visions are inexact but still enough for the psychic to guide starships to nearby systems without the need to use warp beacons for guidance. Only the most powerful human psychics can do this, generally being referred to as 'true psychics'.

Since this news broke, there has been a surge in gray matter grafting, in an attempt to break the builders' monopoly without using their human pets. However, while it seems that both volucris and immortui psychics can use warp divining, no amount of gray matter grafting from their brain matter appears to allow any other species to do the same. This has lead some to consider grafting from human brains.



Making a Warp Jump

To make a warp jump, you first have to get beyond the gravity envelope of the system's star facing your destination. Each jump requires a 5 TN piloting check and takes 5 or 2d6 Earth days, whichever is higher. A failed Piloting check increases the roll by 1d6 per point failed. If you have True Psychic on board your ship, they can enter a psychic trance before the jump. If they succeed on a TN 10 psychic check, a single 1d10 is rolled instead of 2d6.

If the destination star system does not have a warp beacon, you lose your way if you roll two or more 1's. This could be due to a warp storm knocking you off of your path, a slight shift in the warp, or even a miscalculation. However, if the system which you jumped from has a warp beacon, you can turn back to it taking 10 days total. For example: You are jumping to a system without a warp beacon and roll double 1's, the ship is off course and returns to the previous system, taking 10 days.

If there is no beacon in either the system you're jumping to or the system that you're jumping from and you roll two 1's, you are simply lost in the warp forever

Mothership Piggybacking

Before making a warp jump, a single Escort or Hunter scale ship may attach to a Mothership scale ship. If the Mothership has multiple sections, one Escort ship may attach per section.

The main purpose of this is to allow the smaller ship to make a warp jump together with the Mothership scale ship, sharing a single warp bubble and arriving in the target system at the same time.

Warp Interception

Intercepting a ship in the warp is difficult and can be risky as you attempt to follow their warp drive's wake; but it can be the best way to catch another ship, whether for a bounty, piracy, or something else.

To intercept, jump from the same place they went into warp from and make a Piloting Check to warp jump with an increased TN based upon how long ago your target jumped (see Warp Interception Chart below) and on a success roll 2d6 minus how much higher your warp drive ranking is than your target's. That is the number of days it takes to intercept. If they make it to the next system first, you fail to intercept. You cannot jump after a ship which is no longer in the warp.

If no warp beacon is around, double 1's still cause the ship to be lost to the warp as normal.

If the interception roll is greater than the target's remaining days in their warp jump, then you follow them into the next system of hours behind equal to the difference. For example, if the interception roll is an 8 when they have 5 days left in warp, you appear in the next system 3 hours behind them. The total minimum jump time is still 5 days.

Warp Interception Chart	
0-1 Hours Behind	**+1**
1-12 Hours Behind	**+2**
12-24 Hours Behind	**+3**
1-3 Days Behind	**+4**
3-5 Days Behind	**+5**
5-10 Days Behind	**+6**
10+ Days Behind	**+7**
12+ Days Behind	**Impossible**

Intercepted Warp Bubble

If a ship is intercepted, the two ships' warp bubbles are linked and the ships are in the same SCS either for the next 5 space combat rounds (25 minutes), or if thechasing ship's warp drive is damaged, as that allows the lead ship to 'de-link' the drives and separate their warp bubbles. Once de-

linked, both ships will complete the trip to the destination star system in separate bubbles and enter the system 1d6 hours apart, randomizing which entered first. The only way to remain linked is for an Escort or Hunter scale ship to piggyback onto a Mothership scale ship.

While in the linked bubbles, there is far less space than in a normal SCS and gravity engines can only link to each-other as there are no stars or planets within the warp bubble. This gives a -4 penalty to all passive ship defenses and a +4 bonus to board the opposing ship(s) while in the linked warp bubble.

GMing Warp Travel

How much you focus upon warp travel and tracking the time it takes largely depends upon what sort of campaign that you want to run. If the player characters never own their own ship, you can largely ignore the rules for warp travel and just have each jump between destinations take a couple of weeks including the in-system transit.

If the players do own their own ship, you can still mostly ignore the rules for warp travel until someone attempts to intercept their ship in the warp or they want to do the same to someone else. If you and the players don't want to worry about the traveling and want to jump right into whatever trouble the PCs find in the next system, feel free not to worry about rolling for the warp jump. After all, unless they're in a rush for some reason, the time it takes may not matter too much.

If there is a True Psychic amongst the PCs, some NPC merchants may be willing to hire the PC crew at a premium to speed up their trips and make travel safe even to star systems without warp beacons.

Making a Jump Through the Warp	
Time For Normal Warp Jump (Assumes Warp Beacon in Destination System)	5 or 2d6 days (use the higher #)
Jumping Without a Beacon in Destination's System but from a system with a Beacon	On a roll with double 1's, the ship is off course and returns to the previous system, taking 10 days to do so.
Jumping With No Beacon	On a roll with double 1's, the ship is lost to the warp and all passengers are lost to this reality forever.
Jumping or Intercepting With a True Psychic	With a TN 10 Psychic check, 5 or 1d10 days (use the higher #)
Intercept Another Ship	Catch them in 2d6 days minus how much higher your warp drive ranking is than your target's. You fail to catch if they get to the next system first.
Failed Intercept	Appear in the next system a number of hours behind them equal to the number the intercept failed by or 5 days total – whichever is greater.

Chapter 17: Potential Threats

The Potential Threats chapter shows a smattering of foes which Space Dogs may face in their travels across the starlanes and rules for expanding them out, along with a pair of starships. This should be enough to get you started with the starter module (Chapter 18) as well as a short campaign.

For longer campaigns it is recommended that you get the Threat Guide to the Starlanes – a companion book with hundreds of pages of foes, starships, in addition to more weapons, items, mecha, and rules for customizing the PCs' own starship. Or if you choose to purchase a published module, they should have stats for all of the included foes and starships.

NPCs vs PCs: Throughout this chapter, you will see many references to both NPC and PC classes. The vast majority of the galaxy, from sapients to alien monstrosities, use the rules for NPC classes. The players on the other hand, all play as PC classed characters.

If you think in terms of a novel or movie, PC characters who you get to know; the ones who you really root for or against.

The players are the protagonists of *Space Dogs*, and are therefore all PC characters. In the same way, the players' closest allies and fiercest rivals will often be PC characters as well.

NPC Skills: NPCs do not use the Background system given in Chapter 4 of the core rulebook and do not gain skill points as they gain experience. Instead, they are given a mix of skills which fit their background which may or may not align with a PC background option.

It should also be noted that the skill list is not intended as an exhaustive list of everything possible but instead meant to show the skills useful to a space dog. For example, a highly skilled astrophysicist would have few if any of the skills present in Chapter 4.

If you have not decided upon an NPC's skills beforehand, a good rule of thumb is +2 if they have dabbled, +4 if they are skilled, and +6 if they are masters.

Non-Combat Characters: Most NPCs never gain a level in a combat class. After all, most are not combatants and have no reason to train themselves in that way. A non-combat character has no Vitality, Grit, Life, or Psyche. Instead they have a Durattribute.

Durability: An NPC's Durability is equal to their Stamina. They are taken down by damage in a single round equal to or greater than their Durability, or by any critical hit which deals at least 1 point of damage. Ex: An NPC with a Durability of 6 would be taken down by a single hit of 6 damage or two hits for 3+ damage each if they both came in the same turn etc.

Thug: Throughout the galaxy are those who are able and willing to resort to combat when necessary. As their combat skill improves they generally gain levels in Thug. When a character gains a level in Thug, they gain 10 attribute points; their two primary, two secondary, and two tertiary attributes are dictated by their species. They also gain 1 Mettle every 3 levels. Like non-combat characters, Thugs have no Vitality, Grit, Life, or Psyche and have a Durattribute.

Thugs may or may not have skills, but they have Awareness Spot and Notice TNs based upon their level in Thug. These do they count as having skill ranks to increase group TNs. If an NPC has Thug levels and ranks in Awareness, their Awareness TNs are the higher of the two.

Thug Levels

Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Awareness TNs	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	-	-	-	-	+0	10/15	+10/10
2	-	-	-	-	+0	10/15	+10/20
3	-	-	-	-	+1	10/15	+10/30
4	-	-	-	-	+1	11/16	+15/45
5	-	-	-	-	+1	11/16	+15/60
6	-	-	-	-	+2	11/16	+15/75
7	-	-	-	-	+2	12/17	+15/90
8	-	-	-	-	+2	12/17	+20/110
9	-	-	-	-	+3	12/17	+20/130
10	-	-	-	-	+3	13/18	+20/150
11	-	-	-	-	+3	13/18	+20/170
12	-	-	-	-	+4	13/18	+25/195
13	-	-	-	-	+4	14/19	+25/220
14	-	-	-	-	+4	14/19	+25/245
15	-	-	-	-	+5	14/19	+25/270

Elite Levels							
Level	Vitality	Grit	Psyche	Talents	Mettle	Awareness TNs	Ability Pts (added/total)
1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+0	12/17	+10/10
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	+0	12/17	+10/20
3	+3	+1	+0	+0	+1	12/17	+10/30
4	+4	+1	+0	+0	+1	13/18	+15/45
5	+5	+1	+0	+0	+1	13/18	+15/60
6	+6	+1	+0	+0	+2	13/18	+15/75
7	+7	+2	+0	+0	+2	14/19	+15/90
8	+8	+2	+1	+0	+2	14/19	+20/110
9	+9	+2	+1	+0	+3	14/19	+20/130
10	+10	+2	+1	+0	+3	15/20	+20/150
11	+11	+3	+1	+0	+3	15/20	+20/170
12	+12	+3	+1	+0	+4	15/20	+25/195
13	+13	+3	+1	+0	+4	16/21	+25/220
14	+14	+3	+2	+0	+4	16/21	+25/245
15	+15	+3	+2	+0	+5	16/21	+25/270

Elite: While Thugs encompass the bulk of the combatants throughout the starlanes, some Elites. These are the highly trained professional warriors and experienced shock-troopers. While not as rare as characters with PC classes, Elites are still few and far between.

Those with Elite levels gain Life Points, Vitality, and Psyche as PC classed characters. Like Thugs, their primary, secondary, and tertiary attributes are dictated by their species unless they are combined with PC classes, in which case the PC class's primary, secondary, and tertiary abilities are used.

Elites also slowly gain Grit as they level, but they do not get Grit from their attributes.

Like Thugs, Elites sometimes have skills, but they don't need to be included unless relevant to the

encounter. They gain Awareness TNs based upon their level. NPCs with the Elite class receive +2 to their Break TN.

PC Classes: NPCs which take levels in PC classes can be built in the same way that a PC is, with the addition of having a +2 on their Break TN.

NPCs with levels in PC classes can mix levels of their PC class with Elite levels, gaining attribute points and scores gained from both classes combined.

Use the Elite Awareness numbers for PC classed NPCs as well as the total level for a combined class NPC. For example a Elite 6 / Warrior 1 NPC would have Awareness TNs of 14/19 equal to a level 7 Elite.

Beast: Many creatures throughout the galaxy have some amount of inherent combat prowess. They gain a Vitality, Life, and Psyche as PC classes, but they do not gain either attribute points or skills as they level. Some beasts do have skill ranks as shown in their profile.

Template: A template can be applied to an NPC to change their stat block and abilities. Some can even change the NPC's primary, secondary, and tertiary attributes. This is sometimes done when something has happened to them such as receiving surgical gray-matter grafting, being turned into a cyber-zombie, or being infected and becoming an immortui etc.

Other templates are used to alter an NPC class just to better represent the NPC and who they are, such as a squadron leader being given the Leader template.

Pairing: If you have 2+ identical NPCs in an encounter sharing a square, you should generally pair them up in the same square and have them attack the same target. Then when rolling, roll once for attack and damage and multiply the final damage by x2. This can help speed up gameplay and keep the action fast and furious.

For example, if four comite servitors are in an encounter they should move in two blocks of two. If one fires at Yuji for 7 damage, it would be reduced by Yuji's armor of 4 once to be 3 damage and then multiplied by x2 for 6 total damage. This counts as the pair's turn.

Design Note: The NPC classes were designed to help to streamline gameplay. While the PC classes can be used to create NPCs and are used to do so in the Threat Guide from time to time, it should be rare.

The PC classes are designed to be engaging for a player who is only running their own character, and a GM trying to run multiple PC classed characters at the same time will find themselves stretched to not have gameplay slow to a crawl. For this reason, it's recommended that usually you stick to NPC classes with only the occasional single PC classed NPC in any given encounter. And even that occasional PC classed NPC should generally have their PC class mixed with levels of Elite to avoid having too many abilities.

Even amongst NPC classed characters, Thugs should greatly outnumber Elites. This lets you GM larger groups of foes quickly and keep the pace of the combat snappy even with relatively large groups, and being up against larger groups of foes is when Space Dogs' combat system really shines, so large groups of weaker foes should be the default option.

Reading an Example Stat Block:

Razorback Grunt (Thug 1) (human scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 2
Iron: 1
Steel: 3/4
Brawn: 6
Dexterity: 3
Agility: 3
Stamina: 4
Sharpness: 1
Willpower: 2
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Shield (one hand) – Block/Attack 1d10+9 / 1d6+6 dmg
Hand Cannon (one hand) – Attack – 2d8+3 (-5) / 3d6+1 dmg
Boarding axe (one hand) - Attack: 2d8+9 (melee) / 1d10+9 dmg
Razorback tusks Attack: 2d6+9 (melee) / 1d6+6 dmg (Charger)
Durability: 4
Damage Reduction: 3 (mesh)
Dodge Defense: 5 / 9 run
Body Defense: 8
Mental Defense: 4
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 10/15
Break TN: 10

You only need to worry about the threat rating for the grade which currently applies to the PCs. (Levels 1-3 lead, 4-7 iron, 8+ steel)

The foe's abilities are here for reference, but they can be ignored if you plan to make no alterations to their weaponry or abilities, as they have already been applied to their other stats.

As GM – you should feel free to adjust NPC weaponry to fit the situation – but they are given a default mix.

A single hit of 4+ damage (or a critical hit for 1+) after Damage Reduction will take down this foe, or multiple hits for 4+ damage in a single round. No damage is tracked from round to round.

The dodge defense has the normal dodge defense as well as the dodge defense when running listed.

The Break TN is listed, but only the highest Break TN in the group who is still alive matters, as the Break is rolled by side rather than individually.

NPC Talents

There are some Talents which are designed only for use by NPCs. Mostly these are because they affect things such as Morale which wouldn't be relevant to a PC. Besides being NPC only though, they are chosen in exactly the same manner as a normal Talent, though they may also be chosen as a psychic Talent.

Hold the Line
Requirements: Willpower 4
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: Initiative/Morale Phase
Use: If an NPC uses Hold the Line before making their Initiative/Morale roll, the TN of their side's Morale Test goes up by 3.

Making an Example
Requirements: none
Cost: 2 Psyche
Used: After failing a Morale Test.
Use: The NPC may act this turn as if the Morale Test was passed, though his allies do not. If they attack one of their allies who has broken and deal Life Point or Psyche damage they may immediately make another Morale Test for their side with a bonus to their Break TN equal to the damage dealt.

Run Away!
Requirements: none
Cost: 2 Grit
Used: After failing a Morale Test.
Use: The NPC may make a bonus move action at the beginning of the Movement Phase to try to escape their foes.
Note: The NPC can still move normally when their turn comes up.

NPC Templates

Templates are ways that an NPC classes can be altered beyond their class level. These allow the NPC classes to cover a broader spectrum of potential foes. These can change species abilities, give bonuses or penalties, and give Talents to Elite NPCs.

Any changes to species attributes need to leave them with the same number of primary, secondary, and tertiary species abilities, and are changed with a cascade effect. For example, the Alanny Spymaster has the Leader template, which makes it so that Willpower & Sharpness are their primary attributes. An alanny's Sharpness is already a primary attribute, so there is only a single change. Willpower is changed from a tertiary attribute to a primary attribute, therefore the other primary attribute, Agility, is shifted to be a secondary attribute. An alanny's secondary attribute are normally Dexterity and Stamina, so one of them would need to be shifted to a tertiary attribute.

Any template which gives a Talent will only do so to Elite NPCs and not to Thugs. The NPC does not have to meet the normal requirements for the Talent.

Leader – NPC Template
Change Willpower & Sharpness to primary species abilities
+1 Break TN
Bonus Elite Talent: Any One NPC Talent
An NPC with the Leader template is one who has others under their command, leading them both in battle and in day to day life. In battle they likely aren't the best combatant, but their leadership can be the lynchpin which holds their allies together. If the PCs are up against a Leader, they should likely place target them early in the fight with the hope that their fall will break the enemy's will to fight.

Protector – NPC Template
Change Stamina to a primary species attribute
+5 Vitality/+3 Durability
Bonus Elite Talent: Fight Me!
A specialist is being able to take a beating, a Protector NPC will often use a heavy shield and/or focus on melee so as to better protect their allies.

Capeks

Research TNs	Information Found Researching Capeks
8	These are capeks (name on sight).
12	Capeks are a synethetic lifeform.
15	Capeks are extremely insular and only rarely seek out other species.
20	The creators of the capeks, the ignav, disappeared without a trace centuries ago.
35	The capeks still mourn their missing masters, and much of their seeming random behavior is their looking for them.
80	Some capeks have attacked immortui in their search for information about their missing masters.

Comites

The comite were the most common model of servant for the ignav, working closely with their masters. Both due to their numbers and their close working relationship with their vanished masters, the comite are by far the most common sort of capek to 'snap' and attack other species for various irrational reasons.

Research TNs	Information Found Researching Comite
10	This is a comite – one of the ignavs' servants.
18	The comite are the most common of all of the capeks.
40	The comite are the most likely to have snapped due to missing the ignav, attacking nearby starships and systems in order to prepare them for the return of their masters.

Comite Base Attributes
Brawn: -1 (Species tertiary)
Dexterity: -1 (Species secondary)
Agility: +1 (Species primary)
Stamina: -1 (Species tertiary)
Sharpness: +0 (Species primary)
Willpower: -1 (Species secondary)
Damage Reduction: 0
Base Movement Speed: 2sqs (4 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Break TN: 9+Willpower

Comite - Servitor (Human Scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 1/2
Iron: 1/4
Steel: 1/10
Height: 1.3-1.6 meters
Weight: 35-60kg
Brawn: 2
Dexterity: 2
Agility: 4
Stamina: 2
Sharpness: 3
Willpower: 2
Base Movement Speed: 2sqs (4 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Pistol (one hand) – Attack 2d8+2 (-5) / 2d6+3 dmg
Shortsword (one hand) – Attack 3d6+6 (melee) / 1d8+2 dmg
OR
Rifle (two hands) – Attack 3d6+2 (-4) / 2d8+3 dmg
Knife (one hand) – Attack 1d12+6 (melee) / 1d6+2 dmg
Durability: 2
Damage Reduction: 0
Dodge Defense: 6 / 11 run
Body Defense: 4
Mental Defense: 4
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 10/15
Break TN: 11

Bloodthirsty Comite (Thug 4) (Human Scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 1
Iron: 3/4
Steel: 1/3
Height: 1.3-1.6 meters
Weight: 35-60kg
Brawn: 3
Dexterity: 3
Agility: 8
Stamina: 3
Sharpness: 4
Willpower: 3
Base Movement Speed: 2sqs (4 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Pistol (one hand) – Attack 2d8+3 (-5) / 2d6+5 dmg
Fencing Blade (one hand) – Attack 2d10+11 (melee) / 1d6+4 dmg
OR
Rifle (two hands) – Attack 3d6+3 (-4) / 2d8+5 dmg
Knife (one hand) – Attack 1d12+11 (melee) / 1d6+4 dmg
Durability: 3
Damage Reduction: 1
Dodge Defense: 10 / 15 run
Body Defense: 5
Mental Defense: 5
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 11/16
Break TN: 13

A lean metallic form dotted with metallic feathers, its neck and optics turn nearly upside-down as it stars at you, its long legs together and arms akimbo with a thin blade and finely crafted pistol. The

form's body gleams metallically except for where there are red paint splatters, looking to be stylized after blood splatter. A strange sound comes from the creature, and you have the feeling that if it had a mouth, its lips would be spread wide into a grotesque smile.

Artifexes

Research TNs	Information Found Researching Artifex
10	This is an artifex; it was designed by the ignav for hard manual labor and construction projects.
20	The ignav found the artifexes' form distasteful and kept them away from their living areas.
40	Even snapped, unless there is present combat, the other capeks nearly always shun artifexes and may even come to blows to keep them out of living areas despite the ignav being nowhere around.

Artifex Base Attributes
Brawn: +2 (Species primary)
Dexterity: -1 (Species tertiary)
Agility: -1 (Species secondary)
Stamina: +0 (Species primary)
Sharpness: -1 (Species secondary)
Willpower: -1 (Species tertiary)
Damage Reduction: 3
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters)
Break TN: 9+Willpower

Construction Worker - Artifex (Thug 1) **(Exo Scale)**
Threat Rating: Lead: 2
Iron: 1
Steel: 3/4
Height: 1.8-2.1 meters
Weight: 255-295kg
Brawn: 7
Dexterity: 2
Agility: 3
Stamina: 4
Sharpness: 3
Willpower: 2

Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Club (one hand) – Attack 2d6+9 (melee) / 1d10+7 dmg
Shield (one hand) – Attack 2d6+9 (melee/block) / 1d6+7 dmg
Rapid-Fire Rivet Gun (one hand) – Attack 2d10+2 (-8) / 2d8+3 dmg (Auto-Fire +0)
(The rapid-fire rivet gun is a machine pistol with -2 range increment penalty and +2 Brawn.)
Durability: 4

Damage Reduction: 3	**Break TN: 11**
Dodge Defense: 3 / 8 run	
Body Defense: 13	
Mental Defense: 4	
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 10/15	

This metallic creature is shaped like a mythical centaur, but rougher, made of nothing but hard lines and sharp corners, its body dented and scraped to show bare metal. Where a centaur's head and neck would be is a blocky armored sensor box which turns slowly towards you as its bulky arm raises what looks something like an industrial rivet gun.

Capek Legionnaires

Research TNs	Information Found Researching Legionnaires
10 (if A-2)	This is an A-2 legionary. They are the mainstay of the capek legions.
12 (if BR-4)	This is a BR-4 legionary. An older model; they are often considered expendable and are almost always led into battle by A-2s.
20	You can read the uniforms of legionaries to know their ranks and you know that DX-1s commonly mark their metal carapace for each kill.
40	The A-2 was originally meant as an officer class for the older BR-4 models. But due to their general success and far more appealing aesthetic, the ignav made them the primary legionnaire model.
60	While the legions do officially follow the legates, in some cases it is little more than lip service. While they will protect any legate, they will generally refuse any commands they consider underhanded and not in keeping with their purpose as honorable soldiers.

Legionnaire Model A-2 Base Attributes (Human Scale)
Brawn: -1 (Species tertiary)
Dexterity: +0 (Species primary)
Agility: +1 (Species secondary)
Stamina: +0 (Species secondary)
Sharpness: +0 (Species tertiary)
Willpower: -1 (Species primary)
Damage Reduction: 3
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Break TN: 11+Willpower
Height: 1.6-1.8 meters
Weight: 70-85kg

Grunt - Legionnaire Model A-2 (Thug 1) (Human Scale)	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 1**
	Iron: 3/4
	Steel: 1/2
Brawn: 2	
Dexterity: 5	
Agility: 5	
Stamina: 4	
Sharpness: 3	
Willpower: 3	
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)	
Standard Weaponry:	
Rifle (two hands) – Attack 2d8+5 (-3 per incr.) / 2d8+3 dmg	
Bayonet (on rifle) – Attack 2d6+7 (melee) / 1d8+3 dmg	
Durability: 4	
Damage Reduction: 3	
Dodge Defense: 7 / 12 run	
Body Defense: 4	
Mental Defense: 5	
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 10/15	
Break TN: 14	

Veteran - Legionnaire Model A-2 (Thug 8) (Human Scale)	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 2**
	Iron: 1.5
	Steel: 1
Brawn: 3	
Dexterity: 8	

Agility: 6
Stamina: 5
Sharpness: 5
Willpower: 5
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Rifle (two hands) – Attack 2d8+8 (-3 per incr.) / 2d8+7 dmg
Bayonet (on rifle) – Attack 2d6+11 (melee) / 1d8+6 dmg
Durability: 5
Damage Reduction: 5
Dodge Defense: 8 / 13 run
Body Defense: 5
Mental Defense: 7
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 12/17
Break TN: 16

Approximately the height of an average human, though with longer limbs, this grunt has metallic scale covering most of its vulnerable workings, as well as plating for the sensors on its head.

Decanus - Legionnaire Model A-2 (Thug 5 – Leader Template) **(Human Scale)**	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 2**
	Iron: 1.5
	Steel: 1
Brawn: 3	
Dexterity: 5	
Agility: 6	
Stamina: 4	
Sharpness: 6	
Willpower: 5	
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)	
Standard Weaponry:	
Assault Rifle (two hands) – Attack 2d8+5 (-5) / 2d8+6 dmg (Auto-Fire +1)	
Bayonet (on rifle) – Attack 2d6+8 (melee) / 1d8+4 dmg	
Rocket Launcher (two hands / bulky) – Attack 2d6+5 (-12) / 1d20+1 (Tank) (single shot)	
Durability: 4	
Damage Reduction: 4	
Dodge Defense: 8 / 13 run	
Body Defense: 5	
Mental Defense: 7	
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 11/16	
Break TN: 17	

A red ridge has been added to this capek's helmet plating, making it stand out from fellow capeks. It uses a large polearm to direct its fellow legionaries, its motions projecting a certainty of purpose.

Shock Trooper - Legionnaire Model A-2 (Elite 3) (Human Scale)	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 3**
	Iron: 2
	Steel: 1.5
Brawn: 3	
Dexterity: 6	
Agility: 5	
Stamina: 4	
Sharpness: 4	
Willpower: 4	
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)	
Standard Weaponry:	
Assault Rifle (two hands) – Attack 2d10+6 (-5) / 2d8+5 dmg (Auto +1)	
Bayonet (on rifle) – Attack 2d6+9 (melee) / 1d8+4	
Concussion grenade (one hand/light) – Attack: 3d8+1 (-16 per 5) / 6d6+1 dmg (Grenade)	
Vitality: 11 / Life: 7 / Psyche: 8 / Grit: 1	
Damage Reduction: 4	
Dodge Defense: 7 / 12 run	
Body Defense: 5	
Mental Defense: 6	
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 12/17	
Break TN: 17	

Legionnaire Model BR-4

<u>Legionnaire Model BR-4 Base Attributes (Human Scale)</u>

Brawn: +0 (Species secondary)
Dexterity: +0 (Species secondary)
Agility: +0 (Species tertiary)
Stamina: +2 (Species primary)
Sharpness: -1 (Species tertiary)
Willpower: -1 (Species secondary)
Damage Reduction: 5
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters)
Break TN: 11+Willpower

Grunt - Legionnaire Model BR-4 (Thug 1) (Human Scale)	
Threat Rating:	Lead: 1
	Iron: 3/4
	Steel: 1/2
Height: 1.2-1.3 meters	
Weight: 90-110kg	
Brawn: 4	
Dexterity: 4	
Agility: 3	
Stamina: 7	
Sharpness: 2	
Willpower: 2	
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters)	
Standard Weaponry:	
Machine Pistol (two hands) – Attack 2d10+4 (-5 increment) / Damage 2d8 (auto-fire)	
Machine Pistol (one hand) – Attack 2d10+3 (-5 increment) / Damage 2d8 (auto-fire)	
Broadsword (one hand) – Attack 3d6+8 / Damage 1d12+4	
Durability: 4	
Damage Reduction: 5	
Dodge Defense: 5 / 10 run	
Body Defense: 6	
Mental Defense: 4	
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 10/15	
Break TN:	13

Veteran - Legionnaire Model BR-4 (Thug 11) (Human Scale)	
Threat Rating:	Lead: 2
	Iron: 1.5
	Steel: 1
Height: 1.2-1.3 meters	
Weight: 90-110kg	
Brawn: 6	
Dexterity: 6	
Agility: 4	
Stamina: 10	
Sharpness: 4	
Willpower: 5	
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters)	
Standard Weaponry:	
Machine Pistol (one hand) – Attack 2d10+6 (-5 increment) / Damage 2d8+3 (auto-fire)	
Bastard Sword (one hand) – Attack 3d6+12 / Damage 1d12+9	
Rocket Launcher (two hands / bulky) – Attack 2d6+6 (-12) / 1d20+3 (Tank) (single shot)	
Durability: 10	
Damage Reduction: 8	
Dodge Defense: 6 / 11 run	
Body Defense: 8	
Mental Defense: 6	
Awareness Spot/Notice TNs: 13/18	
Break TN:	16

A short heavily plated form, unlike many capeks, the BR-4 has the look of something built for function as opposed to form.

Chimera

The chimera are, as a group, the monstrous creations of the torali. They seem to be totally compelled to follow the last order given to them by their master, and they're generally not considered to be truly sapient. There are hundreds of different chimera which have been created over the centuries, though a few are by far the most common due to their combination of effectiveness, ease of creation, and subservience. The most common by far is the razorback, though even amongst them there are superficial depending upon where you are in the starlanes and the specific torali which cooked them up.

Razorback

Getting their nickname from the large nose and upward curving tusks, the Razorbacks are the standard trooper of the chimeras. A bit shorter than the average human male and with a hunched back, they're practically bursting with muscle. Try to avoid melee combat with them as that's where they truly excel. They're equipped with a wide variety of weapons, but it's not uncommon to see them armed with a shield to help them to close to melee.

Razorbacks can speak, but their ability to hold an actual conversation is limited, and they seem to have almost no capacity for abstract thought.

Research DCs	Information Found
4	This is a chimera (recognize on sight).
8	This is a razorback (recognize on sight).
20	Razorbacks are the mainstay of the chimera market, sold to nearly anyone with the credits. They are used in a wide variety of military and security applications.
30	Razorbacks can speak, though they have a limited vocabulary and have difficulty following complex instructions.

Razorback Base Attributes
Brawn: +1 (Species primary)
Dexterity: +0 (Species tertiary)
Agility: -1 (Species secondary)
Stamina: +0 (Species primary)
Sharpness: -6 (minimum of 1) (Species tertiary)
Willpower: -2 (Species tertiary)
Damage Reduction: 0
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Morale: 8+Willpower
Height: 1.3m – 1.6m
Weight: 80kg-100kg
Tusks: Attack 2d6+Brw+Dex / 1d6+Brw dmg
Charger: When using tusks in the first round of melee the razorback adds 1d6 to hit and deals double damage if they moved this turn.

Razorback Grunt (Thug 1) (human scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 2
Iron: 1
Steel: 3/4
Brawn: 6
Dexterity: 3
Agility: 3
Stamina: 4
Sharpness: 1
Willpower: 2
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Shield (one hand) – Block/Attack 2d6+9 / 1d6+6 dmg
Hand Cannon (one hand) – Attack – 2d8+3 (-5) / 3d6+1 dmg
Boarding axe (one hand) - Attack: 2d8+9 (melee) / 2d6+9 dmg
Razorback tusks Attack: 2d6+9 (melee) / 1d6+6 dmg (Charger)
Durability: 4
Damage Reduction: 3 (mesh)
Dodge Defense: 5 / 9 run
Body Defense: 8
Mental Defense: 4
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 10/15
Break TN: 10
Charger: When using tusks in the first round of melee the razorback adds 1d6 to hit and deals double damage if they moved this turn.

Razorback Boss (Thug 8 – Leader Template)
Threat Rating: Lead: 6
Iron: 4
Steel: 3
Brawn: 7
Dexterity: 5
Agility: 3
Stamina: 5
Sharpness: 1
Willpower: 5
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Shield (one hand) – Block/Attack 2d6+12 (melee) / 1d6+9 dmg
Hand Cannon (one hand) – Attack – 2d8+5 (-5) / 3d6+3 dmg
Greatsword (one hand) - Attack: 3d6+12 (melee) / 2d8+9 dmg
Razorback tusks Attack: 2d6+12 (melee) / 1d6+9 dmg (Charger)
Durability: 5
Damage Reduction: 5 (mesh)
Dodge Defense: 5 / 9 run
Body Defense: 9
Mental Defense: 7
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 12/17
Break TN: 14
Charger: When using tusks in the first round of melee the razorback adds 1d6 to hit and deals double damage if they moved this turn.

Krakiz

Research DCs	Information Found Researching Krakiz
1	These are krakiz (name on sight).
4	Krakiz commonly take jobs which require physical strength, whether manual labor or as security.
6	Some kraiz, the Primevals, are extremely aggressive and consider anything they can take by force rightfully theirs.
12	Krakiz females are substantially bigger & stronger than the males. The females are a small minority, but they form prides, leading a dozen or so males.
20	Krakiz are formed into loose clans, though their clan allegiance can shift.
35	Many krakiz have a love of taming dangerous beasts, either using the beasts themselves or selling them once trained.
60	The krakiz used to be largely united under the Vrlakiz tribe, but as they've spread across the starlanes their prides have fragmented between various tribes, or even as unaligned prides.

Male Krakiz Attributes (exo scale)
Brawn: +0 (Species primary)
Dexterity: -2 (Species tertiary)
Agility: -1 (Species secondary)
Stamina: +0 (Species primary)
Sharpness: -1 (Species tertiary)
Willpower: -1 (Species secondary)
Damage Reduction: 1
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters) – All Fours - 3sqs (6 meters)
All Fours:A krakiz gains +2 sqs (+4 meters) to their run speed if they have at least one hand empty.
Morale: 8+Willpower
Claws & Bite (one hand) – Attack: 2d6+Brawn+Dexterity / 1d8+Brawn dmg
Height: 1.8m – 2.3m
Weight: 170kg-270kg

Female Krakiz Attributes (exo scale)
Brawn: +1 (Species primary)
Dexterity: -2 (Species tertiary)
Agility: -1 (Species secondary)
Stamina: +1 (Species primary)
Sharpness: -1 (Species tertiary)
Willpower: +1 (Species secondary)
Damage Reduction: 1
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters) – All Fours - 3sqs (6 meters)
All Fours:A krakiz gains +2 sqs (+4 meters) to their run speed if they have at least one hand empty.
Morale: 9+Willpower
Claws & Bite (one hand) – Attack: 2d6+Brawn+Dexterity / 1d8+Brawn dmg
Height: 2.1m – 2.7m
Weight: 250kg-380kg

Krakiz (Male) Marauder (Thug 1) (exo scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 4
Iron: 2.5
Steel: 1.5
Brawn: 5
Dexterity: 2
Agility: 2
Stamina: 4
Sharpness: 2
Willpower: 2
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters) – All Fours - 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Shot Thrower (one hand/light) – Attack: 2d10+1 (-8) / 2d12 dmg (low pen)
Boarding axe (one hand) – Attack: 2d8+7 (melee) / 2d6+7 dmg
Concussion grenade (one hand) – Attack: 3d8-1 (-16 per 5) / +6d6 dmg (Grenade)

Claws & Bite (one hand) – Attack: 2d6+7 (melee) / 1d8+5 dmg
Durability: 4
Damage Reduction: 2 (mesh)
Dodge Defense: 2 / 6 run
Body Defense: 11
Mental Defense: 4
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 10/15
Break TN: 10

Hefting his axe, the krakiz stares down his snout at you with a grimace as he shrugs his shoulders to loosen his muscles, the scales along his long arms glistening slightly with the movement.

Krakiz (Male) Shock-trooper (Thug 3) (exo scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 6
Iron: 4
Steel: 2.5
Brawn: 6
Dexterity: 2
Agility: 3
Stamina: 5
Sharpness: 3
Willpower: 3
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters) – All Fours - 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Shot Thrower (one hand/light) – Attack: 2d10+2 (-8) / 2d12+1 dmg (low pen)
Power Hammer (two hands/bulky) – Attack: 2d6+8 (melee) / 1d8+7 (M) dmg
Concussion grenade (one hand) – Attack: 3d8+0 (-16 per 5) / +6d6+1 (Grenade)
Claws & Bite (one hand) – Attack: 2d6+8 (melee) / 1d8+7 dmg
Durability: 5
Damage Reduction: 3 (mesh)
Dodge Defense: 3 / 7 run
Body Defense: 12
Mental Defense: 5
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 10/15
Break TN: 11

Giving you a big shark-toothed grin, the krakiz hefts the oversized hammer onto his shoulder with a casual swing.

Krakiz (Female) Beta (Elite 1) (exo scale)
Threat Rating: Lead: 7
Iron: 5
Steel: 3
Brawn: 6
Dexterity: 1
Agility: 3
Stamina: 5
Sharpness: 2
Willpower: 5
Base Movement Speed: 1sqs (2 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters) – All Fours - 3sqs (6 meters)
Standard Weaponry:
Claws & Bite (one hand) – Attack: 2d6+8 (melee) / 1d8+6 dmg
Greataxe (two hands) – Attack: 2d8+7 (melee) / 3d6+9 dmg
Shot Thrower (one hand/light) – Attack: 2d10+1 (-8) / 2d12 dmg (low pen)
Concussion grenade (one hand) – Attack: 3d8-1 (-16 per 5) / +6d6 dmg (Grenade)
Vitality: 11 / Life: 11 / Psyche: 7
Grit: 0
Damage Reduction: 2 (mesh)
Dodge Defense: 3 / 7 run
Body Defense: 12
Mental Defense: 7
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 12/17
Break TN: 16

Her scales an iridescent shade of dark orange, this krakiz's feathered mane is just beginning to grow in.

Other Species

There are dozens of species that you may encounter out amongst the stars, though most are in relatively small numbers outside of their home systems. Below are a few examples.

Dizin Trader	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 1/4**
	Iron: 0
	Steel: 0
Brawn: 1	
Dexterity: 2	
Agility: 3	
Stamina: 2	
Sharpness: 3	
Willpower: 2	
Base Movement Speed: 0sqs (0 meters) / Run: 3sqs (6 meters)	
Durability: 2	
Damage Reduction: 0	
Dodge Defense: 5 / 10 run	
Body Defense: 3	
Mental Defense: 4	
Break DC:	**7**

Looking up at you, this small lizard's eyes meet your gaze for only a second before flicking away and back several times before giving you a sharp nod of greeting.

Buubo Mechanic	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 1/4**
	Iron: 0
	Steel: 0
Brawn: 2	
Dexterity: 3	
Agility: 2	
Stamina: 2	
Sharpness: 2	
Willpower: 3	
Base Movement Speed: 0sqs (0 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters) - Jumper	
Durability: 2	
Damage Reduction: 0	
Dodge Defense: 4 / 9 run	
Body Defense: 4	
Mental Defense: 5	
Break DC:	**9**
Light Blindness:	**A buubo without anything to protect their vision is treated as wearing night vision goggles. Vision protection such as goggles gives the buubo a -2 dice penalty on Awareness & Investigation rolls.**

The short buubo's neck stretches and turns to look at you from several angles through its thick goggles, then she crouches down onto her oversized legs.

Salap Informer	
Threat Rating:	**Lead: 1/4**
	Iron: 0
	Steel: 0
Brawn: 2	
Dexterity: 2	
Agility: 2	
Stamina: 3	
Sharpness: 4	
Willpower: 2	
Base Movement Speed: 0sqs (0 meters) / Run: 2sqs (4 meters)	
Swimming Speed: 0sqs (0 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters)	
Durability: 3	
Damage Reduction: 0	
Dodge Defense: 4 / 9 run	
Body Defense: 4	
Mental Defense: 4	
Break DC:	**7**

This squat sapient less than a meter tall has four legs and two webbed hands and is wearing something reminiscent of a purple jump suit. Its large eyes blink at you in question, but not in unison.

Torali Crime Lord
Threat Rating: Lead: 1/4
Iron: 0
Steel: 0
Brawn: 2
Dexterity: 1
Agility: 1
Stamina: 2
Sharpness: 2
Willpower: 3
Movement Speed: 0sqs (0 meters) / Run: 1sqs (2 meters) - Slow
Float Chair Movement Speed: 2sqs* (4 meters) / 2sqs (4 meters) - exo scale
Low Gravity Homeworld: The torali take a -2 dice penalty on all physical skill checks in anything above low gravity.
Durability: 2
Damage Reduction: 0
Dodge Defense: 3 / 3 run
Body Defense: 4
Mental Defense: 5
Awareness Spot/Notice DCs: 10/15
Break TN: 7

Not a production model float chair, the torali's seat seems designed to impress, its purples and silver meshing well with the crime lord's fur and clothing.

Starships

Starships are one of the main threats that the PCs are likely to run into out in the starlanes. After all, someone with a pistol isn't much of a threat when you're flying through the warp. Not unless they have a ship of their own and use it to board yours. This chapter includes a wide variety of starships which the PCs may deal with or even crew. Many of the starships can be found throughout the starlanes, but others or used almost entirely by a single species and will be separated out into their own section. Perhaps most notably are the starships of the volucris, which are biological ships which are themselves volucris and therefore it is impossible to find other species crewing them.

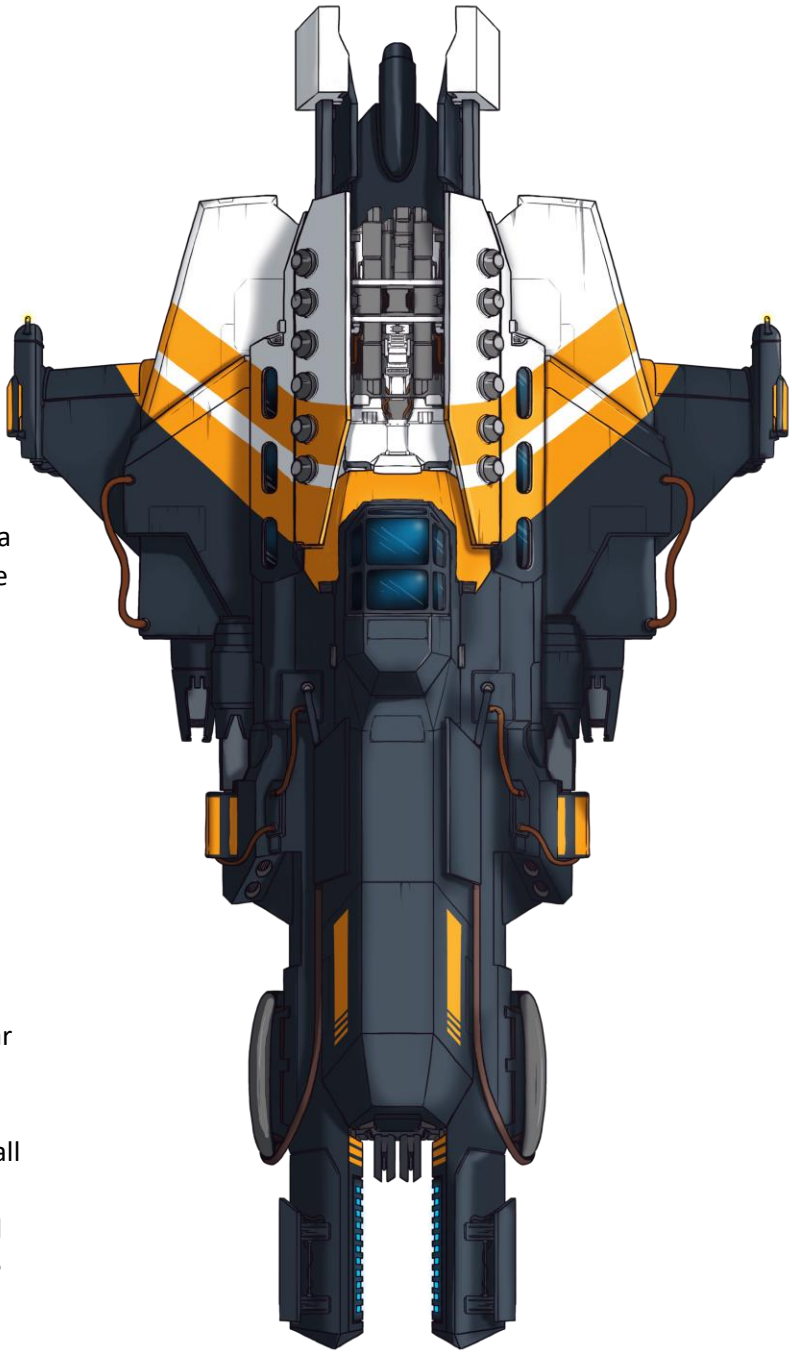
Finally, there are optional rules for starship customization. These rules are not needed to enjoy Space Dogs RPG, but they are available primarily in case your table wants to build out a custom starship of their own , though of course a GM may also use them to make the starships the PCs run into more unique rather than using the stock ships in this chapter.

Sparrowhawk v3

Originally the sparrowhawk was designed as a courier ship, but the sparrowhawk V3 has been modified to include a forward mounted railgun and a pair of torpedo launchers.

While not as common as the faster unarmed v1 or v2, the sparrowhawk v3 has become a popular choice for small crews of Space Dogs due to the ship's relatively high firepower for the cost and ability to operate independently despite the small size. Non-humans are less likely use any variant of the sparrowhawk for combat due to the small interior considering that other species rely more heavily upon numbers in combat.

However, even humans can find the limited space confining after weeks of travel. Few are willing to use a Sparrowhawk as a long-term home.



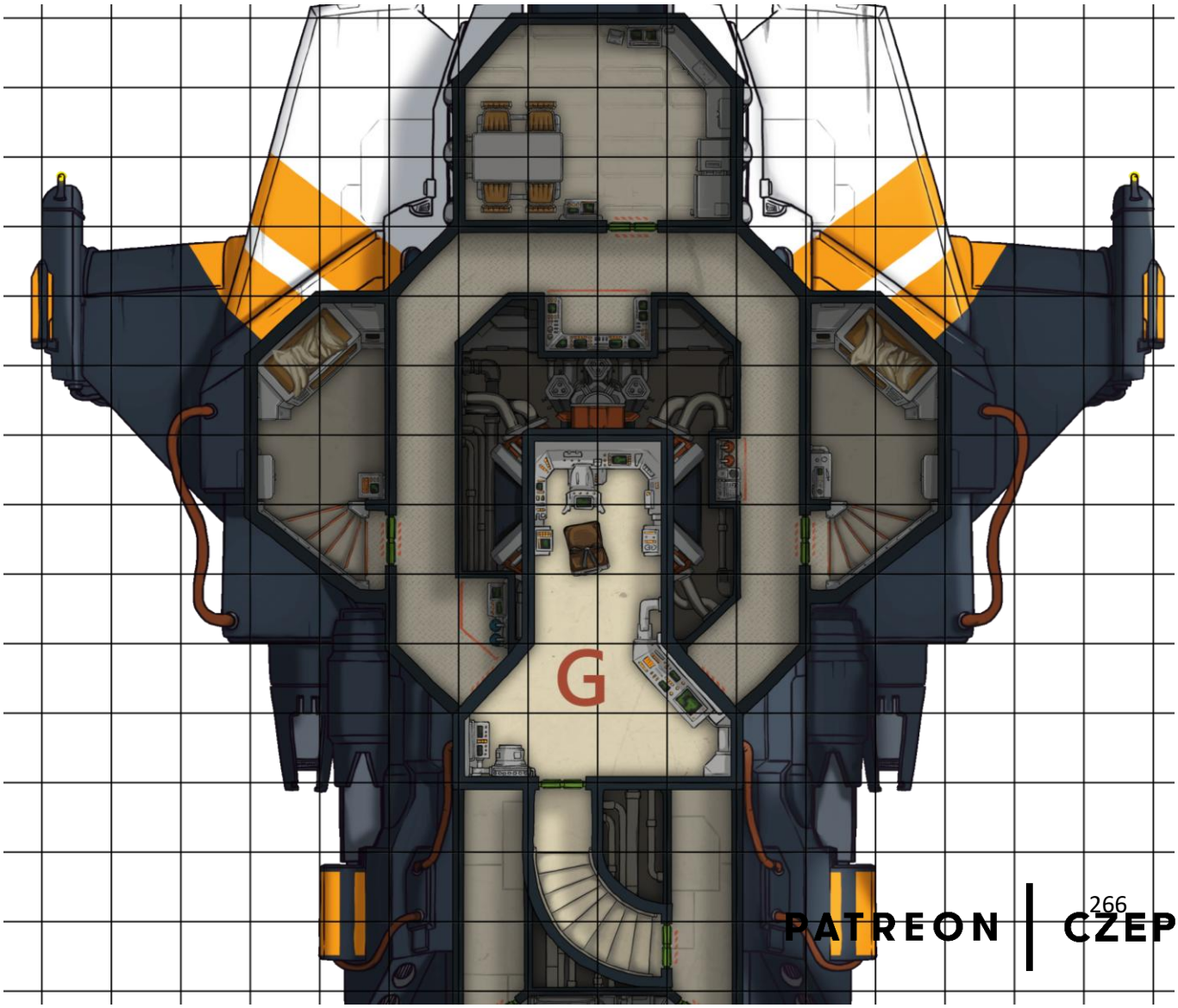
Sparrowhawk v3	
Range:	**4 jumps***
Crew: Pilot/Gunner	
Hull: 10 (E)	
Armor: 2	
Maneuverability: +9	
Speed: 3 (space)	
Engines: Gravity engine / Warp Drive	
Defense: 5+Pilot Skill	
Features:	**Boarding**
Weapons:	**Dogfighting: Railgun – 2d8+Dex/2d10 (E)** **Torpedo Launcher A: x1 Mark 1 Torpedoes – 1d10+Shp/1d12 (M)** **Torpedo Launcher B: x1 Mark 1 Torpedoes – 1d10+Shp/1d12 (M)**
Cargo M^3: 35	

*The sparrowhawk V3 only takes 6 hours per unit of maintenance instead of the normal 12.

Sparrowhawk v3 Layout:

A – Kitchen/Rec Room
B – Dormitory
C – Engineering
D – Torpedo Control
E – Boarding Bay
F – Air Lock
G – Cockpit (upper level)

Sparrowhawk v3 – **Customization**		
Cost:	**New:**	**$1.1m**
	Used:	**$900k**
	Rust Bucket:	**$350k**
	Maintenance:	**$40k**



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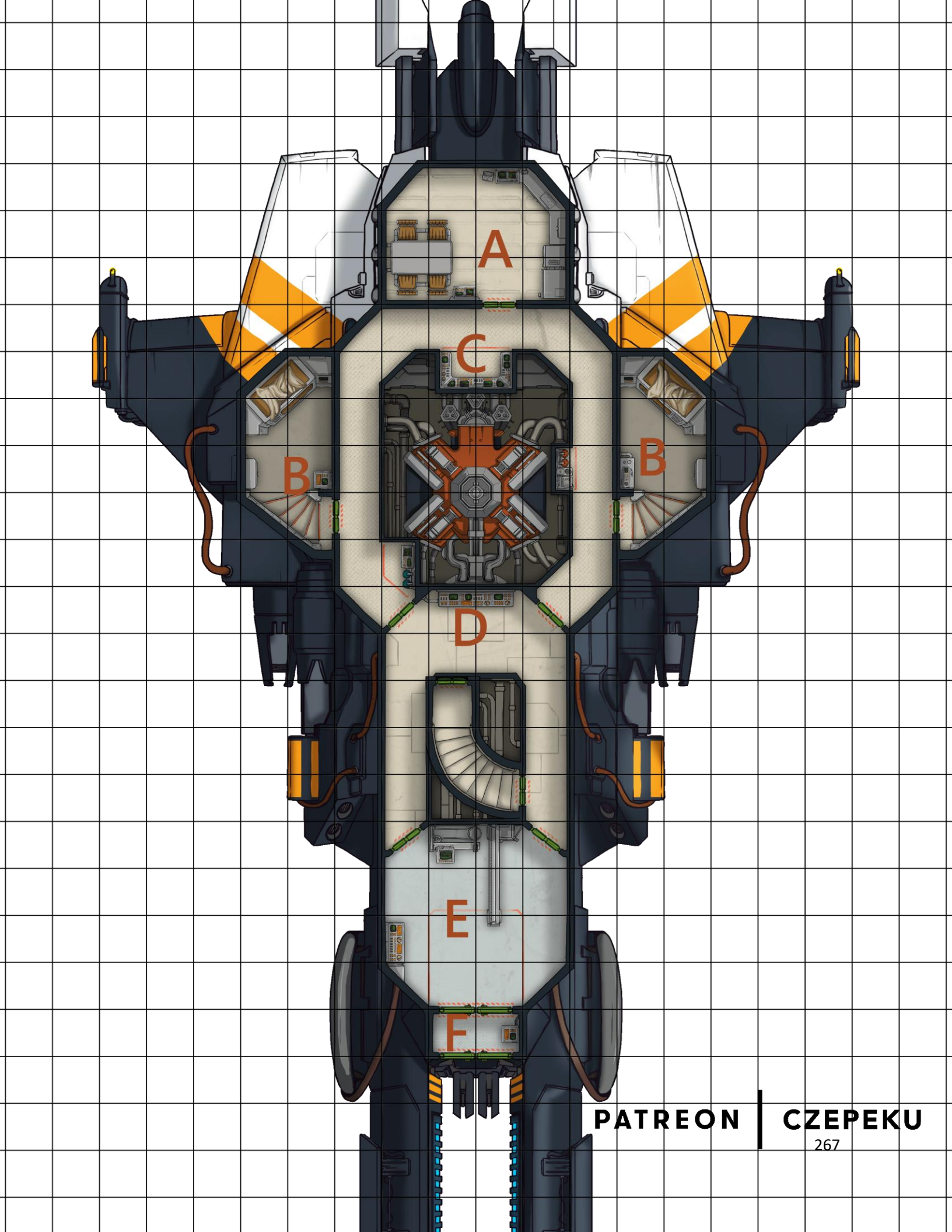

A
C
B
B
D
E
F

Prime Mover Mark IV – Cargo Carrier

While the starlanes are full of pirates, monsters, adventurers, colonists, and travelers, the core of the starlanes has always been trade. The Primer Mover Mark IV is one of the many forms that this trade can take, designed to haul 72 cargo containers between the stars, each of which can carry more than 50 tons.

While there are certainly larger cargo ships, and those which are more specialized for various hazardous or volatile materials, the Prime Mover Mark IV is the epitome of a private merchant vessel, with tens of thousands of this model alone scattered around the starlanes, and many times that for similar starships, some little more than knock-offs.

The Prime Mover series is almost entire used in the more civilized parts of the starlanes due to its total lack of weaponry and how fragile the ship's structure is to damage from any sort of weaponry. Nonetheless, occasionally a Prime Mover captain will take a riskier route in an attempt to boost their bottom line.

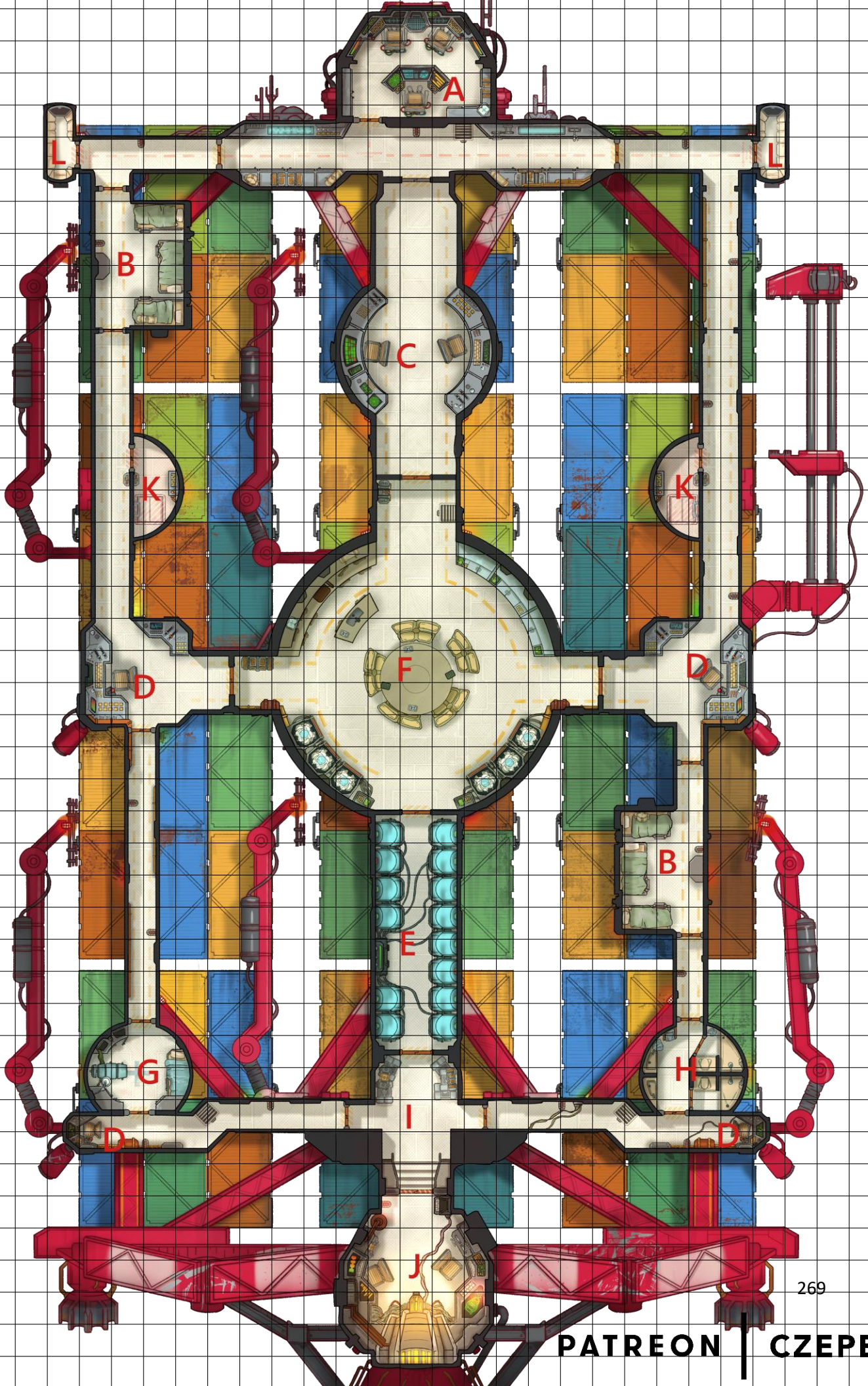
Prime Mover Mark IV – Cargo Container	
Range:	**6 jumps**
Crew: Pilot/Co-Pilot	
Hull: 5 (M)	
Armor: 1	
Maneuverability: +1	
Speed: 3 (space)	
Engines: Gravity engine / Warp Drive	
Defense: 0+Pilot Skill	
Features:	**None**
Weapons:	**None**
Cargo M^3: 5.8k external & 200 internal	

Prime Mover Mark IV Layout:

A – Cockpit
B – Dormitory
C – Cargo Monitoring/Control Room

D – Loading Arm Control
E – Cryo Pods
F – Kitchen/Rec Room – docking bay on roof – ladder comes down onto table
G – Medical Bay
H – Bathroom
I – Storage
J – Engineering
K – Cargo Access
L – Privacy Room

Prime Mover Mark IV - Customization		
Cost:	**New:**	**$1.1m**
	Used:	**$1m**
	Rust Bucket:	**$400k**
	Maintenance:	**$30k**



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Chapter 18: Module – The Raving Raptor

This is a short module, or scene, which can be used either to introduce a table of players to Space Dogs or slipped into an ongoing campaign as a short side-story. There is no real set-up for this episode; but it should give you and your players a good feel for Space Dogs' gameplay by dumping you right into the thick of things, albeit only the action-y bits.

Episode Summary

Before the episode begins, the PCs were already hired by alanny captain Wip as the marine garrison for his cargo hauler, a Prime Mover Mark IV. He and his flock are looking to jack up their profits by crossing a more dangerous couple of warp jumps instead of more heavily trafficked starlanes which would take an extra jump and more tariffs. They agree to give the PCs $20k each along with room & board for the journey, with an additional fee if something dangerous happens.

Shortly after the hauler makes the second such jump and is in the warp, an armed escort sized ship of snapped (insane) capeks jumps breaks into the hauler's warp bubble and boards, aiming for the cargo and to kill any in their way.

To be clear, this sort of thing is a rarity and would not happen every time this route is attempted.

Characters

Wip: The alanny captain of the cargo hauler and the one to hire the PCs. Wip is young for a captain, with dyed neon pink and purple feathers beneath his arms. Ambitious, he wants to use his ship to bring in large profits to make a place for his flock within their alanny clan.

Eager to keep his relationship with space dogs generally good, Wip works to make sure that the PCs are comfortable in their living quarters and that they are suitable for human use.

Wip has +3 to Piloting and Repair.

Alanny Crew: Besides Wip, there are 9 other alanny in the hauler's crew, all part of Wip's flock. They aren't as friendly to the PCs as Wip but are still polite and willing to support their flock, but they have the us distaste for humans that most starlane residents have.

The crew all have +3 in Repair: Starship, with two of the flock having +3 Piloting along with a smattering of other skills. They can get pistols from the ship's storage, but they will only engage in the fighting as a last resort if their lives are threatened as they are non-combatants. They hired the PCs to do the fighting for a reason.

Foes

The crew aboard the attacking starship (a sparrowhawk) are packed with snapped capeks. While they do have a pair of legionnaire grunts as leaders, the rest are not soldiers and none are sane, so they do not act together. Instead, about half will move actively against the PCs, while the rest will largely mill about on their own ship since their in-built directives do not push them to violence.

The Opening

While you should feel free to play out being hired by Captain Wip, by default the episode opens with them already on the ship, an hour from making their next jump through low population star-systems, bypassing the more heavily traveled starlanes which would take an extra jump and have some tariffs involved.

Tip for VTTs: A Virtual TableTop, or VTT can be a great tool for playing Space Dogs. They can be convenient and allow you to play with people who may not live nearby.

One potential issue with using a VTT for Space Dogs is that VTTs do not normally allow tokens to share squares easily.

As a workaround, have each square of your Space Dogs map align with 2x2 grid squares of the VTT.

Then have human scale characters take up 1x2 VTT squares so that allies can share a square. Exosuit characters are 2x2 VTT squares, taking up a full square on the map.

A mecha scale character takes up 4x4 VTT squares and a tank scale character a full 6x6 squares – taking up 2x2 & 3x3 respectively on the map.

Finally, a character with the Swarm ability (see Threat Guide to the Starlanes) takes up just a single VTT square.

The cargo hauler that you're on has spent the last few days in the warp headed for V-84, a sparsely populated system with only a few dozen small space stations and no planetary settlements. You're asleep in your bunks when the room comms blare to life:

"Space Dogs! Prepare for boarding! Capeks have invaded the warp bubble and are speaking in gibberish – likely snapped. Repel and Defend!"

A moment later there's the heavy sounds of metal hitting metal, and the speakers crackle and the voice changes to an oddly modular one.

"Stop your engines. You are holding treasures which properly belong to our masters; The Creators. Once we obtain them, The Creators will finally come back to us!"

The capek Advance Team will board the ship guns blazing, firing at the PCs and the alanny crew both. Where the capeks come on should be randomized by rolling a 1d6.

1	Through rear corridor
2	Port (left) side near D
3	Starboard (right) side near D
4-6	Through ceiling docking bay in F

The capeks will need to come through in a small group each round as any opening is only one square (2m) wide and will end their movement phase in the same square, though they can run or spend an Action to move again to spread out.

The capek Advanced Team will do a cursory search of the ship and kill any they come across, but mainly they're heading for K to search the cargo.

If the Advance Teams' morale breaks – they will run back to their ship.

Advance Team (Lead 8/Iron 4.75):

4 Comite – Servitor – rifle

4 Comite – Servitor – pistol/sword

2 Artifex – Construction Worker (Thug 1)

1 Grunt - Legionnaire Model BR-4 (Thug 1)

Break TN: 13 (from Grunt)

Reserve Team (Lead 8.5/Iron 5)

2 Comite – Servitor – rifle

2 Comite – Servitor – pistol/sword

1 Grunt – DX-1 (Lineman) (Thug 1)

1 Shock Trooper - Legionnaire Model A-2 (Elite 3)

Break TN: 17 (from Shock Trooper)

Design Note: The two teams of capeks are intended to each be pretty tough fights for 3-4 level 1 PCs. If you have a crew of only 2 players or more than 4, or if the PCs are higher level, you should likely increase or decrease the number of comite in the encounter(s).

While individually the comite aren't very tough, the sheer number of them can prove challenging, especially if the PCs lack any auto-fire weapons and/or they're caught out in the open under a barrage of gunfire.

GM Note: Make sure that you watch for the capeks breaking, especially the Advance Team. None of the capeks are true leaders with high Break TNs, and even the legionnaires have Break TNs of just 13/17 for the two teams respectively. And if they go down the rest of the capeks have a Break TN of just 11.

GM Warning: If this is their first session and they are still learning the system, make sure that the PCs know to take cover. If they stand in the open they will probably die horribly.

Capek Ship

The PCs may choose to detach the sparrowhawk by using demolition charges etc. to push the sparrowhawk away. If they do, the sparrowhawk will fire its railgun at the cargo ship for 3 SPR (Space Combat Rounds) before the warp bubbles delink and the sparrowhawk is no longer a threat. The sparrowhawk has no torpedoes one board for the torpedo launchers.

If the PCs move to separate the ships, make sure they are aware of the risks. If one of the PCs has Piloting skill equal or above Wip's +3 then they would want to take over the bridge to have the cargo ship take less damage.

The PCs can choose to board the capeks' sparrowhawk, both to keep it from being a future threat and potentially take the sparrowhawk as a prize.

The capek ship is packed with capeks – which **********they can do due to not needing to eat/breath. The reserve team will be on the ship in cargo bay with the legionnaire in the cockpit. If they haven't been called over to the cargo hauler during any fight with the PCs (notably if the PCs attack the advance team during A3 above) then they will be caught largely unawares.

Any survivors of the advance team which break and run will run past them, alerting them to the combat. In addition, the legionnaire will come down out of the cockpit and attempt to regroup any stragglers. As this takes 1 minute, there will only be enough time if the PCs take a breather or if the PCs spend a lot of time hesitating/discussing before going into the capek ship.

Most of the reserve team will be in Section D of the capek's sparrowhawk, with the A-2 legionnaire in Section G. Any retreating members of the advance team will run to A or B. The DX-1 is in E as the only place it can be comfortable and it has been modified to be its charging station.

In combat the reserve team with rifles will stick to the corners for cover while those with swords and the artifex will look for the chance to close to melee range, though they won't get out of cover if they can't get to melee range after spending an Action to run.

When the reserve team breaks, if the A-2 legionaire runs, he will try to run back to the bridge and cause the generator to self-destruct. This will take him 4 rounds (12 seconds) to input. At that point it will take 20 rounds (1 minute) for the ship to explode. This can be stopped at any time by a TN 14/10 Hacking check, where the hacker takes 1 RAM damage if they roll below the secondary TN.

It is possible to Intimidate the A-2 into giving the code. If captured, it will tell the password after a full success Intimidation check with a TN of 9, but the PCs only get one attempt as they would need to wait one minute for a second attempt.

The PCs can also escape the sparrowhawk and separate the ships. The cargo ship will take 5 base damage with 1 less damage for each round since the ships separated due to the distance.

Conclusion

Location: Assuming that the PCs aren't killed, Wip's cargo ship will continue on to their destination – which is one jump beyond the current jump's destination. As the GM you can make this anywhere, but by default it is Equi, which can then tie into The Retrieval Job module as Wip recommends the PCs to his distant cousin Gik.

Conclusion A - Total Success:

If the PCs can defeat both teams of capeks, they can take the sparrowhawk as a prize.

Conclusion B - Capek Escape:

If the capeks are fought off of the cargo hauler but can escape on the sparrowhawk, they will pull away in panic rather than properly undocking. This will deal 1 point of damage to the sparrowhawk.

The sparrowhawk will then shoot the cargo hauler, but since the sparrowhawk is damaged it is now possible for the cargo hauler to board the sparrowhawk by winning the dogfight piloting check, though it will take some good rolling due to the much higher maneuverability bonus on the sparrowhawk as well as the penalty die for boarding without the Boarding ability. But it is the only way for the PCs to survive as the capeks will keep firing long after the cargo hauler is destroyed.

Payment/Spoils:

The amount Wip will give the PCs will change depending upon the damage to his ship and cargo.

By default Wip will give the PCs the base payment of $20k per crewmember for acting as garrison. If the PCs are able to take out the capeks without any damage to his ship or cargo, he will give them an additional $200k (total – not per crewmember). If there is 1-3 points of hull damage to the ship and no cargo damage he will give them a bonus of $120k. If there is 4+ hull damage but the ship can still jump and relatively little cargo was damaged, Wip will give the PCs a bonus of $50k, though he'll complain about the damage.

If the PCs are able to capture the sparrowhawk, they can claim it for their own. It will likely be damaged by the fighting and definitely not in good shape due to the poor maintenance of the snapped capeks.

In addition to any damage that the sparrowhawk may have taken in the fighting, it will take an additional $30k to retrofit it for human use. As it is, any non-capeks will take -2 on all skill checks for the ship. Finally, the snapped capeks did not do proper maintenance. While no damage has happened yet, the ship has already taken 6 jumps without maintenance, so even taking the ship on to Equi without piggybacking on the cargo hauler has a decent chance of something going wrong.

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