

***GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM1***

# **GuildSpace Setting**

***By Blake Mobley***

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends, many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

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**From Blake Mobley to:**

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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change thought the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

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# Overview

Hey, Killiam, if normal history gets a little slow, jump to the Super History at the end.

You will also find a map of Known Space at the end of this booklet. Referring to it will help as you read through this booklet.

This booklet is intended to introduce players to the Guild Space™ Setting. Details on playing the game are found in the other booklets.

Welcome to GuildSpace, located in the Trinium Scape. I am Jodar, your guide to the wonders of this new universe. You have been chosen to help mold the reality of my Scape, and to aid me in the coming struggles against the enemies of the Guild and galactic civilization.

This brief introduction is all you need to begin adventuring in this exciting new realm. Below is a general overview of GuildSpace, its races, nations, conflicts and dangers. These are all discussed in much greater detail later in this book, but for now all you need to do is read the following.

## GUILDSPACE

The race you know as humans are known in this Scape as Anthropos. Far advanced from ordinary humans, Anthropos fled their home world of Url over 3000 years ago, and spread out into the galactic arm, creating several major stellar nations. The most prominent of these are the Guild, an alliance of democratic, peaceful nations whose main objective is to explore and unite the galaxy; The Company, a corporate state with no true borders, but financial interests in almost every corner of Anthropos space; and the Arthirian Sphere, a militaristic state which once fought a destructive war with the Guild and lost.

The Guild is more than an alliance of Anthropos worlds. Currently, hundreds of alien species have joined the Guild, some inhabiting a single planet, others controlling dozens of star systems. Within Guild boundaries are numerous small, independent states as well, some Anthropos, some alien, some unknown.

Major allies of the Guild include the Draca, a ruthless but honorable empire of powerful reptilians, and the Zin-Shee, or psi-cats, a feline race possessing awesome mental powers.

Beyond Anthropos space lie several alien states. The largest of these, known simply as The Empire, is a totalitarian state ruled by the alien Katha, with hundreds of subject races, including Anthropos. The Empire and Guild fought a war several centuries ago, and since then

the demilitarized zone between them has been administered by the Arthirians.

## COMMON PLAYER FACTIONS

You and your GM will need to determine your current roll within the guild. Are you a member of the elite, secret house of Dha; a covert member of the Rangers patrolling the nooks and crannies of space; or Mercenaries, ready for any challenge and quick to adapt to new situations?

## THE HOUSE OF DHA

*Cha-ma... I am a warrior of the House of Dha. Enemies crumble at my glance, allies know the meaning of invincibility. History records my every breath.*

— Dha Proverb

In 2889 a.h., the Guild formed the House of Dha. This secret organization was to become the best trained and equipped military group ever assembled. Hundreds of races are represented in the ranks of Dha, but six races make up the main body: Anthropos, Calemora, Draca, Kryll, Shanask, and Zin-Shee.

The house's base is located on the proto-planet Dha Prime, deep within the Acropolis, a stellar nursery on the outer rim of GuildSpace. The planet is orbited by the six Guardian Moons, one for each of the house's major races. The proto-planet's only city is called Glory, a vast domed settlement containing the barracks, warehouses and training facilities for the House of Dha.

Although ostensibly formed to combat the threat of the Empire and their new super-soldiers, the primary objective of the House of Dha is to investigate, engage, and eliminate all threats to the Guild, by whatever means necessary.

Dha soldiers know that they exist among the elite. They are trained and conditioned to face the ultimate threat, and live for the chance to leap to action as the first and last defense for the unified races of the Guild.

Recently, reports have begun to filter out of The Empire that imperial scientists have developed a new type of "super soldier," an invincible warrior which the Imperials intend to use in a renewed invasion of GuildSpace.

For many years, Guild leaders have acknowledged the need for an elite force to deal with The Empire, as well as the other unknown powers and dangers of the galaxy. The reports of the new so-called "Imperial Deathstalkers" caused the Guild to ultimately form the House of Dha.

Dha warriors are the elite of the galaxy, the finest warriors, Psionicists, techs, martial artists, and so on.

Intended to counter the new Imperial Deathstalkers, and to deal with other threats both within the Guild and beyond, the House of Dha was awarded a harsh protoplanet (dubbed “Dha Prime”) deep inside the Acropolis stellar nursery, where training commenced. Today, the existence of the House of Dha and the location of Dha Prime remain largely secret.

Many races joined the House of Dha, but the bulk of membership was made up of the four major (or “guardian”) races. Of these, the Anthropos, Draca, and Zin-Shee have already been discussed. In addition to these three, Dha selected the Calemora, a race of primitive yet awesomely powerful warriors who can turn their very bodies into deadly weapons.

Four moons were transported to Dha Prime, each to serve as headquarters for one of the Dha guardian races. Months passed, and slowly, the elite military force which was to become Dha took shape. Now, the House of Dha is finally ready to begin operations.

If you choose to become members of the House of Dha, you will be among the galaxy’s elite. Even at your lowest rank, your powers and abilities are far beyond the finest warriors the Guild has to offer. Your ultimate loyalty is to the Guild, and to the preservation of the society which it has created. You will stand against anyone who threatens the peace of the Guild, and lay down your very life if necessary.

You may choose to play an Anthropos – the highly evolved descendants of modern humans. Your technological skill and luck are legendary. You may be a Calemora – the most dangerous martial artists in the galaxy, capable of manipulating your own body through will alone. Perhaps you are a Draca – grim, brooding, reptilian warriors who live to fight and fight to live. Or you could be a Zin-Shee – agile and awesomely talented with *Psionics* and mental abilities.

In addition, your GM may allow you to play two other, mysterious races, the Kryll and the Shanask, whose presence is yet to be felt in GuildSpace.

In the chaotic realms of Known Space, friends are rare and enemies are legion. Beyond the borders of the Guild, The Empire schemes and plans, pirates prepare for raids, and hostile aliens expand their spheres of influence. Who knows what threats to the Guild may arise? All you know is that you are Dha, and it will be your job to face them.

## HOUSE OF DHA

Currently may become members of the House of Dha, the secret elite military unit of the Guild

## CHAPTER INFORMATION

Now turn to the chapter section of the *Character Manual*. You need to choose which Chapter your character is going to join. A list of chapters is provided at the beginning of the chapter section of the *Character Manual*. Make sure you choose a chapter which accepts your race.

Chapter information is recorded as follows.

### Back Sheet

1. **DOSSIER:** Record the chapter you selected on your dossier.
2. **ALLOWANCE:** Record the rank - 0 allowance in the allowance balloon of your credit card.
3. **FORMULA:** Now record you allowance on your credit card’s formula balloon.
4. **BONUS:** Most chapters give a bonus equal to the chapter’s rank - 0 allowance to help equip new recruits. Record any bonus in the white space of your credit card. These are credits which your character has and can spend.
5. **BENEFITS:** Chapters provide members with special financial benefits such as half-price for certain equipment, access to the bio-pool, free equipment, etc. Record these in the notes box beneath your credit card. Specifics on leasing and mission allowance can be found in *RB, miscellaneous, guild currency*.
6. **ATTRIBUTES:** All attributes listed under benefits should be increased by +1d.

### Front Sheet

The effects of specialization are summarized at the beginning of the chapter section of the *Character Manual*. The details on how to record skills, and enhancements can be found in the abilities-learning section of this book.

1. **SPECIALIZATION:** Record all bonus skills and enhancements in the skills and enhancements tables on your character record sheet (be sure to shade in the skill’s IC box). Then write down your chapter’s name in the notes area and list all other skills and enhancements under the name (for later use).
2. **DOSSIER:** Find your chapter’s 0 - rank title and record this in the provided “Title” space at the top of your character record sheet. Now flip over to the back and record the information in your character’s dossier.

## THE RANGERS

Operating throughout GuildSpace and far beyond are the often misunderstood Rangers. Made up of many races, the bulk of which is Anthropos and Zin-Shee, the

Rangers are driven by a singular purpose, which only they know and understand.

Rangers operate in small teams of 2 to 8 individuals. Their primary covenant is to serve and protect the weak and those in need. Rangers do not wage war and avoid the major conflicts of Known Space. However, if a planet is under their protection, whether willingly or not, and it is threatened, the rangers will soon swarm like a hundred fanatic killer bees. Even the major forces of GuildSpace think twice before openly assaulting an area under Ranger protection, as Rangers use relentless guerilla tactics, are almost fanatically devoted to their cause, and never ever, ever stop! What they may lack in numbers and ship classes, they make up for with tenacity.

Rangers walk the dark areas of the universe, quietly going about their tasks to what secret end, only they know. They are masters at blending into nearly any region and prefer to perform their deeds, quietly, unobtrusively, tweaking the fabric of time with small pinches here and there.

## FREELANCERS

The term, freelancer, generally has a bad connotation. Ruffians for hire for any purpose. Scoundrels, thieves, even criminals make up their ranks. With loyalty to no one but themselves and about as much honor as there is water on Calemor. And, this perception is sometimes true. However, many freelance bands are made up of small teams of ex-military, ex-Dha, or other more noble groups. Many a mercenary group are local legends, known for their elite capabilities and are sought out by rules and diplomats to serve as bodyguards or secure curriers. Even the military houses rely on Mercs, as mercenaries are often called, to perform covert operations which need a high degree of deniability.

Freelancers have served side by side with Dha, Rangers, and nearly every other faction known to exist. Mercs get to see more and do more than any other group.

Freelancers are the most fluid and mobile group in GuildSpace as they don't hold allegiance to any but themselves. They can accept any commission they choose and can travel to any place they want without supervisors or some "code" shackling them.

Face it, a great Dha team may have a medal or two, a great Ranger will humbly remain quiet, but a great Freelancer will become a legendary hero known by all and loved by... some.

## Timeline of Known Space History

All dates are considered a.h. (after holocaust), unless listed as b.h. (before holocaust).

**-100,000-10,000 b.h:** Massive alien states grow and prosper, including the Aerolk.

**-4,000 b.h:** Galaxy-wide conflict apparently wipes out most interstellar civilizations. Aerolk depart Known Space, leaving behind vast technological wonders and deadly traps.

**-2,500 b.h:** Empire founded by humanoid Katha. Emperor Rallykk I leads imperial starships against neighboring states.

**-1,000 b.h:** First Anthropos spaceflight.

**0:** Nuclear holocaust destroys Anthropos civilization on Url. Numerous refugees escape into space in a great migration known as "The Scattering."

**175:** Empire plunged into civil war as numerous claimants to the imperial throne vie for dominance. Known as "The Reign of the Thousand Emperors."

**ca. 200:** Founding of Arthirian Sphere by Anthropos militarists.

**ca. 250:** Founding of The Company

**450:** Dracan Holding founded.

**ca. 505:** Founding of the Galactic Union of Intelligent Life-forms and Devices (the Guild).

**515:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy founded by alliance of noble females. Expansion into surrounding space begins immediately.

**691:** The centuries-long imperial civil war ends with the militaristic Krrang dynasty in firm control. Another century passes as the Krrangs consolidate their power and stamp out the last strongholds of rival power.

**705:** Dracan Holding utterly destroys the Ixxeen, their only rivals for dominance in the region.

**805:** War between Sphere and Guild begins.

**818:** Siege of Guild home.

**820:** Arthirians defeated and driven back across frontier.

**900-1700:** Peaceful expansion of Guild frontiers. Arthirian Sphere wracked by social and economic upheavals.

**1116:** The imperial tradition of “honored slavery” in which slave races are given favored status and influential positions, is instituted.

**1260:** Draca/Zin-Shee war begins. The war continues, at varying levels of intensity, for over two centuries.

**1476:** Draca deem Zin-Shee “worthy” of survival after two centuries of conflict.

**1775:** Skrak and Kurg raids begin throughout the Guild. They continue, varying in frequency and ferocity, to this day.

**1812:** Expanding Zin-Shee Matriarchy invades planet Calemor despite disastrous meteor storm which badly damages their invasion fleet. Beginning of the Blood Feud.

**2245:** Dark Alliance founded by outlaws, pirates, and anti-Guild planets. Several major raiding campaigns take place in the first century of the alliance’s existence.

**2333:** Massive Dark Alliance raid on industrial world of Carivora. Battle continues for months, leaving world blasted and devastated.

**2520:** Zin-Shee move capital from Sheapa to Seril in order to better manage war with Calemora.

**2602:** Guild ships encounter outposts of The Empire.

**2610:** Imperial slave-ambassadors deliver ultimatum to Guild home. Guild refuses to surrender.

**2611-2690:** Empire invades Guild. Unbroken string of Guild defeats.

**2632:** Arthirian Sphere suffers probing attacks by Empire, and begins channeling supplies and weapons to the Guild.

**2702:** Imperial forces unexpectedly withdrawn. Peace talks begin between Empire and Guild.

**2705:** After intense negotiations, demilitarized zone (aka “The Zone”) is established, and Arthirians given policing duties.

**2712-75:** Guild reclaims and rebuilds worlds devastated by war.

**2804:** Guild starships discover Calemor, observe the Blood Feud.

**2808:** Guild intervenes in Blood Feud, imposing settlement on both sides. Calemora and many Zin-Shee join Guild.

**2856:** Provided with information by the Zin-Shee, Anthropos and Calemoran diplomats make contact with the Draca.

**2860:** After intensive negotiations, discussions and displays of force, Guild and Dracon Holding sign treaties of peace. Draca begin to appear throughout the Guild.

**2885:** First reports of new imperial warriors (aka “Death Stalkers”) begin to appear.

**2889:** Guild establishes House of Dha.

**2891:** Construction of Glory commences upon Dha Prime and placement of four “Guardian Moons” is completed.

**2893:** Mysterious insectoid race called Kryll invades Guild. House of Dha fleet intervenes. Shanask arrive at Dha Prime, help to end hostilities. Kryll and Shanask accepted into Guild (See *Shakna – Assault on the Hive*, the first Guild Space™ Setting adventure).



# History of the Guild

Galactic civilization is unfathomably old. Long before the Anthropos' ancestors were even arboreal insectivores, some legends tell of titanic battles with dark forces from other realities, the rise and fall of mighty civilizations, and powerful, godlike entities. Occasionally, strange devices and indecipherable writings are found, or fragments of ancient myths speak of an age of heroes and war, or of chaos and darkness. From this fog of myth and legend emerged the civilized galaxy which we know today.

## **BEFORE THE GUILD**

Pre-Guild civilization is difficult to piece together, for only a few hints remain of what once was. As it is impossible to separate fact from fiction in these ancient chronicles, most scholars place them in the realm of folklore, and concentrate on the most ancient known civilization, the Aerolk.

Occupying a region coreward and counterspinward of the Guild, the Aerolk are known to have developed a highly advanced civilization which flourished over 100,000 years ago. The Aerolk's appearance and biology are a mystery, for no portrayal of them survived their disappearance.

As to why the Aerolk disappeared, no one can say either. Their legacy lives on, however, in the dangerous reaches of Aerolk space. Here, it is said, many of the Aerolk's incredible tools, devices, weapons, starships and other artifacts may be found by those daring enough to journey there.

Unfortunately, Aerolk Space is one of the most dangerous regions of the Known Space. Laden with time-space anomalies, this region is also full of traps and devices apparently left behind by the Aerolk, either to guard their worlds in anticipation of their return, or to keep their galactic tomb undisturbed. Few who journey to this area have returned to tell of it, or to bring back the wondrous devices of super-science which may still be found there.

## **THE BEGINNING**

The universe we know today began in the flames of atomic war and genocidal destruction. The Anthropos home world of Url, long the scene of global conflict and danger, finally exploded in the ultimate atomic war. Survivors of the conflict were few, and each group was driven by the desire to avoid the mistakes of the past.

In ones and twos, or in groups of a few dozen, the survivors came together. A few crawled up from the devastated surface of Url. Others came from Url's handful of offworld colonies. Slowly, the ones and twos became tens and hundreds, and the hundreds became thousands. There was nothing left for them in the Url system now. With heavy hearts and grim determination, the survivors turned toward the distant stars. The Scattering had begun.

Many different groups left Url in the decade following the Holocaust. All were bound for the limitless reaches of space, and the promise of new worlds and new homes. Most didn't make it. Crude stardrives failed, stranding survivors in the interstellar void. New worlds proved hostile or completely incapable of supporting life. Conflicts broke out between factions, wiping out entire communities. Of the handful who escaped from Url, only a smaller handful actually reached habitable worlds.

Within two centuries, several distinct factions of humanity had emerged. Those militaristic humans who believed that the great holocaust could have been avoided by maintaining strength and vigilance found their way to the world now known as Arth, from which they spread out, absorbing the smaller human colonies and alien worlds which surrounded them. The Arthirian Sphere was formed in 200 a.h.

In 250 a.h. the descendants of the corporate powers created a mercantile empire called simply The Company, which directly controlled few worlds, but had financial connections throughout human space.

## **THE GUILD**

Other small human alliances, states and individual worlds existed as well, scattered throughout Known Space. Some of these were idealized, utopian communities which tried to live in accordance with theoretical social models or religious philosophies. Others were true democracies or republics. Still others were ruthless dictatorships, or pirate alliances which lived by raiding neighboring worlds.

As time passed, many of the worlds settled by the idealists, artisans, philosophers or theologians found they had much in common, and as the science of space travel and interstellar communication advanced, their contacts increased. Faced with the threat of the expanding Arthirian sphere, and the unknown threats which might lie beyond Known Space, they banded together into a formal alliance, with each major faction represented as an official "House."

Soon, the Guild (originally an acronym for "Galactic Unification of Intelligent Life-forms and Devices," but soon simply "The Guild") had been established in 505 a.h.

Guild members were expected to abide by several simple, but significant, laws. Member worlds were free to deal with internal affairs in any way they chose, so long as their citizens retained basic freedoms such as free speech, democratic representation, and a free press. In exchange, member worlds received economic support, technical assistance, disaster relief, and military defense. Military house members were trained for loyalty to the Guild, but such houses were not allowed to participate in the government, lest the Guild degenerate into the militaristic totalitarianism of the Arthirian Sphere.

Even before alien contact, Guild leaders had made provisions for non-Anthropos membership. Many alien races were encountered, some hostile, some neutral, some friendly. Provisions in Guild law had been made to provide for alien biologies and social systems, and each race was considered for membership on an individual basis. All were still expected to have free and open societies, but obvious differences in physiology and social development were always taken into account. Soon, over a hundred species could claim membership in the Guild.

## THE ARTHIRIAN INVASION

Conflict between the major branches of human civilization was inevitable. As GuildSpace grew to rival the Arthirians in size and power, the rulers of Arth saw them as a threat to both themselves and the glorious future of humanity. Democratic traditions were seen as weakness, and the full participation of all Guild citizens in GuildSpace governance was seen as a fatal flaw. Urgently, and in total secrecy, the Arthirians planned a war of conquest against the Guild.

Fortunately, the Guild houses had anticipated such a move. Spies within the Arthirian Sphere warned Guild leaders that something was up, and so the initial onslaught, in 805 a.h., did not take Guild forces completely by surprise.

All the same, it was a furious conflict. Sphere naval forces broke through the Guild's frontier defenses in several places, shattering the few small flotillas which could be rushed to the scene. The sacrifice of these fleets bought the Guild time, however, allowing the beleaguered alliance to marshal its forces and attempt to blunt the Arthirian advance.

Unfortunately for the Guild, the Arthirians had planned their campaign well. Their fleets advanced with amazing swiftness, slipping through a previously uncharted wormhole into the heart of GuildSpace. Guild home itself was threatened and with it, the entire Guild. The Guild fleet threw up a hasty defense of the Guild's prime world and a prolonged siege began.

These were the Guild's darkest days. Months of maneuvering and skirmishing followed, with Guild home totally cut off from the rest of GuildSpace. A spirited defense, coupled with hit-and-run raids against Arthirian supply lines and bases, kept the invaders off balance and forestalled their final offensive. Both sides knew, however, that the reckoning was coming.

With supply lines overextended and morale deteriorating, Arthirian leaders were forced to press the attack. Preceded by a light screen of corvettes and in system fighters, the Arthirian battleships advanced toward the interior of the Guild's home system.

Casualties were heavy. An entire flotilla was decoyed into the rings of Kargyr where their sensors functioned poorly, and was wiped out by Admiral Hamor's strike cruisers. Other ships were damaged by mines and small, one-man fighters intended to distract, rather than destroy. With the advance behind schedule and losses mounting, the Arthirian admirals redoubled their pace and prepared to bombard Guild home into submission.

This was the moment the defenders had been waiting for. In their haste, the Arthirians had bypassed Guild home's sister planet, Raxon, without a thorough scan. Hidden beneath its surface in vast caverns was the bulk of the Guild fleet. Rising from its surface, the smaller, lighter Guild ships swept down upon the clumsier Arthirian battleships, inflicting heavy losses before the invaders could maneuver around to respond.

The skies of Great House were lit up that night as the two fleets struggled, fought and died. In this desperate battle, where Admiral Kuranna broadcast a heroic call for resistance against the Sphere and herself died on the bridge of her flagship, the cruiser *Defiant*, the Guild fleet earned the title "House of Defiance."

Bloodily repulsed, the Arthirian fleet limped back for home with less than a third of their original numbers. The Sphere never again attempted an invasion of the Guild, although skirmishes and low-level conflict along the frontier continued for years. The Guild, badly battered but still alive, took steps to collapse the uncharted wormhole and increase its border defenses.

The first major conflict between humans in space had been a near-catastrophe, from which neither side emerged as a clear winner. The only real victor was The Company, which had managed to supply both sides while remaining scrupulously clear of real conflict.

## THE EMPIRE

Years passed. The race of humanity evolved through genetic engineering and superior medical science, eventually becoming the advanced species known as the Anthropos. The Guild's frontiers steadily expanded, while internal conflict and the massive economic

disruption caused by the failed invasion kept the Arthirians occupied.

The days of open hostility between Guild and Sphere ended, however, and the expanding Guild slowly crept around the Arthirian frontier, threatening to completely surround its old enemy. Nearly 2000 years of relative peace ensued. However, in 2602 a.h., a danger far greater than the Arthirians was encountered.

Exploring spinward, Guild scouts came upon a heavily fortified frontier. Guild ships which approached were fired upon; some were destroyed – The Empire had been discovered.

The humanoid Katha controlled this totalitarian state in the person of the mysterious Emperor and his equally unknown “Council of State.” Numerous subject races also served The Empire, with various levels of status depending on their importance and length of servitude. Driven by an intense xenophobia and the arrogance of absolute rulers, the Katha had little tolerance for the Guild’s philosophy of peaceful coexistence.

In 2610 a.h. imperial slave-ambassadors delivered a stark message to the guild – submit or face destruction. The myriad races of the Guild, despite their different appearances and biology, had one thing in common. All preferred even a doomed struggle to docile submission. The Guild’s answer was swift and unequivocal: If the Katha wish to make us their slaves, let them try.

Even the centuries of training and rearming which had followed the Arthirian conflict scarcely prepared the Guild for the sheer ferocity of the imperial onslaught. Endless legions of slave-troops swept over outlying Guild worlds, imperial warships laid waste to cities and continents from orbit, and quarter was neither asked nor given.

In the face of such an attack, the Guild had no choice but to fall back with heavy losses. A few triumphs highlight the first decade of conflict, but all were merely honorable defeats and skillful withdrawals. The evacuation of the planet Hralla in the face of an advancing imperial armada, for example, is one such small success, in which a small Guild flotilla led by the dreadnaught *Dauntless*, held an entire Imperial fleet at bay for several days before being completely annihilated. “Remember the *Dauntless!*” was to become a rallying cry to the Guild military and all those who opposed The Empire.

The second and third decade of the conflict saw little change, but slowly, Guild strategy began to change. Utilizing guerrilla tactics, Guild forces managed to delay and frustrate imperial commanders, slowing the pace of their advance somewhat.

In 2632, imperial forces encountered the Arthirian Sphere, and after several sharp exchanges, withdrew their probing forces and concentrated upon the Guild,

which imperial commanders considered more vulnerable.

Realizing that The Empire would turn on the Sphere once the Guild was destroyed, the Arthirians finally began to funnel ships, weapons, equipment and supplies to their former enemies. Publicly, however, they remained neutral, hoping to gain favored status with The Empire should the Guild be defeated.

Despite isolated successes, after almost a century of conflict, the Guild seemed doomed. Imperial forces were still strong, and the handful of Guild victories had served only to delay the inevitable. Some Guild members now openly spoke of capitulation, to spare the worlds further tragedy and bloodshed. Whatever happened, it seemed that the Guild would eventually be conquered, one way or another.

It was then, in 2702 a.h., as the Guild steeled itself for the final conflict, that the impossible happened. Imperial forces unexpectedly pulled back, and unilaterally declared a cease-fire. Why this happened remains a mystery, but the most common theory is that The Empire had met another, more dangerous foe, and needed the forces to fight elsewhere.

It took another three years to work out the final terms of peace. Forces were pulled back, leaving a 500 light year-wide strip of uncontested star systems. The Arthirians, who, despite their covert support for the Guild, had remained officially neutral, were given control over the demilitarized zone between the Guild and Empire, and citizens of all three states were allowed free access to the region.

Today, the area, simply called “The Zone,” exists as a rich trading region in which numerous states and races may freely coexist. The conflict with The Empire has scarcely ended, however, and imperial forces remain the greatest threat to the Guild’s freedom generally known.

## AFTER THE WAR

In the meantime, technological advances continued. Guild scientists perfected a method for widening existing wormholes, creating a Guild-wide “rapid-transit” system for emergencies. The only drawback to this system was the huge amount of energy required to widen the normally subatomic wormholes to a practical size, and the extremely brief period which they could be held open.

With The Empire blocking spinward expansion, Guild explorers turned coreward and counterspinward. Here, the richest period of Guild expansion began.

## THE BLOOD FEUD

Nearly two thousand years previously, in 515 a.h., the catlike Zin-Shee had built their own interstellar state – known as the Zin-Shee Matriarchy – based on the conquest of surrounding worlds and races. Originating in a region of space with few technological races, the Zin-Shee had had an easy time of it. In fact, many worlds voluntarily joined the Zin-Shee after seeing the advantages of doing so.

The Zin-Shee were not cruel conquerors, and generally treated subject worlds well. Rebellion was not tolerated, however, and worlds which tried to break away from the matriarchy usually found their major cities destroyed and their culture forcibly bombed back into pre-technological eras.

After centuries of unopposed conquest, the Matriarchy finally met its match, in 1812 a.h., in the Calemora, a low-tech warrior race inhabiting a huge, high-gravity world orbiting an ancient red giant star. Anticipating a relatively short conflict, the Zin-Shee gamely settled into their familiar conquest routine, expecting their superior technology to dazzle the simple primitives. Things went badly almost from the start – an unexpected meteor storm badly damaged the Zin-Shee invasion fleet, and to the surprise of the Zin-Shee commanders, the Calemora proved tough, resourceful, and highly prolific.

The siege of Calemor had lasted nearly ten centuries when the Guild arrived on the scene. So long had it gone on that the Blood Feud – as it was now known – had become central to both species' cultures, and few could imagine life without it (the Zin-Shee had gone so far as to relocate their capital world from Sheapa to Seril in order to better manage the war). The near-permanent state of war had devastated Calemor, but still, mysteriously, the powerful humanoids hung on.

The war degenerated into little more than a permanent draw, with the Calemora unable to dislodge the invaders, and the Zin-Shee incapable of finally pacifying the planet.

Cloaked Guild ships observed the conflict and saw in the Zin-Shee and Calemora valuable allies against the threat of The Empire. After a long debate, the Guild decided to intervene, forcibly ending the centuries-old conflict.

The Guild fleet and ground forces descended on Calemor in overwhelming force, catching the combatants entirely by surprise. In the face of such superior force, both the Calemora and Zin-Shee realized, albeit with great reluctance, that the war was finally over, and Calemor remained free.

Impressed by the fighting prowess of Guild warriors and by the benefits of Guild membership, the Calemora joined immediately, and turned to healing their

devastated planet. As for the Zin-Shee, Guild membership was a more complex matter. Several Zin-Shee worlds, mostly located near the Guild frontier, joined the Guild while maintaining dual membership in the Matriarchy. But, most of the Matriarchy held a thorough dislike of the Guild for ending the war so high-handedly and would not become and rejected Guild membership.

The alliance forces finally prevailed, and soon the Zin-Shee Matriarchy was a de-facto member of the Guild.

## OTHER ALLIES

Spinward of the Zin-Shee, bordering both Guild and The Empire, was another vast undiscovered alien state, that of the reptilian Draca. The Zin-Shee themselves informed the Guild of the Draca's existence, and emissaries were immediately dispatched to this strange and distant realm.

The Draca proved to be a fearsome race with awesome abilities. Highly militaristic and violent, they practiced genocide on those species which they encountered who proved "inferior," but treated races which proved their military skill as near equals. So far, only a handful of races had passed the test, including the Zin-Shee, whom the Draca had fought for over two centuries before deeming them "worthy."

Calemoran and Anthropos ambassadors were required to demonstrate their martial skill before the Dracan cyber-lords would even speak with them, and even then the Draca seemed standoffish and distant.

Demonstration of Guild military might forestalled a Dracan attack, and within a few years, treaties of friendship and non-aggression were signed between the two states. Many Draca were drawn to service within the Guild, as mercenaries, military officers, and adventurers. Today, the positive influence of the Guild seems to have mellowed the Draca's aggression somewhat, and no small number favor full membership in the Guild. All the same, the Draca remain a fearsome and mysterious race whom many Guild members distrust.

## THE HOUSE OF DHA

Recent events in The Empire have led the Guild Council to consider a new and radical change for the Guild military. Reports filtering out of The Empire indicate that imperial scientists are close to perfecting a new type of so-called "super soldier" to be used in renewed conflict against the Guild and other surrounding powers. The exact nature of these soldiers is not known – the best guess is that they are a new

type of genetically-engineered warrior, possibly trained to take more damage, ignore pain and never retreat. Whatever form these new warriors take, the reports were believable enough to spur the Guild to drastic action.

Ever since the first, disastrous confrontation with The Empire, Guild leaders had recognized the need for an elite, independent force of Guild warriors. However the Guild-Empire treaty did not allow for such a military base. But now it seemed that The Empire had taken the first step and the Guild could not afford to idly stand by. The Empire was not the only reason for this conclusion – many unknown forces obviously existed beyond GuildSpace, and a highly-trained and -motivated military force might be needed to deal with them. The reports of the new imperial super-soldiers were what finally compelled the Guild to found a new secret military house, the House of Dha.

This move in itself was quite unusual – the Guild military had, up to this point, been organized into large houses, with most military starships belonging to the House of Defiance. Organizing Dha as a separate house gave the new group full independence and freedom from petty regulation.

Dha is a very old Calemoran word meaning, roughly, “chosen.” Only the finest warriors, Psionicists, martial artists, techs, and so on, are selected for admission, and of these, over half fail to attain full Dha status.

The primary Dha races are collectively known as the Guardian Races – Anthropos, Draca, Calemora and Zin-Shee. Many other races have since joined Dha, but the Guardians still make up the bulk of membership.

The House of Dha is a single, independent military unit, with sufficient personnel and equipment to fill any needed role. Small, highly-trained groups of Dha warriors may be sent into enemy territory to gather information or destroy a set objective, or larger numbers of Dha may serve as elite fighting units, supplementing the military chapters of the House of Defiance. In this way, the Guild hopes to offset The Empire’s new and frightening military innovations, and to deal with new threats wherever they arise.

## TWO NEW ALLIES

*GMs Note: The following section contains information revealed in the first Guild Space™ Setting adventure, Shakna – Assault on the Hive, and should not be read by players before that adventure has been completed.*

As the House of Dha grew and evolved, and its warriors trained and became more experienced, the Guild was again plunged into crisis.

A strange, artificial planet, seemingly made entirely of organic material, appeared on the Guild frontier not

far from Dha Prime. Its occupants, deadly insectoid warriors first dubbed “bugs,” swarmed immediately to the attack, destroying several House of Defiance ships sent to contact them.

The House of Dha was the only other major military force nearby, and most of the house was marshaled to meet the threat. As Dha ships moved to the attack, a second incredible event occurred. Back on Dha Prime, where only a skeleton staff remained, a mysterious black planetoid appeared, positioned in orbit alongside the four Guardian moons.

A newly trained team of Dha warriors who remained on Dha Prime moved to investigate the new world. Its surface was featureless, save for a single, four-sided obelisk. From this structure emerged a cloaked being, which called itself Shakna. It was one of the Shanask, it said, an ancient race which had arrived to aid the Guild and head off conflict with the aliens.

The Dha warriors accompanied Shakna and managed to prevent war with the Kryll in a surprise twist of fate. Eventually, both Kryll and Shanask were accepted into the Guild and the House of Dha.

The Kryll carried a dire message – an alien horde of unknown origin was approaching the galaxy from the depths of intergalactic space. Several House of the Guide ships were dispatched to investigate. (The outcome of this tale will be told in the adventure: *Into the Horde Wall*.)

## THE PRESENT

Clearly, GuildSpace stands on the brink of a new era. With its alien members and allies, the Guild is a truly integrated state, and with its new military forces, GuildSpace may become a force to rival even The Empire itself. The Empire’s preparations seem geared to a renewal of conflict with the Guild, and any war between the two states is sure to be momentous.

Guild expansion continues, despite the presence of The Empire, the still largely unknown threat of the alien horde, and other obstacles. Other small states exist even within the boundaries of GuildSpace, and no one knows what alien states remain to be discovered. The universe remains a mysterious place, in which the Guild is an island of enlightenment and stability. What the future holds is anyone’s guess, but it is certain to be fraught with danger, as well as exciting possibilities.

# Major Races of Known Space

Hundreds of species inhabit GuildSpace, and thousands more dwell in the parsecs beyond. Six major races are most likely to be encountered by adventurers or members of the House of Dha. The following provides a brief overview of each race, its history, character, abilities, and so on. Following is an overview of several other races found in the Guild and beyond.

## ***Anthropos***

The race once called humans originated on the world of Url. Fleeing the effects of an atomic holocaust, they spread out into the galaxy, founding numerous small states, many of which eventually combined to form the major Anthropos states of today.

### **APPEARANCE**

Anthropos have evolved considerably from their human ancestors. Most stand over six feet and weigh around 200 pounds. Their musculature and skeletal system are more advanced than an ordinary humans, and have higher endurance. They have lost almost all body hair, retaining only head and (in males) facial hair. Anthropos' skin, hair and eye coloration show the same variation as their ancestors.

### **CLOTHING/ARMOR**

Most Anthropos cover their entire bodies with clothing, save hands and head, although this may vary according to climate and cultural norms. Hats and helmets are also worn frequently.

Jewelry is worn by both sexes as a symbol of wealth and status. Sometimes special pieces of jewelry, such as rings, collars, headbands or necklaces are worn to symbolize membership in a special group or fraternity.

Anthropos prefer to wear at least partial body armor in combat. Suits of powered armor with ranged weapons are favored, often used in conjunction with energy shields. Such equipment can make an ordinary Anthropos the equal of even a Calemora dragon in combat.

### **ATTRIBUTES**

A typical Anthropos can lift over 300 pounds of dead weight, sprint at speeds as high as 25 mph, and broad jump 20 feet or more. Despite Anthropos' impressive physique, their greatest assets are and always have been their Intelligence, curiosity and luck.

### **SENSES**

Anthropos' sight and hearing have also advanced considerably. Hearing range is nearly equal to that of a normal dog, while vision is as sharp as some birds. Taste is probably the Anthropos' most sophisticated sense; Anthropos meals are considered delicacies by many species. The weakest sense is that of smell, although some genetically-enhanced Anthropos are used in The Empire as intelligent tracking and hunting animals.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Anthropos communicate verbally, and over the centuries have developed many complex and subtle languages. Today, most Anthropos in the Guild know Guild speak, and a few can communicate psionically.

### **ACTIVITY CYCLE**

Most Anthropos are diurnal, although considerable variation exists, with some sleeping during daylight and staying awake all night. Most of this race prefer to sleep for eight hours and remain active for 16, though this cycle may change depending upon the cycle of the world they inhabit.

Anthropos eat two to five meals per day, usually immediately before and after sleep periods. They are omnivorous and prefer to consume liquids with meals and between.

### **POWERS**

The Anthropos species has no special powers, but their advanced technology makes up for the deficiency.

### **SCIENCES**

Anthropos are one of the most technologically advanced races in the Guild. They also have access to both Cybernetics and Biotechnology, and are extremely adaptable, developing technologies of other races and turning them to their own use.

## COMBAT

In battle, most Anthropos like to keep their distance and enhance personal safety. Long range energy weapons and armored vehicles are preferred, but armored infantry forms an important segment of Anthropos military technology.

There is no special code of honor among the Anthropos as a whole, although individual fighters or groups may have such things. In most cases, however, Anthropos have no qualms about annihilating an outgunned enemy; a “fair fight” is considered foolish by Anthropos strategists.

Open conflict is usually viewed as a last resort, usually the result of failure in communications. When given a choice, an Anthropos will usually sit down and negotiate rather than fight. Anthropos are notoriously reluctant to enter a fight in which they do not have the advantage.

## PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

As a race, the Anthropos are one of the most divergent and varied groups known, making it difficult to generalize. For the most part, Anthropos tend to be ruled by emotion, although rational thought and logic are valued. Most decisions, however, are made on the basis of what an Anthropos might call “gut feeling” rather than logic.

Anthropos are curious, inquisitive and, in many cases, downright nosy. Scientists love prying into things which are considered forbidden or imponderable. Explorers and adventurers love to push the boundaries of Known Space. Artists and writers strive to be different and unique.

Anthropos are a highly social race. While solitary individuals exist, most Anthropos cannot survive for long without contact with others. They offer and accept friendship readily, but committed friendship is a valuable thing. Most Anthropos even enjoy the company of aliens, once they have overcome initial surprise or revulsion at an alien’s appearance.

Emotions such as love can be intense – it is said that wars have been started over love. Over time, this intensive form of love usually evolves into a less intense form, which still may remain quite strong depending on the individuals involved.

Many marriage practices exist throughout Anthropos space. In some, the father is considered the provider and protector, while the mother is primarily responsible for child-rearing. In others, domestic duties and responsibilities are shared equally. In still other cases, females may be heads of households. As with

most other aspects of Anthropos society, the only consistent feature is inconsistency.

Race- and species-hatred is considerably less common in Anthropos than in their human ancestors. Ideally, an Anthropos feels that all races and species are equal, or at least hold the potential of equality, and that discrimination or hatred based on race or species is wrong.

In reality, of course, the same variations exist as have always existed. While there is little racism within the Anthropos species, most Anthropos feel that their species is superior to all others, although they do a good job of hiding this.

Like all other aspects of Anthropos society, their religion runs the gamut from out-and-out atheism to complex polytheistic cultures with ancient histories and endless pantheons. Individual Anthropos planets often have dozens of religions competing for followers, each claiming to be the one true faith. In the past, Anthropos society has been torn by bitter religious wars, but today most faiths are willing to live and let live.

## MOTIVATIONS

Individual motivations for Anthropos are typically the desire for financial independence, personal power or freedom, accumulation of possessions, self-preservation and curiosity.

Species motivations include the exploration of space, treaties with or the containment of other races, freedom of galactic travel, species preservation and technological advancement.

## Calemora

Calemoran history goes back over 25,000 years. Theirs is not a technological culture – they have no advanced tools, and their way of life has not changed in over 100 centuries. This does not, however, mean that Calemoran culture is stagnant. While other races improve their devices and technologies, the Calemora improve their bodies, becoming one of the most physiologically advanced species in GuildSpace.

## APPEARANCE

Outsiders tend to think that all Calemora look alike. While their overall physique is roughly similar, there are many individual differences, which anyone can learn with enough experience.

Calemoran skin tone varies from copper to brown. Hair is dark brown to black, fading to grey and white with age. Facial hair except eyebrows is absent, but older

Calemora can sometimes produce enough facial hair to grow a small, goatee-style beard (generally considered a mark of distinction and venerable age). Eyes are dark brown or black.

Calemora average 5'6" in height. The bones and muscles of a Calemora's arms and shoulders are just as massive as those of his legs. A Calemora's torso is a massive, v-shaped affair, supported by a thick, heavily muscled backbone. Calemora average 350 pounds, most of it muscle.

There are no external ears – not even holes.

Calemoran hearing is a slightly more complex process than it is for Anthropos, as described below.

All Calemora bear scars, tattoos, or brands. These are intended for personal decoration, and also to identify an individual's Catong and rank.

## CLOTHING/ARMOR

Calemora avoid clothing (except for a basic loincloth) for a variety of practical reasons – receptors on their chest and back enable them to hear. They believe in absolute physical perfection without artificial enhancement, and their natural *psychosomatic* abilities more than compensate for the lack of clothing. Additionally, many of their natural abilities such as communication, body alteration and martial arts would be restricted by clothing.

For similar reasons, armor is rarely worn.

*Psychosomatic* enhancement such as *rough skin* helps offset this disadvantage. Some forms of Calemora armor, designed to interfere only minimally with Calemoran abilities, are known, but even these are rarely used.

## ATTRIBUTES

For millennia, the Calemora have been perfecting their bodies. Their arms are just as strong as their legs, enabling a Calemora to lift half a ton, while extremely strong individuals can lift over 1500 pounds.

Mentally, Calemora seem underdeveloped in comparison to other races. They are generally considered rather "slow" and a bit on the dull side. However, the perfection of their bodies has provided the Calemora with a number of phenomenal abilities. Their strong Will Power enables them to withstand extremes which might kill lesser races, and allows for the incredible concentration required to perform *psychosomatics*.

## SENSES

A Calemora's senses are quite different from those familiar to an Anthropos. While Calemoran sensory

apparatus, such as eyes, mouth and nose, are located in familiar places, their use differs radically. The first, and most prominent sense, is sight.

Calemora see in the infrared spectrum. This means that Calemora see heat rather than light. Their brains do not process visible light, but instead perceive objects in shades of red, from white or pink (hot) to black (cold).

Vibrations and pressure changes are detected by receptors in the chest and back. These are processed by the brain as sound, giving Calemora as good as or better hearing than most Anthropos.

Finally, Calemora have been trained by years of combat and natural selection to ignore pain. They are aware of the sensation, and consider the pain simply as a warning that something is wrong, but even the most extreme pain will not distract a Calemora from the task at hand. They are extremely poor torture subjects for this reason, as imperial interrogators have discovered.

## COMMUNICATION

Ignorant individuals consider the Calemoran language to be simplistic and primitive. In fact, the exact opposite is true. The Calemoran language is simple and direct, as would be required while hunting, or in battle, or when excessive verbiage would be a handicap. Theirs is a deep, vibrating language, which has been compared to the soft beating of a drum. Consonant sounds are often modified by a soft aspirant, creating such words as "Dha."

When using Guild speak, Calemora also waste few words. Where a Zin-Shee in extreme formal mode might say "Hark unto my words, oh respected individual of higher rank! It is my duty to inform you that the thermal extremes of yonder igneous formation are such that they might cause severe discomfort should the aforesaid formation be manipulated...", a Calemora would simply say "Rock is hot!"

Among themselves, Calemora use verbal communications only when they are a considerable distance apart. When close, they utilize *psychosomatics* to alter their body temperature, with different degrees of heat representing various words and concepts. This form of communication – called "catongi" after the massive martial arts temples scattered across Calemor – is a highly subtle and effective language.

Certain points of the Calemoran body, known as chakra, are particularly sensitive, and are most often used for communication. If one or more of the chakras is covered, this does not prevent catongi communication, but it does slow it down.

Only a few Guild xenolinguists fully understand catongi, and these few admit that they have a lot to learn. Most deep and philosophical thoughts are communicated through the chakra, and are memorized



by old or particularly wise Calemora. Books and permanent records are unknown, save for stone carvings on Calemoran Catongs. This language is difficult for aliens to learn requiring infravision or infrared equipment.

## ACTIVITY CYCLE

Calemora do not sleep as Anthropos know it. The conditioning and modification of the Calemoran physiology did away with this requirement centuries ago. Calemora function at their peak, however, if they are allowed to rest and meditate for at least four hours per day. There are no visible ill effects if this meditation is not practiced, but those individuals who do not meditate regularly are known to have shorter lifespans than those who do.

Strict vegetarians, Calemora subsist on the fleshy, moist root-crops of their home world. Once a rich jungle world, Calemor was reduced to a desert during the Blood Feud, so that today only tough, spindly leaves exist above ground, while water and other nutrients are stored below. Calemoran roots are nutritious, and if eaten regularly, need for liquids is all but eliminated.

Away from their home world, the Calemora eat roots such as potatoes, carrots and radishes, but must consume liquids to make up for the deficiency.

## POWERS

The Calemora's greatest power is their mind-over-body control known as *psychosomatics*. This is the ability to mentally alter or control body functions at all levels. A master is able to accelerate cell repair, concentrate his immune system, break down tissues and transfer them to other parts of his body, enhance muscles, alter pigmentation, form natural body armor, and so on.

While it might seem that way, *psychosomatics* is not magic or mysticism of any kind. It is simply supreme neurological control of all bodily functions. Many animal species have the ability to reduce respiration, slow heartbeat, feign death, or control a wide variety of other functions. The Calemora have learned to control and harness this power.

## SCIENCES

Calemoran culture is naturally low-tech. Their mental capacity for technological work and understanding is lower than other races. The real reason for the limitations of their sciences, however, is their basic philosophy of existence.

Calemora shun technology, considering their bodies to be the ultimate machines. It is believed that with

proper preparation and concentration, any task can be accomplished. The use of any technological device is considered a betrayal of ancient codes of honor. A Calemora who undergoes cybernetic modification, for example, will become an outcast and be shunned by his fellows for the rest of his life.

Biotechnology is tolerated somewhat better, since it is an outgrowth of basic life processes. However, many Calemora shun it as well, considering it an abomination, and the exploitation of other living things.

## COMBAT

Although they are one of the most peaceful races in the galaxy (their thousand-year conflict with the Zin-Shee notwithstanding), they are also among its most formidable warriors. They feel no pain, display little or no emotion, are physically superior to most races, are trained masters of the martial arts, and possess powers which can turn their very bodies into deadly weapons.

Fortunately for other races, the Calemora's combat effectiveness is limited by several factors: their rigid code of honor, their quest for physical and mental perfection, and their disdain for advanced weapons and technology.

Calemora prefer a straight contest of unaided physical strength. At best, medieval level weapons may be used. Energy-enhanced weapons are usually looked down upon, but have gained some level of acceptance since they still require muscle power to work properly.

Simple thrown weapons are likewise shunned. A Calemora would rather run to fight an opponent hand-to-hand than waste time throwing a spear. Such items are sometimes used, and are not considered particularly dishonorable, but are not preferred.

Propelled weapons (those powered by more than physical strength) are thought of as highly dishonorable, and their use is considered grounds for a total loss of honor.

In battle, Calemora try to match their opponents, avoiding any unfair advantage. If an opponent has no thrown weapons, the Calemora will not use them, either. Should an enemy use dishonorable weapons, however, all rules are suspended, and a Calemora will fight as dirty as is necessary, so long as his own personal honor is not reduced. The worst mistake an opponent can make is to shoot a blaster at a Calemora.

Calemora do not take prisoners or practice torture. Prisoners are either slain (if considered dishonorable) or set free (if honorable).

## PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

For thousands of years, the Calemora strove to eliminate emotion from their lives. Although they still harbor some of the behaviors associated with emotion, they have for the most part succeeded. Calemora almost never show outward signs of emotion such as fear, anger, hatred, love, sadness, happiness, etc.

Despite this, Calemora are a gentle race – humble, introspective, and stern but merciful. They avoid instigating emotions in others, they are stubborn and goal-oriented, and retain a profound respect for life and other species.

What little leisure time the Calemora have is devoted to perfecting the body and training the mind. Meditation, martial arts kata, weapon practice – all honorable ways to pass time.

Calemora learn martial arts and philosophy in vast pyramidal structures called Catongs. Little is known about the internal arrangements of the Catongs or the Calemora's low, blocky cities, as outsiders are never allowed beyond highly-restricted visitors' areas.

While the emotional bonds of friendship familiar to such species as the Anthropos and the Zin-Shee are unknown to the Calemora, they may form close relationships based on mutual respect. Calemora in adventuring or mercenary groups are highly loyal and dependable, although they almost never show any real emotional attachment to their companions.

Virtually nothing is known about Calemoran family life. Families bearing the same name do exist, and form an important part of Calemoran life, but their actual organization is a mystery. So far, only male Calemora have been encountered. The concepts of grandfather, grandson, uncle and cousin have no meaning. Calemora call all elders "father," all of the same generation "brother," and all of younger generation "son." It is difficult, therefore, to determine whether an individual referred to as "father" is truly related or not.

Many theories have been advanced for the monosexual nature of Calemoran society, and none have explained it satisfactorily. Do the Calemora reproduce artificially, creating only males? This is completely contrary to their anti-technological bias. Do they reproduce asexually, with male Calemora "budding" off their parental unit? This has never been observed, and male Calemora have been observed at all life stages without such thing occurring. Many other hypotheses have been advanced and discarded, and the true nature of Calemoran family life remains a mystery. The Calemora themselves aren't talking, as to do so would be a severe breach of their code of honor (see below).

Within their species, the Calemora are obliged to respect all those with more honor or higher rank, and receive respect from those of lesser status. Their

relationships seem cold and impersonal to outworlders, but many who have spent time on Calemor claim that there is a vast and silent bond, almost like a hidden love, which binds the race. Despite their lack of emotion, Calemoran compassion and mercy is near-legendary, and their society remains one of the most peaceful in the Guild.

No one knows what religion, if any, the Calemora practice, although most suspect it is an ascetic faith whose rituals are performed in the secrecy of Calemoran Catongs, and is intimately related to Calemoran martial arts and body-control regimen.

## MOTIVATIONS

As may be guessed, personal ambition is suppressed within the Calemoran species. Motivations therefore spring from the desire to live within and help the group – to live honorably, die honorably, build honor for yourself and your Catong, learn, adapt, and improve yourself to benefit all. The most overriding and important motivation is to obtain perfect mental and physical balance and to attain perfection as a species.

Calemoran society is governed by a strict code of honor, known as the Code of the Dragon – so called since it was originally developed by the Dragon Catong. To disobey even one law is grounds for exile. An exiled Calemora is shunned by his own race – no one will acknowledge his existence. An exile is totally ignored, unless he attempts to commit a crime, in which case the sentence is instant death at the hands of any Calemora nearby.

The Code of the Dragon is as follows:

- You will not brag.
- You will not suggest or instigate retreat from battle unless you are the commander.
- You will only lie to protect or aid worthy causes greater than yourself.
- You will follow all commands of those ranking above you or resign your post.
- You will protect your family name and add honor to that name.
- You will protect Calemor and add honor to your species.
- You will not show emotion.
- You will spend your time listening, learning, and observing.
- Speaking, especially out loud, will convey information in as short and efficient a manner as possible.
- You will study and observe the ways of your Catong.

- You will honor your master and the other members of your Catong.
- You will not hear personal insults. However, insults to your species, family, Catong or post will be taken as a challenge to a personal duel.
- Time is irrelevant.
- Once you decide upon a course of action you will not waiver without good reason.
- You will not procrastinate.
- You will not allow substances to enter your body which reduce your physical perfection.
- You will maintain your body at peak physical condition.
- You will avoid unnecessary luxuries.
- You will personally own only that which you can carry.
- You will not complain.
- You will not speak of our ways with outworlders.

## Draca

These reptilian warriors are among the most fearsome in GuildSpace, and they increase their already-substantial combat abilities with cybernetic enhancements.

Although they are not officially part of the Guild, the Draca of the Holding were sufficiently impressed by Guild military might to sign treaties of peace and friendship. While Guild members are not allowed in the Holding, many Draca choose to serve and adventure in GuildSpace. Despite their lack of membership in the Guild, the Draca are one of the Guardian races of the House of Dha.

### APPEARANCE

The Draca resemble massive, bipedal lizards with thick, scaled skin, small, dagger like teeth and powerful claws on both hands and feet. A Draca's head is heavy and thickly muscled, often supplemented with savage-looking cybernetic armor and devices.

Draca have tails and, while this provides them with another formidable weapon, tradition usually demands its removal. Those Draca who retain their tails are often thought of as provincial and primitive.

Dracas' fearsome appearance is further enhanced by the use of cybernetic implants. Virtually every major body system may be replaced by machinery, and externally-visible items are often highly decorated and modified to appear more savage and formidable.

Dracan dedication to cybernetics is more than mere technological enhancement. The Draca see the fusion of flesh and machine as a route to ultimate perfection, and

pursue the science with single-minded (and, in the eyes of some, near-religious) fervor.

### CLOTHING/ARMOR

Most Draca wear only a loincloth and chest sash. This sash is decorated with tribal markings, and is also used to carry a Draca's personal awards, honors, rank emblems, and so on.

Armor must be personalized in the same fashion as cybernetic implants. External armor is generally disliked in any event, as endoskeletons, armored implants, energy shields, and the Draca's naturally tough hide help a warrior resist damage without it. Many Draca use armored suits in spite of this, but they are often difficult to fit.

### ATTRIBUTES

Dracan Fortitude and ability to withstand damage are legendary. When enhanced by cybernetic implants, Draca are nothing short of amazing.

Draca Will Power is also remarkable, and when combined with their durability, creates a being of incredible stubbornness, toughness and courage. Many tales tell of Draca warriors withstanding horrific damage and still managing to defeat their enemies. The cyberlord Ki-ta, for example, is said to have had one arm blown off and the other cut off by an attacking pirate lord. Ignoring the damage, he sang a tribal battle song, charged his enemy, chewed through his armor, and finished him with a swift bite to the neck. He then stood up and issued a challenge to any other opponents. Faced with such suicidal courage, the pirates immediately surrendered. Ki-ta then had cybernetic arms fashioned from the hull of the pirate ship he had captured. The arms are still proudly worn by his descendants.

### SENSES

Dracan natural senses are equivalent to, or less than most other races. Vision is in the normal visible spectrum, but is monochromatic, like a black-and-white video monitor. Hearing is somewhat dull, as Dracan tympanic membranes are small and heavily protected with bone. The tongue is used for both taste and smell, neither of which are exceptional.

None of these factors is a handicap to the Draca, however, for limited senses are easily modified through the use of Cybernetics, making their sensory apparatus equal or superior to most other GuildSpace races.

## COMMUNICATION

An Anthropos can only speak Dracan for about a half-hour before going completely hoarse. Dracan is a harsh, guttural language with few soft sounds. Dracas' rigid lips and narrow tongue require that most sounds be made in the throat; most syllables consist of a single explosive consonant followed by a deep or grinding vowel sound. Examples are Da, De, Gu, Ge, Mak, Ta and Tak.

Dracan is always spoken loudly and with arrogant authority. Virtually every statement in the Dracan language can be interpreted as a challenge. Lesser beings have been known to flee in terror after a Draca simply introduces himself in his native language.

As an example of this practice, a Draca who wishes to know another's identity will customarily say something like, "Who are you, who stands before me as an equal, why do you deserve such status, and why should I not kill you for your presumption?"

In the past, Draca expected outworlders to respond in a like manner ("I am Shar, warrior of the Guild. I have slain many enemies and have led warriors in battle. Attempt to slay me, and you yourself shall die!"), and they ignored or attacked those who did not reply properly. Since contact with the Guild, however, many Draca have come to tolerate outworld practices, and are satisfied with more traditional introductions.

Draca may also communicate simple emotions and commands through hissing. These hissing sounds are apparently holdovers from the reptile-men's primitive ancestors, and still hold considerable significance. Hisses are used extensively in religious and ceremonial observances.

## ACTIVITY CYCLE

Draca activity varies according to the length of the day. As reptilian descendants, they generally grow sluggish in cold conditions, and so sleep during hours of darkness. Cybernetic enhancements can adjust the Draca's primitive thermodynamic system (they only need six hours of sleep if fitted with a thermoplas implant). Normally, Draca must regulate their temperature by shuttling back and forth between warmer and cooler areas, but modern innovations in Cybernetics enable Draca to maintain a constant temperature without external stimuli.

Draca are strict carnivores. Not only would the average Draca die rather than eat vegetable matter, their systems are not equipped to process such nutrients, and such a Draca would quickly starve in any event. Cybernetics could theoretically enable the Draca to process any protein-based matter, but tradition and the

repugnance of eating plants has prevented Draca scientists from creating such devices to date.

Draca prefer fresh meat and need to drink only twice per day. While they have attained a high degree of civilization, their eating habits have remained somewhat primitive. Draca cooking, delicacies and table manners are generally considered crude and repulsive by other races, particularly the fastidious Zin-Shee.

## POWERS

The Draca have no powers – in fact, they shun such things, feeling that true advancement is possible only through the cybernetic enhancement of the body, rather than through the manipulation of mental or supernatural forces.

## SCIENCES

The Dracas' main ability is their advanced use of Cybernetics, which is the science of implanting mechanical devices into the body for the purpose of enhancement. An eye may be replaced with a device capable of seeing infrared, or in low-light conditions. The skeletal structure may be infused with metal filaments for added durability. An entire arm may be replaced with a stronger mechanical arm. Thermoregulators may be implanted to eliminate the need for constant heating and cooling. The list is virtually endless. Many cybernetic devices are extremely old, and are handed down from generation to generation as clan heirlooms. These devices are highly valued, and their loss or destruction is a major blow to an individual's prestige.

## COMBAT

Draca are formidable fighters, and their fearsome reputation is further enhanced by the savage, baroque appearance of their weapons. Artistic embellishment is often used to enhance the apparent deadliness of a weapon, and the Draca favor weapons which do the maximum amount of physical damage.

Still looking backward to their "heroic" pre-technological history, the Draca favor medieval-style weapons such as swords, axes, polearms, crossbows and so on. Recently, the Draca have begun importing and copying Calemoran weapons, which they consider highly sophisticated.

All this has not prevented the Draca from adopting modern weapons, however. Lacking the Calemoran distaste for unequal battles and ranged weapons, the Dracan military has grown into a heavily armed,

offensive-oriented force with little taste for strategic withdrawals or subtle tactics.

In general, Draca prefer weapons which inflict the most physical damage. Ranged weapons utilizing plasma bolts, heavy-element projectiles, or explosive munitions are also favored. Draca have a propensity for loud, unpleasant sounding weapons as well, as this does not disturb their minimal sense of hearing, while at the same time terrifying opponents. The traditional scythe-cannon, for example, may function as both a melee and ranged weapon, and inflicts considerable damage in both roles.

Of course, the Draca believe the finest weapons are those which are integral to a cybernetically-enhanced body. Many types of body weaponry have been developed.

Draca are savage warriors. They have few qualms about killing or torturing prisoners, even when there is no valuable information to be gained. Some Draca, after contact with the more civilized Guild, have rejected this practice, but it remains widespread within the Holding.

## PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Draca are probably the most militaristic race in Know Space. They see war and conflict as the natural state of the universe, and are incapable of imagining peace among the various empires and states. They are ferocious, merciless and, in the eyes of many, only barely civilized. In spite of this, the Draca are not an inherently evil race; to the contrary, they see themselves as the defenders of stability and civilization in the galaxy (of course, this is the position of every "evil" state in history, but the Draca have their good points nonetheless).

Even the Draca feel that the most successful battle is one which does not take place. Their ultimate goal is to instill such fear in enemies that they surrender without a fight. Unfortunately, most Draca consider this "ideal" behavior to be a sign of weakness, and have in the past ruthlessly exterminated passive races.

Every Draca is trained as a warrior. To fight is considered the ultimate cause for existence, and battle a crucible in which the weak are eliminated and the strong survive.

Friendship is rare among the Draca, for the emotion of friendship is thought to be contrary to good military discipline. A commander might be reluctant to order a "friend" into battle, and therefore must maintain a rigidly unemotional attitude toward his warriors. Rather than friendship, Draca form blood-bonds between fighters. The blood-bond is a rare and valued gift, indicating that either blood-sibling would lay down his or her life for the other. Blood-bond oaths often involve the exchange of valuable cybernetic devices.

Draca are hatched from eggs laid by the female once per year. The young mature quickly, and parental love is geared toward preparing youngsters for the rigors of battle and the demands of adult life. Children are taught to obey their elders without question and, while tenderness and affection may be shown in private, young Draca must act like adults while in public.

Not surprisingly, Draca have no concept of romantic love. Mates are chosen based on military achievement – the best pairing is considered that between two accomplished warriors. A Dracan "marriage" (more accurately described as an "alliance") may last for only a single mating season, or in rare cases, may be a lifelong bond.

There is absolute equality of the sexes. Egg-laying is an extremely brief process, and a female suffers no ill effects either before or after the act.

Advancement in Dracan society is accomplished solely through combat. All promotions are as the result of duels, either to first blood or to unconsciousness. Many Draca die in these duels, but such deaths are not considered dishonorable. Plots, counter-plots and alliances between factions are common in Dracan society, and it is always difficult to determine who to trust.

The standard Dracan family unit is the clan – a family group which traces descent through the female egg-layer. Dracan clans tend to bond together in alliances, or fight long, protracted blood feuds. Family members are honor-bound to avenge the deaths of relatives, and several Dracan clans have been completely wiped out by such feuds. Failure to respond to an assassination or murder will leave the impression that a clan is weak and vulnerable.

The Dracan state – called "The Holding" – is ruled by an individual known as the Egg-mistress, so-called due to her ancient role as defender of her clan's egg clutches. This individual is served by a band of fanatically loyal fighters from her clan, who act as surrogates in personal combat, should the Egg-mistress be challenged for ruler ship. In this way, the Holding can have consistent, long-term rulers, rather than enduring duel after duel and ruler after ruler.

Draca examine other races for their strengths and weaknesses. They are then studied, and tested in combat. This even extends to inter-personal relationships, for a Draca will not respect his comrades until they have proved themselves in combat. If they are judged weak or ineffective, they will be disdained, if equal or more skilled, they will be respected.

Many of the above traits refer to traditional Dracan society, as it exists within the borders of the Holding. Many Draca who have had contact with the Guild, however, have modified their traditional attitudes somewhat. While still primitive, dangerous and violent,

the Draca who adventure and serve within the Guild are significantly more civilized and better adjusted than their fellows in the Holding. Some have even gone so far as to totally shun their traditional society, and fully embrace Guild concepts of peace, understanding and coexistence.

Once Guild attitudes begin to spread through the Draca race as a whole, the Holding itself may grow and mature in such a way as to join the truly civilized races of the galaxy. At present, however, this is only a hope.

The Draca worship an all-powerful goddess whose true name they keep secret. Her public name is "The Great Egg-Mother," and she is believed to have produced the eggs which hatched the first two Draca. She is sometimes spoken of as having a male consort, but he seems of little importance.

Draca believe in reincarnation, that a warrior who fights well will return as a stronger, more powerful, and more heroic warrior, until at last he or she has lived enough lifetimes to join with the Great Egg-Mother in the afterlife, where warriors battle and revel forever.

## MOTIVATIONS

Draca seek to increase their prowess and reputation as fighters, as well as increase the number and quality of their cybernetic enhancements. Victory in combat is a major goal, bringing glory to both the individual and his or her clan. Clan reputation is also important, and acts which will reduce it, or show weakness, are to be scrupulously avoided. As a race, the Draca's goals are still to crush weak races, and prepare the strong ones for intergalactic war.

## Kryll

The Guild's first contact with the Kryll almost ended in tragedy. When Guild starships encountered a Kryll hiveship, the preprogrammed hive warriors immediately attacked, precipitating a massive response by the House of Dha. A small band of Dha adventurers, along with the Shanask warlock Shakna, managed to contact the Kryll's hive queen and avert disaster, and today the Kryll have been accepted both into the Guild and the House of Dha. (For more information on this incident, see *Shakna – Assault on the Hive.*)

## APPEARANCE

Kryll are an insectoid race, resembling an enormous cross between ant and praying mantis. Weighing around 360 pounds, most Kryll are only four to five feet tall, but five to six feet in length.

The head of a Kryll has large, serrated mandibles and glittering red, yellow or green, multifaceted eyes. Its chitinous exoskeleton is covered with multi-colored markings unique to an individual's hive. The outer layer of a Kryll's exoskeleton is constantly molting, giving it a somewhat ragged appearance, as if it was wearing a shredded suit of clothes.

Kryll's bodies bear numerous nutrient glands and pores. These have evolved over the generations to provide nutrition to the Kryll's various symbiotic bio-items. These regions secrete a nutrient slime which the Kryll's symbiotes use as food.

Of all the Kryll, only a hive-queen and her drones have real gender. Ordinary Kryll workers and warriors are genetically female, but incapable of reproduction, so are best described as "neuter."

## CLOTHING/ARMOR

Kryll do not wear anything which might be considered clothing. For formal events, a Kryll will polish its chitin to a high sheen.

Biotech organisms can function as armor, and Kryll will sometimes use physical shields.

## ATTRIBUTES

Kryll are below Anthropos norms in most areas, although they are extremely strong and hearty. A Kryll's six legs enable it to climb steep slopes, or even walls (provided there are sufficient handholds) without difficulty.

## SENSES

Kryll senses are more primitive than Anthropos, but once more, Biotechnology helps fill in the gaps. A Kryll sees slightly farther into the ultraviolet spectrum than an Anthropos. Kryll also have a 360 degree field of vision. They have virtually no sense of touch, and smells are detected by a Kryll's antennae. Warrior Kryll have smaller, degenerate antennae which still have significant olfactory abilities, and contribute to the race's relatively good Awareness.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The Kryll have several modes of communication. Their "spoken" language, a combination of clicks, rasps, and snaps of various body parts, is virtually impossible to duplicate without a translator Kryll or translation device. Kryll are able to reproduce most languages sufficiently to be understood.

Kryll also communicate biochemically. Each Kryll can produce a wide range of Pheromonal secretions, which are detected by nearby Kryll, and may be relayed over long distances. This form of communication works best within a Kryll hive, where the queen may give and receive orders with extreme speed. Kryll queens can also analyze the Pheromonal output of hive members, and instantly determine if new workers, drones or warriors are needed.

Pheromonal communication nodes are found throughout Kryll hives. These are biochemical "intercoms" which can relay information at phenomenal rates. The pheromone message of one Kryll is instantly transferred with the speed of a highly efficient nerve impulse, to any place in the hive or ship, and to any other Kryll which require communication.

A special caste of worker has also been developed, the translator. These individuals are capable of reproducing virtually any sound, and may be pheromonally programmed to speak to any species. Non-Kryll are often surprised when they meet their first translator, and hear an alien, insectoid creature speaking in a highly cultured version of their own language!

The translators are also important to Kryll society, for they are capable of receiving telepathic communications from their hive-queen, and transmit messages to Kryll under their control. For this reason, translators are often thought of as "officers" in Kryll military units, and occupy a vital role in the life of the hive. Rumors of free-willed translators have begun to circulate, but have yet to be confirmed.

## ACTIVITY CYCLE

Kryll do not sleep. They appear capable of round-the-clock activity without the need for rest.

True omnivores, Kryll will eat virtually anything. Their highly efficient digestive system (modified with symbiotic organisms) can break down any organic material into its basic nutrients. Their major requirement is moisture content. If food has sufficient liquid, they do not need to drink. Kryll metabolism is high, however, requiring an individual to eat several pounds of food every five to six hours.

## POWERS

Kryll have no real inherent powers. Their skill with Biotechnology, however, makes them a highly potent race.

## SCIENCES

Biotechnology involves the manipulation and modification of living matter, transforming plant and animal species into useful symbiotic devices. Kryll scientists have perfected numerous biological implants, which Kryll can use to help digest food, exist in hostile environments, resist damage, enhance their strength, or improve their sensory apparatus.

Many races have experimented with Biotechnology, such as Anthropos modification of certain bacteria to fight disease or digest toxic waste products, but only the Kryll have developed the science to such an extent.

Some bio-items function as weapons, with natural bodily secretions transformed into deadly acids, bioelectrical organs charged as energy projectors, and spiky chitinous protrusions modified as the blades of melee weapons. Given the sheer variety and frightening nature of bio-weapons, many races are glad that the Kryll fight for the Guild, rather than against it.

## COMBAT

Kryll are deadly fighters even without their biotech enhancements. Their spiked claws and mandibles can inflict considerable damage, and Kryll's substantial strength enables them to hold their own with most other galactic races.

Many bio-weapons are unique, so their exact function may remain a mystery until an enemy actually has to face them. Symbiotic insects may launch eggs filled with a caustic substance. A long, whip like creature grafted to the Kryll's abdomen may lash out to stab and inject poison or acid. An innocuous-looking pouch may gush forth a horde of stinging, biting insects. Bio-armor may also have offensive functions, ejecting darts or deadly gas while protecting its wearer. In all, Kryll Biotechnology has the same effect as the Draca's cyber-enhancements, taking a fearsome fighter and making it still more deadly.

## PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

The concepts of personality and culture are difficult to accurately describe, as most Kryll are part of a true hive-mind society. Only in the past century have any individual Kryll attained self-awareness, but these individuals still serve their hive and their queen with single-minded devotion.

Most Kryll function in response to Pheromonal secretions from their queen, and those around them. When isolated from their hive or translator-caste Kryll for an extended period of time, an individual will either

die (simply stop eating and starve to death in a matter of hours) or become independent and somewhat self-aware. Genetic imperatives to defend the hive remain active, however.

Individual Kryll do not form friendships as we know them. A Kryll may, however, adopt companions as a sort of surrogate hive, and grant loyalty to varying degrees. A Kryll "friend" is one of the most dependable allies known.

Many different types of Kryll exist; new ones are produced almost daily, depending upon the task they serve in the hive. Most common are queen, drone (fertile male), worker, warrior, nursemaid (cares specifically for eggs and young Kryll), translator, etc. The only Kryll known to venture beyond the hive to any extent are translators and warriors. Adventuring Kryll are warriors.

Kryll deal with other races in a very pragmatic way. If friendly relations benefit their hive, they will follow such a course. If a species is hostile, it will be fought to the death. If no benefit can be found for the hive, a species may be ignored or simply bred as cattle. This last tendency has been modified somewhat since Guild contact, for the Kryll queens realize that coexistence and living within Guild law is a great benefit to their hives.

Presently, the Kryll inhabit a bio-world known as the "Kryll-Hive." The Kryll-Hive is mobile, and may move at slow speeds utilizing biological propulsion units. A special sort of bio-engine is also used to generate an FTL field, enabling Hive to move (albeit relatively slowly) between stars.

The hive is a vast living organism, linked together by huge filamentous tunnels. It does not require a sun, as many of its internal life forms provide biologically-based light, and a massive, radiant entity at the center of the hive provides limitless quantities of energy. The hive constantly grows and can reach enormous size over the course of centuries.

The hive is ruled by a single queen. The queen communicates pheromonally, or with her translators through a form of telepathy. Lately, more and more warriors have been allowed to leave Hive and adventure within the Guild, even qualifying as independent members of the House of Dha, leading observers to suspect that a major change in Kryll psyche and society may be imminent.

Kryll have absolutely no understanding of the concept of religion, and not even free-willed individuals express any interest in practicing any faith beyond absolute loyalty to the hive and the queen.

## MOTIVATIONS

Motivations are difficult to assign to the Kryll. Individuals – even those who have attained self-

Awareness – have few motivations beyond the good of their hive and queen. If a Kryll is required to sacrifice its life for the good of the hive, it will do so without hesitation.

Money, power, honor, freedom – none of these usual motivations hold any meaning to an individual Kryll. While a single Kryll may undertake a task, such as to retrieve an object, destroy or capture a certain individual, or explore a distant world, it is always done with the welfare of the hive in mind.

Contact with the Guild has changed Kryll society in subtle ways, however. Some theorists suggest that the Kryll queen is slowly coming to the realization that the Guild, and indeed, all sentient races, could be considered a sort of "Common Hive," worthy of service and protection. Should this occur, the Kryll may become the staunchest and most valued defenders which the Guild has.

## Shanask

As the House of Dha became established and fully operational, a crisis arose which demanded immediate attention. A Kryll hiveship appeared in GuildSpace, and attacked the Guild ships sent to intercept it. The Dha fleet left to meet the threat, leaving only a handful of defenders behind on Dha Prime.

As the Dha fleet departed, a mysterious, black planetoid appeared in orbit around Dha Prime. A team of Dha adventurers was dispatched to investigate, and to their own amazement, encountered a mysterious, robed alien figure, who claimed to be "Shakna"... the Shanask had arrived.

It was later learned that the Shanask had teleported an entire moon into orbit around Dha Prime with a mystical ability known only as the *Sorce*. Although there was only a single small structure on the Shanask moon, it seemed to hold hundreds of members of the dark race. Dha sensors were unable to penetrate the moon's surface, but it is believed that the pyramid is only an entrance to the world's interior.

The Shanask are highly secretive about their past and their society, so little is known for certain. Even the location of their home world, if it exists at all, is not known.

Several prominent Shanask act as spokesmen (or, perhaps "spokes beings") for their species. The best known is Shakna, who has continued to play an active role in relations with the Guild and the House of Dha. Another prominent, and (if possible) even more enigmatic figure is Jodar, a Shanask of incredible power who, on his rare appearances, claims to be creating a new strategy to help defend the Guild against its enemies.



Reaction to the Shanask throughout the Guild has been mixed, ranging from groups who claim that they are evil spirits or malevolent beings intent on mischief (presumably, their initial benevolence was simply to lull the Guild into a false sense of security) to those who claim that the hooded aliens were sent by a benevolent deity. There is at least one known group of Anthropos who have founded the "Society of the Hooded Messenger," claiming that Shakna and the other Shanask are saviors who will lead the Guild to paradise.

## APPEARANCE

All Shanask are identical — 6'6" tall, and 250 pounds. Age, sex, and individual characteristics are not known. Neither is it known how Shanask are born, or whether they can grow old and die.

Shanask always wear full-length robes which conceal their entire bodies. Faces, save for a pair of dark red, glowing eyes, are always hidden in the shadows of their robes, and hands and feet are never visible. Some have suggested that the cloak is actually a Shanask's outer body covering, but this has never been proved.

No one has ever been able to catch a glimpse of the being beneath the robes. Sensor probes have proven useless, and anyone who approaches within a meter or so of a Shanask experiences a feeling of gloom and fearful unease.

## CLOTHING/ARMOR

Shanask cloaks are bound at the waist with a rope-like belt. No other clothing is ever seen, but some have claimed to have observed a glowing mist near the "hands" and "feet" of a Shanask. Damaged clothing appears to repair itself. Some rumors claim that Shanask have been seen wearing red, blue, green, or even white robes, but this has never been reliably confirmed.

Shanask shun armor, but will sometimes carry physical or energy shields. They often attach small sacks or pouches to their belt as long as they do not unduly interfere with the Shanask's movement.

## ATTRIBUTES

Shanask are physically weak compared to other races, although their Vitality is better than average. Their mental attributes, however, are very high. They are one of the most alert and intelligent of all races.

The Shanask also seem to know more about ancient history, customs, places, planets and races than any other race. They share this information only rarely, and never reveal the full extent of their knowledge.

## SENSES

Shanask see in the visible spectrum, but process all colors as shades of grey (except for Sorce color). Their cloaks cut down on their viewing so that they can see only 90 degrees directly in front of them.

Shanask cannot smell or taste, and no one has ever seen them breath, eat or drink.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Although Shanask appear to speak in a raspy whisper, this is not strictly true. Shanask communications may be directed at a single individual, or at an entire group. Range extends a number of squares equal to the Shanask's *Sorce* skill, or double this if only a single individual is being contacted.

Whatever the range, the volume and quality is always the same low, raspy whisper. This whisper can be heard, whatever the outside noise may be. Recorders and communication devices designed to pick up audible noises will hear and record nothing. Shanask may also communicate between themselves with no chance of being detected by any means.

Exactly what this mode of communication is, no one knows. It is not telepathic, for not even the most talented Zin-Shee psionist has been able to penetrate it. Apparently, Shanask communication is some form of inherent, *Sorce*-based speech, the actual mechanics of which remain a mystery.

## ACTIVITY CYCLE

Shanask do not eat, sleep, drink, breath, or dispose of bodily wastes. However, every Shanask carries a pair of flasks, one containing a powder, the other a liquid. These are consumed in some fashion after a Shanask receives physical damage. It is believed that they contain the essentials of Shanask existence and are used to repair wounds. Shanask will not heal naturally if these flasks are not present. No other being has yet been able to obtain these flasks for analysis, for when a Shanask is killed, its flasks vanish along with its body.

## POWERS

The Shanask control an ancient power called the *Sorce*. Its derivation is reminiscent of the old word "Sorcery," and it is similar in many ways. *Sorce* accomplishes things without logical explanation, and seems to function independent of the laws of physics and logic.

The Shanask rarely discuss *Sorce* power, and are reluctant to use it in public. If any "reasonable"

explanation can account for the effects of the *Sorce*, the Shanask will support it.

Many people don't actually believe in the *Sorce*. Some claim that it is simple illusion created by hidden high-tech devices. Those who actually observe the *Sorce* in action tend to forget about it very quickly, and have difficulty remembering the event.

Several prominent Guild researchers have, in effect, thrown up their collective hands, and simply declared the *Sorce* to be, for lack of a better term, "magic" – in short, a force which transcends natural law, and cannot be logically explained. Nonetheless, the researchers say, the *Sorce* does work, and has real power.

## SCIENCES

The race is technologically adept, and will use technological devices if needed. Over the ages, however, the Shanask have so adapted themselves to the *Sorce* that they find technological devices unnecessary, although they will use them on occasion. No Shanask will ever submit to cybernetic modification.

## COMBAT

Shanask favor simple blade weapons in combat. They have a strong preference for such weapons as scimitars, scythes, daggers, staves and polearms. These weapons are often used with technological enhancement. They will also use small thrown and ranged weapons.

Occasionally, Shanask will employ small pistol-type energy weapons, but rarely keep such things around for long. Although a Shanask may become adept at other weapons such as rifles and plasma guns, they will never carry one for longer than a single encounter.

The Shanask's disdain for such weapons appears to be derived from their reliance on *Sorce*-based weapons. As the *Sorce* appears to be the single unifying and driving force in Shanask culture, the use of devices beyond the *Sorce* is disdained. Just the same, Shanask seem to have no problem firing vehicle- or ship-based weapons.

Shanask never fight in a manner which might require direct physical contact, using *Sorce*-weapons, swords, etc., instead. They will always avoid combat involving body contact, even if it means their own death.

## PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Shanask appear to possess emotions similar to other races, but control them very carefully. While they do not seem to experience love or happiness, they do

experience and briefly share satisfaction, contentment, pride, etc.

Short term emotional disturbances do not seem to affect the Shanask. They reserve their emotional responses to significant or long-term disturbance. Thus, jokes and Anthropos humor, which are mostly short-term in nature, seem pointless to a Shanask.

Shanask never laugh and are always serious. While they will share the accomplishment of fellow adventurers, and seem to enjoy the thought of a job well done, they generally do so contemplatively, always thinking of the next phase of the mission. They are highly philosophical, and do not engage in idle conversation.

Shanask never sit or lie down, but always stand. They also avoid bright lights, and prefer natural light over artificial illumination.

Loners by nature, Shanask do not like crowds or formal gatherings. Although they do not form friendships, long-time acquaintances and adventuring companions do somehow become "attached" to their Shanask, and vice versa.

Nothing is known of Shanask family life, or even if such a thing exists. Gender, offspring, and normal interactions between the sexes (if any) seem totally unknown.

## MOTIVATIONS

Like most other things regarding the Shanask race, individual motivations are largely unknown. Racial motivations are also uncertain, although a few select individuals have been informed that the Shanask accepted some great task eons ago and have been slowly working to fulfill it.

No one knows exactly what this task is. Some claim that the Shanask are evil and seek the destruction of all life. Some say that they are a race of super beings or demigods sent to protect the Anthropos and other Guild members. Some even believe that the Shanask are spirits of the dead returned to repent for their sins.

No one knows whether the Shanask have a religion, but some of their actions seem to be inspired by some form of higher power. Whether this represents obeisance to a deity, or to more highly-powered Shanask, no one can say.

Whatever their motivations, the Shanask have proven invaluable. They have quickly become integral to the House of Dha and serve it with a stern, near-fanatic, fervor.

## Zin-Shee

For over 1300 years, the Zin-Shee Matriarchy expanded its borders, conquering those hapless races which stood in its path. Few foes withstood the Zin-Shee onslaught, until the forces of the Matriarchy arrived at the massive, high-gravity world of Calemor.

Expecting another easy victory, the Zin-Shee descended to the planet's surface, only to be met by the finest warriors the galaxy had known, the Calemora. Soon, the Zin-Shee realized that the Calemora were skilled, determined, with apparently inexhaustible numbers, and the millennium-long siege of Calemor began.

The so-called "Blood Feud" dragged on for centuries. With tens of millions dead and no resolution in sight, both Calemora and Zin-Shee were shocked when Guild starships and soldiers appeared on Calemor, seizing strategic positions with overwhelming force, and demanding an end to the conflict. It took another twelve years to finally finish the Blood Feud, and despite their annoyance, many Zin-Shee grew to respect the Guild and its ways.

Numerous Zin-Shee border worlds, including the provisional capital of Seril, joined with the Guild, most maintaining dual membership in both Guild and The Matriarchy. Today, Zin-Shee expansion continues coreward, while individual Zin-Shee adventure throughout GuildSpace, going so far as to become one of the Guardian races of the House of Dha.

### APPEARANCE

Anthropos generally agree that the Zin-Shee are a handsome race. Zin-Shee males stand around six feet tall and weigh around 200 lbs., while females average 5'6", and 160 lbs. They walk upright, although they maintain a catlike crouch most of the time.

Zin-Shee are covered in soft fur, with coloration and markings varying from individual to individual. Racial variations resembling familiar felines such as leopards, tigers and panthers are common. Fur is shortest on their faces, save for whiskers, a goatee-like tufted beard, and long hairs over their eyes and at the tips of their ears.

Hands and feet are equipped with sharp claws, which are used effectively in combat. Zin-Shee have sharp, cat-like teeth.

A Zin-Shee's most striking feature is its eyes. Normally catlike, with iridescent gold, green or yellow irises and a slit-like pupil, a Zin-Shee's eyes glow brightly with pure energy when an individual uses *Psionics*.

## CLOTHING/ARMOR

Zin-Shee are an agile race, and feel that excessive clothing is restrictive in battle. Armor, especially baroque armor of archaic design is sometimes worn in battle, but most Zin-Shee prefer unrestricted activity when fighting. They favor the use of physical shields and personal force fields for protection.

When not in battle, however, Zin-Shee are nothing short of excessive when it comes to clothing. A bewildering variety of styles and fashions exist throughout Zin-Shee space, but a style resembling Renaissance-period human clothing is popular, featuring broad-brimmed hats, roomy shirts, vests, capes, elaborate skirts, revealingly-cut garments, etc. Overdressing is very common among the noble classes.

## ATTRIBUTES

Zin-Shee are roughly comparable to Anthropos in most attributes, although their Speed and Awareness are impressive. Males Zin-Shee have a slight edge over the females in terms of physical prowess, but their inferiority in psionic abilities balances the genders' strengths and weaknesses.

## SENSES

Every sense is above Anthropos norms among the Zin-Shee. Hearing and vision are particularly acute, and smell is far better developed than in Anthropos.

In addition, Zin-Shee have natural starlight vision capability, enhancing even the most minimal natural light to enable them to see almost as well in the dark as they do in the light.

## COMMUNICATION

Zin-Shee speech is soft, but can grow harsh if the Zin-Shee is emotional, passionate, or otherwise disturbed. When they speak other languages, Zin-Shee's cat-like language is apparent in their accent.

Female Zin-Shee can communicate telepathically, although verbal communication has important cultural significance, and is never completely abandoned. Among accomplished telepaths, purely mental communication is far more efficient and subtle than verbal communication.

There are five different modes of formality in Zin-Shee verbal communication, a holdover from their complex feudal society. Different modes are distinguished by levels of formality and complexity.

Most verbal communication is at what linguists refer to as "familiar" level. There are two modes of formality

above familiar level, the highest being one used only in the most ceremonial and solemn occasions, the next lowest being used in formal settings to individuals of higher social rank than the speaker. At the highest rank of formality, even the simplest information takes a considerable time to be communicated.

Below familiar mode are what are referred to as “slang” mode (mostly used by intimate friends or young Zin-Shee) and “vulgar” mode (used only in the crudest of circumstances, or by extremely low-class individuals).

Telepathy may fit into the formality mode at any level. Highly ceremonial functions are done entirely verbally, as what is said and the way it is said are important enough to warrant being said out loud, so all can hear it. Telepathy is most useful at familiar level and below.

## ACTIVITY CYCLE

Like other felines, Zin-Shee do not sleep continuously, preferring to catch brief naps as frequently as possible. A Zin-Shee grows restless and cranky if more than six hours elapse without a nap. Zin-Shee are quite adaptable in this regard, and can nap virtually anywhere, although they prefer warm, secure spaces. Zin-Shee homes are filled with small niches and hiding places for napping. These naps have the added benefit of helping Zin-Shee Psionics recover spent power.

Zin-Shee are carnivores who prefer to eat at least once a day. They prefer fresh meat, but since Guild contact have developed an extremely subtle sense of taste, and often enjoy Anthropos-prepared gourmet meals.

Table manners and eating habits can only be described as fastidious. Meals can be long, drawn-out ceremonial affairs, and even in informal settings, Zin-Shee like to take their time. Formal linguistic mode is often used during even casual meals.

The eating of enemies, once a common practice, is now viewed with no little distaste. Zin-Shee no longer consume the flesh of sentient beings.

Although they prefer meat in their diet, Zin-Shee can exist as herbivores for several weeks without ill effects, although after this period, they grow tired, listless and dull-looking, eventually growing quite ill.

## POWERS

As their nickname implies, the psi-cats are highly skilled in *Psionics*, the ability to manipulating matter and energy through pure mental force. Unlike the Shanask *Sorce*-manipulation, *Psionics* are not magic, but real, physical powers with real, physical laws governing them. Through *Psionics*, a Zin-Shee can engage in

combat, reach out to see the secret thoughts of others, communicate secretly, etc. Many other abilities are possible, and the Zin-Shee are masters of them all.

Female Zin-Shee excel at *psionic* manipulation, perhaps because of their ancestral role as protectors of the family. Male Zin-Shee are quite handicapped in this role, but can still serve as potent warriors or martial artists.

## SCIENCES

The Zin-Shee have high technological abilities, although *Psionics* take the place of many high-tech items or procedures. They also understand and can utilize some Biotechnology.

Cybernetics are well understood by the Zin-Shee, but are rarely used since the Psi-Cats feel that implants are unaesthetic, ugly and unreliable.

## COMBAT

Zin-Shee are easily bored, and enjoy using a wide variety of weapons in addition to their deadly natural weaponry such as claws and teeth. Zin-Shee also prefer using psionic weaponry, energy weapons, and technologically enhanced melee weapons. Their agility and force fields are used to protect them in battle. As noted, armor is unusual, but not unknown.

Being a fastidious race, Zin-Shee dislike bloody, violent combat, preferring subtlety and weapons which kill with minimal damage. Piercing melee weapons such as rapiers and daggers are used, while pulse lasers are preferred for ranged combat.

The exception to the psi-cats' fastidiousness is in the use of claws, but when a Zin-Shee has reached a point that it is forced to use its own body weaponry, all bets are off, and it will fight as violently as necessary to win. Afterwards, it will probably take a long, hot bath, however.

Zin-Shee can be fierce, cunning opponents. Their war cries and challenges can be truly terrifying, and their restless nature makes them highly innovative and unpredictable. They enjoy ambushes and hit-and-run raiding, but will not shirk from a toe-to-toe battle at close quarters.

## PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

In Anthropos terms, the Zin-Shee might best be described as devil-may-care swashbucklers with a passion for living and a lust for excitement. They are highly curious, and enjoy exploration and travel for its own sake. They love fun and activity, to an extent that few races can keep up with them. Both sexes love to flirt,

even with members of other species (although they tend to avoid Draca and Kryll). Most other races, especially the Anthropos and other humanoids, consider Zin-Shee to be quite beautiful.

On the bad side, Zin-Shee tend to be moody and high-strung. At any moment, a Zin-Shee can literally explode with emotion, only to have the outburst forgotten a few minutes later. Zin-Shee do not hold grudges. Yesterday's enemies are today's friends, and vice versa. The long and bitter conflict with the Calemora is an exception – although the Calemora are viewed as worthy opponents and interesting individuals, most Zin-Shee avoid forming friendships or even associating with them.

The Zin-Shee Matriarchy is ruled by a number of elder females, each representing a major world of the Matriarchy. Decisions are usually made by consensus, and open brawling has been known to mar conclave meetings. Most Zin-Shee worlds go about their business any way they desire, and ignore the conclave's rulings if they are inconvenient.

Another holdover from their ancient feudal system is the Zin-Shee's noble class. Many important positions throughout the Matriarchy are held by members of hereditary nobility, and a wide variety of titles exists throughout Zin-Shee space (most Anthropos, however, translate Zin-Shee noble titles into familiar terms such as "Count," "Duke," "Baron," etc.). Zin-Shee nobles are known for their eccentricity, excessive lifestyles and highly interpretive code of honor.

Within the Matriarchy, the Zin-Shee still keep slaves. All conquered races are reduced to this subservient status and, although the Zin-Shee are relatively kind masters, this custom has prevented more Zin-Shee worlds from joining the Guild. Zin-Shee within the Guild have turned against the practice of slavery, a move which threatens to split the Matriarchy.

Zin-Shee appear lazy to other races when it comes to strenuous and unpleasant work. Work which is not enjoyable, interesting or different is generally avoided. This, perhaps, explains the Zin-Shee's' cultural acceptance of slavery, for it provides others to take care of the tedious jobs.

Zin-Shee form friendships as easily as Anthropos, but tend to be more fickle. A friend is a friend for as long as they are fun and interesting. Even great personal sacrifice is forgotten after a few weeks. While the Zin-Shee hold few grudges, they also owe few favors (at least in their own eyes).

Marriage as a long-term bond is unknown to the Zin-Shee. Most such bonds only last long enough for children to grow to maturity. After a pair separates, children associate with both parents and there is rarely any tension or animosity. In their lifetime, a female Zin-Shee will have two or three litters, and numerous short-

term non-procreative liaisons (those known colloquially to Anthropos as "love affairs").

Zin-Shee are friendly and gregarious, associating with other races as freely as with their own. The exception to this is in times of war and when dealing with slaves.

Zin-Shee worship a pantheon of gods, goddesses and heroes so extensive that Guild scientists are still cataloging them all.

The psi-cats also believe that upon death, those who lived with honor, fought well, practiced *Psionics* diligently, and enjoyed as varied a life as possible, will go to a vast, luxurious paradise where every whim is instantly fulfilled.

## MOTIVATIONS

Individual Zin-Shee are motivated by curiosity, thrill seeking, love of adventure, fun, luxury, and their own form of romance.

Currently, the racial motivations of the Zin-Shee are divided. The old Zin-Shee, who still control most of the Matriarchy, still support the expansion of Zin-Shee influence, the enslavement of other races, and eventual galactic dominance. The new Zin-Shee, those who have dwelled in the Guild, and learned more of the universe outside the Matriarchy, seek to civilize the Zin-Shee race, and bring about a peaceful and more just society. Some have even called for the liberation of all slaves, which has sent shock waves through the Matriarchy.

# **Major States of Known Space**

The Guild is not the only organized group of star systems in Known Space. Several other states exist, some friendly, some hostile, some more-or-less neutral. The major states (plus a few of the minor ones) are fully described below.

## ***The Guild***

Three thousand years ago, a handful of survivors fled the holocaust on the Anthropos home world of Url. Of these, some formed the militaristic Arthirian Sphere, others founded The Company, and still others found their way into the realm known today as GuildSpace.

Espousing principles of democracy, personal freedom and peaceful exploration, the Guild (Galactic Unification of Intelligent Life-forms and Devices) was founded to counter the growing threat of the Arthirians. Bloody conflicts with both the Sphere and the newly-discovered Empire followed, strengthening the Guild and turning it into the powerful state that it is today.

Guild membership is simple. For Anthropos members, worlds must guarantee basic human rights to all citizens in order to join. Alien races may also join, and the rules of admission may be modified based on cultural, technological, and biological considerations. In general, however, alien members of the Guild must also abide by its basic rules and tenets.

Widely considered the best hope for galactic peace and civilization, the Guild nonetheless must maintain an extremely well-armed and -trained military in the face of threats from The Empire and elsewhere. This apparent contradiction has not gone unappreciated by the leaders of the Guild, and so the military's role in governing the Guild has been purposely limited.

## **INHABITANTS**

Hundreds of races have joined the Guild, and within GuildSpace, hundreds of other independent races and nations still exist. The Guild does not fight wars of conquest; if a world does not wish to join the Guild, it is free not to. Most members joined the Guild in response to the enormous benefits and minimal requirements for membership. Several revolutions broke out, in fact, replacing totalitarian states with democratic ones, just so the inhabitants could join the Guild. Rumors continue to

circulate of Guild involvement in such revolts, but they are hotly denied.

The most populous race of the Guild is the Anthropos. Tough, resourceful, and highly skilled technologically, the Anthropos founded the Guild, determined not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Today, Guild warships patrol member worlds, and Guild soldiers stand ready at a moment's notice, not to conquer, but to preserve peace in any way necessary.

The four major races of the House of Dha have recently begun to be referred to as the Guardian Races. These include the Anthropos, the powerful Calemora, who have grown numerous over the years, and the grim Draca. Many Zin-Shee worlds embraced the concepts of Guild membership and rejected the practice of conquest and subjugation, and are present in large numbers. Recent additions include the insectoid Kryll and the mysterious Shanask, both of whom are currently being considered for Guardian status.

Besides the Guardians, many other races are included in the Guild, such as the uruk, bear-like mammals with strengths to rival the Calemora; the rakka, lupine pack carnivores who until recently raided GuildSpace in squadrons of small, very fast starships; the aquatic hammu; the fox-like vulpe, whose skills of stealth and evasion are unparalleled, and the gigantic space entities known as the t'skaa, which seem to be capable of faster-than-light travel through some unknown physiological ability. There is no real "average" Guild member – almost every life form imaginable exists within GuildSpace, and most of these are either members or potential members.

Like most other states in this region of space, the Guild is also troubled by the skrak and Kurg pirates, who live in unruly bands of warriors and raiders, periodically sweeping through civilized space, stealing, destroying, kidnapping slaves, and generally raising havoc. These creatures seem to have no set home world, and are generally considered an unavoidable hazard of space. Guild control of its territory is sometimes minimal, and in regions where the House of Defiance or the House of the Star cannot reach, the raiders can potentially cause severe damage. A few Skraks and kurgs have settled down as semi-honest traders or adventurers, but such individuals are rare.

## **THE HOUSES**

Besides the member-worlds (see below) the major power in the Guild is held by The Houses, groups of individuals with similar skills or missions. Many houses are further subdivided into chapters, smaller groups with common skills within the larger organization of the House.

Many of these houses, such as the House of Defiance, were created and administered by the Guild itself. Others, such as the Merchant Houses (there are several, including Houses Hassa, Morituri and Kima), and the House of the Knife (an alliance of criminals and other shady characters), exist outside of Guild control. These and other major houses are described below.

## Merchant Houses

Numerous trading houses exist within the Guild. Major merchant houses include Hassa (run entirely by the Zin-Shee), Morituri and Kima. Some are friendly rivals, others are allies, and a few are open enemies. Organization varies from house to house. Some are run as companies, with presidents, boards of directors and stockholders. Others are family affairs, with family members making all major decisions. Regardless of their internal organization, all merchant houses engage in the buying, selling and transportation of needed goods throughout GuildSpace. In this, there are strict Guild rules regarding pricing, supply and availability, and most merchant houses abide by them.

A few, however, are of the unscrupulous sort, attempting to circumvent Guild law to reap excessive profit at the expense of their customers. Many worlds are dependent on the merchant houses for necessities, and the illegal trader can often exploit such worlds. Some houses are controlled by the House of the Knife, while others are fronts for The Company, used to detect weakness in the Guild economy and in other merchant houses, so that Company operatives can increase their control of trade.

## House of Gamah

The technicians, computer specialists and other experts in Anthropos high-technology are members of this house ("Gamah" is an uruk word meaning "magician who works with tools"). This highly important house is responsible for the design, repair and improvement of technological items throughout the Guild, but the open-minded and curious nature of its members prevents Gamah from translating its importance into political power. Most Gamah members are Anthropos, and this house is the source of many new devices which are used on Anthropos worlds.

## House of the Sextant

Most civilian star-pilots and Astrogators belong to this large and influential house. Responsible for large-scale transportation of goods and travelers, the Sextant oversees the welfare of its members, buys fuel and parts

in large quantities and passes savings on to members, and represents members in legal disputes.

House dues are considerable, so there is a good number of independent contractors, who fly individual ships, or operate transport companies of under a dozen craft. The house rarely bothers these individuals, but should the owner of a large number of starships try to strike out on his own without house membership, the Sextant will definitely seek to drive him out of business.

## House of the Dreamer

This house oversees and protects all sorts of artists within the Guild. Unfortunately, overseeing artists is a difficult task, and Dreamer is little more than an umbrella organization with little real authority. A bewildering number of chapters exist within the house, representing the interests of painters, sculptors, writers, dancers, singers and musicians.

The somewhat independent and chaotic nature of the artistic mind dictates that many do not belong to the house at all, and that some pursuits have several rival chapters representing them. Painters, for instance, have over a dozen chapters to choose from, depending on their style, tastes and personalities. Most chapters are open to all races without prejudice. Zin-Shee, for example, are generally considered to be excellent artists in all media, and are highly sought-after to give credibility and class to a given chapter.

Many new types of art have emerged since the founding of the Guild, including light sculpture, zero-g ballet, psionic impressionism (in which a talented psionicist induces certain sights, sounds and emotions in an audience), planetary sculpture, and more. As may be expected, each one of these new art forms has one or more chapters representing it, while other chapters represent more than one type of art.

Major chapters include Bramalo Chapter (representing painters in oil and watercolor), Quill Chapter (representing novelists, poets and playwrights), Gazzir Chapter (representing anyone who the guild leadership agrees is "an artist") and Starfall Chapter (representing dancers, particularly those who perform in zero-g or low-grav conditions).

## House of the Caduceus

This house is an organization for doctors, healers, and other medical-type individuals. Membership is open to anyone who deals with disease or injury, and so includes sophisticated high-tech Anthropos doctors, primitive shaman-healers, Zin-Shee Psionicists, Shanask *Sorce*-masters, and Kryll bio-techs. House of Caduceus shares new healing technologies, drugs, surgical

procedures, and innovative devices with its members, hoping to spread the science of healing throughout GuildSpace.

Unlike other houses, Caduceus will share its knowledge with non-members, but other benefits, such as housing, low-cost equipment, and technical support, are reserved for members alone. Many medical schools in the Guild require that their graduates join Caduceus, and so most healers and doctors throughout the Guild belong to this house.

## House of the Star

The space police are organized into this large, varied and diffuse fraternity. The job of space policeman is not as rigid and official as it sounds — often “space police” are simply privateers with Guild sanction to pursue pirates and other lawbreakers and bring them to justice. Regardless of this, the House of the Star’s authority extends to the borders of GuildSpace (although the elite Star Marshals — see below — are an exception to this).

Star equipment ranges from excellent to barely-functional, and most members are rugged non-conformists seeking adventure. Each is pledged to support Guild law and enforce it wherever possible, but a few use their status to run what amounts to legalized protection and pirating operations. Such individuals are invariably hunted down by honest space police, or, in extreme cases, by Defiance House starships.

The Star Marshals are an elite chapter within the House of the Star. The Marshals have special enforcement powers, and are allowed to pursue lawbreakers beyond the boundaries of GuildSpace. The Marshals have first choice of all equipment and starships, and their small group is acknowledged as one of the most professional and incorruptible in the Guild.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Not all professions and groups are organized into Guild-sanctioned houses. Many others were formed independently and exist outside of Guild authority. Some pursue illegal activities, while others simply chafe at Guild oversight. Several of the most prominent of these are listed below.

### House of the Nova

This marginally-legal, semi-official “house” is a haven for rogues, individualists, and those who occasionally have to live on both sides of the law to survive. While not sanctioned by the Guild, Nova is organized as a house (with a president, officers, and so on), sends delegates to the Great House, and fights for

its members’ interests. Membership is open to anyone but out-and-out space pirates, slavers, or violent criminals. Those who happen to slip in and attempt to exploit house membership to their own ends usually end up being dealt with by house justice. Needless to say, House of the Nova justice is swift, irrevocable, and quite final.

### Brotherhood of the Skull

GuildSpace is anything but pacified, and the scourge of space piracy is common in many areas. The Brotherhood of the Skull (sometimes called “House of the Skull” to infuriate and taunt the Guild) is an informal alliance of cutthroats, corsairs, pirates and criminals. Many members are brutal thugs with little concern for sentient life, but others fit the image of the “jolly rogue,” and are in it for the adventure. Most pirate vessels are run as rough dictatorships, with captains deposed by mob violence should they fail in their duties.

The Guild deals harshly with pirates, but those individuals who have a reputation for mercy and fair treatment of captives generally escape alive, after serving prison sentences. One of the House of the Star’s most important (and frustrating) jobs is the hunting down of infamous Skull members.

### The Sword League

Outside GuildSpace, many conflicts both large and small, can erupt, costing lives and destroying property. The professional soldier or mercenary is an integral part of these conflicts, selling services to either side and fighting for whoever pays the best. Many mercenary units operate in GuildSpace, and The Sword League is best described as a clearing house for mercenaries, coordinating employers with available units, helping to negotiate contracts, and making sure that contractual terms are obeyed.

The League is headquartered on the tropical world of Shosso, where lush continents house numerous warehouses, barracks and offices. Shosso is not a member of the Guild, and The Sword League is officially illegal within GuildSpace. This does not stop mercenaries from plying their trade, however, and as little wars between the nonaligned nations of Known Space increase in number and grow hotter in intensity, business has never been better.

### House of the Knife

The unofficial criminal underground of GuildSpace, the House of the Knife (so-called, but definitely not an official Guild house), along with several smaller rival



criminal organizations, controls much of the illegal activity within the Guild and beyond. Smuggling, large-scale theft, murder for hire, buying and selling of illegal drugs, gambling, and many other activities come under the control of the House of the Knife and its rulers, the Knife Masters. Membership is open to all races, and it is said that the Supreme Knife Master has a bodyguard consisting entirely of Dracon cyber-rogues and outcast Calémora.

## GREAT HOUSE

The Guild is governed in the tradition of Anthropos republican democracy, in which every adult citizen may vote, choosing both a planetary leader, and a delegate to the Council of the Great House, the governing body of the Guild itself. In exchange for protection and the benefits of Guild membership, each member world must pay a small percentage of its gross planetary product (typically no more than .01 percent) each year to help fund the Guild and support the Guild military.

The Great House Council meets daily, moderating disputes between member worlds, overseeing commerce and travel, and administering the Guild budget. Internal affairs are left to member worlds, so long as they abide by Guild law. While the Guild will not fight wars of conquest, any member world which breaks Guild law (suppressing basic freedoms, installing a dictatorship, etc.) is liable to be immediately occupied by Guild forces and have order forcibly restored.

## THE MILITARY

The defense of the Guild is in the hands of several houses. Individual member worlds are allowed to maintain their own militaries, but at strictly controlled levels.

## THE HOUSE OF DEFIANCE

All of GuildSpace is protected by this organization, which oversees and coordinates military space operations. New leaders of Defiance are selected from veterans and promising members of the military chapters, so military leadership in the Guild is usually highly professional and intelligent. House Defiance is not immune to incompetence, so a few unqualified political appointees and toadies have been known to slip through, much to the frustration of the ordinary rankers.

The Guild Navy (as the House of Defiance is commonly called) is responsible for interstellar transport and combat. The fleet currently controls over 15,000 starships, varying in size from five-crew corvettes to massive, wormhole-generating dreadnaughts capable of

destroying entire enemy fleets and blasting planets to rubble. This tally doesn't even begin to log all of the one and two man fighters which serve in the navy. The house is divided into seven fleets, each patrolling a different sector of GuildSpace.

### First Fleet

Home world: Guild home

Commander: Admiral Atrias (Anthropos)

Forces: 1000 corvettes  
750 destroyers  
400 light cruisers  
300 heavy cruisers  
200 battleships  
100 light carriers  
60 heavy carriers  
60 dreadnaughts  
20 super dreadnaughts  
10 warmoons

**Mission:** Without doubt the most powerful Guild fleet, the First (also known as the "Home" Fleet) is responsible for the security of the capital world of Guild home. The lessons of the Arthirian Invasion have not been lost on Guild strategists, and as a result, the Guild home system has become a virtual fortress, bristling with every conceivable defensive system. First generally tends to stick in system, although destroyers and cruisers are often sent on patrols, and to maintain contact with the Fifth Fleet. Generally considered to be the finest personnel in the House of Defiance, First Fleet crew members stand ready to lay down their lives in defense of Guild home and with it, the Guild itself.

**Second Fleet**

Home world: Fravir

Commander: Admiral Ubik (Anthropos)

Forces: 650 corvettes  
 400 destroyers  
 250 light cruisers  
 150 heavy cruisers  
 100 battleships  
 40 light carriers  
 30 heavy carriers  
 20 dreadnaughts  
 4 super dreadnaughts

**Mission:** The Second Guild Fleet patrols Fravir Sector, the region containing Aerolk space, Calemor, the Zin-Shee frontier, and sections of the Dracan Holding. Needless to say, this is considered to be a "hot" sector, with plenty of potential conflict. Several unexplored stretches of space lie within Second Fleet's jurisdiction, and the deadly dangers of Aerolk space are a constant threat. The fleet has not seen action in over two years, but even the lowliest crew member realizes that conflict can break out virtually without warning.

**Third Fleet**

Home world: Shalimmah

Commander: Admiral Barri (Anthropos)

Forces: 750 corvettes  
 500 destroyers  
 300 light cruisers  
 200 heavy cruisers  
 200 battleships  
 60 light carriers  
 40 heavy carriers  
 40 dreadnaughts  
 10 super dreadnaughts

**Mission:** This well-equipped fleet patrols one of the two sectors with the most potential danger of any area of GuildSpace – the coreward half of the demilitarized zone between the Guild and The Empire. Contacts with Imperial, Arthirian, Dracan, and many other ships occur almost daily, and the beings of the fleet must maintain a high degree of alertness. Recent rumors of Imperial activity beyond the demilitarized zone have put Third Fleet on edge, and they are likely to react swiftly to any provocation. Should The Empire decide to break the treaty and invade, Third will be on the front line.

As if this were not enough, a portion of Third's patrol area lies along the border with the Dracan Holding, still considered by many to be a potential hot spot. Should relations between Guild and the Holding sour, Third will be the first to suffer.

**Fourth Fleet**

Home world: Gefe

Commander: Admiral Ivorra (Anthropos)

Forces: 650 corvettes  
 400 destroyers  
 300 light cruisers  
 250 heavy cruisers  
 80 battleships  
 40 light carriers  
 40 heavy carriers  
 20 dreadnaughts  
 6 super dreadnaughts

**Mission:** Fourth Fleet shares patrol of the demilitarized zone with Third, and is responsible for the sector rimward of the Arthirian Sphere. Among other threats, Fourth has to contend with the ever present malevolence of The Combine, and recent developments in The Empire have made Fourth Fleet personnel nervous, as well.

**Fifth Fleet**

Home world: Ysai

Commander: Admiral Kurr'hassa (Zin-Shee)

Forces: 550 corvettes  
 300 destroyers  
 200 light cruisers  
 100 heavy cruisers  
 50 battleships  
 20 light carriers  
 10 dreadnaughts

**Mission:** Fifth Fleet is the smallest in the House of Defiance. It serves primarily as a reserve unit, based on the centrally-located world of Ysai. Its secondary function is as a relatively quiet and restful posting away from the dangers and stresses of frontier patrols, and is often the destination of Defiance members upon rotation. This status may change, however, if the fleet is assigned to guard the strategic wormhole at Stronghold (see below). Another alternative which the Guild is considering is the construction of an eighth fleet, but no firm decision has been made.

**Sixth Fleet**

Home world: Ka

Commander: Admiral Omboro (vulpe)

Forces: 650 corvettes  
 400 destroyers  
 250 light cruisers  
 200 heavy cruisers  
 100 battleships  
 50 light carriers  
 40 heavy carriers  
 30 dreadnaughts

8 super dreadnaughts

**Mission:** The rimward frontier of the Guild, which contains the new home world of the House of Dha, is the most mysterious and unexplored region in GuildSpace. Admiral Omboro's ships must cover a broad area of space, and must be prepared for any eventuality. One of Sixth Fleet's major duties is to assist small exploration ships bound rimward by opening wormholes. Several important exploratory vessels have been sent rimward recently, and their return is anxiously anticipated.

### Seventh Fleet

Home world: Drennik

Commander: Admiral Kerns (Anthropos)

Forces:

- 500 corvettes
- 300 destroyers
- 200 light cruisers
- 150 heavy cruisers
- 100 battleships
- 60 light carriers
- 40 heavy carriers
- 30 dreadnaughts
- 5 super dreadnaughts

**Mission:** The Seventh Fleet patrols the counter-spinward boarder of the Guild, which occupies some of the most recently explored regions of Known Space. The Guild has plans to continue space exploration and expansion in this direction. Thus, Seventh's patrol area is likely to expand and with expansion come many new challenges and uncertainties.

The regions beyond are largely unexplored and still quite wild, containing as it does thousands of star systems and hundreds of habitable worlds. So far, several sentient races have been discovered here, as well as several lost Anthropos worlds. The Seventh Fleet is a rough and ready group, prepared to meet threats of any level. (After the adventure in this game box several Kryll will serve with the Seventh on a probationary basis).

### House of War

Estimates are that over 25,000,000,000 sentient beings serve in the House of war, also known as the Guild army. While actual organization varies from planet to planet, most of the house is organized into regiments averaging a thousand infantry or 100 armored vehicles. Regiments are identified by their number and world of origin.

Note that there is considerable variation within regiments, and some actually incorporate one or more types of the various chapters, including infantry, armored vehicles, artillery and transport. Some even have orbital fighter wings, attached from the Guild fleet.

Major arms of service in the House of War include the following.

**Infantry Chapter:** Most Guild infantry is mechanized – that is, transported from place to place in armored carriers. Guild infantry typically carry pulse-laser rifles and a variety of grenades, wear flak jackets and helmets. Only about half of Guild foot soldiers are Anthropos, the remainder made up of Draca, Zin-Shee and other races such as uruk and rakka.

**Armored Infantry Chapter:** Body armor of several levels is worn by some Guild infantry units. Units are organized for several different types of missions, from the nimble, flight-capable scouts, to the lumbering Destron. Some Draca now serve as armored infantry, but most are still Anthropos or rakka.

**Marine Chapter:** These highly-skilled troops specialize in initial planetary landings, boarding actions and special forces operations. Anthropos, Draca, and uruk are the most common troops serving in the Guild Marines.

**Armored Vehicle Chapter:** Guild armored vehicles vary greatly, as they are drawn from member-worlds with a variety of technological levels. Tracked and wheeled vehicles are not uncommon, but hover- and grav-tanks are preferred due to their versatility and speed. Armament varies from simple projectile-throwing guns to sophisticated laser, plasma or missile batteries.

**Artillery Chapter:** Most of the Guild's "big guns" are tracked or wheeled self-propelled artillery. Warfare has grown more mobile over the centuries, and static artillery positions are no longer practical. Guild artillery can fire shells of various dimensions, shoot plasma, ionic or laser bolts, and be used against ships in orbit.

### HOUSE OF THE GUIDE

Scouts, rangers, special forces, and other front-line elite troops are part of this house. Separate from the House of Defiance due to their independent mission and nature, the Guides work on their own, patrolling frontiers, checking out dangers, and reporting on any threats to the Guild. Operating far from major Guild worlds, the Guides are forced to deal with obsolete equipment, shortages, poor living conditions, and long periods of duty without compensation. Casualties in the Guides are high, but there is never any shortage of applicants. In all the Guild, only the House of Dha can claim to have finer members than the Guides.

## THE HOUSE OF DHA

The newest and most prominent military house is the House of Dha, formed only a few years ago to counter a growing threat from The Empire. To date, Dha's organization, equipment, home world, and its existence, are closely-guarded secrets, disclosed only on a need-to-know basis.

This is an independent military house, with its own infantry, vehicular, air and space arms, consisting of the best and the brightest from among all Guild races. The four Guardian races — Anthropos, Draca, Calemora and Zin-Shee — until recently made up the majority of Dha membership, but recent arrivals, the Shanask and Kryll, may soon attain this status as well.

Many major Dha operations are carried out by teams drawn from many different chapters. A given team may contain any combination of different chapters — Destron, marines, warriors, cyber-lords, warlocks, bio-warriors, Mensi, and so on, in combinations determined by the commanders of Dha as the most effective.

Dha's home base is the protoplanet Dha Prime (see Major Worlds), a blasted ball of rock located in the Acropolis stellar nursery, and orbited by six artificially-placed moons, one for each of the Guardians, (and one each for the Shanask and Kryll after the adventure in the game box). Here, the chapters of the House of Dha receive their training, and secret plans to thwart The Empire are drawn up.

## MAJOR WORLDS OF THE GUILD

Only the accountants of the Great House know how many worlds lie within GuildSpace. Currently, over 10,000 worlds belong to the Guild, and any attempt to catalog these in this limited space would be futile. Several major worlds exist, however, as the hubs of Guild activity, and the places where the most important events of Guild history take place. Several of these are described below.

### Guild home

Chosen due to its resemblance to old Url, home world of humanity, Guild home is now a protected park-world, with only a handful of cities above the surface. Guildhome's importance to the Guild is unimaginable, for it houses all the central governing apparatus, as well as the meeting place of the Great Council itself. Most major structures are located underground, but the Council meets in the vast, picturesque city called Centre, a gigantic settlement of over 10,000,000 inhabitants, which displays the art and architecture of a thousand worlds. The only major settlement on Guild home's

surface, Centre is devoted exclusively to the governance of the Guild.

The remainder of Guild home is little short of paradise, a green, fertile world virtually untouched by civilization. No settlement outside Centre has a population of more than 10,000, and most inhabitants are quiet, peaceful people (of many races) who have come here to help tend and oversee this world chosen as the most beautiful and peaceful in all of GuildSpace. The Guild home system is a bristling fortress, however, containing a ring of powerful orbital fortresses, squadrons of defense boats and space fighters in hidden lunar bases, and many other top secret defenses. Guild home serves as base to House Defiance's Seventh Fleet, generally referred to as the "Home" fleet. The harsh reality of the system's military defenses stands in sharp contrast to the pastoral beauty of Guild home itself.

### Seril

As the struggle against the Calemora grew longer and more brutal, the Zin-Shee relocated their capital to this small world a few light years from Calemor. In this way the Blood Feud, which occupied more and more of the Zin-Shee's resources, could be more efficiently overseen and managed.

When Guild forces ended the war, many Zin-Shee chose to join the Guild, most maintaining dual membership in both states. Seril was one of these, but the Zin-Shee Matriarchy could not tolerate the thought of its capital world lying within the borders of another stellar nation, and so moved its administrative center back to Sheapa, the race's original home world.

Seril, a lush jungle-world where the Zin-Shee can hunt and play endlessly, remains the defacto capital for those Zin-Shee who joined the Guild, and is now a magnet to those Zin-Shee who wish to change the ancient ways of conquest and slavery. Many Guild tourists enjoy visiting Seril, and the Zin-Shee are delighted to have them.

This world is also unusual in that it has no moons, and absolutely no tidal action. Its vast oceans are broad and still, disturbed only by thermal currents and wind-driven waves. Large coastal cities and extensive docks support a planet-wide oceanic transport network.

### Calemor

The home of the Calemora race is a gigantic, high-grav world, with the surface area equivalent to ten Arth-sized planets, orbiting a dim red giant star. The surface, still showing deep scars from the titanic battles of the Blood Feud, was originally a lush jungle, but today is a blasted desert. Temperatures vary from 150 degrees

during the day to sub-zero at night. Fierce dust- or (worse yet) gravel-storms ravage the landscape, while the atmosphere is harsh and only breathable for a few hours by Anthropos without artificial filters or supplemental oxygen supplies. The arid surface is crisscrossed with deep, craggy canyons and ravines, and rivers flow here only seasonally. The Calemora themselves, with the help of Guild techs and planetary engineers, have only just begun the monumental task of restoring their home to its original state.

Native life-forms are fully consistent with the harsh conditions of Calemor's surface – the world's dangerous predators include pouncers, a species of giant cat which can camouflage itself to match virtually any environment; dustsharks, enormous armored mammalian creatures which burrow beneath sand and gravel; and crestsnares, poisonous reptile-like beasts with psionic abilities to immobilize or deceive their prey (transported here during the Blood Feud).

The most prominent structures on Calemor are the giant pyramidal buildings known as Catongs, which serve as combination temples, social centers and martial arts training houses. Beyond this, the Calemora dwell in stone buildings, built low and strong to protect them from the elements.

## Kryll-Hive

The Kryll's strange world resembles a tremendous, greenish sponge, bristling with life forms, and bound together by long, filamentous tunnels used for travel and communication. The hives is a living thing, although it is not certain if it is a collection of small biological organisms, or a huge single life-form.

The entire "Hive World" can be moved by means of living propulsion units, or taken to hyperlight speed by globular glowing creatures which seem capable of generating a natural hyperspace field. This process is slow and consumes much energy, however, so most travel is undertaken by Kryll bioships.

The hive is a labyrinth of pulsating, animate matter, often intersected by channels or vessels carrying unknown organic fluids. Here and there, clusters or organs, nodes or glands grow along walls or floors. Small, independent insectile or slug-like creatures crawl everywhere, overseeing the health of the hive, cleaning passageways, consuming dead matter, and scuttling about on unknown errands. Pale Kryll workers walk the corridors, carrying important objects, doing their own maintenance work, building new corridors, and other more obscure things.

Despite this, the hives are wondrous places, where all life forms work together for the common good. At the center of each hive is a vast, pulsating entity that glows with a pale yellow light, providing light and power to

the hive. Close by, where she can take advantage of the entity's heat and light, lies the hive queen, a massive, highly intelligent being which oversees the health of the hive, laying eggs and producing new Kryll as they are needed. She is attended by several dozen drones, fertile males who see to her needs and fertilize her when required. Drones are non-sentient, blind creatures which are killed by hive warriors when the queen deems them no longer useful.

## Dha Prime

Near the rimward edge of GuildSpace lies the Acropolis Stellar Nursery where, uncounted thousands of years new stars are forming. Near the center of this dense, gaseous formation lies the protoplanet Dha Prime, where the stellar dust glows dimly with the light of a thousand young stars, and where the elite House of Dha has chosen to make its home.

Dha Prime itself is a rocky, airless wasteland onto which stellar dust rains constantly (enough so that, in a million standard years or so, Dha Prime itself will become a star). The bleak terrain is interrupted only by the massive, fifty-mile wide domed city of Glory. Here the legions of Dha are trained and housed. Architecture from a dozen races graces the streets of Glory, and in the vast barracks and fortresses of Dha, the finest warriors in the universe are trained.

In orbit around Dha Prime are the six moons, each representing a major House of Dha race. Originally, only four circled the planetoid, one each for the Anthropos, Draca, Calemora and Zin-Shee – the so-called “Guardian” races. These contained barracks, stardocks, administrative and recreational facilities for the various races, and served as headquarters for each race in its dealings with the House of Dha. Recently, however, a fifth moon, resembling a vast, shattered ball of black onyx, appeared, bringing with it a new race, the Shanask. Once misunderstandings with the Kryll were settled, a sixth moon in the form of a Kryll hiveship appeared, as well.

In addition to ground forces, Dha also maintains a small but potent fleet in the hangars and naval bases beneath the surface of the guardian moons. Spacecraft from all guardian races serve the Dha fleet, along with several new craft which incorporate secret Guild technologies and weapon systems including the strange bioship of the Kryll.

## Kalb

The computer planet of Kalb is home to House Gamah, the technological specialists of the Guild. Here, amid considerable secrecy, new tech devices and procedures are developed and old ones improved. Vast arrays of computers lie deep beneath the surface, analyzing potentials and performance of new devices, and pondering questions posed by Guild scientists. These computers can also be used in times of crisis, to analyze enemy attack patterns, determine the nature of unknown threats, etc.

The surface of Kalb resembles a vast industrial park with manicured lawns, small stands of trees, and low,

pleasant-looking buildings. Kalb was originally a sterile world when Gamah arrived here, and the present managed look was achieved over generations of careful cultivation. Most of the heavy manufacturing and computer labs lie below ground, where industrial emissions and toxic products are strictly monitored, collected and processed into useful chemicals.

## Fashim

Known as the machine world, Fashim resembles a single, planet-wide factory. Here Fashim lives, one of the few machine intelligences encountered by the Guild. The Fashim itself is a single, communal mind, made up of computers, intelligent machines and self-aware devices. Fashim does not know or remember its origin; most speculate that the planet was an ancient automated manufacturing center, possibly built by the Aerolk. After the masters left, the machines of the planet continued to evolve, eventually attaining a single self-awareness. The entity Fashim continued to follow its original programming, going through the motions of manufacture, despite the fact that nothing remained to build with. Old machines were repaired, replaced or recycled, and the planet was still chugging along single-mindedly when Guild explorers discovered it.

Fortunately for the Guild, Fashim retained its loyalty to living beings and its desire to serve, and now the world happily produces many mechanical and electronic devices for distribution throughout the Guild. These items are of high quality, but are not leading-edge technology, for Fashim specializes in tried-and-true manufacturing and devices with well-proven, easily duplicated designs.

Fashim was actually offered Guild membership, but was uninterested, preferring to continue building, modifying and designing. The delivery of an order for a new product, or the arrival of fresh raw materials (Fashim itself has been virtually stripped of any valuable resources) seems to bring the being great joy.

Those who have spoken with Fashim find it a warm, friendly individual, although it seems to have a one-track mind in regard to building and designing, and always wants to move the conversation in that direction.

## Torav

This world is remarkable in its singular lack of dangerous flora and fauna, as well as its lush, unspoiled beauty, ranging from the yellow and red forests of the northern latitudes to the blue-green jungles of the equatorial regions, its picturesque mountains, meandering rivers and colorful animal species.

While all of this would make Torav an outstanding vacation spot, the most remarkable feature of the world is its seas. Through a unique geological process, Torav's oceans are made up of a hyperoxygenated compound, enabling air-breathing species to actually "breathe" the water without serious effort or side-effects.

Of course, Torav has become a tourist paradise, with vast seaside (and undersea) resorts catering to hundreds of thousands of visitors per year. Guild control of the world is strict, however, for its unusual ecology and scenery are considered an irreplaceable treasure. Tourists are forbidden to enter proscribed areas, and their numbers are limited by Guild law. The waiting list to visit Torav is ten years long and growing, and many citizens of the Guild dream of visiting the world someday.

The most common visitors to Torav are Anthropos, Zin-Shee, and other mammalian species. Zin-Shee particularly love the world, as do the otter-like wurro. Reptilians and hunters like the Draca find little of interest on a planet where hunting is severely restricted, and the Calemora have no interest in vacations of luxury. Still, Torav is a remarkably cosmopolitan world, and its pleasant surroundings seem to induce peace and good-fellowship. The average visitor will easily encounter a dozen species in a single day, all living together happily, without strife or argument.

## Stronghold

Guild ships have for years been scouring the Imperial frontier for major wormhole routes to and from The Empire, routes which enemy forces might use for invasion. In an empty stretch of space near the very heart of GuildSpace, far from major planetary mass (where wormholes are extremely rare), the Guild located a wormhole directly linked to The Empire's frontier worlds, where most of their naval strength was concentrated.

Realizing that this gateway was far more useful to The Empire than to the Guild, and also surmising that The Empire knew of its existence, the Guild immediately began construction of an immense star-fortress, mined the region of space, and saw to it that several Guild capital ships were assigned there on a permanent basis. A squadron of warships nominally under the command of the Fifth Fleet now guards the wormhole, and the space-fortress, now called simply Stronghold, contains enough weaponry to blast any enemy craft emerging from the wormhole to scrap.

The entire area is heavily patrolled by star-fighters, and is strictly restricted to non-military traffic. Currently, the Guild is preparing to transport a warmoon into the region, to be used as new headquarters, either for the Fifth Fleet (normally kept in

reserve), or a new Eighth Fleet, whose job it will be to either defend the wormhole against The Empire, or enter the wormhole itself and fall upon The Empire from within.

## Url

The ancient home world of the Anthropos exists within GuildSpace, but it is not a member world. Preserved in its devastated state as a warning to the future, Url is a nightmare world devastated by the horrors of atomic warfare. A small research base and tourist center exists on Url's single moon, and each year many Anthropos come here to see the devastation, learn of the mistakes of the past, and contemplate how to avoid them in the future.

Url itself is quarantined, its surface observed by scientific stations in orbit around the planet. Scientists report that life appears to have returned to Url, but erratic atmospheric conditions and residual radiation prevent detailed scans. Exactly what form life has taken on Url, and how it has been changed by the effects of radiation and biological warfare cannot be known without actual manned expeditions to the surface and such missions are forbidden.

## Utopia

Many inhabitants of GuildSpace consider this world to be little more than a myth. Others think it will turn out to be nothing but a burned-out cinder stripped of all useful items. Whatever its true nature, whether it exists at all, "Utopia" is the name given to the prime world of the vanished Aerolk. Legend holds it to be a storehouse of super-science, possibly even an artificial world, where the mysterious Aerolk made their greatest discoveries and stored their greatest treasures. Located somewhere in the hazardous reaches of Aerolk space, well known to be laced with traps and deadly dangers.

There is no denying that those few who have braved Aerolk space and survived have brought back some amazing technological devices (such as T11's disruptor - see *SG, GMU personalities*). Still, the wonders of the few minor items scavenged from the ruins of Aerolk civilization pale before the possible treasures of Utopia, assuming the world exists at all.

## The Arthirian Sphere

After the holocaust which devastated old Url, many factions of humanity escaped to the stars. Among these were groups of military-oriented individuals, who believed that the war could have been avoided through martial strength and preparation. The war was not a failure of the military, they believed, but a failure of will. It had started because the combatants perceived weaknesses in their opponents, and would not have happened had all remained strong.

These survivors banded together and based themselves on the planet Arth, a world similar to the old home planet in many ways. Here, they created what they considered to be the perfect military state. Society was ranked and regimented, all citizens registered and classified. Arthirian starships set out, colonizing and conquering all surrounding worlds. At first, they encountered mostly other Anthropos worlds, most of which gave up with minimal struggle. As time passed, the Arthirians began to think that they were the only human civilization left in the galaxy.

Then, they encountered the Guild. This alliance of free-thinking, free-living worlds seemed to embody everything the Arthirians hated — they were soft, conciliatory, and stressed negotiation and compromise. It was compromise, the Arthirians believed, which had nearly destroyed humanity, and here were millions of Anthropos ready to start down that road once more! Plans for conquest were swiftly drawn up.

The struggle between Guild and Sphere was grim and bloody. When Arthirian ships were finally repulsed from Guild home, it became clear that the “soft,” “weak-willed” Guild was here to stay, and the Arthirians would have to live with it.

Fallout from the disastrous campaign against the Guild continued for decades. The Arthirian economy, stretched to the limit by a constant wartime footing, threatened to collapse. Inflation, unemployment and poverty all ran out of control. Revolts by individual worlds were suppressed only with great difficulty, and soon the Arthirian generals learned that sometimes even the strong must compromise.

Several major changes took place in Arthirian society over the years. Subject worlds were given limited autonomy. The absolute power of the military was curbed. Expansion was carried out through negotiation and treaty, although the Sphere still turned to conquest on occasion.

By the time The Empire was encountered, the Arthirians had evolved substantially from their militaristic origins, but remained a potent force. Fortunately, the Guild had outstripped their old enemy

and had nearly surrounded the Sphere. Thus, most of The Empire’s wrath fell upon the Guild, but the Arthirians defended themselves handily in several frontier systems, throwing back imperial scout forces. Realizing the danger of opening a second front in the war, The Empire, more or less, left the Sphere alone.

Seeing the danger of The Empire, Arthirian leaders (no longer all generals), covertly aided the Guild, funneling advanced weaponry and technology to those who were once their bitterest enemies. Still the Arthirians hedged their bets, remaining officially neutral, hoping to cut a good deal with The Empire should the Guild be defeated.

With The Empire’s sudden and unexpected withdrawal from combat came peace. Combatant forces fell back 500 light years, and the Arthirians were given the task of administering the resulting demilitarized zone.

This proved to be the turning point for the Sphere. With their somewhat more tolerant society, their impressive new military might (thanks to the Guild arms trade), and skill in logistics and administration, the Arthirians proved the perfect stewards of the uneasy peace which followed. The demilitarized zone (quickly shortened to “The Zone”) became a haven for traders and a crossroads where all species could travel and interact without the threat of violence. Arthirian patrol ships made the Zone one of the safest stretches of space in the galaxy, free from raiders, pirates, or petty warfare. For their trouble, the Sphere charges a one percent tax on all transactions, and is prospering in the resulting commercial boom.

The Sphere is a very different place now than it once was. A stern, martial spirit infuses most of its institutions, but the representative republic which emerged from the autocratic government of the past serves the people reasonably well. Despite inferior numbers, Arthirian ships and weapons are acknowledged as the finest in Known Space. Many Guild starships are constructed from Arthirian components, hulls or weapons, and the gradually-improving relations between the two former enemies may eventually result in the reunification of two major branches of Anthropos society.

### INHABITANTS

The Arthirians did not settle in a region of space as rich in life-forms as did the founders of the Guild. Most Arthirians are Anthropos, and only a dozen or so alien races have been found within the borders of the Sphere. Like the Guild, however, the Sphere still contains a substantial number of unexplored systems, some of which may yet harbor intelligent life.



Some alien races of the Sphere include the k'lak, a semi-aquatic race of crustaceans which defend themselves with potent bio-electric charges; the sheem, frail humanoids with highly developed telekinetic abilities; the drassk, black-furred carnivores with highly cunning natures; and the moriam, diminutive bat-like aliens with limited flight abilities and a fascination with mechanical devices. All of these races serve to some extent in the Arthirian military, and move with relative freedom throughout the Sphere and beyond. The drassk have especially become mainstays of Arthirian defense.

As in the Guild, Skrak and Kurg raiders trouble the Sphere, but Arthirian control of their region of space is surer than in the Guild, and their rate of success against the raiders is much higher than the Guild's.

## GOVERNMENT

The Sphere was originally ruled by a Council of Generals and Admirals, whose word was law, enforced by soldiers and starships. Soon, the generals came to see that some problems cannot be solved through intimidation at gunpoint. The massive economic disruption which followed the ill-fated invasion of GuildSpace swept many old-line generals from power, and the more enlightened and forward-thinking officers who followed them slowly opened the Sphere up to a republican form of government.

Each planet within the Sphere now elects a number of representatives based on its population, and this assembly then selects the council which will govern the Sphere for ten standard years. The council still has a great amount of power (its decisions can only be reversed by a three-quarters majority of the assembly), and many of its members are military officers, but the council is still a vast improvement over its predecessor.

Voting rights are also limited. Individuals can only vote if they have given at least two year's service to the Sphere, either in the military or some other civil service. An individual may request a branch of service, and if such a posting is available, the Sphere will usually allow it. If personnel are needed in another area, however, an individual's request can be ignored completely.

Over the years, the governments of individual planets have evolved, until a bewildering variety has emerged. Every sort of government, from near-anarchy to totalitarian dictatorship (the Sphere does not share the Guild's qualms about such things) can be found within the Sphere, although most worlds have governments roughly modeled on the Sphere council.

## THE MILITARY

The armed forces are still integral to Arthirian society, and they are without question the best trained and equipped in Known Space. Although both the Guild and The Empire are the Arthirians' numerical superiors, the Sphere's smaller area and better control of its military enable its forces to move about far more quickly and efficiently. Today, conflict between the Sphere and its neighboring states would be a long, drawn-out and bloody struggle.

Much of the Arthirian council is controlled by military officers, and the armed forces still receive the lion's share of the annual budget. They have taken to their new job as peacekeepers quite readily, scrupulously patrolling the Zone and impartially enforcing the terms of the Guild-Empire cease-fire. The major branches of the Arthirian military are described below.

## THE NAVY

The Arthirian navy has more than 4000 starships "under sail" and has 2000 more "in mothballs" ready for battle at short notice. Most of the Sphere ships are now engaged in patrolling the Zone, but some remain back in the Sphere, on the off-chance that the Guild or the Draca might launch a sneak attack (no one really believes this, but it is a good reason for maintaining a strong reserve). Currently, the Arthirian navy is organized into three main fleets, each subdivided into a number of flotillas. These are detailed below. All commanders are Anthropos unless otherwise noted.

### Fleet Vanguard

Home world: Emeh

Commander: Admiral Garrik

Forces: Three flotillas

#### *First Flotilla:*

Home world: Emeh

Commander: Rear Admiral Dorasco

Forces: 100 Patrol Frigates

100 Missile Boats

60 Light Cruisers

40 Heavy Cruisers

10 Light Carriers

5 Dreadnaughts

#### *Second Flotilla*

Home world: Torianis

Commander: Rear Admiral Shyn

Forces: 250 Patrol Frigates

150 Missile Boats

75 Light Cruisers  
50 Heavy Cruisers

*Third Flotilla*

Home world: Lyrri  
Commander: Rear Admiral Nolom  
Forces: 100 Patrol Frigates  
100 Missile Boats  
50 Heavy Cruisers  
10 Dreadnaughts  
1 Super dreadnaught

Fleet Vanguard is responsible for patrolling the coreward portion of the Zone. This is done by flotilla, with each serving a six-month rotation in the Zone. So far, the fleet has done an admirable job, stopping several smuggling operations and defusing at least one major confrontation. If The Empire crosses the frontier, however, Fleet Vanguard will be in no position to fight, and may simply fall back to Sphere territory.

**Fleet Sentry**

Home world: Opaz  
Commander: Fleet Admiral Tragir  
Forces: Four Flotillas

*First Flotilla:*

Home world: Opaz  
Commander: Admiral Sharakk (Drassk)  
Forces: 200 Corvettes  
150 Patrol Frigates  
100 Missile Boats  
75 Light Cruisers  
50 Heavy Cruisers  
15 Light Carriers  
10 Heavy Carriers  
5 Dreadnaughts

*Second Flotilla:*

Home world: Emmor  
Commander: Admiral Nargil  
Forces: 300 Corvettes  
250 Patrol Frigates  
150 Missile Boats  
100 Light Cruisers  
75 Heavy Cruisers  
20 Light Carriers  
10 Heavy Carriers  
10 Dreadnaughts  
2 Super dreadnaughts

*Third Flotilla:*

Home world: K'yllah  
Commander: Admiral Stonn  
Forces: 350 Corvettes

200 Patrol Frigates  
100 Missile Boats  
100 Light Cruisers  
75 Heavy Cruisers  
25 Light Carriers  
15 Heavy Carriers  
10 Dreadnaughts  
4 Super dreadnaughts

*Fourth Flotilla:*

Home world: Istar  
 Commander: Admiral Urbon  
 Forces: 100 Corvettes  
       75 Patrol Frigates  
       75 Missile Boats  
       50 Light Cruisers  
       50 Heavy Cruisers  
       15 Light Carriers  
       1 Dreadnaught

*Fifth Flotilla:*

Home world: Yzeen  
 Commander: Admiral Rekkana  
 Forces: 150 Corvettes  
       100 Patrol Frigates  
       75 Missile Boats  
       50 Light Cruisers  
       40 Heavy Cruisers  
       10 Light Carriers  
       5 Heavy Carriers  
       5 Dreadnaughts

Fleet Sentry is primarily a front line fleet, with enough striking power to badly batter an enemy who invades Arthirian space. So far, Sentry has not seen action, but the Arthirians, suspicious of The Empire, keep the fleet in top condition just in case.

**Fleet Prime**

Home world: Arth  
 Commander: Fleet Admiral Zesa  
 Forces: Five flotillas

*First Flotilla:*

Home world: Arth  
 Commander: Admiral Krushe  
 Forces: 200 Corvettes  
       200 Patrol Frigates  
       150 Missile Boats  
       100 Light Cruisers  
       50 Heavy Cruisers  
       20 Light Carriers  
       15 Heavy Carriers  
       12 Dreadnaughts  
       2 Super dreadnaughts

*Second Flotilla:*

Home world: Jamass  
 Commander: Rear Admiral Norok  
 Forces: 100 Patrol Frigates  
       50 Missile Boats  
       50 Light Cruisers

*Third Flotilla:*

Home world: Xalara  
 Commander: Rear Admiral Trellasa  
 Forces: 150 Patrol Frigates  
       100 Missile Boats  
       50 Light Cruisers  
       30 Heavy Cruisers

*Fourth Flotilla:*

Home world: Gereia  
 Commander: Rear Admiral Shaskaraia (Drassk)  
 Forces: 100 Patrol Frigates  
       100 Missile Boats  
       10 Heavy Cruisers  
       1 Dreadnaught

*Fifth Flotilla*

Home world: Icebox  
 Commander: Rear Admiral Elikkar  
 Forces: 150 Patrol Frigates  
       100 Missile Boats  
       40 Light Cruisers  
       20 Heavy Cruisers  
       10 Light Carriers

Fleet Prime is the Arthirian home fleet, kept close to the Arthirian core worlds. Relatively strong, Prime could hold its own even against an Imperial or Guild Fleet, but still lacks the capacity for long-term operations. Prime will only be sent into battle if The Empire invades the Sphere itself, otherwise it will stick close to home, even if the other fleets should go to aid the Guild.

**Fleet Hammer**

Home world: Enre  
 Commander: Admiral Horvath  
 Forces: Three flotillas

*First Flotilla*

Home world: Enre  
 Commander: Rear Admiral Yli  
 Forces: 200 Corvettes  
       150 Patrol Frigates  
       100 Missile Boats  
       40 Light Cruisers  
       20 Heavy Cruisers  
       10 Light Carriers  
       4 Dreadnaughts

*Second Flotilla*

Home world: Koge  
 Commander: Rear Admiral Remae  
 Forces: 150 Corvettes  
       100 Patrol Frigates  
       60 Missile Boat  
       50 Light Cruisers

40 Heavy Cruisers  
 20 Light Carriers  
 10 Heavy Carriers  
 8 Dreadnaughts  
 2 Super dreadnaughts

### *Third Flotilla*

Home world: Tesh

Commander: Rear Admiral Sorokk (Drassk)

Forces: 200 Patrol Frigates

120 Missile Boats

50 Light Cruisers

10 Light Carriers

5 Heavy Carriers

1 Dreadnaught

Fleet Hammer patrols the rimward portion of the Zone. This area has recently been much quieter than Fleet Prime's area, and many crew members are growing bored. Not certain whether to wish for action or for continued peace, the fleet continues its patrols, and in the event of Imperial attack, Admiral Horvath will probably content himself with hit-and-run assaults against the enemy as he falls back toward the Sphere.

## ARMY

Arthirian ground forces are mostly Anthropos, organized into infantry, mechanized, or armored divisions, with artillery and transport battalions attached as needed. The Arthirians have over 10,000,000,000 beings in arms, with typical forces and armaments described below. Few non-Anthropos races besides the Drassk are suited to ground combat. Most army members are of these two races.

**Light Infantry:** These unarmored, lightly-armed troopers are equipped with jump-packs for speed and mobility. They are most often used in reconnaissance roles, or for commando raids.

**Infantry:** "Leg" and mechanized infantry are similar to their guild counterparts, most often armed with blast or pulse-laser rifles and armored, at best, with flak jackets. Most platoons have at least two heavy weapons troopers armed with turbo-plaz, grenade launchers, or similar devices.

**Heavy Infantry:** Battlesuited Arthirian infantry are well-trained and skilled in combat, rivaling even the Guild marines and Destron troopers. The Arthirians are known to have a special fondness for this type of trooper, so they are proportionately more common than in GuildSpace. Arthirian heavies typically wear marine

or heavier armor, and carry turbo-plaz, grenade launchers or sonic disrupters.

**Armored Vehicles:** Most Arthirian tanks are hover- or grav-propelled, the less advanced wheeled and tracked designs having been scrapped or converted long ago. Unfortunately, such vehicles are expensive to build and maintain, so their numbers are comparatively low. Weapon systems include vehicle-class pulse lasers and missile batteries, with supplemental weapons such as pulse cannons or turbo-plaz as antipersonnel devices.

## MAJOR WORLDS OF THE SPHERE

### Arth

The capital planet of the Arthirian Sphere is very similar to Url, the Anthropos destroyed home world. Its four continents contain a wide variety of terrain and climate, from frozen tundra to tropical jungle. The Arthirians did not learn well from the past, however, and their militaristic government cleared vast stretches of forest and devastated large wilderness areas constructing military bases, factories and huge, grim, soulless cities for their citizens.

Although much of Arth has been built up and polluted, many today are trying to reverse the damage, preserving the remaining wilderness as parks and converting unused regions back to their original state. The factories and bases still remain, but some laws have been passed to help protect what remains of Arth as it was when the humans arrived.

Arth's cities are ugly stretches of steel and concrete. The largest city, New Victory, houses the assembly and council chambers, as well as offices for all major branches of Arthirian Government. The increase in poverty and decay brought about by the economic collapse following the war with the Guild has left large ghettos and poor sections, some almost totally lawless. New Victory itself is largely free from these ravages, mostly because poor and criminals are deported to other cities, or off planet. Despite the improvements in Arthirian society, Arth can still be a sad and unpleasant world.

### Starrak

This "world" is actually a vast asteroid belt circling a white giant star. Many valuable minerals and resources have been found in the belt, and several stable asteroids are large enough to house substantial populations. Starrak today serves as a mining system, and as a repair facility for Sphere starships. Civilians swarm through the belt, searching for the "glory rock" which will make them rich. The military patrols the area heavily, so there is little lawlessness, while civilians are kept well away from military facilities.

### Garmish

Once a relatively tranquil agricultural and mineral world, Garmish was suddenly the center of Arthirian attention when a mining excavation uncovered a gigantic alien artifact. Garmish was immediately quarantined, its inhabitants prevented from leaving, and

Sphere military and science teams dispatched to investigate.

Full excavation of the site is still underway, but what has been uncovered is incredible. The site's exact function is still a mystery, but it is clearly gigantic – nearly a hundred miles across – a network of tunnels, tubes, conduits, and unexplained rooms containing cryptic machinery, none of which can be coaxed to function.

Although the official explanation for the quarantine is a contagious plague on Garmish, rumors of the excavation have leaked out nonetheless, and some have even reached the Guild. Some Guild leaders are worried about what the Arthirians might find as the project continues, and have suggested sending a team from the House of Dha to investigate and, if possible, learn the structure's true nature.

### Jackpot

Originally called simply Stimson after its discoverer, this grassy, temperate world has since been renamed by its leaders in the hope that it will attract gamblers from across the Sphere and beyond. As might be surmised, Jackpot is a gambling world, its entire economy devoted to games of chance.

Jackpot's cities are garish nightmares of bright lights, holographic displays and hideously baroque buildings, and while its official population is only about ten million, this may be doubled or even tripled by the presence of tourists. Everyone, save a few individualists who live in small plains cities, ranching and farming, is involved in the gambling industry to some degree, and the gambling economy drives the planet.

Tourists come to lose money from both the Sphere and the Guild, and some even filter in from The Empire. Hundreds of races may be seen on the streets of Jackpot's cities, but as always, Anthropos make up the bulk of travelers, hoping to get rich quick. Zin-Shee and, surprisingly, Draca (who seem to enjoy risking their money as much as risking their lives) travel from the Guild in large numbers.

### Aquirus

Although the entire world of Aquirus is covered by water, and all its ecosystems are oceanic, the planet still supports a substantial population of Anthropos, who live beneath the waves, fishing, farming the sea floor, and mining the depths for valuable minerals.

Arthirian technology helps the inhabitants survive, but life on Aquirus is still difficult. The pressures of deep-sea living, the cramped quarters, the hard work and hazardous conditions all combine to keep tours of

duty on Aquirus relatively short. Still, there are fortunes to be made, and the produce of this world is famous throughout the Sphere.

Major exports include Aquirus shrimp, a large and succulent crustacean-like creature which swarms all the oceans in huge numbers; Drill-fish, a moderately sized creature which swims in large schools and can inflict serious damage with its serrated beak, but is delicious when broiled; numerous rare minerals; and glow-eels, another fish-like creature which shines varied colors in the darkness. Algae and seaweed are also cultivated here, and processed into cheap food for sentients, pets, and livestock.

As noted above, life on Aquirus can be dangerous, as many predatory beasts dwell in the planet's dark and frigid depths. Many of these are unknown, but two particularly terrifying species are the so-called "devil-whale," a species which can reach lengths of a thousand feet or more, and often raid Arthirian settlements with apparently malevolent intelligence, and "shark rays," bat like swimmers with huge mouths, sharp teeth and voracious appetites.

Some explorers claim to have seen other monstrosities at great depths, and even suggest that an unknown alien race dwells in the trenches, plotting against the Anthropos invaders and waiting for their moment to strike. Most of these stories are simply legends, but some inhabitants look uneasily to the unplumbed depths of Aquirus' deep trenches and wonder...

## Icebox

This snow-covered world where winds howl and the temperature never rises above freezing is also an important source of garathium, a major starship hull component. Domed settlements house thousands of workers, and deep, heated mineshafts tunnel far beneath the surface. A vital world to the Arthirian military, Icebox is guarded by Prime's fifth flotilla.

Several disasters — mine collapses, explosions and life-support failure — have killed hundreds of workers and severely disrupted garathium production. Although it may well be that Icebox is simply experiencing a string of bad luck, some suggest that Empire saboteurs are trying to cripple the Arthirian military prior to a major invasion of both the Guild and the Sphere.

So important have Arthirian components become to Guild shipbuilding that the disasters on Icebox have begun to affect the Guild fleet, slowing completion schedules and forcing the outright cancellation of planned warships.

Icebox continues to be an important world, and security has been increased to deal with possible saboteurs. The current troubles on the world have led

some Arthirian leaders to speculate that The Empire is planning a major attack soon, on both the Guild and the Sphere.

## The Company

Not all the human refugees from Url were dedicated to democracy, or believed in peace through strength. Some believed in the power of trade and the omnipotence of the credit. These individuals combined to create a new organization, known simply as "The Company."

The simple commercial exploitation of humanity was not enough for The Company – its goal was to eventually have every Anthropos buying nothing but Company product, thus cornering the market on the largest monopoly imaginable.

As the years passed, The Company grew more and more powerful, absorbing rivals, controlling governments from behind the scenes, and buying and selling worlds the way children trade marbles. Secure in its power, The Company began construction of the gigantic, flying worldship known today as "Headquarters." Based outside of GuildSpace and well beyond Guild authority, The Company continues to strive for total financial domination of Known Space.

The Company's major products today are leading-edge, high-tech items such as computers, communicators, hand scanners, Q-cells, ultra-lock gear, and so on. While no one doubts that Company tech is the highest available, the organization itself is not well-liked. All the same, billions of consumers buy Company products each day, further swelling corporate coffers.

### STRUCTURE

The term "government" does not really apply to The Company. Organized along corporate lines, The Company has a CEO, Board of Directors, and Stockholders, all of whom exert influence in direct proportion to their power within The Company. Each year, the Board of Directors selects the CEO (Chief Executive Officer). Board membership is for life; when a board member dies or retires, the surviving members choose a new board member from the ranks of stockholders.

Many board members have had cybernetic implants, or have had their lives artificially prolonged, simply to remain in power. Several board members exist solely within the confines of computer arrays, where their consciousness were transferred before death. While this increases a board member's life span almost indefinitely, it does not completely eliminate openings in board membership. Particularly bad board members – those who habitually miss meetings, for example – can be removed by a two-thirds vote of the other board members.

Also, with a near-immortal group in control of the board, some other board members have been known to resort to assassination in order to remove a troublesome member who is, for example, blocking an important vote. Ambitious stockholders sometimes attempt assassination, hoping to gain promotion, but such attempts are successful only rarely.

Almost all Company stockholders are Anthropos. A handful of alien races holds some influence in The Company, but their presence is insignificant. In the vast majority of cases, The Company is an Anthropos operation.

The Company's primary goal today is to purchase control and influence throughout Known Space. Company operatives purchase stock in Guild corporations, sphere ship building, and imperial slave trade. Company agents bribe, cajole, blackmail or threaten their way into positions of authority with local governments. The Company has interests on virtually every significant world – a common proverb states that "The Company is Everywhere."

### MILITARY

The Company makes extensive use of mercenary troops through the good offices of the Sword League. They also maintain "security forces," often armed and armored every bit as well as the finest Guild regiment. A few Company-owned starships are equipped for combat, although Headquarters is a virtual star-fortress, capable of withstanding the harshest of assaults.

Yet, most of The Company's forces are geared toward internal security – they are not a military power and, in fact, disdain the use of overt force, considering it unprofitable.

### MAJOR WORLDS AND HOLDINGS

The Company directly controls only a single "world", the artificial planet called Headquarters. Other possessions consist entirely of stock in corporations, influence in government circles, or direct political control of cities, continents or worlds. These holdings are vast, indeed, but no one knows their full extent. The Company can appear anywhere in Known Space, even within alien states such as The Empire. The central world of Headquarters and several of its branch businesses are described below, with further holdings left to the imagination.

#### Headquarters

This titanic artificial planet current lies beyond the rimward edge of Guild territory near The Combine.

From the outside, it resembles an irregular mass of machinery, towering structures, conduits, piping, airlocks and docking ports. Inside, Headquarters varies from the grim, gray barracks inhabited by ordinary workers, to the pleasant, if small, apartments of stockholders and the airy, luxuriant quarters of board members. Headquarters is capable of sublight flight and has been known to travel over interstellar distances, whether through the use of wormhole technology or some unknown new propulsion device (possibly even a Company version of the mysterious quantum drive), no one knows.

Comforts and privileges rise swiftly as one's status increases. Workers are paid a minimal salary, with fees for food and lodging deducted, leaving each with a pittance to spend in the numerous bars, cheap trivid houses, peep shows, and other tawdry establishments which crowd the workers' areas. The Company's policy is to keep the lower classes sated with cheap entertainment and fogged with drugs and intoxicants to prevent revolts, strikes or other disruptions. Attempts to strike, or to organize workers, are dealt with ruthlessly, with offenders summarily executed, or psionically altered into mindless drones for work in high-hazard areas of the city.

Stockholders work hard to maintain their interest in The Company, and to earn more (hoping, eventually, for the near-impossible dream of board membership). Their entertainments and privileges increase with the amount of stock owned — private trivid, exclusive parties, holographic environmental simulations, space cruises and travel throughout Known Space — all this and more is reserved for influential stockholders.

The Company even sanctions a form of slavery, in which a stockholder can, with permission from a board member, "appropriate" one or more ordinary workers for use as servants, mechanics, manual laborers, or even concubines. Such behavior is disliked by the workers, but the chaotic state of lower-class society prevents action by anyone save small, easily controlled groups.

Board members and CEOs live in conditions of unimaginable excess, with no indulgence denied them. Members who attend the monthly meetings may do as they please with their leisure time, so long as they do not endanger The Company. Removal of a board member is rare, but not unheard of. A board member who is demoted back to stockholder is the subject of intense ridicule and prejudice, and often has to live as a pariah. Removed board members have been known to win their way back to their former status, but this is also very rare.

## Galactic Weapons, Ltd.

A wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company, Galactic is a source for many advanced, if expensive,

high-tech weapons. Some of the best heavy pulse laser and blaster weapons come from Galactic, and current rumor claims that the corporation is about to market a new line of plasma-powered weapons, all self-contained and capable of functioning without the cumbersome plasma precipitator pack which drives most other plasma weapons.

Galactic's major munitions factories are located on a number of small worlds outside of GuildSpace. Conditions on these worlds are not good, with the vast factories and warehouses covering major portions of the worlds' continents, but pay is said to be good. Unfortunately, in exchange for generous salaries, The Company demands absolute loyalty, and imposes unbreakable, ten-year contracts, during which time workers are virtual prisoners on the factory planets.

## Universal Pharmaceuticals

Another Company enterprise, Universal produces many impressive wonder drugs and devices, including the famous Genesis Capsule, and advanced medical monitors. The secrets of the production of these items are generally kept well-guarded, and any competitor attempting to learn how to manufacture them generally meets with grief at the hands of The Company's ruthless Security arm.

Universal runs pharmaceutical plants on a number of worlds, including several within GuildSpace. Those plants within Guild jurisdiction are managed in scrupulous compliance with Guild law, with workers well treated and fairly paid. Still, many Guild officials believe that Universal plants are havens of industrial spies, smugglers, and illegal drug manufacture. So far, however, no one has ever been able to prove a thing. Non-Guild plants are run in the same manner as other Company enterprises, that is to say, with extensive benefits for owners and managers, and near-slavery for ordinary laborers.



## The Empire

Ruled by the humanoid Katha, The Empire is the oldest state in Known Space, and continues to be the deadliest threat to the Guild. The Katha's history is one of constant struggle. After several centuries of expansion, they had accumulated enough slave races to turn the actual task of warfare over to trusted subjects, with suitable Katha oversight, of course.

The Empire which encountered the Anthropos in 2602 was a confident and self-assured state which had, over centuries of internal conflict and endless battles, honed its forces into deadly engines of destruction and, despite occasional setbacks and defeats, had always triumphed.

The ferocity of the imperial assault caught both Guild and Sphere totally by surprise. In a few years, the Guild frontier was pushed well back, and the Sphere itself began to suffer imperial probing attacks. Finding Arthirian space a tough nut to crack, The Empire concentrated on the Guild, and the first 80 years of the war saw a near-unbroken string of imperial victories.

Then, inexplicably, the impossible happened. Without warning, imperial forces withdrew from their positions, abandoning whole worlds to the Guild. Imperial representatives arrived at Guild home, asking for peace. Although many suspected that a greater, more threatening conflict elsewhere demanded imperial attention, no one knew for certain why The Empire had stopped fighting.

Intensive negotiations followed, in which The Empire agreed to return numerous captured worlds, and establish a 500 light year-wide demilitarized zone (eventually to become known simply as "The Zone"), administered by the Arthirians.

Of course, The Empire never intended the peace to last. Every Katha expects the war to be renewed someday, and the recent development of the so-called Imperial super-soldiers has led the Guild to suspect that a new conflict is imminent. The Guild's reaction has been to increase military alertness, consider the creation of an eighth House of Defiance fleet, and, most significantly, form the House of Dha.

While there is still a possibility that the state of armed readiness on both sides will continue indefinitely, most believe that a second Empire invasion is unavoidable. Recent fleet movements have suggested that The Empire is preparing to strike. Even as the Emperor built up forces along the frontier, however, individual ships and ground units were pulled out and reassigned elsewhere, leading some to suspect that The Empire has another conflict, possibly a slave revolt or border dispute with an unknown rival state.

## INHABITANTS

While the Guild contains hundreds of races, most observers believe that The Empire contains literally thousands. Most of these inhabitants are limited to single worlds paying tribute to The Empire and occasionally furnishing slaves, while a handful are considered trustworthy enough to be given the freedom to travel throughout The Empire.

The master race of The Empire is the Katha. These beings resemble gray-skinned Anthropos with tough, bony growths covering much of their bodies. This covering acts as a natural form of armor, but Katha are not adverse to wearing armor of all sorts. A natural warrior race, they are stronger than Anthropos, and have a good affinity for technology.

Over the centuries, the Katha have mastered the art of pitting their enemies against each other, and devastating enemy forces before battle has even begun. In all likelihood, imperial agents are responsible for at least some of the unrest within the Guild, and possibly for the conflicts within the Dracon and Zin-Shee states. All this may be an attempt to soften up the Guild and its allies prior to a renewal of hostilities.

Several dozen races have achieved high status (known in the Kathan language as "honored slave" status), and are allowed to serve The Empire as soldiers, pilots and civil servants. In fact, in many parts of The Empire, a visitor will go for weeks without seeing a single Katha, while honored slave races may be seen in abundance.

After the Scattering, numerous groups of humans settled in what was to become imperial territory. Today, Anthropos are an honored slave race, and are used in large numbers against the Guild and other Anthropos enemies. Guild and Arthirian Anthropos consider these individuals to be traitors, although methods of dealing with them are quite different. The Arthirians are inclined to kill imperial Anthropos on the spot (although they cannot as long as they are responsible for peace in the Zone), while most Guild members consider them to be deluded and brainwashed, in need of understanding and treatment. Despite this, Guild Anthropos fight the "traitors" with great enthusiasm when given the chance.

Other honored slave races include the murrk, a massive, ogreish race which seems not to mind imperial domination so long as they are allowed to fight; the haochann, an amphibious species with a special talent for astrogation; the da-han, slender reptilians resembling egg-stealing dinosaurs who serve as technicians, traders and couriers; the mBari, tall, muscular humanoids with a culture similar to the Guild Calemora; the jangiri, badger-like spacefarers who are often found as imperial pilots; and the per'kiff, omnivorous mammalians with

delicate fingers who possess special skills at electronics and mechanical repair.

All these species (and many more) seem to have accepted their status in The Empire, and serve faithfully. In exchange, The Empire asks only minimal tribute from their worlds, and rarely mistreats members of honored slave races.

Some honored races, in fact, are growing restless, not because of mistreatment, but because The Empire is becoming less "imperial." Many, particularly those members of warrior races, feel the Katha are growing soft, and not ruling or conquering with the same fervor and skill as in the past. Eventually, some of these races may grow to believe that they are the true defenders of imperial traditions, and attempt to replace the Katha "for their own good." When this will happen, or whether it will happen at all, is anyone's guess. A new war with the Guild or Sphere will undoubtedly distract the dissidents' attention, at least for a while.

## GOVERNMENT

Citizenship in The Empire has evolved along an interesting path. The Katha are the only true "citizens" of The Empire, for they choose leaders and make all important decisions. Other races are confined to their home worlds, expected to provide tribute, and occasionally raided for slaves.

The caste of honored slaves has grown in size and prominence over the centuries, however, to the point where non-Katha control and manage most important imperial agencies, services and organizations. Nominal Katha oversight is provided, but the once-proud warrior race is now content to bask in the luxuries of The Empire and leave the tough jobs to others.

As to the identity of the Emperor, the Guild can only speculate. It is possible that he (or she, or it) is not even Katha. Rumors abound that the mysterious despot is a cloaked, alien figure who can wield forces similar to the Shanask's *Sorce*.

It is known that the Emperor is advised by a nebulous group called the Council of State. No one knows the identity of this council, and speculation is rife that it is dominated by honored slave races, contains one or more unknown life forms, or is made up entirely of sentient computers, for whom the emperor is a mere figurehead.

There is no doubt that the emperor controls vast, mystical forces. Enemies disappear or are reduced to gibbering idiots. Assassins are slain by unknown means before they even get in sight of the Emperor. The Emperor seems to know what visitors want before they speak. He detects plots against him almost as they are

hatched. Cloaked or concealed Council members also control weird powers, further enhancing their frightening reputation.

Member worlds have a wide variety of governments, and so long as they pay tribute and provide slaves and goods when requested, they are left alone. The imperial military will sometimes raid worlds suspected of holding back on tribute, and in this way Empire forces stay in training.

## THE MILITARY

The imperial military is considered the most important branch of The Empire. Without their fleets and armies, the Katha believe, the ruthless alien races of the outside would waste no time dismembering The Empire and reducing the Katha to vassals.

Clearly, The Empire's forces are vast and powerful. The emperor can bring overwhelming force to bear along the Guild frontier, and there are few, if any, reliable estimates of what the forces currently arrayed against GuildSpace could be.

Some observers have noted a constant siphoning off of border garrisons, however, as if another, continuous, but low-level conflict is keeping The Empire busy.

The nature of this conflict is open to speculation, but most Empire-watchers feel it is probably a series of slave revolts and border raids by such powers as the Skraks and kurgs. Whatever the precise identity of the conflict, it has done the Guild a favor by delaying what many consider to be the inevitable resumption of hostilities by The Empire.

## THE IMPERIAL NAVY

The assignments of the various fleets along the Guild frontier are described below. Note that these are only the known forces — The Empire may have considerably more ships and fighters at its disposal. Any of the following force estimates are subject to change, and much of this information is outdated or inaccurate, so caution should be used in evaluating it.

### Frontier Fleet Sakur

Home world: Unknown

Commander: Great Swordmaster Echak (Katha)

Forces: Six (or more) fleets, 40 sub-fleets, 100 squadrons

### *Fleet Kra*

Home world: Unknown

Commander: Swordmaster Ree (haochann)

Forces: 1000 Knifeships  
500 Bladeships  
250 Ramships

200 Lancers  
150 Gunships  
100 Hatchetships  
50 Globeships  
1 Slavemaster

Fleet Kra is known to be one of the major strike fleets of the Guild/Arthirian region. Although several ships have been withdrawn to other fronts recently, Kra continues to rehearse for assault and planetary invasion, operations which will be vital should The Empire attack the Guild. Ree is a haochann known for his skill in fleet maneuvers; he is best known for utilizing short-jump wormhole navigation to bring his fleet to within extremely short distances of enemy planets or ships and attacking with near-total surprise.

#### *Fleet Harak*

Home world: T'Raa  
Commander: Swordmaster Krrr (jangiri)  
Forces: 2500 Dartships  
500 Knifeships  
250 Ramships  
200 Lancers  
100 Gunships  
100 Globeships  
20 Homeships  
1 Slavemaster

The large number of small, one- or two-man dartships indicates that Harak is intended primarily as a defensive fleet, or at least expected to harry and delay enemy advances. Little is known about the jangiri commander, Krrr, save that it is extremely unusual for someone of his race to advance so far in the imperial fleet.

#### *Fleet Zor*

Home world: Etabak  
Commander: Swordmaster Alir (Anthropos)  
Forces: 750 Daggerships  
500 Swordships  
500 Bladeships  
250 Lancers  
200 Ramships  
150 Gunships  
100 Globeships  
1 Slavemaster

Zor is a reserve fleet which rarely leaves its home base of Etabak. Its numbers have been reduced lately, as forces are transferred from the Guild front.

#### *Fleet Mivoz*

Home world: Unknown

Commander: Unknown  
Forces: 500 Knifeships  
500 Daggerships  
300 Swordships  
300 Lancers  
200 Ramships  
50 Globeships  
1 Slavemaster

Mivoz has arrived in the region only recently, so force estimates are somewhat speculative. Its base and commander are unknown, but there is some evidence that Mivoz is under the command of a Katha swordmaster (who, of course, outranks all non-Katha in the fleet regardless of their "slave" rank), indicating that this may be the command fleet for any invasion attempt.

#### *Fleet Stara*

Home world: Tularamu  
Commander: Unknown  
Forces: 1000 Knifeships  
600 Bladeships  
400 Swordships  
200 Lancers  
200 Ramships  
50 Globeships  
1 Slavemaster

Another relatively new fleet, Stara has been assigned to the world of Tularamu, close to both the Zone and several strategic wormhole sites.

#### *40 Sub-fleets*

Homeworlds: Vary  
Commanders: Vary  
Forces (typical):  
150 Lancers  
100 Gunships  
100 Hatchetships  
25 Globeships

Imperial sub-fleets are small units assigned as reinforcements or supplemental forces to larger imperial units. The forces above represent a typical sub-fleet only. Several are known to have squadrons of daggerships and homeship carriers assigned to them. Sub-fleets are often used for patrol duty, with one or more squadrons attached.

#### *100 Squadrons*

Homeworlds: Vary  
Commanders: Vary  
Forces (typical):  
500 Dartships  
5 Homeships

## 5 Lancers

Most of The Empire's small dartships are assigned to these mobile, independent squadrons. A typical squadron contains five homeships, each with a complement of 100 dartships, and five to ten lancers for firepower and support. Like sub-fleets, squadrons are attached to larger units as needed.

## ARMY

Imperial ground forces are organized into large formations known as "Fists," each roughly equivalent to an Arthirian regiment. Fists are different from Arthirian or Guild units as each is a self-contained entity, with infantry, armor, artillery, transport and air support (The Empire has no separate air arm). Each fist, therefore, functions as a small "army" unto itself.

**Infantry:** Murrk Slain and mBari dagger-brethren make up the bulk of imperial infantry, although numerous other races serve. Slave troops generally carry blast or disc rifles and fight unarmored (murrk Natural Armor is substantial, however). Smaller races serve in the infantry as scouts and raiders.

**Powered Infantry:** Some mBari and murrk are trusted enough to serve as powered infantry, but the bulk of this arm is still reserved for those Katha who retain the old martial spirit. Many Katha powered suits are very old (although they have been upgraded and improved to modern standards) and hold much importance to the warriors who wear them. Katha powered infantry varies from marine to Destron-class and can carry virtually any combination of heavy weapons, including the deadly Katha disc autocannon.

**Armored Vehicles:** The Empire does not use crewed armored vehicles as the Guild and Sphere know them, preferring instead to send remotely-controlled drones or intelligent cybertanks against the enemy. These terrifying devices never retreat, will not acknowledge damage until totally destroyed, and never question The Empire's orders. Each cybertank appears to be unique, built on a standard chassis, controlled by a living brain, with different orders and armament depending on its mission. Weapon systems include plasma and pulse cannons, missile batteries and a host of small anti-personnel weapons.

## MAJOR WORLDS OF THE EMPIRE

No one knows for sure how many worlds the Kathan Emperor controls. Conservative estimates claim

in excess of ten thousand, with similar numbers of subject races. Much of The Empire remains unknown to Guild scientists, but some of the more prominent worlds known are described below.

### Katha

Originally called Yorek, this world was renamed after its conquerors and masters. Katha is home to the Emperor, the Council of State, and all central offices of the imperial bureaucracy. Once, only Katha and their slaves could live here, but in recent centuries, the number of honored slaves without direct Kathan control has skyrocketed, almost to the point where the Katha themselves are outnumbered.

Katha is a harsh world, with vast, rocky deserts, forests filled with tough (often carnivorous) plant life, and shallow oceans alive with deadly carnivores. The Katha themselves consider it a virtual paradise, and wish that all worlds resembled their beloved home planet.

The sprawling city of Nrisk is the center of Kathan authority. In a great palace, the size of a small city itself, the Emperor lives and issues the edicts which govern The Empire. Built over centuries, the palace is now a motley jumble of Kathan architectural styles, all of them harsh and, to Anthropos eyes, quite ugly.

The rest of Nrisk is filled with Katha and their slaves. Most Katha do little work, preferring to hunt, travel, engage in mock duels and dream of their glorious imperial past. Honored slave races toil throughout the city, taking care of the day-to-day running of both world and The Empire.

### Tularamu

This would not normally be a valuable world, except for its close proximity to both the Demilitarized Zone and several important wormhole routes into the Guild. Tularamu's system consists of airless planets with no mineral resources and a bright white dwarf star.

The Empire's Fleet Stara has recently been assigned to Tularamu, and extensive naval facilities have been under construction for several years. Guild strategists believe that if a strike against GuildSpace is imminent, it will originate here.

### Rilsk

Colloquially called "mudworld," Rilsk is a planet of constant rain and moist, swampy conditions. Nevertheless, rich mineral deposits lie beneath its muddy surface, and extensive imperial mining

operations produce billions of imperial credits in revenue each year.

Conditions on Rilsk are hellish, and most workers are slaves or condemned criminals. Deep mudseas can swallow entire dredging platforms; mudstorms ravage the surface each morning and evening; deadly mudworms (carnivorous, three-meter long annelids), snappers (toothy, large-mouthed fishlike predators), and raspies (tiny creatures resembling tadpoles which travel in swarms of thousands and can rasp flesh from bone in seconds) make the mud seas deadly; and few permanent installations can long withstand the pressure of the mud-currents and storms.

Imperial offices stand on the few pieces of solid ground, and administrators venture into the mud as little as possible. A few Katha live here, considering the posting little more than dishonorable exile, while da-han administer the facility and murrk guards oversee work crews. Rilsk is, for the most part, a place of despair and death, and those sent there rarely return.

## Phytous

Phytous was once a lush, green world under Guild control, with myriad life-forms and many breathtaking wonders. Today, its beauty has been pushed to a few isolated corners of the world as The Empire has stripped it for timber, plant fiber, food animals and minerals.

To date, most of the exploitation has stopped, but what remains of the once vast forests and peaceful rivers are blasted piles of mine tailings or sandy, desertified wastelands. These wastelands are now used as prison areas for criminals, political dissidents and other "incorrigibles."

Murrk overseers manage the world, but the criminals are generally left alone to go their own way. The wastelands of Phytous have developed into a brutal, kill-or-be-killed society, with roaming bands of raiders attacking each other for food or fuel, and fighting over meaningless scraps of worthless land. Supplies are delivered monthly, but The Empire sends less than the inhabitants need for survival, intending to keep them in a constant state of conflict, and to keep the overall population down.

Skrak and Kurg smugglers sometimes deliver outdated weapons, vehicles, food or equipment to the world or, for fantastic (and for the prisoners, unattainable) prices might be willing to smuggle escapees off-world. An imperial sub-fleet is based nearby to deal with such eventualities, so smuggling to and from Phytous is a risky undertaking.

## Tnemmo

This dirty, gray industrial world is the source of most manufactured goods in the region. Anthropos and da-han managers oversee legions of slaves who labor to produce vehicles, computers, tools and other necessities, while the ever-present murrk maintain the peace. The world's endless, grim corridors and grimy barracks are indeed depressing, and insanity is a common problem among the slaves.

The peace on Tnemmo is always uneasy, for the slaves know that they hold a considerable amount of power – should they revolt and destroy their machines, this entire imperial province will suffer. Revolts and demands for better conditions are dealt with cautiously, for widespread massacres of workers will undoubtedly result in the crippling of the planet's valuable industries. While conditions here are grim, and the slaves of Tnemmo labor ceaselessly, their treatment is somewhat better than elsewhere in The Empire.

Rumors claim, however, that Tnemmo is about to be taken over by the imperial military and converted to the production of armaments and the repair of starships. If another imperial fleet moves into the area, it could signal a major change in Tnemmo's status, and make it an even more important world than it is now.

## Eidern

Little is known of this strange, blackened world; Guild scouts have only recently returned with images of the place. Eidern is remarkable for the heavy imperial defenses which surround it, and for the remarkable resemblance it has to the Shanask moon which appeared in orbit around Dha Prime.

The imperial guards may be present to keep something in as much as to keep others out. Forces sent to land on the planet have never returned, probes malfunction and crash, and the imperial globeship *Peril* which attempted to bombard Eidern's surface vanished instantly and completely. No wreckage or survivors have been found.

While no Guild ship was able to get close enough to observe the world's surface, it is clear that The Empire fears something here.

## The Dracan Holding

Tested in the crucible of their hellish home world, the Draca emerged as conquerors and judges of other races. Convinced that the only route to galactic survival lay in the culling of the weak and the advancement of the strong, the Draca took it upon themselves to test other races and exterminate those found wanting.

As the Draca have few equals in battle, most races were, indeed, found wanting. The Zin-Shee psi-cats were able to hold their own against the reptilians and were deemed worthy of survival, although the conflict continued for decades.

The Draca's ferocity might seem to make them a poor Guild ally, but when the two states met, cordial (if strained) relations ensued. Many wonder why. The Draca were notorious for their attacks on any race or state they encountered. So far, the only races to meet them in battle and survive with their freedom intact were the Zin-Shee and a handful of warrior races within the Holding. Dozens, if not hundreds of lesser races had perished beneath the Dracas' armored cyber-fist, and the Guild certainly seemed a likely target for future aggression.

Fortunately, the Guild had been well briefed in Dracan psychology by their new friends, the Zin-Shee. Initial contacts were carried out by Anthropos and Calemora warriors. Demonstrations of Guild military might were carried out for Dracan egg-mistresses, and dire (if subtly veiled) threats of bloody war and possible extinction were delivered in the savage, ceremonial fashion so favored by the reptile-men.

For a time, it was touch and go. Several Dracan cyber-lords favored an immediate attack to test the resolve of the new races, and to see if their threats were valid. Others (most notably the Dracan Egg-Mistress, Ukasherakk) felt that the Guild had adequately demonstrated its worthiness and deserved honorable treatment.

In the end, treaties of peace and non-aggression, but not outright alliance were signed. The Guild, in typically benevolent fashion, agreed that the Dracan Holding was off-limits, while at the same time, Draca cyber-warriors were allowed to enter GuildSpace, and even serve in the Guild military. When they learned of the House of Dha, the Draca demanded to be allowed to join, a demand which the Guild was, for once, happy to oblige.

### INHABITANTS

The vast majority of inhabitants of the Holding are Draca. Many other sentients were wiped out in the crusades of the past, and today only a few races survive.

Among these are the oro, tough humanoids with rock-like Natural Armor and the skrikka, burrowing creatures resembling upright moles. Having withstood Dracan attacks, these species were deemed worthy, and allowed to live, unmolested, on their home worlds. The Draca do not keep slaves, and find the practice in other races to be highly distasteful, and a sign of weakness.

### GOVERNMENT

Dracan government is as savage as the rest of their society. Advancement is through duel, with various rules depending on the position desired. Most duels are to first blood, but some are to unconsciousness, and particularly important ones are to the death.

The Dracan leader is called the Egg-mistress, after the ancient practice of each clan selecting a female warrior to defend egg clutches before they hatched. Duels for the position of Egg-mistress are very important, and are always to the death. The Egg-mistress has a special dispensation from death-duels, however. A fanatical band of 12-20 bodyguards of the Egg-mistress' clan guards the leader, and may fight in her stead should another desire to fight for the position. This way, a pretender must slay all of her rival's bodyguards before the final battle with the Egg-mistress, assuring that Egg-mistresses are the finest warriors imaginable.

It is considered dishonorable for an Egg-mistress to die a natural death. Should a mistress feel that death is coming, she will dismiss her bodyguards and fight all challengers directly. Eventually, the old Egg-mistress will be slain and a new one selected. The bodyguards of the old Egg-mistress return to their clan and the new Mistress chooses bodyguards from her own family.

Below the Egg-mistress, Dracan society is divided into clans, all tracing descent through female ancestry. There are thousands of clans throughout Dracan space, averaging 2,000,000 or so in number. Major clans, with populations of a billion or more, control entire worlds (called "lair"), while lesser families must share worlds. Succession to clan leadership is also by combat.

The Egg-mistress is supreme ruler, but the word of senior Cyber-lords is law within clans. Cyber-lords will always bow to the Egg-mistress' wishes, however, unless there is violent disagreement, in which case a cyber-lord will challenge for leadership.

A few known Draca clans of various sizes are listed below. There are many more clans and some are quite large.

Clan:	Hakariss
Home world:	Lair Hakkariss
Population:	2,000,000,000
Leader:	Cyber-lord Hakariss-Ra-Tur

The largest and most influential clan, Hakariss maintains the largest fleet and the most warriors of any Draca family. More Egg-mistresses have come from this clan than any other. The Hakariss are also very conservative, and are a major bastion of resistance against Guild influence.

Clan: Urkaa  
Home world: Lair Urkaa  
Population: 1,500,000,000  
Leader: Cyber-lord Urkaa-Mak-Aka-Na

Urkaa has always been Hakkaris' main rival for influence in the Holding. Urkaa Draca are somewhat more open minded, and many of them serve in the Guild. Several have openly broken with the Holding and now consider themselves to be Guild members, a situation which has caused Lord Mak no small embarrassment.

Clan: Akmakk  
Home world: Lair Akmakk  
Population: 1,000,000,000  
Leader: Cyber-lord Akmakk-Ka-Ro

Another powerful clan, Akmakk has distinguished itself in battle many times. Like Urkaa, many Akmakk have ventured to the Guild in search of adventure.

Clan: Kri  
Home world: Sharak  
Population: 250,000,000  
Leader: Cyber-lord Kri-Aa-Ra

Clan Kri maintains a small fleet, a small but powerful army, and shares the jungle-and-desert world of Sharak with three other smaller clans. Lord Aa has plans for improvement, however, and is actively considering becoming the first Draca clan to openly join the Guild. This is sure to infuriate many old-line clans, and possibly lead to open conflict, during which Aa hopes the Guild will be forced to intervene and, possibly, place Clan Kri in a position of authority.

Clan: Garak  
Home world: Zashara  
Population: 100,000,000  
Leader: Cyber-lord Garak-Nra-Ak

Garak shares crowded Zashara with a dozen other small clans. Like many smaller clans, Garak has allied with a large clan (in this case the relatively powerful Clan Sahir) in order to survive.

## THE MILITARY

The Dracon military has changed little since the race's primitive origins. Fighting units are organized along clan lines, with each clan having its own warriors,

vehicles, starships, equipment, and so on. Clan armies vary in size from a few hundred thousand up to tens of millions.

## Naval Forces

Only the largest and richest clans can afford a full naval force, but all clans operate a bewildering variety of military craft, of many different ages, technological levels and capabilities. The entries below give ship strengths by class, but there is enormous variation within each class.

### Clan Hakariss Fleet

Home world: Lair Hakariss  
Commander: Cyber-lord Hakariss-ka  
Forces: 2000 Little Dragons  
500 Claw-Carriers  
500 Noble Warriors  
300 Berserkers  
200 High Serpents  
50 StarDragons

### Clan Urkaa Fleet

Home world: Lair Urkaa  
Commander: Cyber-lord Urkaa-ra  
Forces: 1000 Little Dragons  
600 War-Eggs  
500 Faithful Warriors  
200 Claw-Carriers  
150 High Serpents  
30 StarDragons

### Clan Kimak Fleet

Home world: Lair Kimak  
Commander: Cyber-lord Kimak-Ar  
Forces: 750 Faithful Warriors  
600 Noble Warriors  
400 Berserkers  
100 High Serpents  
10 StarDragons

### Clan Akmakk Fleet

Home world: Lair Akmakk  
Commander: Cyber-lord Akmakk-Ba  
Forces: 1000 Faithful Warriors  
500 War-Eggs  
500 Noble Warriors  
250 Berserkers  
100 High Serpents  
10 StarDragons

### Clan Thar Fleet

Home world: Lair Thar  
Commander: Cyber-lord Thar-Aa

Forces: 500 Faithful Warriors  
 400 War-Eggs  
 250 Noble Warriors  
 50 High Serpents  
 6 StarDragons

#### **Clan Sahir Fleet**

Home world: Sahir  
 Commander: Cyber-lord Kri-I  
 Forces: 500 Little Dragons  
 400 Faithful Warriors  
 250 Noble Warriors  
 100 Berserkers  
 50 War-Eggs  
 4 StarDragons

#### **Clan Maki Fleet**

Home world: Tlava  
 Commander: Cyber-lord Maki-Kag  
 Forces: 250 Little Dragons  
 200 Faithful Warriors  
 50 Berserkers  
 10 War-Eggs

#### **Clan Rypa Fleet**

Home world: Donova  
 Commander: Cyber-lord Rypa-Ma  
 Forces: 200 Little Dragons  
 100 Faithful Warriors  
 50 Noble Warriors  
 50 War-Eggs  
 2 StarDragons

Several other clans maintain small fleets, some only a single ship. These fleets often provide reinforcement to allied clans, or are used simply to defend a clan's home world. The total number of starships available to the Dracan Holding is unknown.

## **ARMIES**

Clans also maintain standing armies. In fact, all Draca can serve as warriors, but only about half of each clan is ready to fight at any one time. Fighting on foot, with cybernetic enhancements and force fields to help shrug off the effects of heavy weapons, is the Draca's favored mode of battle, but they realize that heavy fire support, air and artillery are necessities if one is to survive. Powered infantry suits have been slow to gain acceptance, since they interfere with a Draca's natural weaponry.

Draca use actual armored vehicles only rarely, and these are purchased from other states. The Dracan equivalent of tanks are actually cybernetically-modified animals, armored, protected by force fields, controlled

by cerebral implants, and equipped with weapons. The Dracan home world contains numerous deadly species which can easily be turned into living "tanks," and such creatures are quite terrifying to Dracan enemies.

Although Draca fly domesticated animals, and use them as weapons platforms as well, they know that supersonic flight is necessary in combat. Dracan military aircraft and in system fighters are fairly unsophisticated, but are heavily armed and armored. While they are not in the same class as similar vehicles flown by the Guild or the Matriarchy, their numbers more than make up for their technical flaws.

Clans manufacture their own weapons, aircraft and armor, marking each with distinctive clan symbols and designs. These weapons and vehicles vary too greatly to be easily categorized, but suffice to say the Draca favor big guns, lots of noise, and lots of blood. Observers can extrapolate the probable nature of their weapons from this.

## **MAJOR WORLDS OF THE HOLDING**

### **Egg-Home**

Legend states that this world is the home of the Dracan race. This is easy to believe, given the world's cracked, rugged surface, active volcano chains, thick jungles and windswept plains. Dracan cities crouch among mountains, built to resemble natural formations both for aesthetic reasons and (in the past) to camouflage them from clan enemies.

The Egg-mistress and her guards live in the central city of Maka. Modern innovations make Maka slightly less alien in appearance, with Guild-style high-rises, a modern spaceport and broad freeways extending in all directions. Despite appearance, Maka is still a rough, violent place, where advancement by duel or assassination is the rule, and the Egg-mistress rules as the supreme authority in the Holding.

The creatures of Egg-Home are reptilian in nature, many resembling dinosaurs, but with several thermodynamic features which improve their activity cycle and keep them from growing overly sluggish. Many of these beasts have been domesticated and modified by the Draca into weapons of war.

### **Lair Hakariss**

The home world of the largest Draca clan is largely swamp and shallow seas, conditions which the Draca also enjoy. Cities consist of low domes in the drier areas, and travel is accomplished through the use of subterranean tunnels built beneath the swamps and oceans.



Hakariss maintains military facilities all over this world – barracks, training grounds, wartime facilities, starship docks, repair bases, and so on. Hakariss itself is heavily fortified, containing mines, spaceports and fighter bases.

## Lair Urkaa

This lair is a world of steep mountains, deep lakes and small pockets of greenery. Those Anthropos who have visited Lair Urkaa say that it is a very beautiful world, a view shared by those Draca who live there. The Draca enjoy the rugged terrain, feeling it helps them train for battle.

The Urkaa are more friendly toward Guild members than most other clans, and have (rarely) given Anthropos permission to visit. This clan has a high number of expatriates, who have rejected traditional Dracan society and joined the Guild completely. While the act does not especially bother Cyber-Lord Mak (he himself harbors doubts about Dracan practices), it is a great embarrassment due to the ridicule it has drawn from other clans.

## Sharak

Several clans share this hot desert/jungle world. Cities dot the alternately arid and humid surface, connected by slender highways. Sharak is a violent world, from its highly predatory life forms (which the Draca love to hunt) to its frequently open clan warfare. The clans of Sharak know that if all clans save one can be driven out or eliminated, the survivor will gain considerable influence, claiming the world as a clan lair.

The conflict between clans is heightened by the fact that some of Sharak's clans are Guild sympathizers and others are staunch traditionalists. Several Guild-leaning clans have members who adventured in GuildSpace and bring back new weapons, tactics and ideas, which they hope will give them an advantage as the conflict continues and grows wider.

## Zashara

A dozen small clans occupy Zashara, a crowded, urbanized world. Unlike Sharak, there is little open conflict between the clans, since few have enough strength to fight for long.

Zashara is a center of Dracan industry. Most of the small clans here have allied with larger clans, and assist their allies by helping to train, spy on the activities of other clans, and occasionally perform overt acts of sabotage. Again, there is no open conflict here, but intrigue is rife.

This is an important world, and if a single clan could ever control it, that clan may rival even Urkaa and Hakariss in influence. So far, however, the major clans and their smaller allies content themselves to playing games of espionage and covert violence, and are content to bide their time.

## Ka-Ma-Kolak

Dracan “wargames” are definitely not games. In training for war, all conditions of real warfare are simulated to the point where it is impossible to distinguish between training and the real thing. Ka-Ma-Kolak was originally intended as a world where young warriors could practice, and older Draca could hone their skills. It has evolved into a deadly place where clan disputes can be settled with a minimum of disruption to the Holding as a whole.

Blasted over the centuries by every imaginable weapon, Ka-Ma-Kolak is a shattered world of surrealistic magnificence. Entire mountains have been smashed to rubble, rivers have been diverted, valleys buried in debris. The landscape has changed so much that no one living can remember what the planet originally looked like.

Although still used for training and “mock” (actually very real) combat, Ka-Ma-Kolak's major function is as a place where rival clans can fight it out. Rules for such engagements are worked out in advance – number of warriors, weapons available, duration of conflict, etc. There is always a conflict going on here, even if it is a pair of clan warriors settling a personal grudge.

## Haven (Sokra)

This planet, located on the Guild frontier, is the only Dracan world where Guild personnel have unlimited access. Elsewhere in the Holding, outsiders are forbidden unless specifically invited by a controlling clan.

Haven (the Guild's name for the planet which the Draca call Sokra) has become a center for cultural and commercial exchange, and a tiny portal through which a trickle of Guild technology and ideas can reach the Draca. Clans Nar and Rennik, which control the world, have both been heavily influenced by contact, and are considered the most “Guild-like” of the traditional Dracan clans.

The world is relatively pleasant, if somewhat arid, with several small inland seas and vast, scrubby forests. The Draca enjoy hunting and exploring the dusty plains, for several challenging game animals still inhabit the world in large numbers.

Haven's major settlement, Greenpoint (or, as the Draca call it, "Krukk-Ha-Tak") is a crossroads for many species. Here, major negotiations between the Draca and the Guild take place, and anything from either nation can be bought or sold. Starships of many races orbit the world, while Nar and Rennik's small fleets keep watch.

## The Zin-Shee Matriarchy

Like the Draca, the catlike Zin-Shee were a race of conquerors, expanding out from their fertile home world and enslaving all those they came across. Unlike the Draca, the Zin-Shee found the thought of genocide horrifying, if only because it was a waste of good subject races.

The area of space which the Zin-Shee inhabited offered few challenges in their drive to conquer. Most races were primitive or of, at most, atomic age technology, and many submitted without a fight after seeing the awesome might of Zin-Shee weapons.

The only other major alien state encountered was that of the Draca, and over two centuries of conflict ranging from minor skirmishes to massive interstellar fleet engagements and ferocious planetary invasions, neither side managed to gain the upper hand. When at last the Draca decided the psi-cats were worthy of survival, they simply withdrew their forces, and the conflict ended as quickly as it had begun.

Surprisingly enough, it was a world of primitive warriors which caused the Zin-Shee the most trouble, and transformed their society in ways which have yet to be fully realized. Expecting an easy victory on the huge, high-grav world of Calemor, the Zin-Shee legions were stopped dead in their tracks by the powerful fighters.

Although they disdained the use of ranged weapons, and fought by an obscure and troublesome code of honor, the Calemora were able to use the power of their own minds to create armor and avoid damage from weapons, making them relative equals to the psionically-talented Zin-Shee.

Calemoran Will Power also played a major role in the stalemate, enabling the tough humanoids to resist the cats' mental powers. Zin-Shee writings and chronicles of the period complain frequently of the Calemora's "stupidity" and "dullness," obviously frustrated at their enemies resistance to *Psionics*.

The Blood Feud, as it came to be known, lasted a millennia, eventually becoming part of both races' culture. The Zin-Shee even relocated their capital world to Seril in order to be close to the fighting. The two races' first contact with the Guild was when their warships and armored marines arrived on the world, determined to put an end to the fighting.

At first the Zin-Shee were annoyed by the thought of outsiders showing up and spoiling their fun. Then, they realized that the Guild represented an even more exciting cast of playmates, and many frontier worlds joined the Guild, while at the same time maintaining their status within the Matriarchy. The Zin-Shee saw many advantages in association with the guild and, besides, they thought Anthropos were very attractive.

The history of association between Guild and Zin-Shee has so far been a positive one. The Zin-Shee spread throughout GuildSpace and proved valuable, if fickle, allies and friends to the other races there. When the House of Dha was formed, the Zin-Shee were quickly granted the status of guardian.

Like the neighboring Draca, the Zin-Shee have been changed by their contact with the Guild. Those who have become Guild members, and those who adventure in GuildSpace, have learned much about the galaxy and the ways of racial harmony. They have decided that the old ways are in need of modification, and urge their fellows in the Matriarchy to change them.

## INHABITANTS

At last count, over 300 races inhabited the area covered by the Zin-Shee Matriarchy. All of these have the official status of "subjects," generally employed throughout the Matriarchy performing menial and dull tasks which the Zin-Shee find boring and tedious. On the whole, the Zin-Shee are not harsh taskmasters, and most are affectionate and protective toward "their" subject races. Still, the concept of slavery itself is distasteful to the people of the Guild, even if it is carried out with relative kindness.

Prominent subject races include the lirit, woolly primates who are often employed as nursemaids to Zin-Shee children; the neidasca, aquatic, squidlike beings; the eefo, an intelligent plant species often found (not surprisingly) as gardeners; and the sidera, bird-descended warrior-philosophers with great linguistic skill.

## GOVERNMENT

The head of Zin-Shee government is the queen, the elder female of the ruling Shkarr'rus family. The queen has a substantial amount of power, and is highly respected, although like many Zin-Shee nobles, she is prone to eccentric behavior.

Ordinary government is in the hands of a council of elder females. These females are chosen in a variety of ways — some worlds disdain the whole process and don't bother choosing a representative at all. Most are chosen by a form of consensus, in which all candidates

for the position declare their positions and fitness to serve, argue with each other, and submit themselves to the will of the mob which has gathered to watch.

The use of *Psionics* in such debates is common, and often the winner is the female who is best able to impose her psionic will upon her opponents. Should a candidate attempt to take the position of council member without the approval of the mob, however, she is usually carried off and thrown in a pond, or something similar.

Often, these debates go on for weeks without the mob selecting a favorite, in which case the candidates will voluntarily submit themselves to an informal vote using a device similar to an applause-meter. The winner is allowed to take a seat on the council.

Council decisions are accomplished in a similar fashion. Council members argue, often for days, sometimes even fighting openly, before all opposition is finally worn down and a consensus reached. Some Zin-Shee worlds find all this quite silly, and ignore the council's decisions, whatever they are.

The queen has the right to overturn any council decision, but she is generally considered above any worldly concerns, and only intervenes when she considers it a matter of the gravest importance.

Zin-Shee society is highly stratified socially. The queen is at the top of a complex social pyramid; beneath her is a privileged and, not surprisingly, eccentric noble class.

Zin-Shee nobles usually do not participate in government, although occasionally a noble matron will be found on the elder council. Most are content to live in their extensive estates, hunt, travel, explore and adventure, and engage in the latest faddish craze. Contacting the spirits of departed ancestors by reading fireplace ashes was one such fad, as was wearing outrageous outfits with long capes, velvet doublets and ruffs. Zin-Shee nobles are also almost-intolerable dandies with outrageous taste in clothing.

Zin-Shee nobles have a variety of titles, but Anthropos translate these into familiar terms such as count, baron, duke, knight, etc.

The complexities of Zin-Shee nobility have given rise to many ceremonies, traditions and rituals. The best-known of these are the well-known levels of politeness and formality within the Zin-Shee language. No less than five different modes of speech are used in the Matriarchy, depending upon who is speaking to whom (see racial notes).

Amazingly, the Zin-Shee Matriarchy functions even in this turbulent environment. This is mostly due to the Zin-Shee nature, which sees to the welfare of the species above all else.

## THE MILITARY

Centuries of conflict have made the Zin-Shee military much more organized and efficient than the government. The Zin-Shee navy uses several recognizable ship classes, although their builders and crews modify each one to suit their senses of individuality. The following is a relatively accurate breakdown of Zin-Shee fleet deployments. All commanders are males unless otherwise noted. Many are nobles, but use their military rank instead of their title.

### Plrrw's Fleet

Home world: Nenei

Commander: Pride-chieftess Plrrw Rr'rf (female)

Forces: 800 Chasers  
550 Trackers  
500 Lurkers  
200 Pouncers  
50 Hunters  
20 Denships  
20 Stalkers

### Yllu's Fleet

Home world: Rakk'Shhr

Commander: Sub-chieftess Yllu R'wwl (female)

Forces: 400 Chasers  
300 Trackers  
250 Lurkers  
100 Pouncers  
50 Hunters  
10 Stalker

### Mistifl's Fleet

Home world: Uurr'aa

Commander: Pride-chief Mistifl S's

Forces: 1200 Chasers  
800 Trackers  
300 Lurkers  
250 Pouncers  
50 Stalkers  
30 Denships

### Krrup's Fleet

Home world: Hammarik

Commander: Pride-chief Krrup Kurr

Forces: 1000 Chasers  
600 Trackers  
400 Lurkers  
200 Pouncers  
150 Hunters  
50 Stalkers  
20 Denships

**Brassl's Fleet**

Home world: Okomot

Commander: Pride-chief Brassl K'mikk

Forces: 800 Chasers  
600 Trackers  
400 Lurkers  
200 Pouncers  
100 Hunters

**The Herd**

Home world: None

Commander: Unknown

Forces: 5000 Claw-Fighters  
2500 Talon-Bombers  
100 Denships

The Herd is an unusual fleet support group which moves apparently randomly throughout Zin-Shee space. Its 100 denships are a potent strike force, and the Herd will give assistance to any nearby fleet which needs it. Unfortunately, the Herd is not always where the conflict is, and may not arrive in time to assist if a fleet is in danger. Herd pilots and crewmembers consider themselves the elite of the fleet.

**ARMY**

Most Zin-Shee infantry are agile warriors with little body protection save their potent psionic abilities and speed, although armor is used on occasion. Force fields are also used extensively, despite their great expense and complexity.

Speed and mobility are central to all Zin-Shee strategies. Their armored vehicles tend to be fast, lightly armored affairs which nonetheless pack a punch. Force fields also provide a measure of protection for some vehicles, but the expense of equipping a tank with such a unit is considerable. Grav- and hover-vehicles are favored, and fire support comes, not from slow or static artillery, but from nimble atmospheric fighters, skimmers or helicopters.

Large military units are numbered and named for their world of origin, while units of regimental size or smaller are named for their commander.

The Zin-Shee army numbers approximately 7,500,000,000, but can be swelled to twice that if reserves are employed.

**MAJOR WORLDS OF THE ZIN-SHEE MATRIARCHY****Sheapa**

The home world of the Zin-Shee, Sheapa was the Matriarchy's capital until the Blood Feud with the Calemora forced its relocation to Seril. After the war, the Zin-Shee council moved the capital back to Sheapa.

One of the strangest inhabited worlds, Sheapa is the only planet in a system with three suns. The world moves in a chaotic orbit between the three suns, circling first one, then another, in a random pattern. This causes the day-night length and cycle to change, and the flora and fauna of Sheapa have adapted to it. This also may be a factor in the Zin-Shee's erratic sleep habits.

Here, the females of the council meet irregularly, and determine (often violently) how to deal with the daily needs of the Matriarchy and meet the various crises as they arise. Sheapa is a tropical world, with vast rain forests, grassy veldts and gravelly deserts. The competitive ecosystems of the veldt and forest created the Zin-Shee and instilled them with their desire for expansion and conquest.

Sheapa has been preserved, almost as a park-world, with its population tightly controlled and its wilderness – considered the cradle of Zin-Shee civilization – scrupulously protected. Zin-Shee settlements dot the planet, but few are larger than 10,000 in population. Most Zin-Shee on Sheapa live in traditional villages (albeit with many modern conveniences) and consider themselves privileged to live on this near-sacred planet.

Anthropos visit Sheapa often, and are usually welcomed with open arms. Recent problems with Guild philosophy have soured the locals on Anthropos somewhat, but the changeable nature of Zin-Shee character makes any rejections short-lived. Most Zin-Shee like to associate with Anthropos in any event, and can't bring themselves to stay mad for long.

Sheapa's long, sandy beaches and warm, blue oceans attract many tourists of many species, all of whom the local psi-cats enjoy cavorting with in the surf and conversing with in the various small hotels and inns which line the coast. All of these facilities are carefully controlled by the Zin-Shee, however, lest their presence disturb the world's delicate ecological balance.

**Dolos**

Save for small settlements, usually overpopulated by tourists, most of this planet is covered in grassy plains, where the Zin-Shee hunt, fish and generally relax. Many Zin-Shee who visit Dolos prefer to hunt in the ancient style, with spear or bow and arrow, as a

connection and tribute to their primitive ancestors. Other races are allowed to come here, but the Zin-Shee limit their numbers.

## Hammarrik

The Zin-Shee military is considerably better organized and less chaotic than Zin-Shee society at large. This military training world, where Zin-Shee are taught the basics of tactics, logistics and strategy, is a marvel of organization and regimentation.

A network of broad tunnels and grav-rails stretches beneath the world's rocky surface. Bases and barracks resembling sunken domes dot the landscape. At any time, there will be dozens of Zin-Shee regiments training in Hammarrik's varied climes. Krupp Kurr's fleet is stationed at the orbital docks and bases which are found in abundance throughout the system.

## Kimmiri Station

Not a world, but a large space station and port facility orbiting a planetless star. Located near several important wormhole routes through the Matriarchy, Kimmiri has become an important center for commerce, diplomatic meetings, starship maintenance, repair and recreation.

The powerful House Hassa, a Zin-Shee trade house with extensive holdings within the Guild, moved here from its home world of Che'rrh. Hassa's headquarters now consist of a small sub-station orbiting the main body of Kimmiri, fully equipped with luxurious Zin-Shee living and recreational facilities, a small ship dock, and other modern amenities.

Since Guild contact, more races have begun to appear at Kimmiri, but most visitors are still Zin-Shee. Facilities here are extensive, but the atmosphere is somewhat lawless and chaotic. Many businesses catering to Zin-Shee line the main dock area, and the remainder of the station is filled with inexpensive inns, Zin-Shee herb-bars, trivid parlors, gymnasias and so on. Security is generally lax, mostly due to the fact that Zin-Shee security forces are severely undermanned, and many of them end up participating in brawls and other antics they were sent to stop.

Kimmiri attracts some of the finest technicians in the Matriarchy, drawn here by the prospect of working at highly profitable jobs on a wide variety of different starships. Many starships will go out of their way to be repaired on Kimmiri, even though it is expensive.

## Yawwlin

This large world nonetheless maintains a relatively light gravity due to its low mass. Its crust contains few heavy elements and no real mineral resources. Its main value to the Zin-Shee is as a vast cattle ranch.

Originally, Yawwlin was virtually sterile save for some local grasses. The Zin-Shee covered its vast surface with food plants and shipped in various non-sentient food animals. They are allowed to roam free, and are rounded up once a year and shipped throughout the Matriarchy. Several Zin-Shee "corporations" (their organization is far more unstable and varied than Anthropos companies, but the term is the closest possible), often under the control of prominent Zin-Shee nobles, manage the hundreds of ranches and grazing ranges which cover the world, and all make a tidy profit.

Occasionally, if a Zin-Shee world is experiencing shortages, the council will decree a "cattle-tax" in which a small percentage of each herd is culled and sent to the trouble spot. The ranchers usually do not complain, their natural instinct for racial welfare overriding their desire to make money.

Many different animals graze here, but the most prominent include H'rress, a bipedal dinosaur whose flesh is considered quite tasty even by Anthropos; Kiva, fat, highly domesticated ungulates which resemble a cross between cows and antelope; and ornax, swift, ostrich-like flightless avians which are also valued as riding animals, and for their eggs.

## Rak'shhr

This unique world is one of the most valuable in the Zin-Shee Matriarchy. Rak'shhr's surface is literally covered in seas of petroleum compounds — literal oceans of oil. Petrochemicals still represent an important fuel source throughout the Matriarchy, and it is estimated that this world contains enough resources to fuel the Matriarchy for another century. The atmosphere is virtually unbreathable, so processing facilities (on artificial islands in the sea) are sealed with processed and filtered atmospheres. Most of the cracking and refining plants are run by slaves (the Zin-Shee feel that work here is messy and unpleasant) with tight Zin-Shee control.

Several Zin-Shee battle stations orbit the world, and Yllu's fleet is based here. The orbiting stations can also fire weapons planetside, destroying any facility if the slaves revolt or refuse to work. Conditions in the refineries are kept clean and comfortable, and the slaves are well-treated to avoid such incidents.

## Actileh

Another major recreation world, Actileh is known for its small chains of tropical islands, the only land on a world-wide ocean. Fishing, swimming and basking in the sun are the major pursuits here, especially swimming in the carbonated waters. Resembling nothing more than an ocean-sized seltzer, the waters are buoyant (it is said that no one has ever drowned on Actileh) and provide something of a natural whirlpool-bath, a sensation which the Zin-Shee enjoy intensely. So far, no aquatic species has proved dangerous to sentients.

Anthropos and other Guild races sometimes come here, as well, but so far Actileh is an "undiscovered paradise," which the Zin-Shee like to keep to themselves. As elsewhere, however, visiting Anthropos are well-treated, and fussed over by friendly Zin-Shee.

## Other States

Numerous other states and regions exist in GuildSpace and beyond. The boundaries of GuildSpace are anything but firm, and within the Guild's sphere of influence, hundreds of planetary and stellar nations exist, ranging from single, primitive worlds with Neolithic inhabitants, to alliance of dozens of worlds with enough resources to actually threaten the Guild. Although this list is by no means complete, a few of the best-known stellar nations are described below. Many, many others exist, all with unique features and potential dangers.

### THE FREE TRADERS' REPUBLIC

Founded by merchants and free-trade enthusiasts who found the trade restrictions of other states too harsh, the FTR is a relatively powerful alliance of over 500 star systems which controls several major trade routes throughout the Guild, the Sphere and the Zin-Shee Matriarchy. The free traders are a rough-and-tumble lot, dedicated to their own independence and the near-sacred status of trade and free travel. They have a small military, which cannot hope to match the Guild or Sphere, but neither of these states has any interest in conquering the FTR, considering it a convenient place for those who don't fit in.

The independent nature of the free traders also prevents their central government from having much authority, and member worlds often go their own ways, ignoring rules and edicts from higher up. The FTR actually functions as something of a benevolent anarchy, with only enough laws and regulations to keep the whole affair from coming apart at the seams.

### THE COMBINE

This state comprises about 600 star systems and has long been a thorn in the side of the Guild. A largely violent and lawless place, the Combine is the source of many illegal drugs, smuggled weapons and terrorist activities. The Combine government, actually a group of warlords who saw the advantages of working together, tolerates and secretly encourages incursions into GuildSpace, and acts as a haven for various species of criminals and rogues.

The Combine's difficult location, far from the nearest accessible wormhole, and the current potential for conflict with The Empire has kept the Guild from taking military action against the warlords, except for brief raids by the House of Dha to retrieve stolen

property, kidnapping victims, or to intercept contraband shipments. Guild covert agents are often dispatched to The Combine worlds to seek out the source of contraband or to see what the warlords are up to; more often than not, these agents are never heard from again.

### THE SKARR EMPIRE

The skarr are a species of ferret-like aliens who control an empire of 500-1000 systems well counter-spinward of the Guild. So far, contact has been minimal, but the skarr seem to be rather antagonistic toward the Guild. Skarr space is generally avoided, and the skarr themselves do not seem to have the military strength to pose a serious threat to the Guild.

### THE DOMINATE

Rumors exist of another alien state beyond the skarr, controlled by ruthless (and so far unknown) aliens whose advanced mental powers enable them to dominate and psychically enslave entire planetary populations. Whether the Dominate truly exists or not remains to be seen, but it may represent yet another threat to galactic freedom.

### HALIMA'S REALM

One of the most bizarre states in Known Space, this so-called "Empire" is the home of an eccentric Anthropos tycoon who now calls herself Empress Halima, Defender of the Emerald Crown. Originally a builder and exporter of cheap starships, Halima evidently decided that filthy commerce was beneath her, and bought a small, unoccupied world on the fringes of GuildSpace lock, stock and barrel.

Within a few local years, Halima had built a palatial estate, and persuaded Anthropos, Zin-Shee and several other species to colonize the world, with the single requirement that they acknowledge her as their supreme and absolute ruler. Once they were settled, Halima declared independence from the Guild, christening her one-world state an "empire."

Halima's world remains closed to all but Halima's invited guests. A small mercenary navy guards the planet itself, while warriors of a dozen races serve as Halima's army. Not that she needs the protection — her subjects seem relatively happy with her benevolent rule (most planetary income is still drawn from Halima's vast fortune). The world has been transformed into a comic-opera fantasy, with vast stands of palm trees, artificial lakes, forests and rivers where there had once only been bare, sterile desert.

As for Halima herself, she spends most of her time in her palace, running her various businesses (many of which have died messy deaths over the years), issuing edicts and decrees, and cavorting with her “harem,” rumored to number over a hundred males of various species.

The Guild itself has seen fit to ignore Halima, and let her go her own way. Most Guild citizens think of Halima as something of a lunatic (and in this they are entirely correct), but wealthy lunatics are generally excused as being simply “eccentric.”

## THE DARK ALLIANCE

Another dangerous state well beyond the reach of Guild justice, the Dark Alliance is a cluster of several hundred pirate worlds whose economies thrive on raiding, plunder and robbery. Alliance pirate frigates and sloops are fast and well armed, often equipped with sophisticated stealth gear. Alliance crews are the equal of the best the Guild has to offer.

The Dark Alliance is ruled by a council of captains, who are elected by all the ship captains throughout Alliance space. These captains do little other than set rules for the division of plunder, the selection of captains, and rates for ransom. Most Alliance captains are fully autonomous and may freely operate within Alliance space so long as they do not interfere with other pirates.

Alliance planets are mostly poor, rocky worlds with few natural resources. The capital world of Toranga, however, is a pleasant planet of leafy jungles and tropical seas. Here, the council of captains meet, and the various ships of the Alliance put in for liberty, rest and recreation.

Every world of the Alliance is heavily mined and fortified. A Guild attack upon Alliance space would be a difficult job indeed, and victory would be far from easy. Though numerically inferior, pirate captains are served by elite crews, and have ships and equipment plundered from a hundred worlds. Favoring speed, stealth and surprise, the pirates would whittle away at any invaders, catching them at strong points, raiding, and retreating before they could be caught. For this reason, Guild strategists have avoided any direct confrontations with the Alliance, contenting themselves to intercepting Alliance raiders as they enter GuildSpace.

Despite its lack of resources, the Alliance is one of the Guild's deadliest enemies, and in combination with another hostile force, could well threaten the Guild's very existence. For this reason, security in regions bordering on Alliance territory is tight, and Guild forces are always on alert for suspicious activities on the part of Alliance forces.

## MIRROK

Another recently-encountered alien species, the mirrok are tall, multi-armed reptilians who seem to be the component parts of a larger intelligence, called Mirrok for convenience. No one has even guessed exactly what Mirrok is, or what its internal nature could be, but it seems clear that individual mirrok operate with one mind, and are capable of instantly communicating with each other over vast distances. Mirrok Space, coreward of Guild territory, has been quarantined as Guild scientists study the situation and attempt to figure out a means of contacting and understanding Mirrok.

## THE COMMON ENTENTE

Located entirely within GuildSpace, the Entente is a relatively benevolent collection of diverse cultures and species controlling over 300 star systems. The leaders, a council of about a dozen different races, are reluctant to give up their freedom by joining the Guild.

The Entente maintains friendly relations with the Guild, and manages several trade routes. Their computers and environmental devices such as space suits are of the highest quality, and highly sought throughout the Guild. Many Entente members favor membership in the Guild, but it is still a matter of intense contention, and may not be settled for decades to come. The Guild, for its part, is content to wait.

## THE KINGDOM

This relatively new state was founded, well coreward of The Empire, by Katha dissidents, who feel that the old imperial government has grown too corrupt and has betrayed its heroic past. Currently, The Kingdom controls about 500 star systems.

Based on an idealized conception of the old Empire, The Kingdom is under the absolute rule of a single monarch. Subordinate races are enslaved and used for menial labor, but are never allowed to replace the Katha in important positions of power, or in the military. The status of “honored slaves,” which The Kingdom’s rulers feel destroyed the old Empire, has been eliminated. So far only a handful of alien races has been encountered by the new state, and none of them have proved satisfactory for anything but the simplest tasks, so the Katha are responsible for most jobs within The Kingdom.

The Empire knows of The Kingdom’s existence, but feels it is far enough away that it does not represent a threat. Also, most imperial Katha feel that the new state will eventually collapse, and its members will come



crawling back home, begging forgiveness. Time will tell whether this will happen or not – the Kingdom appears to be doing well, building a small navy and professional army, and expanding aggressively coreward, away from the old Empire.

## **UNKNOWN STATES**

Space is vast, and sizable states may exist and prosper even within Guild boundaries without the Guild knowing it. Beyond GuildSpace, of course, the possibilities are endless. Human starships ranged far and wide during the Scattering, and it is entirely possible that other states, as large as or larger than the Guild may exist out in the void beyond explored space. Other alien states surely exist – known alien groups speak of others beyond their own borders, and of conflicts elsewhere in the galactic arm.

The major question to Guild leaders is whether these states will prove friendly, neutral or hostile when encountered. The risks of disastrous alien contact are too great for security to be lax, and the guild military continues to be on guard against the unknown.

# Super History

If you are a player and not the GM, please stop reading now. Otherwise, you may ruin a lot of your gaming fun with MetaScape.

OK, Killiam, now that you have a good feel for the GuildSpace setting, it's time to give you the *secret* scoop on what's *really* happening. Below is the super history and setting of GuildSpace. The ultimate, behind the scenes lore.

This information should be revealed *very* slowly, as a great unfolding mystery.

## UNIVERSE, SCAPE, DIMENSION

You must understand the difference between a universe, scape and dimension in order to understand many of the major plot elements below.

**Universe/Scape:** The universe is *everything*. A universe may be split or fractured into multiple scapes. Think of a scape as a clone or parallel universe in which history and the laws of physics and the arcane are different. In MetaScape, there are currently three scapes: GuildSpace, Reality, and Core. GuildSpace is high tech and medium arcane. Reality is medium tech and low arcane, and Core is low tech and high arcane.

**Dimension:** A dimension is a puzzle. Some are tied to a scape or the universe itself. But others are something *else*. Here are some possibilities: partial universes or scapes, remnants of a dead universe, some anomaly that *floats* between universes. Others are created by vast supernatural powers such as the ancients or some ultra powerful arcane power.

One of the questions that plagues scholars and those in the know is whether hyperspace is part of the universe or another dimension. Same for ghost walking, etc.

**Universe Name:** The universe's name has always been Trinium and very few know this name – *very* few. The number 3 is key to the functionality of the universe as you will see if you keep your mind open and your attention to detail honed. And I don't just mean the three scapes – far too simple a puzzle.

## UNIVERSE RACE

Creating a universe is very difficult because nothing exists beyond the universe – no scapes, no dimensions, nothing at all. The universe is not a being it is a conglomeration of all its parts. So the first three attempts to create a universe was to create a *universe* race. A

universe race is a perfect race blending all elements of the existing universe together in such a fashion that the races ultimate evolution would one day lead them to “somehow” pass beyond the confines of this universe and form their own.

When the universe consisted of a single scape, known as Core, it contained all levels of arcane, technology, etc. Basically every setting of every novel, movie, story existed in one scape.

Then elves were created as the first universe race. The vast powers poured into this first attempt at making a universe race nearly split the universe in two.

Alas, elves had three major flaws as a universe race. They lacked the far reaching *wild* imagination necessary to succeed at as a universe race – they would never evolve far enough. Second they lacked the balance of technology and arcane – too much arcane, too little technology. And finally, they had too much *life* essence in them. They didn't die rapidly enough to evolve. They began to see time for what it really is and their drive and imagination waned and passed into the night.

The second universe race was the race known as humans. For a second time vast powers were using in this attempt and this time the universe was sundered for two universe races cannot be given *focus* in the same existence: So Core and Reality were formed. Core, the elven scape, changed into a classic *medieval* setting with high magic and low technology and Reality, the human scape, became the setting low arcane and high technology – very high technology.

Now some humans spilled over into Core, after all, scapes are parallel universes. But in Core, humans were not the master race – elves were. But in Reality, humans ruled!

Humans almost succeeded as a universe race. But they didn't have enough arcane abilities to fuel their awesome imagination and they too failed as a universe race.

So, the universe created its third attempt at a universe race – Anthropos. Anthropos are very similar to humans since the former was a near success. And again, this third universe race needed its own primary scape: GuildSpace. The Reality scape was stripped of its advanced technology and nearly all of its arcane. It became a place of high imagination, medium technology, and extremely low arcane. And then there was the new scape: GuildSpace, named after the location of the third attempt at a universe race.

Unlike humans, the GuildSpace split managed to contain most Anthropos in its own scape with little spill over to Core and Reality. Anthropos exist in reality to a small degree but hardly worth mentioning. In Core they are the noble race of man. Most medieval settings has the “Race of Kings” or “Elders.” These would be Core's manifestation of Anthropos.

The MetaScape GuildSpace game is set in the time of the Anthropos, the third age of the universe. All eyes (well all of the mega eyes who are in the know) are on Anthropos and their development. Are they the one?

Each universe race became, arguably, the most powerful, most successful race in their scape. Which is only logical – they were attempts at creating the perfect race. And, though elves and humans are called failures above, they still have a small chance of success. Just not a probable one.

## ANCIENT RACES

This section is just a fantasy background that lends depth to the entire setting. Please take no religious offense. The author's religious views and most other people, have nothing in common with this fictional fabrication.

The ancient races are the original races of the universe. Think of them as the original manifestation of the universe. There are three racial dualities. Two races per duality and they are opposites in all important ways.

The universe began when there was nothing. To *begin* it simply needed a name, for a name demands existence. For a name to exist amongst nothing is a remarkable feat. Once that requires the power of – well, a universe (substitute deity or some other word if you are religious)!

The Trinium universe then utilized its most powerful ability – it imagined! Trinium imagined nothingness as a black plane with no thickness stretching infinitely in all directions. Then, Trinium *imagined* that on either side of the plane it could pull out anything it wanted as long as the exact opposite was pulled out of the other side. Thus, the balance of nothingness “0” would be maintained.

Trinium had a name and imagination, but little else. Reaching into the plane of nothingness it pulled out all the laws and manifestations of matter and the physical on one side of the plane of nothingness and all the laws of energy and power on the other. As these two opposites were pulled out they took the form of two beings a black obsidian golem which Trinium named Zodar and a being of pure energy which Trinium named Aerolk. Though the ancients (all of them) look like living beings in the normal sense of the word. They are not. They are a conscious, localized manifestation of the laws of the universe in a “being-like” form. Many, many, many rules of their existence and functionality is completely outside the normal rules that govern *real* living races.

Now, Killiam, based in Reality you may not think of Matter and Energy as opposites. Everything is a circle. If you follow a circle in opposite directions, what happens?

You meet. So, if you take a brick and light and trace them back far enough, you find that they are one and the same  $E=MC^2$ . Besides, opposite to the universe is very different from opposite to science or logic.

Trinium knew that space, matter and energy were done, but nothing would move without a metronome – time! So Trinium reach back into the nothingness and pulled out Time in the form of a Time Lord out the other side, the opposite of time, precision was randomness and raw possibility for the unknown – the source of all that is wild and unpredictable, that which breaks all the rules. Trinium names this “power” the Source. This is the true ancient name. But the Source wielders of Core called is Sourcery, which changed to sorcery. And the Shanask simply call it the Sorce. For yes, the being pulled out as the opposite to the Time Lord was the Shanask.

So, Trinium thought, I have space, I have time thus motion and evolution, I have chaos and change for evolution. Now, it is time to bring forth the most important element – beings. My four master races are beings, but they are direct creations and will never evolve. So, Trinium, for the third and last time, reached into the shards of nothingness and pulled out life and death in the form of Valkery and Quantum Knights. Valkery would create life and Quantum Knights would take it away. These two would become the most vehement of the dualities. Often hating each other with fervor.

Now, each of you pull forth as much of your power as you can from the nothingness. Keep it in balance.

Time was still irrelevant, who knows how long it took, but vast numbers of each of the six ancient races (as they came to be called) were summoned from nothing. But eventually, the balance got off, due to miscalculation, greed, who knows. And suddenly the plane of nothingness shattered into billions, trillions, who knows how many shards of nothingness.

And, in that instant, the ancient races set out and the universe, as we know it was formed.

**Light/Dark Races:** The races on side of the original plane of nothingness are called the light races and the other the dark races. These terms have no real meaning and no impact on temperament. However, there is some unusual bond and the light races like each other and work together well and the same goes for the dark races.

The Light races are: Aerolk, Valkery, Shanask. Shanask is the surprising one, many historians list them among the dark races in error.

The dark races are thus: Zodar, Quantum Knights, Time Lords.

### Ancients and their Realm

Zodar – Matter and Power Burst

Quantum Knight – Death and Quantum Space

Time Lord - Time

Aerolk - Energy and Technology

Valkery - Life

Shanask - Sorcery

## AVATAR

So where do the ancient races hang out? What do they look like? What do they do? The answer lies in the imagination of the GM. These aspects I will not tie down very much. Here are a few things to know.

Even I have not decided what the original or *true* form for the six ancient races is. You see, Killiam, the ancient races typically use an Avatar form. The *true* ancients are vastly powerful and are able to create avatar forms for themselves. When character's interact with an ancient, it is very likely that are interacting with an Avatar. And, being an Avatar, they can look like just about anything you want.

**Avatar Races:** If a lot of power is used, avatar races can even be created. These are not true *living* races rather they are a sub-race created by one of the ancient races (besides the Valkery who create real life). For example, dwarves are a Zodar avatar race created ages ago when just Core existed. From a purely game point of view there is little difference between an avatar race and a living race created with the help of Valkery.

### Typical Avatar Forms

- Zodar - black obsidian golem with no facial features
- Quantum Knight - ancient plate armored knight with no mid section armor, rather a dark purple energy area with wisps inside. Red glowing points of light in their helms for eyes.
- Time Lord - stately elder gentleman with an iron bound walking cane. Another common form is that of a floating wooden mask suspended by wisps of power. Their eye slots glow green.
- Aerolk - Roughly bipedal form of glowing energy with no head features.
- Valkery - Medieval shield, spear, bow, partial armor female warrior with a long pony tail. Often a soft glow of light radiates from them.
- Shanask - Black robe with two points of light within the hood.

**Abilities:** Ancient races have a wide range of powers and abilities depending greatly upon their Avatar form. For example the most powerful of any ancient race can do basically anything within its realm and it is highly likely the character's will never encounter one of these ancients. A true Zodar could

waive its hand and all matter within an entire solar system would vanish in an instant, possibly even within a galaxy. But, a lesser Zodar may have stats as low as RCD 50, or even smaller if the situation warrants.

In general, you will place ancient Avatar stats in the RCD 500 to RCD 10000 range.

Obviously, each ancient race can do all sorts of things within their realm.

- Zodar and create/destroy matter
- Aerolk can create/destroy energy and design/use vast technology
- Valkery can bring things to life, heal, and breath life into beings and races
- Quantum Knights collect ant-life or death and store this power (little do Valkery and quantum knights know but Valkery pull life force from the very place that quantum knights store it. In other words, life is a circle or cycle and without the one ancient, the other's powers would wane. Their opposite power is very circular.
- Time Lords can stop, start, speed up, reverse, and jump in time and much more. They are the most seldom encountered of the ancients
- Shanask - well you know about Shanask and the Sorcery

**Where do they Live?:** This is also largely up to the GM. Here are a few tips that you may use if you desire. Lesser Zodar Avatars can sometimes be found in planets and more often greater Zodar Avatar can be found near the center of galaxies. Lesser Aerolk Avatar are sometimes found in stars. The other four ancient races are not very static - they will ebb and flow as their purposes dictate.

## SHANASK

Yes, in MetaScape a player may play an Ancient Race. Of course, player character Shanask are very, very, very weak avatars of that race. - at least until they are leveled a whole bunch!

Player character Shanask have a limit placed upon their knowledge. Whether this stems from a true lack of knowledge imparted upon the Avatar, some block, or an honor bound limit, isn't known. The character will know a lot more about *ancient* things and the workings of the universe than most other characters, but still not very much compared to a non-character Shanask. Basically, I let my Shanask character's know about as much as their players actually do - unless they've GMed or read this section of the booklet.

## SHARDS OF NOTHINGNESS

When the plane of nothingness was shattered, the dark races set about collecting the shards and protecting them throughout the universe. The dark races believed that the shards would someday become important to the universe and that they were too dangerous in the hands of non-ancients. Though only ancients have the direct ability to move a shard. There are a lot of Avatar and ancient infused artifacts that also have this ability.

Among the many dangers of the shards is that when anything (time, Sorce, mater, energy, life, death) impacts the side it is totally gone - vanishes into nothingness. But, the real danger is that some opposite from the universe must also vanish. Thus, the universe diminishes and at random locations.

On the other hand, the light races decided that the shards should be dispersed throughout the universe where they would be available to the universe wherever and whenever it needed them. Having the shards in ware houses was too risky as non-ancients could gain access to a vast quantity of shards, all at the same time.

Heading up each side and each philosophy were the Quantum Knights (collectors) and the Valkery (dispensers).

Quantum Knights have been working with Zodar to store the shards in pyramids across the universe. This is why pyramids are always associated with earth, death, and time (Zodar, Quantum Knight, Time Lord). And, quantum knights will often use a shard of nothingness bound to a handle as a sword with no width. Since no strike is perfect, the blade will be tipped a little, forming a cut. A cut that will sever anything effortlessly. Of course, a much more devastating blow would be with the flat of the blade as it would cut an effortless swath through anything. But this reduces the universe by a lot each time. Thus, Quantum Knights are masters at making ultra thin cuts with their blades.

Likewise, Valkery love to equip the tips of their spears and arrows with shards of nothingness turned on edge. Once fired, the shard will continue in a perfect strait path endlessly. Due to the circular nature of space, the arrow/spear travels in a great space-time circle around the universe unless tampered with by an ancient or something that has been touched by an ancient. (yes, all mater was touched by an ancient, but it has to be more on the "artifact" level)

## DARMOTH

For each universe race one representative of each ancient race came together and poured their power into forming the new universe race. Balancing the power of the six was extremely difficult as each power was

unique and there was always the temptation to outperform one's duality.

So, on the third attempt, Anthropos, it was decided to take a male and female of the previous attempt, humans and use them as a crucible. So the light races focus their energies on the woman and the dark races on the man. Then a union of power between them was activated at the crucial moment. This balancing act worked very well. But there was a down side. On that threatens the very existence of the Guild Space scape.

After the experiment the man became nearly comatose and was confined to an insane asylum where he has lived for centuries without aging, getting sick, and little sign of conscious activity.

But the female went insane and worse, began to exhibit abilities from each of the light races who had infused her with power. Soon she was creating mutated life, wielding an unrecognized Sore-like power and tinkering with energy, but not technology. Then she vanished and fell off the grid.

Two years later an odd race of human's was encountered from a planet called Giea. The Giean's all seemed to be tied together by some enhanced life force and one member could draw upon the reserves of the entire planet if needed. Thus, a Giean with 10 Vit could summon forth tens of thousands of Vitality from the planet if needed. And all of Giea worshiped a being named Darmoth.

When a few of the ancients went to investigate they discovered something else. Something so horrible to the balance of the Scape that a nearly unprecedented meeting of the ancient races was held. After a great argument, It decided that the planet's leader, Darmoth, must be killed. Of the six races the Aerolk and Valkery refused to help. The campaign against Darmoth that followed with the Zodar, Quantum Knights, Time Lords, and Shanask trying to destroy Darmoth is the main reason that these *four* races are often, mistakenly, called the Dark races. That, and the fact that these four races, generally, wear dark colors or clothing.

But as the "dark races" engaged Darmoth and her minions, they met with unexpected failure and uncommon resistance. But, it was within the first century of this war that Darmoth's identity was discovered - she was the female crucible of the Anthropos universe race creation. As the years rolled on, it became apparent that she had mastered the abilities of all three light races and was a vast power and one that was not slayable.

Ultimately, Darmoth was lured into a trap and banished to another dimension.

This was long ago, but several centuries back, Darmoth broke free with a host of Kryll like minions and the Dark Races again faced their nemesis.

Ultimately, in a battle that rocked the entire scape, the dark races succeeded, for a second time, in banishing Darmoth back to her prison dimension.

But now, as MetaScape GuildSpace beings, whispers of Darmoth and her minions are leaking back into GuildSpace.

For game fun, anytime a player (let a alone character) speaks the name "Darmoth." A portal opens from Darmoth's dimension and one or two of her powerful minions slips through. Their purpose is to slay any in the area, then set about trying to free her. This demonstrates the power that is in a name!

## CHARACTER RACES

Warning, reading this section may ruin the fun and mystery of playing the player races. Even a GM should consider whether or not to read this.

OK, now that you know all this, let me tell you about the seven main character races. Each has a hidden story and a hidden agenda.

**Anthropos:** Universe Race – see above

**Calemora:** Calemora are a joint Avatar race. They are nearly perfectly formed golems, made by Zodar and given uncannily fast motions by Time Lords. Calemora were formed during Core as the golem guardians of the pyramids. Many pyramids were linked together by Time Lords so that these guardians can flow from one to another. It is this reason that the planet Calemor was able to fend off the entire Zin-Shee matriarchy. Because the Zin-Shee weren't fighting several million Calemora, but an endless supply that could come through the planet's inner time chamber and exit through the great Catong pyramids. And add to that that a Zodar and Time Lord happened to be on the planet – hehe.

This is why Calemora are very medieval in nature – they were created in Core. This is also why they are so fast, agile, and martial art oriented for such a large race – they have the touch of a time lord upon them. And, this is why they are the masters of psychosomatics (mind over body) because they are golems. Granted, golems so perfectly made that a trained physician couldn't tell, even with a dissection. And so good that normal healing methods work upon them.

Why do Calemora have three stubby fingers and no ears? Because they were harder to form out of dirt in the original prototypes and the idea stuck. Why no females – because there aren't any. Calemora are made not born. Why no emotions and no fear? Because they are golems.

**Core:** A few of the original Core Calemora were given life by a Valkery before she knew what their purpose was. Among Calemora, these are called Core.

The unusual blend of a Zodar/Time Lord avatar infused with life make Core nearly invincible and timeless (they never die from any natural cause including aging). The Core Calemora race should have huge stats such as RCD 500 to RCD 2000. They will typically focus on either Martial Arts of Psychosomatics and will be insanely talented at these.

**Draca:** Ok, this is a big secret. Draca started as simple lizardmen in a planet at the far coreward side of the current Dracan Holding. As the Darmoth war began, Darmoth found the planet and realized the potential for technology bound to organic life – cybernetics – within them. So, she poured forth her technology influence and Draca were created with the sole purpose of accelerating Cybernetics so that she could one day equip her Giean army with them. Til now, Darmoth had not tipped her hand that she possessed the technology skills of the Aerolk. She wanted a sudden leap of technology within her ranks and so set the Draca up as the secret crucible for cybernetics.

For centuries Draca have been developing two lines of cybernetics. The line that is covered in these books, and a much more advanced line of liquid metal cybernetics, so advanced that it appears to be living. This living metal was recently supplied by a Valkery name Sharda.

Now, Darmoth has pulled some of this advanced cybernetics back into her domain and is preparing a terrible surprise for GuildSpace, should she and her minions break free.

Not all Draca know of this secret purpose. In fact few do. It is highly unlikely that a Draca character will know this.

**Kryll:** Kryll are a Darmoth created race, made within her prison dimension. Some Kryll managed to break out of the dimension and began to flee to a safe haven, knowing the horrendous force that was to soon follow. Most Kryll, at this time, are traitors of Darmoth and her forces. However, she has many more Kryll that are loyal to her.

Kryll will not indicate that they know anything of Darmoth or even think about her out of pure fear. Player characters will not know about this part of their history as the Hive Queen's are the only ones that know and they will only tell their top trusted advisors and guards, if any.

**Shanask:** Read above for their background. Character Shanask are here as minor Avatar to experience *normal* life. But, more secretly, they are watching the Anthropos universe race. Why – is not known.

**Zin-Shee:** Zin-Shee are an Aerolk Avatar race given life by Valkery. Their original purpose is not known. But their hot tempers, technology mastery, and their ability to manipulate energies of mind and space all stem from their Aerolk base creation.

## MOTC

Every 9000 years one in two million beings born/create (so races or avatar) will have a thin rune upon their left breast, just below the collar bone. It is so thin as to be nearly invisible. The one so marked will have a strong sense to keep this rune secret, even from their family and friends.

The mark looks like a ying-yang with a "C" bridging across the center, from ying to yang.

Those marked are immortal, to a degree. They will age to middle or a little older but they will never die from old age or common disease. However, that can easily die from a fall, being ran over, a weapon blow, poison, combat level disease, etc.

The symbol stands for "Sect of the Chose". In some places it is called "Children of the Sun." If you look at the rune the outer circle is an "O", the squiggle through the middle is an "S" the bridge is a "C" and where the C and S intersect is a "T". Thus it has the letters SOTC (sect of the chosen) or COTS (children of the sun).

The mark is called the Mark of the Chose or MOTC. Most individuals will refer to themselves as MOTC, hiding the more secret and powerful acronym of SOTC.

**What is it?:** No one knows, not even the ancients know. There are several guesses:

- A new universe *class* created to span all races. Done by the universe itself. An end-run if you will.
- The universe realizes that like all things, it must end. The circle must complete. But it needs a being more powerful than the ancients yet not created by them. Thus, MOTC will slay each other over the millennium until there is only One super MOTC. And that one will end the universe.
- The ancients numbers are slowly dwindling. As MOTC advance they will ultimately become as powerful as an ancient and, by aligning themselves with one and remaining true to that alignment, they will become an ancient.

**Rules:** On purpose, the rules for MOTC are vague so you, as GM, can develop them as you go. I'll give you some guidelines below to start you out.

- If a MOTC is slain by another MOTC, a skill roll is made versus 10, 25, 50, 100. If the 10 is beat a minor ability is gained from the slain MOTC. A 25 a lesser ability, a 50 a primary ability, a 100, a major ability.

So as SOTC slay MOTC the survivor becomes stronger and stronger.

- When the character is made the player must select a MOTC color and related ancient. The Colors and Ancients are listed next. GM - do *not* tell your players anything about the ancients or colors. Let this be a guess and learning process as they play the game more and more. Once they pick, then roll a d6 and randomly select a race/color. Now tell them the names of both picked and rolled race and let them pick.
  - Zodar - Black
  - Aerolk - White
  - Quantum Knight - Purple
  - Valkery - yellow
  - Time Lord - Pearl
  - Shanask - Dark Rainbow
- All MOTC will have a feat with the R+C selected by the GM based on how well the ancient race and their realm match up with the race and class.
- A MOTC must go to a powerful MOTC and have their mark activated. This is the step that results in the end of 90% of MOTC. Because the more powerful SOTC *must* desire to kill the lesser MOTC and gain their powers. So, a friendly MOTC will not work. So, the only hope is to find a greatly more powerful enemy MOTC who will activate the mark, but then wait for the lesser MOTC to gain power before slaying them. In other words, throw the fish back until it gets big enough.
- Once activated, the MOTC will gain its first MOTC powers which will always be an attribute bonus. I have players guess a related ancient attribute and if correct they get a 2d4 bonus. Otherwise, they randomly roll one of the ancient's attributes and get a d4 bonus.
- Once activated their mark will be broadcasting that "Here is a MOTC, please come kill me." They must quickly find a rune master who can teach them to mask their mark and how to activate it when a power is needed.
- Activating a mark requires transferring it to your palm. Simply touch the mark with your palm. It will then glow on your palm. Next extend hold your palm out to the item/area you wish affected.
- The rune master will be able to teach the MOTC another power from their ancient and give them d6 MOTC points.
- Once the learn to mask their MOTC power, they will next have a long list of MOTC tasks ahead of them - you make these up. For example, one of my groups had to "Wrestle the Gooth." They were given a band and a system to travel to. Turned out that the Gooth was a stone table with a stone arm on it in "arm-wrestling" position. Once gripped they could

wrestle with mind or strength – their choice. They were then transported to a room where they fought or solved a puzzle. Success “bound their color” to them – I forget what I meant by that – hehe. So, you see, just be creative.

- MOTC Points: A MOTC point can be used to power a mark for a special effect. For example, a Shanask MOTC could say, “I’m going to dump two MOTC points into my power and try to unlock this door.” The GM sets a difficulty based on (# of MOTC points used up, the feat roll that the player will make, how relevant the ability is to the ancient race, and how hard the task is). Then allow an open-ended roll versus your Dif.
- MOTC Points can be gained for any reason you deem appropriate such as when another MOTC is slain, anytime the character reaches some major

#### **Ancient - Color - sample lesser powers and attributes for bonuses**

**Lesser powers always work, no MOTC point needed**  
**Attributes are an incomplete list. This is just wave 1 of attributes**

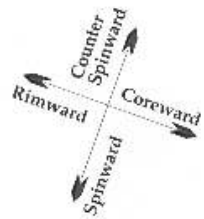
- Shanask – Dark Rainbow – light small fire, reduce fall by 10 feet
  - Lore, Will Power, Arcane, Energy, Luck
- Time Lord – Pearl – add 5 to all Nish rolls, luck all Nish rolls free, for 1 weapon luck Atk free, for 1 armor Luck Def free
  - Speed Burst, Dexterity, Awareness, Charisma, Lore

development or event, per level, per rank, etc. However, you like to do it.

- Likewise attribute bonuses and powers can be given out as you deem appropriate, other than after slaying a MOTC.
  - When a MOTC is slain, all other friendly MOTC in the immediate area may roll to gain power.
  - I like to sprinkle one or two MOTC in each adventure. Typically they are bosses or lieutenants – fairly hard combats. But not always.
  - The MOTC plot element is an excellent one to weave throughout all your adventures.
  - I’m going to leave the rules here for you. I will just add a table below of a few suggested powers and attributes that could be buffed.
- Quantum Knight – Purple - +5 on death check, free luck on failed death check, gain sword skill minimum of 10 on R and C.
    - Fortitude, Arcane, Energy
  - Valkery – Yellow - +2 Vit, Vit Pool of 10, Regeneration, gain bow skill with min. of 10 on R and C, spear skill min 10 on R and C
    - Vit, Dexterity, Awareness, Charisma
  - Zodar – Black – permanent AR RCB4, permanent Energy resistance RC+10, Strength RC+5
    - Str, Fortitude, Energy, Vit
  - Aerolk – White – +1 to MR, starlight vision, infravision, x-ray vision, Gain Sorce Nova feat min R+C of 8+8  
 Speed Burst, Charisma, Energy, Nish, Luck



# Known Space



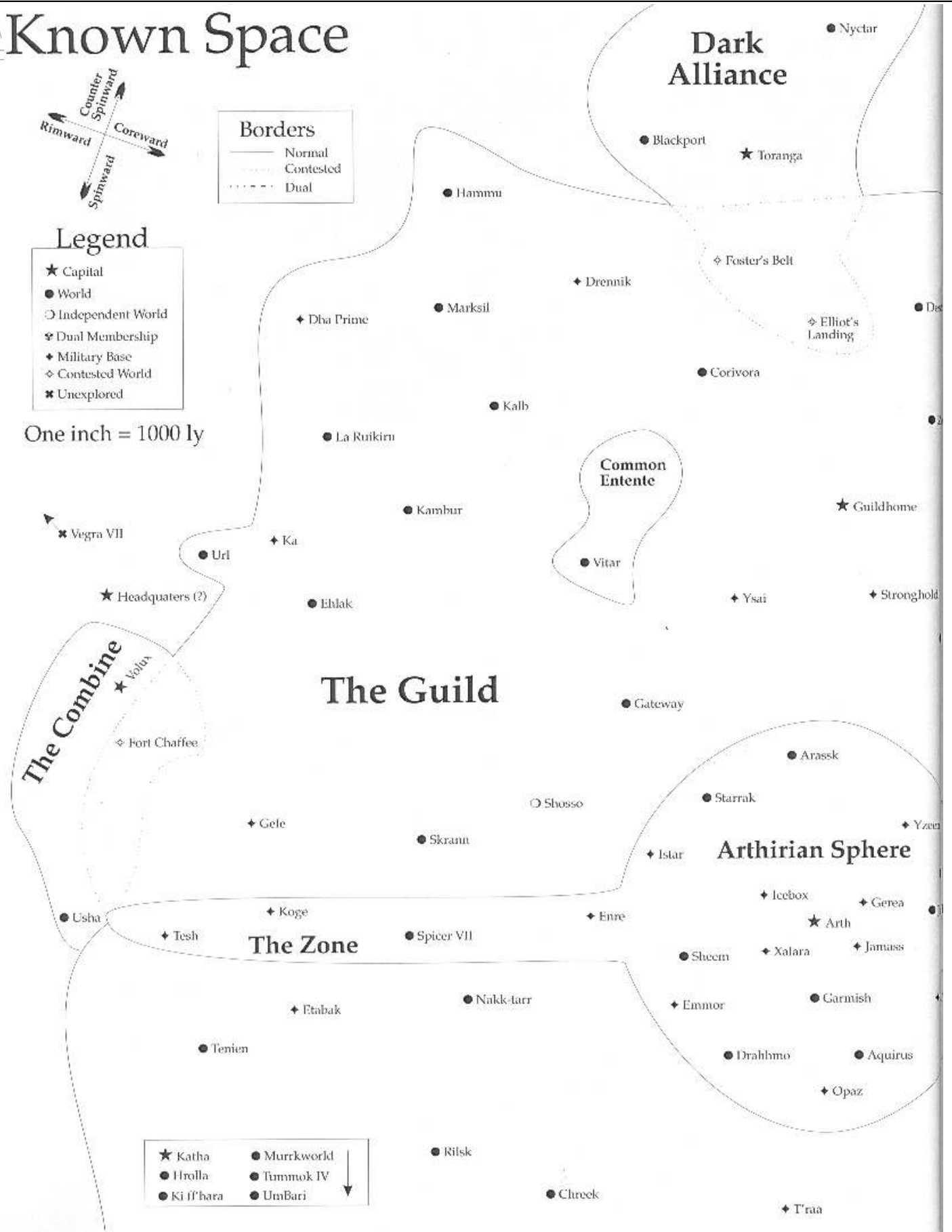
**Borders**

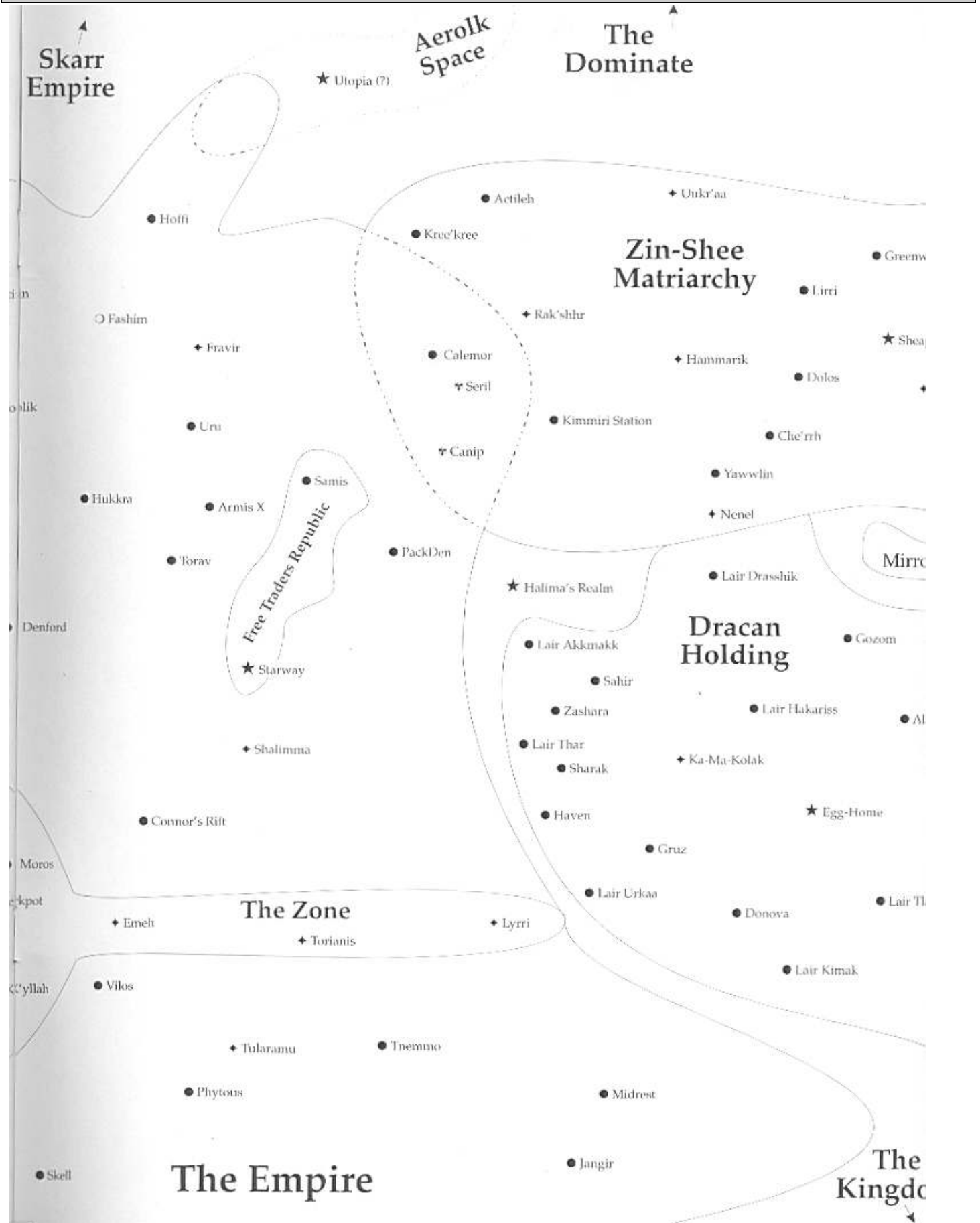
- Normal
- - - Contested
- · · · · Dual

**Legend**

- ★ Capital
- World
- Independent World
- ✦ Dual Membership
- ✦ Military Base
- ◇ Contested World
- ✦ Unexplored

One inch = 1000 ly





**GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM2**

**Character & Die**

**By Blake Mobley**

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends, many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

## Special Thanks

**From Blake Mobley to:**

- Renay for allowing me to play late into the night for these many years and for supporting my dream.
- Phillip Bagga, Steve Tobin, and Dave Webb for their many deep conversations into the recess of RPG design and playability. Phillip for "keeping it real" and his watchfulness for the "fun" of gaming. Steve as a great sounding board for prototype concepts and services as a master GM. Dave for his unique ability to break bad rule systems and for his long time inspiration as a fellow game designer. You three have helped me more than you know.

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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change thought the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

To download or buy other booklets and products:

**[www.mentalwinds.com](http://www.mentalwinds.com)**

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# Read Thoroughly!

This is the first and most core of the actual MetaScape rule booklets. It is the keystone of MetaScape. But, if you haven't already read the "Read First! Introduction" you should go read it. It will take you on a tour of the rules which will help the contents of this book make more sense.

This book is for GMs, players need not read any rule booklet, just utilize the players manual and its booklets as needed. As GM, your job is to absorb the rules and then assist players in enjoying the game without the need for them to read any of the rules.

OK, first, I just can't address you as "YOU" throughout these rules, too impersonal. So, I shall continue to address you with your Scaper name of Killiam.

This book must be read first - rule wise. But, if you are new to roleplaying you should go read the Roleplaying booklet first. Then return here when you are ready to learn how to play.

## STRATEGIC APPROACH

Ok, here is a general idea of how I'm going to teach you to GM and play MetaScape. Do read these bullet points as it will give you a mental map of where you are going and keep everything in perspective.

- **Conventions:** Several of the more important conventions are covered so my conversations with you, Killiam, make sense.
- **Dice:** Next, I'm going to cover the extremely powerful and robust die system. This will be a lengthy and detailed topic to hit you with so early. But, it is the heart of MetaScape and enables it to surpass other RPGs in so many ways. Please wade through this with great attention. I know it is a bit long and technical, but it will pay off big time when you see the power and flexibility of the die system during game play.
- **Major Character Creation Techniques:** Now that I've fried your brain with the Die system, take a break and down a soda, for next I'm going to cover some of the more tricky parts of character creation. These techniques are used multiple times and I didn't want to list them over and over in the Character Creation section that follows. Plus some of them are a bit "tricky" to learn, so isolating them here is better.

- **Character Creation:** Now that you understand the Die and the Major character creation techniques, We'll have some real fun and create our first character together from start to finish.
- **Character Advancement:** Now the fun begins, Killiam, how to water our characters and watch them grow. This section covers everything you need to level and Rank up your characters.
- **High Level Character Creation:** Ever wanted to create a high level character in another RPG? Often it is a painful and difficult process. But not in MetaScape, it was designed for high level character creation. So if a party wants to run high level characters or a player's character dies and need's replaced - you are set!

My friends, who regularly play with me, want me to caution you that you may never return to your current RPG system once you learn how to play MetaScape - hehe. And, they are serious.

Now one quick clarification point. These rules are for MetaScape Guild Space which is the super science, space opera setting. I'm not yet done with MetaScape Core which is the medieval setting. However, I tend to use lots of medieval examples in these rules, which works well as they apply to both settings - e.g., swords exist in both settings. Just remember, the game you will play is an advanced high tech, spaceship and sciences setting.

# Conventions

There are a few conventions and global rules that I must share with you, Killiam, so everything makes sense.

**Formulas:** There are a number of formulas in the game and I need to make sure you interpret them correctly. Particularly \* as in  $5*2$  means times. So  $5*2 = 10$ .

Just like back in high school algebra, multiplication and division are done before addition/subtraction. Just remember, do the hard things first. So  $5*2+3$  is  $10+3$  or 13. But  $5+2*3$  is  $5+6$  or 11. This typically shows up when level or rank are involved. Three “famous” formulas are

- Advancement Die of:  $3d6+3*Rank$
- Credits of:  $3000+300*level$
- ETax of  $30+3*level$

**Color Coordination:** As much as possible tables and character sheets have been color coordinated. For example green = R+C information, brown = encumbrance, Yellow = die or maintenance, Purple = RC, etc. You’ll learn about all these later, just be aware of the color coordination. It will help you.

**Rank Requirements:** In all cases but one, a rank requirement is hard and fast. No exception if something needs rank, 3, the Character MUST be rank 3 or more.

The one exception is feats. Character’s may learn feats of higher rank by spending AP. These term will be explained below, just store the idea away for now.

**Ability(Dif):** A notation like Str(15) means a strength check is needed versus difficulty 15. Str 15 means the character or Unit has a Strength of 15. Killiam, be sure to note the subtle but important difference.

# Dice

Lets start with the MetaScape die system. I hate to say this, Killiam, but I consider the die system the heart of MetaScape. It really is the aspect that allows most of the other nifty things to work. I hope you're the type of person who loves to see a bunch of transparent colored glass with lots of fun sides and colors. If so you're in luck, for I'm going to teach you how to toss those dice to generate meaning within your character's worlds.

MetaScape uses the most advanced die system of any RPG I've encountered. As such, move through this section carefully and attentively. As GM, Killiam, you have to master the concepts here as the rest of the game is driven by the die system. It is the sophistication and robustness of the die system that forms the mighty foundation for MetaScape.

Upon first read, this section may seem a bit, ummm, robust! But don't worry, I've ran games with 8, 12, and 14 year old girls as my three players and they got along just fine. Most rolls are quite simple, but I have to explain all possibilities to you in case you ever need them. So, put on your best thinking hat and delve into the vast power of the MetaScape die system.

**Goals:** The goals that forged the MetaScape die system were:

- Move die roll out of the GM's hands as much as possible, freeing the GM to run the game.
- Allow for rapid ad-lib play.
- Create a rolling system that would mimic the results of the GM rolling a dX and the player rolling a dY and the larger roll wins. So the GM could roll a d10 and the player a d47 and the higher roll wins.
- Have natural indicators or a critical success or failure to add game flavor.
- Create a system in which die size never ends, so advancement is unlimited.
- Keep all of this "relatively" simple.

Killiam, all of these goals are met by the MetaScape die system (though the last is always an arguable point - hehe).

## COMMON DIE NOTATION

**The Basics:** Rolling die throughout the hobby industry is noted as d4, d6, d8, d10 etc. This means roll the die and read the result. So d6 means "roll a 6-sided die and read the result." So, d10 means roll a 10-sided

die and read the result. This couldn't be easier. But, few die rolls in MetaScape are of this type. Most use a capital D or "big D" such as D6 or D10. These have a very different and unique meaning as explained in the next section below.

For no, Killiam, lets do a quick refresher of typical die notation used by practically all RPGs and used by MetaScape. When I want a 6-sided die rolled, I list is as d6, so a d20 is a 20-sided die rolled. So a statement like, "see if you can beat a 7 with a d10" means roll a 10 sided die and try to get a 7 or better.

Now what If you want a player to roll three 6-sided die and add them together for a result between 3 and 18 (1 to 6 plus 1 to 6 plus 1 to 6). The notation is 3d6. This means roll three 6-sided die AND add the results together. So 2d12 means roll two 12-sided die and add them together.

Ok, so what if you want the results of a 6-sided die and 12 sided die added? You would write d6+d12. Now what if you wanted a 6-sided die rolled and 10 added to the result. You would write d6+10. Likewise d8-2 is generated by rolling an 8-sided die and subtracting 2. So let's do a more advanced one, Killiam, what does 3d6+9 mean? I bet you got it, you roll three 6-sided die, add them together then add 9.

One of the more common roles of this type is found on the Tables Character Sheet as the Advancement Die and is 3d6+3\*Rank. This means roll three 6-sided die and add them together then add to that three times your character's rank. So a Rank 2 character would be 3d6+6, a rank 3 character would be 3d6+9, etc.

**d1, d2, d3 Rolls:** Most dice are easy to roll, a d4 means pick up the 4-sided die and roll. However, three common die types need explained.: d1, d2, d3.

A d1 means a one sided die. Now you could find the nearest marble write a 1 on the outside and roll it to see if it does indeed stop rolling with its outside out, or you can just realize that a d1 will always roll a 1.

To roll a d2, there are many common RPG methods. The most common is to roll a d6 with the lower half (1, 2, and 3) being 1 and the upper half (4, 5, and 6) being 2.

To roll a d3, again many options, but a common method is to roll a d6 with the lower third (1 and 2) being 1, the middle third (3 and 4) being 2 and the upper third (5 and 6) being 3.

## DOUBLING DIE

**Doubling Die:** OK, now that we've reviewed the basics, let's start with the key die of the entire game - the doubling die (DD). The doubling die is a 16-sided die numbered oddly (t, ©, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 2, 4, 4, 8, 16). Don't worry if you don't have one. I'll present some options below - the best is to buy some soon, but in lieu



of that, you can use a 20-sided die and a conversion table (that happens to be on the Front character sheet).

The doubling die is a multiplier die. It is rolled along with a normal die, such as a d6, and the results of the two die are multiplied. So, a d6 and DD roll of 3 and 4 would result in  $3 \times 4 = 12$ . And, to note this roll the notation is D6 (the big D represents doubling die and the 6 represents the other die). So D12 is a doubled 12 roll (a doubling die times a d12), and a D20 is a doubled 20. Now a d20 is simply a 20-sided die roll, no doubling die as it has a lower case "d". Killiam, it is VERY important that you understand the difference between d8 and D8. The d8 means "roll an 8-sided die" where a D8 means "roll and 8-sided die and a doubling die and multiply their results." Don't move on until you have this concept down.

**Making Doubling Rolls:** A few rules about doubling rolls. First, both die (the normal and the DD) must be rolled together. If either die is re-rolled (falls of the table, is cocked), both are re-rolled. Treat them as a single die. (Below you will read of t, ©, and 16 exceptions, but these are the only exceptions)

**t, and ©:** I can hear what you are thinking, "Great, so how do I multiply a die by t or ©? Good question, Killiam. The answer is, that the DD's t and © are treated as 1's - which makes multiplication pretty easy! The exception is when a t or © comes up on the initial roll. This flags the roll as a tremendous (t) or critical ©, see below.

**Tremendous (t):** A tremendous roll occurs when the VERY first roll results in a t on the DD. The roll is a "tremendous" roll, indicating that the GM will ad-lib some special beneficial effect. When a tremendous roll occurs, the DD "ONLY" is picked up and re-rolled. Any result of t or © after the initial roll are treated as if they were 1s. So there is no double or triple tremendous or a tremendous canceled by a critical, as any t or © after the initial roll is identical to rolling a 1.

**Tremendous Examples:** Killiam, let's use the example of rolling a D8 and we'll assume the d8 die always rolls an 8 to keep it simple. Let's say the DD roll is a t, rolled again, for a 2. This would result a "tremendous 16." Here's why, first we had an 8 and a t. The t was on the initial roll and flags the roll as a tremendous effect. The t is re-rolled and a 2 results. So the 8 (on d8) and the 2 (on DD) are multiplied to get 16 and the "tremendous" flag is added giving a tremendous 16. Now, let's say the D8 roll was an 8 (on d8) and a t, t (on the DD). The result would be a "tremendous 8." Remember the 2<sup>nd</sup> t is treated as if it were a 1. Likewise a roll of 8 (on d8) and t, c (on DD) would also be a "tremendous 8."

**Critical (©):** A critical roll works almost identically to tremendous rolls and indicates that the GM will ad-lib some special negative effect. If, the initial doubling roll

comes up © on the DD, the roll is flagged as critical. The DD ONLY, is then picked up and rerolled. Any future result of © or t are treated as 1s.

**Critical Example:** So a D12 roll of 6 (on d12) and ©, 4 (on DD) would result in a "critical 24". Walking through this Killiam, the initial © flagged the roll as critical, the DD was rerolled and generated a 4. So the 6 (on d12) and 4 (on DD) are multiplied to get 24 and the flag "critical" is applied producing "critical 24." Like tremendous rolls a roll of 6 (on d12) and ©, © is a "critical 6" just like a roll of 6 (on d12) and ©, t (on DD), or 6 (on d12) and ©, 1 (on DD). All three rolls are the same.

**16:** Whew! Only one more doubling die mechanic to understand, Killiam, and you will have it down pretty well. I bet you're wondering, "What about hitting that 1000 difficulty dragon with a D8. How does that happen?" Good question, the answer lies in the DD's 16. Here's a statistical teaser. The chance of rolling a 16 on the doubling die is 1 in 32. Impossible, you say? It has 16 sides and one of them has a 16 on it! So you say it is 1 in 16. Not so I say!

Look at the pattern. If t and © are treated as 1<sup>st</sup>, the chance of rolling a 1 is 1 in 2, the chance of rolling a 2 is 1 in 4, the chance of rolling a 4 is 1 in 8, the chance of rolling an 8 is 1 in 16. So, it follows that the chance of rolling a 16 is 1 in 32, the chance of rolling a 32 is 1 in 64, the chance of rolling a 64 is 1 in 128, etc. Killiam, I can hear you saying, "What the heck!"

Its all true. You see, if you roll a 16 on the DD, you immediately roll the DD ONLY again and multiply the initial 16 times your second roll. So a DD roll of 16 and 2 is 32. Extending this example a D8 roll of 3 (on the d8) and 16, 2 (on the DD) would be a 96 ( $3 \times 16 \times 2$ ).

So huge numbers can be generated. But wait, it gets better. If a second 16 is rolled on the DD, guess what, Killiam? Yeap, you roll a third time on the DD. In other words, as long as you keep rolling 16's, you keep rolling the DD.

As an extreme example let's say a player makes a D8 roll of 2 (on d8), 16, 16, 16, 4 (on DD) for a total of  $2 \times 16 \times 16 \times 16 \times 4 = 32,768!!$  That poor dragon just went down, big time!

Quick reminder: once a 16 is rolled, any future rolls of t or © are treated as 1s. So a D8 roll of 2 (on d8) and 16, © (on DD) would be 32 ( $2 \times 16 \times 1$ ). The © was just a 1. Same for t as in 2 (on d8) and 16, t (on DD) this would be a 32 ( $2 \times 16 \times 1$ ).

OK, if you've wrapped your mind around the doubling die, you have mastered the most difficult part of the MetaScape die system. The rest, Killiam, should be cake! ©

**Magic:** So now that you understand the doubling die, let me explain its magic. Through the laws of

probability, the chance that a player rolls a D10 and beats a GM difficulty of 17 is identical to the chance that a player rolls a d10 and beats the GM rolling a d17 (and I've never even seen a 17-sided die!). Well, it would be identical if the t and © on the DD were actually 1s, but it's close enough (skewed slightly in favor of the player).

Do you see what this means, Killiam!!! It means that the GM can now roll an "any-sided" die against the player by simply naming a difficulty. So when you, as GM, say, "The door is difficulty 15." You statistically rolled a 15-sided die versus the player's die type to see who wins. So, you are armed with an array of die, from 1 to infinity! The math behind this is a bit boring, and has to do with the binary doubling scenario. But trust me, it works just like magic! ☺

## COMMA "X,Y" DIE

On character sheets, a doubling roll may be recorded as 10,4. This is exactly the same as D14. Just that the 14 has been broken down into two die and the "D" has been dropped, all so the roll can be made as fast as possible. So, to roll a 10,4 (found on your character sheet only), you would roll d10+d4 and multiply by DD. For example, if a 6 (on d10) and 3 (on d4) and 2 (on DD) were rolled. The result would be 9 (6+3) times 2 or 18.

## GMING CRITICALS AND TREMENDOUS

So, above I showed you how the crit/ooop system (called tremendous and critical in MetaScape) generates its flags to let you, the GM, know that one or the other has occurred. And you can easily see how unusually high results can occur from doubling rolls (I've seen a few over a million - hehe!). Now, Killiam, I need to show you how to interpret and incorporate such rolls into your game session.

**Critical/Tremendous:** These two work about the same except that one is a beneficial effect and one a negative effect. First, Killiam, it is important to keep the numerical part of the roll separate from the critical or tremendous flag. A player could roll a tremendous 1 (the roll likely failed, but a good effect occurred) or a critical 1000 (the roll succeeded, but a negative effect occurs).

When a critical or tremendous occurs, first, roll the only die the GM should have, a doubling die (DD). Use this roll as a guide as to the severity or magnitude of the critical or tremendous. So a roll of 1 on the DD indicates a basic critical or tremendous effect. A roll of 2 (on DD) is more significant. A DD roll of 16 means that a very significant critical or tremendous has occurred. And, just

like normal DD rolling, keep rolling 16's for greater degrees of magnitude.

Also, a roll of © means that a critical has been doubled and that a tremendous has been canceled out. Same, in reverse for a roll of t. Unlike normal doubling rolls, as GM, I like to continue rolling my DD until any string of T, ©, 16 ends. I then interpret the results to ad-lib the critical or tremendous effect. Sometimes, a player's tremendous roll may get a ©, ©, 16 and turn into a terrible critical. (I see the first © as canceling the tremendous, the second as making it critical and the 16 as a very bad critical).

**Ad-Lib Critical/Tremendous:** So, your player rolls a tremendous or critical and you roll your DD to determine severity/magnitude. Now what? Now, we see how good a GM you are, Killiam. For now, you ad-lib a result. This will take some practice, but to help, here are a few examples. Remember a critical can be looked at as "bad for the player" or as "good for the opponent/situation" and a tremendous for the player can be "good for the player" or "bad for the opponent/situation"

- Critical attack:
  - Half damage, Drop weapon, weapon breaks, hit friendly target, weapon explodes, damage weapon, hit multiple opponents
  - Wild: monster phases in and attacks, feet suddenly glued to the ground, become enraged and must kill all of create "X" in battle.
- Tremendous Attack:
  - Double Dmg, automatic tactical analysis, gain a buff to this opponent type for the rest of the battle
  - Wild: Blade suddenly has poison on it, opponent sprains ankle and now has MR 1,
- Critical Damage:
  - Wound yourself, wound an ally, shatter weapon, damage weapon, knocked off balance, opponent gets a free counter strike,
  - Wild: knocked backwards onto the ground, weapon caught in opponent's armor and requires Str to get it out,
- Tremendous Damage:
  - Double damage, wound continues to bleed for round after round damage, Gain extra damage to all opponents of this type, opponent has a heart attack for D10 more damage
  - Wild: Weapon has an unknown artifact trait that is just now learned, attack results in a moral check for all enemies,

blow is so powerful it chops down an adjacent tree as you yell "Gromp!" at the top of your lungs

- Critical Strength to Lift:
  - Sprain back for damage or reduced MR, Strength reduced for the next 5 hours, fingers smashed under the item,
  - Wild: cavern beneath your feat cracks and you fall in screaming, you break the item, you slip and fall crushing your communicator, you accidentally pull out your grenade pin
- Tremendous Strength to Lift:
  - You lift the item up with ease and balance it on one hand in an Atlas pose, you toss the item aside hurling it supernaturally far, You gain a buff to Str for 3 hours
  - Wild: A cavern breaks open beneath your feet and fall in just to discover a treasure trove, an earth elemental "like" creature is summoned by your efforts and approaches you in friendship

Listing every possibility would be endless and pointless. The idea is to use your GM creativity to feed off the players and the campaign and come up with great creative critical and tremendous results. Killiam, my players often look forward to my critical rulings as much as my tremendous ones as they add interesting events to the story line and make the situations seem more real. But, don't be a softy. If a critical is rolled and you roll an 8 or 16 on the DD, make it bad. But, as I'm sure you know, Killiam, bad doesn't mean game busting, or permanently damaging to the player's experience.

## NON-DOUBLED ROLLS

Rarely, you will want a doubling roll, made without the doubling die. This is called a non-doubled roll. For example, you may want a D8 rolled as a d8 (no DD).

Nearly anytime a two doubling rolls are pitted against one another (such as player versus player) this needs to be done for balance.

The most common use of this is when ranged player attacks into melee and an ally is hit, the resulting damage roll and armor roll are non-doubled as they are both being made by players.

Similarly, if one player is taken over and forced to fight another or berserk effects or a whole host of other situations, the typically doubling rolls are made as non-doubled.

## GMING HIGH ROLLS

At times, players will roll unusually high results. As GM, you need to decide how to interpret such high results. These interpretations will often dip into tremendous "like" ad-libbing, as they should.

First, Killiam, it will take some experience before you know how large is a "large" die result. Generally, I start adding in special effects once the roll hits 1000 (sometimes a bit less) and then just ramp it up from there. Anything over 10,000 generally gets a big effect, and over 100,000 get a REALLY big effect. For the rare 1,000,000 rolls I go totally ballistic with my ad-lib effect.

Here are a few examples to help:

- Player rolls a 4000 Initiative (Nish) roll: Character gets a full Nish on 4000, 1000, 100, and 1.
- Player rolls a Ghost Walk of 32,000 (Ghost Walk a non-corporeal state): The character pulls the entire party and occupied structure into another dimension for 2 hours and can Ghost Walk @R for the rest of the game session.
- Player rolls climbing of 120,000: The character can climb on any surface, even upside down, without effort at full MR as a new feat @R.
- Player rolls 80,000 Dmg with a hand axe versus a Tank: The axe penetrates faulty armor plating and lodges in a power nexus. The vehicle overloads and explodes, destroying it. (Notice that the vehicle had a weakness in this ad-lib rather than the hatchet being able to slice through plating like butter. You can go either way).
- Player rolls a 17,000 Death Ray: All enemies within 10 squares fall over dead.

## AMOUNT OF SUCCESS/FAILURE

A common verbal convention used in this game is "amount of success" or "amount of failure." Sometimes the word "degree" will be used in place of amount, such as the "degree of the success." This notation indicates that the difference between the roll's result and the difficulty is significant.

For example a poison may be Dif 10 and render a person unconscious for a number of rounds equal to the amount of failure. This means that if a failed roll (such as 6) results, the victim is rendered unconscious for 10 - 6 or 4 rounds. A roll result of 12 is unaffected because 12 is greater than the difficulty. Taking another example, an opponent may be stunned for a number of rounds equal to the degree of attack success. Thus, if the opponent's

Def is 15 and the attack result is 20, then the opponent is stunned for 20 - 15 or 5 rounds.

The word success or failure really isn't that important as it is relevant to point of view. In the previous example, the attack succeeded (from the attacker's point of view) but the defense failed (from the defender's point of view). In almost every case, common sense will dictate what effects a roll has.

Finally, the words "amount" or "degree" are often left out when the meaning is obvious. Using the above example, we could say that the poison renders a person unconscious for a number of rounds equal to the failure.

Later, you will learn that wounds are equal to the amount of the damage roll's success or the armor roll's failure (depending on how you look at it).

## COMBINING ROLLS

From time to time it will be necessary to somehow combine two or more die rolls for a single better roll – for example, when two characters use the same ability together on the same problem, or when a character uses a device which affects their ability (such as a ship station or a hand tech item). There are three methods that can be used.

**Full:** When fully combining rolls, you simply have every effected player roll, add up the total for a final result.

**Cooperative:** Cooperative rolling means that all players roll their non-doubled abilities. These numbers are added together and then multiplied by a single doubling die (just like d# buffs).

**Assist:** An assisted roll means that the main player makes a normal roll, and all who are assisting make non-doubled rolls which are added to the result (just like RC+s).

So, this rule combined with repeated attempts can create fun and "realistic" situations. Let's say a party comes to a door and the big Calemora tries to force it open but fails. The door's difficulty would then double. So the party places three of their strongest members on the door (all that will fit) and the GM decides the door is large enough to support Full rating combination. Now they make the new roll versus the doubled difficulty. Or, the door may have been narrow so the GM said that they could assist (assisted).

## CRIT BOXES

I can hear your concern. You can't get over the dragon going down in 1 shot. Well, at times, this would be very bad to the GM and the campaign. You may have some boss that you don't want slain with one great roll. Well, Killiam, Crit Boxes provide a great solution.

This is such a simple rule. Basically, if an opponent has a crit box, it means that it must be killed twice – the first time kills the crit box, the second kills the opponent. No, it is up to your ad-lib skills to determine how the crit box manifests itself. Maybe the opponent falls over, has a spasm of regeneration, and stands back up. Maybe it has a shield that goes down as the crit box. Maybe there are two of them, maybe it looks half dead when the first crit box is killed.

The important thing is that a little wimpy kitten with a crit box could take a 100,000 damage nuclear bomb and still live. Of course, with an extreme case like this, it is up to the GM to decide if the crit box were enough, but you get the idea.

**Multiple Crit Boxes:** Some creatures can have 2 or more crit boxes. For example I used a swamp worm with moderate stats, but each segment of its body was a crit box. Thus, the battle took a long time so I could implement other scenario plot lines during the battle. Oh, Killiam, wana drive your players nuts? Let them run into a giant slug with all stats at 1 but with 1000 crit boxes – hahahaha!

So, if that dragon was a favorite of yours, just add in a crit box or two. Now, using the ad-lib aspect of MetaScape, I occasionally adjust the number of crit boxes as an opponent is slain. Sometimes, a player will say, "Oh, man, I bet that thing has crit boxes." Well, maybe I never thought of it, but the players statement of trepidation is exciting to the other players and I decided "Umm, sure, it does!" Or perhaps they walk into a room and down a major opponent with one lucky hit. I may add a crit box. Or maybe I have a crit boxed opponent that they just can't kill the first time, and when they finally accomplish the task, I decide to erase its crit boxes and leave it dead.

I say all this and, Killiam, I want to emphasize the fun and power of the MetaScape die system. Unlike other games, you can kill the dragon in one hit and allowing your players to do this makes the game very fun for them. So don't over use crit boxes. Also, if a battle is particularly hard, don't necessarily remove crit boxes if the difficulty of the struggle will add to the plot. But, I'm sure you have the skill to judge these types of things well.

## DIE TYPES

As you know Killiam, "Die Types" is another way of saying "which sided die do I use." So a d6 is a die type (specifically, Die Type 6) and d12 is Die type 12, etc. Now, as you know, most RPGs use die types of 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20 and 100. A few also use the 30 and a rare few use the 16. I keep mentioning how MetaScape's rules are "unlimited" and "unending." And, I've mentioned that

character abilities (thus Die Types) can grow without bounds (e.g., the previous example of “So your die may go from 3 to 6, to 10, to 20... to 160, to 200... to 1000, etc.”). So, do you want to see the MetaScape Die types? Well, I can’t show you for there is an infinite number. But let me list the first couple of dozen: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 46, 50, 60, 80, 100, 120, 140, 160, 180, 200, 220, 240, 260...

So while the GM can roll any die type by simply naming a difficulty such as “57”, the list above are the possible Die Types that can be rolled by players as DX as in D12, D140, D24.

Killiam, let me show you how to roll all these die types. First, grab the character sheets and find the Tables sheet. Look along any of the yellow rows and you will see a sequence that reads: 1 2 3 4 6 8 10 12 10,4 16 10,8 etc. Some of the entries are two number separated by a comma. If you add these two numbers the sequence becomes 1 2 3 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 etc. Yes! They create the die types listed above. In other words, to roll a D14, you would roll a d10+d4 and the DD. To roll a D26 you would roll a d20+d6 and the DD.

**Important:** For any die type that requires two standard die (such as d10 and d8 for D18) the two normal die and the DD are all three rolled together. BUT, the two normal die are “added” together and that result is multiplied by the DD. Remember, Killiam, the two normal die are actually being rolled and added in place of a single d18 (which doesn’t exist). So the d10+d8 are to provide a number between 1 and 18 that can be multiplied by the DD. So, again, add the two normal die, THEN multiply by the DD.

[Aside: Yea, I know that d10+d8 produces 2-18 not 1-18 and that it is a bell curve and not an even distribution, but the end result is statistically close enough to a d14 that it works great for the purpose of the game.]

Being the astute person you are, Killiam, you likely have already noticed that the yellow rows end in 30,30 (which is 60) then an 8V and 10V (whatever those mean). This is far from an endless series of die types. Oh contraire!

## DIE CLASSES

In MetaScape, all doubling rolls (D“X” rolls such as D8) have a die class. Most doubling rolls are simply listed as D“X” as in D6, D12, D36, etc. But these Die Types are actually “Personal” class. Written out fully they would be D6P, D12P, and D36P. Obviously the P stands for “Personal.” Guess what Personal does to a die roll? It multiplies the roll by 1! Ohhhh, how special! In other words, it doesn’t do a darn thing, just adds a letter and a nifty name. So rather than saying, “make a D6

personal class roll,” and writing it as D6P, I just say, “Make a D6 roll,” and write it as D6. But, wait. There are also Vehicle, Ship, World classes and more. These too multiply the roll and noticeably so:

	Class	Multiplier
P	Personal	1
V	Vehicle	10
S	Ship	100
W	World	1000
C	Celestial	10,000
G	Galactic	100,000
U	Universal	1,000,000

Theoretically, there are classes beyond Universal, but I’ve never really had a need for any class beyond World. Basically this concept is quite simple. Let’s say a player needs to make a D10V roll. They would roll a d10 and the DD and add the label “vehicle.”. So a roll of 3 (on d10) and 4 (on DD) would 12 Vehicle. If the roll were against a vehicle class difficulty (say a player firing the forward guns of a tank against a vehicle class fortification, then the result of 12 would be compared to the fortification’s vehicle class rating (say 10). However, if the vehicle class roll of 12 were against a Personal class difficulty (say a typical monster) then the 12 would be multiplied by 10 (vehicle class is 10 times larger than personal class) and the result would be 120.

Typically the “D” is no longer needed when class is added. So D12V is often written as just 12V and D24S (24 Ship class) is written as just 24S.

Killiam, don’t get caught up in the class labels. It is true that most vehicles (tanks, rovers, etc.) have “mostly” vehicle class weapons and armor, but most of their instrumentation (scanners, sensors, med labs, science labs) are Personal class. Also, Vehicle class is not at all limited to Vehicles. A player can easily gain bonuses or level to have a vehicle class strength – or any other ability for that matter. Vehicle class is simply x10. But, for convenience, most vehicle’s weapons and armor are vehicle class, most small space craft’s weapons and armor are also vehicle class, most medium space craft weapons and armor are ship class, etc.

I hear you asking, “How do the die classes extend die types without bounds? I see that they can multiply them endlessly, but how does it all work?” OK, Killiam, on the character sheets, once we hit D60 (30,30 or two 30-sided die added together), the Die Types are listed as 8V then 10V. Yes that is D8 Vehicle class and D10 Vehicle class. Here is the rest of the sequence past that: 12V, 14V, 16V, 18V, 20V, 22V, 24V, 26V, 28V, 30V, 32V, 34V, 36V, 38V, 40V, 42V, 46V, 50V 60V, 8S, 10S. If you look closely, I simply wrapped on the same yellow row of Die types found on the character sheet and added a “V” for vehicle class. On the table the last to entries are 8V and 10V and

now they are 8S and 10S. Guess what. I now start at 12 on the table and repeat the sequence as Ship Class. So, this little table actually has all the doubling Die types from 1 to 60U on it and beyond if needed. That, 152 Die Types spanning numbers from 1 to 60 million! That the real upper limit is determined only by the number of class labels you can come up with - hehe.

Of course, there really is a 1V, 2V, 3V, 4V, and 6V, but rolling these as 10P, 20P, 30P, 40P, and 60P provides a lot more granularity to the results. A roll of 4V produces 10, 20, 30, 40 times DD as results. A roll of 40P (using a d30+d10) produces 2 through 40 times DD as results. The same goes for all of the Die Classes, they start at 1 and go up. So a ship could be listed as having 2S armor and 6S guns.

As a quick review, if you were to make a 32S roll you would roll a d20+d12 times DD times 100. So a roll of 15 and 3 (on d20 and d12) and a roll of 2 (on DD) would result in 3600 ( $15+3=18$   $18 \times 2 \times 100=3600$ ). If you've got this down you're nearly a master. Now Killiam, don't get too concerned that this level of math is going to bog the game down. I've played for 20 years, even had a group of girls ages 8, 12, and 14 play and they all got it quite easily. First, there are few rolls outside of personal class, and most rolls are very easy to resolve, even by an 8 year old. However, even the most skilled mathematician can benefit from a calculator when rolls produce sequences like a D60 roll of 17 and 26 (on the d30 and d30) and 16, 16, 16, 4 (on the DD). This would be  $17+26=43$  and  $43 \times 16 \times 16 \times 16 \times 4 = 704,512$ .

## DIE ROLLING TRICKS

Now I'll just cover some common RPG die tricks that will help you and your players. And hit a few little house keeping die rules that you'll want tucked away in your gamer's brain. I make light of this section, Killiam, but it is important you own these concepts.

**Next Larger Die Method:** (Tip: if you don't own a d16, this method will work, just use a d20) What if you need a 17-sided die rolled - a d17? Well, simply roll the next largest type of die (d20) and reroll out of bound results (18, 19, and 20).

Killiam, here's an important tip, what if you needed a d18 because you had 18 artifacts and you wanted the player to randomly roll for one? For a D18 roll, players use a d10+d8 then DD. But, if you need a true 1 to 18 result evenly distributed (no bell curve) d10+d8 fails. First, you can't roll a 1, secondly adding any two die creates a bell curve with average results being more likely and low and high results being less likely. So, allowing two or more die to be rolled and added will

often not work. The Next larger Die Method, works perfectly!

Now, on the flip side, do NOT use Next Larger Die when making Doubling rolls as it needlessly slows the game down.

So, if you need a d27, roll a true d30 die and reroll 28, 19, and 30. But, what if you don't have a d30? Then roll a d50 or d100 - they both exist. But, you say, what if I don't have a d50 or d100. Then you can create one by using the Place Value Rolling system below.

**Place Value Rolling:** So, how do you roll a d40 or d100 if you just own the standard 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20 sided die? (Oh, by the way, there are 50 and 100 sided die sold, but they tend to roll forever before coming to a stop). Here is the trick for rolling a d40, true linear 1 to 40 die result using a d4 and d10.

This trick relies on your 2<sup>nd</sup> grade knowledge of place value. You know, ones place, tens place, hundred place, etc. So, just roll the two die with the d4 result as the tens place and the d10 result as the ones place. For example, a roll of 3 (on d4) and 7 (on d10) is 37. Pretty simple. But you need to know two little tricks.

For place value die rolling to work, the d10 must be numbered from 0 to 9, not 1 to 10, as 0 to 9 are the digits allowed in the one's column. And for a d40 simulation, the digits in the tens column must be 0 to 3 (40 is the only exception and I'll get to that in a bit), not 1 to 4. With 1 to 4 you can never roll below 1 (on d4) and 0 (on d10) and you will roll a lot of numbers above 40 as in 4 (on d4) and 6 (on d10) for 46.

So, for both the d4 and d10, the top number (4 on d4 and 10 on d10) is considered Zero. So a roll of 4 (on d4) is really a roll of 0. Likewise a roll of 10 on the d10 is really a roll of 0.

Now, for some examples, this means a roll of 4 (on d4) and 6 (on d10) would be 0 and 6 or just a result of 6. Likewise a roll of 4 (on d4) and 9 (on d10) is 9.

Now, Killiam, let's look at the ones column, d10, die where a 10 is treated as a 0. So a roll of 3 (on d4) and 10 (on d10) is really a roll of 3 and 0 or 30.

Now for the one exception, a roll of 00 is not 0 but is always the largest result possible (40 in our case). So a roll of 4 (on d4) and 10 (on d10) would be treated as a roll of 0 and 0 as per our rules. And a roll of 0 becomes 40!

Using the place value technique you can roll d20, d30, d40, d60, d80, d100, d120, d160, etc. with perfectly distributed numbers from 1 to the die type. The most classic is to roll a d100 using two d10. Of course, in this case, it is important to note which d10 is the tens place and which the ones place prior to rolling. The gaming standard, if nothing is stated, is that the darker colored die is the tens place.

Just to solidify this knowledge, let me take a d100 roll using two d10 and do an example or two. Now, notice the technique is the same as for our d40, namely that both die have their largest number (10 and 10) treated as 0. So a roll of 3 and 8 would be 38. A roll of 4 and 10 would be 40 (the 10 is 0). A roll of 10 and 7 would be 7 (again the 10 is a 0 on either die). Finally a roll of 10 and 10 is 100 (because 10 and 10 are 0 and 0 for a result of 0, and a result of 0 is always the largest result that can be rolled - on a d100 that would be 100!).

**High “^” and Low “v” Notation:** Occasionally you will come across a die notation such as 1v6 or 5^6. Let me take each one and explain. 1v6 means “roll a 6 sided die and success is a roll of 1 or lower (v = lower, as it points downward)”. And 5^6 means “roll a 6-sided die and success is a roll of 5 or 6 (^ means higher, as it points upwards)”. So the first number is the goal of the roll and the second number is the die type rolled. The symbol %^ or v indicating higher or lower. Do note that rolling the goal itself is always success, so 6^6 means a 6 or up on a d6 and 5^6 means 5 or 6 on a d6 (5^ means a 5 or up not “above a 5”).

**Ties:** In general, all ties between GM and player go to the player. Ties between players go to the defender. Otherwise ties are kept as ties or a 50/50 roll is made to determine the winner. A common exception is Nish (Initiative) where ties are always kept as ties.

## REPEATED ATTEMPTS

If a character fails in the first attempt at a task, future attempts should become successively more difficult for both that character and all of his allies. Let’s take the example of a character attempting to force open a door. If rolls are continually made, eventually the character or one of his acquaintances will succeed (as a high result will eventually occur), and this is unrealistic and game-busting. On the other hand, it is unrealistic to tell a player that his character can’t try to force open the door a second or even third time.

To solve this, the general rule is to double the difficulty on each successive attempt. So it would double, double again (x4), double again (x8), etc. If the player doggedly continues to roll (after two or three attempts), inform the player that the task is beyond their character’s ability. However, if the situation changes (if the player comes up with a new and creative approach – forming a lever to pry the door open, for example), then you may allow another roll, and you may even reset the difficulty to its original value.

Some tasks should not become more difficult upon repeated attempts. A good example is most of the

combat rolls. Just because a player misses on an attack, you *should not* double the opponent’s Def.

In general, only double the difficulty for tasks which successive attempts would unlikely result in a different outcome in reality. For example, once you fail to lift a boulder, trying again a minute later is unlikely to succeed (thus the difficulty should double in the game). However, just because a grappling hook fails to catch on the first throw, doesn’t mean that it won’t succeed on a second or third (thus the difficulty shouldn’t change).

The decision to double or not double the difficulty of a task should be governed by common sense. Be sure to consider the player’s point of view. But, in the end, it all comes down to the GM’s judgment.

## RCD, RCD, RCB, RC+, RC#

OK, so you know how to roll nearly everything under the sun and are a MetaScape Die Master. But, what if you or the rules want to give a buff (a bonus) to a die roll? MetaScape has two types of buffs a RCB and a RC+.

A RCB adds a die to the roll (before the DD – see below) and a RC+ adds a number to the final result. However, a RC+5 will initially be +5 and a RCB10 will initially be a buff of d10. But later, they will grow so that a RC+5 may be an +8 and a RCB10 may be a d16. Let me explain.

**Theory:** Let me start by explaining the theory behind RC+s and RCBs. Your first question, Killiam, may be, “Why use buffs on a table and not simply list buffs as +2 and d6?” Answer: Because MetaScape is designed for unlimited advancement. If I started making Feats worded like “and the character gets Str+5” or “the character gains a d10 die to Str rolls” it would cause problem. Why? Because, as a character advanced to a high level a little +2 Buff or even a d10 Buff would become insignificant.

This problem plagued me for years. At first, I did what most games do. For nearly every feat, I had a Rank 0 version, a Rank 1, Rank 2, etc. up to about Rank 5 and then I just gave up and tried to use a formula. Both were vastly unwieldy, and due to the complex interaction of R+C, RC to Die and the impact of leveling, the balance of Feat’s Buffs to Character Die became shaky at best. Both solutions were a failures in supporting unlimited advancement.

The solution was to step away from listing exact buffs. Rather, I list RC+ and RCB with an special number after them. An RC+8 doesn’t mean +8, it means a + equal to RC8. That’s the trick that makes it all work perfectly. All Die are based on RC, RC advance at a set rate (3d6+3\*Rank). So, I just made a table that mapped Buffs to RCs at the same +3 per rank pace and you get

the table that you just copied! This way the benefits of RC+8 will grow with the character. At Rank 0 a RC+8 is +8, at Rank 5 it is +14, nearly doubled.

Now I can create equipment, Feats, etc. and list a Buff that will work great no matter the character level!

**Interpreting Buffs:** Great, so you know the concept. But when you see something like Str gains RC+12, how do you figure it out? See below.

**Rank 0 Simplicity:** At Rank 0 (levels 0-4) a RC+ will match the RC exactly so RC+8 is +8, RC+27 will be +27, etc. And the RCB will match the RC rounded down to the nearest "single die type." So a RCB8 will be d8, a RCB12 will be d12 and a RCB 18 will be d16 (18 rounded down to nearest single die type is 16).

**Rank 1 and Up:** At rank 1 and up the RC to Buff tables change (see Feats Book):

RCx			
Rank 1			
D	d, B	+,#	RC
D1	d1	1	1
D2	d2	2	2
		3	3
D4	d4	4	4
		5	5
D6	d6	6	6
D8	d8	8	7
		9	8
D10	d10	10	9
		11	10
D12	d12	12	11
D10,4		14	12
		15	13
D16	d16	16	14
		17	15
D10,8		18	16
		19	17
D20	d20	20	18

**Columns D, d, B, +, #:** We have talked about RCB and RC+. The columns used for these are the blue "d, B" column for RCB and the tan "+, #" column for RC+.

Let's take RC+12 at Rank 1 as an example. In the Feats Booklet, look at the Rank 1 table. Remember, the number listed in a Buff is an RC so RC+12 is RC+(RC12). So, find RC 12 on the Rank 1 RC to Buff Table (above). Then just read the number in the +, # column. It is 14. So at Rank 1 RC+12 = +14.

Now let's do a Rank 1 RCB18. Remember the number after the word "Buff" is an RC not a die. So RCB18 is RCB(RC18). Looking on the Rank 1 RC to Buff

table above, find RC18. Then look at what's in the "d" Column: a d20. So at Rank 1 RCB18 = a d20 buff.

**D and d Holes:** You may have noticed that there are gaps or holes in the "D" and "d" columns. Just pretend that all holes are filled with the listing above them. So RCB3 would be a d2 (since RCB2 is a d2). I've found that my players read the D and d columns faster by leaving these gaps in the tables rather than filling them in with the numbers from above. Feel free to fill them in if you like.

**Rolling with RCBs:** If a RCB is buffing a normal die such as a RCB8 buffing a d12. Then the roll becomes d12+RCB(RC8). At Rank 0 that would be d12+d8.

If the RCB is buffing a doubling roll such as D12, the RCB die is added to the normal die BEFORE being multiplied by the DD. So D12 with RCB8 would be d12+RCB(RC8) times DD. At rank 0, RCB8 would be d8, so it would look like d12+d8 times DD.

A RCB will ALWAYS evaluate to a numbers that matches actual dice such a d6, d8, d10, d12, d16, d20, d30 but never d14, d7, d26, etc. This keeps the number of die being rolled from becoming unwieldy. This is also the reason that doubling rolls never use more than two die plus the DD.

**Rolling with RC+:** A plus buff is very simple, it means "add the buff to the total of the roll." So a d6 RC+3 means d6RC+(RC3). At Rank 0, RC+(RC3) is +3 so the roll would become d6+3.

Now a RC+ can also be a penalty as in d8 RC+-2. Just evaluate it as RC+(RC2) but subtract the buff instead of adding it. It is still called a RC+ not a -Buff.

For doubling rolls, a RC+ is added in AFTER the DD has been multiplied. In other word, adding in the RC+ is the very last step. Let's use a RC+3 at Rank 0. The RC+3 would be +3. So a D8 RC+ 3 roll at Rank 0 would be d8 times DD +3. So the roll of 4 (d8) and 2 (DD) + 3 becomes 11.

**Buff Pros/Cons:** So which buff is better? A RC+10 or RCB10? The answer is "depends." Let's say the buff is to damage on a weapon. At Rank 0, a RC+10 means that, other than critical effects, you can't roll below 11. (11, you say? Yes, because any roll will generate at least a 1 and 1 +10 is 11). So, you could wade through a group of lesser opponents like a mowing machine. But, versus a boss of difficulty 100, that +10 isn't nearly as useful.

On the flip side, a RCB10 helps moderately versus easy opponents but can have huge impacts upon high rolls. Here's why - to get a high roll you need the DD to be a large number (such as 8, 16, or a series starting with 16). The DD's number is multiplied by the normal die of the roll. So a D8 roll of 2 (on d8) and 8 (on DD) would be 16. A RC+10 would make this 26. But a RCB10 that rolled an 8 would make the roll 80. Let me walk you through that one. As in our example above, the D8 roll was 2 (on d8) and 8 (on RCB10) and 8 (on DD). The d8



and RCB results are added (2+8 = 10) THEN this number is multiplied by the DD (or 10 times 8) for 80 total!

In summary, RC+ is always there and helps out a lot, particularly with easy tasks. A RCB bonus can range from 1 to infinity, so is less reliable, but has a much greater potential particularly with high difficulties.

**Recording Buffs:** This one is important. At every new rank, your Buffs may increase, so you need to write them on your sheet correctly. A RC+10 that is currently +11 would be written +11(10). The +11 is the Buff and the 10 is the Buffs RC.

Likewise a RCB14 that is currently a d16 would be written d16(14). Again the d16 is the buff and the 14 is the RC.

**Summary:** RCD, RCd, RCB, RC+, and RC# always use the RCx tables. These notations are used when the GM wants a Doubling Roll (RCD), a die (RCd), a Buff (RCB), a plus (RC+) or a number (RC#) that grows with the character's rank. For all of these let's say the character is Rank 1 so we would be using the following RC to Buff table.

RCx Rank 1			
D	d, B	+,#	RC
D1	d1	1	1
D2	d2	2	2
		3	3
D4	d4	4	4
		5	5
D6	d6	6	6
D8	d8	8	7
		9	8
D10	d10	10	9
		11	10
D12	d12	12	11
D10,4		14	12
		15	13
D16	d16	16	14
		17	15
D10,8		18	16
		19	17
D20	d20	20	18

This is the RCx table (note the x is either D, d, B, +, or #). To use this table find the correct RCx column (D, d,B, or +,#) and then find the RC number in the purple RC column. Cross the RC row and the RCx column (D, d,B, +,#) and you will find your result. If the result is a blank box, use the first non-blank result above it.

**RCD:** So RCD9 would be column "D" and RC 9. These intersect at D10. So at rank 1 RCD9 is a D10 roll.

**RCd:** RCd11 would be a d12 roll (use the "d" column and the 9 RC row, using the die above for blank spots).

**RCD vs RCd:** So the difference between RCD and RCd is that RCD is a doubled roll and RCd is a normal roll. And, RCD uses the "D" column while RCd uses the "d" column.

**RCB:** RCB is just like RCd except that the resulting die is rolled along with the other die in a doubling roll and added in *before* the doubling die is multiplied. So a D8 roll with a RCB4 (d4) would be rolled as d8+d4 and this result times the DD. The B stands for Buff or Before (as in before doubling die).

**RC+:** Use the "+,#" column, so an RC+ 8 would be +9 at Rank 1.

**RC#:** RC# is just like RC+ except that the result is a number not a plus to be added to something. So RC# 8 would be the number "9." An example would be, "The monster can spit acid for RC# 8 squares."

## DICELESS GM OPTIONS

**Just DD:** Due to the DD and its magical effects, the GM has no need, in fact it is often detrimental, to roll die.

Exceptions are the rolling of a DD for tremendous/critical severity. Also, you can use a DD for general "guidance." For example, the party enters a bar and tries to befriend a random patron whom you haven't given any thought to. So you roll a DD (high is always good for the players) and get a 4 - the patron is pretty amiable. Or you roll a © 2 and the guy is ready for a fight. Of course, it is generally better to let the players roll (such as a Charisma roll) if it fits the situation.

**GMU vs GMU (GM Unit):** a GMU is a GM controlled Unit. It could be a monster, a friendly unit, an ATM (automaton, i.e., a robot) a vehicle, a ship, etc. Any GM controlled Unit is a GMU. At times, you may be running a GMU and need to roll against your own difficulties (such as two GMU's fighting, or a GMU trying to pick a lock). In this case you, as GM, only have two ratings such as a GMU 10 and a Door of 18. You have two choices

- Choose the door or GMU and make a doubling roll for that one (not both). Usually I have a player make the roll as they have the die and I choose the one that is on their side. So if they are hiding behind the door I'll say, "Linlin, make a D18 roll to see if the door holds." If the GMU is helping the party I'll say, "Linlin, make an R10 roll to see if the GMU can breach the door." This is a VERY good solution to this situation.

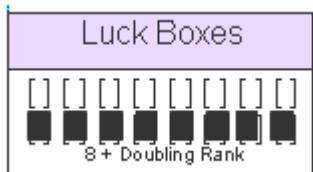
- Roll a DD for both door and GMU and use them along with the GMU and Doors ratings in an ad-lib call. I use the quite frequently when the above solution doesn't fit. It is also an easy way to deal with complex situations. For example, they party is accompanied by 20 native warriors and the entire party is assaulted by 30 opponents. The PC versus GMU combat is easy to run with normal rules. But those 20 GMUs versus the 30 enemy GMUs is a killer. So, during each attack wave, I simply roll a DD for each side and ad-lib the results - cake! Of course, I could also assign 5 or so GMUs to each player and let them make their rolls, if it wouldn't bog the combat down too much.

**(Optional) GM must have Die:** I'm not personally a proponent of this optional rule, but if you really need to have more randomness on your side, you can use a d6 and a DD to modify all of your GM set difficulties. The d6 is a 50/50 (1,2,3, is down and 4,5,6 is up) and the DD indicates magnitude of change. Don't do a direct multiplication as a Dif 10 opponent times 16 = 160 which is extremely difficult for a typical character. Rather, a roll of 16 may double the opponent. So a roll of 2 (on d6) and 16 (on DD) means down at a magnitude of 16 (probably cut the difficulty in half).

**(Optional) Brutal Reality:** If your group is into ultra hard-core realism within your RPG games, you can try this optional rule. I'd never consider it with a rolled up character due to the time put into character development, rather use ad-lib GMU style characters. But, the idea is that GM and Player both using doubling rolls against each other - no difficulties. It is very real as your character can die in one shot (the GM rolls and hits, then rolls a 180 Dmg and down you go). I will occasionally use this for a real serious dual between player and boss or sometimes, in gladiator arenas. But I think, this rule should be avoided most if not all of the time.

## LUCK BOXES

One of the beloved aspects of MetaScape are the "Luck Boxes." In the lower left of the Front Sheet is an area for tracking your Luck Boxes. A newly created character will fill in this area to look like this:



Leaving eight luck boxes for use.

During play, if a player makes a Strength roll and their Strength Die is 8. They will make a D8 roll. If they don't like the roll such as 4 (on d8) and © (on DD), then can "spend a luck box." And roll again. First one of the open luck boxes is crossed off with a single diagonal line. Then ALL DICE involved in the roll (including any Buffs, etc.) are picked up and tossed again. The player may then keep either result, even the poorer result if desired. A lucked roll is like going back in time and making the roll again. Any active feats are in the same condition, all dice are rerolled in the same type and quantity.

So the basic concept is simple, spend a luck box and roll again, keep whichever result you like most. Now, here are all the special cases and considerations that keep this in balance:

- A roll may only be lucked once. No matter how bad the two rolls are, the player must pick one of them and a third lucked roll is never allowed.
- Active feats, and any other aspect besides the die, may not be changed. For example, a player can't luck a weapon attack roll but this time add in additional feats or mastery elements. You are lucking the "roll" not the entire situation. (Big reason for this, is to keep the game from bogging down by re-tooling a lucked roll)
- Tremendous and Critical rolls only apply to that roll. So a roll of tremendous 2 and a lucked roll of 8 does not make the lucked 8 tremendous.
- Luck Boxes may NEVER be used outside of regular play such as character creation or character advancement breaks.
- Luck boxes may only be used by that player for their rolls - no sharing! Hehe
- The lucked roll must belong to the player's character or something the character DIRECTLY controls or influences. No sharing luck with another character or using it on GM controlled things.

The general concept of what can and can't be lucked. Is that game mechanic rolls may not be lucked (R+C, Meta Regeneration, the GM asks for a d6 to determine a choice). Player rolls for common, in-game, by the character or things the character directly controls can be lucked.

In an attempt to further clarify this, here is a list of rolls that may be lucked. But a list is flawed, where GM discretion is better. For example, Feat and feat sub rolls may be lucked. However, a feat sub roll that has six random events decided by a d6, I generally do not allow lucked as it is a game mechanic (exists outside the character's control).

But, here is a list of allowed rolls to give you a “rough” feel for it.

- Nearly all Doubling rolls Like attributes, Atk, Dmg, Def, AR and Feats. But never a roll of the DD by itself.
- Non-doubled rolls (since they “were” doubled). Such as player versus player rolls.
- Owned Equipment rolls if non-game mechanic
- Feat rolls and sub rolls
- Pets, GMUs, ATMs, Ships, Vehicles if they are directly controlled by the character and the roll is a non-game mechanics roll.

Here is a “partial” list of non-luck-able rolls.

- Meta Regeneration
- R+C
- Advancement Die
- Artifact or Treasure Rolls
- Omega selection Rolls
- Roll for MOTC color or race
- GM requested rolls are rarely luck-able. For example, things like awards, type of MOTC power gained, roll to see which player is attacked/selected/transported/etc.

Killiam, you will have to make a number of calls as to what can and can't be lucked. I hope the information above helps.

## **DONE! DIE MASTER!**

Grats Killiam, you are done! You have mastered the robust, powerful heart of MetaScape. This is the foundation that all the else rests upon. Once you play just a bit, all of the above rules for dice will become old hat and easy to use.

If that was fun, you'll love the rest. If it was a bit like wading through a warehouse of dense cotton while soaked in tar, well, it gets a lot more fun from here.

# Major Character Creation Techniques

## *RC to Die*

Oh boy, Killiam, time to start playing with races and classes to help determine how good a character is at an ability like Strength, weapons, armor, skills, arcane powers, and more. Pretty much every significant die type is determined by the characters race and class. Hey, guess what RC stands for? Ding, Ding, Ding – correct Race+Class.

Killiam, I think I'll take a specific real example and walk you through the process of using RC to ultimately determine the die (like D8 or D12) that a character would use. Let's use the Core Attribute of "Strength" found on the Front Character Sheet. And, let's pick a strong class race, so we can get a large Die result. How about a Calemoran Warrior.

In case it's not blatantly obvious, Calemora is the race (the R) and Warrior is the class (the C). So, look in the Player's Class Booklet and turn to the section on Warrior (toward the end). The first table is the attribute table and you should see Strength listed there. Both Race and Class RC numbers are die types between 1 and 12 as in (d1, d2, d3, d4, d6, d8, d10, d12). Race and Class RC numbers will always be in green columns or beneath green headings. Please find the green R and C columns. So, obviously a Warrior's Strength is 12 (the best) as you can see on the table (just look along the Strength row to the very right under the green heading "Warrior C". You should find the 12.

Now for the Race number, look blue labels to the right of "Core" and you will find "Cal" for Calemora. This is the Calemora column. So the box at the intersection of Strength and Cal is the R part of RC and is a 10. Notice that only "Kry" (Kryll) are stronger.

So we have an R of 10 and a C of 12. On the Front Character Sheet, write 10+12 in the green R+C column across from Strength. These are just the die, we need to generate the actual RC. So simply roll d10+d12 and write the result in the purple box beneath RC- let's say you rolled an 18, so I can keep my example matching you. (There are options to buy rerolls if the RC roll went south, but for now let's stay focused).

So our R+C of d10+d12 rolled an 18 RC. Killiam, think of RC as "potential." Our character has a strength "potential" of 18. Now we are going to randomly roll our Strength die, using that potential as an anchor point. Someone with an RC of 10 could end up stronger than

our character if they rolled really good. Likewise, someone with an RC of 24 could end up weaker than our character if they rolled very poorly. So let's go make our roll.

Turn to the Tables Character Sheet and find the large table called RC to Die. Killiam, do you see the purple column labeled RC? Move down it to 18 – which is our Strength RC. At the top and bottom of this table are yellow rows of die types ranging from 1 to 10V (the entries with a comma, like 10,4, will be explained in a bit). So we are going to roll a die and turn our RC into a Die type for our Strength. Here's how...

First, this die roll is called an Advancement Die roll. Below the big RC to Die table is a little Advancement Die box with a formulae that reads:  $3d6+3*Rank$ . This means you will roll  $3d6$  and add the character's rank times 3. Since our character is 0 level we don't add anything ( $3*0 = 0$ ), so our Advancement Roll is just  $3d6$ .

So roll  $3d6$  (let's pretend you rolled a 15). So, we find the largest number on the RC 18 row that our roll of 15 equals or beats. So, our roll of 15 beats the 13 (but not the 16). Now, to turn our RC 18 with a roll of 15 into a Die, simply look up or down the column we rolled (13 in our case) and you will find a yellow 12! So, our die is a 12. This is recorded on the Front Sheet in the yellow die box next to Strength.

So, if the character must make a strength roll to lift a boulder of Difficulty 6, the player makes a D12 roll and hopes for a 6 or more. Note that the roll was a doubling roll. Nearly every "Die" roll on the character sheets is a doubling roll. However, to conserve space the 12 is written, not D12, the "D" is assumed.

Killiam, did you happen to notice the color coordination on the sheets. Purple columns are for RC, green is for R+C, yellow columns are for Die, etc.

**RC to Die Summary:** Summarizing these steps to find and generate an RC then turn an RC into a Die, you...

- Find the R and C numbers in the correct rule booklet
- Record these in the character sheet's R+C box
- Roll  $dR+dC$  and write the result in the purple RC box
- Find the RC on the RC to Die table on the Table's sheet.
- Roll  $3d6$  plus  $3*rank$  and find the largest number on the RC row that the roll equals or beats.
- Look up or down to the yellow Die row and you have your Die
- Write the Die in the yellow Die box on the Character Sheet.

# RC Bonuses

Items and events may grant character's RC bonuses. A bonus is recorded on the character sheet in the purple Bns column next to RC. This bonus is a RC+ to the Advancement Die roll. So, in our Strength example above. A Bonus of 5 would turn our Advancement Die roll from 3d6 to 3d6+5. So our roll of 15 would have been a 20. If you go to the Tables sheet, an RC of 18 will a roll of 20 would generate a 10,8 Die instead of the 12 we had earlier.

## Weapon RC to Atk/Dmg

Alright Killiam, you should have RC to Die down. I'd like to walk you through the exciting process of creating a character, but before we do that. Let me show you how to create Weapon (nearly identical to Armor) RC and turn it into both Attack (Atk) and Damage (Dmg) die. The process is very similar to regular RC to Die, but must be done twice, once for Atk and once for Dmg and has an extra step in it. Let's cover this now, Killiam, so that when I'm walking you through character design, we don't have to slow down for this process. It is the most involved part of character design, and, after you try it a time or two, you'll see how easy it is. Let's get started!

Remember, a weapon is a feat like any other, so we start by finding the weapon's R and C so we can fill in the green R+C column on the Character Front Sheet. Let's pretend our Calemoran Warrior wants to use a Cross Bow. On the Character Front Sheet write "Cross Bow" in the first white space under Weapon on the large Weapon/Armor table.

The next step is to find the "R" the "racial" skill with a Cross Bow. It is found in the Player's Weapon's Booklet. Open it and find the large colorful tables of alphabetically listed weapons, each taking up two rows.

Once you find Cross Bow, notice that there is a top row labeled "Atk" in purple and a lower row labeled "Dmg" in purple. It is EXTREMELY important that you keep the information from these two rows separate and record them in the correct location. So follow along closely Killiam.

On the character Front sheet, notice that there are two rows for each weapon entry. The top row is for Atk information, just like the weapon tables, and the lower row is for Dmg information.

Back to the booklet, look up at the top of the table for the green "R" and "Cal" for Calemora. Where "Cal" and the Cross Bow's Atk row meet is the R for attack (it is a 8) this Atk R is recorded on the Front Sheet in the

upper row of Cross Bow, since the upper row is for Attack information.

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 +						Cross Bow	
+							

No in the booklet, find the Dmg R by finding the cell where "Cal" and Cross bow "Dmg" meet. It has a 12 in it. Write this R in the lower, Dmg, row of the character sheet.

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 +						Cross Bow	
12 +							

Now time to find our "C"s for Cross Bow Atk and Dmg. Class or "C" information is almost always found in the Player's Class Booklet. Turn there now and find the Warrior section.

Find the table labeled "Atk C/Dmg C for Warrior" in green. Now we have to classify Cross Bow. Back in the weapons Booklet it said "Archaic Ranged with a SML of M."

Cross Bow	Archaic, Ranged	M
-----------	-----------------	---

In the Class booklet, on the Atk C/ Dmg C table there is a section for Ranged Archaic and next to M is "8,8".

Ranged Archaic	
4,8	L
8,8	M

This means that the C for Atk is 8 and the C for Dmg is 8. Both Cs are the same, but if they were not, the first C is Atk and the second is Dmg (as the table's title indicates). So write the first 8 in the Atk C box and the second in the Dmg C box on your character sheet.

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 + 8						Cross Bow	
12 + 8							

Good, let's generate your "Skill" RC. This is how good your character is at the weapon for both Attacking and doing Damage. This is NOT how good the weapon is. For example, your character may be and RC 20 Atk and 20 Dmg at blow gun. However, the Dmg of a blow guy will NOT be RC20 as it is a very little weapon. You'll learn more later. For now, just remember that the RC we are about to generate is the "Skill" RC and indicates overall skill.

So make the typical R+C roll for attack (the top row) and the a separate R+C roll for damage (the bottom row). So our attack R+C is d8+d8. Let's pretend we roll a 10. And our damage R+C is d12+d8. Let's pretend we roll 15. Record the Atk Skill RC and Dmg Skill RC in the purple "Skill RC" column as follows:

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 + 8	10					Cross Bow	
12 + 8	15						

Since RC's typically go from 1 to 24, our character is average attack and above average damage with a cross bow. At least their "potential" is.

Ok, back to the weapon's booklet where we found the R's. To the right of Cross Bow is a column titled "\*" . Copy these into the white "\*" column for both Atk and Dmg on our Front Sheet. The .8 on top and .43 on bottom.

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 + 8	10	.8				Cross Bow	
12 + 8	15	.43					

To generate the weapon's "actual" Atk RC and Dmg RC you simply multiply the Skill RC times the Multiplier (the white "\*" column). So the attack Skill RC of 10 \* .8 = 8. The Damage Skill RC of 15 \* .43 = 6.46. All calculations are rounded up so 6.46 = 7. (Note. 6.00001 would also be 7). Record these in the RC column.

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 + 8	10	.8	8			Cross Bow	
12 + 8	15	.43	7				

An average multiplier is .5, so a Cross Bow is above average accuracy (.8) but below average damage (.43). So our great Skill RC of 15 is a weapon RC of 7 because the weapon is a lower damage weapon. For a Calemoran Warrior, with our rolls, we end up with a weapon that attacks about as good as it damages. That can be useful at times.

Now, let's use our RCs to generate our Die. The top RC of 8 is for Attack. Let's say we turn to the Table Sheet and roll and Advancement Roll of 12 on our 3d6. That generates a Die of 4 as 12 beats a 10 but not a 15.

RC To Die						
RC	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1	40	60	80	100	120
2	1	20	30	40	50	60
3	1	13	20	27	34	40
4	1	10	15	20	25	30
5	1	8	12	16	20	24
6	1	7	10	13	16	20
7	1	6	9	11	14	17
8	1	5	8	10	13	15

Next we roll a 10 on our 3d6 advancement roll for our RC 7 Dmg. This results in a die of 3 as 10 beats the RC 7 row's 9 but not the 11. So we have an Atk die of 4 and a Dmg die of 3. Record these to either side of "Cross Bow" on our character sheet under the correct labels.

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons	Dmg
8 + 8	10	.8	8		4	Cross Bow	3
12 + 8	15	.43	7				

Now, in the Weapon's Booklet, simply copy the information at the far right (the white row that is Range, Draw, Cr, Maint, ETax, and Enc) onto the Front Sheet to the right of Cross Bow.

Notes						
Range	Draw	Cr	Maint	ETax	Enc	
1/12	P	250	55	4 =	2	

You have completely generated a weapon! Good job, Killiam!

## Armor RC to Def/AR

Now let's learn how to do armor. Done! (Tip: it works JUST LIKE WEAPONS).

Of course, Killiam, I now have to say "except...." Except that we have Def (Defense) and AR (Armor) instead of Atk and Dmg. So, the top row is for Def (not Atk) and the bottom row is for AR (not Dmg). And, you will use the Player's Armor booklet to find armor information and use the "Def C/AR C for Warrior" table in the class booklet.

There are also a number of odd armor types that have additional nifty, cool rules, but you pretty much have weapons and armor down for RC to Die generation.

## Feats

Feats are their own set of rules. How they are recorded and activated will be explained below during Character Creation, but the effects of a feat are unique. Consider feats to be a giant list of alternate rules. Every one adds to or modifies some aspect of the game. So, to understand feats, you simply have to read the description of the feat in question out of the Feats Booklet. I don't recommend reading through all of them, unless you really like that sort of thing, but reading through the large alphabetical table is a good idea, so you at least have a "feel" for what they all do.

**Rank Limit:** Killiam, this is very important. In MetaScape if something has a rank 3 requirement, it means that the character must be rank 3 or they CANNOT learn or use it. However, there is one large exception and you are going to see it first. So just remember, the ability to "buy up" to a rank that exists in Feats below, is an EXCEPTION. In all other situations, if a character is below rank then the item in question is OFF LIMITS.

**Same Feat, Multiple Times:** It is possible for a character to take a feat, say climbing under their class, and find it again under their race, and maybe even under the association or ship position, etc. Players may take a feat multiple times, if it is taken twice the feat

gains a +2 bonus, if learned a third time it becomes a +3bonus,etc. (Note: this bonus applies to the Advancement Die roll when converting RC to Die as seen below).

**First Feat!** Alright Killiam, lets record our first feat onto a character sheet so we know how it's done. The cool thing about feats, is, the steps are the same whether you are recording skills, Mega powers, Omega powers, enhancements, Feat rules, arcane powers like Sorce, Psychosomatics, Psionics, etc. Because they are all "Feats!"

So, let's say we are a Calemoran Warrior and want to learn the second Feat in the Warrior section of the Class Booklet. That feat is "1Charge of Force" and is just below "1Battle Hardened." (I picked Charge of Force as it has a mastery option that I'll show you in a bit and Battle Hardened doesn't).

Warrior - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
Key	8	12	10	10	4	6	10	12

- 1Battle Hardened
- 1Charge of Force

**AP:** First, we need to note the number at the front of Charge of force - the 1. This is the feat's rank. This is the rank our character must be to learn the feat at the cheapest rate of 2AP. If our character's Rank (happens to be 0) is below it, then the AP cost is 2\*the feat's rank. Since we are below (Rank 0 character versus Rank 1 Feat), we have to pay two times the Feat's Rank or 2\*1 = 2. "Wait a minute," you say. "That's the same as the cheapest of just 2!" Yes, true enough. It so happens that a character of ANY rank can learn Rank1 Feats for just 2 AP. So, to make this Simple pretend that Rank 1 feats are really rank 0 or 1 Feats - it all works out the same.

BUT! A rank 2 feat would cost us 4 (Our Rank of 0, is below the feat's rank of 2 so it is two times Feat's rank or 2\*2=4 AP). And, for the same reason, Rank 3 feats would cost us 6AP and rank 4 feats would cost us 8 AP, etc. So, we can learn any eligible feat, even a higher ranked one, but the AP cost goes up.

Now, Killiam, back to our example. Our character is learning a Rank 1 feat, so it will cost us only 2AP.

We are going to need three resources to get our feat, Charge of Force, recorded:

- Feat Character Sheet to record the information
- Warrior section of Class Booklet for the information listed above
- The primary entry for "Charge of force" in the Feats Booklet. It looks like:

### Charge of Force

This charge helps to magnify a melee weapon's damage. To be a charge, at least 6 squares (or Max MR) of strait movement must occur toward the opponent with an attack action remaining. If the charge is from falling/jumping - the distance need only be 10 feet. Damage is multiplied by 2. [A, I, Self] @Y  
**\*\*\* Mastery \*\*\***

**MER:** NO - no meaning

**Mod:** Damage is multiplied by 3 @#B but requires a loud battle cry to work.

Killiam, start by recording the Feat name "Charge of Force" in the left side of the "Feat-Description" box on your Feat Sheet. Your Feat Sheet should look like:

MER	R+C	RC	Die	Meta	
	+				Charge of Force

**Kits:** Feats are always grouped together beneath a little table (like the one up above). These groups of feats are called "Kits" The kit name is in the bottom left part of the table. So, our Charge of Force feat is in the Warrior "Key" kit. All feats within a Kit will have the same R+C. That is really the sole purpose of a kit - to provide R+C information for the Kit's feats. (Actually some kits, like race kits, only provide R or C not both, but play along for now).

Killiam, let's record our Charge of Force R+C. Looking up at the Kit table above, we see that the R for "Cal" is 12 (we are really good at this) and to the far right the C is also 12! We have the best R+C possible 12+12! Record this in the green R+C box on our Feats Sheet. (BTW - notice that the heading of the Kit table was green and had an R on one side and C on another. The green and the R and C are to help you find your R+C information throughout the rules.) (BTW, BTW means "By the way" - haha).

Let's roll our d12+d12 and generate our RC. For our example, let's say we roll a 10 and an 11. So we have an RC of 21.

MER	R+C	RC	Die	Meta	
	12+12	21			Charge of Force

Now, go use the RC to Die table and generate the Die. If we rolled our 3d6 Advancement Die and got a 15 on the RC 21 row, it would give us a die of 16!

MER	R+C	RC	Die	Meta	
	12+12	21	16		Charge of Force

OK, the number crunching is done, let's turn back to the Feats Booklet and the entry for Charge of force:

### Charge of Force

This charge helps to magnify a melee weapon's damage. To be a charge, at least 6 squares (or Max MR) of strait movement must occur toward the opponent with an attack action remaining. If the charge is from falling/jumping - the distance need only be 10 feet.

Damage is multiplied by 2. [A, I, Self] @Y

\*\*\* Mastery \*\*\*

MER:NO - no meaning

Mod: Damage is multiplied by 3 @#B but requires a loud battle cry to work.

Copy the information in the brackets "[" and "]" found just above the \*\*\*\* Mastery \*\*\*\* section at the far right of the Feat-Description box on your Feat's sheet. Notice that there is an Act/Dur/Rng heading above them. These three entries are for Action/Duration/Range or (how long does it take to do it / How long does it last / How far does it work).

Act / Dur / Rng
A / I / Self

Killiam, just to the right of the brackets in the Feat's Entry is an "@Y". There will almost always be an "@X" entry here. The X is usually one of: Rule, ~, Ω, R, O, Y, G, B. In this case it is "Y". Whatever is here should be recorded in the Blue Meta column just to the left of the Feat's name, as in:

MER	R+C	RC	Die	Meta	
	12+12	21	16	Y	Charge of Force

So, to power a Charge of Force, we must spend a Yellow Meta.

**Description:** Read through the Feat's description from the title down to \*\*\* Mastery \*\*\* (ignore the stuff in the brackets and the @), and figure out how to paraphrase this on the remainder of your Feat-Description box. If there isn't enough room, write in the margins, on your rules sheet, on scratch paper, or simply list the page number of the booklet.. Learn to use abbreviations and acronyms. I would paraphrase this as, "Must Move 6sq strait, 10ft if fall/jump, = x2 Dmg." I only recorded the statistics, not the things that I'll remember like "it works for melee only" If my Max MR is below 6 it still works, I must have an Attack action left (obvious if you play a bit). All of this I will remember. I just need to know the part I listed above. So, it should look like this:

Feat-Description
Charge of force—Must Move 6sq strait, 10ft if fall/jump, = x2 Dmg

**Bufs:** Both Feats and Masteries often have buffs in them. As a reminder, here is how to record Buffs on your character sheet.

**MER:** The MER column is used to indicate that the feat can stack with MER. This is often used, when weapon mastery elements are recorded on the Feats table.

**Recording Buffs:** At every new rank, your Buffs may increase, so you need to write them on your sheet correctly. A RC+10 that is currently +11 would be written +11(10). The +11 is the Buff and the 10 is the Buffs RC.

Likewise a RCB14 that is currently a d16 would be written d16(14). Again the d16 is the buff and the 14 is the RC.

### META

**Meta:** Meta rules exist in several places, but one of the more significant is in the Meta section of the Feats Booklet. Killiam, I listed there rules in Feats Booklet rather than here, because I felt players would need to refer to them more frequently.

At this time, turn to the Feat's booklet and read about Meta. It will go over the Meta Notations (@R, @R/YG, @~, @Mega, etc.). The concept of normalization and Bound Meta will be covered.

### Feats:

### MASTERY

Learning feats is fine and dandy, Killiam, but if you REALLY want to be great at something, you should Master at it! Not all feats have a mastery option, but luck for us, Charge of Force does. Any feat with information below the \*\*\*\* Mastery \*\*\*\* line is open for Mastery!

Killiam, let's master at charge of force so I can show you how it works.

**AP:** The first step as always, is to pay for the privilege with AP. It costs 5 AP to buy our first Mastery element. Then each additional mastery element costs only 1 AP.

**Mastery Elements:** Looking at Charge of Force, the Mastery section says:

\*\*\* Mastery \*\*\*

MER:NO - no meaning

Mod: Damage is multiplied by 3 @B but requires a loud battle cry to work.

So, we have no MER elements (I'll show you this in a bit). But there is a Mod (Modifies the Feat). It is a very simple mod it changes the x2 damage benefit of the charge to x3. So our charge would do triple damage. And the Meta cost increases to B (Blue) instead of Y (Yellow). All and all, I wouldn't spend 5 AP for this at



lower levels, but at higher levels it could be a good option. But, for now, let's take it so we can learn how masteries work.

On the same Feat's sheet that Charge of Force is Recorded, find one of the colored boxes to the right and in the Feat box write "Charge of force." Cross off the "O" after MER as there are no MER. It should look like:

Feat	Charge of Force	MER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
------	-----------------	-----	-------------------------------------

**Allowed Meta:** A character with a low RC is prevented from using more powerful elements of the mastery. So, the next step is to find our RC (21 in our case) and then cross off the Mastery boxes that the RC isn't equal to or better (look at the number to the left of the Mastery boxes). Our RC of 21 beats the Blue 20, so we don't have to cross off any boxes. But let's say our RC was 14. We would then have to cross off the Green and Blue boxes as they need an RC of 15, and 20.

Lucky for us we didn't have to cross off the Blue box, as the one and only mastery element of Charge of Force uses Blue Meta.

Now, we record our mastery element in the colored Meta box that matches its Meta Cost. Since the X3 Dmg element was @B, we record "x3 Dmg" in the blue box, like this:

Feat	Charge of Force	MER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1			
5			
10			
15			
20	x3 Dmg		

There, we are now a master at Charge of Force, we can charge harder than most characters.

I want to show you a Feat with more Mastery options, like MER and multiple elements per Mod. Let's look at the Rank 2 Feat of Charge of Recklessness. In the Class booklet in the Warrior section, it is the 7<sup>th</sup> entry under the Hammer Time Kit.

This is just an example, but if we "did" take it, it would cost us 4 AP (we are Rank 0, and it is Rank 2).

After recording it on our Feat sheet we decide to master. Note that our R+C would be 12+12 and let's say we rolled a 19 RC.

We spend 5 AP for the first mastery element and record the name "Charge of Recklessness" in one of the Mastery boxes. And blacken in or check the "O" after MER as is says Yes in the Feats Booklet. Your Feat Sheet should look like:

Feat	Charge of Recklessness	MER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
------	------------------------	-----	-------------------------------------

Now we compare our RC of 19 and find that we must cross off the Blue Mastery box as it is just below 20.

Feat	Charge of Recklessness	MER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1			
5			
10			
15			
20			

Lucky for us this Mastery doesn't even have Blue meta elements. So we really haven't lost anything. Just look at the entry in the Feats Booklet:

\*\*\* Mastery \*\*\*

MER: Yes

Mod: Effects up to 3/4 opponents @R/O

Mod: Effects a 3sq wide swath @#Y

After paying our AP and checking which Mastery Meta is Allowed, we can now record our first Mastery element (the one we get for 5 AP). Killiam, let's look at the first Mod. It says, "3/4 opponents @R/O" So, instead of the typical 2 opponents, we can spend some Meta and up it to 3 or 4. Here is an important point, when Mods have more than one option, they are each an element and must be learned separately. The good news is, they can be learned in any order. So, for example, we may take the element of 4 opponents for @O.

Did you get that Killiam, the "3/4" goes to "@R/O" in a 1 to 1 map. That means the 3 is @R and the 4 is @O. But since elements may be learned in any order, we will learn the 4 opponents @O. Just write "4 opponents" in the Orange bar of your mastery table - done!

Feat	Charge of Recklessness	MER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1			
5	Effects 4 Opponents		
10			
15			
20			

OK, Killiam, I'm liking that last Mod. The one that lets us effect a 3sq swath @Y. Lets learn that mastery element also. As I mentioned above, all mastery elements after the first one cost 1AP. So we spend 1 AP and our Mastery table looks like:

Feat	Charge of Recklessness	MER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1			
5	Effects 4 Opponents		
10	Swath is 3sq		
15			
20			

I hope you know why I put it in the Yellow bar (psst: because it was @Y or a yellow Meta).

## MER

MER are part of mastery and I'm just continuing our Charge of Recklessness example from above. But MER is a significant concept so I wanted to give it a bold heading.

Killiam, say you wanted to use Meta so simply make your die roll bigger. For example, you wanted to pump Meta into a sword swing representing an extra amount of effort to really cleave into your opponent. Or, in our case, you recklessly charge into a group of opponents and you want to put some extra effort into it. Since Meta is "effort," basically you want to enhance your roll with Meta. Or make a Meta Enhanced Roll (MER)! Ahhh, now you get the acronym.

Of course, doing anything out of the ordinary to a feat or roll requires Mastery. Thus, MER almost always re mastery elements. Which is the case with our Charge of Recklessness.

So, let's MER up our charge a little bit. MER always allows @R/O/Y/G/B elements. So you can buy between 1 and 5 elements in any order.

Look at your Tables Character Sheet and at the very bottom is the MER table. Now, to calculate MER you have to have the Feat's die calculated. I didn't walk us through that far with Charge of Recklessness, so let's just say we rolled a 15 with our 3d6 advancement on the RC 19 table = a die of 10,4.

To MER 10,4 simply find 10,4 on the yellow Die row and the numbers below it are the R/O/Y/G/B MER options:

10,4
10,8
20
10,12
20,6
20,8

Lets lean the biggest and littlest MER (Red and Blue). Ooops - we can't learn blue as it is crossed of due to our RC19. So let's learn Read and Green. As you can see above, Red turns our 10,4 into a 10,8 and Green turns our 10,4 into a 20,6. So, spend 1 AP for the Red MER and one for the Green MER and our character sheet should look like:

Feat	Charge of Recklessness	MER ●
1	10,8	
5	Effects 4 Opponents	
10	Swath is 3sq	
15	20,6	
20		

Oh, BTW, the MER O filled in just reminds us that we can learn MER and X off means we can't. This is hand for later character advancement. For example, we

come back to Charge of Recklessness in the future and decide to pump up our mastery a bit. I notice the MER filled in and also notice that we have a Red and Green MER already. I have 1AP burning a hole in my pocket so I choose to learn the Yellow MER and my sheet now looks like:

Feat	Charge of Recklessness	MER ●
1	10,8	
5	Effects 4 Opponents	
10	Swath is 3sq, 10,12	
15	20,6	
20		

It is important to note that we have two Yellow Meta elements: Swath is 3sq and MER 10,12. We can use one, the other, or both of these but EACH ONE costs a Yellow Meta. So to use both it would cost two Yellow Meta. It is easily possible to have 3, 4, or more elements on a single Mastery's Meta Bar. Each requires a separate Meta to use it, and each is an independent option.

OK, I knight you a Mastery master! Go forth and greatly enhance your feats!

## ETAX

**Intro:** ETax is a system designed to maintain possession based character balance. That's why it exists, nothing more - nothing less. As a character advances, their possessions will become more and more powerful - as they should.

**Core Rules:** All items from standard equipment, biotech, cyber implants, armor, weapons, artifacts, ships, ATMs, even land are governed by ETax.

**GM's Prerogative:** A GM may always modify the ETax slots cost of an item. Common examples are when characters gain a temporary ATM, item, artifact, even ship or transport during a mission. If the item was intended to be in the adventure, thus doesn't create a game imbalance, then the GM may reduce or even waive the ETax cost all together. Or, as a real bonus, some artifacts may have their ETax costs reduced (call it part of the artifacts benefits). The GM simply needs to keep character growth and balance in mind.

**Own & Use:** A character may own an unlimited number of possessions - even an entire fleet of ships and use not a single ETAX point. A character can also use every item they encounter, again without spending a single ETax point. It is when Own and Use meet "Own with intent to use" that ETAX comes into play.

**No Cheating:** This is a rule in which players and GM must adhere to the "spirit" of the rule rather than the word of the rule. If character A is "just carrying"

some item "owned" by another and starts to use it more than casually, the item is considered "Owned" for the purpose of this rule. Basically if the character controls the item and intends to use it - they must pay ETax on it. So what if they are carrying 5 grenades and do NOT intend to use them, but an extreme situation occurs and they want to? Answer - up to GM Prerogative. If unsure, error on the side of NO.

**Examples:** Characters may carry any item at any time regardless of the ETAX cost. BUT, they can't USE the item as their own unless it has been counted under ETAX. Of course, using items around them on a casual basis such as an elevator, quick rental car, alien transporter, etc. are fine. Even jumping in the pilot seat of an enemy vessel and flying it back to some planet is fine. But, they can't choose to "keep" or "own with intent to use" the item without charging the ETAX points. So, a character could carry 5 weapons with him yet only pay the ETax cost of the "blaster rifle." As long as the other four were never used - not even once.

**Pooling ETax:** ETAX points can be pooled among multiple characters. At lower levels this is often the only feasible way to "own with intent to use" large items such as ATMs.

# Character Creation

Alright! Woot! Woot! Woot! It's time to create a character, Killiam! If you like character creation and choices, you will love MetaScape. It takes between 30 minutes and a hour to generate most of the initial statistics. Then the real fun beings – looking through all the feats, masteries, Mega, Omega, weapons, armor, and equipment. The time for this phase varies wildly depending upon decision making speed and desire to browse and learn. Generally it takes 1 to 3 hours. Most of my players love character creation as the options are so vast and the creativity nearly endless. But, most them also hate a sudden character death as it takes a fair amount of time and effort to make anther full character. Of course, you can always ad-lib a GU for them, but it isn't quite the same.

For your first game, allow a good 3 to 4 hours for character creation.

On the Rules sheet are the Major Steps of Character Creation:

## Major Steps of Character Creation

- 1) Name, Rank, Level, Hours, copy RC to Buff table
- 2) Pick Race & Class
- 3) Record Class information (up to ETax) (some refer to Race)
- 4) Record Racial Information (no feats)
- 5) Pick an Association and roll artifacts
- 6) Select a ship position if desired
- 7) Select an Omega Power if desired
- 8) Select any desired Handicaps
- 9) Use Class info to pick weapons and armor
- 10) Now start selecting feats (Key Kits MUST be completed first) Feats are found in: Race, Class, Association, Ship, Open
- 11) Generate Die
- 12) Master at any feats/weapons/armor desired
- 13) Select equipment
- 14) Optionally – determine MOTC stats
- 15) Add up Enc, Maintenance, ETax, Credits
- 16) Luck Boxes, Nish, Vit, MR, AP
- 17) Character Name, Personality, Meta, Select Adv Areas

Have your players turn to these steps and go through the steps, crossing them off as they go. This way, you can then keep several players busy at once without getting you or them lost.

As I walk you through character creation, we will do the very same thing. Of course, I'm going to toss in all the little stuff too.

## STEP 1

Name, Rank, Level, Hours, copy RC to Buff Table

**Name:** Write your name on all three character sheet – front and back. This way they can't get lost or mixed up with other sheets.

Player	Killiam
Character	

**Level & Rank:** Write "0" in the Level and Rank boxes on the Front sheet. It should look like:

Level	0	Rank	0
-------	---	------	---

**Hours:** The hours of play for this character is also 0, of course. On the Front Sheet write "0" in the "Hours" box as in:

Hours
0

**AP:** Now get some scratch paper and write 30 on it. You have 30 adventure points or "AP" that you can use during character creation. If you ever forget this, just turn to your Rules Character Sheet and read the upper right hand corner "Starting AP 30AP at 0 level 0 rank."

This is a good time to note a few of the things you can do with AP during character creation. So, just read that entire text box on the Rules Sheet. Here are a few highlights:

- Luck an R+C roll for 1AP
- Luck an Advancement Roll of 1 AP

This means that if you make an R+C roll and don't like it, you can spend 1 of your 30 AP and luck it. (Lucking a roll means reroll ALL die again and then keep whichever roll was the best). Even better, there is no end to this, so if your R+C were 8+12, you can make as many d8+d12 rolls as you want for 1 AP each until you are happy or out of AP! If a lucked R+C improves, it provides a free Adv Die roll also (see below).

Similarly, that Advancement Die roll (3d6 to turn your RC into a Die) can be lucked for 1 AP and again, you can luck it as many times as you want for 1 AP each time. So you have an RC of 9 and roll 3d6 badly, you can spend 1 AP and make a new 3d6 roll and keep the best. And for 1 AP each time, you can keep on rolling.

Now don't fret, and don't burn all your AP lucking R+C and Advancement Die rolls. You can always make these luck rolls in the future at during any advancement and in any quantity for 1 AP each.

**Copy RC to Buff Table:** This is another simply copy step. Just grab your Feats Booklet and find the first table. Now just copy the Feat Booklet's RC To Buff table, exactly as it appear onto your RC to Buff table on your Tables Sheet.

**STEP 2**

Pick a Race and Class

You need to look through the Race Booklet and the Class Booklet and select a Race/Class combination that sounds fun and exciting to play. To help, in the Class Booklet, towards the very front is a list of all 26 classes and a brief definition of each one. Once selected record your Race and Class on your Front Sheet.

Race	Calemora
Class	Warrior

**STEP 3**

Record Class information (up to ETax) (some refer to Race)

OK, Killiam, time to record the unique aspects of our class of "Warrior!" So in the Class booklet, let's move through the Warrior information, and become the mighty combatant we know we are.

On the Tables sheet, write down your Current Advancement die. You will turn the formula of  $3d6+3*Rank$  into  $3d6+3*0$  (since  $3*0 = 0$ ) this becomes just  $3d6$ . So write  $3d6$  in the "Current" box as in:

Advancement Die	$3d6 + 3*Rank$
Current	$3d6$

**Attributes:** You have already been shown how to roll attributes in the RC section above. So, follow those instructions and generate your R+C, RC, and Die for all attributes from Strength to Luck. Just follow through the first table under Warrior. Remember if you roll a bad R+C, you can spend 1AP and reroll the entire roll (both R and C must be rerolled, not just one of them). This is called "Lucking" the roll. You then get to keep the better of the two rolls. And, you can roll a 3<sup>rd</sup> time for 1 more AP, a fourth for 1 more AP, etc.

However, a warning, AP will vanish fast, so limit the use of this. I would only consider it for bad rolls on very important attributes, like Vitality.

Also, you can spend 1AP and Luck a bad Advancement Roll (the  $3d6$  roll on the RC to Die table). Again, due to AP use, limit this practice!

**General:** Next to Core and Sciences is a strip boxes with titled "Gnrl" which stands for General Skills. When a character tries something and is unskilled, like climbing a castle wall without climbing skill, then the GM picks a General Skill for the player to roll (probably Dexterity in this case). General Skill rolls are based on

their corresponding attribute, but they are much worse. In other words, you can try it, but you are "bad" at it. However, the wonder of the MetaScape die system, still creates hope, even for the unskilled.

Generating general skills is VERY easy. Let's take Strength. We take the Strength die (let's say it is 12) and we simply look up the general skill of a Die 12. Just turn to the Tables Sheet and find the "Die to General" table:

Die to General	
Die	1 2 3 4 6 8 10 12
General	1 1 1 1 2 2 3 4

So, a Die of 12 has a general of 4. So, on the front sheet, a 4 is recorded in the Gnrl box next to Strength.

Killiam, if you would please look up the general skill die for all of your Core and Science Attributes, that would be great.

**MR:** MR is movement rate or how fast our Calemoran Warrior can travel. On the Front sheet there is an Encumbrance/Movement Rate table or Enc/MR.

T Enc							
MR							

We are going to fill in the top "TEnc" row. If you look at the next table in the Class Booklet, it looks like:

Warrior	
Enc	B
MR	C

So, a warrior has an Encumbrance rating of "B" and a MR rating of C. These ratings are on an A to D scale with A being the best.

To record Encumbrance, we need to find our character's race in the Race Booklet. Then locate the Calemora Enc table which should look like:

Calemora Enc						
A	15	23	30	38	45	53
B	13	20	26	33	39	46
C	12	18	24	30	36	42
D	11	17	22	28	33	39
E	9	14	18	23	27	32

Since the Class Booklet listed our MR rating as a "B" we will copy the B row onto our Front sheet as follows:

T Enc		13	20	26	33	39	46
MR							

**MR:** Recording MR is very similar. Our class listed our MR as "C" (see above). And under the Calemora Race (race booklet) we have a table "Calemora MR" that looks like:

Calemora MR						
A	12	10	7	5	2	1
B	10	8	6	4	2	1
C	9	7	5	4	2	1
D	8	6	5	3	2	1
E	6	5	4	2	1	1

So we will copy the C row of this table onto our Front Sheet's MR table as follows:

T Enc		13	20	26	33	39	46
MR		9	7	5	4	2	1

**Jumps:** Jumps work a little differently in that there are four jump styles: Vertical, Broad, Dive, and Long. And each of these has a separate rating. In the class booklet our jumps are listed as follows:

Jumps	
Vert	D
Broad	C
Dive	B
Long	B

Killiam, looking at the Warrior Jumps table above, Warriors are bad at vertical jumps, average at broad jumps, and pretty good at dives and long jumps. But, we need to get this recorded.

Lets do them one at a time on the Calemora Jumps table of the Race Booklet:

	Calemora Jumps				
	A	B	C	D	E
Vert.	30	25	20	15	10
Broad	25	21	18	14	10
Dive	40	36	33	29	25
Long	25	21	18	14	10

Our vertical was a D, looking at the Calemora Jumps table above, a D Vertical is 15. Our Broad is a C and that is an 18, Our Dive is a B which is a 36 and our long is B for 21. So the numbers are 15, 18, 36, 21. Copy these into the corresponding boxes on your character Front sheet produces:

Vertical	SB roll+ <b>15</b> = /10 feet
Broad	SB roll+ <b>18</b> = /10 sq
Dive	SB roll+ <b>36</b> = /10 sq
Long	SB roll+ <b>21</b> = feet

**Starting Credits:** The next one line table under Warrior is Starting Credits. Credits is the currency or "money" in MetaScape. There is a place to record credits on your Back Sheet, but I'd place the number on your scratch paper as you will be spending a lot of them soon.

Warrior Starting Credits	3000+300*Level
--------------------------	----------------

Since we are a new zero level character, the 3000+300\*Level (meaning 3000 + 300 "per" level) is just 3000 for us. If we were level 6 we would get 3000+ 300\*6 = 4800 credits. But we get 3000.

**ETax:** Please refer back to the ETax discussion in the Major Character Creation Steps, section.

ETax limits the quality/quantity of our possessions. We can have as many items as we can carry, but we can only use those that fit within our ETax number. For example, a single grenade able to destroy a planet may have an ETax of 5000, so we can't use it. But we might be able to load ourselves down so we can't move with grenades that make a "pop" sound and that's it, and have an ETax of 1 or 2. As I said, ETax is a combination

of quality and quantity. A few good items will have a high ETax and a lot of mediocre items may have the same ETax.

Write the Warrior - ETax Points formula on the Back Sheet exactly as it appears. Here's a little trap, be sure to put the whole formula to the left of the "&" on the character sheet.

For example, the Warrior ETax formulae is 30+2\*level. It should be recorded on the Back sheet as:

ETax Formula & AP = Max ETax
30+2*Level & =

Now calculate your Max ETax by using the Formula. Well 30 + 2 more per level is just 30 since our level is 0. If we were level 3 it would be 30+ 2\*3=36. But we are just 30. So record 30 in the Max ETax area just right of the "=".

ETax Formula & AP = Max ETax
30+2*Level & = 30

Killiam, I need you two next write six numbers onto your Back sheet. They are the ETax number in the next table of you class:

Warrior ETax	
Mult	Item Category
1/2	Archaic Items
1	BioTech items
1	Cyber Items
1/2	Tech Items
2	Psionic Items
1	Psychosomatic Items
2	Soorce Items

On your Back Sheet find the ETax Category table in the upper left. In the white boxes, copy the Warrior ETax number strait down: 1/2, 1, 1, 1/2, 2, 1, 2.

Mult	ETax Category
1/2	Equipment directly supporting KNOWN feats.
1/2	KNOWN Armor or Weapons.
1/2	Archaic Items
1	BioTech Items
1	Cyber Items
1/2	Tech Items
2	Psionic Items
1	Psychosomatic Items
2	Soorce items
GM	All other items

**Read:** Now read through the description and rules for Warrior. Some classes will include very specific rules

or suggested methods of play for the class, so this information can be critically important.

## STEP 4

Record Racial Information (no feats)

Calemora	
Age	d16+30 or older
Max Age	d30+200
Sex	M
Height	5' + d16" or shorter
Other	width: 3' 4" + d12" or narrower
Weight	(d20*10)+250 or lighter
Eyes	Drk Brown or Black
Hair	Drk Brown or Black
Diet	Herbivore 4x/day no drink
Sleep	4hrs meditation/day
Vision	infrared monochrome 180

In the Race Booklet, find your character's race and the Age through Vision table (see above).

Record the Age through Vision information on your Back Sheet. You even get to roll dice for some entries like Age, Max Age, Height, Width and Weight.

**Age:** So, age says "d16+30 or older" So roll a d16+30 (let's say we roll 9+30 = 39). So we can be 39 years old or older. I like 39, don't you?

**Max Age:** Now we roll d30+200. Let's say we roll a 3 (bad roll) +200 = 203. So, our character starts making old age death saves at age 203. We've got a lot a good years ahead of us.

**Sex:** M (hmmm no females, at least as player character's - interesting!) So, we record M or male.

**Height:** Says, (5' + d16" or shorter) This means 5 feet + d16 inches or shorter. So we roll the d16 and get 11. We are 5' 11" tall. But I like the round number of 5" 5" and since we can be shorter, let's change it to 5' 5".

**Other:** Width of 3' 4" + d12" or narrower. That is "three feet four inches + d12 inches" So we roll the d12 and get a 5, we are 3' 9" wide. Nice, we look like a short line backer.

**Weight:** (d20\*10)+250 or lighter. So, remembering our math (do things in parenthesis first) we roll a d20 (say we get a 12) and multiply by 10 = 120. Now we add 250 and get 370. We can be lighter but I want a nice beefy warrior, so we'll keep the 370 pounds of pure muscle!

**Eyes:** Wow, all of TWO choices. Let's go Black.

**Hair:** Man, these guys have a theme going. OK, let's take Black again.

**Diet:** Just write down "Herbivore 4x/day no drink." Obviously not a meat and potatoes man, just potatoes. ☺ For the lexically challenged, herbivore means "plant eater only" And they don't drink!

**Sleep:** Just copy "4hrs meditation/day." Cool, they never sleep, just mediate for 4 hours and then, they are good to go for the other 20 hours.

**Vision:** Again, just copy "Infrared monochrome 180." So they see 180 degrees (typical human peripheral range), but it is infrared - they see heat. And monochrome - their brains only process shades, not colors. So basically their vision looks like older military infrared scopes, you know, those green ones, but for a full 180 degrees and at greatly improved resolution. So, they are nearly as happy at night or underground as in the day.

If you recorded this all correctly, your back sheet looks like this.

Age	39
Max Age	203
Sex	Male
Height	5' 5"
Other	Width: 3'9"
Weight	370 Lbs

Eyes	Black
Hair	Black
Diet	Herbivore 4x/day no drink
Sleep	4hrs meditation/day
Vision	Infrared Monochrome 180
2nd Vision	

**Racial Weapons and Armor:** Copy the racial weapons and armor listed in the Calemora section of the Race booklet onto your back sheet onto the table called "Racial Weapons (+2)." The weapons should be listed from top down and the armor from bottom up. For some races, you may need to list two items per line to make them all fit.

Calemora Racial Weapons
Axe
Ba-Shonk
Hook-Pa
Ka Jung
Kray
Ra-oot
Sword
Ta-oon

Calemora Racial Armor
Calemora Chain
Calemora Plate
MA

If we learn any of these weapons or armor, we get a +2 bonus to both attack and damage or Defense and AR. (Remember, a bonus is a RC+ to the Advancement Die).

**Optional Rule:** If you want to throw in a little more flavor and options, you can also allow the bonus to be +1/+3, +2/+2, or +3/+1, players option.

**Racial Feats:** Do not record any feats at this time, but it is an excellent idea to glance over them so you have an idea or "feel" for the abilities that your character can later learn due to their Calemoran nature and heritage.

## STEP 5

Pick an association and roll artifacts

**Association:** Killiam, every character must have an association. Having no association is the same as picking a freelancer association, so you see – everyone gets one.

The associations are found at the front of the Professions booklet. Players may select Dha, Ranger, or Freelancer.

The section should be written on the front sheet in the “Association” box.

Players then need to read through the association and note the rules governing Income and Salvage. This information can be noted on the Back sheet in any convenient location.

**Artifacts:** Oh, boy, Killiam, one of my favorite parts. I love having players roll for their starting artifact. The character’s association will determine whether they get a Major, Minor, or no artifact. If they get an artifact, flip to the Artifact and Omega Powers booklet and find the Artifact Tables section.

**Major Artifact:** Use the place value system of rolling and have them roll a die large enough to cover all major artifacts (currently a d60).

Have the player roll twice and let them choose their artifact from amongst the two. If an artifact is totally unusable (an artifact usable only by Sorcists and the character is not a Sorcist, or some such thing), then the player should roll again.

Once chosen, they should record the artifact on their Back sheet at the bottom of the Equipment table. Read off the artifact’s Cr, Maint, ETax, and Enc. Then just turn to the details of the artifact and hand the player the Booklet so they can read about it and make any notes they need.

**Keep or Sell:** Players are free to keep the artifact or sell it for ½ value and add this to their credits.

**Minor Artifact:** If you turn further into the Artifacts and Omega Powers booklet, you’ll find the three sections of lesser artifacts: weapons, armor, and equipment that contain a large text list of potential artifact effects. Have the player roll a d6

- 1-2 = Weapon
- 3-4 = Armor
- 5-6 = Equipment or Miscellaneous

Then, simply go to the table and have the player start rolling. I do not allow multiple rolls. I simply take what is rolled the first time. You’ll likely need to use the Die Place Value method of rolling as some of the tables, have a larger odd number of elements in them.

Lesser artifacts are not hard cast, rather they are lists of effects and brief rules. Have a lot of fun with these and Ad-Lib them well. Very often, my players like my lesser artifacts more than my Major ones because I inject my own creativity and tool them to fit the character or situation.

## STEP 6

Select a ship position if desired

**Optional:** Killiam, depending upon the skill and personality of your group, you may wish to skip Ship Positions during your first game session. It will make character design simpler and faster. However, it does remove a lot of richness. But you can always add it in later. Your choice. For now, let’s elect to give our Calemora a ship position.

Ship Positions are really bridge officer rolls (from many popular science fiction shows and books).

**Evaluate Ship Positions:** First, it is best if every character in a party has a different and complimentary set of ship positions. Having a team of four Helm Officers show is isn’t very useful – hehe. Keeping this in mind, turn to the Warrior section of the Class booklet and find the Professions table with green heading “C – Warrior Professions.” It should be the last table before the lists of feats.

Did you notice the heading started with “C - ...” This means these numbers are the C of the green R+C box. Now we want to look for the middle “Ship Officer” part of the Professions table. So, as a “class” Warriors are best as Engineering Officers (C of 10), OK at Captain, and Tactical Officer (C of 8) and mediocre at Helm Officer and Tech Officer (C of 6). From there it goes downhill.

Ship Officer	
4	Astrogation Officer
8	Captain
4	Communications Officer
10	Engineering Officer
6	Helm Officer
3	Medical Officer
3	Science officer
8	Tactical Officer
6	Tech Officer

So, now we need to find the R of R+C, so turn to the Professions Booklet and find the Ship Officer Professions section. Look at all of our top picks and see how Calemora do for an R. Under each Ship Officer position there will be several thin tables for R values. For



example, under Engineer Officer there are four tables and the "Cal" (Calemora) R ratings are 3, 10, 3, 12. You can look at the feats under each of these to see what our character will be good or bad at. So, we are a 10 C, so as an Engineer our worst R+C would be d3+d10 and our best is d12+d10.

Lets look at a few more Ship Officer roles. Looks like Captain and Tactical will result in similar R+C totals. So we can really pick among these three as we wish. By the Way - Calemora are not well suited to space craft, so our character isn't going to be great at any ship officer roll. However, most skilled MetaScape players, take ship officer roles with nearly every character due to game impact, plot impact, and playability during ship and vehicle combat.

So for now, let's go ahead and take Engineer Officer. Tactical is tempting but the Key set is R of 2 and our C drops to a 8 giving us an RC of 2 to 10, versus the Key set of Engineering as an R of 3 and a C of 10 making a 2 to 13 RC. Plus, we have that nice Engineering Kit of "Engineering Officer" with an R of 12, so we can pick up all 12 of its feats with an RC range of 2 to 22.

OK, first step is to spend the 5 AP it costs to learn your first Ship Position. (Yeap, you can learn more at higher rank and larger AP - see the Rules Sheet).

#### **Ship Position**

Rank, AP

0, 5

2, 30

4, 60

This means that at Rank 0, for 5 AP a ship position can be learned. At Rank 2, for 30 AP a second ship position can be learned, etc. Now, for clarification, if a character took no ship positions and was rank 3, they could learn their first one for 5 AP (the rank 0 one) and a second one for 30 AP (the rank 2 one). So these are not "missed" opportunities - they always exist. And you can buy at the cheapest rank that is available to you.

After deducting 5 AP, record the ship position on your front Sheet:

Personality	
Ship P	Engineer Officer

**Glance:** Now take a good look through the feats of Engineer so you have a feel for what abilities your character can now learn due to his role as a ship's Engineer. But for now, we aren't going to purchase any feats. We are an Engineer in name only. We've got the diploma but no talent - hehe.

## STEP 7

Select an Omega Power if desired

**Optional:** This is another optional element of character development. Omega powers can be learned at any later time, so, again, Killiam, this is not a missed opportunity if skipped at this point in time. And, depending upon you and your players, you may elect to not use Omega Powers at all or not to allow them during your groups first character creation.

However, they are a total riot and vastly fun. So, for the purposes of learning how to make a character, we are going to take one.

**AP:** First, you need to spend the 5 AP. If you look on the Rules Sheet, you will notice that a 0 Rank character can actually learn up to two Omega powers. The first one costs 5 AP, the second one costs 10 AP. But that is a huge hunk of change out of our 30 starting AP, so we'll just do one Omega Power.

**Pick from 3:** The first fun thing about Omega Powers is the method for selecting them. The GM grabs his Artifact and Omega booklet and turns to the Omega Power section.

Notice that there are 31 Omega Powers. We need to have your player (us in this case) roll three numbers between 1 and 31. So, using the "Next Larger Die" trick from the Die section above, we will roll a d40 and reroll results of 32 and up. By using the "Place Value" rolling trick we use a d4 for the tens column and a d10 for the ones column treating a 4 on the d4 and a 10 on the d10 as zeroes.

Lets say we roll an 8, 17, and 26. If any of these is impossible for the character to have or an Omega they already know, then it is rerolled until three viable choices exist. Now they can be three very bad choices, that is OK, as long as they are viable. In our case we have:

- 8 = Deadly shot
- 17 = Penetrating Gaze
- 26 = Super Nish

We now get to pick ONE Omega Power from the three random choices we generated. For our Calemora Warrior, Deadly shot would surprise others with a sudden super ranged attack. The penetrating gaze could let us look through doors or even walls to gain an advantage, or look through locked chests to determine contents. Finally, Super Nish would nearly guarantee that we win Nish and go first each round for the rest of a combat. Man, tough decisions. Most players in this situation would pick Super Nish, though I really like those players who pick based upon the concept of their character more than maximizing effect. But hey, that's just my opinion. Since we have already walked through arming our character with a Cross Bow in the rules section before Character Creation, let's be different and take Super Shot - It'll freak out our Marine and Sniper friends, among others.

Killiam, now that we know which Omega Power we will gain, we need to record it onto our Feat's Character Sheet. At this point the process is nearly identical to the Feats area of the "Major Character Creation Techniques" section above. So I will just gloss over the process here. Refer to the Major Character Creation Techniques if you need to.

Begin by finding the entry for "Omega: Deadly Shot" in the Omega section of the Artifacts and Omega booklet. I don't mean the table at the beginning, but the entry in the Omega List section.

**OMEGA: DEADLY SHOT**

Omega: Deadly Shot - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	IS-F	IS-M	C
8	12	3	4	10	6	10	10	GM Pick

First, we must get our R+C. There is an R table at the beginning of Omega: Deadly Shot (Calemora are a 3 - terrible, but it really doesn't matter much, you'll see). If you look to the right, you will see that the C is "GM Pick". So the GM must decide, strictly on class - or how good a "Warrior" (in our case) will be at Deadly Shot. Well, Killiam, a Warrior isn't the best. That would be a Sniper, Marine, or other ranged classes. But, we are a combat class that does use ranged. So, as GM I would pick 8 (choices are 1,2,3,4,6,8,10,12). Thus, our R+C is 3+8.

I generally write Omega Powers at the bottom of one of my Feat sheets, so write the name "Omega: Deadly Shot" down in the left side of the "Feats-Description" box and put 3+8 in the RC box.

	3+8				Omega: Deadly Shot
MER	R+C	RC	Die	Meta	

Next, roll a d3+d8 to generate the RC. Let's say you roll a 2+5=7 for RC 7. Now go to the Tables Sheet and roll your 3d6 Advancement Die on the RC 7 row. If you roll a 12, the result would be a Die of 4. Now your Feat's sheet should look like:

	3+8	7	4		Omega: Deadly Shot
MER	R+C	RC	Die	Meta	

Write down the Act/Dur/Rng information (A,I,Self) in our case. As in:

A / I / Self
Act / Dur / Rng

Then record the @ information. It says @Omega. So in the Meta box place an "Ω" symbol. Then read the description and paraphrase it in the Feats-Description box. Probably something like "x5 Dmg." Like:

4	Ω	Omega: Deadly Shot — x5 Dmg
Die	Meta	

I'll get into the various Meta costs later, Killiam, but to quench your curiosity, Ω doesn't cost Meta, it uses up Luck Boxes (another topic for later - but at least you have an idea). Pretty much only Mega and Omega feats use @Omega to power them.

**STEP 8**

Select any desired Handicaps

**Optional:** Another optional step. Killiam, handicaps are great to skip during your first game. But, so you know how they work, we'll give our Calemoran Warrior a couple of handicaps.

As the name implies, handicaps are negative effects that you can take to give your character some, well, character! In exchange, you gain a certain amount of AP now and at every new Rank.

One important point, Handicaps may only be taken at character creation. However, with your first group, you may want to skip them for now and they provide a single opportunity to take handicaps later.

**Selecting:** Turn to the end of the Feats Booklet to the Handicaps section. Now, look through the list of handicaps and find a few that you like. We can't take a handicap that we already have due to race, class, etc. For example, we can't take "Color Blind" since we already see in monochromatic. Give this, let's take:

- Low Poison Tolerance for 5
- Bad Defense vs Ranged for 7

We will build our character concept around these flaws, maybe we were sickly as a young Calemora after being dropped into a vat of scorpions and have ever sense been susceptible to poison. And, our combat training on Calemora was grossly remiss in ranged defense (which is a very realistic handicap. As a GM I would applaud a player who took this - read the setting information for a better understanding).

Well, Killiam, we ended up with 5+7=12 points of handicaps. And the little table below the list we see that 12 points = 4 AP. Cool, add 4 AP to our remaining pool. AND, we get 4 more every time we reach a new rank!

Handicaps are written on the Back Sheet in the Handicaps table and the AP bonus is also recorded. It is VERY important that players play their handicaps. Removal costs two times the AP gained, so the longer you have a "bad habit" the harder it is to kick. If a player fails to play their handicaps, inform them that they need to start doing it or buy it off with AP.

**STEP 9: PART I - WEAPONS**

Use Class info to pick weapons

**Pick out Weapons:** Turn to Warrior in the class book and look over the types of weapons that our Warrior

side are good at. Remember, Killiam, these numbers are the C part of R+C. The first is Atk C and the second is Dmg C.

Note: the LMH is for Light, Medium, and Heavy weapons. Light are high attack low damage like a dagger, Medium is balanced like a sword, Heavy is low attack high damage like a Kray (big two handed uni-blade).

So being warriors, we are good at a lot of things:

- M Archaic Melee 12, 12 (best possible)
- M Tech Melee 12, 12
- H Archaic Melee 10,10
- H Tech Melee 10,10
- M Tech Hurlled 10,10
- M Bioblades 10,10

And, we are pretty good at natural weapons with an 8,12.

**Cross Bow:** Of course, you don't always want to take just things that you are good at. Often it is fun to take weapons that build on your character concept. For example, our Calemora is terrible at ranged defense, because we had no training. However, there was an old hermit on our homeworld who had a cross bow and our character would sneak away frequently to the hermits hut. The hermit trained us over the years - which resulted in our Deadly Shot and our Cross bow skill. So we take cross bow with a C, C of 8,8.

So, please spend 2AP, and record Cross Bow on your character sheet. The specifics are found in the Major Character Creation Techniques section above.

**Sword:** Next, let's take a melee weapon. Otherwise, hehe, we would make for pretty bad Warrior, Killiam. This time, let's be smart and look at our racial weapons that we wrote on our Back Sheet. We get an Advancement Die bonus for these. I don't know about you, Killiam, but I have a soft spot for swords. So let's learn to fight with a sword. A nice Calemoran blade, forged in the earthen smitheries of our home world.

This process is very similar to the Cross Bow. First spend 2AP and then find "Sword" in the Weapon's booklet in the large alphabetical list of weapons and note the type and SML. It is Archaic Melee, M. Cool, in the Class Booklet, Warriors are 12, 12 C and C in this category. Well we know the C (or Class) side of the R+C, now let's see how good Calemora are at swords. In the Weapon's book we see that they are also 12 and 12! Woot, a perfect match. Imagine that: a warrior combined with a medieval muscle bound race happens to be the best there is at sword! Knock me over with a feather. ☺ Not only that - it is a racial weapon - moohaha!

So, record, the weapon, the R+C info and roll the d12+d12 R+C for Atk RC and the d12+d12 R+C for the Dmg RC. Then write down the multipliers and the Range, Draw, Cr, Maint, ETax, and Enc. Just like you did

with Cross Bow. But DON'T roll your Advancement Die to generate your Die yet. And let's say your d12+d12 roll for Atk ended up with an RC of 18 and the Dmg RC rolled was a 3. Oh my gads, that is a horrible RC for damage.

As a warrior, damage is very important to us, so let's spend 1AP and luck that roll. Rolling d12+d12 again, we get 22! Much better than 3! Go ahead and multiply your Skill RC by the Atk and Dmg \*. Your sheet should now look like this:

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons
8 + 8	10	.8	8		4	Cross Bow
12 + 8	15	.43	7			
12 + 12	18	.5	9			Sword
12 + 12	22	.5	1			

**Racial Weapon:** Racial weapons provide a +2 RC Bonus (as indicated on your Back Sheet where it says "Racial Weapons (+2).". This +2 applies to both Attack and Damage OR you can make it +3 and put it on just one! Let's just leave it +2 on both. Record this on your Front sheet in the Bns column so your sheet looks like:

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	Weapons
8 + 8	10	.8	8		4	Cross Bow
12 + 8	15	.43	7			
12 + 12	18	.5	9	2		Sword
12 + 12	22	.5	1	2		

Its time to use the ol' RC to Die table. Lets to Atk first, we have an RC of 9 and a Bns of 2. Turning to the Tables sheet, we will roll our Advancement Die of 3d6 BUT we will add in the Bns of 2, so the roll will be 3d6+2. We roll 4,6,5 on the die making the total 4+6+5+2 = 17. And 17 on the RC 9 row is a Die of 6. (almost 8, we needed 18 to get an 8 - darn!).

OK, record the 6 on our Front Sheet in Atk and let's do Dmg. We have an RC of 11 and a Bns of 2. On the RC to Die table we roll 6, 6, 1 for a total of 6+6+1+2 = 15. A 15 roll on the RC 11 row is a Die of 8! Record the Dmg Die of 8 on the Front Sheet.

Our two weapons now look like:

Atk	Weapons	Dmg
4	Cross Bow	3
6	Sword	8

We are clearly superior at the sword. Now, Killiam, in real generation, don't be surprised if you find characters with low Atk and/or Dmg on weapons they should be good at and large Atk and/or Dmg on weapons they aren't well matched to. There are two sets of random rolls R+C and the RC to Die. A series of high or low rolls can produce very interesting results. However, this adds a lot of great flavor to the game.

Plus, any player who want to improve bad or even average rolls can do so.

**Weapon Balance:** Any combat intensive class is advised to take a mix of L, M, and H weapons, because there is a fair amount of strategy in matching your weapon to your opponent. If you are attacking a giant tortes with a terrible defense (5) but a huge armor and Vit (25) (a 5/25 for example), and you use your speedy dagger with Atk of 10 and Dmg of 4 – you will hit frequently but have a low chance of damaging the tortes. However, if you attack with a Kray (giant uni-blade) with an Atk of 6 and Damage of 16, you will still hit pretty often and have four times the damage output!

Plus, this is all magnified by mastery (MER a Kray's Dmg!)

Additionally, unless you are going for a certain character concept, you should consider a natural or MA weapon in case you are disarmed, a melee weapon for close combat, and a hurled or ranged weapon for ranged attack.

**Description:** Be sure to find your weapons in the detailed section below all the tables and read up on it. This will add a LOT to the richness of the game and there are sometimes special rules here.

## STEP 9: PART II – ARMOR

Use Class info to pick armor

OK, back to our Class Booklet. Killiam, I hope you are getting the sense that the Class booklet drives character creation (and advancement). It is also were we find most of our C's for the R+C.

Now, armor works just like weapons. At least most armor does. There are a few fun exceptions, and since I like fun, let's pick on one of the exceptions. I want to armor our Calemora in barbarian style. A mix of helm, vambrace, grieves, chest plate, etc. The reason this is an exception is that we get to pick out our desired partial armor mix and the combination determines whether we are Minimal, Light, Medium, Heavy or Full partial armor.

OK, in the Armor book find the very first set of tables. Three down is the "Archaic partial Combinations" table that looks like:

Archaic Partial Combinations	
L	Partial Minimal (1-6)
L	Partial Light (7-12)
M	Partial Medium (13-24)
H	Partial Heavy (25-48)
H	Partial Full (49+)

And the adjoining "Archaic Partial Pieces" table that looks like:

Archaic Partial Pieces	Val
Breastplate (Chest Only)	16
Breastplate (Full Torso)	20
Chain, Full Torso	16
Greave (Lower leg)	3 ea
Greave (upper leg)	4 ea
Helmet (cap)	2 ea
Helmet (Full)	4 ea
Helmet (Open Faced)	3 ea
Vambrace (Lower arm)	3 ea
Vambrace (Upper arm)	3 ea

This is how it works, Killiam. We are going to pick out a set of partial armor from the list above, total up the Val (or Value) for our selection, then look at the Combinations table above to see which category of Partial Armor we generated. Note the Value range after each type: Partial Minimal (1-6), Partial Light (7-12). In other words, if we pick out a selection of partial armor with a total value of 9, we have Light Partial Armor, if the total were 2, it would be Minimal Partial Armor. And if the total were 48, it would be Heavy Partial Armor.

So for now, let's go for a concept. Calemora have awesome wide chests, so let's leave that uncovered for the sheer brute nature of it. But, we have to have a helm, nothing very fancy just to cover the top of our head with a pony tail hole. So, we will take a "Helmet (Open Faced)" for 3ea. Since we aren't a two headed creature, it will be just 3. Now, I like a particular book in which the master fighters learned to fight with one side towards their opponent and they armored mostly that side, so let's do a left side upper and lower greave (leg) and upper and lower vambrace (arm). That would be a Val of 3 and 4 for greaves and 3 and 3 for vambraces. That brings our total to 3 (helm) 3+4 (leg) 3+3 (arm) = 16. So our particular partial arrangement has a Value of 16. Looking up at the Combinations table above, we are just into the Partial Medium Category. That's it, let's take it!

**Mix and Match:** Cool think about Partial Armor is you can mix things around. As long as we keep the Value total between 13-24 it is still Medium Partial Armor. Or, we can spend 2AP, learn Partial Heavy and throw on a breast plate if we want to. – Cool huh?

**Cyber:** BTW, Killiam, cyber armor works just like partial, at least the basics. There are a few other tweaks that cyber provides – all that cutting of flesh and the optional spikes – you know.

**Recording Medium Partial:** I bet you know step 1, Killiam. Yeap, learning a weapon or armor is a feat – costs 2 AP. Go ahead and write "Medium Partial Armor" at the bottom of the Weapon/Armor table on your Front sheet. Then, list out the actual pieces of armor we choose there or in the margin; "Helm (open faced) left side upper and lower greaves and left side upper and lower vambrace."

The next step is finding our R+C. Now, just like all weapons and all armor, the C (or Class) will be in the Warrior section of the Class Booklet and the R will be in the Armor booklet. Let's go find the C.

In the Class booklet under Warrior, find the Armor table (just past the Weapons table we used earlier). Not the heading "Def C/ AR C for Warrior" so the two numbers are Defense C then Armor C in that order. Find the table's section called "Tech Archaic Partial." That's us. Now it has a L, M, and H entry. We are using Partial Medium, so it is the M. (Tip: Look up this rule book two tables and notice the left most column has L, L, M, H, H. There are the LMH for Archaic Partial. Note that Light, Medium, and Heavy partial are L, M, H. But that minimal is also L and Full is also H.

Anyway, in the Class Booklet, A warrior is 12, 12 at M Tech Archaic Partial. Again, Woot! Best that we can be! Let's just hope Calemora are also highly skilled (hmmm, medieval race on a barren planet - hmmm) ☺ So record your two C's for Atk and Dmg in the R+C boxes.

**R:** Now, let's go find those Rs. In the Armor booklet turn to the large table of alphabetical armor and find Partial Medium (13-24). Cool, Calemora are 12, 12. Again, best that we can be! So record these 12s in the R part of R + C. Now, Killiam, because we have hit on items that have identical Rs and Cs. You haven't had to pay attention to putting the right R in the right place and same for the C. To reiterate, the top R+C is for Defense and the bottom if for Armor on both the tables and on the Front Sheet. Be sure you own this concept or you will end up with bizarre and unbalanced weapons and armor in your group.

Record the armor's two "\*" (or Multipliers) and the Speed, Don, Cr, Maint, ETax, and Enc. Onto your Front Sheet.

Let's roll our RCs. For the Def Skill RC pretend the d12+d12 rolled 15 and the AR Skill RC was a d12+d12 roll of 24! Then do the Skill RC times Mult to get the final RC. Your sheet should look like:

12+12	15	.7	11			Medium Partial Armor: helm and Left Side
12+12	24	.45	11			
R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Eng	Def	<b>Armor</b>

So, Killiam, we make two rolls on the RC 11 row of the RC to Die table. The first is for Defense (Def) and second is for Armor (AR). Let's assume we roll 10 for Defense. An RC 11 with roll of 10 is a Die of 4 for Def.

Now for AR. We roll a 4! Gads. We can't have our Warrior with low Armor. Let's spend 1AP and Luck the roll. We roll 3d6 again and get 18! Awesome! RC 11 with a roll of 18 is a Die of 10. Our Front sheet should now look like:

4	Medium Partial Armor: helm and Left Side	10
Def	<b>Armor</b>	AR

So our defense is adequate, but our skill at turning Medium Partial Armor into an impenetrable shield is great!

**Natural:** You don't have to learn natural or MA armor, as the General Skills can cover them. However, learning one of these will provide a significant advantage over General Skill rolls should you enter combat unarmored.

**Description:** Be sure to find your armor in the detailed section below all the tables and read up on it. This will add a LOT to the richness of the game and there are sometimes special rules here.

### STEP 10

Now start selecting feats (Key Kits MUST be completed first) Feats are found in: Race, Class, Association, Ship, Open

**Organization:** Oh, the meat of characters. At first you may have very few feats, as you simply can't afford them, but as you can levels and Ranks, you will end up with dozens and dozens of feats. Given this plan your organizational strategy carefully. Personally, I like to group things by how I'll use them in the game. I don't like flipping my feat sheets all around. For example, I'll group

- Ship feats
- Combat feats
- Stealth/Spy/Scout feats
- GMU interaction feats

Some players like to put all Ship Officer feats, Race Feats, Class Feats, Weapon Feats, Power Feats, together. This works pretty good also.

Notice that the Feats sheets have a blank line after their title. This is so you can label or mark them for quick identification.

**Free Kits:** Sometimes, an area (particularly Race) will have a Free Kit as the first one listed. The feats in this kit cost 0AP and MUST all be taken - the good and the bad.

**Key Kits:** This is a very important concept. Feats tend to come from Race, Class, and Ship Officer sections of the rules. "Usually" the first kit (or the 2<sup>nd</sup> if there is a Free Kit first) will say "Key." Please look for the Key kit

every time. Not all race, class, professions have a Key kit, but most do.

The Key kit lists feats that are “key” or fundamental to the race, class, or profession. They MUST be learned before you can learn any other feat in that race, class, or profession. They don’t all have to be learned at once, you can learn Key feats in stages, but no other Kit may be learned until the Key kit is complete. It is the “Key” to the rest of the race, class, or profession’s kits. Sometimes Key feats may be above your Rank. That’s no excuse, you still have to learn them before moving past the Key Kit, so either pay the extra AP or wait for your character to advance.

**Feat Hopping:** Players may jump around between Race, Class, Professions, Open (see below) etc. when learning feats. There is no required order other than “Key kits must be learned fully before any other Kit in that area.” Even within Key kits a player could take feat 1 (of 8 let’s say), 3, 7. Then later learn 8, 2, 6, play some more, then learn 4 and 5 to finish the Key Kit off. Once the Key kit is learned the player can go to any feat in any Kit within that area and learn it. They can bounce around between Kits, and even between Race, Class, Profession, Open, etc. as much as they wish.

Kits are only an organizational tool. They do not require any order or any completion (other than Key Kit must be completed, and Free Kits must be taken).

**Feat Sources:** Feats come from many places in the rules. Be sure you know what they are and that you can communicate this to your players:

- Race
- Class
- Ship Officer
- Each Weapon is a feat
- Each Armor is a feat
- Omega Powers
- And Open Feats

**Open Feats:** Most of these you know, except Open Feats. And “Open” feat is open to any character. These are feats that anyone could legitimately learn. They don’t have to be listed in race, class, profession, etc. These are generally skill based such as acrobatics or bridge officer. Or they are trainable traits that you could pick up like Ambidexterity or Balance.

To find the list of Open feats, look at the large series of alphabetical tables at the beginning of the Feats Booklet. If there is an entry in the “Rank R/C” column, then it is an Open Feat. Otherwise, it is a closed feat and may be learned only if listed in your Race, Class, or a Profession.

The Ranks are usually quite high, making Open feats expensive. And the R/C are usually low to middle. Killiam, the listed R/C should NOT be written down by players. It is a GM guide, you can modify either or both

and then the player can record them in the R+C box on their Feats Sheet.

**Strategies for Picking Feats:** Killiam, your players will spend more time selecting feats than any other part of character design – at least mine do. So, help them out. There are SO many feats and SO many sources that they may feel overloaded with all the great options.

Here’s what I tell my players, “Pick you feats using these guidelines:”

- #1: Determine a character concept. This will help your selection more than anything else. Otherwise, you will wind up with an array of useful feats, but no direction, no concept, and a generally effective but bland character. The problem with no character concept is that players take a little bit of everything to meet every need. This creates a fairly effective character but one without any “Character.” So, come up with a good character concept and background and let it drive your feat selection.
- Class – most of your good feats will come from your class kits, so work on your class’ Key kit vigorously so you can move into the rest of your class.
- Ship Officer – If you are an Officer (recommended between creation and level 3) completing most of your ship officer Key Kit will make you functional at your post. Select these feats carefully and more slowly than your Class feats.
- Open Feats – I generally avoid these like the plague unless my character concept specifically calls for them. They are expensive, low RC, and generally don’t fit into your character concept or they would already be listed under race or class.
- Omega: If you use this optional rule, I think everyone should take one Omega, just for the fun of rolling it and having 3 powerful choices. ☺
- Armor: All classes should learn one armor feat, otherwise, reliance on General Skill defense will likely kill you. Military classes should also think about adding Natural or MA armor for unarmored combat but I’d wait until level 3 or so, save the AP for now. Not until a higher rank would I consider learning additional armor feats.
- Weapons: All classes should pick up at least one weapon feat, so they can fight if their power or other talents run out. Military classes should take a ranged and melee weapon. Avoid Light and Heavy weapons at first as they leave large combat holes versus very agile or very armored opponents. Go for Medium Weapons. As you advance, and good Military character will pick

up a Light Medium and Heavy weapon in their primary attack form (Ranged or Melee). Really high level characters will often have L, M, H weapons of both ranged and Melee. High level characters will also start to fill in their weapon compliment with special functions like non-lethal, AOE (area of Effect – such as grenades), structural damage, tripping, and weapons that complement the characters other feats. Be careful about taking too many weapons at first. Using the APs in mastery or combat related feats may actually make you more effective.

- Race – Most players avoid racial feats during character creation, unless there is a couple that really stand out. These are typically sprinkled in once the character gets to level 5 to 10.

**In summary:** if I had to tell a player which feats to take on character creation without knowing anything about his character concept, I'd say: Take all of your Class Key Kit feats first, then your Ship Officer Key kits next, Take 1 Medium Melee weapon and 1 Armor. If you are military add in 1 Light or Medium ranged weapon and “possibly” a 3<sup>rd</sup> weapon of Light or Heavy LMH in the area the class specializes (ranged or melee).

**Feat Summary:** Killiam, there are four to five hundred feats, so looking through the list of class feats and knowing what they do is hard, even for me, the designer. To help, there is a large alphabetical table at the front of the Feats Booklet that lists every feat and summarizes it. Be sure your players know about this. And, as a tip, the summary is often useful in writing the description part of the Feat on the Feat Sheet.

**Charge of Force:** For now, let's spend our 2AP and learn Charge of Force Feat. You can use the Feat's area of the Major Character Creation Techniques section above. Once you've done this, pick another feat or two out of the Warrior Class and/or Engineer Officer and learn them as well.

## STEP 11

Generate Die

Oh, Killiam, this is going to be an easy one. You see experience MetaScape players often like to write down the R+C of feats and attributes as they go, but wait towards the end to make the R+C roll, then the Advancement Die roll. It is much faster this way and players have a better gauge as to whether they should luck their rolls with AP.

So, this Step is for that type of player. However, we've been doing this for each feat and attribute as we go.

Now the exception to this approach is when masteries are taken. Then, the RC must be calculated so the player knows which Mastery Colors to cross out. And, and MER will require that the Die itself be calculated or you have nothing to MER.

**General Skills:** Likewise, the general skills are not rolled during the Class step when attributes are recorded, rather they wait until now because you can't calculate them without knowing the Attribute's Die.

**New Characters:** I would probably have my new players generate characters in this manner. Just have them record R+C and stop there. But, once the first player wanted to master, stop everyone and walk them through the R+C and Advancement Die rolls then show them how to cross off Mastery Colors and how to record a mastery. But the bulk of the R+C and Advancement Die rolling can wait until this step (including General Skills).

## STEP 12

Master at any feats/weapons/armor desired.

Killiam, you may remember that mastery was covered in the section: Major Character Creation Techniques above. Go there now and master at Charge of Force.

Now, master at one other feat (not a weapon or armor feat). OK, next, I want to walk you through mastering at weapons and armor. We'll do weapons second as they are like armor but add the mastery elements of multiple attacks.

**Armor Mastery:** First, spend 5AP for mastery as always. Armor mastery is not recorded on the Feat's sheet, rather if you look on the Front Sheet there is a special part of the Weapons/Armor table for mastery. It looks like:

Def 1+	Def 5+	Def 10+	Def 15+	Def 20+
AR	AR	AR	AR	AR

As the headings (or footings –haha) indicate the top row is for Def and the bottom for AR. The numbers 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 are to help you cross of mastery colors based upon armor “SKILL RC”. Please note this is “Skill RC” in the purple box next to the green R+C box, not Armor RC in the second purple box.

12+12	15	.7	11			Medium Partial Armor: helm and Left Side
12+12	24	.45	11			
R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Def	<b>Armor</b>

So our Skill RC of 15 for Def just qualifies us for Green, but fails for Blue. So we need to cross off Blue for Def (remember, Defense is on top). But our huge 24 Skill RC for AR means we have all mastery colors open. Our sheet should now look like:

Def 1+	Def 5+	Def 10+	Def 15+	Def 20+	
AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	

OK, armor mastery isn't written down anywhere, because it is so simple. You can MER defense and MER AR. Killiam, remember MER I s a "Meta Enhanced Roll" and simply improves the base die. The MER table is at the bottom of the tables sheet.

For our first mastery element let's take a Blue MER on our, already impressive, armor. First, look at our current AR Die:

4	Medium Partial Armor: Helm and Left Side	10
Def	Armor	AR

So, we will be MERing our AR of 10. Looking on the MER table of the Tables Sheet that would make our die a 20!

10
12
10,4
16
10,8
20

The effects of our 5AP and buying our first mastery element (the Blue AR MER) are as follows:

Def 1+	Def 5+	Def 10+	Def 15+	Def 20+	20
AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	

For practice I want you to Red MER the Defense. Try it by yourself. Did you get:

6					20
Def 1+	Def 5+	Def 10+	Def 15+	Def 20+	
AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	

If not, check your steps. The Def Die is 4. On the Tables Sheet, looking at the MER table at the bottom, find 4 on the yellow Die row and if you look right below it into the red box, you will find a 6.

4
6
6
6
8
8

Thus, a Red Def MER is 6. It is written in the top row because the top row is for Defense and the bottom for AR. Great! Good job.

**Tied MER:** Looking above notice that Red, Orange, and Yellow MER of Die 4 are all 6. So, there is no reason to take an Orange or Yellow MER on Defense. We can spend a cheaper, more common Red Meta and get the same effect. And, if we are out of RED we can use any, more powerful, Meta Color as a Red, so we can still get our 6 with an Orange or Yellow Meta.

Likewise, there would be no reason to take a Blue MER for Def because it is 8 just like the Green MER. (Which is fortunate for us, as we CAN'T learn Blue Mastery elements on Defense, our Skill RC was too low).

**Tip:** Characters who will be in the forefront of battle and take lots of damage, should consider learning all Def and AR MER (that aren't identical as above) so they have maximum options during combat. Due to AP availability, this may take a level or two to accomplish.

Killiam, depending upon what you have elected to learn for our character, your 30 AP plus the 4 bonus AP for our Handicaps, may be wearing thin. For the purpose of learning how to create a character, don't worry if we go over. You won't allow this with your players, but this is an "educational" character so - no worries.

**Weapon Mastery:** Killiam, like armor, weapons have a MER for both Attack (top row) and Damage (bottom row). If we choose to master, the first step is to cross off any Mastery Colors for which our Skill RC doesn't quality.

Let's master at Cross Bow. Not the most strategic decision, but then we did spend all that time out in the dessert with that hermit. So, with our 10 Atk and 15 Dmg Skill RC:

R+C	Skill RC	*	RC	Bns	Atk	<b>Weapons</b>
8 + 8	10	.8	8		4	Cross Bow
12 + 8	15	.43	7			

Our Mastery area looks like:

Atk 1+	Atk 5+	Atk 10+	Atk 15+	Atk 20+
Dmg	Dmg	Dmg	Dmg	Dmg

First, let's MER Red Attack and Yellow Damage. Go ahead, Killiam, I think you can do it. It should look like:



Atk 1+	Atk 5+	Atk 10+	Atk 15+	Atk 20+
Dmg	Dmg	Dmg	Dmg	Dmg
6		6	<del>6</del>	<del>6</del>

**Multi Attack Format:** Many weapons have multiple attack mastery elements. They will be listed with a lower case "x" and a number such as x2. The "x" means a unique opponent and the number (2) is the number of attacks. So x2 is two attacks on a unique opponent. Why "unique"? Because x1x1 is also two attacks but 1 attack on a unique opponent and another 1 attack on a unique opponent. So x1x1 MUST be versus two separate "unique" opponents, and x2 MUST be versus a single "unique" opponent. So, you see Killiam, x2 cannot do what x1x1 does and vice versa.

Let me show you a few more notations like x1x2 or x2x1 (both are the same) one attack on opponent A and two attacks on opponent B. But x1x1x1 is one attack on three separate opponents. Got it? Good.

Now, let's learn multi-Attack with our Cross Bow! In the Weapons Booklet, find Cross Bow in the long alphabetical table.

In the colored boxes to the right, we see that we have two more mastery elements: Yellow x2 and Green x1x1.

		x2	x1x1		
1/12	P	250	55	4	2

Let's spend 1 AP and learn the x2 Yellow mastery element. Our sheet now looks like:

Atk 1+	Atk 5+	Atk 10+	Atk 15+	Atk 20+
Dmg	Dmg	Dmg	Dmg	Dmg
6		x2 6	<del>6</del>	<del>6</del>

**Multiple Elements:** Some weapons, like sword, will have more than one multiple attack elements in a Meta color. Each of these is learned separately. They are separate elements. Find Sword in the Weapons booklet and look at its Mastery elements:

		x2x1x1		x3x1x2
1/1	M	120	80	4 2

In Yellow we have x2, x1x1 and in Blue we have x3, x1x2. So, there are four mastery elements here, each for 1AP. If we learn both Yellow mastery elements, it will cost 2AP and then, during play we can EITHER attack one opponent twice (x2) or two opponent's once (x1x1) for a Yellow Meta in either case.

Now, if we also took a Yellow MER for attack, we could then spend a Yellow Meta to EITHER double attack (x2), attack two opponents (x1x1) or increase our chance to hit (from 6 to a MER of 10). Three separate mastery elements, each costs 1AP and only one may be used at a time, but all cost a Yellow Meta. "If" we did this, our Front Sheet would look like:

		10,x2,x1x1		
--	--	------------	--	--

**Individual Mastery Elements:** Weapons also have unique mastery elements to each weapon. These are listed under the weapon's description area of the Weapons Booklet. Each costs 1AP and the description is found on the Individual Mastery Element's table toward the front of the booklet.

### STEP 13

#### Select Equipment

Yeah! Time to buy things! For this we use Credits (Cr) not Adventure Points (AP). And we have 3000 Credits!

**Weapons and Armor:** Ok, so we know how to use a Cross Box, Sword, and Medium Partial Armor. However, knowing and having are two distinct realities. We need to "Buy" our weapons and armor.

**Free Weapon and Armor:** Lucky for us, we get one weapon and one armor (that we are actually going to use) for Free! This means we only have to pay for one of our two weapons, the cheaper of the two.

Hmmm, Killiam, why do you think I added in that, "That we are actually going to use?" Hehe - yeah, don't won't players taking the most expensive weapon and then sell it just to fund their character.

Looks like the cheapest of our two weapons is the Sword at 120Cr. That beats the Cross Bow at 250Cr. So, Killiam, we are down 120 Credits from our 3000.

**Suggested Equipment:** To make life easier, there is a nifty table at the front of the Equipment Booklet called "Suggested Basic Equipment." Find it now.

The various bands of rows with similar shading are either similar gear - pick one. Or logically go together. No character is required to take any of these items, but they cover all the basics and this is an excellent place to start. In fact, few of my players buy anything else until higher level, with the exception of power suit armor guys (Marines, Destron, etc.)

Lets break out the Identi card and spend some credits.

Though it is not required, I don't know any player who hasn't taken Identi Card and Communicator. They are both pretty key to MetaScape. So, let's record Identi Card first. I'll help you, then you can do Communicator on your own.

This is hard stuff, so follow along. On your Back Sheet write "Identi card to the left of the first box under "Equipment" on the Equipment table. Follow this with a dash "-" and any information you need to properly use

the equipment item, and/or any notes you like. In our case, being new to the game, we'll just list the reminder "credit card, drivers license, general ID"

Equipment
Identi Card—Credit Card, Drivers License, General ID

**Meta:** The meta column on the left of the Equipment table is rarely used, but is provided for those rare items that require Meta.

Now for the killer! Copy all of the Identi Card's information to the right (in the Equipment Book) onto your Back Sheet. It will be in the same order and same colored columns. Wasn't that hard! Hehe.

Cr	Maint	ETax	#	Enc
25	0	0=	1	*

The "#" column is the number you have. So, if you want two or more Identi cards, just up the number.

**ETax:** ETax is a governor of equipment. It makes sure that character classes, and levels remain balanced as far as equipment goes.

Every equipment item has an ETax Value. This is recorded to the left of the "=" on your character sheet (armor, weapons, and equipment). This is the "typical" ETax of the item. Our character's Max ETax is 30 (we wrote that down earlier).

ETax Formula & AP = Max ETax
30+2*Level & = 30

So we can handle up to 30 ETax of equipment, armor, and weapons.

The ETax we write to the left of the "=" is the "typical" ETax for that item. But, different characters are able to carry and use different types of Equipment better or worse than others. For example, Warriors can carry and use a lot of Tech Items (1/2 multiplier) but fewer Sorce Items (2 multiplier). This means a tech item of ETax 10 only counts as ETax 5 for our Warrior ( $10 * \frac{1}{2} = 5$ ). But a Sorce Item of 10 would cost us 20 of our 30 ETax ( $10 * 2 = 20$ ). In other words, if all the Items had the same base 10 ETax, we could carry four tech items to every one Sorce Item!

To fin the ETax Multipliers, just look at the ETax Category table in the upper left of your Back Sheet. We already filled it out above.

Mult	ETax Category
1/2	Equipment directly supporting KNOWN feats.
1/2	KNOWN Armor or Weapons.
1/2	Archaic Items
1	BioTech Items
1	Cyber Items
1/2	Tech Items
2	Psionic Items
1	Psychosomatic Items
2	Sorce items
GM	All other items

The "Mult" column lists the multipliers for base ETax and the "ETax Category" column lists the categories. So, for each Item we record the base ETax to the left of the "=" then we find the proper category on the ETax Category table and multiply that base times the Mult and write the answer on the right side of the "=".

So anything with a base ETax of 0 will have a 0 on both sides of the = (as in  $0=0$ ). But everything else will have a larger number. For example, the second equipment Item we take will be a Communicator. On the "Suggested Basic Equipment" table in the Equipment Booklet the base ETax is 4. Next we classify the item. It doesn't support a known feat, so it fits under "Tech Items." Which is 1/2 for us! So  $4 * \frac{1}{2} = 2$  This means our ETax box on our character sheet will read  $4=2$ .

We have to keep the total of the right hand ETax numbers to 30 or less.

On more example, our sword has a base ETax of 4 and being a "KNOWN weapon" on the ETax Category table, its multiplier is 1/2. So it too will have  $4=2$  in the ETax box on the Front Sheet.

**Increasing Max ETax:** If you want items that add up to 33 ETax and you only have 30, just spend 3 AP (1AP = 1 ETax) and write the number below "AP" in the ETax Formula table like this:

ETax Formula & AP = Max ETax
30+2*Level & 3 = 33

Thus, a player can upgrade their Max ETax with AP to any amount, provided they have enough AP. And this can always be added to later.

OK, I think you have it, go forth and ETax!

Back to buying items from the Equipment Booklet's "Suggested Basic Equipment" table.

Killiam, I think you can take it from here after I give you some advice on the items and show you what I'd pick for our Calemoran Warrior.

- The next section of the “Suggested Basic Equipment” table are containers. I’d learn the basic simple Backpack. It fits our rugged back world persona.
- Next are three items for food, water, and sleep. Lets definitely get a Nutripress, and the survival bag is options. I don’t know, I think a simple mat would do. It’s not on any equipment list but I think we could ad-lib some stats for it later when you get the hang of it. Your players will come up with items they want or find that isn’t on any equipment list, and you’ll soon gain a quick ability to ad-lib them.
- Next section is “ropes.” All of it seems high tech, so let’s just skip this area. We don’t need no stink’en rope! ☺
- Now we have light sources. Well, we have Infravision, so we’ll save some Credits here as well.
- Then, we hit the healing area. Hmmm, Warrior – we may need a few of these. I’d take one Genesis Capsule for 1000Cr. Our emergency heal. Then 3 or 4 Slap Packs to as a quick patch up during combat.
- Oooh, gott’a love the next section. It’s a reminder that we get one weapon and one armor for free! But we already took care of that.
- Finally that last two are just reminders to power armor and cybernetic characters to go buy Enhancements for armor and cyber implants. So we don’t have to worry about this.

Now Killiam, you can start to browse through all the other equipment options if you wish. There are a lot of interesting things out there. Since you are learning the game, why don’t you do some window shopping now and take a look at what’s for sale.

**Description:** Be sure to find your equipment in the detailed section below all the tables and read up on it. This will add a LOT to the richness of the game and there are sometimes special rules here.

## STEP 14

Optionally-Determine MOTC Stats

MOTC information is found at the end of the GuildSpace Booklet.

MOTC power is a highly optional set of rules. I suggest skipping it entirely until you either play and

adventure designed to introduce the power, or you and your players become fairly familiar with the MetaScape setting.

You see, Killiam, unlike Sorce, Psionics, and Psychosomatics, MOTC power is designed as a plot element more than a frequently used set of feats.

As a quick example, all MOTC are immortal – at least from common diseases and old age. This alone has large plot implications.

For now, we’ll skip MOTC. You can learn more about it later in the GuildSpace booklet. It is one of my more favorite plot elements as it can be woven in and out of adventures as a common thread. But it is also totally unnecessary.

## STEP 15

Add up Enc, Maintenance, ETax, Credits

To the finish line we run! We need to total a few things, Killiam. Here’s how we do it.

**Enc:** Add up all encumbrance (Enc) on your Front and Back sheets and write the total in the T Enc Box. The Enc columns and the T Enc box are all a light brown color.

Armor, is the one exception to encumbrance. The character ignores the encumbrance of their currently worn armor.

“If” the Total Encumbrance were 14, it would look like:

T Enc	14
MR	

**Maintenance:** Now add up all the numbers on your Front and Back sheet in the “Maint” columns and write the total in the “Total Maint” box on your Back sheet. These columns and the Total Maint box are all yellow.

“If” total maintenance were 350, it would look like:

Total Maint
350

**ETax:** Finally, Killiam, add up all the ETax on the Front and Back Sheets, in purple columns. And place it in the ETax Spent box in the upper left of the Back sheet. Remember, the ETax numbers being added are the “final” ETax, which is the number to the right of the “=” sign. Or, in an ETax of 4=2, it would be 2.

“If” the total ETax a were 18, it would look like:

ETax Spent
18

**Credits:** Each class has its own starting credits. In our case we had 3000. To check your credits spent, add up all Credits on the Front and Back sheet except for the three free items: most expensive weapon, most

expensive armor, and our artifact that was given to us. Add up everything else and subtract from 3000. The remainder should go in the "Credits" box in the upper middle of the Back Sheet.

"If" we had 1025 credits left, it would look like:

Credits
1025

### STEP 16

Luck Boxes, Nish, Vit, MR, AP

Woot! Last step, Killiam! Time to wrap up our character. There are a couple of other little loose ends to tie up besides those listed. This is the "catch" all final step.

**Luck Boxes:** Follow the formula in the very bottom left of the Front Sheet. It says you have "8 + Doubling Rank" luck boxes. Well, at Rank 0, we are not ANY doubling rank so it is just 8 for us. That means we need to blacken in the bottom row, leaving 8 boxes open. Like this:

Luck Boxes							
█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
8 + Doubling Rank							

P.S: Doubling Ranks happen to be Rank 1, 2, 4, 8 16 just liked the DD. This info is also listed on the Rules Sheet.

**Nish:** You have already calculated your Nish Die on your Front Sheet. Because Nish is used so often, copy the die into the stand alone, larger Nish box to the right. So "if" you Nish Die were 6 like this:

Die	Combat
8	Vitality
6	Nish
4	Luck

You would put an "6" into the Nish box like this:

Nish
6

Of course, you have rolled your R+C and/or Advancement Die differently and have some other Nish Die. Just copy it over.

**Vit:** Vitality (Vit) is one of the most important stats on your character sheet. It represents your "Life." Some games use Hit Points, Health, Life Bar. MetaScape calls this Vitality. Because your Vitality will be used so much (especially if you are a militant class) there is a whole table on the Front Sheet for it.

Like Nish, we are going to copy our Vitality Die to the "Max" and "Current" boxes of the Vitality table. The Vitality table is just to the right of the Nish Box. So, if our Vitality die were an 8 (as my example above), the Vitality bar would look like this:

Vitality	Max	Current
	8	8

The "Max" won't change during play, but the Current will drop as you become wounded. Right now, our character is in peak health, so the Current is at its full of "8".

Again, you may have rolled a different Vitality die, so you have need to put a different number in the Max and Current boxes.

**MR:** Movement Rate (MR) is our next little project on the Front Sheet. Assuming our Total Encumbrance was 14, we look along the numbers to the right and find the first number that is "equal or larger" than our 14. In my example, it would be the 20, because 13 isn't equal to or larger than 14, but 20 is larger than 14:

MR		9	7	5	4	2	1
T Enc	14	13	20	26	33	39	46

Looking above the 20 Encumbrance, is our MR of 7. So copy the "7" into the white MR box, like this:

MR	7	9	7	5	4	2	1
T Enc	14	13	20	26	33	39	46

Do you see how the 14 Encumbrance gave us our 7 Movement Rate? If not go up and try it again. Of course, your Total Encumbrance is likely something besides 14 and you'll need to figure it out yourself.

This is our "Unarmored MR." This is how many game board squares our character can move in a round wearing no armor. Most armor slows you down. To find out how much, look for the "Speed" number on the large Weapon/Armor table. You'll see that Medium partial has a speed of 80. The speed is a percent so it means 80%. Our Medium Partial armor slows us by 80% so our Unarmored MR of 7 becomes a  $7 \cdot .8 = 6$  (actually 5.6 but round up. Even a 5.001 would be 6).

The "Armored MR" goes in the large "MR" box in the bottom right of the Front Sheet. Notice it lists the formula "MR\*Speed" as a reminder to multiply our Unarmored MR times the Speed percent. So, the box would look like this:

MR
6
MR Speed

Of course, your Armored MR may be different due to your actual Total Encumbrance and the Unarmored MR it produced. Or, if you chose some other type of armor.

**AP:** Now, add up how many AP you have spent and subtract from the 30 we actually had. The remainder, even if it is 0, should be written in the "Unused" AP box in the upper right, like this:

AP	Notes
Unused	
2	

I know that you may have easily spent past 30 with our Calemoran Warrior because I had you take most options in order to show you the process. However, your players will be restricted to 30 AP only.

### STEP 17

Character Name, Association, Personality, Meta, Select Adv Areas

Killiam, this information isn't listed as a step. It is more final touches that are obvious once you have done it once. Here they are:

- **Character Name:** Come up with a Character Name and write it on all six sheets right below your own name.
- **Association:** Dha, Ranger, or Freelancer. These associations are described more fully in the Professions Booklet. Write this in the "Association" box on your Front sheet (upper left)
- **Personality:** This is perhaps the most important step of the entire process. Come up with a good character personality and background. Make your character a memorable one that is both fun to play and fun for the other players to interact with. This will greatly enhance the enjoyment of the entire game. Then, summarize your personality in the Personality Box on the Front Sheet. If you want a quick easy way to do personalities, just pick a well known character from a book or movie and you can list your personality as "Like Tom in the Movies X".
- **Meta:** In the Meta table in the upper right of the Front Sheet, put a forward slash in all the boxes with dots in them.

	Meta	[ ] = have	[X] = used	Normalize: [ ] = min [ ] = max
1	[ / ] [ / ] [ / ]			
2	[ / ] [ / ] [ ]			
4	[ / ] [ ]			
8	[ ] [ ]			
16	[ ]			

**Areas for Free Advancement:** On the Tables sheet we need to fill in the five boxes under "Area #" on the "Free Adv. Rolls at Level..." table.

To the left of this table is a little text box like this:

<b>Advancement Areas</b>
1) Core/Science
2) Resistances
3) Weapon/Armor
4) Nish/Vit/Luck
5) Feats

You need to decide the order that you would like to make your Free Advancement rolls later on. So select the most important area and write it's number in the first box of the "Area #" column. Then the second most important, and so on. For our character, let's say we want the order like this:

- First: 3) Weapons and Armor
- Second: 4) Nish/Vit/Luck
- Third: 2) Resistances
- Fourth: 1) Core/Sciences
- Fifth: 5) Feats

With these choices, our Free Advancement table would look like this:

Area #	Free Adv. Rolls at Level..
3	1 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45
4	1 6 11 16 21 26 31 36 41 46
2	2 7 12 17 22 27 32 37 42 47
1	3 8 13 18 23 28 33 38 43 48
5	4 9 14 19 24 29 34 39 44 49

**Done:** OK, that's the end of character creation. Next, Killiam, I'll show you how character advancement works and how to generate high level characters.

**High Level Character Creation:** What if you want to start a group off at 5<sup>th</sup> level or 12<sup>th</sup> or any, for that matter. Or, if a player in a high level group wants to generate a different character due to character death or "just because." MetaScape is designed to accommodate high level character creation. I'll write a section about this below, but first, I want to cover Character Advancement, because many of the concepts in Character Advancement are used in high level character creation.

# Character Advancement

Character's in MetaScape gain AP, Levels, and Rank as a result of real hours played. Unlike other games, how many monsters you slay, or how often you use skills has no impact. This allows for a much more creative and flexible game. Characters don't have to be tweaked out to maximize damage potential. Rather, they just have to be played. Here are a few examples of the benefits to this method:

- I have one player who loves to play non-aggressive characters. Oh, they will trip, mentally effect, slow, etc. opponents, but they will not directly hurt anyone. The character is actually really effective as my minions are held, tripped, etc and the other militant characters come up and slaughter the poor guys.
- Another player made a particularly cool warrior that refused to learn any form of hurled or ranged weapon. Normally, this would be a large hole in combat effectiveness and the character would suffer in other games. But in MetaScape, it lead to a deep and neat character background and the player was not penalized at all.

I can go on with many more examples, but I think you get the picture, Killiam.

**Hours:** On the Front sheet is a box for "Hours". As GM, note the time that you start to play and then stop for character advancement every 3 to 6 hours. Hand out Hours of play. So, if you started at noon and then stopped at 4:00pm for advancement, you would hand out 4 hours to all your players. They would then record this in the "Hours" box on their Front sheets as follows:

Hours
4

Below this box is a text box with two tips:

AP = 1/hour
LV = 1/10hr

So, every hour a character is played gives them 1 AP. So, in our example, we gain 4AP. Now if you remember, I left our character creation example at 2 Unused AP, so our Unused AP would now be 2+4=6, as in:

AP
Unused
6

**Maintenance:** As you see fit, charge maintenance at these character advancement breaks. I will base my maintenance on intensity of battle since the last break, time, etc.

A character must subtract a number of credits equal to their Total Maint box on their Back Sheet. If they can't, then equipment, weapons, and armor of their choosing must be taken "off line" due to damage, wear and tear, until it is repaired with maintenance.

BTW, maintenance takes into account ammo, energy utilization, etc. So this is how equipment utilization is balance. If you've wondered, "Doesn't it cost to power that laser pistol, isn't there a limit to the number of shots." The answer is yes and yes. But, tracking ammo in a science fiction game is a great bore and drags the game down. Thus, I give you "Maintenance." ☺

## SPEND AP

During play, NO AP may be spent on anything. Only during GM called Character Advancement breaks may AP be spent.

Killiam, it is a good idea to set a time limit to character advancement stops, otherwise, your slower or more discerning players can take up a lot of game time. I typically allow 30 minutes. It is a great idea to time these over another break such as a meal break, or someone has to run an errand.

During a Character Advancement Break, players may spend any Unused AP (whether just gained, or left over) in any way allowed. There is a handy table on the Rules Sheet that covers all the possibilities. To reiterate, the possibilities are:

- **Luck R+C:** For 1AP they may attempt to beat any RC by lucking an R+C roll. Both R&C die must be rolled. They may luck the same R+C as many times as they want, for 1AP per attempt. (Note: Lucking R+C does not use a Luck Box, rather it costs 1 AP. Luck Boxes can NOT be used during Character advancement in ANY way.) NOTE: if the RC improves, it may open up Mastery Colors. So always check.
- **Luck Advancement Die Roll:** For 1AP you can try to improve any "Die" by rolling your advancement die (3d6 at levels 0 to 4) and try to get a better result on the RC to Die table. You can Luck an Advancement Die Roll as many times as you want for 1AP each. (Again, this does not and cannot use a Luck Box)

- **Feats:** Buy more feats, including weapon and armor feats. Base cost is 2AP and if the Rank is greater than the character's rank the cost is 2 \* Feat Rank.
- **Mastery:** Master at existing feats, including weapon and armor feats. Cost is 5AP for the first element and 1AP for each element thereafter.
- **Mastery Elements:** Add elements to any known mastery for 1AP each.
- **Max ETax:** Increase Max ETax
- **Special AP:** the special AP list on the Rules Sheet needs a bit more explanation and follows below.

**Special AP:** On the Rules Sheet is a list of special AP. All of these entries include a format like this:

Rank, AP

2, 20

4, 40

8, 80

Etc.

The first number is the rank requirement. The character **MUST** be this rank or higher. Only Feat levels may be purchased with extra AP. All other MetaScape Rank requirements are hard and fast with no "buy up" option.

So, in our example above, the character has to be rank 2 or higher to learn the item. The second number 20 in our 2, 20 example, is the amount of AP it costs.

The next entry above is 4, 40. So at rank 4 and for 40 MORE AP the next item can be gained. The AP cost is a full new AP cost. The 40 is not "20 more than the previous 20 spent." The first time was 20, now it is 40 more for 60 total.

Now a higher level character, say Rank 6, who wanted to learn this could start at the 2, 20. Then if they wanted a second they could do the 4, 40. So, basically you can always buy the cheapest option that 1) you qualify for, and 2) that you haven't already learned.

**Multi Class:** Multiclass section looks like:

Rank, AP

2, 20

4, 40

8, 80

Etc.

Which means at rank 2 for 20AP a character can become multi classed. Then at rank 4 and 40 MORE AP they can become triple classed. And so on.

**Ship Position:** A character can learn their first or additional ship positions. The first requires Rank 0 (anyone can learn it) at 5AP. The second ship position may be gained at Rank 2 for 30 AP.

**Omega Power:** Notice there are two Rank 0 options, so a Rank 0 or higher character can learn two Omega Powers. The first one costs 5 AP and the second 10 more AP. Then at Rank 1 a third can be taken for 15 more AP.

**Team Speak:** Team speak is an Open profession – meaning anyone can take it. As you can see on the Rules Sheet, it requires Rank 0 (anyone) and costs 5 AP.

**No Handicaps:** Killiam, players can't learn handicaps during character advancement.. Handicaps may only be learned at character creation. Unless the GM makes a special exception.

These are all the options, so players can spend those APs like mad – hehe.

## New Level

In most RPGs you can levels, but with the richness of MetaScape, you gain levels, ranks, and doubling ranks. I'll show you how they work.

MetaScape characters gain a level every 10 hours of play. So, when the Hours hit 10, the character becomes 1<sup>st</sup> level. At 20 hours they become 2<sup>nd</sup> level. A simple way of looking at this is that Level = the tens column of hours. So at 27 hours the character is still 2<sup>nd</sup> level, at 90 hours the character is 9<sup>th</sup> level. At 127 hours the character is 12<sup>th</sup> level. This clue is also in the text box below the "Hours" box on the Front Sheet.

**Speed Leveling:** If your group meets only occasionally, you may want to hand our 2 character "hours" per one real hour of play. This will speed character advancement along more quickly.

**Level Effects:** When a character gains a level several things happen. These are listed in the text box in the upper left of the Rules Sheet as:

- Free Advancement Rolls on Select Area
- General Skill Adjustments (if any)
- MER Adjustments (if any)
- ETax Increases

**Free Advancement Rolls:** At every new level a Free Advancement Die roll is allowed. This is just like Lucking the Advancement Die roll for 1AP, except that it's free, or 0AP.

To determine which Die your get to try and improve with the Free Advancement Die roll, look at the table you filled out on the Tables Sheet. The "Free Adv. Rolls at Level..." table in the upper right.

Our sample character looked like this:

Area #	Free Adv. Rolls at Level...
3	1 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45
4	1 6 11 16 21 26 31 36 41 46
2	2 7 12 17 22 27 32 37 42 47
1	3 8 13 18 23 28 33 38 43 48
5	4 9 14 19 24 29 34 39 44 49

Find your level and tick it off and any levels you may have missed (if you advanced 2 level s at once, or simply haven't made your advancement rolls in awhile). At first level, there are two 1s. This is the only time the table has two entries for one level. Ticking these off, we see that to the left we had Chosen Area # 3 and 4 for our two 1s.

Looking at the text box below, 3 and 4 are 3) Weapon/Armor and 4 Nish/Vit/Luck. So, we get free 3d6 advancement rolls on all weapons and armor (Atk, Dmg, Def, AR) and on Nish, Vit, and Luck. So hop too it, Killiam. For each one, find the RC, then make your 3d6 roll on the RC to Die table and see if you improve. It is a lucked roll, so if you roll worse, nothing happens.

MetaScape game mechanics are setup for a gentle constant improvement. On average one in every three Advancement Die Rolls will result in a Die improvement. Be sure you players know this, so they aren't discouraged if they roll even 5 or 6 times without improvement. This is easily possible. Of course, you can also roll 3 or 4 times and improve every one if you roll well.

If you take a look at the game, the idea that RC is the anchor for the Die is very true. Through Free and purchased Advancement rolls, all abilities will slowly gravitate toward an "average" for the RC. So low Advancement rolls are more likely to improve and high rolls will not see advancement for some time, on average. Now to make this all much more interesting, the advancement die roll increases by +3 every Rank. This slowly ratchets up all Die on the character's sheet at an even pace that never, ever, ever, ends. Unlimited advancement!

OK, Killiam, so go make those advancement rolls for weapons, armor and the combat attributes as mentioned above. Good luck! I hope some of them increase. (Particularly, our Cross Bow, as I really like it. ☺)

**General Skills:** General Skills are each based on attributes. Any time such an attribute's Die changes, then General skill automatically changes as they are tied together. So, if your Core or Science Attributes improved, adjust the corresponding General Skill.

**MER:** If a Die has any MER affecting it, the MER will change if the Die changes. MER is reliant upon the Feat's Die, just like General Skills are reliant upon their attribute's Die.

**ETax:** This one is very easy. At EVERY level you will evaluate your ETax Formula on your Back Sheet. The formula lists an amount gained per level. In our case, our Calemoran Warrior, gains 2 every level. I think we left the total at 33 (30 + the 3 AP we spent in our example). So, we change that 33 to 35 (2 more, for the level gain).

**Level #:** It is probably obvious, but you get to change your level on your Front Sheet to indicate your new level.

## New Rank

Ranks are gained every 5 levels. So at level 5, 10, 15, 20, and so on. Our sample character will become Rank 1 once we get to level 5 (or after 50 hours of play).

At each new Rank, several things happen as outlined in the upper left table of the Rules sheet. Plus, don't forget the normal "Level" events which also apply. The Rank effects are, specifically:

- Calculate RC to Buff
- Change Advancement Area Order
- Change Advancement Die
- Handicap Bonus AP Gained

**Calculate RC to Buff:** Turn to your Tables Sheet and erase the entire Buffs table. Then find your Rank on the RC to Buff Table in the Feat's Booklet and copy it to your character sheet.

Now, comb your character sheet for any RC+, RCB or #(#) listings. If you recorded them right they should look like +3(3) or d8(9). Remember to examine the Buff's RC (the number in the parenthesis) and see if the + or d have improved by looking at the new information you just copied down. Easy. ☺

**Change Advancement Area Order:** AFTER, you do the level's Free advancement rolls. Did you catch that? I said AFTER. You may then turn to your Tables sheet and change the Area order (it was 3, 4, 2, 1, 5 in our example Calemoran Warrior). This may ONLY be done



at new Rank (levels 5, 10, 15, 20 etc.) and ONLY after the Free Advancement rolls are done.

The neat thing here is that you have an opportunity to change the focus of your character or adjust for a mistake.

**Change Advancement Die:** On the Tables Sheet, change your "Current" Advancement Die to the appropriate entry. It will be 3d6+X where X is 3\*Rank. So at Rank 1 it will be 3d6+3.

**Handicap Bonus AP Gained:** Yeah, our handicaps are paying off again. In our example character, we were to gain 4 AP every new Rank. So, Ding! It happens now. Just add them to your Unused AP or spend them now.

**Book Keeping:** You also get to change your Rank on your front sheet to indicate your new Rank.

## New Doubling Rank

Killiam, Doubling Ranks are just ranks that match the numbers on the DD: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, etc. When a character reaches one of these ranks, the normal level and normal rank advancement occurs as well as the Doubling Rank effects, which are:

- Gain 1 Meta Box and 1 Luck Box
- MR, Enc, Jumps, Improved by ten's place (minimum of 1)

**Gain 1 Meta Box:** The player may add a Meta Box to the Meta table on the Front Sheet. Use pen, as this is permanent, and add a new meta box "[ ]". A new Meta Box may be added as long as there are already meta boxes both above it and to the left of it. Also, a new Red Meta Box may be added as long as there is at least a red AND orange box in the column to the left.

So, at the first doubling rank, Rank 1, a new meta box could be added as follows:

- Blue box in column 2
- Yellow box in column 3
- Red box to start column 4

**Gain 1 Luck Box:** On the Front sheet the Luck Boxes area says "8+Doubling Rank". At Rank 1, this would be 8+1 = 9 luck boxes. So open up one of the previously filled in boxes like this:



**MR, Enc, Jumps:** All of these improve by their tens place number, with a minimum improvement of 1. So If a number were 27, it would improve by 2. If it were 12, it would improve by 1, if it were 10, it would also improve by 1. And, the odd one, if it were 2 it would ALSO improve by 1, because they ALWAYS improve by at least 1.

**MR and Enc:** On our sample character, our Rank 0 MR and Enc table looks like this:

T Enc	14	13	20	26	33	39	46
MR		9	7	5	4	2	1

At Rank 1, the first doubling Rank, it would change to look like this:

T Enc	14	14	22	28	36	42	50
MR		10	8	6	5	3	2

Notice that we only change the numbers in the purple part of the table. However, since our Total Encumbrance is now stopped by the first encumbrance box, 14, our Movement Rate moves to the first MR box, with is now 10. So our Unarmored MR shot clear up to a 10!

We would then recalculate our Armored MR by multiply 10\*80% or 10\*.8 due to our Medium Partial Armor and our Armored MR would change from 6 to 8!

MR
8
MR*Speed

**Jumps:** Likewise, all four of our jump RC+s would improve by their 10's place. So it would change from:

Vertical	SB roll+ 15 = /10 feet
Broad	SB roll+ 18 = /10 sq
Dive	SB roll+ 36 = /10 sq
Long	SB roll+ 21 = feet

To

Vertical	SB roll+ 16 = /10 feet
Broad	SB roll+ 19 = /10 sq
Dive	SB roll+ 39 = /10 sq
Long	SB roll+ 23 = feet

That's it Killiam, you now know pretty much everything about character creation and advancement including Leveling, Ranking, and Doubling Ranks.

The next section will cover high level character creation, which is really just a combination of character creation and advancement rolled into one.

# High Level Character Creation

Killiam, there are three primary reasons for high level character creation:

- 1) Your group simply wants to start off at a high level. Maybe for the fun of it, maybe to function well in a particular adventure.
- 2) A character dies in a high level party and must be replaced. Starting them off at Level 0 may make them too ineffective. I typically start them off at the same level as the lowest living character, so there isn't an "incentive" to dying.
- 3) The player wants or needs to change their class/race combination in a high level game.

The reason doesn't matter, a high level character is generated the same way, regardless. Here's how to do it.

Basically, just follow the normal character creation steps and rules with the following modifications.

**Level and Rank:** The player needs to figure out what level and rank the character is at and write it down on the front sheet. Learning any element that is Rank sensitive is always done at the character's current Rank. So buying feats, Omega Powers, Ship positions, etc. is done at their high level Rank. This is an advantage over actually climbing the ranks, but there are some negatives to offset it.

**Credits:** In each class there is a Credits formula. Our sample character's formula was  $3000 + 300$  per level. So, if we were making a 7<sup>th</sup> level character, we would have  $3000 + (300 * 7) = 5100$  credits.

**AP:** Instead of just 30 AP, the player will get  $30 + 10$  per level. So a level 7 character would have  $30 + (10 * 7) = 100$  AP. Plus the AP bonus of any Handicaps taken will be added once for Rank 0 and once for every additional rank. As a formula that would be  $\text{Handicap AP} * (\text{Rank} + 1)$ . So 4 handicap AP at rank 1 would be  $4 * 2 = 8$ . The "2" is Rank 0 and Rank 1.

**RCB and RC+:** On the tables, sheet, be sure to copy the correct RCB and RC+ from the first table in the Feats Booklet. That way, as you are writing down buffs for feats and equipment, you will use the correct numbers.

**R+C and Advancement Die Rolls:** When R+C rolls are made, they can be lucked for 1 AP as many times as desired, just like usual.

**Advancement Die Rolls:** Figure out your Current Advancement Die on the Tables sheet ( $3d6 + 3 * \text{Rank}$ ). This is the die used for all Advancement Die Rolls on the RC to Die table.

Advancement Die Rolls can be lucked for 1 AP as many times as desired, just like usual.

However, NO Free Advancement rolls are made. So, cross off all levels up to the character's current level on the "Free Adv. Rolls at Level" table on the Tables sheet. This is a slight negative that helps offset the benefit above.

**Level Effects:** General Skills and MER will take care of themselves naturally, so the only level effect is to adjust your Max ETax on your Back Sheet.

**Rank Effects:** All Rank effects have already been addressed above.

**Doubling Rank Effects:** Add one Luck Box and one Meta box per doubling rank.

Here's the slightly tough one - make the MR, Enc, and Jumps improvement by adding the 10's place (minimum of 1). At Rank 1 this is no problem. But if you are making character of higher rank, say Rank 4. This is more complicated because a number like 26 isn't just  $26 + 2$  three times (Rank 1, 2, and 4), because it goes from  $26 + 2 = 28$ ,  $28 + 2 = 30$ ,  $30 + 3 = 33$ . At Rank 4 the tens digit changed from 2 to 3! Bottom line, figure out how many doubling ranks you have, then for Enc, MR, Jumps, improve each number that many times, but one rank at a time.

**Artifacts:** I typically have the player roll of a number of lesser and normal artifacts equaling one less than the existing character with the fewest artifacts. But at least one normal artifact, just like character creation.

That's it Killiam, high level character creation was a constant consideration during rules design. There really isn't much difference other than a few a lot more AP to spend, which will significantly stretch out design time. I would add 1 to 2 hours more time for high level characters.

With a new group, I would avoid high level character creation and start with new, Level 0, characters.

## THE END

This is the end of this booklet. You now:

- Can roll all the die types
- Know how to create characters
- Know how to advance characters
- Know how to create high level character

Basically, Killiam, the core of the game is yours. In the next booklets I'll show you how use all those little numbers on the character sheet and how to run a combat. So, turn to the Booklet, "Playing Characters."

***GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM3***

# GMinig

***By Blake Mobley***

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends, many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

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**From Blake Mobley to:**

- Renay for allowing me to play late into the night for these many years and for supporting my dream.
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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change thought the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

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# **Introduction**

Killiam, welcome back, your passed the Quest of Trial! If you have no idea what Killiam, is, then you are in the wrong booklet. Start by reading the Read First! Character Creation and Advancement booklet.

This booklet will be a lot more fun that the first one. Unless of course, you really like detail and formulas. I happen to, but most don't - hehe.

In the pages that follow I will explain how to player a MetaScape character. How to run, lift, jump, fight, and use those awesome super natural powers that your character posses. I'm going to tour you around the character sheet and make sure you know what everything does. I'm really looking forward to taking you on this tour!

The major sections I'll show you are: below.

# Attributes

Killiam, attributes are the base abilities that every character has in common. Attributes are all listed on the Front sheet and are organized into four groups:

- Core
- Sciences
- Resistances
- Combat

Let me clarify a few words. First, Combat Attributes have nothing to do with the combat feats of weapons and armor. Combat Attributes are the three attributes Vitality, Nish, and Luck.

**Abilities:** Second, Killiam, I use the term “ability” as the master overlord of all rolls. So attributes, Atk, Dmg, Def, AR, Feats, Powers, Omega, MOTC and everything else are “abilities.” So never confuse that word with a specific.

Now, the Attribute grouping has no real effect other than organization, which does impact Free Advancement Rolls on the Tables Sheet.

**Rolling Attributes:** Let’s take an example where our sample character, the Calemoran Warrior, wants to lift a large rock. The GM will set a difficulty and we will then “Make a Strength Check” also called “Roll Strength.” To do this, we will find the number in the yellow Die box next to Strength and roll it as a doubling roll. So, if the number were 8 we would make a D8 roll. If we rolled 4 (on d8) and 2 (on DD) we would have rolled a Strength of  $4 \times 2 = 8$ . If the rock’s difficulty were 8 or less, our Calemora could heist it into the air, otherwise, we just made a lot of grunting sounds.

Most rolls in MetaScape are made in this same manner, from Atk, Dmg, Def, AR, Attributes, “most” feats, etc. They are doubling rolls and are called a “check” or “roll” versus some GM difficulty.

**Simplicity:** So, you see Killiam, all that complicated character creation has resulted in a very simple system during actual game play – where it counts. We kind of did all the work up front and can now “play!”

Alright, now that you know how to make an attribute check, let’s come to an agreement as to what each attribute should be used for. In other words, as GM, which attribute should you ask the player to roll in which situation.

Killiam, as you might expect this is largely up to GM discretion, but here are some guides. The examples below are just a tiny sample of each attribute’s possible uses. But I think they will give you a good feel for them.

Do notice the abbreviations of each attribute so you will recognize them later in the booklets.

## CORE

These are the base or “core” attributes that define the physical and mental workings of the character.

**Strength (Str):** Strength is used for any roll requiring raw muscle power. Common rolls are:

- Lifting
- Bending
- Holding onto something
- Arm Wrestling
- Forcing Open a Door
- Climbing a rope – raw power

**Speed Burst (SB):** Speed Burst is used to measure rapid limb movement, but NOT for actually walking or running. It indicates how “quick” the character can move their limbs. Common uses are:

- Jumping
- Climbing a rope – Quick bursts
- Catching Items
- Grabbing something when slipping or falling
- Diving out of an explosion or AOE (Area of Effect) situation

**Dexterity (Dex):** Dex measures finesse, fine motor control, and agility. Common uses are:

- Balance
- Fine Hand work like cutting the wires on a nuclear bomb or reaching into a small space without touching
- Holding Still
- Juggling
- Calligraphy

**Awareness (Awa):** Awareness is a rolled anytime one of the senses is in play, including the 6<sup>th</sup> sense. Common uses are:

- Roll to see if the character “notices” something
- Hearing
- Seeing
- Searching for Hidden or Secret things
- Feeling a vibration
- Smell
- Taste

**Charisma (Cha):** Charisma combines two character aspects: beauty or sex appeal and personality and social skills. Common uses are:

- Trying to charm someone
- Trying to convince someone

- Blending in at a social event

**Lore (Lore):** Lore represents all character knowledge and experience. Common uses are:

- Roll to see if the character knows something
- Roll to figure out a puzzle or problem
- Roll to remember something

Core attributes have a lot of roleplaying elements. A character with a low lore should be played appropriately, a character with a bad Charisma should be portrayed as ugly or slovenly or uncouth. A character with a large strength should be ripped and like to walk around in a half shirt, etc.

## SCIENCES

Sciences indicate how good the character is at using various equipment items, devices, artifacts, ships, vehicles, etc. These values have little to no impact upon owned equipment.

Science Die are actually rarely rolled. But their General die are rolled fairly often, especially in ship and vehicle combat situations. General Skills will be covered below.

**Tech (Tech):** Tech is used for any technology related roll. Common uses are:

- Trying to figure out a new tech item or artifact
- Success in using a new "common" technology item

**BioTech (Bio or BioT):** BioT is used for any bio technology related roll. Bio Tech is the science of using living hardware or living equipment. Common uses are:

- Opening/Closing bio sphincter doors or other common BioT items
- Operating "common" bio equipment if unskilled
- Identify and Bio item

**Cybernetics (Cyb or Cyber):** Cybernetics is the science of implanting or replacing flesh and organs with technology. Common uses of Cybernetics is:

- Operate a new found implant
- Identify a cyber item

## RESISTANCES

Staying alive, staying alive, saying ali...ve! That's what resistances are all about. Rolls to resist bad things - haha.

**Fortitude (FR):** Fortitude measures heartiness or physical durability. This doesn't apply to actual damage (that's Vitality), but most other physical effects.

Common uses are:

- Resist Poison
- Resist Disease
- Resist Acid
- Resist Fire
- Resist Freezing
- Resist Death (Death checks) - very important! ☺
- Stop Bleeding - wound coagulation

**Will Power (WP):** Will Power is a measure of mental toughness and force of mind. Common uses are:

- Remain Conscious
- Resist Mind Control
- Resist mental influence like another's Charisma attempts
- Used versus many Psionic attack forms and effects
- Resist Suffocation

**Arcane (Arc):** Arcane is the ability to resist anything strange, magical, or unknown. It is a catch all for "weird." Common uses are:

- Resist many Sorce attacks and effects
- Resist any other odd power like MOTC, religious, magic, etc.

**Resist Energy (Energy):** This is a resistance versus any form of energy that isn't arcane. The one exception is that fire is resisted by Fortitude as it largely effects the physical being (burns flesh). Common uses are:

- Resist radiation
- Resist electrical
- Resist Sorce or Psionic effects that manifest themselves as common energy
- Resist Transporter beam

If a Sorce power was used that created a wall of fire, the correct resistance would be Fortitude, not Arcane. Because the effect was Fire. Doesn't matter how it was created, just the final effect. Similarly, a ball of Psionic force around an opponent would require a Strength check because it is "force" no a mental effect. In reverse, a psionically endued hallucination of a giant monster attacking would need a Will Power roll, not something physical, as it is a mind effect.



## COMBAT

Two of these attributes have a huge impact upon combat and Luck was simply thrown in because it didn't have another good place to live.

Killiam, Luck attribute and Luck Boxes have NOTHING to do with each other. Be sure to own this concept.

**Vitality (Vit):** Vitality is probably the most important attribute in the game. It represents health and the ability to take damage. It has the special use that it is copied on the Vitality table and used to indicate the character's health from living to dead. Outside of this important use it not rolled often, but a few of the more common uses are:

- Defend against life drain or life effects
- Roll to see how much "life" the character is radiating

**Nish (Nish):** Nish is short of initiative, but the long word is almost never used in MetaScape. Nish is a measure of reaction time under pressure. How quickly can the character formulate and enact an action plan in the midst of combat or some other stressful situation. Nish is rolled more than any other attribute.

There is really only common use: To see who gets to go first during each round (a round is like a turn).

**Luck (Luck):** Luck is rolled anytime the GM wants to see if the character is lucky. It has all kinds of use. The biggest danger is to not call on it too much. Common uses are:

- Roll to see who wins at gambling
- Roll to see if the character "pushed the right button" or "picked the horse" or ...
- Roll to see which character wins some prize

Killiam, that's it for attributes, next let's look at those skills that are based off of attributes: General Skills.

## GENERAL SKILLS

For many years I struggled in my game design with how to handle this situation: A character wants to perform an action that is really a skill, like operate a transporter on board a ship. There is an actual feat listed for this, but the character doesn't know it. However, nearly any idiot should be able to "try" and operate a transporter - couldn't be that hard. So, I used to turn to the most appropriate attribute (Tech in our case) and let them roll. Here's the big rub - another character may actually have had transporter skill and their Die may

have been less than our Tech. That means, as unskilled, we rolled better than the skilled guy.

Eventually I fell upon the "General Skill" idea. Abbreviated as Gen. Basically, General Skills are designed, on purpose, for you the GM to use anytime a character wants to do something that it has no skill for and for which a direct attribute roll is too generous. That's why they are called "General Skills" they are skills to be used for general purposes.

General skills are based off of the Core and Science attributes and use a special table on the Tables Sheet. This table basically cuts the attribute die down by a third. This way it is still proportional. A really strong character will have better general strength skill than a really weak character.

In the above example of the transporter, the GM would say, "make a General Tech." And the player would roll their general tech. It is a doubling roll like most others in the game, so even a bad general skill can still succeed at nearly anything.

Again, as GM simply announce "Make a General..." and the player should know what to do. These dice are low enough that it will encourage the player to learn the skills if they use them frequently, but they can still use a large array of realistic skills.

Now, if a player pushes this too far, like, "I want to perform brain surgery." Then you can still use general skills but run the difficulty way up, as this is far past a normal use of a general skill. But hey, if they roll 10,000 let them perform miracles. ☺

**Combat:** General skills are used for unskilled weapons. This will be covered again in the combat rules, but briefly. If a character picks up a spear and isn't skilled at it, he can obviously still throw it and may even hurt the target. So, the quick way to do this is to pick the best general skill for Atk and Dmg. In this case, aim for attack and speed of throwing for damage would make it Gen Dex on the Atk and Gen SB on the Dmg.

If the character is going to use an unskilled weapon long term, they need fully calculate out the Die from R+C, RC to Die (no Lucking) and then run the results through the Die to General table. That is their "real" general skill at the weapon. (It will likely be worse than the Dex/SB general approach).

# Moving and Jumping

**One Square (Sq):** MetaScape is designed to play with a gridded game board and miniatures. Don't worry, Killiam, if you don't have these. I'll present a number of options later on. Most abilities in the game list distances in squares or 1sq for 1 square.

A square is equal to 5 feet in the character's world. So, with typical miniatures, it is about an inch square. If you don't end up playing with a gridded board, you can use a ruler and move one inch per square, or if you prefer pure imagination, then just multiply squares by 5 to get the amount of "imaginary" feet.

## MOVING

**MR:** A character has two Movement Rates or MR. The first in on the MR/Enc table on the Front sheet and is character's unarmored MR. This is the number of squares the character can move per round if wearing no armor.

The second MR is in the larger MR box and it is the armored MR. This is the number of squares the character can move while wearing his/her armor.

**Running:** You will learn a lot more about this later, Killiam, but a character can run, which simply doubles their movement rate.

## JUMPING

Let's learn how to use the jumping table at on the Front sheet. For our sample character, it looks like:

Vertical	SB roll+ 15 = /10 feet
Broad	SB roll+ 18 = /10 sq
Dive	SB roll+ 36 = /10 sq
Long	SB roll+ 21 = feet

Let's see how high our character can jump into the air. The formula in the purple says "Vertical: SB roll + 15 = /10 feet. This means that our vertical jump is a Speed Burst roll plus 15 (as per our info above). A tenth of that answer is the number of feet jumped vertically.

Pretending that our Speed Burst Die is a 6, we would roll D6+15 then take a tenth of that as the feet jumped. Let's say we roll a 4 (on d6) and a 2 (on DD) that would be 8+15 = 23. Taking a tenth we jumped just over 2 feet.

But, if we rolled a 5 (on d6) and an 8 (on DD) it would be 5\*8= 40+15 = 55 which is 5 and a half feet!

Of course, with doubling die you can get insane results like a roll of 1000 would be nearly 100 feet. As GM it is up to you to interpret such a roll. I will often let the character jump the amount rolled. I rule it that the laws of physics are different in the MetaScape game world. But, you could just slide it down to the slightly insane like a 20 foot jump. It's up to you.

All jumps work the same: Speed Burst roll + the indicated buff. This result is then divided by 10 for the first three jumps, but not for long jumps. And the final number is given one of two labels: ft or sq. Be sure to read the label carefully otherwise players might be making 20 sq long jumps easily (rather than 20 feet long jumps). Or 5sq vertical jumps, rather than 5 feet.

Here are the types of jumps:

- Vertical = jump upwards or a vault over
- Broad = a jump forward from a standing position
- Dive = a broad jump but lands prone, not standing.
- Long = a running jump forwards. The best jump for distance.

**AOE:** When an AOE (area of effect, like a grenade) goes off, characters can try to broad jump or dive out of the explosion radius. Typically a long jump doesn't apply unless they were already in the process of running. Although a vertical jump could be used, it is rarely of any use in such situations.

Dive has a greater range than broad jumping, but the character lands prone and there are penalties to this that will be discussed later.

# Meta

Do you feel the power, Killiam? Meta is the universal power of MetaScape. Nearly all Feats and masteries are powered by Meta. Some of the few common rolls not reliant upon Meta are Attributes, General Skills, and weapons and armor "If" no mastery is used.

So a player may use a skilled weapon and roll the Die in the Atk box and the Die in the Dmg box and NOTHING else without spending Meta. But the second a MER or multi attack is used, Meta comes into play. The same goes for armor.

## META BOX USE

Your Meta will be tracked in the Meta Table on your front sheet. There are several notes on the top row that explain how to do this. It may seem a little odd at first, but years of play test have developed this system as the most efficient. Basically

- And open box "[ ]" is empty and has no Meta (Note: this is opposite of Luck Boxes)
- A slash "[/]" indicates the box is available. (Note this is opposite of Luck Boxes)
- To use a Meta box put a back slash through it, making it look like this "[X]".
- An X is a used Meta and is equivalent to an empty meta "[ ]". Neither has any Meta in it.

So, why not erase a Meta box "[/]" to "[ ]" when you use it? Because, that takes a lot longer than just putting a back slash through it, and time matters during game play. Especially since Meta is constantly.

## META REAGAIN ROLL

At the beginning of every round a designated player will call out, "Meta." As a reminder that everyone is to make a Meta Regain roll. This is one of the few rolls that players make with just a DD, no other die. Like magic, the numbers on a DD (1, 2, 4, 8, 16) happen to match the numbers in the colored part of the Meta Table. So, as you might guess, rolling a 2 means an orange Meta is gained.

So, if you notice, nearly half your rolls will be Red (lots of 1s on a DD), then a lot of orange, etc. And only a 1 in 16 chance to get a green or a blue.

When a new Meta is gained this way, simply place a forward slash "[/]" into an empty Meta box of that

color. If there are none, simply start placing slashes to the right of the color.

For example, Let's say that I had 3 Red Meta, (one was used) and I just rolled another Red Meta. My Meta table would look like this:

	Meta	[ ] = have	[X] = used	Normalize: [ ] = min [ ] = max
1	[X]	[/]	[/]	/
2	[/]	[/]	[ ]	
4	[/]	[ ]		
8	[ ]	[ ]		
16	[ ]			

If I gained another Red, Meta, it would then look like this:

	Meta	[ ] = have	[X] = used	Normalize: [ ] = min [ ] = max
1	[X]	[/]	[/]	/
2	[/]	[/]	[ ]	
4	[/]	[ ]		
8	[ ]	[ ]		
16	[ ]			

If I now gained a Yellow and Blue Meta, it would look like this:

	Meta	[ ] = have	[X] = used	Normalize: [ ] = min [ ] = max
1	[X]	[/]	[/]	/
2	[/]	[/]	[ ]	
4	[/]	[ ]		
8	[ ]	[ ]		
16	[/]			

Finally if I used a Yellow and three Red, it would look like this:

	Meta	[ ] = have	[X] = used	Normalize: [ ] = min [ ] = max
1	[X]	[X]	[X]	X /
2	[/]	[/]	[ ]	
4	[X]	[/]		
8	[ ]	[ ]		
16	[/]			

**Outside the Box:** The Meta boxes "[ ]" have no real meaning during play. They are only used during a special phase called "Meta Normalization" below.

**t and ©:** This rule is also on the Rules Sheet. But if a Meta Regain roll results in a tremendous (t), then one Meta of each of the five colors is gained (thus: one R, O, Y, G, and B).

If a critical (©) is rolled, then the DD is rolled again with any t or © treated as a 1 and the all Meta of the color rolled are lost – mark them all off as used. If the player is so lucky as to roll a color that has no Meta, that is fine, nothing further is lost. So if the Meta Regain roll was © then 2 – all Orange Meta would be lost.

## META NORMALIZATION

Once Nish ends (an intense situation) the GM may decide how long it takes for Meta to normalize. There is no specific time. It depends upon the situation, character rest or stress, etc. I typically require 10 to 15 character minutes of non-stressful time before I call for Normalization.

Normalization is a balancing period when the flow of Meta in the universe evens out for a character. Those who used most of their Meta will get some back and those who charged up lots of Meta will have it flow out of them. Like taking a leaky cauldron and placing it half in a river. If it were empty, the water will flow in. If it were full of water, the excess water will flow out.

The little meta boxes “[ ]” are designed solely for normalization. Here’s how it works. Erase any used meta boxes “[X]”.

Now, move all your unused Meta “/” as far left into the boxes as you can.

Any meta “/” not moved inside a box is erased.

And, any box with a dot in it “[.]” but no Meta (no slash) gains Meta.

**Summary:** After normalization, all meta will be stacked to the left in each color. Every box with a dot will have Meta. And no Meta may exist outside of boxes. So, the dots represents filling the cauldron up half full. At the worst, the character will have 3 Red, 2 Orange, and 1 Yellow Meta. But, eliminating all meta outside the boxes represents excess water flowing out of the cauldron. A character cannot have more Meta in a color than Boxes of that Color, after normalization.

## META CHANNELING

Meta Regina rolls are only made during Nish. But some character’s have Meta based abilities that could be used outside of Nish. How do they get their Meta? Simple answer is that they don’t. They must rely upon what stores they have. So really wise players will be sure to leave themselves with extra Meta. Particularly Green and Blue as normalization doesn’t provide these colors.

But there are a few sparks of hope for this type of character.

**Sleep or Rest:** If the characters sleep or rest of a significant time, you may allow another Normalization, even though they already had one after the last Nish situation. Why? Because some characters may have used Meta outside of Nish and there is no way to get it back.

**Meta Channeling:** Also, if a player is desperate, either in or out of Nish. They can try Channeling in an attempt to turn a lesser Meta into a more powerful color.

To Channel Meta, the character opens themselves up to the universe and tries to create a meta Regain Roll. Buying the Channeling Roll costs Meta itself! It costs an entire color. The color chosen by the player must have at least one Meta in it. Once selected, all Meta of that color are erased to buy the single Regain Roll.

Using up an entire Meta color allows an immediate Meta Regain Roll. The result, is not recorded on the Sheet as it must be spent immediately or it is lost. Channeled Meta does not hang around; it is in the character’s grasp, only briefly.

So, note that if the character has no Meta, they can’t channel. And since channeling uses a Meta Color every time, only a few attempts may be made. But a lucky roll may make all the difference.

## META USE

You now to cross out meta when it is used as in “[X]”. So that’s covered.

**Big as Little:** More powerful Meta can always be used in place of a lesser Meta color. So, a Blue Meta can be used as any color. A Green Meta can be used as any color except Blue. A Red Meta can be used as Red only. If this is done, it is at a 1:1 basis. A Blue used to power a Red feat is completely used up.

**No Down Grading:** However, Meta may never be downgraded on the character sheet. A Green Meta may not be recorded as Yellow or Orange or Red. It is “GREEN.” A Blue Meta can’t be turned into two or more Meta of any color. It is “1 Blue” Meta! A more powerful Meta Color and be used as a lesser color, but it can’t be recorded as one, turned into one, or split.

**No Adding:** No combining Meta to make another color. Even 1000 Red Meta doesn’t equal one Orange Meta, etc.

# Abilities

GMs who want players to determine the results of using an ability will commonly ask for a “check” or a “roll.” For example, “Ivan, your Draca, Oshga, needs to make a Strength check to break through the door,” or, “Ivan, your Draca needs to make a Speed Burst roll to catch the falling gemstone.” As you can see “check” and “roll” are used interchangeably.

To make a check or roll, locate the ability’s rating, roll the appropriate dice, and inform your GM of the result. Ties always go to the player. If two players tie, ties go to the defender or, if no defender, to the highest leveled character, and if all else fails, roll a d10 tie breaker.

If the result of a check or roll exceeds the difficulty set by the GM, then the character succeeds. Otherwise, the character fails. The degree of success or failure is determined by the GM based upon how much the result varies from the difficulty. For example, if the GM decides that a particular door is Dif 15 to force open then the following are possible ad-lib effects based upon the player’s Str check:

Result The character...  
 critical ...slips and falls, or takes five points of Dmg  
 5 ...clumsily slams into the door  
 10 ...hits the door with a thud  
 14 ...shoves, the door groans and snaps in protest, but doesn’t open  
 15 ...shoves the door open a few inches  
 20 ...forces the door open with ease  
 30 ...throws the door open with a bang  
 50 ...hurls the door open with such force that a large crack appears across the center  
 100 ...hurls the door open and shatters it upon the wall  
 200 ...physically rips the door from its hinges  
 “t” ...hits the door with such force that the door and part of the wall are taken out

Typically, the most difficult part of making checks is in determining which ability to use. Often, the choice is obvious — if you are attacking with your laser pistol, you need to make an Atk roll using your laser pistol.

However, if you are trying to determine if someone is lying, the choice is less clear. If the character knows a *detect lie* skill, this is the correct choice. Otherwise, should you use General Charisma (i.e., the general skill to deal with people), General Lore (are you smart enough to catch the lie?), General Awareness (did you notice his lips tremble and his palms sweat?), etc. The General Skill and Attributes section of the *class and race* booklet gives guidelines for what Attributes/General

Skills to use under what circumstances. Experience will also make these calls easier.

GMs must typically decide when ability checks should be made and how difficult the checks are. At times, this will be obvious — for example, when a player wants to attack with a weapon, it is obvious that the weapon attack skill must be used versus the opponent’s defense.

Adventures will often inform the GM what ability to use and the difficulty of the check. The common notation reads *ability (Dif)* such as Str (15) — make a strength check at a difficulty of 15. Sometimes the ability won’t be listed, rather the task such as, “The door has a lock (20) built into it.” This means that the lock can be overcome with an appropriate ability check of 20 or more.

# Enhancements

Enhancements are anything that uses Meta and a few more. Basically anything that enhances the normal rolls. The most common enhancements are Feats, Masteries, including weapon and armor mastery elements. This includes any and all MER, multiple attack, etc. MOTC abilities and effects are also enhancements.

These things are NOT enhancements: plain and simple attribute roll, General Skill roll, Atk, Dmg, Def, AR roll, Jumps, natural healing, and any mechanics roll like meta Regain Roll.

Enhancements are being brought up for one reason. Stacking rules.

## STACKING

Stacking is the use of 2 or more enhancements that effect the same die roll or outcome. An example would be using MER on an attack and a multiple attack. Or using a MER and a feat, or two feats, etc.

In MetaScape the rules forbid stacking. The reason for this is simple. There are SO many enhancements (1000s), making it impossible to balance the effects of their combinations. Loop holes, mega powerful combinations, etc. would ruin the fabric of the game.

There is another more direct reason for prohibiting stacking. Stacking would greatly slow down the game as players decided which "combination" of enhancements to use. You will see that it takes some players a lot of time to simply pick one enhancement.

## IN-MASTERY STACKING

The exception is the use of multiple elements of the Same Mastery. Stacking is often allowed as long as they don't magnify or multiple effects. So a mastery that allowed the range of the feat to go from 8 to 12 and the opponents to be effected to go from 1 to 3, could use both elements at once. But if one element improved the number of attacks from 1 to 2 and another improved the number of opponents from 1 to 3, this does not result in two attacks on all three opponents. At best it would provide two attacks on the first opponent and then one attack on the other two. Or, the GM may simply rule it as stacking.

So, elements of the same mastery can stack as long as they don't dramatically enhance each other. This is up to GM discretion.

## WEAPON & ARMOR STACKING

The above in-mastery stacking rule has some very specific cases with weapons. The Multiple attack element cannot stack with the MER option. Either the character concentrates on the attack (MER) or they choose to focus on multiple opponents. Not both.

However, either of those two can stack with Zone elements for range as they don't multiply.

Finally, it is not considered stacking to use and enhancement on both Attack and Damage. These are two separate phases, two separate rolls.

The same goes for Defense and Armor – two separate rolls, so each can be enhanced.

## MULTIPLE ABILITIES

Don't confuse stacking with using multiple abilities. A character could (given the Actions) levitate, shoot a pistol and turn invisible at the same time. These are separate abilities and do not affect the same roll.

This rule is why it Atk and Dmg don't worry about stacking – they are two separate abilities, two separate rolls. Just like Def and AR.

# Difficulties

Most player rolls are made against difficulties such as a bursting open a Door with Strength of 10, a lock of difficulty 12, or an 8 monster.

Difficulties are listed in several ways. Often context is used. A few examples are:

- The door has a lock 12
- Trying to lift the crate will be difficulty 10
- Two orc (8) like beings jump out
- The door (10) is metal bound
- A large ATM (6/16/4) stands guard around the corner

All of these should be self explanatory except for the last one. GUs (aliens, races, ATMs, Vehicles, Ships) can be quickly listed in several ways. These are explained below:

- 10 = difficulty 10 in all ways, including armor, movement rate, vitality, attack, damage, lore, etc.
- 6/12 = the first number is for speed/agility stats and the second is for strength/toughness stats. So it would attack at 6 and do 12 damage, defend at 6 and have 12 armor and Vitality. Strength is a 12, MR 6, Lore (judgment call but 6 by default), etc
- 6/12/4 = First number is speed/agility the second is strength/toughness, and the third is for skills/mentals such as Lore, Will Power, etc.
- 6/12/4 (MR 8, Dmg with kick is 18) = This format allows certain abilities to be pulled out and noted as different from the typical.

Remember, stats are a guideline. If a 16/8 GU is highly agile and adept at dodging, but would be slow at moving, I would use the 8 for Movement instead of the normal first number, or ad-lib a MR on the spot. This goes for all abilities.

A more detailed table for the three number method 6/12/4 follows:

Finesse	Physical	Mental
Atk	Dmg	Luck
Def	AR	Lore
MR	Vit	Cha
Nish	Str	Awa
Dex	FR	WP
SB	Ene	
Finesse Feats	Physical Feats	Mental Feats

For a more detailed discussion of GU stats, please refer to the GM Units booklet.

**PLAGHE:** Often, an adventure can be listed with PLAGHE (pronounced plague) difficulties, so the adventure can be adapted to any group of characters.

PLAGHE	Meaning
P	Poor
L	Low
G	Good
H	High
E	Extreme

So a lock (H) would be a high difficulty for the party, a lock (P) would be very easy. And a party of high level characters H (high) might be 20, but in a low level party an H might be an 8.

With this method you can create an adventure and give things a PLAGHE label, then, when the game starts, you can make a little table for yourself such as P = 2, L = 3, A = 4, G = 6-8, H = 12-14, E = 16-20. These number are appropriate for level 1 to 4 characters. The G = 6-8 notation means 6 or 8.

But the best method of assigning difficulties is to glance at any PLAGHE or numbers listed, then make a snap GM ad-lib call and decide on the difficulties. Decide what they should be based upon your goals for the situation and the player's character mix. After all, MetaScape was designed for extreme ad-lib flexibility, so enjoy it.

# Nish

Man, my players love it when I call Nish!

During much of MetaScape game play, there will be no turns or rounds. Everyone will simply be talking, playing their character's role, verbally acting their part etc. This is the main "Role Playing" part of the game.

But at times, the GM will need to quantify time, control the flow of events, and add in structured play. At these times the GM may call "Nish." Once called, the game instantly shifts modes and will look a lot more like a traditional board game with turns, dice, etc.

Only the GM may call Nish. And the GM may call it for any reason. But, the most common reason will be for combat. Due to the richness of options within combat and the precise rules governing it, combat almost always warrants a Nish call.

## CALLING NISH

When the GM calls "Nish." The game shifts gear and a specific list of events begins. These events will run over and over until the GM says, "We are out of Nish." Each trip through the list of events is called a "Round." Much like a traditional game's turn, except that everyone gets to go. So a round is like a "set" of turns all the way around the table.

- First, all players should roll their character's Nish and announce it out loud. Do not wait to go around the table in order. That is too slow. A Nish roll is like any other Attribute roll - just a standard doubling roll. GM - have a slip of paper ready and write down the player's Nishes as they call them out. An invaluable tip is to record them in a pattern as if the Nish numbers were the players seated at the table - in other words, the numbers are in a pattern so you can easily identify who got which Nish.
- The "Round Tracker" player should record round 1 on their sheet of paper.
- Next the Meta player (see below): should announce "Meta" as a reminder for everyone to make a Meta Regain Roll.
- All players should make a Meta Regain Roll.
- The GM will then announce who has first Nish (the player or Monster with the largest Nish result). After that Player or monster is done, the GM will announce the next Nish. This will continue until all characters and GUs have had a Nish opportunity.

- The GM will then announce "Zero Nish." In case a player has saved actions they wish to use. If so, they will be carried out.
- The GM will then announce "Nish." And round 2 will begin and the cycle starts over.

**Holding Nish:** As a player, when your character's Nish comes up, you can either do something or you can say, "I'm Holding." This means that you are opting to not act now, but reserve the right to jump in at any time. Indeed, if you have held Nish, you can interrupt the flow of events at any time for the rest of the round.

Players often hold Nish to see what others are going to do, to wait for a specific event to occur, or out of indecision.

Once Nish is called again, any held Nish is gone. You can only hold until Nish 0.

One great use of held Nish is for dive attacks or Move-Attack-Move opponents. Imagine a great bird attacking in dives. As a melee character you only have a split second to attack, and unless your Nish matches the opponent, you are out of luck - or so you would think. But, if your Nish is greater than the birds: say you rolled a 20 and the bird is 12. Then you just "hold Nish" and as soon as the bird swoops to attack, you interrupt events with your held Nish and swing your sword at the bird just as it nears.

**Held Actions:** Later you will learn about actions like Move and Attack. If you use only part of your round's actions, the rest are considered held.

**Simultaneous Nish (Simul Nish):** Nish is one of the few rolls that a tie is a tie. The tie doesn't go to player. So if two players and a giant GU snake are have Nishes of 14, then all of them will go at once. This is called "Simul Nish" Since the GM can't really do this, just have everyone involved silently decide on their actions. Then all announce them in rapid succession and play out the events.

For example, more than once I've had a player and monster attack each other on simul Nish. I let the player roll first and he kills my monster. But then I stand the monster up and say, "Now roll Defense because the monster was attacking you on simul Nish." The player then rolls and is also gravely wounded!

## T AND ©

The GM is more than welcome to ad-lib t and © effects of Nish rolls. But since they occur so often (all your players rolling every round). This can bog down the game. So, I assign a player as tremendous/critical player and I have two envelopes labeled "t" and "©"



with cards in them. (Sample cards are supplied in another booklet). The t/c player, as we call him, passes out the envelopes to those who roll a tremendous or critical Nish and they randomly draw a card and follow the instructions. This, then, becomes a totally GM-free solution, which frees the GM up for writing down called out Nishes, deciding on monster and GU Nishes, etc.

## SPEEDING NISH

Because Nish will occupy 30 to 80 percent of your play time and it consists of a repeated cycle of events. Anything you can do to keep it moving along or speed it up will make the game more fun for everyone. Don't become a Nish Nazi, but do keep things moving. Here are some tips:

- The GM impacts Nish speed more than anyone but letting things dip into redundant conversation, or getting side tracked. As GM be sure to announce the next highest Nish as soon as you can, and I typically will tell the player after that that they are "on deck" so they can be thinking about their actions. Such as "Tim, you are up, and Bonnie, you are on Deck"
- Let players call out their Nish rolls at random and just write them down in a pattern.
- Ask players to refrain from any round activities until they have called Nish. Most commonly, they shouldn't roll Meta Regain until you have their Nish.
- Encourage players to have their die in their hands and Meta already marked off when it becomes their Nish (helps if you use the "on deck" method above). You can even reward such players with a free Red Meta or 1 Vit of healing every so often, or even a GM award (see below)
- Encourage players to not do book keeping until their Nish is over. Otherwise, everyone at the table waits while they mark off Meta, flip sheets, etc.

## Actions

Some actions take more time than other. For example, attacking may take more or less time than firing off a healing spell, Drawing out a huge cannon may take longer than pulling out a dagger. To govern all this, I've created Actions.

During each round, everything from characters to GUs to opponents will have a set number of actions they

can perform on or after their Nish. The types of actions are:

- F = Full Action
- A = Attack Action
- M = Move Action
- P = Partial Action
- I = Incidental Action

Every Feat will list the type of action it takes. It will be the first entry in the [Act,Dur,Rng] @R part of the feat. This is recorded on your Feats Sheet under "Act/Dur/Rng".

In any particular round, only a certain number and type of actions may be performed. The default or "normal" rules for actions follow.

**Move and Attack Actions:** Each round, a character will get a Move and an Attack action. So they get 1 Move and 1 Attack action per round. Most events use either a Move or an Attack action. Move and Attack actions are sometimes called "Major Actions."

An attack action can also be used as a second Move action. So anything a Move action can do, an Attack action can do. But the reverse is not true. Move actions cannot function as an Attack action.

Do not let their names fool you. Attack actions are often used for non-attack events, even healing. And Move actions can be used for many things, even certain attacks.

**Move (M):** A Move action is most commonly used to move. A move action may be used to move your character any amount up to your MR rate. But, Move actions are also used for all sorts of feats and other things.

**Attack (A):** As you might guess, the most frequent use of an Attack action is to make an attack with any weapon. It takes one attack action to fire the forward guns of a star ship, swing a mighty hammer, shoot a laser canon, throw a grenade, fire a pistol, and puff out a blow dart. All attacks take one and only one Attack action. (Where's the balance, you ask - in the mastery multiple attack rules, draw rules, Maint rules, cost, ETax, etc.).

**Full (F):** A full action uses the entire round's actions. If a character performs something that uses a Full action, the character may do nothing else that round.

**Incidental (I):** Incidental actions are free. Any number of them may be performed in a round, unless the GM decides it is becoming unrealistic. For example, a face change (turning your character) is incidental. But if a player wanted to spin 10 times, I would make it cost a Move action. Incidental actions do not use up or hinder the use of Move or Attack actions.

**Partial (P):** Partial actions are identical to Incidental actions, except that only one may be performed for free.

The next Partial Action would use up a Move Action, and a Third would use up the Attack action.

**Summary:** Each round a character has an Attack and a Move action. Attack actions can do anything a Move action can do. A Full action takes up the character's entire round. Incidental actions are free and unlimited. The first Partial action is free, then 2<sup>nd</sup> uses up a Move action, and the third uses up an Attack action.

Here are a number of events and the actions that they take up:

Full:

- Running

Attack:

- Any Move action may also performed as an attack action
- Weapon attack
- Using most offensive Feats
- Perform a detailed search (get an Awareness Roll)

Move Action:

- Movement
- Stand from Prone
- Retrieve Item from backpack or bag
- Voluntary use of Awareness
- Drink
- Pick up and store an item
- Slap Pack

Partial:

- Unlock and open a door with a key
- Retrieve item from belt pouch or purse
- Open a Door
- Conversation

Incidental

- Turn around
- Drop something
- Defense/Armor Roll
- AOE dive or broad jump
- Flip switches
- Look around (no Awareness roll)
- Make a comment

Each Initiative a character may perform the following combinations of actions. A character may always perform fewer actions than listed, but never more:

- One full action
- One attack and one move action

- Any REASONABLE number of incidental actions may be combined with any of the above
- Partial actions are just like Incidental except that only one partial may be performed without using a Move or Attack action to do it.

**Speaking:** Because of the roleplaying aspect, speech is governed under more flexible rules. In general, allow players to speak for their characters a little longer than would be realistic. The main guideline is to balance the amount of time you spend on each player. If a player takes a lot of time to say a few words, then that is all that character can accomplish that round. On the other hand, fast and succinct players may get to say twice as much or perform an attack action along with speech. You must also balance the importance of what is being said. Allow more time for creative or important speech.

Players will also get caught up in the game and want to discuss plans, make comments, etc. among themselves. Generally, allow this as long as you and the player with Initiative can carry on an easy conversation. However, you should always encourage good roleplaying. In other words, if characters are in separate rooms, be sure that there is a way for them to communicate. If not, ask the players not to discuss game-relevant ideas with each other.

Once your group gets the hang of roleplaying, pay a lot of attention to their conversations, and run the game accordingly. If characters are trying to be quiet, for example, actually have your players whisper.

**Facing:** Players may always adjust the facing of their characters at any time after their Nish. They don't even need to ask you about this. However, during GU Initiative, this is no longer the case. Only allow a player to alter a character's facing if it would make sense.

If, for example, an alien tries to maneuver around the side of a character for a back attack, allow a player to adjust his or her miniature if the character would notice the alien and if the character could actually make the facing change. If an alien stepped through a doorway behind the character, it is unlikely that the character would change facing until after the alien attacked (unless the door made a lot of noise).

**Duration:** In general effects which last for one round last until the end of the next round. Likewise, effects which last two or more rounds last until the end of those rounds.

GM: the above rules are not hard and fast. They are guidelines designed to create fun, balanced game play. Try to balance the time an action would take and the game impact of an action.

# Vitality

Vitality, the flow of life. Other games call it health, hit points, life force, in MetaScape it is Vitality. Vitality is a measure of survivability and life. There is a special table on the Front sheet for tracking Vitality. Our example character's vitality table looks like:

Vitality	Max	Current	Fresh	d4	Old	d2	Critical	1
	8	8						

## BLEEDING, UNCONSCIOUSNESS, DEATH

Characters are fine while their current Vitality remains positive. Once at zero or lower, special rolls are required as follows:

0 or worse: Bleeding occurs

-1 or worse: Unconscious checks must be made

-10 or worse: Death checks must be made

There is a table in the bottom right of the Front sheet that lists the checks for Death, Bleeding, and Unconsciousness, in the order they should be rolled. The table also, explains how to make each of these checks.

## AP

The first Death check of a situation give the character a free Unused AP. This rule doesn't apply again until the character goes an entire round without making a Death Check.

## Bleeding

When a character is at 0 or worse Vitality, bleeding occurs. The player must subtract 1 from their character's current vitality every round on their initiative until the character is dead, medical attention is provided, or a stop bleeding check succeeds. A stop bleeding roll is a Fortitude check versus 5 times the negative Vitality. Thus at -3 the difficulty is 15, at -11 it is 55.

Bleeding only occurs if the Stop Bleeding check fails. At Vit 0, the difficulty is still 5.

## Unconscious Checks

When a character is at -1 vitality or worse, an unconscious check must be made each round on the character's initiative. The check is a Will Power roll versus a difficulty of 5 times the negative Vitality.

For example, a conscious character at -4 would have to beat a 20 (5x4) or fall unconscious.

An unconscious check must be rolled immediately upon receiving damage that takes the character's Vitality into the negatives. A check must also be made immediately any time the character receives further damage while their Vitality is negative. Finally, while the character's Vitality remains negative, unconscious checks must be made every round on the character's initiative.

Unconscious checks stop once the character dies, is healed back to zero Vitality or higher, or the player makes a successful double check (two times the difficulty).

## Death Checks

When a character is at -10 Vitality or worse, a death check must be made each round on the character's initiative. The check is a Fortitude check and the difficulty is the negative Vitality. For example at -10 Vitality, the difficulty is 10, at -12 it is 12, at -20 it is 20, etc. Failure results in death of the character.

A death check must be rolled immediately upon receiving damage that takes the character's Vitality to -10 or worse (but see the mega-damage and death rules below). A check must also be made immediately any time the character receives further damage while their Vitality is -10 or worse. Finally, while the character's Vitality remains at -10 or worse, a death check must be made every round on the character's initiative.

Death checks stop once the character dies or is healed back to -9 or better.

Death checks must be made before any other initiative actions.

## MEGA-DEATH STOP

To provide for suspense, game balance, and to portray characters as heroes, this rule helps safeguard characters against mega damage and sudden death results.

Whenever the game rules result in a lot of damage which would place the character's Vitality at -11 or worse, or a game effect calls for the character's death (such as a failed death poison roll). The GM may opt to enact this rule.

The rule is simple: instead of instant death, the character's current Vitality is placed at -10, and an immediate death check (see above) is rolled.

I recommend using the Mega-Death Stop rule almost always. Anytime damage would take the character into -10 or below for the first time, I stop the

damage at -10. But, any further damage is recorded normally.

## NON-CHARACTER VITALITY

Only player characters have wound categories (Fresh, Old, Critical) and live if their Vitality drops to 0 or smaller. All other beings and items are killed/destroyed when their Vitality reaches 0 or below, and they simply have "wounds" not Fresh, Old, or Critical.

## CRIT BOXES

Some special opponents may have Crit boxes. A Crit box is a measure of extreme toughness and durability. When a being with a crit box takes enough damage to "kill" it, it instead burns a crit box and is otherwise fully functional. Statistically it is as if the creature were completely healed. In game play, perhaps the creature looks "severely" wounded or is "half dead."

Crit boxes are used on monsters that cannot die in one hit no matter how powerful the attack. Some opponents could have more than one crit box. A huge mother slug might have no defense, no armor, only one Vitality, but 100 crit boxes. This means that it would take 100 attacks to kill it.

## Healing

**Max Vitality:** Max Vitality is copied directly from the Vitality Die in the Combat Attributes. This number is never changed unless the Vitality Die changes. It is the Maximum amount that Current Vitality may be without unusual events such as feats.

**Current Vitality:** Is the character's actual Vitality. Unwounded, Current Vitality will match the Max Vitality. But as wounds pile up Current Vitality goes down. Current Vitality equals Max Vit minus all wounds (Fresh, Old and Critical). So, a character with 8 Max Vit and 3 Fresh Wounds and 1 Critical wound would have a current vitality of 4 (8 -3-1).

**Wounds:** MetaScape has three categories of wounds, Fresh, Old, and Critical.

Vitality	Max	Current	Fresh	d4	Old	d2	Critical	1
	8	8						

Typically wounds start out as Fresh. Anytime Fresh wounds are healed, the remainder move to Old. Anytime Old wounds are healed, the remainder move to critical. Certain extreme types of damage will be

recorded directly as Old or even Critical wounds, skipping the normal sequence of Fresh to Old to Critical.

The main difference between these three categories is that critical wounds are VERY hard to heal, while Old are hard to heal and Fresh are easy to heal. All healing skills and items can heal Fresh wounds. Only some can heal Old wounds, and very few can heal Critical wounds.

So 6 Fresh wounds receive a slap pack which heals 2. The remaining 4 wounds are slid to Old. If a medic heals the Old wounds and rolls a 3, the remaining 1 slide to Critical wounds.

**Healing:** There are many ways that wounds (lowered Vitality) can be healed: natural healing, regeneration, slap packs, feats, first aid, herbs, etc.

When a character receives healing, the appropriate Fresh, Old, and/or Critical wounds are healed and the reminder slide one category worse. The Current wounds should then improve by the healed amount.

Healing cannot heal more wounds than are present. If 6 Fresh wounds exist and a slap pack is used and rolls 20, only the 6 Fresh wounds are healed.

## REGENERATION

Most regeneration healing and some other do not slide remaining wounds to a worse category. For example a character with 6 Fresh wounds who regenerates 2 Fresh wounds, would have 4 Fresh wounds left.

## NATURAL HEALING

Natural healing results from rest and time. One advantage is that natural healing does not move wounds to worse categories. This is because natural healing is the body's own form of regeneration.

Natural healing occurs after every 2 hours of uninterrupted rest/sleep. If the character does more than get a quick drink, the "uninterrupted" sleep/rest time must start at zero.

Every 2 hours of uninterrupted rest/sleep the character will heal wounds. The player must choose the wound category that is healed: Fresh, Old, or Critical. Only one category may be healed per 2 hour period. A traditional die is rolled and that amount of wounds is healed in that category - no spill over.

The natural healing roll is listed on the Front Sheet inside of each type of Wound box. They are:

### Type - Healing Roll

Critical - d1

Old - d2

Fresh - d4

So in an 8 hour night's rest, the player could roll two Fresh, one old and one critical healings. Or four critical, etc. Eight hours will allow 4 natural healing rolls and the player may choose the type of wounds healed with each roll.

# Combat

Killiam, now that you understand Nish, Actions, and Vitality, it's time to delve into the exciting and dangerous realm of Personal Combat. This section applies directly to personal combat, although much of it will apply to vehicle and ship combat which will be covered later.

Personal combat occurs when a character directly fights a foe. This is the most common and detailed type of combat and will be examined first. Later in this section, Vehicle and Ship combat will be examined. But, for now, read on and fight well!

**Shock:** Now you must make a GM judgment call: from the characters' point of view, is the encounter scary, startling, unexpected, or would it in any other way create a possible state of shock – on either side? If so, you need to invoke shock rules.

Shock is a WP roll versus GM difficulty. Failure means Nish is 0. So if five players rolled for shock and two failed, those two would have that round's Nish changed to 0.

Unless some new, startling event occurs, shock only applies to the very first round of combat. But, if a new and significant opponent burst through a wall during combat, shock rules may be invoked again. It is also possible for some players to have to make a Shock roll and others don't. It's all up to GM interpretation of the situation.

If the GM controlled units are at risk of Shock, the players should roll a Shock die as set by the GM. If the roll beats the GMs units' WP, then they are shocked and have Nish 0. The Shock die used by the players can be GM ad-lib such as D12. But I often select the single character that was most "scary" to my side and pick the aspect of them that would startle my units: Str for big characters, a weapon Dmg if they are holding a huge nasty weapon, etc.

**Opponent Mood:** It is now time to roleplay. You, the GM, need to determine the general mood and intent of encountered GUs. Often, this will be evident: hungry alien monsters will usually attack to kill, outnumbered guards will fall back in good order, shooting as they do so, guard droids will stand at attention unless approached, etc.

At times, the proper response is not evident. These are the times which you get to set the initial mood of the encounter. Be creative – don't always have enemies attack and allies come forward with open arms. Enemies may pose as friends, demand bribe money, attempt to learn the group's strengths and weaknesses, etc.

Likewise, allies may, at first, distrust the group, appear staunch and serious, be in a bad mood, etc.

Once the mood is determined, you need to figure out the GU's intentions: are they looking for a fight, do they need money or equipment, will they fight until all are killed, will they run at the first sight of blood, or are they trying to sell items for everything they can get? Again, be creative and logical. Not all enemies will fight until only they or the characters are left alive. This becomes **boring!**

One very important piece of advice: remember that moods and intentions change. With sufficient reason, enemies may become friends and friends enemies.

## LINE OF SITE

**Line of Sight:** An attack must have line of sight. This means the opponent can be seen. If the opponent is behind a wall or tank, attacking is not normally and option. However, an opponent behind a thin screen can be attacked with most bigger weapons as the screen is no real protection. The GM may increase the opponent's Defense rating due to the screen's visual cover.

## RANGE

All weapons have a minimum and maximum range in squares such as 0/1 or 3/10. The numbers are the weapon's sweet spot – no penalty. This range is known as Zone 1 or Z<sub>n</sub>1.

**0 Range:** Range 0 applies anytime the opponent is in the same square as the character such as wrestling, being held, some mind spider attached to the back of your head, a python wrapped around you, etc. It also applies when trying to cut out of loose bonds, a coffin, the inside of a monster's throat, etc. If the character is tightly held or bound, even a Range 0 weapon is useless. The character must then make a Str check to break free.

**Zones:** Zone 1 attacks (within the listed min/max square limit) are made without penalty. The GM will use the opponent's normal Defense or Difficulty. Attacks made closer than the weapon's minimum range are attacking into Zone 0. (Note: weapons with a min range of 0, do not have a Zone 0, as you can't get closer than 0).

Zone 2 doubles the weapon's Max range, Zone 3 triples is, etc.. So a range 3/10 weapon's Zone 2 would be 11 to 20. Zone 3 would be 21 to 30, etc. A weapon with range 2/8 would have a Zone 2 of 9-16, Zone 3 of 17 to 24, etc.

Melee weapons will not have a Zone 2 or higher, as the weapon is held. It cannot reach farther. Hurlled and Ranged weapons will have Zones 2 and beyond. For

these weapons, there is no limit to the zones. A really great roll could let a bullet fly for hundreds of miles, or a spear be tossed across seas. It is possible – not probable.

Players only need to worry about which Zone they are attacking into. If it is Zone 1, nothing need be said. If it is any other zone, they must inform the GM of the zone.

The mechanics of Zones (thus range) is left up to the GM. The Zone and the type of weapon will cause the GM ran target's Defense Difficulty to increase as follows:  
Zone 0

- Difficulty for all weapons is x2

Zone 2

- Melee – not possible
- Hurled – Difficulty is x2
- Ranged – Difficulty is x2

Zone 3

- Hurlled – Difficulty doubles again or x4
- Ranged – Difficulty is x3

Zone 4

- Hurlled – Difficulty doubles again or x8
- Ranged – Difficulty is x4

And the pattern continues. Ranged difficulties are multiplied by the Zone from 2 on. Hurlled difficulties double at each zone from 2 on. Melee can't attack into Zone 2 and on.

Zones only effect attack/Defense they have no impact upon Damage.

## ATTACK AND DAMAGE (ATK & DMG)

In MetaScape all combat rolls are made by the player. So when the player's character attacks, the player will roll and Attack and Damage roll. But, if the player is being attacked (the GM is attacking) the player will roll the character's Defense and Armor. So, all explanations below are from the player's point of view.

Attacking an opponent is a two step event. First a roll is made to see if the opponent is hit. "Hit" is the term for a successful attack. If the character hits, a second roll is made to see how much, if any, damage results.

## CHARACTER ATTACK

**Valid Target:** The opponent must be a valid target. This includes line of site, in the same dimension or plane of existence, etc.

**Nish and Actions:** First, the character must have Nish and have an Attack Action remaining this round. The player then determines which weapon their

character is using. If the weapon is drawn or swapped for another, the character must have the action available to cover the highest "Draw" action listed on the involved weapon(s). The Draw action is listed on their Front Sheet. So, a Weapon that has an A (Attack) Draw action can't be drawn or swapped and used to attack in the same Nish as this would require two Attack Actions.

**Swapping Weapons:** Swapping weapons uses the worst Draw action of the two weapons to perform.

**Attack Roll:** If all is a "go," then the player rolls the character's Attack Die for the appropriate weapon and announces the result to the GM. If the attack is into any Zone besides 1, the Zone must be announced at the same time. So the player might say "18 Attack" or "18 Attack into Zone 2."

The GM will then modify the target's Defense difficulty by the appropriate Zone amount and check to see if the player's roll equaled or beat the Defense (a hit) or failed. The GM will call out "Hit" or "Miss."

With a Miss, the attack ends. But if a Hit is scored, the player will Roll the weapon's damage Die and call out the result (No Zone information). So a player may say "12 Damage." The GM will then compare the damage to the target's armor. Armor ties always go to the defender, even GM defender. If the character's damage is greater than the armor, wounding damage will occur. If it is equal to or less than the armor, the attack has been absorbed by armor – no damage. If there is wounding damage the GM will say, "10 Points of Damage." Or whatever the number is. Otherwise the GM will say, "No Damage."

**Wounding Damage:** Damage is the full Damage roll made by a weapon. Wounding damage is the amount of damage rolled above the target's armor value. So Damage of 12 versus armor of 7 results in 5 wounding damage.

**Characters:** Wounding damage is subtracted from the character's current Vitality The wounding damage amount is then added to Fresh wounds. If Fresh wounds already exist, the new total is written into Fresh wounds.

**Non-Characters:** All others simply have their current vitality reduced by the wounding damage. In board play, the GM will announce the damage and a player known as the "bleeder" will add the amount to any existing damage and then write the total next to the wounded miniature. Note, these are "wounds" not current vitality. This keeps the opponent's actual Vitality Max secret and uses addition, which is faster than subtraction.

## CHARACTER DEFENSE

When anything but another character, attacks a character, it becomes character Defense. Since players make all the die roll, when a GM attacks a character he says, "Defend Yourself."

The player will roll the character's Defense Die and announce it like "8 Defense". If the player's roll equals or beats the GM's attack difficulty, the GM will say, "You dodged." If the player's roll was below the GM's attack, the player will say "Your Hit, roll armor."

If hit, the player will then roll their AR Die and announced the roll, "12 armor." If character's AR roll was equal to or greater than the opponent's Damage, then no wounding damage occurs and the GM will say "No Damage." If the character's armor roll was below the GM's damage, the GM will calculate the difference and say, "You take 4 points of Damage."

If wounding damage is taken, the player will add it to Fresh wounds and reduce their Current Vitality appropriately.

## ENHANCEMENTS

Of course, many attack and defense sequences are far more rich. The player may be using feats to modify the attack or masteries. The player may buy up the Atk and/or Dmg die with MER, or buy multiple attacks, etc. (But no Stacking).

## MULTIPLE ATTACKS

Use the rules below when multiple attacks are made from the same source such as: a character swinging a sword twice, firing a gun twice, a dual cannon (i.e., two separate beams of energy), a quad cannon (four beams of energy), multiple missiles (i.e., a 5 battery salvo), etc. Note: such multiple attacks are not normally allowed. Only certain items or enhancements allow a character to make multiple attacks.

When made, a player should only make **one** attack roll. All attacks either hit or miss. If the attacks hit, the player makes only **one** damage roll. If the single roll is not sufficient to penetrate armor then all attacks have been stopped by the armor. If the roll exceeds armor, calculate out the wounding damage once for each attack. For example, if five missiles are shot at a target and hit, then all five have hit. If the damage result is 12 and the armor is 10 then each missile has caused 2 points of wounding damage for a total of 10. As you may have noticed, a short cut is to simply make the attack and damage rolls as if one weapon were being used,

calculate damage normally, then multiple all *wounding* damage by the number of attacks.

## SHOOTING INTO MELEE

Firing a spell, ranged, or hurled weapon into melee is dangerous. Although the miniatures on the board are static - not moving, actually the two combatants are dancing around, dodging, etc. Targeting a foe and missing your ally can be very difficult. If the attack fails a d6 is rolled 1-3 hits the friendly participant in the melee. (A new Atk roll is made versus the friendly). The same rules apply to shooting past a friendly target in a narrow hallway, etc.

## BREAKING MELEE

If your character is in Melee combat and leaves his opponent (runs to an ally's aide, runs away, switches to another opponent that requires movement, etc.), it is called "breaking melee." Basically you were locked in mortal combat then just walked away. The results of breaking melee is an immediate free (free meaning an extra attack action) attack on the breaking opponent. The exception has to do with Nish. If you have Nish AND your opponent doesn't (you can react and he can't) you may break melee without suffering a free attack. Note, free attacks are made in haste and are a free action. As such, no enhancements may be used on the attack. It is a simple, fast, basic attack and may only be made with the weapon in hand.

Breaking melee applies to GUs, monsters, and character's alike.

## MOVE ATTACK MOVE

A character or GU can move part of their MR, then later that same round, move more. This may continue as long as the total squares doesn't exceed their MR. However, as soon as an attack action of any kind is used, Movement has ended. Thus, it is not possible to Move, attack, then move again without a special ability.

But, if the attack occurs first, the player may then move at that time or any later time that round.

Also, moving 1 square uses up a move action. It is gone and can't be used for anything else. The character can move more as above, but the action is gone.



## PLAYER VERSUS PLAYER

This was covered in the Die section of the Read First! Character Creation and Advancement. But for completeness here it is again.

When two players roll against each other (an unwilling result). Both rolls are made non-doubled. So if Character A attacks Character B and A has Atk die 8 (normally D8) and B has attack Def Die 10 (normally D10). The players would roll a d8 for A and a d10 for B and compare results. The same for damage rolls.

## STANDARD COMBAT MODIFIERS

Following are common combat modifiers. They can be Ad-Libbed as needed, but they should be fairly solid.

- Defending a melee or other close attack: Player roll is at  $\frac{1}{2}$  or Diff is x2
- Defending versus back attack or unexpected (not unknown) attack: Player roll is at  $\frac{1}{2}$  or Diff is x2
- Defense versus totally unknown opponent, such as invisible. Player roll at 1/10 or Dif at x10
- Making a melee attack from prone or awkward ranged attack from prone: Player roll is at  $\frac{1}{2}$  or Diff is x2
- Attacking or defending from a rope or other awkward position: Player roll is  $\frac{1}{2}$  or Diff is x2
- Target is behind good cover, or smoke obscured, or hard to see (75 to 90% cover): Player roll is  $\frac{1}{2}$  or Diff is x2
- Using a weapon port: Def is x5

## UNSKILLED COMBAT

If a character uses an unskilled weapon, then General Skills can be used. The common weapon to general skill conversion is:

Weapon	Atk	Dmg
Melee	Gen SB	Gen Str
Hurled	Gen Dex	Gen SB
Ranged	Gen Dex	Gen Dex

If the unskilled weapon will be used from more than a short term, then the weapon should be recorded on the sheet and marked as UNSKILLED. Then the R+C, RC, and Die calculated. And the die should be ran through the Die to General table on the Table's Sheet. The result is the correct, long term Atk and Damage.

The same goes for unskilled armor use. Typical General Skills are

Armor	Def	AR
Natural	Gen SB	Gen FR
Light Armor	Gen SB	Gen FR
Heavy Armor	Gen Str	Gen Str

## AD-LIB

Any time a player comes up with a good idea or point about attacking or defending, you must make a decision as to what modifier, if any, you will give the player. Be liberal with adjustments of Difficulty – they make the game come alive as players try to think of something to give them an edge.

There are hundreds of other modifiers. A warrior jumping from a height with a melee weapon will receive a penalty to Atk and a bonus to Dmg. A character fighting in knee-deep water will suffer a Def penalty. Firing from the back of a running horse will reduce the attack roll. As in every other aspect of the MetaScape Game, the GM is the final arbiter of all such considerations.

## INJECT ROLEPLAYING

For the sake of teaching the concepts, I used some pretty bland examples above. But combat can be ripe with good roleplaying.

Players should try roleplaying their attack rolls. When you attack or defend, breathe life into the combat by making up a narrative based on the die results. If you roll poorly you might say, "Stumbling forward, I barely manage a feint with my *Sorce-saber*." If you roll well, you might exclaim, "And with another mighty swing I catch the Horak full in the chest!"

*Will's Calemora dragon, Urgoth, is attacking a Horak (Def 15) with his kray (Atk 16). Will rolls D16 for the attack, and the result is 18, or two greater than the Horak's Def. The mighty Urgoth managed to hit the Horak, if only by the thinnest of margins.*

Or...

*Donna's Zin-Shee Krrmyrra, is attacked by a berserk kurg with a laser pistol (attack rating 10). Krrmyrra's Def is 16. Donna rolls D16, but rolls badly, scoring only a 4. The unfortunate Krrmyrra has been hit by a mere Kurg. What humiliation!*

Or..

*Hugh's Destron has hit a Kurg (probably the one which hit Krymrra in the previous example) with his turbo-plaz (Dmg 20). Hugh rolls a 40, inflicting that amount of damage on the Kurg. That will teach him!*

Or...

*Theresa's Draca, Hur'akkimm (AR 12), has been hit by a pirate for 20 points of damage. She rolls D12 AR, with a result of 16. The cyber-lord's armor has stopped 16 points of damage, but four have penetrated. Hur'akkimm is therefore considered to have taken four points of "wounding damage." He is still standing, however, and the offending pirate had better start saying his prayers as Hur'akkimm levels his scythe cannon at him and prepares to fire!*

# Vehicle Combat

Most aspects of vehicle combat are identical to personal combat: all players still roll individual Initiative for their characters, rounds progress the same, action rules are the same, etc. The main difference is that the characters have different choices: firing vehicle guns, driving, using vehicle systems (scanners, sensors, computers, transporters, etc.), and more. These and other details are explained below.

**Miniature Use:** If the vehicle is relatively stationary during the combat keep the board at personal scale (one square equaling five feet). To represent a vehicle, use a miniboard or take a sheet of paper and draw the vehicle out in personal scale. Then place the paper on the game board. Miniatures can then be placed inside or outside of the vehicle, and the vehicle (sheet of paper or miniboard) can be moved around.

If the vehicle is mobile, zoom out to Vehicle scale (one square = 50 feet). The vehicle is represented on the board with a vehicle miniature or chit. A Personal scale drawing of the vehicle is placed to the side of the board. Character miniatures can then interact among themselves on the paper drawing.

## Vehicle Actions

During vehicle combat, characters roll normal Initiative. Just like personal combat, there are Full, Attack, Move, Partial and Incidental actions. The vehicle therefore moves when someone with the appropriate skill uses a move action to "drive" it forward. Note that most vehicle systems may only be used once a round even if multiple individuals know how to operate them. For example, a ship turret may only fire once per round, if character "A" fires it, character "B" can't also fire it that round. The same goes for driving, scanners, etc. Of course, some vehicles will have dual or redundant systems, in which case multiple uses exist.

## Hull Points

Vehicles have hull points (HP) in place of vitality. Hull points serve the same purpose as vitality but the rules for damage of 0 or less are different. First, vehicles never die, they can only be destroyed.

Note that vehicle damage and hull points are of the Vehicle type (10 times Personal type). A Personal type weapon would have to inflict ten points of damage to cause 1 point of Vehicle type damage. All Personal hits upon a vehicle which inflict less than ten points are ignored, as is any fraction of ten. A hit from a Turbo-Plaz which inflicts 64 points of damage on a vehicle would therefore only be considered to have inflicted six Vehicle points of damage.

And, of course, damage must first get through the vehicle's armor before it becomes wounding damage.

## Critical Damage

Several of the critical damage rules below require characters to roll vs a difficulty equal to the amount of critical damage which a vehicle has taken. Except where noted, the difficulty is equal to the number of *Vehicle points* which the vehicle has taken (NOT Personal points). If a vehicle has taken five points of Vehicle type damage, all rolls are made against a Dif of five (NOT 50!).

**GU Vehicles:** GMs should almost never take the time to make all the critical rolls described below for GU vehicles. If a GU's vehicle suffers critical damage, ad-lib the effects as you desire. For example, if the characters wish to board the vehicle, assume the vehicle has been crippled; if the characters have no interest in capturing it, you may rule that it has been destroyed.

**Character Vehicles:** When critical damage occurs, several checks must be made.

**Hull Breach:** If hull breach is important (e.g., the vehicle is under water, in a toxic atmosphere, etc.), the applicable character (engineer type if available), needs to make an armor check combined with any *repair hull*. The difficulty is equal to five times the amount of critical damage. If the roll fails, the hull has been breached, and atmospheric problems may follow.

This check need not be rolled every round, just once. However, anytime an armor check is made another hull breach check must be made so long as critical damage exists.

**System Failure:** Any time a hull breach roll is required, a system failure check is also required. This check is made with one character's *damage control* skill. The difficulty is equal to the amount of critical damage times five.

In addition to the above system failure check, "cascade failure" also occurs. This means that every round after a system fails, another system failure check **must** follow. This continues round after round until a successful check results.

The GM can ad-lib system failures based upon where the damage occurred, or the following tables may be consulted. Roll 1d10 on the following chart. If you roll a system which has already been destroyed, then nothing happens. If you roll a system which does not exist, roll again.

## Table 9: Vehicle Systems

### Die Roll System

- 1 Central Computer
- 2 Engine

- 3 Life Support
- 4 Scanners/Sensors
- 5 Station (Comm, Ast, etc.)
- 6 Weapon System
- 7 Shields
- 8 Turret
- 9-10 Other/Minor System  
(GM's choice)

When a system fails damage may result to any character using the system..

*Team Phoenix's Halberd-class transport (HP 24) has been hit for 32 points of damage., and an armor check (D16) stops only 2 points. Six points of critical damage has been scored against the Halberd.*

*Sherri's Zin-Shee, Hurr'ak, has the engineer. Sherri's roll is a 12 (far short of  $6 \times 5 = 30$ ), so system failure has occurred, and the GM now rolls to determine what system fails. The roll is an 8 – the transport's turret has malfunctioned!*

### Repairs

*Repair hull* simply restores destroyed HP. This alone has no effect upon any damaged systems. Systems must be repaired individually, using an appropriate skill.

**System Bonuses:** Like other equipment, vehicle systems are often of various qualities. Some are average and some are advanced. This is indicated as RC+ or RCBs. For example, a very fast vehicle may have a RCB12 to driving rolls. A vehicle's main gun may have an advanced targeting system that provides RC+10 to all shots made with it. System buffs make a vehicle really come alive for the players.

**Combat between Types:** When a personal weapon is used against a Vehicle class target, their roll is  $\times 10$  because of the ease of hitting a vehicle. And when a vehicle attacks a personal class target the attack is divided by 10. Besides the "pseudo realism" this also helps personal class units from being obliterated by vehicle class. Damage is rolled normally. This extends to Ship class and beyond.

So a Ship class craft attacking a vehicle class has to divide its roll by 10 and a ship class attacking a personal class has to divide it by 100. And in reverse attack a ship with a vehicle is  $\times 10$  and attacking a ship with personal (if in range) is  $\times 100$  (ship classed craft is pretty big – awfully hard to miss with personal weapons).

## MANEUVERS

Any non-linear movement (e.g., a turn) is considered a maneuver.

Individuals (characters, GUs, and most automatons) can maneuver freely. In other words they can make any number of turns without movement penalty.

Vehicles can only maneuver by exchanging squares of movement for the maneuver as per table 16.

**Table 16: Vehicle Maneuvers**

### Pts Maneuver

- 1 Move 1 square forward
- 2 Move 1 square backward
- 2 Turn 45°
- 4 Turn 90°
- 8 Turn 135°
- 16 Turn 180°

# Ship Combat

Ship combat is run very much like vehicle combat — players still roll individual Initiative, rounds progress, actions are the same, etc. Miniature rules are slightly different as described below.

**Vehicle Class ships:** Note that smaller ships like fighters or 1 to 5 man craft, may be of vehicle class, even though they are space ships. Likewise, huge vehicles can be of ship class.

**Miniature Use:** When the adventure is taking place within a starship, draw out all encounter areas in Personal scale.

During ship to ship combat, you will probably have to divide your board into two areas as in vehicle combat. One area should use tactical Ship scale (one square equals one mile), while the other uses Personal scale (one square equal five feet). The Personal board is used to draw pertinent sections of the PC's ship, such as the bridge and turrets. The other board area is used for placing ship miniatures (or chits) to indicate movement and location.

## Ship Actions

Ship actions function just like vehicle actions.

## Hull Points

Like vehicles, ships use hull points in place of Vitality. Ship class HPs are of Ship type (100x Personal, 10x vehicle), so any hits against ships which inflict less than 100 points of Personal type damage, or any fraction thereof, are ignored. Damage against a ship which totals 335 Personal points would therefore inflict only three points of Ship damage.

## Critical Damage

**GU:** If a GU ship takes critical damage, the rule is similar to that for GU vehicles. Generally, the GM will consider such a vessel destroyed, unless special circumstances exist (such as the PCs wishing to board and capture the vessel).

**Character:** Character ships make checks in the same manner as vehicles when they are hit.

When rolls are to be made vs critical damage, use the amount of Ship type damage, don't convert to Personal type. Thus, if one point of critical damage has been suffered the Dif would be 1 NOT 100.

**Hull Breaches and Depressurization:** Hull breaches are critically important in the vacuum of space. To check

for hull breach, an armor check (without shields) vs critical damage x5 must be made combined (cat) with *repair hull* skill.

If this roll fails, a hull breach occurs. The specific area can be chosen by the GM, or randomly rolled. A hull breach check must only be rolled when critical damage first occurs, and anytime an armor check is made while critical damage exists.

If hull breach occurs, the area will immediately begin to depressurize as air rushes into space. The amount of time this takes is up to the GM — large areas will take more time, but a large amount of damage (i.e., a low breach roll) indicates a large hole which will lose air quickly. Typical depressurization time is 1-6 rounds. Note that the Reactive Hull ship system (*EM, ship/vehicles* systems) reduces the danger of a hull breach.

Characters in the breached area run the risk of being sucked into space. If the character has something to hold onto, they should make a Str check, otherwise a Dex check can be made for balance.

Once an area is completely depressurized, all in the area suffer vacuum hazard effects.

The vacuum of space has a strong suction. Normal doors rarely withstand this force, the adjoining rooms are also affected. Bulkheads, blast doors, and similar heavy duty doors are more likely to hold. Starships with Internal Integrity systems are protected against such chain-reaction depressurization.

## System Failure

Any time a hull breach roll is required, a system failure check must be made. The rules are identical to vehicle system failure rules. The difficulty is equal to critical damage x5.

In addition to the above system failure check, "cascade failure" also occurs. This means that every round after a system fails, another system failure check **must** follow. This continues round after round until a successful check results.

Use the following table in the same manner as with vehicles in order to determine the system affected. First roll 1d10 to determine which table to use, then roll 1d10 again to find the exact system affected. If you roll a system that has been destroyed then nothing happens. If you roll a system which does not exist, roll again.

### Table 11: Ship Systems

d10 roll 1-5

#### Die roll System

- 1 Shield
- 2 Central Computer
- 3 Cloaking Device
- 4 Life Support
- 5 Scanners/Sensors
- 6 Main Drive
- 7 Weapon System

- 8 Inertial Dampers
- 9 Sublight Drive
- 10 Other/Minor System  
(GM's choice)

*d10 roll 6-10*

#### Die Roll System

- 1 View Screen
- 2 Lab (Science, Eng, etc.)
- 3 Artificial Gravity
- 4 Tractor/Repulsor Beam
- 5 Communications
- 6 Turret
- 7 Transporters
- 8 Escape/Assault Pods
- 9 Station (Comm, Med, etc.)
- 10 Other/Minor System  
(GM's choice)

### Types in Combat

The MetaScape II™ Game System is so flexible that individuals, vehicles, ships, and beyond can fire at one another using the same rules. To properly game master such mixed combat, you need to understand the various armor and damage types.

In combat, the terms "Personal," "Vehicle," and "Ship" each have two distinct meanings. In addition to describing the source of damage, they also refer to the die type used in such combats. However, a vehicle is still a vehicle even if it carries 6S (Ship type) weapons. Likewise, a character wearing 3V (Vehicle-type) armor is not classified as a vehicle.

In most cases, however, characters and GUs use Personal type armor and weapons, vehicles use Vehicle type, and ships use Ship type. In fact, if no weapon or armor type is indicated, always assume this as the default.

Combat elements such as Initiative, attack, defense, etc., which do not relate to the size or mass of an individual are considered to always be of Personal type. The following table clarifies this:

**Table 12: Default Combat Types**

Aspect	Default Type
Armor	Name Type
Damage	Name Type
Healing	Name Type
Hull Points	Name Type
Vitality	Name Type
Attack	Personal
Defense	Personal
All Others	Personal

A 10V vehicle would therefore have the following combat statistics (unless noted otherwise):

Armor	10V
Damage	10V
Hull Points	10V
Shock	10P
Attack	10P*
Defense	10P*
Initiative	10P

\* Attack and defense are specially modified (see table 13 below)

### Mixed Combat

When individuals or devices of the same type are attacking each other, attacks and defenses are resolved normally. However, combat between types (Vehicle vs Ship, Vehicle vs Personal, or Personal vs Ship) is governed by special rules.

This rule is intended to represent the difficulty of hitting a small target with a large weapon, and, conversely, how easy it is to hit a large target with a small weapon. It is also, frankly, intended for game balance.

*Jamie's Anthropolos marine, Ikarov (Atk 12) is attacking a Horak. Jamie rolls the attack normally, since both the marine and the Horak are Personal-type opponents. If Ikarov attacked a vehicle, however, Jamie would roll 24 to attack (Personal vs Vehicle = x10 to Atk). If Ikaros fired at a starship, the attack would be at x100.*

*On the other hand, if the ship (10 Atk) fired back at the annoying marine, it would attack at roll/100. Ikarov is unlikely to be hit, but if he is, in all likelihood the brave (if suicidal) marine will be squashed like a bug by the ship-class weapons*

**Multiple Weapon Types:** All this is why many vehicles and ships will have personal, vehicle, and maybe even ship class weapons. Kind of like having the 50 cal mounted on an army tank. The tank's vehicle class weapon is not very effective against a defending target running around the tank, but the 50 cal is!

**Simplified Types:** Damage, armor, and HP are all of appropriate types – ships have Ship type armor and cause Ship type damage, vehicles have Vehicle type armor and cause Vehicle type damage, and characters and GUs have Personal type armor and cause Personal type damage.

Most of the time, damage and armor checks will occur between individuals and devices of the same type (e.g., Ship vs Ship, Vehicle vs Vehicle, or Personal vs Personal). During such combat, damage and armor types can be ignored (just treat all rolls as if they were at Personal scale).

As an example let's assume a 12 vehicle (12 Dmg & AR with 12 HP) is fighting an 16 vehicle (16 Dmg and AR with 16 HP). If the 12 hits and rolls 10 for damage, and the 16 rolls 6 for armor, then the 16 has taken four points of damage.

What really happened was that the 12V caused 100 points of damage and the 16V stopped 60, resulting in 40 points of damage. But, as you can see, all of these extra zeros make no difference. During same type combat, you can therefore use or ignore types without concern.

However, during mixed type combat, detail must be paid to the specific types involved. Damage to higher types is only counted in full increments of 10 or 100, as noted in the rules above. Remainders are ignored. A character who shoots a vehicle and inflicts 48 points of damage would, for example, only inflict four points of Vehicle type damage. A Destron who, miraculously, manages to inflict 288 points of damage on an enemy starship with a turbo-plaz would only inflict two points of Ship type damage (the 88 is dropped, since it is less than 100).

In short, damage against the next higher type is divided by ten (Personal vs Vehicle or Vehicle vs ship), and damage against a type two above is divided by 100 (Personal vs ship), and any fractions are dropped.

## MANEUVERS

Normally, ships maneuver poorly due to the extreme speeds at which they travel and the absence of friction. A ship may make one 45 degree turn each round, and even this requires two movement points.

Some ships are equipped with tactical thrusters allowing them to expend movement points as per table 17 below:

**Table 17: Ship Maneuvers if Tactically Equipped**

<u>Pnts</u>	<u>Maneuver</u>
1	Move 1 square forward
2	Slip 1 sq diagonally
4	Slip 1 sq sideways
2	Turn 45°
4	Turn 90°
8	Turn 135°
16	Turn 180°

# Hazards/Events

Poisoned? Falling? Materializing into solid stone? Then this is the rule section for you. It contains the rules which govern most of the common "Hazards" which occur in a MetaScape™ Game. Each hazard is detailed below in alphabetical order.

If you can't find a description of the hazard you are looking for, you will have to ad-lib. To help, you might try examining a similar hazard.

<u>Hazard</u>	<u>Description</u>
Brain Damage	Mental Damage
Falling	Intentional or not
Fatigue	Overexertion
Fear	Scared
Freezing	Too Cold
Heat	Too Hot
Materialization	Power Malfunction
Panic	Irrational Behavior
Poison	Poisoned
Sleep Deprivation	Lack of Sleep
Starvation/Thirst	Lack of Food/Water
Suffocation	Suffocation/Drowning
Vacuum	Exposure to Outer Space or Other Airless Conditions

## **Brain Damage**

Brain damage is a WP check vs a GM set difficulty. Failure indicates that the character has suffered brain damage.

Below are several possible results of brain damage. Results run from least to most severe. You may have a player roll randomly, or may select the result based upon how bad the check failed. Feel free to come up with your own results as well.

- 1 – Insanity:** Each hour the character must make a WP(vs15) check or function as if panicked.
- 2 – Phobia:** The character gains an irrational fear of a common situation or object (select something related to this check).
- 3 – Retardation:** Must make two R+C rolls for Lore and take the worst.
- 4 – Broken Mind:** Must make two R+C rolls for WP and take the worst.
- 5 – Fearful:** Any time the character fails a shock roll, the character becomes fearful (see fear).
- 6 – Power:** If this character has an Omega power, the ability to use it is lost.

If you rule that the effect is temporary, you may have the player roll WP check at the beginning of each new gaming session in which the character is to be played. A result of 50 or more indicates that character has recovered. You may also allow a character to buy off an effect upon attaining next level or rank for 1to4 AP.

## **Fatigue**

Due to the numerous causes and types of fatigue, the following rules are general and flexible. A lot of ad-lib GMing will likely be needed.

In general, fatigue comes in one of two varieties: physical and mental. Physical fatigue should be checked vs FR and mental fatigue should be checked vs WP.

GMs who are good at ad-libbing, can have a character roll an open ended check and adjudicate the results as they see fit.

If you prefer more structure, select a difficulty and a number of rolls. For example, "Make three WP (10) checks." Each failure lowers all applicable abilities by RC+-2.

If you wish to target specific abilities, you may. Let's say a player insists on constantly having his character carry a rifle "at the ready." You may decide to have the character check for arm fatigue (vs FR) when he gets ready to fire. Penalties would apply to his Atk due to his fatigued and shaky arm.

## **Fear & Shock**

There are three severities of fear: scared, fearful, and terror. Most causes of fear will indicate the proper severity. Otherwise you may choose, to have the character make an open-ended shock roll, or have the character make a shock check

## **Shock**

<u>Result</u>	<u>Severity</u>
0-5	Terror
6-10	Fearful
11+	Scared

Depending upon the source of the fear, you may apply modifiers to the characters shock roll.

**Scared:** A scared character will attempt to keep his or her distance from the source of the fear (generally this just calls for good roleplaying). The character will not act irrationally. However, if the player wants the character to approach or deal directly with the source of the fear, the character must make a WP (10) check or become truly fearful (see below). Once the source of the scare is out of sight, this type of fear ends.

**Fearful:** A fearful character will take any reasonable step to flee from the object of the fear. The character will not act irrationally unless stopped or trapped. In this case, the character must make a WP (20) check or



become truly terrified. The fear ends once the character is safely away from the source of the fear. If a similar event occurs later in the character's life, the character will respond as if scared.

**Terrified:** A truly terrified character is irrational and will do anything to get away from the source of the terror. This includes fighting anyone (friend or foe) who attempts to block the character's retreat. Such characters will have no qualms about using their most effective power or weapon to escape. They will not feel safe until they remove themselves from the area in which the terror exists. If anyone tries to slow them down (let alone stop them) from fleeing, they will attempt to break free or kill the one restraining them unless a WP(30) check succeeds. Characters who are confronted with the same source of terror in future gaming sessions will immediately react as if fearful.

### Freezing

Most characters can withstand freezing temperatures for a number of rounds equal to their Fortitude value. Once this time is up, freezing rolls must be made.

Freezing rolls are a modified FR check vs a difficulty which the GM sets. These rolls should be made at a set frequency (i.e., once every "X" number of rounds or minutes) based upon the severity of the cold. If the roll fails, the character suffers an amount of wounds (frost bite) equal to the amount of failure. A roll of 12 vs a 20 Dif therefore results in 20 - 12 or 8 points of wounds.

It is easiest (and perhaps best) to ad-lib the FR difficulty, FR modifiers, and the frequency of the checks. However, the following tables provide suggested guidelines for the GM.

#### Freezing Dif and Freq.

Temperature (Fahrenheit)	Dif	Roll Freq.
30	0	—
10	3	30 min
0	5	15 min
-10	10	10 min
-20	12	5 min
-30	15	2rnd
-40	20	2 rnd
-50	25	2 rnd
-75	30	2 rnd
-100	35	1 rnd
-150	40	1 rnd
-200	50	1 rnd

The Difficulty should be modified by activity, clothing, etc.

### Heat

As with freezing, characters can typically last a number of rounds equal to their FR value before making heat checks.

Heat checks are nearly identical to Freezing checks: a modified FR is rolled vs a Dif at a set frequency based upon the temperature. For specifics refer to the freezing hazard above.

#### Heat Dif and Freq.

Temperature (Fahrenheit)	Dif	Roll Freq.
100	0	—
110	3	15 min
120	12	10 rnd
130	15	5 min
140	20	2 rnd
150	25	2 rnd
175	30	2 rnd
200	35	1 rnd
250	40	1 rnd
300	50	1 rnd

Again, clothing, activity, should modify the difficulty.

### Materialization

When a character partially materializes inside another object (or vice versa), the materialization rules must be used.

The character receives an amount of damage as per table 27 below. Only natural armor can resist this Dmg. Unskilled Natural armor is Gen FR.

**Table 27: Materialization Dmg**

% of Body	Dmg
25	10
50	20
75	30
100	40

If the character's head or chest are included in the materialization, the character must make suffocation rolls as well.

### Panic

Panic is an irrational state of mind. If you wish to determine if a character is panicked, have the player make a WP check vs an appropriate difficulty. If the roll fails, you may make up an effect or select one of the following.

**1 – Fearful:** Character responds as if afraid (see fear)

**2 – Paralysis:** The Character will fall down and do nothing until a WP (15) roll succeeds.

**3 – Frenzy:** The character will attack the nearest target until it is destroyed, and continue in this mode until a WP(15) succeeds.

**4 – Faint:** The character faints. A good slap or shaking will wake the character, otherwise, a WP (15) check must succeed for the character to wake up.

**5 – Bolt:** The character will madly run in a random direction at top speed until a WP (15) check succeeds.

**6 – Frantic Search:** The character will search the area frantically for an “unknown” item until a WP (15) check succeeds. Characters will tear through their own equipment (tossing items around aimlessly) and search over the bodies of friends and enemies.

The indicated WP checks may be made once per round.

### Poison

Major poisons in the Guild Space™ Setting are described in the *Weapons* booklet. The general rule is that a FR check vs the poison’s Dif is made. If failed, the poison takes effect.

### Radiation

Armor helps protect against radiation. However, if any radiation wounding damage is taken, the character must make a FR check vs the amount of damage. Failure indicates an additional side effect occurs from the following table.

**1 – Cancer:** Character must make a FR (# of missions) check before each mission or die.

**2 – Burns:** Blisters form on the skin for an additional 20 points of damage. Roll against FR instead of armor to reduce the damage.

**3 – Blindness:** Blindness occurs unless a FR (15) check succeeds. Each day another FR check may be made to regain sight (however, the difficulty doubles with every failure).

**4 – Immune Failure:** All checks against diseases and poisons are made at half, permanently.

**5 – Hair Loss:** Roll an open-ended FR check to see how much hair falls out (generally anything below a 10 indicates all of it).

**6 – Nausea:** The character will remain nauseous until a FR (20) check succeeds. Roll once every 15 minutes.

### Sleep Deprivation

Active characters engaging in physical activity can force themselves to stay awake for a number of hours equal to 3 times their Will Power’s RC. After that, characters must make a WP check vs total days awake or fall unconscious (check once every eight hours).

### Starvation/Thirst

Characters can go without food for a number of days equal to half their FR RC. After this, they must make a FR check vs total days or fall unconscious (check once a day).

Characters can go without water for a number of hours equal to their FR RC times 3. After this, they must make a FR check vs total days or fall unconscious (check once every 8 hours).

Once unconscious, the character must make a FR check vs the number of hours spent unconscious or die (check each hour).

### Vacuum

Being exposed to vacuum is a VERY BAD THING! Suffocation rules take effect immediately (characters who attempt to breathe in space pass out immediately).

FR rolls are then made versus the vacuum every round for damage. The difficulty each round increases from 10, 20, 30, 40, to 50 and remains at 50.

## FALLING

When a character falls or jumps, the damage base should be calculated as 1 point of damage per foot fallen.

**Landing Surface:** The total damage should be modified based upon special circumstances, such as the landing surface. A 50 foot fall onto hard stone may result in 60 damage, while broken craggy rocks may result in 80 damage. On the other hand, landing in leafy bushes may cause 30 damage from the 50 foot fall and deep snow may reduce it to a mere 15.

**Intentional:** If a character jumps or intentionally falls the damage is reduced by 10 feet. Thus, a character could jump off a 10 foot ledge and suffer no damage, while a jump off a 20 foot housetop would cause 10 damage.

**Hanging Drop:** If the character hangs by their hands then drops, the damage is reduced by their height plus 10. So a six foot tall character could drop 20 feet and face only 4 points of Damage (20 - 6 - 10 = 4).

A character who tries to grab something while falling must roll SB vs a GM set Dif. If the grabbed item is not at the top of the fall, the character will need to make a Str check vs feet fallen so far in order to hold on (this may also cause damage).

An armor check is allowed to reduce the amount of falling damage (a great armor roll can be interpreted as a “lucky” landing as well as actual damage absorption).

## JUMPING

Jumping rolls are found on your Front sheet.

## SUFFOCATION

### Suffocation/Drowning

These two situations result from similar effects – characters being deprived of oxygen. Note that races which do not breath (such as the Shanask) need not worry about suffocation.

A character who manages to get a lung full of air before being suffocated or submerged can hold his or her breath for a number of rounds equal to FR RC divided by 5 – rounded up. Rounds are counted on the character's Initiative (i.e., 1 could come this round or next). If the character wasn't prepared (i.e., no lung full of air), start the suffocation phase immediately.

Once the character's air runs out, the player must make a WP check on each Initiative in order to avoid passing out. The difficulty is five times the number of rounds which required rolls (e.g., 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, etc.)

A character who passes out is considered to have inhaled. This results in death if the character is in water. If the character has no breathable air, the character must make a Vit (rnds x5) check each Initiative. These Vitality checks start at 5, and increase each round to 10, 15, 20, 25, etc. Once this roll fails, the character is dead.

In either case, the player should still keep track of total elapsed rounds. This number is the typical *first aid* or *medtech* Dif to revive the character once the adverse conditions are eliminated. The number of rounds is also the Dif vs FR which the character must roll to avoid brain damage if revived (see brain damage hazard). Life Support Failure

## FAILED LIFE SUPPORT

Turning off life support on a vessel has a lot of impacts. The air starts to foul, radiation shielding drops, air pressure may be compromised. The effects are usually summed up with the following simple rule. You take 1 point of damage per round, cumulative. Thus 1 the first round, then 2 the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, then 3 the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, then 4 then 5, so by the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> round you have taken a total of 15 points of Dmg.

However, each round the character may roll Fortitude versus 5 times the number of rounds to avoid that round's damage.

## SAVES & HEROES

Many rules in the game cause drastic effects, such as death poison, vortalization (severing of the head), special effects on high attack rolls, etc. To safeguard against drastic effects, an additional safety factor is built into the game in the form of saves. A save is a last ditch

roll to avoid the unusual consequence. If successful the consequence should be ignored or greatly reduced.

Saves are typically rolled using the Resistances.

Fortitude: Used for anything that effects the physical body such as disease, poison, bleeding, death checks, cold, heat, electrical, crushing, etc.

Will Power: Used for anything that effects the mind such as interrogation, fear, mind reading, many Psionic enhancements, unconscious checks, etc.

Arcane: Some arcane enhancements are most appropriately dealt with using Fortitude, Will Power, or Even Energy. Otherwise, Arcane is the catch all for supernatural effects such as being teleported against ones will, turned non-corporeal, etc.

Energy: Used to resist energy effects such as laser bombs or traps, radiation, lightning, etc.

GM: Throughout the rules and game play, you may encounter sudden drastic effects upon characters, important GUs, and significant opponents. Please feel free to add a save anytime it seems appropriate. Particularly watch for rules which don't consider the skill, level, or ability of the victim, such as, "Vortalization on any roll of 20 or more."

The difficulty of most saves should be equal to the attacker's rating, skill, or ability that caused the situation. For example, a save versus a vortal attack should be made versus the opponent's attack rating. In absence of any identifiable rating, you may have to set an arbitrary rating. Just use good judgment.

# Cards

MetaScape has two sets of cards that are used.

- **GM Awards** - handed out when players accomplish a set goal, roleplay particularly well, come up with a creative idea, etc.
- **Nish** - there is a critical and tremendous set of Nish cards. Nish is rolled so often that the GM would have to come up with a lot of critical/tremendous effects. Instead, players simply draw the appropriate card.

**Envelopes:** Get three envelopes, and label them GM, Nish Crit, and Nish Tremendous. Cut out the cards and place them in the envelopes. At the beginning of each game, assign one player as the tremendous/crit player and give them the two Nish envelopes. Anytime a player rolls a critical or tremendous Nish, they should NOT announce their roll as such to the GM, simply tell the GM the numerical Nish result. Then, they ask the Tremendous/critical player for the appropriate card, drawn at random.

Players should keep the results of their card draw to themselves until used. Players should also avoid asking the GM for clarification or information as this slows down the game. Finally, if the card says "keep and play when..." or "turn in after..." or any other delay, the player is to write down the information and hand the card back immediately so it is available for random draw by the other players.

# Eclectic Rules

## ***Guild Currency***

### **Credits**

Credits are the currency of GuildSpace. Almost every transaction is measured in credits. Most realms of known space have adopted the Guild's credit system. Credits are abbreviated cr – 10 cr is read "ten credits."

Credits are commonly stored on a computerized metallic or plastic identicard. These cards have a small digital readout area which indicates how many credits the card contains at any given time.

Credits are also stored on smaller units called credit chips (aka "chips"). These small disks resemble small poker chips, and can store credits in the same manner as a card. Each chip has a maximum amount of credits it can store, as indicated by its color, as shown on the table below.

**Table 19: Chip Color**

<u>Color</u>	<u>Max Cr</u>
White	1
Red	5
Orange	10
Yellow	25
Green	50
Blue	100
Indigo	1000
Violet	10,000
Gray	100,000
Black	1,000,000

Each chip has a small digital readout which shows how many credits are stored on it, up to its maximum. These credits may be added to the currency on an identicard by placing the chip into a small recessed slot on the card. The user then enters how many credits should be transferred from the chip. Identicards may also be set to transfer credits back into a credit chip, and to or from another identicard.

An identicard can always accept credits without authorization. However, in order to reduce the card's credits, the licensed user must enter the proper security code.

All identicards have security routines to prevent unauthorized use (called hacking). Special, restricted cards (such as Dha identicards) contain built in hacking routines. Hacking allows the user's card to break into other cards and transfer the credits to the user. Success indicates that the other card has been broken into and you can access its credits. Dha members are equipped

with such cards so that they may salvage credits on their missions (see salvage below).

## **SELLING EQUIPMENT**

Equipment (weapons, armor, items, etc.) can be sold for half value.

## Vision/Light

The ability to see is often of paramount importance in roleplaying. Sight requires the proper type of light or radiation to illuminate the subject.

To fully understand vision, it is helpful to understand light. Light is also known as “electromagnetic radiation” and is indeed, a form of radiation. The entire “spectrum of light” ranges from electric waves to gamma rays as per Table 20.

### Table 20: Spectrum of Light

Electric Waves  
Radio Waves  
Infrared Rays  
Visible Light  
Ultraviolet Rays  
X Rays  
Gamma Rays

Anthropos (and humans) can perceive only visible light (from the visible spectrum). Other races may perceive light from other parts of the spectrum. For example, Calemora see in the infrared spectrum. This form of vision is known as “infravision.”

The two most common forms of vision are described below.

**Visible:** Humans see with visible light vision.

Visible light can penetrate air without much interference. Glass and water can be penetrated for several dozen feet.

**Infrared:** The infrared spectrum is also known as “radiant heat.” Hot things appear red and cold things appear blue to black. Because an item’s temperature changes, the perceived “color” of the item also changes, making infravision very volatile. A scene is an ever-changing pattern of scintillating colors.

This means that those with infravision see heat rather than light. Their brains do not process visible light, but instead perceive objects in shades of color from white (hot) to black (cold). The hot sun would appear bright, while a cold ice cube would appear black. As objects change temperature, their color changes as well. An ordinary rock would appear dark normally, but lighten as it was heated. Objects with multiple temperatures (such as characters) will appear all shades of color, constantly changing as one part of the body heats or cools.

Many races wonder how infravision sees anything at all. The air itself, for example, is rarely a single temperature, but is full of eddies and currents and temperature variations. An individual with infravision walking into a hot room, for example, might be

thermally “blinded” by the sudden change. To compensate for this, those with infravision have the natural ability to filter out certain temperature bands, in effect “focusing” their infrared vision on certain specific thermal levels.

Of course, heating a room to an individual’s normal body temperature is one way of partially disguising oneself from infravision, but infravision is accurate enough to detect even the minute variations of an individual’s body temperature.

Random currents of air can also distract infravision, but most have learned to filter out atmospheric disturbances and concentrate on more important images.

Those with infravision are also excellent trackers because of their heat vision. An individual leaning against a wall will leave a thermal pattern behind for several minutes even after leaving the area. Footprints retain their heat for some time after being made, as well, allowing infravision to determine not only where, but when, a given footprint was made. Completely cold tracks cannot be followed, however.

Stars emit a fair amount of infrared light making vision possible during daylight. Since the infrared band of light is adjacent to the visible band, visible forms of light (flashlights, etc.) emit some infrared light. On the average a visible light source appears half as bright to infrared vision. “Hot” light sources (candles, torches, etc.) produce large amounts of infrared light. In fact, a single candle flame is as bright to infravision as a lantern is to human vision.

Infravision also functions at night since color is based upon temperatures, so anything which emits heat can be seen. This makes plants, animals, and even the ground visible as all of these things emit heat. The hotter an item, the brighter it appears and the easier it is to see. Thus, warm blooded animals are rather easy to see, even at night.

Some special considerations when using infravision follow:

You can track animals shortly after they have passed – their feet warm up the ground leaving behind infrared “foot prints.”

If someone leans on a thin wall (or a wall which conducts heat well), a silhouette may show up on the other side of the wall.

Warm or cold air currents can obstruct vision as the very air itself will be “seen.”

Infravision can be used to see if something is dead or not – living things typically give off more heat.

To “hide” from infravision, individuals need to mask their temperature, making it blend in with the surroundings.

Very warm things will heat the air around them producing an infrared aura.

Those with infravision can typically see only half the distance as normal vision due to the effects of varying air temperatures.

**Starlight**

Starlight is the ability to see in starlight as most would see during the daytime. With starlight a single candle flame is sufficient to light up an entire stadium sized area. A typical computer diode (little red light) sufficiently lights up a good sized room.

Starlight can function in addition to any form of vision: visible, infrared, etc.

**Color/Monochrome**

All sight, regardless of the spectral range, comes in one of two forms: color or monochrome. Colored vision means that items appear to have different colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet, etc. Monochrome vision indicates that everything is viewed in "shades of gray" — like a black and white television. Actually, "shades of gray" is called "white" monochrome. Monochrome vision could be red, blue, green, or any other color. Items are seen in shades of the indicated color.

**Field of View**

Field of view indicates how much of the surroundings can be seen through peripheral vision (i.e., without turning one's head. Field of view will always be indicated in degrees. For example, Anthropos, like their human ancestors, have a 180 degree (half a circle) field of view.

Among other things, field of view is used to determine if a rear attack is seen or not.

**Movement**

Every character, GU, vehicle, and ship has a movement rate (MR). A character's MR is recorded on his sheet. A GU's MR is equal to his first rating number, likewise, a ship's MR is equal to its first rating number.

During Initiative, a miniature may move a number of board squares equal to its movement rate (MR). The square's scale should match the miniature's scale: Personal scale for characters and GUs (5 ft/sq), Vehicle scale for vehicles (50 ft/sq), and Ship tactical scale for space combat (1 mi/sq). A character whose current MR is six can move six squares at personal scale.

Miniature movement is not a hard science. Players don't have to count each individual square unless it really matters. Miniatures may be placed with any facing anywhere on the grid. They don't have to face perpendicular, horizontal, or diagonal to the board, and they can stand in, partially in, or between squares on the board.

A miniature may always move as many or as few squares as desired, up to its MR.

**Running or Overdrive**

Individuals who spend both their movement action and attack action moving may run. Vehicles and Ships may operate at overdrive if a skilled driver/helmsman spends their full Initiative doing nothing but driving/piloting. Note: a driver/pilot must at least spend their movement action driving/piloting in order to move normally.

Running or overdrive lets the unit or character move twice their MR.

**Optional Rule**

If you want a more realistic running rule, in which two character or GU could actually race, then running is made by a normal move, then rolling the MR as a die for the second part of the move. Unusual MR like 7, would require the next larger die rolling technique.

For example if a Zin-Shee (MR 16) wanted to run it would go 16 sq plus d16 sq.

**Overland Travel**

The above movement rules apply to Initiative style movement (i.e., during combat or other precise action).

Calculating the time required for long distance travel is governed differently.

Individuals can cover a number of miles each hour equal to their MR at a forced march (i.e. very fast and very strenuous). Such a rate may not be kept up for long without Exhaustion Hazard rules. Movement at half this rate (i.e., MR miles every two hours) can be kept up without penalty.

Vehicles may travel a number of miles each hour equal to 10 times their MR. A skilled driver may make an overdrive check for even greater speeds if terrain permits.

## Energy

In the Guild Space™ Setting, energy is far more prevalent and readily available than in reality. About eighty years ago The Company began mass production of the *Q-cell*. Although Q-cells had been around for several hundred years, they were too costly to produce on a large scale.

Q-Cell stands for *Quantum Energy Cell*. A Q-Cell uses the concepts of quantum mechanics to channel quantum particles and energy from surrounding space and convert them into usable energy.

Although power packs, power cells, and small back-pack sized nuclear power plants exist and are prevalent, most player characters will have access to more modern equipment which uses Q-Cell technology.

In fact, almost all equipment in the *Equipment Manual* comes standard with Q-cells (if energy is needed).

Because of this, keeping track of ammunition or shorts is too low tech for most MetaScape equipment. Rather the simple maintenance fee is used.

If an item uses large bursts of energy (such as energy weapons), then the Q-cell will be coupled to a capacitor. The capacitor acts like an energy storage tank (or battery) and the Q-cell is the generator which charges it up. For example, a laser pistol has both a capacitor and Q-cell. This notation indicates that the capacitor stores enough energy for 20 shots and that the Q-cell replenishes the capacitor at the rate of one shot every five minutes.

## MultiClass

At Rank 2 and 20AP a character can multiclass, and again at Rank 4, for 40 AP, then Rank 8, 80 AP, etc.

Multiclass is buying a second or third character class. This opens up new feats and new possibilities. To offset this huge benefit, multiclassing permanently binds a Meta Color of the player's choice. Thus, any Meta Roll of that color is lost. However a Meta Regain roll of t allows the normal 1 Meta for every color.

The player picks the color and binds it permanently. At each new Rank, the color choice may be changed if desired.

A triple classes character will have two Meta Colors permanently bound (and they obviously can't be the same color).

So The maximum number of multi class would be 5 – all Meta Colors bound. But this would be a highly crippled character.

Multiclassing requires GM approval. Some class combinations would create game busting balance problems (too powerful, too contrary, etc.) or game ruining character concepts.

**Benefits:** The new class' rank and level match the characters. All feats of the new class are made available as with normal rules. Any FUTURE R+C may take the most favorable of the two classes.

Any past R+C may be "bought" over to the new class for 2 AP (basically relearn the Feat, weapon, armor, etc. as the new class. Attributes may utilize the best R+C for 2 AP as well.



# Create Your Own Rules (Ships, Classes, etc.)

With MetaScape, you can create nearly any new thing you wish to make including:

- Classes
- Associations
- Ship Positions
- Other Professions
- Feats & Mega
- Omega
- Handicaps
- Weapons
- Armor
- Equipment
- Artifacts
- ATMs
- Vehicles
- Ships
- GUs (aliens, monsters, etc.)
- But Race, though possible, is very special case

## CLASS C, RACE R TABLES

**Race R:** For many newly created things, you will need to make a Class C or Race R table. R and C die must be a die type between 1 and 12. The possible die are: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12.

A Race R table will look like:

Captain - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M
Skills	10	6	12	6	8	4	10

Each of the races will be listed and an appropriate R for each race. This means on a value between 1 and 12 (see above) must be assigned to each race indicating how good the race is at the new rule.

**Class C Table:** The class table lists every Class (26 for now) and a C for each one. The C will range from 1 to 12, like above, and indicates how good the class is at the item.

There are no Class C tables in the game at this point. That information has been individually listed in each Class. However, as you create new stuff, you will need make Class C tables for them (or go to each class and add it to them).

## FREE AND KEY KITS

Don't forget Free and or Key kits if appropriate. All feats and rules in a Free kit are free and must be taken, the good and the bad. And all feats in a Key kit must be taken before any other kit can be learned (except Free Kits, which are instant, immediate, and free).

## NEW CLASS

Creating a new class is a bit involved, but very doable. The first huge thing you have going for you is the fact that I intentionally didn't make any tables in the game, outside of the classes, that listed all the classes for the C. This is key to making class creation relatively simple.

Just find an existing class and create duplicates of the various tables - tweaked to meet your class (Attributes, MR, Enc, Jumps, starting money, ETax, Armor, Weapons, Professions)

Then be sure to make a nice description area with any special global rules like, "Can't fight with bladed weapons," or such rules.

Then, go through *every* Feat in the game and make a list of feats that define the class well. You may need to write a few feats or Mega's specifically for the class. In fact, I suggest a few Mega's for every class to give it that "unique" flavor. See blow on rules for this.

Next group these feats into Kits (just a logical grouping - see existing classes). Next label each feat with a Rank number (1 to 4 is most common, but any is allowable). Finally, you need to create Race R tables for each kit (see above).

That's it, your class is done!

## NEW ASSOCIATION

This is a great area for expansion. As your campaign unfolds, new organizations may arise which players may want to make their primary association. Here's how to do it.

Write a brief description. Then create a Race R table for each race.

Then find a small (keep it small) list of feats that define the association. Be sure to include a few Attribute Buffs as it is traditional. Break these feats into two groups, a small group of "reduced AP feats." And the rest in another Kit. Reduced AP only cost 1 AP (or professions are at reduced AP cost).

Assign Rank requirements to all the Feats.

Next, read the existing Associations and use their examples to come up with the association's income and salvage policy.

Then, decided what kind of starting artifact's members of the association will get upon character creation.

Finally, create a Class C table for the association. That's it, your association is done!

## NEW SHIP OFFICER POSITION

Ship officer positions are pretty easy to make. Just write a very brief description then make a medium sized list of feats that define the new ship position.

Organize the feats into Kits and list their Rank requirements.

Next, for each kit, make a Race R table..

Last, create a "Class C" table for the ship officer position.

## NEW PROFESSIONS

You can add other professions, such as the Open profession, Team Link. Be very careful about the requirements for these professions. Otherwise, you may create a situation where characters can gain so many feats that they no longer have any weaknesses. They become the global game killer character that is no fun for player or GM.

Steps to create a profession, are identical to the steps for creating a ship position.

## NEW FEATS & MEGA

Creating a feat takes 10 or 15 minutes, but linking the feat to everything can take an hour or more.

To create a few, come up with a unique name.

Then write a description that explains what the feat does and how it is to be implement as far as rules go. Be sure to include the [Action,Duration,Range] and then add the cost "@x".

The only real difference between a feat and a Mega, is that Mega's are more powerful and use Luck boxes instead of Meta .

Then, decide if the feat will have a mastery. If so, decide if it is eligible for MER (does it make sense and impact the feat to roll a bigger Die for the feat?) Finally, make a list of mastery elements.

That's the easy part. Here is the time consuming part. You need to go through every area in the game that lists Kits (every Races, every Classes, and every Professions) and evaluate each one. For each, decide if the feat belongs or not.. If not, skip it, but if the feat does

make sense with the Race, Class, or Profession then place it into an appropriate kit.

If there is no appropriate Kit, you can create your own Kit, which will entail making a Race R or Class C or both list.

## NEW OMEGA

Creating a new Omega power is very similar to creating a Feat & Mega above. Main difference is that it is listed in the Artifacts and Omega Booklet and a Race R table must be made for each Omega.

## NEW HANDICAPS

Handicaps are very easy. Just list a name, the handicap effect and assign it a point value (refer to existing handicaps for examples). That's it.

## NEW WEAPONS

To make a new weapon, first name it and decide which Weapon Type it is from the list at the very beginning of the Weapon's Booklet.

Next, create an entry for the weapon, like the one in the larger alphabetical list of weapons. This will have LMH info, Race R for both Atk and Def, a Multiplier (copy some existing weapon's Atk and Def Mult to maintain game balance. Don't make up your own). Then assign Range, Draw, Cr, Maint, ETax, and Enc data. Finally decide what kind of multiple attack options exist as mastery elements (for these try to duplicate a similar weapon, in order to maintain balance).

Finally, write a description of the weapon, any history, any special rules, etc.

## NEW ARMOR

New armor creation is much like new weapons. First come up with a name and concept and categorize it into an Armory Type (see first tables in the Armor Booklet).

Then, make an entry like the ones in the Armor RC and Stats table (large alphabetical list). You need to assign a LMH, R for Def and AR, Mult (copy an existing Mult), then the stats: Speed, Don, Cr, Main, ETax, and Enc.

Finally, write a description of the armor, any history, any special rules, etc.

## NEW EQUIPMENT

One of the easiest of things, is making a new equipment item.

Simply come up with a concept then assign appropriate stats: RC (if any), Cr, Maint, ETax, Enc and a description of what it does and any special rules.

Some equipment will come in various "qualities" such as a Strength Enhancer with Buff of 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 50. Simply treat each of these as an individual equipment item.

## NEW ARTIFACT

Same process as equipment. They are just a lot more powerful or unique, and generally can't be purchased. They must be found or given.

## NEW ATM, VEHICLE, SHIPS

Essentially all of these work just like new Equipment. Probably, because they are equipment, just large intricate equipment.

Differences include the fact that they need to be given GU stats (see Read First! Character & Die Booklet).

Also, their description and special rules can be much more involved. The best suggestion, is read up on several existing ATM, or vehicles, or ships, and use them as an example.

## NEW GU

Creating a new GU (monster, alien, etc.) is pretty simple. Just come up with GU stats and a description.

For a more detailed entry, follow the format used in the GU Booklet.

## NEW RACE

Making a new race has two rounds: pretty easy, and tons of work.

Pretty Easy: Come up with a name and a nice description and history. Then following the example of existing races make a table of age-vision, racial weapons, and MR, Enc, and Jumps table. The MR, Enc, and Jumps need to have a rating of A, B, C, D, and E. A being best and E worst. Jumps is particularly difficulty as each type of jump varies as to whether it uses squares, feet one

tenth or whole. So, I suggest copying some other race's jump information.

**Free:** List any free feats, rules or handicaps

**Kits:** go through all the feats and find a medium number that are indicative of the race. Group these into Kits.

Now the decision of Easy or Hard. Easy is that the new race will be considered as one of the existing races on all of the game's hundreds of Race R tables. So your new race called Ooknak have the same R as Draca, for example.

The Hard method, is that you go through all the manuals and find all the Race R tables and make an entry. This could be done on the fly on a "as needed" basis. If it is done more completely either you can mark up your rules as the master and anyone playing the race will need your rule booklets. Or you could try and make some master list or Race R tables and coordinate them with the rules books by booklet, page, and Kit or element.

If it were up to me I'd use the Easy method and "maybe" a little ad-lib on the fly. The hard method is for real hard core gamers.

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***GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM4***

# Roleplaying

***By Blake Mobley***

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends, many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

## Special Thanks

**From Blake Mobley to:**

- Renay for allowing me to play late into the night for these many years and for supporting my dream.
- Phillip Bagga, Steve Tobin, and Dave Webb for their many deep conversations into the recess of RPG design and playability. Phillip for "keeping it real" and his watchfulness for the "fun" of gaming. Steve as a great sounding board for prototype concepts and services as a master GM. Dave for his unique ability to break bad rule systems and for his long time inspiration as a fellow game designer. You three have helped me more than you know.

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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change thought the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

To download or buy other booklets and products:

**[www.mentalwinds.com](http://www.mentalwinds.com)**

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# Roleplaying

Even master roleplayers should read this booklet. There are unique tips and strategies within these pages. A few are critical to MetaScape play.

This booklet will cover the topics of roleplaying, as an art form. Few "rules" will be covered, but many "techniques" will be explored.

I'll also cover the intricacies of the optional game board and miniature use - which I highly recommend.

## SETTING

The Guild Space™ Setting is an outstanding example of *true* space opera.

This means not only that GuildSpace is a place of high excitement adventure, but it also contains many different elements: super-science technology, magic, alien races, unique powers, high tech weaponry, ship combat, personal combat, and more. Game excitement and enjoyable adventure are stressed above all else.

The Guild Space™ Setting is incredibly rich, with many factions, political alliances, and alien societies. Even the player character races are unique and well-developed ranging from the emotionless, self-disciplined Calemora warriors to the mysterious, cloaked Shanask, who wield the secret powers of the *Sorce*, and the high-tech space faring Anthropros, the evolved descendants of ancient humans in the Reality Scape.

Characters may control fantastic powers such as *Psionics* (powers of the mind), *psychosomatics* (powers of the body), and the *Sorce* (an advanced form of Sorcery or magic). Many sciences also exist including cybernetics (mechanical body implants), technology, and biotechnology (living hardware).

## **What is Role-Playing?**

A role-playing game is a sophisticated and highly fun game played around a table - but it is not a traditional board game. Imagine your favorite science fiction or space opera movie or book in which a small band of heroes are pitted against the forces of evil or go on heroic quests. Role-playing games try to capture the essence of such a story, but you get to play the role, or role-play, one of the heroes. Role-playing requires one player, known as the game master or GM, to manage the story and act as referee. The other players portray, or role-play, the heroes.

Before beginning, the GM needs to develop a storyline, called an adventure. An experienced GM can make these up as the game proceeds, known as ad-libbing. However, to begin with, it is recommended that you use a pre-prepared adventure.

Once the GM has an adventure prepared, he needs to gather several players and have them create their heroes, which we call characters - like characters in a story. To aid in this, the GM should carefully read the rules so he can explain the process of character creation and aid the players in this endeavor.

Each player should create a character, writing down the character's name and background information on a character sheet - a piece of paper used to define the character.

Once completed, the game will begin. Game play varies between rolling die to determine a character's success or failure at various activities and what we call role-playing. Role-playing is the fun and highly imaginative aspect of the game in which players interact with each other and the GM as vocal actors. The players hold conversations with each other, trying to vocally "play the part" of their character. An excerpt might go something like this.

GM: Your party enters the Green Griffin Dinner on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Planet in the Rigel system, after their long day exploring the Ruins of Gan-Kin.

Player 1 (role-playing Martia, a female Zin-Shee Mensi): Martia, looks for a vacant booth to either side of the room.

GM: She sees one to her left. The booth and benches are all levitating, obviously some sort of suspensor tech at work.

Player 1: Martia walks her soar body over and slips into the booth with a sigh of relief.

Player 2(role-playing Gron, a large Draca Cyber Warrior): Gron joins Martia and scopes out the joint.

GM: There are several patrons, mostly Anthropros. But there are four Skrak pirates sitting at the counter and one of them sneers toward Martia.

Player 2: I take offense and get up....

Player 1: Martia places her hand on his forearm saying, "Gron, let it go, we are too tired to brawl."

Player 2: "OK, Martia. Hey you, serving drone, bring the Zin-Shee and I each a tall glass of denobian nectar."

GM (role-playing the droid): "Right away sir."

Player 1 and 2 enter into a discussion of the days plundering and make plans for tomorrow's assault.

GM: I need an awareness roll from both of you. (Both players roll dice: Gron 12, Martia 8). Gron, you notice that one of the skrak stops the droid on its way to your table and spits into both glasses.

Player 2: I slide up out of the booth, casually, so as not to upset Martia, walk over as if passing by the skrak.



GM: Yes

Player 1: Oh no, here we go. I wish Martia knew what you were up to.

Player 2: Then, I grab the nearest skrak and toss him down the length of the bar!

GM: Ok! Initiative please, and I will need an attack and strength roll from Gron, to see if he succeeds in grabbing the skrak and then how far he throws him!

So, you see, as a concept, role-playing is very simple and a lot of fun. Unlike other games, there is no set path. You can try anything. Gron could have gone berserk and broke into a fighting freeze or the two could have simply got up and left. Anything goes. However, there are always consequences to your character's actions - just like in real life.

## ROLEPLAYING RULES

The game rules are supplied to create realistic boundaries as to what a character can do. If Martia had tried to grab a skrak and toss him down the table, she would most likely not have succeeded to the degree which Gron will. This is because Gron, being a big Calemora, will have a higher strength rating than Martia. Gron would most likely also possess the special ability, as a game rule, to go berserk. On the other hand, Martia will be quick, fast, and possess the powers of Psionics - mental powers.

If there were no game rules, the GM would have to arbitrarily decide everything: did Gron succeed in grabbing the skrak, how far did he throw him, etc. With game rules, a die roll can determine the result of important or critical random events.

Game rules also determine what special enhancements, such as going berserk, a character has and how that ability impacts the game.

Role-playing rules are quite different from rules for most other games.

At first, the volume of rules may seem overwhelming. However, as you get into the game, you will soon realize that most of the rules simply provide options from which you may choose, like the section on races. There are several pages of races and statistics. You simply skim these until you choose a race for your character. Then, stop and read your chosen race in detail to gain a more thorough understanding.

## ROLEPLAYING SETTING

Guild Space™ is a detailed science fiction setting with elements of a space opera. Guild Space has a range of technologies including tech, bio-tech, and cybernetics. There are also several types of powers at play ranging

from Sorce (sorcery), to Psionics (mental), to Psychosomatics (mind over body).

Still confused? So what is roleplaying anyway?

Well, that question has been pondered since 1973, when roleplaying began, and the definition is constantly being molded as the industry grows and develops. Even among those who create these games, defining roleplaying is an unusually difficult task due to its flexibility, dynamics, and widely differing forms. But let us try.

First, we will make a few general statements about roleplaying games:

- They are the most advanced table top game on the planet.
- Roleplaying games have no formal beginning or ending.
- No one wins or loses.
- There is no simple objective.
- You don't have to use a game board.
- Many of the largest game conventions in the world are held primarily for roleplaying games.
- Roleplaying games are the most creative, imaginative form of game in existence and, we believe, the most fun!

Now for a more specific definition.

Roleplaying games are a unique form of entertainment. They are classified as "Hobby Games" due to the depth of rules, typical time involved in play, and their potential hobby activities such as collecting and painting miniatures. Most roleplaying games have from 100 to several thousand pages of rules. Roleplayers typically meet every couple of weeks for six to twelve hours of play. (It's a hobby, not an ordinary game).

Roleplaying can be defined as an advanced form of group story-telling in which some rules exist to govern random events. One participant is the master story teller and is often called the game master (GM). The other participants are the players and each controls a character in the story. In fact, they do more than control these characters, they create them and "roleplay" them.

The GM learns the rules and game setting, assists the players in developing their characters, and prepares the story or adventure. The GM then explains the game's setting, in which the characters exist, to the players. The Guild Space™ Setting is a super-science space opera. This means that elements of any imaginable science-fiction setting may be included.

Once all the players understand their characters and the setting, the game begins. Play takes place around a table or while sitting in a room. The GM explains the characters' current situation such as, "You are all part of the House of Dha of the Guild and are currently working on the Space Station Alto-5 on the outer rim.

Your team is working in cargo bay nine in preparation for your daily training flight.”

The GM then allows the players to interact among themselves and ask questions. Eventually, scenes will unfold, aliens will be encountered, and heroes will rise and fall.

At some point, the players will end the current gaming session. Next time they play they will start up just as they left off. They will have their same characters and the story will pick up in the same place. As the game progresses, a player's character becomes more significant, powerful, and heroic.

The fun and magic of roleplaying is the fact that the game is limited only by the players' imaginations. Every game is unique because the story continues to unfold and characters continue to develop in new and fantastic ways.

## THE ROLEPLAYING EXPERIENCE

This section provides a brief overview of the roleplaying phenomenon. The following is a list of the events which will soon unfold.

- You will read through the rules as recommended above. (Being the one reading the rules, you will likely become the GM of the first adventure.)
- Amazed and dazzled, you will spend the following evening or two reading through and preparing the first adventure.
- Amazed, dazzled, and thrilled, you will get a group of peers together to generate characters.
- Next you will explain the Guild Space setting to them (they will be more amazed and excited).
- Finally, you will have them generate characters (they will be thrilled and will count the minutes until the game begins).
- With unsurpassed bravery and renewed hope in your ability as a GM, you will charge into the thick of things and play.
- Several hours (or days) later, you will draw your first gaming session to a close.
- Your players will feel as if they just discovered a new universe! And they will beg you to run the game again tomorrow.
- Taking this as a cue, you will establish a regular gaming night.
- For the next 5 to 50 years, you and your group will be caught up in one of the most remarkable experiences of your life. Your characters will embark on adventures throughout the heavens and across the surfaces of many worlds, meet thousands of individuals from cultures spanning the Scapes. Some will become great friends, others dangerous

enemies. And, alien powers and technologies will be discovered which you have not dared to imagine.

Now, read on and live the dream!

# Miniature Gaming

“Miniature Gaming” or “Miniature Use” refers to the process of using, not only miniatures, but chits, a game board, pens, erasers, props, etc.

## **Preparation**

First, you need to prepare your miniatures, chits, and game board for use in the game.

Half the fun of roleplaying arises from its “hobby” nature. Nowhere else is this as apparent as in miniature preparation. Miniatures can be collected and painted.

If the GM cannot locate sufficient miniatures or chits to cover all needs, alternate items may be used: green plastic army men, figurines from a chess set, pawns from other games, etc. If you have none of these items, you can resort to pen and cardboard (or paper) to make your own chits. Simply draw a profile of the GMU (GM controlled Unit) you need or write the GMU’s name on the chit. Crumpled balls of paper can even be used to represent hordes of similar aliens. Note, however, that such props are poor substitutes for well-crafted, colorful miniatures.

Additional miniatures and chits can be purchased through Mental Winds™.

## **BOARD**

The best game boards are custom home-made dry erase boards designed to best fit your table size. To make these, you can purchase a 4 foot by 8 foot thin sheet of bathroom wall paneling or similar material from your local hardware store for around \$20. Have this cut to a size that fits your table.

To grid the board, mark off one inch increments along all four edges. To create the grid, simply score a line along a straight piece of metal or glass (such as an aluminum yard stick). Modeling knives, box cutting knives, or some other razor blade type knife works best. Warning, these knives are extraordinarily sharp, so adult supervisions should be used. Score just hard enough to barely break through the paint.

The lines will not appear to be very easy to see, but as the board is used, the dry erase ink will become captured by the scratches and a grid will appear. It will take 20 or 30 hours of play for the board to become well seasoned.

When you begin your gaming session, lay the board out on the table. The game board serves two primary functions: first it delineates distance in miniature scale, secondly, the GM uses it to draw the character’s surroundings. Several drawing guidelines follow:

- Do **NOT** count every square and draw rooms exactly as they appear in adventures. First, this is too slow. Secondly, character’s aren’t stopping to measure every room with a tape measure, so having them a little off is more realistic.
- Draw quickly, but not sloppily.
- You may draw out the surroundings as often as you like. In general you should draw out any combat situation and any place which the players wish to use their miniatures.
- Do **NOT** draw out scenes if miniatures aren’t useful – this is a waste of time.
- Use varying colors: one for walls, doors and other permanent fixtures, a second for tables, chairs, computer consoles, etc., but don’t spend a lot of time switching colors.
- The purpose of your drawings is to indicate where players may move their miniatures, which way they should be facing, and what major furnishings exist.
- Don’t waste time drawing a detailed map. The maps provided in our products are professional maps drawn out in far greater detail than is needed for a game board drawing.
- A table is drawn just as square, a computer console a shape, etc. If a table has items on it, describe them verbally. If a computer has special buttons, explain this to the players. To make the drawing process easier, drawing guidelines follow. We intentionally drew these out by hand so you can see exactly how to do it.

### Board Symbols

@@@symbols@@@

When these symbols are combined, a board drawing might look something like below. Note how items have been drawn fast and simple. However, the map functions well to indicate where miniatures can be placed, the limits of sight, etc.

@@@Drawing@@@

## **MINBOARD**

If you make your own game board, it is very hard to cut out several mini-boards of various sizes. I use them for my Round Tracker to use and for vehicle and ship’s so I have a movable personal scale board.

## MINIATURES USE

Once the board is ready, players select miniatures or chits to represent their characters – it is best if GMUs are represented by miniatures or chits, as well. The remaining miniatures are placed within the GM's reach. Your group is now ready to play, but first you need to explain miniature rules to your players.

Following are a number of fundamental miniature rules

- First, the board's scale must be understood as:
  - Personal Scale = 5 feet
  - Vehicle Scale = 50 feet
  - Ship Scale (tactical) = 1 mile
- Whenever a new miniature or chit is used, be sure all gamers know who or what it represents.
- A miniature should only be moved by the GM or the player who controls it.
- During combat, a player's miniature should only be moved during Initiative (unless moved by the GM).
- The GM may move any miniature at any time. However, GMs should allow players to move their own miniatures whenever possible.
- The number of board squares a miniature may move is equal to its movement rate (i.e., a movement rate or MR 6 means that the miniature may be moved up to six squares during its Initiative).
- Unlike most games, miniature movement is NOT a hard science. Gamers do not need to count out exact squares unless it is really important, and it doesn't matter if a miniature is in a square, on the border, or somewhere in between.
- The direction a miniature faces is often very significant. Players and the GM need to make sure their miniatures are faced properly.
- If a particular miniature's facing is difficult to determine (e.g., a marine looking forward with a gun extended to the left), the gaming group needs to make a facing judgment that everyone understands (marking an arrow or dot on the miniature's base is often useful).

## PROPS

To add extra life to your game, you may want to collect together any available props. Props are in-scale items used to represent other elements of the game such as chairs, tables, transports, rocks, columns, equipment, etc. A good source for props are other toys and games.

You can also make home-made props. Wadded up paper works well as a rock. Wood blocks function as tables, benches, and chests. Sponges can represent trees and bushes. Small dowels or cash register or adding machine tape rolls make good columns, etc. Be

industrious and creative. If you really get into props, you can even get a pail of plaster and sculpt your own props.

Another useful item is a carrying case to hold all of your miniature gaming supplies. Among the best of these devices are multi-drawer utility bins or fishing tackle boxes.

All of the above props may be found in local stores.

# Gaming Tips

## ***Gather Items***

### **RULES**

Print out all the rules and bind them. A good technique is to place all reference booklets (those used by players during game play such as race, class, professions, feats, weapons, armor, and equipment) into a 3 ring binder. Use labeled dividers for quick location and separation of the booklets. The other booklets can be placed in a separate binder.

### **GROUP OR CLUB ITEMS**

There are a number of items that are best purchased as a group or club and kept together for general use.

Every player but the GM will likely need a simple calculator. Instead of having everyone bring one, and some being quite large, taking up a lot of table space, just go to a large store and find a bunch of one dollar calculators and buy them. These are then kept with the GM between games.

A good set of mechanical pencils is another inexpensive but very beneficial purchase for the group.

A group set of dry erase markers is nice.

Dice can be purchased individually, or as a group. If you plan to play with new players, you may want enough dice for the entire table.

Miniatures may or may not be a good group purchase depending upon the how adhesive the group is, as miniatures are very expensive. And after taking hours to paint them, players tend to want to keep them for themselves.

A good set of miniature paint and brushes is a nice group item.

### **MINIATURE AND DICE BOX**

A great box for containing miniatures and/or dice are the plastic utilities cases sold at hardware stores and large department-type stores. These are typically marketed to hold and organize things like screws, bolts, sewing supplies, etc. They have many small drawers, often of different sizes and are easily labeled. Fishing tackle boxes are also nice.

## **FILING BOX**

It is very handy for the GM to obtain a small filing box designed to hold hanging folders. Typical folder labels and uses are:

- Blank Character Sheets
- Current Adventure
- Characters
- Screens
- GM Awareness
- Critical and Tremendous envelopes

Within the Characters section you need to keep each character's sheets and notes together. To accomplish this, use manila folders. On each, write the players name, characters name, ship officer, class and race.

## ***Character Creation***

Generating characters will be an unusual experience for new players, and one which you must lead them through carefully.

If you are a novice GM, you should meet with one or two players individually to generate characters (you may opt to do this over several evenings prior to the game night). Even veteran GMs should use this method with players new to the MetaScape™ Game System.

First, gather up pencils (**never** use pens, since most of the things you write are likely to change), scratch paper, a calculator, the MetaScape™ rules and dice, and find a quiet area where you are unlikely to be disturbed. Be sure you have character sheets available for each player.

Once the GM, players, and the gaming supplies are all in one place, the fun begins. It is often easier to simply walk new players through character creation rather than try to explain how the game works. Roleplaying is such a sophisticated and, at times, complex concept that explaining it can be daunting.

You might mention that character generation is the most rule-intensive phase of roleplaying for the players, but they will soon learn that it is a lot of fun. Most of the rules are reserved for a single player, a "master" to read and understand. That would be you – the Game Master or GM.

Show them the Player's Reference booklets and explain that these booklets are all they need to use during play, and that using them is like browsing through a catalogue. They don't need to read them, just know where to find things.

## RACIAL/CLASS SELECTION

The fun begins... It is time to help your players decide which race to play. First, you need to introduce them to the races. Turn to the Race booklet and show them the pictures while you explain a little bit about each race. If you own the race miniatures, let them see the miniatures as well.

Things to cover on each race include: any powers which they are known for, their science ratings (i.e., how good they are at Tech, BioT, and Cyber), special abilities, rough personality description, brief history, and available genders. Be sure to interact with the players, allowing them to ask any questions they may have. Remember, you are their guide to this Scape.

Once you have introduced the races, you need to have the players select which ones they wish to play. The following guidelines may help you and your players.

- A racially mixed party is generally more advantageous. If a previous group of your players has already created characters, tell your current group which races they chose.
- Novice roleplayers should avoid strange races and races with powers (i.e., select something easy to play). Inform players that they may generate other characters at a later time – their current decision isn't final.
- No race is better or more powerful than another. They each have strengths and weaknesses.

**Important:** Be sure the player selects the race, **NOT** the GM or other players. Don't be suckered in by lines like, "Well, which is best?" or, "Which one would you pick?". You may suggest races to avoid (due to difficulty), but be sure to leave the player with a choice. After all, this is major component of roleplaying: player choices and freedom to decide. Besides, players will have more ownership of a race they choose.

## GM AWARDS

Below is a partial list of events worthy of receiving GM Awards during play. A GM award is an envelope filled with random award cards. The awarded player simply draws a random card.

- Great Roleplaying: Acts of great roleplaying (e.g., verbally acting out the part in an extraordinary way)
- Racial Roleplaying: Sticking to the racial qualities of a given race, even if the act is detrimental to the character. For example, Gra the Calemora has the opportunity to throw an D80 grenade at a powerful

opponent, but chooses to charge with nothing but a ra-oot dagger (Calemora disprove of ranged weapons).

- Point of View Roleplaying: The player knows something which the character does not, but still portrays their character properly. Example: Laura is a player who has played this particular adventure before. She knows that a heavily-armed A-frame walker is lurking just behind a door, but has her Anthropos enter anyway, since her character knows nothing about the adventure. This is good roleplaying (although it may represent risk of death for Laura's character), and should be rewarded.
- Creativity: Highly creative acts should be rewarded. Example: Your team hears a group of pirates in the next room. Instead of barging in and attacking, two team members disguise themselves as pirates and enter, two others circle around to the second door, one climbs into the air duct and squirms into the room's center, while the final member waits with a combat android at the front door. Then, upon signal, the various groups attack while the two disguised pirates attempt to create confusion.
- Heroic Acts: Selfless acts of bravery. Example: Ontash leaps over the body of his fallen comrade and defiantly fires his blaster carbine at an onrushing Horak even though he could run to safety.
- Acts of Morality: Benevolent acts and noble consideration for others. Example: Team Griffon finds itself in the engine room of an enemy vessel and is immediately seen. The engine crew rushes forward with tech-wands and small knives to attack you. Arik, an Anthropos Destron, notices a slaver's patch upon one crew member indicating that the engineers are actually slaves. Realizing this, Arik calls out, "attack to subdue only," drops his turbo-plaz, and throws a flash-bang grenade.
- Exceptional Decisions: Any time a player chooses a less advantageous course of action to stay in line with a character's personality, race, chapter, etc. it may be an exceptional decision. Example: Your team has been ordered to avoid hostilities while on a space station. While in the station's bar, a large Zin-Shee male comes up to you and slanders your mother. Remembering that you recorded a dislike for Zin-Shee in the personality section of your character's journal, you decide to jump up and shove the Zin-Shee backwards (knowing that a brawl may result), even though all of your fellow players plead with you to stop.

## ***Adventure Preparation***

An adventure is actually a highly advanced and specialized story. Besides containing all the elements of a story, an adventure also contains specific game information, GMing hints, and combat statistics to allow the players to "Play" the story. Good adventures are non-linear (unlike stories). In other words, the actual plot of the adventure is somewhat flexible and will be developed by your gaming group as they make choices during play. The experience of adventuring or roleplaying is wonderful. But, to heighten the enjoyment that you and your players experience, you need to carefully prepare the adventure. The first step is to learn how an adventure is laid out. appropriate for the introduction or body.

### **ACTUAL PREPARATION**

First, read through the entire adventure - start to finish - as you would a book. Don't worry about game statistics; just read to get a feel for the general plot. Be sure to refer to any available maps, drawings, etc., as they are mentioned.

Now go through with pencil, paper, and a highlighter. Use the pencil and paper to take notes, adjust text to fit your needs, etc. You see, an adventure is never complete. At best, it is only a good framework for the GM to build upon. Try to customize the adventure to fit your gaming group. Don't worry, you will get a lot better at this as you gain GMing experience.

Use the highlighter to mark key words, especially in the GM's section of each encounter. This way, when you are actually playing, you won't need to stop the game and silently read the entire GMing section during each encounter. You will look at the key words, triggering your memory as to the encounter's events, and immediately start running the encounter. As you need specific information during the encounter's development, you can find the key word and quickly read the following sentence or two.

The adventure is now prepared. However, if you haven't read the adventure within a week before GMing it, you should skim the adventure before the game (especially highlighted key words).

## ***Player Selection***

Roleplaying is best with 4-6 gamers (i.e., one GM and 3-5 players).

# Game Area

## GAME SETUP

Once the seating arrangement is ready, you need to decide who is going to fill your assistant roles such as:

- Bleeder – the person who uses a red marker to track wounded opponents so that the GM doesn't have to.
- Nish Master – they track which round of Nish the game is on and if someone has an ability that, say, lasts for 4 rounds, the Nish Master will note it and then let the player know when 4 rounds is up. This task needs to go to a very responsible player.
- Meta Reminder – the player reminds everyone to roll Meta each round.
- Props – If you have props like miniature chairs, trees, etc. this person places them and removes them so you don't have too.
- Drinks – this person fetches cold drinks when needed by others.
- Trash – place the trash can near this person and everyone passes trash their way. Can even have one can for pop cans and another for regular trash.

Additionally, here is a checklist of items you need.

- Players - remind them of the day, time, and location of the game
- Fully generated characters
- Table
- Chairs
- TV tray, card table, or other spare surface
- MetaScape II™ Rules
- Fully prepared (and recently read) adventure
- Game board
- Board pens
- Board cloth - for erasing board
- Pencil for every gamer (including the GM)
- Scratch Paper
- GM Screen
- Calculators
- Dice - it is best if every gamer has one set (4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16, 20, 30, and doubling), but you can share if need be
- Miniatures - as listed in the GMU list of the adventure and one for each player character
- Board Props - if you use them

- Snacks: drink and food. Traditionally, players provide the drink and food as the GM has already done a lot of work.

## GM SCREENS

A screen is simply something you can use to hide dice, paper, etc. from the player's eyes. You can purchase screens or use two manila folder's taped together in a 3 or 4 panel fold. A common trick is to make a mini screen only five or six inches in height. This is placed on the game board directly in front of the GM to obscure initiatives and die rolls. Larger screens are used to obscure the adventure notes during play.

## CHARACTER NAME CHART

As character introductions are being given, all other players should write down the names and pertinent information on scratch paper. A good trick is to write them in a pattern matching where their players are seated around the table.

The GM needs to go further and on a small piece of paper, write down the character's name, in table order, under line it, then below write down race, class, ship officer, primary weapon and armor. With this information the GM can add descriptive elements about how weapons swing or fire, how opponents impact the character's armor, etc.

A final trick with the GM Name chart is to paper clip it to the inside of their mini GM screen for easy reference.



# Game Mastering

GMing is a highly challenging and rewarding experience, and occasionally, it can be frustrating. The following tips should make the good games great and the rough ones less bumpy.

To help you get started, you need to know what the GM's role is. A GM is the master story-teller, referee, arbitrator, judge, and jury. As GM you will be the player's window into the game's setting. It is up to you to create and drive the plot. You will set the tone for the game and spark the players' imaginations. You play the roles of enemies, allies, subordinates, and superiors. You help guide player's through the game. If a rule question arises, you will hear the arguments and make the judgment call. In other words, you are the game - all of it except the players' characters.

## STARTING THE GAME

This is what you've been waiting for: it's time for the game to begin!

When players start arriving, direct them to the seat you have selected for them. It is also best to keep the adventure's miniatures hidden so as not to give away clues to the possible forces characters will encounter.

Once everyone has arrived you may begin. Hand out dice, pencils, and scratch paper to any player who needs them. Now pull out your miniatures and allow players to select one for their character - these should be racially accurate if possible.

Before beginning you need to explain some of the common courtesies of roleplaying:

- Players should keep snacks, character sheets, pens, and scratch paper at the edge of the table and off the board if possible.
- Players are not to move any miniature but their own. And during an encounter, they should only move their miniature during their Initiative.
- You are the GM and, during the game, you will act as referee and master storyteller. Players should not question your judgment calls.
- Explain that the GM's word has more power than any rule written in the Rule Book. (This rule, right here, says so!)

Now on to the adventure! You should provide a brief history which links the player's characters together (have they been training together on Dha, are they old friends, etc.). Give them some common background.

Then, the players need to introduce their characters to each other. When a character or GMU is introduced talk in the first person (i.e., roleplay or speak as if you are the character). Hold up the miniature that represents your character so everyone can identify it.

During the introduction you need to let the other players know your character's race, sex, appearance, general size, age, obvious equipment carried, and any outstanding features. Also, based upon the characters' common background (as described by the GM), you should describe any abilities, skills, personality traits, etc. which the other characters would know about your character. A possible introduction for a Shanask PC might go something like this:

*My name is Zeada. I'm a 6'6" black cloaked figure standing in the shadows of the room. I am ageless, mysterious, and your skin crawls with a slight tinge of fear as you look my way. I carry nothing, and not even hands or feet protrude from my multi-fold robe. All you notice is a simple tasseled belt fastened about my waist. Stealing a glance into the depths of my hood, you're alarmed to find two glowing points of red light unblinkingly staring back at you. I don't eat, I don't breath, I don't sleep, and you've never seen me sit or lie down.*

*As barrack mates during the past 10 weeks of Dha training, you have come to respect me as the captain of our group. I have a formidable personality coupled with a keen intellect. You've observed me using tech items without difficulty, though I have no overt need for them.*

*During combat training you have noticed that I use a strange energy sword which seems to magically activate as I wish. When not using the sword, it vanishes into the folds of my robe.*

*During individual training, I disappear to the Shanask moon. And, though you've likely questioned me about these escapades, I reveal nothing, only speaking in the dry, penetrating whisper of my kind, "I have been preparing for that which awaits us all".*

Once everyone has introduced their character you can continue with the adventure.

## AD-LIBBING

At best an adventure is a rough story framework. Every group of players will play it differently. At times, they will do things not anticipated by you or the adventure designer. It is at these times that the GM gets to test his skill at "ad-lib" gaming - and it's loads of fun!

For example, let's say that your players are on a starship running from two heavy cruisers. The adventure is laid out so they can turn and fight, call for help, or outrun their adversaries. If they turn and fight, they will soon realize that they are outclassed.

However, your players turn, do a quick fly-by and transport onto the enemy vessels - a course of action the adventure doesn't cover. The adventure has no information on the layout of the enemy vessels, their crew, etc. - you get to ad-lib it all!

And, you're in luck, for the MetaScape™ Game is one of the easiest roleplaying games on the market to ad-lib. To aid you even further, here are some helpful tips:

- Don't let players know that you are ad-libbing. Players are often less willing to accept ad-libbed plots. If you need time to think, flip pages in the adventure, pretend to read, etc.
- A good trick is to think of a similar situation from a book, cartoon, TV show, movie, or other adventure, and use it as your mental framework. In the example above, select a famous starship you know of and use it as the layout - if you don't tell your players they often won't even realize what you are doing.
- Figure out the players' motives and work to make them quickly realized, so that they can get back on track with the adventure.
- Finally, don't worry. You will soon be amazed at how easy it is to ad-lib.
- Once you learn to ad-lib, you will find that you do it more and more often, stretching adventure plots to match the interests of your players. You will begin to tailor the game to Player Enjoyment. It is at this point that you are truly becoming a great GM - unfortunately, it is also at this time that you can enter into a truly terrible GMing trap (see the next section).

## GM D16

As GM, the only die you will need is a D16 also known as the doubling die. This is used for several things. The most common is to determine the severity of critical and tremendous effects.

On a critical or tremendous, the D16 is rolled with a 1 being a lesser crit or tremendous and a 16 being very significant. If a "c" (critical) is rolled it will worsen a critical significantly (called a double critical) or cancel a tremendous. The same but opposite is true of rolling a "t" (tremendous). If a cancel occurs, the D16 is rolled again. If it comes up a number, nothing happens the critical or tremendous has been canceled. If a "t" or "c" comes up, then it becomes a tremendous or critical respectively. Thus it's possible for a player to roll a critical but a tremendous effect occurs if the GM rolls something like a t, t, 2. The critical would become a tremendous of 2 intensity. Also, unlike most rolls, an initial series of "t" or "c" are stacked so a c, c, 8 is a

massively bad triple critical severity 8! The sequence always ends with a number - 16s are not re-rolled!

The other common use of the D16 is for a quick resolution of random events. For example, you have a group of enemies attacking a friendly group of GMUs with the players. Rather than roll out all of the GMU versus enemy attacks/damages defenses/armors yourself, you can simply roll the D16 with 16 being very severe and 1 being minimal. Then, by judging the relative power or rating of the GMUs versus enemies, you determine if a hit occurred or how much damage was done.

So anytime you don't have a notion of how something random should go, you may always toss the D16 and let the result help guide you. But remember, you are the GM and in control. Don't let the dice become a crutch for good GMing.

# GM Tips and Traps

If there is a cardinal rule to GMing it is: Always be fair to the players and make sure they are fair to each other. If there is a single purpose to your role as GM it is: Make the game fun for everyone.

To accomplish these two ultimatums, consider the following tips:

## CHARACTER DEATH

- First, be sure you are aware of the "Mega Death Rule" detailed in the GMing booklet.
- A void killing a new character, even if the roll of the dice indicates otherwise. A lot of time and effort goes into a character, an early demise only leads to player frustration.
- Senseless character death is no fun. If a character dies due to no fault or misjudgment of the player, think about it twice.
- If a player does something dumb which kills the character, however, or the players decide to fight when they could run, and are clearly out matched - then so be it. If you swing too far the other way, your players will lose the sense of danger and adventure that keeps roleplaying games alive.
- Never try to kill a character. If, for some reason, you are that irritated, stop the game.
- Never, kill all, or a majority, of the party in one encounter. If this occurs, it means that the players are being silly and you should stop the game, or the encounter is too difficult and you need to adjust it.
- Once players game enough to become regulars in your group have each of them generate a backup character. Then, if their character dies, they can get out their backup and continue playing.
- If a player has no backup character, have them run one of the team's GMUs. If you don't have any GMUs adventuring with the team, have the team encounter one within the next encounter or two don't worry about whether it makes sense with the plot or not. Remember, player fun is more important than plot integrity (this is a game, after all).
- Let players back in the game as quickly as possible after character death.
- Above all, be sensitive to players and their motives. Some enjoy running their characters on the edge all the time and they expect an early character demise. Others are very loyal to their character (and often very attached). They may spend hours detailing their character's history, personality, etc. They will play more cautiously and cleverly. You should be

lenient with their characters. You should also consider your players' ages and maturity level.

- If a character does die, watch the player's reaction. If they become very upset, consider bringing the character back. For example, "In the next room, the party finds a strange black shard. It glows with an inner light and Zeata, the Shanask, recognizes it as a rare Sorce healing artifact. When it is used on the dead character, he amazingly comes back to life".
- The balance point on character demise is perhaps the most difficult thing you will have to face. Fortunately, the MetaScape™ Game System does a really good job by itself. Just remember, if characters die too often, players will become discouraged. If they never or rarely die, the sense of danger, risk, and adventure will be lost (and this is one of the most powerful elements of the game).
- One last suggestion - tell your players up front that their characters will be going on tremendously dangerous and heroic quests. And it is unlikely that they will all return every time. Be sure the players understand that this is the truth of the game and not just romantic story telling. However, character demise should not be interpreted as "losing the game" or ending the campaign. The player simply gets to switch to another character (again backup characters makes this a lot easier).

## GAME BALANCE

Maintaining game balance is also one of the most challenging elements of GMing, and one that is often overlooked. The main areas of game balance are characters, equipment, treasure, and encounters.

Many factors are involved in maintaining game balance, but they can all be boiled down to two main elements: immediate player satisfaction vs long term enjoyment.

You see, players love to be more powerful than their adversaries, gain tremendous skills and combat prowess, and find tons of treasure and equipment. At least, this is what they believe and, as GM, you will even be rewarded through immediate laughter, excitement, etc. for satisfying these unspoken desires.

Unfortunately, this is a vicious "Catch 22" proposition and is game-busting. As players get what they want, their characters will become more powerful and they will want more and more. Soon, you will be giving away gravtanks, fighters, ships, and super powers just to keep up with their appetite for improvement. Worst of all, once you finally realize what you have done, it will be largely unfixable. If you strip their characters down to something practical, they will feel cheated and frustrated. Plus, once your players get

in the habit of having everything go their way, it will be harder to satisfy them with the proper amount.

On the flip side, if the players' characters have to adventure through an entire game night just to gain a few credits, and a single combat knife, they will soon become discouraged and bored with the game.

Furthermore, if they have to run from most encounters, they will not feel heroic and will become frustrated.

The proper balance exists when you maintain player interest from adventure to adventure. Players should feel that their characters are improving, but improvement should come in even steps - just enough to whet their appetites.

Using the analogy of game balance to appetite: you should normally "feed" your players just enough to keep them from going hungry, but not so much that they become full or complacent - keep them ever so slightly on the lean and wanting side. However, proper game balance is never constant. You must vary it from time to time. Occasionally you should let them have a nice feast (but never gorge them), and occasionally you should let them go hungry for a short while, but not starve.

The key is to keep them wanting to come back next week. If you can accomplish this, they are happy enough to keep playing.

**Characters:** Equipment and Treasure: Balancing equipment and treasure is very similar to balancing out characters, as it ultimately affects characters in the same way. It is game-busting to allow characters to gain equipment or treasure quickly or in large amounts. Likewise, if you keep equipment and treasure finding to a minimum, the players will become frustrated.

**Encounters:** Encounter balance exists on two fronts: frequency and difficulty.

Frequency will depend upon the interest of your gaming group. Some groups prefer to spend as much as 75% of real time roleplaying (verbally acting). Others want to run from combat to combat with brief roleplaying episodes between. The typical group will want to spend 50% of reality time in actual combat, 25% heavily involved in encounters (non-combat), and 25% in verbal roleplaying.

The proper balance will depend mostly on your group's interest. You may have to game with a group for a while to get the proper balance down.

As GM you should edit adventures, cutting out or adding encounters, changing encounter hostility level, etc. to match the bent of your gaming group.

Encounter difficulty is, perhaps, more complex. Here are some guidelines:

- 10%: The characters survive the encounter and destroy all opponents with no damage to themselves
- 20%: Characters engage, and overcome opponents, with slight damage only

- 50%: Characters engage, receive moderate wounds, and overcome their opponents
- 10%: Characters engage, become heavily wounded, but eventually triumph
- 5%: The characters engage, become heavily wounded, and must flee or risk losing a character or two
- 5%: The characters must flee or take heavy losses
- 0!: One or more characters will die, no option to flee or avoid the encounter

Never play down their heroic abilities. However, when it comes to encounters, you must present the player's with a challenging sense of danger.

Players should occasionally feel that their character's existence is at risk. No adventure, even one you create, will balance perfectly with your gaming group. To adjust, you can increase or decrease the number of foes and increase or decrease the difficulty of the foes. Consider arming opponents with different weapons or vary their combat tactics, etc.

Your most powerful tool is your roleplaying or story-telling ability. You can make a weak foe seem nearly invincible (even as a character overcomes it) or you can cause a player to feel heroic (even as his character is nearing death) by good GMing.

The trick lies in what you say. Read the following two passages; they are both GM descriptions of the same event: Renay's marine, Andor, being attacked by a Dreadar.

Playing up Encounter: "Renay, Andor sees a Dreadar emerge from the green glowing bio-tunnel high up on the left wall. Your blood chills as it drops to the ground, swiveling its eyes to lock onto your form. Its lips curl back in a wicked hiss (GM hisses) showing hundreds of razor-sharp teeth while bubbling yellow saliva drips from its mouth, landing with a hiss in the pool of bio-slime at its feet. Four powerful arms rise up, ending in wicked, eight-inch claws. With unbelievable speed, the naturally armored terror hurls itself at you.

Renay rolls Def and is hit -You can smell the creature's terrible breath as it locks onto your neck while its claws slice through your power armor like butter. The impact of its body knocks you back several feet (GM moves miniature), and you nearly lose your balance.

Renay rolls armor and is wounded - You hear a terrible ripping as it steps back, towers over you, and spits out armor and flesh. Pain shoots through your side and neck, where you have been wounded. And you feel its burning saliva bubbling into your shoulder. Feeling weak and battered, what do you do?"

Playing up Character: "Renay, Andor sees a Dreadar emerge from the green glowing bio-tunnel high up on the left wall. You adjust your stance, preparing to meet your adversary. With instinctively heightened senses

you calmly watch as it drops, splash, into a pool of bio-slime.

Its face is alien and horrible, but you think you see fear in its tiny eyes. Its lips curl back and it snarls (GM snarls) to build its confidence. The pitiful alien seems to be drooling in fear. It has nothing to match the super-tech hardware you carry - only teeth and claws. Lumbering up to you, it tentatively swipes out with one claw.

Renay rolls Def and is hit - With amazing luck, it finds the one gap in your armor and manages to scrape you a bit. You instantly put the slight discomfort out of your mind as you prepare to dispatch the pitiful thing. What does your mighty techno-warrior do next?"

## INITIATIVE

During game play, when the GM calls for Nish, it is best to pencil and scratch paper hidden behind a half height screen and just write down the Nish numbers in a pattern matching the positions of the players around the table. Don't ask each player one at a time for Nish, just let them call it out. If you miss someone, or two call at once and you don't catch both, just re-ask. This tip will shave off a minute or two for each Nish, and that can really add up.

## MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

**Retroactive Ruling:** Retroactive ruling occurs when you go back in time within the game (a Nish ago, a round ago, an hour ago, etc.) and alter some event or judgment call. The golden rule here is NEVER retroactively rule against the players (i.e., never go back and change something so that the players' situation is worse). This is true even if you or one of the players made a mistake. Just explain the error away as "amazing luck" However, you may always retroactively rule in favor of the players or their situation.

**Fudge Factor:** To properly balance game play, it is often necessary for the GM to "fudge" a bit. For example, if a player rolls a string of 2s in a critical situation, you may need to soften the effects of such a roll. Also, if the game has been going against the players, you should begin softening the effects of all low roles for a time. Another good trick in these situations is presented next.

**Difficulty Screening:** At times, you will want your players to know the difficulty of a task before they roll. At other times, you will want to keep this a secret. GM experience will help you make the choice. However, one benefit of keeping the Dif a secret is the ability to make ad-lib adjustments to the a task's Dif (i.e., you can tweak the Dif up or down to help maintain game balance).

**Player Response Time:** Players should learn to preplan their actions before their Initiative comes up. When their Nish comes, they should be ready to explain their character's actions. Be flexible at first (and with all new players). After several hours of play, limit the amount of player response time. Roleplaying games are more enjoyable when the game moves along at a nice pace - no single player should hog game time. Using the Pre-Roller sheet will help considerably in this area.

To create quick player response, explain to players that if they don't respond in a reasonable amount of time you will have them "Hold Nish", so that you may keep the game moving in a fluid manner for everyone's enjoyment. Please remember that your goal is to create a fun environment for all players, so be gentle and flexible or you will irritate your players.

**Hands Over Ears:** At times you will need to communicate to a single player or group of players. The traditional method is to pass notes scribbled out on scratch paper. Unfortunately, this takes time and players can't interact with you. A better method is to have the other players place their hands over their ears. Then, you may speak openly with select individuals.

A couple of suggestions: when using this technique do it as quickly as possible. When you call for "Hands-Over-Ears," several players have to sit in silence - this is no fun. If you need to converse privately for more than thirty seconds, take the player into another room. This way the other players can talk with each other and have fun.

Whenever possible, call for good roleplaying (see below).

**Good Roleplaying:** The best method for individual communication is to call for "good roleplaying." Remind the players that they should always make character decisions based upon what their character actually knows. Just say, "I need good roleplaying here." Then go ahead and explain the situation to the individual(s) as needed. The only time you should resort to hands-over-ears is when you believe good roleplaying won't suffice or when it will be more enjoyable for the players not to hear what you are saying.

For example, if a character is taken over by a mind spider, you probably don't want the other players to know his mental instructions. Players will probably have more fun if you give the controlled player secret instructions.

**Witnessed Rolls:** Until you become familiar with your gaming group. You should install a "witnessed roll" policy. This means that a roll is considered void unless someone watches the roll (not just the result, but the actual roll). Some players have a unique ability to roll high when needed - hehe.

**Keep the Game Moving:** Roleplaying is great, but at times, it will bog the game down in indecision or a

lengthy debate. When my players get bogged down like this, I typically just create a sudden event (often combat) to break their unproductive line of thought.

If the game becomes slow, Killiam, remember, it is your fault as a GM, because you can always correct this.

# Ending the Game

As the evening comes to a close, you need to wrap up the game.

## **STOPPING THE ADVENTURE**

Most adventures will be played over several game sessions. In this case, you need to locate a good break in the adventure. The best breaks exist when the players feel that they have accomplished some goal or objective, yet there is some impending event which they are looking forward to. Most importantly, end the game with all players happy and satisfied. You want them looking forward to the next game. Here are some guidelines:

- Never stop right in the middle of a combat.
- If there has been a lot of combat, stop just before the next one. If there hasn't been very much, stop after the next one.
- If possible, stop at the end of a scene or at the end of an adventure.
- Don't end right after a major character defeat - you want the players to be happy when they leave.
- Try to end with the entire character group together, alive, and conscious.

Be sure to allow enough time to hand out adventure points. It is also best if you leave time for the players to perform character advancement (i.e., spend their new adventure points). Advancing characters will make them more powerful, causing players to look forward to playing again. Anticipation keeps player motivation high between games.

A good technique is to tantalize your players with hints of events to come. For example, "Well, this was really fun. But, next time you will have a chance to learn who is really behind the alien attack, and you may even meet their master." Give your players something to ponder until the next game.

# Adventure Creation

Killiam, my players and I have been debating great adventure design for years. There are a few points that we *mostly* agree on – hehe. Here they are:

- Great adventures involve and encounter, then travel, an encounter, then travel, etc. This rules out the dungeon crawl, but once in a very great while, a dungeon crawl is OK if your players like them.
- There should be combat within the first 30 minutes of game play.
- Never should the game run for more than and two hours without combat.
- Combats should be varied. There should be easy ones so the players can feel powerful and hard ones that test their abilities. Don't get trapped into making them all easy or hard.
- A very defined plot must exist. If the plot seems persona, it is best. Such as introducing them to a little kid, run an encounter together, then have the villain abduct the child. The quest is to hunt down the villain and rescue the child. Just be sure to make it personal.
- Try to include GMUs who know the characters in the party and make them an ongoing thread from game session to game session. These can be arch rivals, allies, relatives, etc.
- Plan some specific reward that the players will really like.
- Include some form of mystery that is slowly revealed, in pieces over several game sessions. This will make them really want to play again.

When I create my adventure, I often use a movie or book I like as the *rough* framework. Then, I modify things as I go or blend several books/movies together.

When you become more adept at MetaScape, you will only need a few pages of notes to run an adventure for several game sessions.

I typically have a small paragraph per encounter area and mentally create the map (I rarely draw out maps).

Then, I'll stew over my game and try to make it more interwoven, stronger personalities, and add in detail that directly involves the players.

You can consider each character's strengths and try to create encounters tailored to them.

If I see a cool scene or concept on TV, I'll incorporate it into my adventure.

Be sure to create sophisticated motives and intertwining events. The game will feel so much more alive to your players this way.

Listing difficulties and GMU stats is one of my last concerns. These are so easy to ad-lib, and often ad-libbing is better so you can fit the GMU to the situation. However, I sometimes will list things using the PLAGUE system.

## PLAGUE

Plague stands for:

- P = Poor
- L = Low
- A = Average
- G = Good
- H = High
- E = Extreme

This is a fast and easy way to list things such as the door is locked (H). The orc is A, the chieftain is A/H/L. You can even take this a step further and when the game starts and you know how good the characters are, make a PLAGHE to Diff table like P=2, L=5, A=8, G=12, H=20, E=30. And this table can be changed as the character's advance.



**GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM5**

**Artifacts & Omega**

**By Blake Mobley**

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends; many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

## Special Thanks

**From Blake Mobley to:**

- Renay for allowing me to play late into the night for these many years and for supporting my dream.
- Phillip Bagga, Steve Tobin, and Dave Webb for their many deep conversations into the recess of RPG design and playability. Phillip for "keeping it real" and his watchfulness for the "fun" of gaming. Steve as a great sounding board for prototype concepts and services as a master GM. Dave for his unique ability to break bad rule systems and for his long time inspiration as a fellow game designer. You three have helped me more than you know.

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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change throughout the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

To download or buy other booklets and products:

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# Major Artifacts

	Technology	Cost	Maint	ETax	Enc	Description
1	ATM Sphere	5000	850	30	1/2	When dropped or thrown, transforms into a combat ATM
2	Boyance cylinders	2500	10	6	*	Cylinders will cause a weapon to be weightless, lower Enc, Draw time, and x2 range
3	Circlet of Armor Store	3000	10	6	1	Neck, half collar that can store or return tech or archaic armor as a P action.
4	Cloaking Mines	1000	Buy	6	1/2	5 Small buttons that can turn any explosive into a cloaked mine
5	Cloaking Shield	6000	150	20	4	Doubles armor and cloaks the user for 5 rounds, recharges in 1 hour.
6	Dimensional Disks	4000	25	8	*	Can shrink a metallic item of Destron armor size or less to the size of a chess pawn
7	Dimensional Gun	5000	400	8	2	Shoots balls that transform into various odd things.
8	Dimensional Phaser	3500	400	10	1	Normal from Start of Nish until Nish roll, out of phase from Nish roll on
9	Dimensional Shifter	5500	350	12	1/2	Shift to another dimension, walk, then shift back - much like Ghost Walk
10	Energy Bracer	1200	30	6	1	Converts kinetic energy to electrical "like" for a buff to melee weapon damage
11	Environ Shield	2250	100	8	1	An energy field that functions like an awesome environmental space suit for 10 days
12	Fluid Key	750	2	4	*	Take impressions of things and can form to pick most physical locks
13	Genesis Capsule	1000	Buy	4	*	Heals all damage, 1 per day or save Dif 10x number taken or die irrevocably
14	Grappling Gloves	4500	125	10	1	Gloves fire a strand of material 75' and can winch at 75' a round, use ultralock tech
15	Grav pad	2750	40	8	1	Forms a doughnut around user with 5V Str gravity to suck down melee and physical
16	Gyroscopic Stabilizer	2500	35	6	*	Stabilizes a weapon providing a cumulative +Buff2, but 1st round is at +Buff-10
17	Holo Camera	6500	10	24	1/2	Block of polymer that can capture huge items and store them until retrieval
18	Jump-Boots	3500	75	10	1	pack worn on calves, uses air burst, tripled jumping capabilities, works on AOE
19	Jump-Pack	5500	225	16	3	Jumps are at x3 for three rounds (x9 total), can reduce falling distance also
20	Mass Cannon	8500	250	18	4	Reduces armor, walls, vehicles AR by d100% per shot, kicks at Str 25
21	Molecular Disrupter carb	3250	200	8	2	Dmg cumulative until greater than AR+Vit then opponent destroyed
22	Palmstore	1500	5	6	1/2	hand bands that can store 1 item up to 6 Enc instantly and retrieve instantly
23	Particle Modifier	2750	75	6	1	Modifies users surface molecules to appear as another.
24	Personal Transporter	6000	200	18	1	100 mile range to a preset lock point, 3 transports then recharge 300Cr per transport
25	Phase Deviator	2000	60	6	1/2	Doubles Def, Halves Atk, doubles melee damage, extended use = phase sickness
26	Ring of light	3300	5	6	*	Creates 3sq radius light that can't be seen from the outside, can change radius
27	Slow Glass	1200	Buy	4	1/2	Sparry on time delaying glass - use on enemy helmets, vehicles, security cameras
28	Speed Displacer	3500	1000	14	1	Arm/Leg bands cause mini teleports, doubles movement, no solid objects
29	Static Bar	1500	25	6	2	3' long bar. Once twisted it remains static to the surface below it.
30	Suspensor Belt	3200	250	8	5 (0 if worn)	Suspends up to 25 Enc at the worst of 6MR or -1MR, has an articulated arm
31	Tierra of Light	1300	5	4	1/2	Creates extremely bright and large light, can blind opponents and light whole towns
32	Transportal	4500	350	16	2	1000' range, instant doorway
33	Ultralock 2 Boots	3000	275	10	1	Can walk up walls and more 6V Str, 1/2 MR
34	Wall Ball	2000	45	12	1/2	Throw when hit a wall forms up to 20' high by 20' wide by 3' thick of granite blocks

	Biotech	Cost	Maint	ETax	Enc	Description
35 or 1	Sensor Spiders	1250	45	6	*	Spider clan that searches for sentient life within 18sq

	Cybernetic	Cost	Maint	ETax	Enc	Description	Vit	Lbs
36 or 1	Cyber Legs, Speed	4500	350	14	3	Doubles MR and Jumps	1	50
37 or 2	Cyber Legs, Strength	3800	250	12	3	MR suffers a Max MR 8 or -1sq penalty, but Enc is doubled and leg Str rolls are x5.	2	80
38 or 3	Tish-Shocks	3500	75	16	2	All rolls versus blunt weapon, falling, crushing, impact is at x3	3	20
39 or 4	Titanium Endo Skeleton	7500	0	20	5	Bones are break resistant and magnifies tish shock and joint lock effectiveness.	3	100
40 or 5	X-Ray Eye	2000	15	4	*	Allows to see through layers of material	0	1

	Psionic	Cost	Maint	ETax	Enc	Description
41 or 1	Sphere of Will	3500	0	10	1	When held doubles WP checks, and provides 3 psionic feats or doubles them
42 or 2	Pulsing Palm	4000	15	8	*	Star Gate like band with jewel in palm can create a force of RC 3V.
43 or 3	Mind Wipe	3000	35	8	*	Flasing pen that creates a recent period of amnesia
44 or 4	Warrior Servant	5500	200	14	1/2	Can psionically charge 3 crowns as ally bonuses or to enslave enemies

	Psychosomatics	Cost	Maint	ETax	Enc	Description
45 or 1	Somatones	4000	0	4	*	Gain extra psychosomatic feats which will last extra long or require less Meta.

	Source	Cost	Maint	ETax	Enc	Description
46 or 1	Boots of Levitation	3500	50	8	1	Boots can levitate at 25' per round.
47 or 2	Pocket Dimension	5000	0	12	*	This pyramid can cause a seran like rapping of space so you are in an invisible/hidden dimension but can still see out
48 or 3	Source Sphere	12000	0	30	*	A bubble that can fly the sorcist and 1 other to any known location in the universe

## Technology Major Artifacts

### ATM SPHERE

This is a softball sized sphere, looking a lot like a miniature warmoon. When dropped or thrown, it activates on impact and a dimensional transporter will turn it into a 10' tall ATM. One arm will be a dual laser rifle and the other will be a large mechanical claw for gripping and melee.

The ATM will have stats of (RCD 8/20/5)

### BUOYANCY CYLINDERS

Two thumb sized cylinders are inserted into the stock of a weapon or attached to the side. Micro pumps will empty the cylinders to a near perfect vacuum and expand their surface (like a balloon) until the weapon reaches true buoyancy. On board micro computers will constantly adjust for environment and altitude.

Once activated, the weapon's Enc is cut in half, Draw time improves by one action type (F, A, M, P, I). And range will be doubled.

### CIRCLET OF ARMOR STORE

A behind the neck half collar, like Egyptian collars that can store or return armor at a press of a button. The armor appears to roll up or roll out over the character in plates as the circlet's internal transporters slice and dice the armor into sections and transport it into or out of storage. Activation is a P action for store or return.

The process is slightly noisy as the plates are fitted back together.

Circlets will only work on full or partial tech or archaic armor.

### CLOAKING MINES

This isn't actually a mine; rather it is a small button a half inch high and an inch in diameter that can be placed on nearly any explosive (mine, grenade, plastics, and missiles). Once in place it will cloak the explosive up to

the size of a six foot long missile at RCD 20. Then, a thin invisible beam will extend straight outwards from the button's center for 10 feet (2sq). Any motion through the beam and the button will activate the explosive. So you see, the button turns any explosive into a "cloaked mine."

Cloaking mines are extremely good at being able to activate nearly any technology based explosive. Through their advanced tech, they can pull grenade pins, armor bombs, etc. at an RCD 5V skill.

They rarely survive the explosion, but a typical tube comes with 5 cloaking mines in it.

### CLOAKING SHIELD

The cloaking shield generates a shield that doubles AR, and cloaks at RCD 25. Any large energy usage (like shooting a gun), will cause the shield to fail for a few seconds (the rest of the round). The shield will last for 10 rounds before depleting its energy cell. It can self recharge in one hour.

### DIMENSIONAL DISKS

A set of disks, one ultra locks to your person, the other ultra locks to a "metal" item less than Destron armor in size. It can shrink the target to any degree (still fully functional) down to the size of a chess pawn. Enc becomes \* and weight becomes a few ounces.

Dimensional disks are great for smuggling large weapons, or packing around a large metallic device without any Enc.

The half on your person controls the item to shrink or return. Any percentage of full size is possible.

Expanding in a confined area (trying to use it to burst something) will be at RCD 10 Str. Weak items may be damaged.

Change of size takes one round.

### DIMENSIONAL GUN

This gun uses Lob Carbine stats for all stats but damage.

It shoots dimensional balls two inches in diameter that, ten feet from the run dimensionally transport into

their contents. In other words, you shoot a ball, and the ball then transforms into something else after 2Sq.

There are vast number of ball types (GM can ad-lib these) but the most common magazine has a random mix, which are nearly impossible to identify. So upon each shot a random roll is made:

- 1- Rubble – a mass of rubble about 4' in diameter that will cause RCD20 damage and knock back/down of RCD30 vs Strength
- 2- Steel beam – the beam is a 6 inch I-beam 10' long that will come out sideways. This will clear a 2sq swath at a Str of RCD30 for 15sq or until someone makes the Str check. Victims will fly backwards and take RCD 10 damage.
- 3- Ice Cubes – two dozen ice cubes will come flying out along with a large blob of alcoholic drink. The mass won't have the speed to cause any damage beyond a good sting and wet splash. The inventors of the Dimensional Gun either had a special purpose in mind or really liked to party.
- 4- Burning logs, an arrangement of logs looking like it perfectly fit into a traditional fire place (4' long) comes out very much on fire. These will Cause RCD 15 Dmg to any target and catch flammables on fire. They have a knock back/down of RCD20. Those touching the logs on round 2 or beyond will suffer an additional RCD 20 Dmg.
- 5- Nest of snakes and insects: A nest of snakes and biting insects will appear. They will travel for 10 squares then become a 4sq radius AOE of poisonous bites and stings. The whole AOE causes RCD8 Damage every round and will expand by 1sq radius for three rounds.
- 6- Android: Identical to the ATM of the ATM Sphere (must have been the same race and company making both). However, the ATM will only have the power to fight for 6 rounds, upon which time it will self destruct causing an AOE explosion of 0/1 radius for RCD16 damage.

## DIMENSIONAL PHASER

These unusual items are rarely, if ever, offered for sale. They are ancient artifacts of a vanished alien race, possibly the Aerolk.

Dimensional shifters move their users into an alternate plane of existence for a time, fazing them in and out, making attack against them impossible while they are phased out.

The game effect of a dimensional shifter is simply that its user is present and on the board, vulnerable to observation, attack, etc., until their Nish. At Nish, the

player may immediately make any actions (Move and Attack) desires. After this, the user vanishes, and may not be attacked for the remainder of the round. At the beginning of the next round, the user reappears, rolls Nish, and disappears again at the end of his or her next Nish.

A dimensional phaser makes a character very powerful in combat, especially if they have a high Nish. But, the power mechanism is such that they last as long as a D6 roll beats the number of rounds being phased. Once the dimensional phaser is out of power OR turned off, it will recharge in 8 hours.

## DIMENSIONAL SHIFTER

The dimensional transporter creates an effect similar to the *Sorce* enhancement, *ghost walk*, in that it shifts the user into another dimension. Unlike *ghost walk*, the user cannot see, hear, or sense anything while transported in the other dimension. While in this state, the users can move in any horizontal direction. When the transporter is deactivated, the user will reappear back in their own dimension. However, the user will be located as if all movement in the other dimension took place in their own dimension.

When used, players should verbally (no pointing) describe the direction and distance traveled in the other dimension. It is then entirely up to the GM to determine where that would place the character when they rematerialize.

Users must be very careful, for they might end up materializing in something solid see *hazards* in the GMing booklet.

The uses of this device are obvious. Users can walk from ship to ship through space, walk through walls, or escape a potentially dangerous situation. Dimensional transporters only have enough energy to shift once an hour. The duration of a shift is also limited – D10 roll is made every round, if it does not exceed the total number of rounds shifted, then the character rematerializes automatically.

## ENERGY BRACER

Bracers convert kinetic swung energy into a form of electrical causing RC+5 damage with any swung melee weapon and RC+3 damage with any thrusting melee weapon.

## ENVIRON SHIELD

When this belt pack shield is activated, it seals the wearer in a four inch thick skin tight shield of force. The shield blocks nearly all environmental effects (poison,

toxin, disease, radiation, vacuum, etc.) at RCD 10V. It also auto seals over bleeding, stopping bleeding at the same RCD 10V roll. It contains a canister of compressed air that will flow into the shield and can last up to 4 days. The canister will auto refill next time it is in adequate breathable air.

The shield will block physical “elements” like sand, rain, splashing mud, even submersion in water at the RCD 10V. However, smaller physical elements like a tree branch, falling, weapon attack are not blocked. Though radiation is stopped as is extreme temperatures up to 200 degrees above or 200 degrees below zero at the RCD 10V, most energy weapons are not blocked. However, explosions of nearly all types are blocked.

The guess is that these shields were used by miners or other hazardous workers who needed to handle tools and energy devices, so the shield was set to not block them. This makes it vulnerable to most combat.

The shield can last for 10 days use before needing recharged for 1000cr.

When the shield is on MR, Defense, Jumping, and Speed Burst rolls are cut in half.

## FLUID KEY

Fluid keys are a stellarnite “pet.” If placed next to a small hole, or 3D shape, the fluid key will pour inside and mold to the shape, or flow around a shape, then pour back to normal. By verbal command, they are trained to form any of the sampled shapes or holes, and can remember up to 5 different forms.

So, they can nearly perfectly take an imprint of a finger print, key hole, key, etc. at RCD 10V.

But, one of their unique abilities is to enter a lock and “play” with it until they crack its combination. This occurs within d3 rounds. They can “pick” a lock at RCD 10V.

When not performing their “tricks.” Fluid keys like to *worm* around in a small space with lots of little objects – such as a purse or small sack with odds and ends, broken glass, rocks, small bones, etc. If not kept entertained in this manner, they will attempt to escape – and likely succeed. They need no food, water, or energy, but do like sunshine.

## GENESIS CAPSULE

Genesis capsules are large black pills, filled with viscous matter. They are manufactured by the Company, which will not divulge the secrets of their creation. However, it has been determined that mechnites (microscopic robots) are contained within the capsule’s fluid.

It is thought that the mechnites fill themselves with the fluid, then travel through the body’s systems (via blood vessels, lymph nodes, etc.) until they find damaged tissue. Then they inject the healing fluid, and use their small claws to tear away dead tissue and repair the area.

The effect of all this is that at the end (Nish 0) of the next round following ingestion, all wounds will be healed and the user will be fully revived (if unconscious).

Only one capsule may be taken safely in a 24 hour period. Additional capsules require a FR roll – vs 10 times the number of capsules taken in the last 24 hours. If the FR roll fails, the user is irrevocably dead.

## GRAPPLING GLOVES

Like a certain comic hero. These gloves use technology to create rapid grappling-like movement. Each glove bonds to the hand preventing any slippage. The glove contains a spider thin polymer strand that can be fire up to 75 feet. The tip of the strand is capped, each time with an ultra lock pad that will bond with any surface touched at RCD 5V – no roll needed during normal use. The gloves are able to reel in the strands at a speed 75 feet per round (MR 15). If the strand is released, it will be sucked back in at a tremendous rate and spooled back up.

Each glove holds 150 feet of strand, (but can only fire 75 feet at a time). This allows for the strand to be damaged, cut, lost, and still have more to use.

As listed the These gloves act like an awesome grappling gun with winch, are very fast and can release the grappled at ease, and use ultra lock technology so type of surface isn’t as much of an issue. (Would fail in sand, loose dirt, snow, etc. as the substance would just slough away with the pad.)

If acrobatics are learned and an additional 2AP are spent, the acrobatics Die may be rolled to perform unusual feats and movement with the Gloves.

Once the winch is used five times (in either glove), they must be recharged by placing them in bright sunlight for one hour or they will not work. This is a “per glove” rule.

## GRAV PAD

Gravepads look like a traditional oriental fan of gray gauze. The fan is about two feet long. When cast upon the ground, the fan will telescope to 5’ long and then unfold forming a doughnut with a 1sq center and covering the next 1sq ring (the the second ring of a 0/1 grenade).



The material is paper thin but extremely strong, walking on it will not harm it.

Any physical thing that passes over will feel the Gavpad's enormous gravitational field and be pulled and crushed to its surface at a Str of 5V.

Thus arrows, bullets, rocks, melee weapons, all must roll versus the 5V Str or be stuck to the pad.

Oddly, things don't just arc down as physics would dictate, rather failure causes them to drop straight down, no matter their horizontal speed.

These devices were obviously used by some military group with energy weapons who fought low tech opponents who used slug throwing guns, hurled weapons, and melee. The user inside the gravpad could fire energy out, while being shielded from their opponents.

Gravpads will work for up to an hour before losing charge. They self recharge in one hour. So, if used in shorter stents, with breaks, they can be used over and over in short engagements.

Those caught by the GravPad, take no inherent damage, but they are often trapped and easy prey for an energy wielding opponent.

## GYROSCOPIC STABILIZER

Gyroscopic stabilizers are designed for use on Rifles and Cannon's only. This small stabilizer has two arms that clamp on either side of the weapon. When activated the stabilizer makes it very hard to move the weapon against the gyroscopic force. This causes a RC+-10 penalty the first round as the user forces their weapon to point at the desired target. But, after the target is attacked (real or targeting - see below) once at the RC+-10 penalty, the computer in the stabilizer locks onto the target and begins to track it as long as its MR is 10 or less. This provides an aiming bonus to Attack of RC+2 that cumulatively builds every round that the exact same opponent is being attacked up to a max of RC+20. (RC+2 on first round, RC+4 on next round, RC+6 on next round, etc.)

The first round attack at RC+-10 doesn't have to be an actual "pull the trigger" attack. However, it must take an attack action like any other round, but it can be a "target attack" and keep the user's presence a secret.

Multiple attacks work fine if they are ONLY on the target as do most other feats and mastery elements that effect ONLY the target.

If the target goes behind cover, is lost from site, or the target is switched to a new opponent, the process must start again.

## HOLO CAMERA

This unusual block of near transparent polymer has a small DW etched into one corner. It is about the size of typical red brick. If held up to an object and pressed on, mimicking taking a photograph with an old camera, it will somehow "capture" the target within it - like a bee caught in amber.

The process used to miniaturize the object and then store it within the polymer is not known, as it is very advanced.

No living things can be captured. Simple life forms can be swept off like bacteria, but capturing a person in armor, is too difficult. It can't separate the armor from the person.

The size of object depends upon Holo Camera's quality which is rolled as any size up to:

- 1: Destron Armor
- 2: car
- 3: semi truck
- 4: small jet
- 5: small ship
- 6: small building

Stored objects are put into stasis (no time, thus no energy, no function). They are also protected by the Holo Camera's polymer structure which has a durability of RCD 20V.

Objects weight and encumbrance is no more than the holo camera, so a small space craft could be stored and carried around with ease.

The camera's rating for transporting a resistant or difficult target is RCD 3V.

Only one object, no matter the size, can be stored at a time. Releasing a stored item works just like capturing it. It will not release a stored item in a destructive way such as inside a small space. It will only place an object back on a stable horizontal surface of appropriate size. (no dropping objects off cliffs).

Uses: Capture ATMs to destroy at a later time and place. Store fragile things such as a tapestry or ancient manuscript. Stop a device from exploding or "doing its thing" due to the camera's stasis nature, Carry something huge, like a ship or lab, with you. And many more.

Regardless of the above, the "intelligence" of the camera will not allow it to be directly used as a weapon or for destructive purposes when items are released.

The camera may be used once per hour to store and any time to retrieve.

## JUMP-BOOTS

These boots strap to the calves and have a ram-jet technology to provide a burst of air anytime the wearer

jumps. This will triple any jump roll. Of course, the jumper may always choose to reduce the effect to x2, x1, or none.

No realistic limit to use, but the act of jumping is very tiring.

Since these boots typically run in "auto" setting. They do help with AOE jumping.

## JUMP-PACK

This backpack-sized unit contains an array of thrusters enabling individuals to make an assisted jump, that borders on short flight. The pack triples jump distance, and can do this over three rounds (thus x9 jump distance at the end of 3 rounds). Any type of jump applies.

The pack has enough force that it can be activated during a fall, in an emergency burst, and reduces falling by a number of feet equal to a vertical jump roll x5.

Activation is too slow to help in AOE jumps.

Trying to combine a pack and boots leads to catastrophic guidance problems and isn't a possibility.

## MASS CANNON

This weapon is based on the Tharg Cannon for Atk, Range, etc. But it must be taken as a 2<sup>nd</sup> feat.

Mass Cannon's were created for breaching walls, penetrating vehicle armor, and reducing heavy armor (such as Destron) to a manageable amount.

Mass cannon's ammo is a large, baseball sized metal sphere that is very heavy (10 lbs). When the gun fires, the jacket falls away and the large ball releases its contents which are a large half dollar shaped disk of rare, super dense element, and a collection of BB sized pellets of heavy metal. The larger disk hits flat with a great force of mass and cracks the target like dropping a heavy disk onto thin ice. The pellets also penetrate the weakened target and then micro-detonate, creating many smaller fractures. Finally, a concussion wave follows all this that rips and tears and shakes everything loose.

The end result is that a d80 is rolled and that is the percent of the target's Armor that is destroyed. So someone with 24 armor and a d80 roll of f50 results, it would destroy 12 of the 24 armor. That individual would now make armor rolls at 12 not 24. If shot again, the d80 would count versus the 12 that remains, not the 24. Until repaired, armor remains damaged.

It works versus structures too. However, against soft targets, it will have the same effect as a Tharg Cannon. Versus ATMs, it typically works in its Armor destroying capacity.

The Mass Cannon kicks as Str 25, failure means the shooter is knocked backwards and onto their back.

The ammunition is as follows per ball: Cr 100, Maint Buy, ETax ½, Enc 1.

## MOLECULAR DISRUPTER CARBINE

The disrupter feat is identical to blaster carbine, except there can be no multiple attacks and the damage is unique as described below.

Firing a disrupter is like squirting someone with a hose, once the attack starts, the energy must be constantly aimed at the target round after round until: the total damage rolled over all rounds beats the target's AR+Vit. Once that happens the target loses all cohesion in a mini implosion that looks a whole lot like splatting a bug onto a car windshield.

The damage rolled each round is the same as blaster carbine damage (MER is allowed).

Once the target is hit, no further attacks need be made unless the target moves erratically. If the target moves out of range or site, the process has to start over again.

Besides a high pitched whine and a jittery sensation, the target doesn't feel any effect until - splat!

This weapon is very useful against targets with large AR and Vit as it provides a type of "tactical analysis" versus AR and Vit. It is also useful during a combat as a semi-assassin like weapon as a busy target may not notice that they are under attack.

The tip of the gun looks like a small radio dish, almost as if it were a scanner or listening device.

## PALMSTORE

A palmstore is a thin band which fits around a user's hand with small buttons on the palm. The band contains a mini-transporter device which can store the energy pattern of any one object up to 6 enc. When the store button is pressed, the object dematerializes and is stored in the palmstore's memory (0 weight, 0 enc).

When the retrieve button is pressed, the object immediately appears in the user's hand in the exact position it was held when stored.

Storing and retrieving are incidental actions, making a weapon draw take an I action.

Player should roll a d6 on a 6 they have the advanced palm stores that can swap held items so, as one is being stored, another one can replace it. Makes for instant action weapon swapping and the appearance of "magic" to the gullible. (turn lead into gold, etc.).

Living items cannot be stored. And, at most, one palmstore can be used per hand.

## PARTICLE MODIFIER

The standard equipment item, Hologuise, is great for appearing like someone else, but it is just a set of sophisticated holo imagers working in unison. Every good assassin or thief manages to get their hands on a particle modifier.

A particle modifier looks like a fishnet muscle shirt, that stretch to fit nearly anyone, even a Kryll. A small case, like a pocket knife case laid on its side hangs near the bottom side of the shirt. Opening the case releases the drone and AI of the entire particle modifier. It will cloak at RCD 30 and then quietly fly outward at MR 3 to the nearest person or being of interest (Max of 10 sq) and then does a full master scan performing multiple 360 loops. This process takes d6 rounds. When done the probe will return to its case. Note, being the AI of the whole modifier, if the probe is lost, damage, stolen, etc., the whole particle modifier is useless!

The probe can hold up to 5 images.

When activated, the fish net will stretch out like a hair net and cover the character's entire body. Through an unknown technology the net will then modify the character's body on a molecular level so that outward appearance is identical to the target. Total mass must be maintained, but through some creative programming even this can "seem" OK to within ½ as little or 1 and ½ times larger. No physical abilities will be gained of significance. If the new form has wings, the character will grow wings and they will be real and movable, but flight won't happen. Or if the target has huge strong arms, the characters will be just as huge, but the underlying muscle and skeleton will remain the same.

Fangs will grow, eyes will change, horns can grow, Krill can become bipedal, Anthropros can become Kryll, etc. But these changes will be the bare minimum necessary to accomplish the new role. In essence the change is "skin deep." But it is totally real, as the particles of the character's body surface will have been modified. This is true clear down to, but not including genetically. If a cell sample is taken, it will not match the target. But otherwise, it looks - no it is perfect!

Oh, and the vocal cords are also, always modified too, so sound tones and pitch are correct - terminology, language, mannerism, and speech patterns are another thing. Only the tones and pitch are copies, nothing else.

A Few examples, since the change is "skin deep" a Calemora changing into a Zin-Shee will still not be able to eat meat, hear like a cat, or have their eye sight.

For appearance sake, the particle modifier is nearly perfect at an RCD 10V. But if the character does other things to give themselves away such as mannerism, actions, abilities missing, then the GM should have them roll Charisma or some other appropriate ability.

Typically these will be multiplied by x2 due to the believability of appearance.

## PERSONAL TRANSPORTER

A personal transporter is a belt that fits around the user's waist. The unit has a "lock" button that when pressed locks the location of the users feet into memory. It can store up to 3 locations and erase any previous one desired.

Later, the unit can transport the wearer and any carried objects (not touched but held up) up to 100 miles (which would reach a ship in low orbit) to the exact surface and foot position previously locked.

One trick, the operator can place their feet on a vehicle or even the shoulders of a strong person and then transport them later if within range. So a lock doesn't have to be stationary, just the "feet location" does.

A personal transporter technology cannot transport another personal transporter. The transporter has enough neutrinos to make three transports. After that, it must be refilled. A single canister (1 use) of neutrinos is: Cr 300, Maint Buy, ETax 3, Enc ½.

Transporter has a rating of RCD 30 for making a safe transport. Otherwise, their rules are the same as ship or vehicle transporters.

## PHASE DEVIATOR

A phase deviator is a small unit that looks like a heavy, wide, flat, neck choker. When activated, it generates a powerful field of dimensional flux. The wearer rapidly "phases" in and out of this dimension, landing in slightly different locations each time (up to a couple of feet in either direction). This makes the user appear blurry and hard to locate.

The net effect is to double all defense rolls. But it also halves all attack rolls. They also half any precision actions and make certain things, like grabbing a door knob, nearly impossible.

But, the phasing effect magnifies melee damage by doubling it as a result of the rapid jumping around and phasing in and out. A weapon may strike an opponent several times and in multiple non-related locations. It's a gruesome and nasty effect, like a micro burst of a blender.

The bonus does not apply to grab/hold/throw and other "precision" melee attacks.

Each round of operation, the user must make a For vs # of rounds check. All rounds for the last hour are added, even if they were not contiguous. Roll failure results in character developing phase sickness and is

unable to do anything but collapse, vomit, and experience a pounding headache that puts all other headaches to shame. Basically the character can Move up to 3 sq a round, and THAT IS IT (no defense, no talking, etc. Even Shanask will be disoriented). Phase sickness lasts until an FR 50 is rolled, one roll per round.

## RING OF LIGHT

This smooth golden band has a unique power. When activated, the ring creates a field of light that is 3sq in radius and as bright as full daylight. Within the light radius, there are no shadows and the light will permeate into all openings. The light radius can be dialed down to any smaller amount. As can the brightness.

This is nice, but the reason thieves and assassins like them so much is that through some dampening field, the light ends at the radius. One inch past the radius and the wearer would appear to be standing in the typical environmental lighting.

So a thief can hide in shadows in a dark alley, but, dial the ring down to 6' radius and open a lock, read a book, watch for careful footing in total daylight. Or, a party can move through a difficult or dangerous path or climb a rickety stairway in total darkness (or so it would appear).

## SLOW GLASS

Slow glass comes in a canister collection of 6 canisters. They work like mini-spray cans. They spray out a thin film of "glass" like material that transmits light very slowly. So if sprayed on a window, light hitting the windows would experience a time delay, say a minute, before coming out the other side. So everything viewed through the window would be from 1 minute ago.

That's nifty, but the real genius is that the material has a time stretching ability. Otherwise, you would spray it on a window and the window would go black for 1 minute before the first image gets through the glass. Rather, the glass allows the current images through, but at a time delayed (slow motion at half speed) until the full delay is reached, then the images become normal motion, but one minute ago.

Whew, now that you got all that, here's the cool thing. The canisters have a dial that can be set for a one second to one hour delay.

So if set for 10 minutes, and sprayed on a helmet, things would appear slow motion at half speed for 20 minutes, then run at normal speed with a 10 minute delay. (20 minutes because at half speed it would take 20 minutes of time to equal 10).

Each canister can be used for one application, then it is useless.

Uses include: if sprayed on an opponent's helmet or glasses, it will cut all applicable stats in half the first round, then down to 1/3, 1/4, 1/5, 1/6 etc. Attacking with a canister uses the same stats (must learn the feat separately) as touch attack.

But there are many more creative uses, like spraying it on the windows of a vehicle, ATM camera, even a space ship that uses visuals for docking. It can be sprayed on surveillance cameras or windows.

And, the glass has one last neat property. You can start by spraying it onto two supports (like floor and wall) and spray your own thin glass sheet across and entire door or hallway. It will have very little strength, but anyone looking down the hall will see everything time delayed.

Though each canister is a one use item, in a combat the GM should allow several rounds of use. If used on a small house, several windows could be used. Hallways can be covered up to 10' x 10' per canister.

## SPEED DISPLACER

Speed displacers are a set of bands worn on the arms and legs. When activated, they fire off a mini-teleport with each step, placing the wearer to appear two paces ahead for each one pace taken. This, of course, doubles MR

The teleports are too short and based on random stride length to teleport through any solid object. They strictly double MR.

Speed displacers can maintain their power endlessly, so there is no limit to use. However, when they are on, they emit a strong humming noise that can be heard for a fair distance.

## SPHERE OF WILL

Doubles WP checks when held or worn (pendant/etc.), gives domination skill at E when held in hand

## STATIC BAR

This piece of alien technology resembles a bar of shining gray metal, approximately three feet long. To activate, the user grasps both ends and twists, engaging a powerful static field.

When activated, the static bar locks in place relative to the nearest large object (the ground, a vehicle, a ship, etc.). If a static bar is activated while in mid-air, for example, it will remain hanging there, even if it is

released, and will be as solid and immovable as if it were firmly attached to some invisible metal frame. A static bar attaches with RCD 4V strength.

Static bars have been found throughout Known Space (particularly in the areas near Aerolk Space). No one knows what they were actually used for (as weapons, as tools, as building components). However, the potential uses of a static bar are endless, and players are encouraged to discover them.

For example, if on top of a moving vehicle, the bar could be activated three or four feet above the vehicle to create a stable handle or backrest. Or, the bar could be activated next to a door to hold it shut (or open). The bar can be used as a step or even a handle. A character could jump or fall and use the bar as an emergency hand hold.

If moved or knocked aside, the bar will fall to the ground.

## SUSPENSOR BELT

A suspensor belt is a large metal ring with expansion slides that can fit around the mid section of most beings. The ring is about 4 inches by 3 inches and wraps all around the user so that there is about a two inch space between the ring and them. A series of 8 pins extend inwards from the belt's ring to contact the user. These pins must be run in to contact the user firmly.

Once turned on the suspensor belt activates its own antigravity field and will hover along as the character moves. There is a very low hum, but only discernable in near silence. Items can be suspended from the many hocks, fasteners, holes, storage boxes, bolts of the belt. It is very well designed, very versatile and the sections can be slid around to accommodate most needs. The belt can suspend up to 25 Enc. If the users armor is both solid and rigid (like power armor, full armor, some bio armor such as carapace, the pins can be ran into the armor and anything that the armor carries may be counted as part of the suspensor belt Enc.

The belt also comes with an "arm" which can be mounted into a ball-joint style socket. The arm has a universal mounting plate on the other end for mounting nearly any item, but heavy weapons, just as cannon class guns, are most common. The arm is extremely articulated and can be moved in nearly any direction. It comes with internal technology (equivalent to old fashioned hydraulics), that will create a nearly-buoyant state for the item, making it easy to move around. This allows a character to keep a large item, like a cannon, out at the ready at all times and still walk around smoothly and without tiring. The belt will compensate for the off centered, center of balance during arm use.

There is but one disadvantage to a suspensor belt, MR is the worst of: 6 MR or -1 MR from current.

## TIERRA OF LIGHT

On command beautiful heaven like light shines forth and tiara glows magnificently. The light is extremely bright, like sunrise and will go for miles. It fans out in a 90 degree cone in front of the wearer.

In combat, the light is so bright that those who see in the visible spectrum have to make a FR vs RCD 20 or be unable to see for the rest of that round. This will drop many stats (Atk, Def, MR) to ½ normal. This is a large AOE. But it will only affect a being for one round, before their eyes adjust.

The light will last for 4 hours if the character doesn't move their head and stands still. If the character swivels their head or walks, it will last for 10 minutes. In a combat situation, it will last for 1 round.

Once activated, the tiara must be worn just at sunrise, while facing toward the sun. For some gravitational reason, this only works while standing on a planet (not a space craft or space station, unless it is a very large one, like a war moon).

## TRANSPORTAL

This device consists of a two one-foot long, two inch thick square bars.

When activated, the transportal bar telescopes out to 3 feet and bonds (using an ultra lock field) to the surface below it. When first activated, the transportal searches for other transportals within its 1000 foot range at RCD 10. The difficulty of the search varies depending upon range and interference (as set by the GM).

A search roll may be made once per round. If successful the portal will form, but if the other bar is not active, it will emit a beeping sound and flash to inform its owner that a portal link is being attempted. In order for the link to succeed, the other bar must be placed on the ground and activated.

Once another bar is located and activated a seven-foot tall wall of energy appears above each bar (if within 1000 feet).

Those from either side may then step through one bar's energy portal and instantly step out the others.

A user may reach through and grab the far bar, and bring it through, thus closing the doorway and retrieving both bars.

These devices may remain active endlessly without power failure. This makes them the perfect instant doorway between two teams or as a quick escape (leave one bar activated in a safe place).

## ULTRA LOCK 2 BOOTS

This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of the popular Ultra Lock Boots (see the Equipment Booklet). The 2<sup>nd</sup> generation does everything the first does, but it also can create a supportive field much like an invisible medical stretcher of energy. The boots place these on the necessary side or sides to support the wearer while they walk up walls or steep slopes. This eliminates any need to roll for walking up walls, other than the Boot's bonding strength, which has been improved to 6V.

When active, MR is at ½ normal.

## WALL BALL

This ball works similarly to an ATM Sphere above. It is a metallic ball the size of a baseball. When thrown, it will activate as soon as it hits a surface. It will then unpack from the internal dimension and transport out a wall three feet thick and up to 20 feet high and 20 feet wide. The wall is made of old castle style granite blocks.

The creation of the wall is non-destructive in that it will only appear on a relatively flat smooth surface. It will be as high and long as it can, out to its 20', but will not produce force against any item in either direction. If it were tossed in a small room with a light bulb hanging down, its height would stop, just toughing the light bulb.

However, its sheer weight can cause indirect harm, just as being cast on a small footman's bridge.

If the wall is tapped three times hard, by the one who threw the wall, ball, it will rapidly fold up into the ball again.

It is theorized that an expedition to an ancient planet was being led and in order to study the castle structures and walls, they were stored in these "wall balls." Of course, their original purpose has been lost.

The wall has a Str and armor of 20V. If any block or blocks are not touching the others when the ball is retrieved, those blocks will not be stored again and will be missing in future uses.) So using it to crush something, like a large table, as it may take a lot of work to get the blocks all touching afterwards, or simply lose some.

Uses are endless: seal a passageway, toss up in front of oncoming cars, use to cut enemy numbers in half. Create a lot of mass or weight, etc.

## BioTech Major Artifacts

### SENSOR SPIDERS

Spiders can be release to scout everywhere within 18sq, and if find sentient life will report back to user. The sensor spiders can keep up a permanent vigil but they are susceptible to damage and shunned in most civil settings. If they are slain, the remaining spiders on the host will create a web with egg sacks and a new generation will hatch in 2 days.

## Cybernetics Major Artifacts

### CYBER-LEGS, SPEED

These legs are designed for speed and agility. They double MR and Jumps, including AOE jumps.

### CYBER-LEGS, STRENGTH

Cyber-legs of strength are large reinforced cyber legs designed for support and strength. Their internal servos and can create a strength boost of x5 to any leg based Str roll. And encumbrance capacity is doubled for all 5 categories (on the Front Sheet).

The bulk of these legs does create a maximum MR of 8 or a -1 MR penalty if MR is already 8 or less.

### TISH-SHOCKS

Tish-shocks create several thousand nail shaped shock absorbers, placed under the skin and rooted to the core bone below. They help to spread out blunt force and absorb the impact more evenly and scientifically than tissue alone. Net effect is that the cyber being may end up with a bunch of round circular bruises, but all blunt damage is reduced by x3. Meaning that all AR, or Str rolls versus blunt, crushing, falling, or any blunt force (blunt weapons) is made at x3.

### TITANIUM ENDO SKELETON

An extreme operation in which all of the character's bones are replaced or grafted with titanium. The character's skeletal system will then have an RCD 5V resistance to damage and breaking.

The endoskeleton will double the effect of joint locks if they exist and increase Tish-Shock effect to x5 if they exist.

## X-RAY EYE

The X-ray eye, allows penetrating sight through layers of material at a roll of RCD D16. The roll result is an open-ended roll for general purposes, but the roll is also the maximum depth, in inches for light material like cloth or a mattress, half that for medium density such as wood and half that (1/4) for very dense such as stone or metal. The presence of electronics or other energy may have additional effects.

## Psionic Major Artifacts

### SPHERE OF WILL

Sphere's of will are baseball sized orbs of dark marble. When held a cat's eye flashes into one's mind's eye for a brief moment. Then, while held, all WP rolls for any purpose are doubled.

Three random Psionic feats should be rolled. While the orb is held, the user may use any of the three as if they had learned them. If the user wishes, they may expend AP to master at the feats.

If the wielder knows any of the feats, holding the orb while using the feats will double one aspect of the feat each use as decided by the player: range, a single die roll, or duration.

### PULSING PALM

This is an intricate, artistic weave of silver and platinum wire that slips over the fingers and onto the palm. At its center, the wire holds an amber stone the size and shape of a 16-sided die.

If the pulsing palm is slipped on and worn by a Psionic the amber gem will always glow (brightness indicates the Psionics power). Wearing the pulsing palm is awkward, making the hand ridged and useless. But, if it is brought within 3 feet of a subject, it will go from glowing to pulsing with the intensity equal to the target's Psionic power. It's ability to detect is at RCD 20.

But, the real ability of the pulsing palm is to place the stone inches from a structure (wall, Vehicle, extremely large and brittle armor (Destron or Carapace). If the psionicist focuses their mind as an Full action, they pulsing palm with tap into the part of the brain that normally creates Psionic force fields, balls of force, push, etc. and super charge the crystal with that energy. Then, the pulsing palm will let out two pulses, using the intricate wires as a mental antenna it will release the first pulse putting up a 10' diameter shield centered at the amber stone and the send pulse will release a burst of massively destructive force. The shield will almost

always protect the user as the 10' round area is decimated with massively enhanced Psionic force. The net effect is a structural damage of RCD 6V. If used on extremely heavy armor (Destron for example) the first trick will be to keep the stone a few inches away from the target for a full round while it builds (no moving as it takes an F action).

Once used, the Psionicist will not be able to perform any field, force, levitate, or any other Psionic feat that moves or hold mater for 15 minutes. During this time, the structural blast feature of the pulsing palm is also unusable, as the wielder simply has no mental "force" energy left.

### MIND WIPE

Also known as the "flashing thing" among the less educated, a mind wipe is a small pen sized rod with a lens, a mid-section twist for power-on/off, and a thumb press button on top.

To use a mind wipe, the character must know one or more Psionic feats. The more feats known, the longer the wipe may be. As follows

Psionic Feats Know	Max Wipe Time	Meta
1	1 Min	R
2	5 Min	R
3	10 Min	O
4	15 Min	Y
5	30 Min	G
6+	60 Min	B

To use a Mind Wipe, the desired minutes are selected (must be possible base on number of known Psionic feats) and the indicated meta must be spent.

Once target, time, and meta selected, the rod is twisted to power it up, and the victim(s) must be looking in the general direction of the mind wipe and be within 4 squares. By depressing the top button, a flash of Psionic light/energy is emitted that creates a period of amnesia in the victim(s) equal to the time selected. So, if 10 minutes were selected, the victim(s) would completely forget the last 10 minutes. The Mind Wipe can care less about its victims, number, friendly, enemy, everyone without a 90 degree cone out to 4sq looking "roughly" in the direction of the mind wipe will be effected.

Since flashing off of mirrors, shiny armor, etc. can bounce the signal back at the user, a uniband, visor colored a deep purple is provided so the operator need not be affected by accident.

The victim is allowed a save versus Will Power to avoid the effects. A typical Mind Wipe has a rating of RCD 30.

## WARRIOR SERVANT

The warrior servant looks like metal crown with a single gem in the main peak. Upon closer examination, it is actually three nearly identical but diminishing crowns connected together, but worn as one. The crown is one fit for a warrior king, not elegant, more suggestive of conquest and triumph.

The three gems (one per receding crown) appear as diamonds initially. If worn on the head of a Psionist, each stone, one at a time, will turn green as emerald, 8 hours after that crowns criteria is met (the crowns charge themselves with the psionic energy created at the moment of death. Slaying an enemy must be a "worthy" enemy. Killing a rat or a willing foe will have no effect. Neither will getting the killing blow in on an already weak opponent. The Psionist must take the opponent all by themselves.

Crown	Criteria
Small	Slay an enemy via Psionics
Medium	Slay an enemy via Ranged/Hurled
Large	Slay an enemy in Melee

The crowns may be used in any order and they do not require the others to be changed to emerald. But the one being used MUST hold an emerald stone.

If the small emerald crown is placed upon an ally's head that ally can either have double MR or double any one attribute roll (roll not persistent like Vitality) per round for one hour.

If the medium emerald crown is placed upon an ally's head, they will get to make two Meta regain rolls each round, keeping the preferred roll. This will last for one hour.

If the large emerald crown is placed upon an ally's head, all melee damage rolls will be lucked. And their Vitality will double for one hour.

Placing more than one crown onto an allies head will requires an RCD 30 roll versus their WP (both rolls remain doubled). If the crown wins, the ally will lose half of their Max Vitality as the crown absorbs it. Lost Vitality will return one point per day. Almost no science can repair this as it is a mental drain of life force.

Once an emerald crown is used for one hour or taken off for any reason, it returns to diamond until recharged.

The wielder may not use any of the crowns on his own head as he is the mental "battery" and the crowns will simply try to charge themselves. Of course, he could loan them to another Psionist who could charge it.

Now, if any crown is placed upon an enemy's head (requires a GTH attack if unwilling), they will fall under the Psionists mental suggestions. This does require one crown still on the Psionists head as well, but it doesn't

have to be emerald. The one controlled gets a WP vs RCD 30 when first placed on their head and once per round during Nish and once per hour when not in Nish.

These trapped enemies are called "warrior servants." For they will fight or serve without waver and without conscience. If they should make their WP check and break out, the crowns will try to fall off their heads and not be noticed at a WP vs RCD 30.

The bad news, is that the ex-warrior servant will remember everything and know exactly who was pulling their strings.

## Psychosomatics

Since psychosomatics is mind over body, there are very few psychosomatic artifacts.

## SOMATONES

This neck bracer holds the skill of two random psychosomatic feats. Organize them so the first is of lower rank. If the ranks tie, the first is the less "effective."

When the somatone is worn a non-psychosomatic will gain the first random feat as if it were known. The feat can be up to 3 ranks above the character's actual rank. If the wearer is a psychosomatic, both feats will be learned.

Mastery will not be learned, but will be available by the normal rules. If the somatones are removed for more than a day, the character may choose to lose any mastery purchased and the AP are returned.

The feats stored by the somatone will have double normal duration, if applicable, If not, their Meta cost will be one color less.

## Sorce

### BOOTS OF LEVITATION

Boots of levitation come in a few different models. There is a low cut, soft leather green boot with soft leather sole, a high hard black boot with hard wooden sole, and a medium cut, brown boot with hard sole.

These boots, when worn by a Sorcist, can levitate the wearer up or down at a rate of 25' per round. This uses no Meta and can be done indefinitely. However, there is no horizontal control, so winds or force can push the Sorcist in other directions.



## POCKET DIMENSION

A pocket dimension is a clear crystal pyramid, long and narrow, about two inches high. If placed on the Sorcist's head and given a snap – like spinning a top, the Sorcist will be wrapped up in what appears to be blue tinted plastic wrap, like a candy treat in its wrapper.

Actually, the crystal is pulling in the shard like planes of little pocket dimension and wrapping the user up inside of it. The process takes just a few seconds.

Others will see the person vanish as if a bunch of invisible sheets were being pulled around them. Once gone, others will not be able to see, touch, smell or scan that the person is there, because, in fact, they aren't. They are in a pocket dimension.

But, even better, they are in a Sorce created pocket dimension. Which is why only a Sorcist can activate the crystal (Must have at least 3 Sorce enhancements and activation uses an Yellow Meta).

The Sorcist, sees everything a bit differently. It is like being wrapped in blue sheets of ridged crystal, totally impervious to the Sorcist in every way. There will be just enough room inside the pocket dimension to stretch your arms out and that's it. Due to the "magic" of the Sorce, all events from outside can be seen. If someone runs through the Sorcists location, they will appear to run up to the crystal boundary, then away from the other side (not ever inside).

Only the Sorcist may enter, the dimension will ONLY allow the one using the crystal – the Sorcist – to enter.

The Sorcist may at any time spin the crystal again (no Meta Cost) and return to normal space.

Activation or deactivation is an M action.

Uses: hide from opponents, get out of the elements. Survive an upcoming event (even a nuclear strike or planetary destruction).

## SORCE SPHERE

This is a simple but amazing "ship" for the lack of a better word. It is a marble sized dark gray translucent bubble. The Sorcist must know at least five Sorce feats or masteries to use the Sorce sphere.

If a Blue Meta (or Omega works too) is used while a Sorcist touches the bubble, it will expand. To just accommodate the Sorcist and one other of similar size. To enter the passengers simply step through the bubble's shell. The Sorcist must go first and needs to leave last.

Inside, the Sorcist simply thinks of a known destination that they have seen before, either with their own eyes or with extensive imagery. It always takes a Sorce Sphere d10 hours to get to any known destination

no matter the distance, even a five foot trip would take d10 hours. A trip to the other side of the universe would take d10 hours.

Once the Sorcist is in the bubble, it will wait for one round (in case there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> passenger) then it will rise into the air and outer atmosphere (if on a planet) at greater and greater velocity. Then, faster than any ship can travel in normal space (for the bubble never leaves normal space) it will travel to any destination know by the Sorcist within d10 hours. Distance is not a factor. It's just a random d10 hours. Once on course, the bubble can't be turned, stopped, nor another destination picked.

The interior environment will be adequate, though no food or drink or facilities of any kind will exist, just a large 10 or 15' bubble of thin gray material.

The bubble's main defense is its incredible speed giving it a Def RCD 10V to 30S depending upon how far it is traveling and in how many hours (the faster the better the defense).

The bubble has an Armor of RCD 8, and RCD 10 Hull Points (Both are Personal Class). It has no offense and there is no way to control its flight path.

However, other than intentional attack or very unexpected phenomenon. The bubble is impervious to the effects of space flight. Space debris, radiation, etc. are totally blocked or broken upon the bubble.

When the Sorce Sphere stops at its destination, the occupants can simply step out. Once the Sorcist steps out, the bubble will shrink and anyone left behind will be trapped. They too will shrink. The Sorcist would have to reactivate the bubble and step in before they could exit.

## Lesser Artifacts

There is an endless amount of lesser artifacts that modify attributes, resistances, combat attributes, feats, weapons and armor, such as a ring of RC+3 Str. Instead of trying to list a sampling of specific lesser artifacts, below, you'll find a matrix that allows you to select or randomly roll thousands of combinations.

**How to roll lesser artifacts:** Many of these artifacts will have one or more lists like, "Works for 2/4/6 rounds at Free/R/O/Y with a range of 1/2/3/4/5/6/7sq. For each of these sets (e.g., "2/4/6") count the number in the set and have the player make a random roll. In this case a d3 would be rolled for set 1, then a d4 for the second set (Free/R/O/Y) and a d7 for the third set (1/2/3/4/5/6/7).

Please feel VERY free to ad-lib as much of this as you wish. I often have players roll and then use the results to "help" me come up with a nicely fitting lesser artifact.

### **CURSED**

All lesser artifacts may have a negative trait, called a curse. Use the following table.

Cursed (on 1v6 must roll for a cursed trait) (d21):

1. Only works at night
2. Only works when alone
3. Fails 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8
4. Breaks 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8/1v12/1v16
5. Works outdoors only
6. Works indoors only
7. Works underground only
8. Works off planet only
9. Works only on planets
10. Must be fed something worth 10/50/100/250 cr
11. Likes to blink up to d4/d6/d8/d10/d12/d16 sq in random direction 1v4/1v6/1v8/1v10/1v12 when used.
12. You must eat twice as much
13. You must sleep twice as much
14. It drops your Vit by 1 each day while owned
15. It drops your Str/For/WP by 1 each day while owned
16. Has 1v10/1v16/1v20 chance to turn you undead upon 1<sup>st</sup> use/each use/once per game session
17. Has a 1v20/1v30 chance to kill you on first use/each game session
18. may not perform any multi-attacks while owned
19. Permanently binds R/O/Y/G/B while owned

20. 1v8/1v10/1v12/1v16/1v20 each game session on first use of permanently dropping Vit/Str/WP/For by 1.
21. Causes a reroll of 1/2/3 attributes and take the worst/best

## **Weapons**

Activate Power by (d10):

1. Trace Runes
2. Speak Runic Words
3. Carve/transfer tattoo then trace
4. Point weapon upwards or other direction
5. Simple Kata
6. Complex Kata
7. Summon power (kneel w/ hands on hilt, etc.)
8. Automatic
9. Aura
10. Sonic nova

Ability (d53)

1. Has 1/2/3 luck box usable for (Atk, Dmg, Atk/Dmg) usable once per (combat, hour, day)
2. Has 1/2/3 Meta usable for weapon abilities only (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue)
3. Can turn invisible for R/O/Y Meta for 2/3/4 rounds
4. Can summon to your hand from sheath/bag/etc. for R/O/Y
5. Can summon to your hand from up to 1/10/100 miles for Y/G/B.
6. Can banish into a pocket dimension for O/Y/G/B and resummon for R/O/Y.
7. Can perform 1/2/3 of its multiple mastery attacks for a lesser color than normal.
8. Can place opponent into a cube of ice if hit opponent (no Dmg needed) of Str RCD 8/12/16/20/30 for R/O/Y/G/B fails 1in2/in3/in4/in6/in8.
9. Causes Str RCD 8/12/16/20/30 cold for R/O/Y/G/B that reduces movement by d2/d4/d6/d8/d10 squares, lasting for 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8.
10. Gives RC+2/4/6/8 Str/Nish/MR/Vit/Def/AR when held/for R/O/Y/G/B
11. Gives RC+2/4/6/8 resistance to heat/cold/acid/disease/poison/Sorce/psi when held/for R/O/Y/G/B
12. Allows levitation for R/O/Y/G/B at the rate of 1/2/3/4/5/6 sq per round for a maximum of 1/2/4/8/16/indefinite rounds if the Meta is continued.
13. x2/x3/x4 Dmg to doors/walls/vehicles for Free/R/O/Y.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. For Meta, injects Sleep/Paralysis/DOT/Death poison of Str RCD 4/6/8/10/12/16/20/30 (DOT is limited to RCD 3/4/6/8) fails 1in2/4/6/8.</li> <li>15. For Y can blink/teleport as a Full/Atk action for 2/4/8/16/32/1mile/10miles/100miles. Can be done once an hour/day.</li> <li>16. Has can use MER mastery for one/two cheaper meta than normal.</li> <li>17. While holding, can use Green Meta as a luck box.</li> <li>18. While holding, all jump rolls are x2/x3/x4 for Free/R/O/Y Meta.</li> <li>19. Piercing shriek at RCD 4/8/12/16/20 that will stun all within 1/2sq for 1v2/1v3/1v4 rounds for R/O/Y/G.</li> <li>20. For O/Y/G/B can summon a flame strike of Dmg = to Weapon Dmg up to 4/8/16sq.</li> <li>21. Can encase opponent in a magic shell for Y/G/B with Str of RCD 6/8/10/12/16/20/30.</li> <li>22. For O/Y/G/B can drain up to 4/6/8/10/12 of next wounding hit to yourself.</li> <li>23. For Y/G/B can summon a knight/war dog/warrog/droid/AFrame/alien that will (using this weapon)/(using their own weapon) at a rating of RCD 6/8/10/12/16/20/30.</li> <li>24. For FREE/R/O/Y/G/B can shove weapon into a solid object like butter and later retrieve it - as a means of storage and just a cool effect.</li> <li>25. Weapon can activate a NV force field for R/O/Y/G/B of strength (any of the actual NV force field strengths - see Armor booklet)</li> <li>26. Can walk on liquid while being held for Free/R/O/Y</li> <li>27. Can breathe underwater/in space while held for FREE/R/O/Y/G</li> <li>28. Gain infravision/star light/life sight/X-Ray while held/while carried</li> <li>29. Gain danger sense at RCD 6/8/10/12/16/20 while held/while carried</li> <li>30. Can create a Tharg effects as if from pistol/carbine/rifle (use actual stats from them, without the need to learn them)</li> <li>31. Can create a free Meta Regain roll once per battle/hour/day</li> <li>32. Can summon an appropriate mount (horse,cat,cyber dog,bio-worm,hoverbike) once per hour/day for FREE/R/O/Y</li> <li>33. Can buff party with RC+2/3/4 to Str/Dex/SB/For/WP/Arc/Vit/Nish/MR/Atk/Dmg/Def/AR once per battle/hour</li> <li>34. All Death checks are at RCB4/6/8/10 while owned and near by</li> <li>35. All Unconscious checks are at RCB4/6/8/10 while owned or near by</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>36. Party's Death/Unconsciousness checks are at RCB4/6 while weapon is held/while carried</li> <li>37. Gain acrobatics Feat at RCD 8/12/16/20 while weapon is carried or held</li> <li>38. For F action can turn invisible if don't move at RCD 10/20/30 For O/Y/G once per Unlimited/10min/hour/day.</li> <li>39. Can cause items up to 50/100/250/500/1000/2000 lbs to move at a MR of 1/2/3/4/5/6 for R/O/Y/G/B if no resistance.</li> <li>40. Crush wall - a massive ability to burst walls at RCD 20/30/40/60 for Blue Meta - can do once per hour/3hr/6hr/12hr/day</li> <li>41. Can shoot a melee weapon (clone/original) with same Atk &amp; Dmg as in melee up to 4/8/12/16 sq for R/O/Y/G/B.</li> <li>42. Weapon can levitate in place when released</li> <li>43. Weapon can give off light up to 8/16/32/64/128/256 squares in a beam/cone/globe for FREE/R/O/Y</li> <li>44. Can lock weapon into place like static bar (use static bar statistics)</li> <li>45. Wielder can fly in direction the weapon is pointed at MR of 2/4/6/8/10/12 fails 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6, check each round, for R/O/Y/G/B. Works once per hour/6hr/12hr/24hr.</li> <li>46. Built in enemy scanner at RCD 8/12/16/20 at range 2/4/8/16sq - will only locate enemies. Costs R/O/Y/G/B.</li> <li>47. Auto tracker for perfect return trip in a dungeon, overland, etc. at RCD 10/20/40/60</li> <li>48. Sensor alerts when air is bad at RCD 10/20/30</li> <li>49. Provides FREE tactical analysis on an opponent for a single R/O/Y whether feat is known or not.</li> <li>50. Wounding Dmg has 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8/1v10 chance of leaving an explosive nodule that does RCD 4/6/8/10/12/16 Dmg at the end of the round.</li> <li>51. Weapon durability is x2/x3/x4/x5/impervious</li> <li>52. Draw speed is 1/2/3/4 action types better @Free/R/O/Y</li> <li>53. Enc is reduced to 75%/50%/25%/10%/0</li> </ol> |
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## Armor

Activate (d10):

1. Trace Runes
2. Speak Runic Words
3. Carve/transfer tattoo then trace
4. Stance

5. Weapon slam into armor
6. Summon power (hold out shield)
7. Automatic
8. Aura
9. Sonic nova
10. Palms together over head and bring to chest

## Ability (d35):

1. Has 1/2/3 luck boxes usable for (Def, Atk, Def/AR) usable once per (combat/hour/day)
2. Has 1/2/3 Meta usable for armor mastery elements only of type R/O/Y/G/B that regenerate once per battle/hour/day
3. Can turn invisible, fails after 1v2/1v4/1v6/1v8/1v10 rounds for R/O/Y/G/B once per battle/hour/day
4. Can banish into pocket dimension for O/Y/G/B and resummon for R/O/Y.
5. Can do mastery MER for one/two Meta colors less than normal
6. If attacked, can place opponent into a cube of ice if you are hit (no Dmg needed) of Str RCD 8/12/16/20/30 for R/O/Y/G/B fails 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8.
7. Causes Str RCD 8/12/16/20/30 cold for R/O/Y/G/B that reduces movement by 2/4/6/8/10 squares, lasting for 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8.
8. Gives RC+ 2/4/6/8 Str/Nish/MR/Vit/Def/AR buff when worn
9. Gives RC+ 2/4/6/8 resistance to heat/cold/acid/disease/poison/Sorce/psi buff when worn
10. Allows levitation for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B at the rate of 1/2/3/4/5/6 sq per round for a maximum of 1/2/4/8/16/indefinite rounds
11. For @Y can teleport as a Full/Atk action for 2/4/8/16/32/1mile/10miles/100miles once per hour/6hours/12hours/day.
12. While worn, can use Green Meta as a luck box.
13. While worn, all jump rolls are x2/x3/x4 for FREE/R/O/Y
14. For R/O/Y/G/B can summon a knight/war dog/warrog/droid/AFrame/alien that will fight for you at RCD 6/8/10/12/16/20/30. Can summon once per battle/hour/day.
15. Armor can activate an NV force field for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B of type (all types listed in Armor Booklet)
16. Can walk on liquid while being worn for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B
17. Can breathe underwater/in space for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B.

18. Gain infravision/star light/life sight/X-Ray activated for 1 hour for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B
19. Gain danger sense at RCD 6/8/10/12/16/20 for one roll at FREE/R/O
20. Can heal you for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B at RCD 4/6/8/10/12 at a frequency of battle/hour/day
21. Can summon an appropriate mount (horse,cat,cyber dog,bio-worm,hoverbike) once per hour/day for FREE/R/O/Y
22. Can buff party with RC+ 2/3/4 to Str/Dex/SB/For/WP/Arc/Vit/Nish/MR/Atk/Dmg/Def/AR once per battle/hour/day for duration of battle/hour/day for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B
23. All Death checks are at RCB4/6/8/10 at Free/R/O/Y
24. All Unconscious checks are at RCB4/6/8/10 at Free/R/O/Y
25. Party's Death/Unconsciousness checks are at RCB4/6 always
26. Gain acrobatics at RCD 8/12/16/20
27. For F action can turn invisible if don't move each round may fail at 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6/1v8 @FREE/R/O/Y/G/B
28. Can cause items up to 50/100/250/500/1000/2000 lbs to move at a MR of 1/2/3/4/5/6 for R/O/Y/G/B if no resistance.
29. Armor can give off light up to 8/16/32/64/128/256 squares in a beam/cone/globe for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B lasts until stopped.
30. Can fly in direction pointed MR 2/4/6/8/10/12 fails 1v2/1v3/1v4/1v6, check each round, for O/Y/G/B Meta can use once per 1hr/6hr/12hr/24hr
31. Built in enemy scanner at RCD 8/12/16/20 at range 2/4/8/16sq - will only locate enemies. Costs R/O/Y/G/B.
32. Auto tracker for perfect return trip in a dungeon, overland, etc. at RCD 10/20/40/60
33. Sensor alerts when air is bad at RCD 10/20/30
34. Armor durability is x2/x3/x4/x5/impervious
35. Don speed is 1/2/3/4 rounds or action types better @Free/R/O/Y

## Equipment & Miscellaneous

## What is it? (d64)

1. Ring
2. Necklace
3. Boots
4. Gloves

5. Vambrace
6. Arm Band
7. Press on tattoo that becomes permanent
8. Tiara
9. Crown
10. Helm
11. Gold Tooth – must be inserted into mouth
12. Eye patch
13. Glasses or goggles
14. Visor
15. Nose ring
16. Bracelet
17. Gauntlet
18. Clasp
19. Broach
20. Hair Pin
21. Hair Comb (the kind that is used to hold hair)
22. Ear Rings
23. Snuff Box
24. Marble or set of marbles
25. Stones or set of stones
26. Jewels or set of jewels
27. Cloak
28. Robe
29. Shirt
30. Jacket
31. Belt
32. Harness
33. Bell
34. Lantern
35. ultra lock patch
36. Bone (knuckle/radius/tibia/femur)
37. Wish Bone
38. Skull
39. Walking Stick
40. Crooked Stick
41. Wooden ball
42. Glass globe (1-2 hollow/3-4 solid/5-6 glowing)
43. Statuette
44. Mini Robot
45. Neck Band
46. Neck Collar
47. Body Paint (particular pattern may be required)
48. Black Box
49. Dagger
50. Alien tooth
51. Alien tooth necklace
52. Ancient relic (unidentifiable instrument)
53. Crown of thorns
54. Vial – of liquid/ooze/glowing light/empty
55. Cup
56. Bowl
57. Bowl and Pedestal
58. Stool
59. Blanket

60. Animal Leash
61. Rock with symbol or rune
62. Unmelting ice cube or cylinder
63. Cylinder of unknown element
64. Ball of unknown element

## Criteria (d3):

1. Works when carried
2. Works when worn (if appropriate)
3. Works when held

## Abilities (d32):

1. While used/carried/held you gain 1/2/3 random feats at RCD 6/8/10/12/16.
2. Gain Jump/MR/Vit/Nish/Str/SB/Dex/For/WP/Arc/Awa RC+2/3/4/5/6
3. Gain Jump/MR/Vit/Nish/Str/SB/Dex/For/WP/Arc/Awa RCB2/3/4/5/6
4. Party buff of Jump/MR/Vit/Nish/Str/SB/Dex/For/WP/Arc/Awa buff of +2/3/4/5/6 or d4/d6/d8/d10
5. Gain an extra A/M/F action once per 5rnds/10rnds/battle/hour
6. Can Atk in the middle of a move
7. Gain Infravision/star light/life vision/x-ray for Free/R/O/Y for one hour once per Always/1hr/6hr/12hr/day.
8. Breath water check each hour fails 1v6/1v4/1v8/never.
9. Stop Breathing – no need to break at all lasts for always/1hr/6hr/24hr, useable once per hour/day
10. Never hungry no need to eat at all lasts for always/1hr/6hr/24hr, useable once per hour/day
11. Never Sleep no sleep to eat at all lasts for always/1hr/6hr/24hr, useable once per hour/day
12. Survive a vacuum – no damage from space
13. Summon a warrior/warrog/ATM/bio-creature/cyber-hog at RCD 6/8/10/12/14/16/18/20 to serve until a 1v2/1v4/1v8/1v10/1v12/1v20 – check one a round, can summon once per battle/hour/day for FREE/O/G
14. Shrink to 2/4/6/8/12" tall for FREE/O/G for 1v2/1v4/1v8/1v16 check each round.
15. Grow +1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8' taller for FREE/O/G for 1v2/1v4/1v8/1v16 check each round.
16. Walk through matter (as per Sorce - Ghost Walk feat) usable once per battle/hour/day for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B
17. Immortal stance as per Sorce - Immortal Stance feat. Usable once per battle/hour/day for FREE/R/O/Y/G/B

18. Rocket upwards at tremendous rate to as far as 100 miles (low orbit). Usable once per hour/day/week for FREE/O/G
19. Chameleon – works like stealth but in any lighting at RCD 6/8/10/12/16/20
20. Invisible – can turn invisible once per battle/hour/day. Lasts for 1v2/1v4/1v8/1v12 check each round for R/O/Y/G/B
21. Change into animal form  
Bear/Panther/squirrel/Salmon/Dove for 5rounds/10rounds/1hour/4hours once every battle/hour/day for R/O/Y/G/B. You will be able to move like the form, breath like the form, and act as the form. Otherwise, all your stats remain the same.
22. Change into ATM form – can transform in at a ATM that is exactly like the ATM of the ATM sphere once per battle/hour/day at FREE/O/G
23. 2 Death/Unconsciousness Checks – may roll twice for the indicated check
24. Luck boxes for Green/Blue Meta
25. Transfer a Meta Color to an ally by touch/1sq/2/3/4 at the cost of another R/FREE Meta.
26. Same Nish – have Same Nish Feat
27. Nish Lord – roll twice each round and keep better Nish
28. Vit Pool of RC# 4/8/16
29. Atk/Dmg/Def/AR pool of RC# 4/8/16
30. Roll a Major artifact. This artifact summons the major artifact but only for 1/2/4/8 rounds every hour/day.
31. Officer in a ball – the ball contains an ATM ship officer. Roll a random position and the officer is RCD 5/10/15/20. The officer will do NOTHING but its roll.
32. Doubles all Meta rolls resulting in R/O/Y/G/B.

## Lesser Bio Weapon Artifacts

This is a small list of lesser artifacts for weapons. You can roll a random one, if needed. The descriptions are left open to GM ad-lib.

- 1) Bio Blades – Producer - Poison producing. Very safe for wielder and the blade makes its own poison. Some can even create multiple types on pheromone command.
- 2) Bio Blades – Death Child – A small piece of the blade breaks off on wounding impact and works its way to the victim's vital organs. Escalating death check of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 must

- be made each round. The blade will perform this act 6^6 on a wounding attack that doesn't kill the target.
- 3) Bio-Blade – Slaver – A small piece of the blade breaks off on wounding impact and works its way to the victim's central nervous system. There it will attempt to take control of the victims mind (roll vs WP). Escalating check of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, must be made or the victim is under the control of all verbal commands made by the swords wielder – if the sword is in hand. The blade will perform this act 6^6 on a wounding attack that doesn't kill the target.
  - 4) Bio-Blade – Acid Wipe – When the blade hits it sprays out a mist of corrosive acid that reduces the opponent's armor (most metals, living, etc.) by RCD d8. The blade will perform this act 6^6 on a wounding attack that doesn't kill the target.
  - 5) Any Bio Weapon – sprays a mass of gooey green mucus slime on opponent. Slime is actually inert, but has enough residual energy to crawl around and pop blisters. This has the effect to freak out the opponent. SK vs WP or opponent loses next Nish, spending it's trying to scrape and analyze the goo. The goo's rating is RCD 16.
  - 6) Goo Ball – used in egg shooters and acts like a tangler grenade, but effects only 1 opponent.
  - 7) Bio-Blade – Psi Blade – The bio blade has a few limited Psionic powers. One is a built in danger sense of RCD 12. If it sense danger the sword can glow (phosphorescent) or vibrate, or start crawling toward the character's hand, or even use psi force powers to fly into their hand.
  - 8) Tentacle Snakes – These special snakes wrap around the wielder's arms and, when activated slide down and enter a tentacle glove. They are able to modify its cellular structure such that its spike now causes poison doing RCD d12 the first round and half damage the following round.

## Elite Artifacts

Elite artifacts are not on any *typical* chart for rolling. Rather they are strategically placed by the GM into adventures. These artifacts are very powerful and should be carefully monitored.

Most of their stats have been left up to the GM.

## **Elite Vehicles**

### **ATV TUMBLER**

Capacity: 2

This impressive vehicle was designed by the black labs of the Arthirian Sphere. It was designed as an all terrain assault vehicle with stealth capability. When we say "all terrain vehicle" we mean it! There were 240 tumblers put into production. They were first used in the Tagaskan Suppression, when fully 90 of these units were drop shipped onto the planet surface 100 miles outside the main Tagaskan camp to avoid radar detection. The Tagaskan's were confident that the harsh snow and ice climate and the shattered landscape would make ground assault by vehicles impossible. Thus, they focused on anti-air defenses. Nine hours later, there was nothing left of the Tagaskan camp than fist sized debris.

The rest of the tumblers have been kept on top secret bases here and there throughout the Arthirian Sphere. If a character manages to acquire one, it will be a rare thing. How did the Arthirian military misplace once of its elite stealth assault vehicles?

The Tumbler has eight large inflated tires – a set of duallies on the back and an offset pair of wheels on the front, with the front two tires nearly touching. The rear tires are the highest profiled aspect on the vehicle, thus, even flipped upside down, they still support the vehicle. All the tires are made from memory rubber that can alter its shape and rigidity. Their inner chamber is filled with a high tech foam making the tire nearly impervious to puncture and requiring nearly total tire obliteration to reduce effective travel.

The vehicle is quite heavy. Its outer plating is made from advanced metal alloy nearly one inch thick. Everything is colored in a flat mat black or green that is non-reflective, difficult to see in dim light, and radar absorbent. Moreover, the entire shell is constructed in the multi-surfaced design of old Earth stealth fighters and bombers.

The Tumbler is eight wheel drive, with four separate electromagnetronic engines. Each rear dually has an engine as does the two left and two right front wheels.

The tumbler also sports a single rocket propulsion drive for short bursts of speed, most commonly used to jump ravines. The entire ATV is powered by a small internal fusion reactor.

Brakes are a combination of traditional drum brakes complimented by air brakes. The 93mph to 0 stopping distance on firm ground is 17 feet. Five point restraints are provided for both seats.

**Armament:** Armament is very versatile, but typically a tumbler will come with two internal hard point racks. Each can be configured with 8 ram-rod rockets, a heat seeking cruise missile, or a 12-barrel 80 caliber Gatling gun. The main "tank" barrel is only 20 inches long and sits on a flush mini-turret atop the vehicle, with 120 degree sweep. It can fire, ether high explosive mortars or photon bursts (similar to blaster energy). Tumblers are also equipped with mini-mine deployment for discouraging pursuit and a flaming oil-slick dispersion on any of the four sides.

**Jumps:** When the rocket engine is engaged, in jump mode at top speed, the tumbler bounces on its tires with a controlled thrust and is able to jump across openings up to 2d10x100 yards.

**ATV:** The tumbler has many odd enhancements allowing it to perform as an ATV (all terrain vehicle). 1) All but the two front tires can extend up or down 12 feet, independently. Thus, the tumbler could come to a 10 foot wall or rock and slowly, via wheel extension, drive over it. 2) All tires can twist up to 45 degrees for phenomenal cornering capability. This with the tumbler's low profile make it nearly impossible to flip and able to corner without slipping at its full top speed of 93Mph. 3) The rear duallies and outside front tires can rotate a full 90 degrees and extend up to 5 feet out from the vehicle. This allows the tumbler to drive down a ravine or crack, or tip itself up on edge and drive through a very narrow alley. 4) Inside all the tires are a number of traction enhancing systems that can independently be brought to the tires surface (like a submarine emerging from the water's surface). These implements include six inch spikes for extreme ice traction and grip in soft dirt. The spikes can be made rigid or set to various levels of shock absorption. A chain-like grid of created metal links can be used as advanced chains in snow or for traction on various surfaces. A series of durable plastic-like fins can emerge across the tire for excellent traction in sand, lose snow, and for water propulsion.

The tires themselves can also expand in volume to the point of buoyancy. Their surface can become extremely sticky for excellent traction on pavement, concrete, even metal or glass surfaces.

And, if all else fails, the Tumbler is equipped with two forward and two rear grappling guns with a 200 foot range. Each grappling line is capable of supporting

the entire weight of the tumbler after a 50' fall. The grappling ends have a tip designed to disintegrate contact material for 12 inches guaranteeing deep penetration, then the entire shaft activates with ultra-lock technology. Each grappling is mounted on a mini turret with 90 degree targeting.

**Submerged:** The tumbler can easily function under water, either on the bottom or as a submarine. Internal environment provides enough air for two for six hours. It has a water to oxygen processing unit for indefinite air.

**Environmental:** The tumbler was designed with a sophisticated internal environment able to sustain its occupants for 6 hours without air, 8 days of food, and 12 days of water. The tumbler can function without flaw from 150 below zero to 420 degrees above. It tires can cross lava for up to 50+d50 feet. The internal environment is life sustainable from 100 below to 350 above.

**Computer and Features:** The advanced Viordine computer controls most of the subtle changes and alterations to the tires. However, for significant changes or major decisions, the driver must take over on manual. The main windshield is four inches high fourteen inches long, with one such strip in front of both seats. To the side, each seat has a six by six inch square. These "windows" are three inch thick blast glass. They are a dark burnt red in tint with marginal visibility. However, there are twelve high res cameras mounted on the tumbler on all sides including two on the bottom. These cameras are relayed to an array of internal 8x8" screens double stacked all around the driver. The tumbler is controlled with a yoke style steering wheel riddled with buttons, hats (multiway thumb joystick), toggles, and touch screen LCD panels. The yoke controls turning, speed, fire control, and some tire manipulation. There is a double pedal system – like putting on the tip of a boot. Foot motions in 180 degrees control tire tilt, attitude, size, and more. Finally, on both sides of the driver and overhead, there are build in instrument panels.

**Maneuverability:** With independent engines for its main drive wheels, the tumbler can spin in a circle in either direction. It cannot rotate its tires sideways up to a 45 degree angle for lateral travel. If flipped over, it can right itself easily with wheel extension. In fact, it can operate "reasonably" well upside down.

**Entrance/Seats:** Large wing like doors open on either side with large hydraulics holding up the weighty armor. Crawling into the tumbler is not convenient as the side instrument panels must be navigated. However, the seats are a very cushioned series of ribs in a seamless lounge chair style. There is a nice head rest and the entire seat is suspended on a liquid shock absorbing system reducing all falling damage by 50 feet.

**Storage:** Virtually None

**Military and Jump Mode:** When the vehicle is placed in military mode (hard points open and main turret may fire, and/or jump engine may fire). Both occupants are pulled down and forward under the "hood" area. A series of ultra lock straps is pulled up around the passenger and the seat – now ribbed cot, is suspended by high tensile elastics and an inertial dampening field. This reduces falling Dmg by 100 feet. The driver is then surrounded by a full sphere holographic representation of the battle field. This experience is much like standing in the driver's seat, with no vehicle around you – just open view. The hard points and main turret may not fire unless the vehicle enters military/jump mode.

## NINJA PHASER

The ninja Phaser is a covert trick bike designed by the Black Claws. The Black Claws are an ancient and notorious gang, nearly a clan, of Zin-Shee. Their role has risen above and beyond petty theft and muggings. Though they still operate above, and below, the law most of the time, they have evolved into such a force that even the military hires them for certain missions of "high deniability." It is for just such a mission that the Black Claw developed the Ninja Phaser. This remarkable bike is extremely fast, very agile, and packs a small arsenal of light weapons. But, most importantly, it has a unique and powerful ability to be "covert."

**Power System:** The Ninja (for short), is powered by an internal Q-Cell, meaning that it never runs out of power, and is essentially totally silent, other than the minute frictional sounds of the wheels. However, the Black Claw couldn't live with a silently powered bike and reached back into old Arth history to pull out jet fuel as an alternative power source. With jet fuel in the bike, it can sound like a hellion, screaming with raw power. Special sound amplifiers have been added so that revving the engine can produce a D40 field of deafening noise, totally obliterating normal conversation within 80 feet.

**Speed:** Powered by Jet fuel, the Ninja can attain a speed of 190Mph, when kicked over to the totally silent Q-Cell, speeds of 285Mph are attainable.

**Jump Gliders:** The bike has four jump flaps that extend when activated greatly enhancing the bike's ability to jump or drop off of high ledges. The glide ratio is two to one (two feet forward, one foot down). Front and rear stabilizers raise up allowing for limited control, for every fifty feet forward a 45 degree turn may be made. Landings are difficulty equal to the distance traveled in squares, with 50 as a maximum difficulty. However, the bike does not come with any special



means to launch a jump, so running off a square canyon bank, will not provide any vertical lift – thus the far side of the canyon will remain elusive. At top speed and with a nice jump, Ninjas have been known to leap across one thousand, five-hundred foot spans.

**Porta Ramp:** Fortunately, the Black Claw designed Porta Ramps. These are small one foot long rods that can be tossed onto the ground within 15 feet of a roof/cliff/etc. edge. The rod's, using simple sensors, will roll to the appropriate edge and align themselves. And produce a perfect jumping ramp using a short burst force field. Tracer lights will appear so the Ninja driver can speed toward the ramp, then just as the front wheel is about to hit, a two second force field pulse will burst in the form of a ramp. Ramp angles will be calculated based upon slope of the ground for ideal lift/momentum mix. The Porta Ramp is a disposable unit, costing about 125cr on the open market.

**Jumping Beans:** For short jumps, say up to 90 feet, the Ninja is equipped with a carousel of Jumping Beans – a marble sized ball that can be fired directly in front of the bike, about 5 feet out. Like the Porta Ramp, these jumping beans create a sudden force field burst designed to kick the Ninja into the air. Heights of 30 feet can be reached. Allowing for 60 feet of glide (the other 30 feet of the 90 jump comes from the rise into the air, which takes 30 feet of forward travel). The carousel holds 12 Beans and each bean costs 25 credits.

**Slammer:** Being used to fleeing for others, the Black Claw, implement a four shot clip of Slammer Balls in the rear of the bike. These work very similarly to Jumping Beans, except they are proximity triggered and create a two second force field burst that is 10 feet by 10 feet with a Strength of D40. The ball basically waits until motion is on a tangent that will impact it, then based on a simple calculation, it springs a half second before impact. Each slammer costs 65cr.

**Phaser:** So, why the Phaser after Ninja? This is the Ninja Phaser's big secret! The bike is equipped molecular phasing technology. Essentially the bike can temporarily phase out of this existence. This allows strait line travel (falling is down, jumping would be at the angle turned on, regular travel would be strait forward, etc.) in another dimension. The bike appears to nearly vanish, it is visible as if made of polished glass. In this state it can pass through trees, rock, steel, nearly any substance. Some Sorce spells, force fields, large power sources, etc. can prove harmful or catastrophic based upon GM discretion. Now, the rub comes with the rider. The bike's molecular makeup is ideal for its phasing technology, but most riders fall far short of ideal. So, the bike was designed to encase the rider in a phase bubble, thus allowing the rider to travel with the bike while phased. However, Each phasing takes 1 to 3 MAP based upon GM discretion, and the distance the "rider" travels

is D10 feet max. This distance can be improved to D12, D14, D16, D18, etc. per mastery point applied. So, what happens if the rider is caught in the middle of a large boulder? Suffocation rules will apply, start rolling. Note, sealed environmental suits, breathers, etc. Will not help, as the rider cannot move any part of his body, including lungs. However, the bike is programmed to exit the high mass structure, return to this reality, turn 180 degrees, phase out, and attempt a rescue (a D10 roll is made to see if the bike can sync with the rider vs Dif 25+5 per round. If synced, a D10 is rolled to see how far the bike can take the rider out in the opposite direction). The bike will continue this until the rider is rescued or the rider is dead. Of course, if the phasing occurs in mid jump, the bike will have a very difficult, if not impossible task to return to its rider (it can't fire off any jumping beans or other special effects, it can only drive).

**Holo Ball:** The Ninja is equipped with 3 holo balls that fire just as the Phaser is activated. They can be set to create a holographic scene. There are three scene choices (the bike and rider explode into a fire ball, the bike is suddenly transported away, the bike cloaks). Thus, the driver can create any of these illusions just before traveling through some solid object. Each holo ball costs 100cr.

**Armament:** The Ninja has exposed side mounts for four claw-mark rockets (two per side) or two striker missiles (one per side). Two short barrel pulse laser rifles barely protrude from the front wheel housing. These have a narrow, 45 degree arc directly in front of the front wheel. Finally, The Ninja effect – the bike is loaded with 100 small shuriken mines. When triggered they fire, coating a 25 foot radius circle in micro mines. Anyone stepping on one will suffer D30 damage as it explodes (there will be one per board square). This effect can be triggered from the bike, stationary or moving, AND it can be remotely sent to the bike by any secure transmission. Moreover, all the un-exploded shuriken can be returned to the bike – they fly into the air and propeller back under the various mounts where they hide. 100 shuriken mines can cover a 10x10 area. As they are exploded and used up, this shape remains, but squares must be marked off as "safe" as per the player's desires. Running or driving through such a grid is extremely hazardous.

## THE WRAITH

This car was made by the Company for the rich and the wealthy, like planetary presidents, CEOs of multi-system corporations, etc.

The wraith has a large rechargeable power cell. Attached to it are a gravitational generator and a near 99.897% efficient solar recharging system. The wraiths tires are made of the most advanced rubber known to

exist. It is nearly impervious to damage, yet grips as if it were coated in sticky tar. The car's frame is micro-polymer alloy. The entire structure is one giant molecule. It can bend like rigid plastic but is very difficult to break. The drive shafts are also made of micro-polymer. Finally the 1100Hp, high performance engine is optical based, tapping power directly from the power cell. Thus, there is no engine noise.

**Why Wraith:** The most impressive part of the car is its skin, both exterior and interior. Everything but the power cell, engine, wheels, armament, and engine and drive train are made of trillions of nanobots - very advanced nanobots. These nanobots have many functions and advantages.

**Body Type:** The nanobots can form any car shape and style that remains true to the rough dimensions of the frame. The drive train and long-side rails of the frame are equipped with telescopic sections, so the car can extend out to 30 feet or as short as 10 feet, from front to rear tire. Color can be any desired from mat to lustrous, even pearl, chrome or multi-toned.

**Interior:** The interior can have any desired design and color. Most any material can be simulated from leather to mahogany, to vinyl, to steel. Controls can be created, moved restructured in any way desired - everything if fluid from an appearance point of view and from a basic control point of view. You can set the foot pedals to steer, the steering wheel to control speed, toggles for lights, etc.

**Options:** Only pre-programmed options may be implement on the car. It can have nearly any common component such as horn, lights, fog lights, spot light, flood lights, wind shield wipers, mirrors, etc. But you can't add cameras, grappling guns, etc.

**Nanobot Advantage:** If the car is damaged, a chunk is blasted away, the nanobots simply reposition themselves and the damage is undetectable. Also, the nanobots can be moved around the car in any manner, emulating nearly any shape. They will NOT separate from the nano-collective, so you can't have them form a shovel for you. However, you can ask the window nanobots to remove ice/snow/rain from the window - keeping it nearly crystal clear. The nano-bots can instantly clean the car of nearly any substance, even having the car shake like a dog if desired. The concept of door is moot - the nanobots can form any simulation of a normal door, but you can just as easily leap into the air and fall through the roof and land in the seat. Or, you can fall through the seat and floor and land on the ground. The nanobots are completely fluid. They can move you and any item in the car around with considerable strength, so items in the turn can end up in your hand in seconds, or your passenger can be thrown out through the roof (Str: D120).

**Solar Charging:** Every nanobot is a master solar collector, they can maintain full power in light as dim as early dawn. The power cell can sustain the car for 12 hours without solar power. If the car runs out of power, the nanobots will lock into position, retaining the cars form, and leave the primary driver's door functional, but nothing else will work.

**Shape Changing:** The nanobots will not leave their connection to the power cell. As a security precaution, doing so will instantly result in nanobot melt down (their micro processor will burn itself out - physically) Thus, any piece blown/cut off the car is lost forever. However, the nanobots can form any shape, a large cube or ball, or pile of furniture, etc. over the power-cell/frame/engine. So the car can be left disguised as some other item(s). It can be quite intricate, but moving parts is something it doesn't do well, such as being a flag, and being a plant or animal is out of the question.

**Wraith it is:** Now, that you have a good feel for the Wraith's nanobot technology, you are ready for its most attractive, super feature. Each and every nanobot is equipped with a micro transporting technology beyond your wildest dreams. When activated the wraith becomes completely invisible, and nearly undetectable to any scan, other than power (at which time it glows like a nuclear bomb in the midnight desert). This is not a cloaking device, rather, all mater/energy that would strike the car is dissected by the nanobots and transported to the other side of the car on the same trajectory, with a time delay appropriate to the speed of the object/energy. Moreover, the view of the energy/object is projected on all visible tangents. For example, if the Wraith was in full stealth mode, and a leaf fell upon it, the leaf would be intercepted just before contact, transported to the bottom of the car on the correct tangent with the appropriate delay. During the delay, maybe three seconds let's say, an image of the leaf would be projected as falling down, so that, to any observer, the leaf simply fell to the ground. So, the car could be placed in the middle of a tennis court, during the game, and no-one would know, not the players, not the spectators, only the ball - as it passed through the car over and over again. No this transporting ability has its limits. First, the item must be traveling at the car, not the other way around. So, a spear thrown at the car will pass through, but trying to run over a spear in the ground will cause a physical impact. Secondly, the object cannot weight more than 200lbs. Finally, energy and weapon damage of personal class only can be transported safely, vehicle and higher energy/damage must be rolled against. In stealth mode, rain, wind, hail, snow, will all be transported through - yes even wind - so there is no wind buffeting in stealth mode.

**Stealth Limits:** Entering steal mode takes 1 MAP.

**Armament:** Several defensive mechanisms are enabled by the nanobots. They can instantly coat the car in thousands of eight inch spikes with a Damage of D25. A section of the car and form a large pseudo pod, about eight feet long and about a foot in diameter that can pummel a target 25Atk/30Dmg. Otherwise, the car has no armament, but it can open up gun ports for personal arms fire. But, the cars best offense is to enable reverse stealth. In this mode, anything that would normally be transported successfully (given the above rules) is instead transported at 180 degrees. Thus firing a laser pistol will fire back a beam right at the attacker's gun. This Atk/Dmg is 2xEnemy Atk/1xEnemy Dmg. Many would be assassins of corporate executives have died attacking their target in a Wraith.

**Speed:** The car can cruise at a top speed of 220Mph.

## ZX52 ROCKET

As the name implies - here be speed! The ZX52 was originally designed by Dha, though some experts have traced the concept to the Empire, claiming that their encounters with Dha lead the later to create a similar vehicle.

The ZX52 looks like a hover sled (like a hyper-bike that you ride with your chest lying full down, likely lying forward on a horse at top speed.) It is powered by a hydrogen ram-jet (uses hydrogen to burn in a jet engine, around an almost critical nuclear core). The ZX52 can collect adequate hydrogen from most atmospheres, but water can also be poured into the machine and its water/hydrogen separator will extract the necessary hydrogen as it goes. One gallon of water will power the ZX52 for about two hours (depending upon activities)

**Speed Daemon:** The ZX52 can travel at 320Mph and attain an altitude of 120 feet. However flip a switch and the bike's small front windshield extends up and over the occupant, who is lifted and laid on his back in full prone position. The windshield then seals with the back of the ZX52 and you are now in rocket mode. In rocket mode, the ZX52 can go 900Mph and fly to the edge of space. Now, fully activate the ram-jet's nuclear core so the reaction goes critical and - bye! If you thought 900Mph was fast - well, try Mock 47.5, sustainable for 27 minutes. On most planets, you will hit space in 7 minutes at 36,000Mph or 10 miles a second (the space shuttle travels about 7 miles a second to enter space, and takes about eight and a half minutes to reach orbit). Thus the ZX52 is the smallest craft known that can rendezvous with orbiting craft. Or to be used as a drop ship from space to planet, especially for a gallon of water each way!

**Construction:** The ZX52 is made in a rigid alloy, coated in a ceramic skin ten times harder than diamond.

The skin is nearly frictionless and almost impossible to hold onto. You can pour a cup of flower on it and it acts like rain on a hot tin roof. The ceramic is also able to withstand temperatures over 3000 degrees (the shuttle can handle 2300 degrees). The extendable windshield is a total mystery. No one knows what material it is or how it works, but it acts, in all ways just like the rest of the exterior (frictionless, tough).

**Hover:** In hover-bike mode, the ZX52 can hover and move in any direction in a 360 degree sphere.

**Armament:** The ZX52 has one great feature as a weapon. It can "be" a weapon. The ZX52 has two forward energy barrels capable of firing either pulse laser or plasma. By itself The ZX52 can fire at dual D15 Dmg in hover-bike mode only. However, if the ZX52 docks with a military power source (the most common is on the end of a transport arm, then it can channel the full power of the transport's arm and can be used as a vehicle class weapon, as well as its own personal class. If not connected, the ZX52 can fire a vehicle class burst only once before exhausting all power, requiring a gallon of water be poured in before another shot can occur. Since processing of the water takes d10 rounds, the delay can be significant. (The nuclear core is not setup to power the guns).

**Nuke:** For 1 to 15 MAP, the ZX52 can be armed and have its fusion core set to critical. It may then be programmed to fly up to 120 miles and explode with the force of D20 Ship class. Of course, it will be a little hard to ride it after this maneuver!

## OREGRIMMER WORM

Oregrimmer worms are about 60 feet long on average though a few giant specimens have been seen upwards to 100 feet. Rumors of even larger worms exist on the Kryll home world.

Oregrimmer are not actually worms, rather they are a type of hard shelled centipede. Thus, they look like a 6 to 8 foot tall arch about 12 feet wide and 60 feet long covered in overlapping armored segments ranging from a few inches at the ends to several feet in width. At their front end is located a multitentacled sphincter mouth. Two armored segments back. Is a ring of evenly spaced eyes. But these eyes look like no other animal. They are only a half inch high and are extremely armored. The "eye ball" part looks like a hard, glowing amber gemstone with a few crystalline red and green veins across the surface. These eyes never blink, never rotate, in fact other than their location, they don't appear to be eyes at all.

The armored body of the Oregrimmer typically rides about a foot and a half off the ground on a sea of cilia like supports. The Oregrimmer has several different types of "protrusions" that it can use for locomotion. Often a combination is used and there are some many, along with the ooze of bio-slime that it is hard to see what is actually going on under there.

Down the top of the Oregrimmer just as their circular backs curves to about 45 degrees (about 8 feet apart) are two rows of dorsal spots running down both sides of the Oregrimmer from head to end.

**Speed/Maneuverability:** Oregrimmer can travel upwards to 40mph. They can raise 1/3 of their length into the air, so a 60foot Oregrimmer can easily navigate up a 20foot cliff. Due to their cilia locomotion, travel over logs, mud, debris, is very easy. Even a boulder field of three to 20 foot boulders for miles would only slow an Oregrimmer down to half speed at the worst. However, they hate traveling on snow/ice/ or extreme cold. And, Oregrimmer drown rapidly if submerged in any liquid. They are extremely resistant to heat and acid. Oregrimmer can snake up tree trunks, make 180 degree turns at top speed, and crawl on any surface, any orientation if their cilia/tentacles can gain purchase. Thus, if a large space-ship with catwalks and gridded floors, they can travel on the underside of the catwalks at 1/2 move or faster.

Oregrimmer can't jump. They can fall, but not jump.

**Intelligence:** Oregrimmer have the intelligence of a dumb dog. It is still there but they aren't that bright. However, they also have the loyalty of a very loyal dog once the owner has been its organ chamber a few times. A unique life long bond is formed. It is rare for an Oregrimmer to be driven by more than one owner in its

entire life (those who try usually end up coming out the "end"). Like a dumb dog, it can follow others if it "gets" it. So, finding an adult Oregrimmer (or any for that matter) that hasn't already been bonded is exceedingly rare.

**Cargo Restraints:** The dorsal spots are actually holes. These holes have armored sphincters, making them appear more like spots than holes. They range from a half inch to three inches in diameter. From these dorsal specters, long tentacles can emerge for the purpose of holding cargo and more. There is a huge supply, so a lack of such restraints almost never occurs.

The restraints are so strong that they can easily hoist the Oregrimmer into the air. At full length, the strong 3" tentacles can reach about 30 feet. By using these and equivalent under-belly tentacles, Oregrimmer can easily aerially navigate through a thicket of dense (and strong) trees or vines or ropes, etc.

**Cockpit:** Passengers can ride on the back of the Oregrimmer. The cargo restraints can act as seat belts, seats, and controls all in one. In this fashion dozens of passengers can be accommodated. And, due to their cilia/tentacle support, Oregrimmer can support an astonishing amount of weight in the form of supplies, people, and cargo without any noticeable effect on movement. In general Oregrimmer can easily haul one ton per ten feet.

There is also a secret cockpit. If the owner enters the Oregrimmer's mouth, peristaltic waves can carry the victim to an internal organ chamber for purposes of mining, battle, stealth, etc. This is a very rude and hostile experience. Only those with bio-tech skills can attempt it. If things go wrong the Oregrimmer may accidentally swallow the victim, depositing it in the Oregrimmer's extremely powerful and lethal digestive tract.

From within the organ chamber, the driver's head will be encompassed by a complex organ. This organ will lift the driver's eyelids and place photo junction pads on them, slide a muscular tube down the driver's throat, forking both into the lungs and stomach. Two worm-like appendages will deeply enter the outer ear, and a few other oddities. This is the only way for the occupant to get breathable air in the organ chamber.

But, the advantages are great. The driver will be able to see everything the Oregrimmer sees, feel everything the Oregrimmer feels, smell, taste, and even sense the Oregrimmer's emotions to a degree. After a few times operating an Oregrimmer, drivers all find that the experience is nearly identically to becoming one with the Oregrimmer. Basically you "are" the creature and the creature is you. To turn left you just turn left, to open the Oregrimmer's eyes, you just open your eyes (at least it feels that way). So, the Oregrimmer's actions, decisions, etc. become nearly identical to your own in a non-stat/non-number way.

**Eyes:** Oregrimmer eyes are actually retractable though evidence of this does not exist. When fully retracted they are 100% protected. They eyes don't blink, but they stay clean of debris because they can generate a low level Psionic force field to clear any obstructions.

Rear eyes also exist. These are not known by most as they are usually closed, thus undetectable. There are only 4 rear eyes about three feet from the worm's back side.

**Miner:** One of the big secrets about Oregrimmer is that their real purpose is that of tunnel construction and mineral extraction. They are basically master mining vehicles. They can bore through solid dirt at half their normal movement rate in any direction. They can bore through solid rock at ¼ their normal movement rate in any direction. How is this done? First they will roll into a complete tub – armor side out. Propulsion is accomplished by swelling and undulating through the passage. But, how is this passage created so fast? Do they eat or digest the dirt/rock? No. Their amber eyes can emit a focused beam of ultrasonic energy, so powerful it looks more like amber laser beams than sonic energy. Dirt/Rock/etc. is broken up into a fine dust like white flour. Through compaction, the Oregrimmer is able to shove this powder to the side (using its front tentacles and sheer force). If compaction gets very difficult (such as through clay), the Oregrimmer will swell and swallow the dust into its mouth allowing its advanced digestive tract to rapidly deposit the material out the other end.

When an Oregrimmer enters dirt/rock, it always aligns its body at a 90 degree perpendicular. So, on flat ground, it will arch its front up like a question mark. If entering a vertical cliff, it will simply move strait in. What is amazing is that any of these maneuvers may be entered at top speed. So an Oregrimmer can haul at 40mph and slam into a vertical stone cliff face without a hitch. Of course, it will immediately slow to 10mph, but even at that speed the master tunneler will be gone in seconds.

**Cilia:** The Oregrimmer cilia is made up of a collection of tentacles that can extend to six feet, stubby but strong cilia used for most of the locomotion, and a set of barb hooked cilia for use on slippery terrain or when trying to climb trees, walls, etc.

**Combat:** Oregrimmer can trample opponents with their cilia causing 10r Dmg. If they rise up then land on a target the damage is 16r. They can also swallow an opponent with an Atk of 4r but a damage of 20r over and over with no defense. The digestive tract is designed to handle rock shards, rocks, etc. and is massively strong. So once swallowed, a victim is basically dead.

Their most powerful attack, is their amber eye beams. This ability is private to the Oregrimmer, unnatural for non-boring use, and a secret kept by most

Bio Techs. So, it is not easily used. The range is a short 2sq. The front Atk is 6r with 50r Dmg. The rear Atk is 2r with 30r Dmg. When used it looks like a 2sq amber flash light. The beams move so fast that they cannot be picked out. The Dmg is an all or none. If the target's Armor fails they are instantly turned to fine dust and float away on the breeze. Otherwise they are fine. Wounds do not occur, just death.

## ***Elite Weapons/Armor***

### **SORCE ARTIFACT – SWORD OF OBIOX**

Requirements: None

AP: 3

Credits: 18500 (warning – this sword has never been “successfully” sold, just appraised.)

Enc: 3

Energy: Unknown (Sorcery or Unholy)

The Sword of Obiox is a rare artifact. It is a five foot long ancient archaic bastard sword of great and dark craftsmanship. Thought to once have been wielded by the dark undead knight Obiox himself. The blade is onyx black with maroon carvings and ancient runes on its hilt and between its blood grooves. The mighty weapon comes with a misty grey scabbard of very thick leather. From the corner of one's eye, the scabbard occasionally moves and flows like the Smokey vapor of a dying breath.

Once drawn, the sword will not leave the wielder's hand until it has taken a life. The sword is “smart” and will not accept a rabbit's life as penance, or any victim that is more than half as powerful as the wielder. The wielder may freely hold the weapon in either hand or in both, but it may not be set down or rested upon an item. The weight of the weapon is such that many a foolish wielder has died due to sheer exhaustion trying to find a victim to slay before their arm strength gives out.

The Sword of Obiox contains many secrets, but to any who are brave or foolish enough to carry it, it grants the following:

**Death Lust:** Upon drawing the blade, enemies become hated despicable beings, neutral parties become enemies, and allies become neutral. This can be fought as WP vs 100.

**Shadow Armor:** If the weapon is carried in its original scabbard, and the character proclaims, in a hearty voice, “By the might of Obiox – Dieeee!” the opponent's armor is reduced by a d10 roll. (Though this power was originally for medieval weapons, the nature of the magic is such that it extends even to ranged tech weapons such as a blaster pistol or turbo-plaz - basically to any weapon).

Enhance Shadow Armor: The effects of Shadow Armor can be increased by learning more of the sword and scabbard and by dumping in some of the character's meta (d12, d16, d20: 1Meta, 2Meta for d20, 3AP)

Proclamation of Destruction: If the sword is drawn and stabbed into an earthen or stone floor (which it will pierce to 18 inches), and the character kneels and swears to the sword these words "Grant me the power to destroy and I shall feed you" the character may then get up and fight with any weapon. For 5Meta per attack, all enemy armor will be ignored, damage going directly to vitality. HOWEVER, at the end of the killing spree, the character must retrieve the sword within 5 rounds or begin making death checks vs 100 until dead, reach the sword, or manage to break free with a roll of 3000 or more. AND the character may now not let go of the hilt until they slay one opponent for every opponent the sword helped to stripped of armor (a 1:1 ratio). Thus, the proclamation is best used for fighting just one or two opponents, AND when other victims are near. While stabbed into the floor, any other trying to remove it must make a STR 100. If they succeed, they are the new sword master and the character's obligations are gone.

## QUANTUM ARMOR

The massively durable and tough armor of the Quantum Knights. Typically, any character carrying quantum armor for long will have an encounter with a Quantum knight. These encounters often prove the end of the character.

## QUANTUM SWORD

The blade that can cut through anything effortlessly. The famed Quantum sword of the Quantum Knights. A Quantum Knight is more protective of his sword than anything else, including armor. Typically, any character carrying a quantum sword for long will have an encounter with a Quantum knight. These encounters often prove the end of the character.

# OMEGA

#	Omega	Description
1	Omega: Alter Reality	Mental illusion in 20x20x20 sq for 30 min at Sk + dBuff10
2	Omega: Attunement	Core and Res attributes gain +Buff20 1 hour or until damaged
3	Omega: Battle Cast	For 6 rnds, all power Dmg is doubled
4	Omega: Big Luck	Spend 1 luck box but get to make 5 luck rolls on 1 ability roll
5	Omega: Bio Communication	5hrs can talk to plants
6	Omega: Command All	10 rnds, can give whole party an attack action command
7	Omega: Crit Be Gone	Next 4 crits become tremendous
8	Omega: Deadly Shot	Next ranged is x5 Atk/Dmg
9	Omega: Flight	Fly at 3x MR of 1 hour
10	Omega: Flurry Fighter	For 6 rnds, successful melee defense = parry hit, just roll Dmg
11	Omega: Globe of Invulnerability	10' impenetrable bubble (Skx10) for up to 10 rounds
12	Omega: I have Cool Stuff	Etax improved by 25 until luck is regained
13	Omega: Instant Armor	Armor pops on/off into small figurine for 24 hours
14	Omega: Meta Fountain	Gain a Blue Meta each round for 10 rounds, used or lost
15	Omega: Nova	Sorcist/Psionicist effect up to 3 times normal targets, 4 rnds
16	Omega: Party Heal	Heals party at SKx5 all wound classes - one use per Omega
17	Omega: Penetrating Gaze	Super X-Ray sees depth of SK in feet, for 4 hours
18	Omega: Percision	For 1 weapon, all Atk are doubled and @s become 1s, 10 rnds
19	Omega: Persistant Luck	All rolls rolled twice for 4 rounds as if lucked
20	Omega: Purification	If conscious purges self of all dmg and ill effects
21	Omega: Rapid Scan	Can mentally scout at MR30 for 10rnds, even through 1 wall
22	Omega: Sonic Speed	MRx4 for 10 rnds or 1hr if not in combat.
23	Omega: Structural Punch	Punch is Dmgx10 versus structures for 30 min
24	Omega: Super Gun	M/H power armor tuns into gun SK Atk, SKx5 Dmg for 5 rounds
25	Omega: Super Jump	Jump roles at at x10 for 4 jumps
26	Omega: Super Nish	Nish at x5 for rest of combat
27	Omega: Super Speed	For combat or 1hr MR and Nish are doubled
28	Omega: Technopathic	Destroy/Repair d4 tech items of 5' square at Gtech + dBuff 30
29	Omega: Teleport	Create up to 3 anchor points, then teleport to any at SK vs Diff
30	Omega: Ultra Regen	On Nish 0 for 5 rounds, regenerate SKx5 wounds
31	Omega: War God	Atk/Dmg/Str/Def/AR/Nish/Unconscious/Death are doubled

## Rules

**Omega:** Omega feats are special Open Mega (or Omega) feats that may be gained by spending a significant amount of AP. The schedule of AP and level limits on learning Omega Feats is found on the Rules Character Sheet. Note, Omega Feats are often called Omega "powers" due to their nature.

Omega powers are not learned normally, rather the player rolls three times on the Omega table and the GM tells them which Omega was rolled. The player must then pick one from among these three.

**GM:** It is best to scrutinize the rolled Omega and have the player re-roll any that do not fit with their character or which create unusually powerful or unbalanced effects. Be very careful with Omega powers.

**@Omega:** Omega powers do not normally use Meta. Rather they use luck boxes. The luck box must be totally free and unused and once used by the Omega, it may not be used for any other purpose until regained. So @Omega means @1 Luck box. Some Omega take more than 1 luck box and are indicated as @Omega2 or @Omega3 (2 and 3 luck boxes respectfully).

**RCD:** Racial RCDs are listed but due to the number of classes and special circumstances, the 1 to 10 class rating is not listed. Rather, the player rolls two d10 and takes the better result. If the Omega is particularly a bad fit for the class, the GM can shrink this roll to a lesser die type such as two d8 or two d6, etc. The better of the two die is added to the race's number in the table above for the RCD base.

## Omega List

### OMEGA: ALTER REALITY

Omega: Alter Reality - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
1	10	3	4	10	8	12	6	GM Pick

An area of up to 20x20x20sq will appear any way the user wants. The area itself sends out a false reality, so everyone is affected. This is a mental effect and is not real. Nothing about the false reality will physically affect onlookers. However, it can be used to mask the presence of a space ship, or make it look like a bridge exists where none is, or hide a hard concrete wall. So physical effects can result from believing in the image. Or an image of 10 combat ATMs at your side may sway a group of thugs to turn their attentions elsewhere.

Skill plus RCB 10 versus WP to believe. [M,30 minutes,15sq to nearest edge] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

**DB:** yes

**Mod:** Can extend the time

1hr/6hr/12hr/1day/1week by binding a @BindsR/O/Y/G/B

### OMEGA: ATTUNEMENT

Omega: Attunement - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
2	6	12	12	12	4	4	10	GM Pick

All Core and Resistance attributes gain a RC+20. This buff ends if any damage is taken. [I,1 hour or any damage taken,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

**Mod:** Duration is 2/4/8 hours @+BindsY/G/B

**Mod:** Buff is RC+30 @+BindsG

### OMEGA: BATTLE CAST

Omega: Battel cast - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
3	10	3	6	8	12	12	6	GM Pick

All damage directly from powers (Sorcer, Psionics, psychosomatics, etc.) is doubled. [I,6 rounds,Self] @Omega

@Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

**Mod:** Dmg is tripled @=Omega2

**Mod:** Duration is 10 rounds @+BindsB

### OMEGA: BIG LUCK

Omega: Big Luck - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
4	12	4	4	6	12	8	8	GM Pick

Spend a luck box for a particular roll normally as you always do. Then instead of just one luck roll, you get to make five rolls and take the best. [Rule] @Omega2

### OMEGA: BIO COMMUNICATION

Omega: Bio Communication - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
5	6	6	4	12	8	6	4	GM Pick

Can communicate with any living thing. Normally intelligent speaking things – such as alien races, are automatic. Plants and animals require a roll and the knowledge and intelligence of plants and animals will typically be between a dog for grass (may twitch and look at you expectantly) or that of a wizened old man for certain types of trees. The success of plant/animal communication is a SK vs GM difficulty roll. [Talk,5 hours,10sq] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

**Mod:** Lasts for 12hr/24hr/1day/1week/until luck is regained @+BindsR/O/Y/G/B

### OMEGA: COMMAND ALL

Omega: Command All - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
6	12	4	4	8	10	8	6	GM Pick

On your Nish each round, up to 5 in your party gain a free Attack action if they follow your “general” instructions, such as “attack the enemy” or “jump the chasm” [I,10 rounds,30sq] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

**Mod:** Gain an Atk and Move action @=Omega2

**Mod:** Effects up to 10 in your party @G

### OMEGA: CRIT BE GONE

Omega: Crit Be Gone - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
7	12	6	6	8	12	8	6	GM Pick

Next four critical rolls turn into tremendous rolls. Player may choose to pass on an unimportant critical roll if they wish. [I,next 4 or until luck regain,Self] @Omega

@Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

**Mod:** Next 6/8/10 rolls @+BindsY/G/B



**OMEGA: DEADLY SHOT**

Omega: Deadly Shot - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
8	12	3	4	10	6	10	10	GM Pick

Makes the next ranged attack and Dmg at x5 each.

[A,I,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Atk/Dmg is x10 each @G

**OMEGA: FLIGHT**

Omega: Flight - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
9	10	4	10	12	6	8	8	GM Pick

Wings will grow from the character's back and they can fly at three times their maximum MR. [M,1 hour,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Can fly for 2/4/8 hours @+BindsY/G/B

Mod: Speed is 4/5 times maximum MR

@+BindsG/B

**OMEGA: FLURRY FIGHTER**

Omega: Flurry Fighter - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
10	8	12	4	4	4	8	12	GM Pick

All successful defense rolls in melee combat automatically counts as a successful parry and repost and damage is rolled. It can be used up to 3 times a round as the actions would go P, M, A. [P,6 rounds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Duration is 10 rounds @+BindsG

Mod: Action is I, unlimited use per round @+BindsB

**OMEGA: GLOBE OF INVULNERABILITY**

Omega: Globe of Invulnerability - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
11	10	4	8	10	12	10	6	GM Pick

Creates an impenetrable bubble around the character 10' in diameter that is resistant to EVERYTHING in both directions except for normal sight at SKx10. The globe does not move. [I,up to 10 rounds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

DB: Yes

Mod: Can hear @Y

Mod: Can move at MR 2/4/6 @+BindsO/Y/G

Mod: Can attack out with energy or powers

@=Omega2

**OMEGA: I HAVE COOL STUFF**

Omega: I have Cool Stuff - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
12	12	3	8	8	4	6	8	GM Pick

Available ETax improves by 25 until luck boxes are next regained. [I,until luck box regain,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Increase is 50/75/100 @=Omega2/ Omega3/ Omega4

**OMEGA: INSTANT ARMOR**

Omega: Instant Armor - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
13	12	8	12	8	4	6	8	GM Pick

All armor instantly pops on or off into a small figurine of the armor that can be stored in a pocket, simply by snapping one's fingers. It is as if the armor were teleported and its size massively changed. [I,24 hours,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Duration lasts until next luck regain @=Omega2

**OMEGA: META FOUNTAIN**

Omega: Meta Fountain - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
14	10	8	6	6	12	12	6	GM Pick

Gain one Blue Meta each round. If not used that round, it vanishes. Works even if Blue is Bound. [I,10 rounds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Can a Blue and a Green @=Omega2

**OMEGA: NOVA**

Omega: Nova - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
15	12	4	8	8	12	12	6	GM Pick

Sorcist or Psionicist can effect up to 3 times the normal amount of opponents/targets. [I,4 rnds,Self] @Omega

**OMEGA: PARTY HEAL**

Omega: Party Heal - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
16	10	8	4	12	12	8	6	GM Pick

Heals the party SKx5, all wound classes. [M,Perm,Sight] @Omega

**OMEGA: PENETRATING GAZE**

Omega: Penetrating Gaze - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
17	8	8	12	10	12	10	6	GM Pick

Provides a kind of super X-Ray vision. Can see through nearly any object or objects at will, stopping on

objects of interest. Penetration depth equals a SK roll in feet. [I,4 hours,Sight] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

DB: yes

Mod: Duration is 8/12/24 hours @+BindsY/G/B

Mod: Depth is in squares not feet @+BindsB

## OMEGA: PERCISION

Omega: Percision - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
18	8	10	8	10	8	12	12	GM Pick

All Atk rolls are doubled and all doubling die @s are turned to 1s with one particular weapon.

[I,10rnds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Works on all of your weapons @+BindsG

Mod: Duration is all of a combat @=Omega2

## OMEGA: PERSISTANT LUCK

Omega: Persistant Luck - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
19	12	4	4	6	12	10	8	GM Pick

All normally luckable rolls may be rolled twice (as if lucked). [I,4 rounds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Duration is 6 rounds @+BindsG

Mod: Get to roll all rolls three times @=Omega2

## OMEGA: PURIFICATION

Omega: Purification - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
20	8	12	12	12	10	6	8	GM Pick

Purges the body of ALL negative effects and instantly heals all damage. Must be conscious to use.

[I,Perm,Self] @Omega2

## OMEGA: RAPID SCAN

Omega: Rapid Scan - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
21	10	4	6	10	10	12	8	GM Pick

Can send their mind off to scout at a MR of 30. All senses will be present. This is not detectable by any normal means. The ability is instantly canceled if any damage is taken or the Zin-Shee is moved more than 10'. Once, the mind can slip through doors or walls if a SK vs GM difficulty succeeds. [I,10 rounds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

DB: yes

Mod: Lasts for 20 rounds @+BindsY

Mod: Can try to get through doors/walls 2/4 times @+BindsY/G

## OMEGA: SONIC SPEED

Omega: Sonic Speed - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
22	8	8	6	6	6	10	12	GM Pick

Can Move at MRx4. [I,10 rounds or 1hr if not in combat,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: MRx5 @+BindsY

Mod: Duration is combat or 12 hours if not in combat @+BindsG

## OMEGA: STRUCTURAL PUNCH

Omega: Structural Punch - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
23	6	12	10	8	3	4	8	GM Pick

Any punch causes Dmgx10 to structures only. [I,30min,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Dmg is x20 @+BindsG

Mod: Duration is 1hr/6hr/12hr/1day

@+BindsO/Y/G/B

## OMEGA: SUPER GUN

Omega: Super Gun - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
24	12	3	8	1	3	4	10	GM Pick

M or H power armor may be made to transform into a large tripod mounted super gun that fire's player's choice of (pulse laser, blaster, or ion). Does SK attack and SKx5 damage. When the omega is up or gun destroyed, it will transform back onto the character as their armor. Any damage to the gun will appear as damage on the armor. [M to transform and F to fire, 5 rounds, 25sq] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

DB: Yes

Mod: Duration is 10 rounds @+BindsB

Mod: Damage to gun does not hurt armor @+G

## OMEGA: SUPER JUMP

Omega: Super Jump - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
25	6	8	4	N/A	N/A	10	12	GM Pick

All jump roles are at x10. [I,next 4 jumps or until luck regain,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: next 8/16 jumps @+BindsO/G

## OMEGA: SUPER NISH

Omega: Super Nish - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
26	10	8	6	8	10	12	12	GM Pick

All Nish rolls are at x5. [I,combat,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: x10 Nish @=Omega2

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: Duration is for all of a combat @+BindsB

## OMEGA: SUPER SPEED

Omega: Super Speed - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
27	10	8	6	6	8	12	12	GM Pick

All Nish rolls and MR are doubled. [I,combat or 1hr if out of combat,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

Mod: They are all tripled @+BindsG

## OMEGA: TECHNOPATHIC

Omega: Technopathic - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
28	12	3	12	1	6	6	6	GM Pick

Can Repair/destroy d4 technological items up to the size of 1sq cube (five feet cube) with a single thought at GTech plus RCB 30 vs GM difficulty. [I,Perm,10sq] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

DB: Yes

Mod: Size is 2sq/3sq cube @G/B

Mod: Range is 20/40sq @G/B

## OMEGA: TELEPORT

Omega: Teleport - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
29	10	3	6	4	12	6	6	GM Pick

Character can spend an Omega creating an anchor anywhere in the universe that you are located at the time. Then later, another Omega to teleport to the anchor. May have up to 3 anchors set at any time. Success of the teleport is SK vs GM difficulty (based on game impact, distance, etc.). [M,I,unlimited] @Omega

## OMEGA: ULTRA REGEN

Omega: Ultra Regen - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
30	6	12	12	10	3	4	8	GM Pick

At the end of each round on Nish 0, the character will regenerate SKx5 of any type of wounds. Remaining wounds will not move to a worse category. [I,5 rounds,Self] @Omega

\*\*\* **Mastery** \*\*\*

DB: yes

Mod: heals SKx10 @+BindsG

Mod: for 10 rounds @+BindsG

## OMEGA: WAR GOD

Omega: War God - R	Ant	Cal	Dra	Kry	Sha	ZS-F	ZS-M	C
31	6	12	10	10	3	4	12	GM Pick

Following combat stats doubled  
(Atk/Dmg/Str/Def/AR/Nish/Unconscious Checks/Death Checks). [I,6 rounds, Self] @Omega



***GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM6***

# GM Units

***By Blake Mobley***

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends, many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

## Special Thanks

**From Blake Mobley to:**

- Renay for allowing me to play late into the night for these many years and for supporting my dream.
- Phillip Bagga, Steve Tobin, and Dave Webb for their many deep conversations into the recess of RPG design and playability. Phillip for "keeping it real" and his watchfulness for the "fun" of gaming. Steve as a great sounding board for prototype concepts and services as a master GM. Dave for his unique ability to break bad rule systems and for his long time inspiration as a fellow game designer. You three have helped me more than you know.

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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change throughout the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

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# GUs

GU (pronounced goo, plural is gooes) is a GM controlled Unit. It can be an alien, a non-player personality, an ATM, etc. This booklet describes a section of GUs for GM use.

Thousands (perhaps millions) of species exist throughout Known Space. Some serve other states as slaves, others are subject races who pay tribute to their conquerors, while others are full-fledged members of their nation with all rights and privileges. Other alien species are unremittingly hostile, while still others are nonsentient members of their planetary ecosystems. While the possible number of alien species is virtually infinite, some of the better-known ones are described briefly below, utilizing the following format (in the interest of space and simplicity, statistics which are not appropriate to a given GU are not listed):

**Name:** The life form's name.

**FORM:** The life form's appearance.

**HABITAT:** The terrain in which the life form is most likely to be encountered.

**LOCATION:** Where in Known Space the life form is most likely to be found. An entry in parentheses indicates a world's name.

**STATUS:** The life form's most common status (citizen, independent, slave, etc.) in its home region.

**RCD:** This entry is in the form of three numbers, separated by slashes. The first number is the Finesse number, the second is the Physical number, and the third is the Mental number. Each number represents several attributes feats as follows:

Table 1: Ratings

Finesse	Physical	Mental
Atk	Dmg	Luck
Def	AR	Lore
MR	Vit	Cha
Nish	Str	Awa
Dex	FR	WP
SB	Ene	
Finesse Feats	Physical Feats	Mental Feats

Remembering what abilities each of the three GU numbers stands for is easy with a little practice. Just remember that the Finesse number represents all speed and dexterous aspects of the GU such as attack, defense, movement, initiative, and finesse based skills; the Physical number represents all strength and health related aspects such as damage, armor, vitality, and physical based skills; and the Mental number represents all intelligence and personality related aspects such as luck, awareness, charisma, and mental based skills.

The rating listed for each GU life form is only a recommended average. Some members of the race will have much higher ratings, and some much lower. Please feel free to adjust the listed ratings based upon your need and the situation at hand.

The player character races have been included in the life forms section so that the GM may easily run GU members of these races. You will note that they also have a three number rating system even though they are fully detailed in the *races Booklet*. Don't let this disturb you. It is true that when a highly detailed race is reduced to three numbers that some of the detail is lost.

However, remember that the ratings may be adjusted individually to meet any special needs. (Also from a gaming standpoint, it is simply impractical for the GM to run GUs having a full complement of abilities.)

Now for some special rules and uses of the three GU ratings:

- If the creature has an unarmored form, use the first number for its AR when unarmored.
- Occasionally, one of the statistics included within the above categories may be substantially higher or lower than listed. In this case, the appropriate statistic will be listed in parentheses after the three rating numbers: for example, 10/12/8 (Dmg 20, MR 8), indicating that the creature's damage is 20 (not 12), and its movement is 8 (not 10).
- Occasionally, Physical rating (the second number) will be of Ship (S) or Vehicle (V) type. In this case, the type applies only to AR, Vit, Dmg and Str. All other uses of the Physical ratings are of Personal type.

**ATK/DMG:** These two statistics provide a listing of the life form's most common attack forms. If a life form's attack or damage rating are different from the GU's base ratings the information will be listed here. An entry which lists "weapons" simply represents that the life form can attack with weapons if desired; usually, a list of typical weapons will follow in parenthesis.

When GUs use weapons, the weapon's attack and damage should be derived from the Finesse and Physical ratings (even though these numbers don't always match the kind of weapon being used). Remember, GUs are unique just like characters, any



discrepancies can be explained away with “special weapon modifications,” enhancements, special skills, etc. Don't let yourself or the players bog the game down with overly precise numerical concerns. (The same holds for GU armor.)

**DEF/AR:** These two statistics provide a list of special armor considerations (such as a soft underbelly). If a life form's defense or armor rating are different from the GU's base ratings, the information will be listed here. An entry which lists “armor” simply represents that the life form can wear armor if desired; usually, a list of typical armor will follow in parenthesis.

**SPECIAL:** Any special attack – detailed in the life form's text description.

**SIZE:** The life form's average height and weight.

**LANGUAGE:** Languages typically spoken by individuals. A “+” sign indicates a number of additional languages, chosen by the GM.

**AHUK****RCD:** 4/16/1

ATK/DMG: beak, trample

SIZE: 20' long, 10 tons

FORM: Decaped (10 legs), reptilian

HABITAT: Desert, mountains

LOCATION: (Calemor)

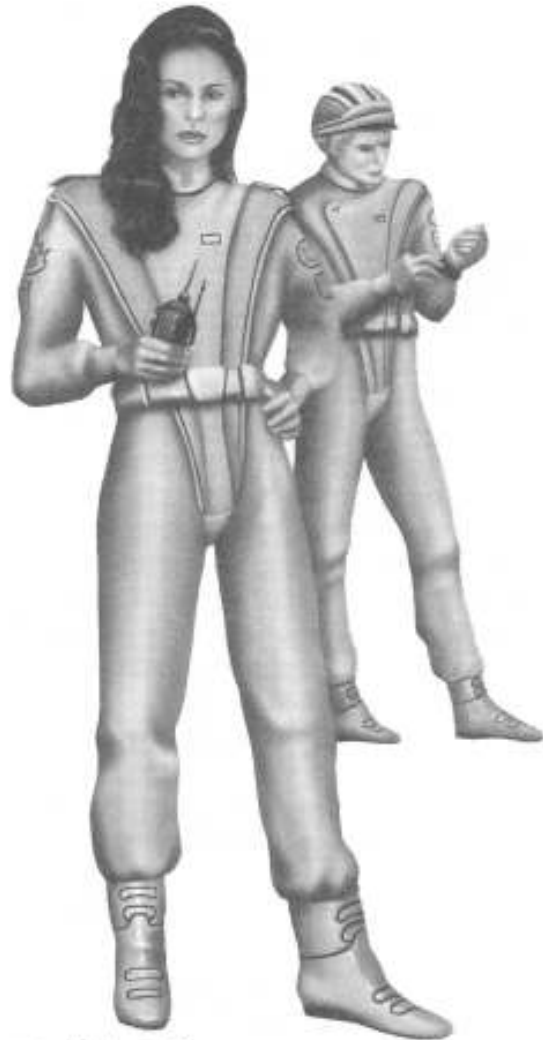
STATUS: Domesticated Animal

The Calemora keep these ten-legged, heavy-bodied creatures as pets. Ahuk never stop growing, beginning life the size of a small dog and often growing to the size of an elephant. Large Ahuk may be used as riding beasts. The Calemora often rode Ahuk into battle during the Blood Feud, since the creature's natural armor is nearly the equal of a light armored vehicle.

Like all Calemoran life-forms, Ahuk are incredibly tough and strong. Ahuks' heads are protected by heavy, bony plates, and can inflict considerable damage from trampling and biting with their heavy, beaked mouths.

Wild Ahuk roam the surface of Calemor, and it is considered a highly honorable pursuit for a Calemoran warrior to stalk, capture and tame one. Young Ahuk are, of course, more adaptable and easier to train. Herds of domesticated Ahuk are also kept, but most Calemora prefer the free spirit of wild Ahuk.

The Draca have also taken an interest in the Ahuk, seeing them as potential war-beasts. The Calemora have thus far resisted this, feeling that Ahuks' long history as companions and friends to the Calemoran species grants them special, almost sentient, status.

**ANTHROPOS****RCD:** 5/3/5

RCD: B8/C12/T24

ATK/DMG: punch, weapons (prefer ranged energy)

DEF/AR: armor (prefer suit, especially powered)

SIZE: 6', 200 lbs

LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Guild speak, +1

FORM: Humanoid

HABITAT: Any

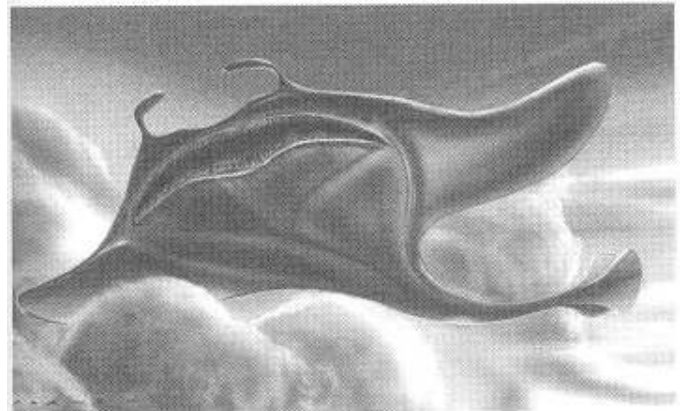
LOCATION: Guild, Arthirian Sphere

STATUS: Guild members, Arthirian Citizens, Imperial honored slave race, Independent spacefaring race, etc.

The Anthropos are known as one of the most adaptable of galactic races. They inhabit thousands of worlds, and have a nearly infinite variety of governments, societies, technological levels and philosophies. The Anthropos are the dominant race of both the Guild and the Arthirian Sphere, but are found in large numbers elsewhere as well.

**CALEMORA****RCD:** 6/8/2**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C4/T6**ATK/DMG:** martial arts, weapons (prefer body and melee: kray, raoot, sword, etc.)**DEF/AR:** armor (prefer open style armor), psychosomatics (such as rough skin, tough skin, and iron skin)**SPECIAL:** Psychosomatics**SIZE:** 5'6", 320 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Calemoran, Catongi, +1**FORM:** Humanoid**HABITAT:** Desert/arid**LOCATION:** Guild (Calemor)**STATUS:** Guild Members

The Calemora are a primitive, non-technological race, masters of the powers of Psychosomatics.

**CLOUD-MANTA****RCD:** 15/30/2**ATK/DMG:** bite, tail whip**SPECIAL:** Swallow (on Def roll of 1)**SIZE:** 20-60' long, 2000-6000 lbs**FORM:** Piscene**HABITAT:** Atmosphere**LOCATION:** Low-grav worlds**STATUS:** Animal

This unusual species resembles its oceanic namesake in that it is a broad, roughly diamond-shaped creature with broad wings and a massive mouth. Cloud-manta do not swim in the sea, however, but instead swim through the atmosphere by means of lighter-than-air bladders located in their central body cavities. Long, rudder-like tails direct their movement, and cloud-mantas are extremely maneuverable and fast.

Cloud-manta are solitary creatures, and mate only rarely. Females carry eggs in spongy tissue on their backs. After the eggs hatch, females are surrounded by clouds of smaller manta which seek refuge under her wings if danger threatens. Young manta are highly vulnerable to airborne predators, including adults of their own species, who make few distinctions about the sources of their food.

Cloud-manta feed by funneling insects and small flying creatures into their massive maws. They also swoop down low over water regions and scoop up fish or avians near the surface. As cloud-mantas never seem to stop growing, some have been known to attain substantial size; under such conditions, mantas sometimes will consider the occupants of small airborne craft or boats as possible food. They have proved to be a nuisance on some worlds, and a major threat to life on others.

If the defender rolls a one for defense, the cloud-manta has swallowed its prey. Swallowed defenders lose RCD 10 points of Vit per round until dead or freed. The manta must eat through all armor before ingesting the victim, however, and the armor's AR is reduced as if it were Vit.

**CH'AAK**

**RCD:** 20/20/8  
**ATK/DMG:** grab, crush  
**DEF/AR:** special  
**SPECIAL:** Pocket Dimension

**SIZE:** Unknown  
**FORM:** Unknown  
**HABITAT:** Unknown  
**LOCATION:** Rimward Space  
**STATUS:** Unknown

Another inhabitant of the unexplored worlds beyond the Guild's rimward border, ch'aak are one of the most dangerous and unpredictable predators in Known Space. No one knows exactly what form ch'aak take, for they move about in small, mobile bubbles of existence, several degrees out of phase with their surroundings. This renders ch'aak invisible and immune to normal weapons except for the brief moment when they attack (although the *Sorce-energy bolts and blasts* affect them).

Even then, only a cluster of multi-jointed, insectile claws emerges from a ch'aak's bubble, seizing prey and pulling them out of normal space and into the ch'aak's lair. Anyone caught in this fashion is gone forever unless they can single handedly defeat the ch'aak.

Ch'aak are the ultimate ambush artists, remaining invisible until the moment of attack. Ch'aak remain visible for one round, then vanish whether they have succeeded in grabbing a victim or not. They will trail prey for days, striking unexpectedly.

When a ch'aak emerges from its "pocket dimension" for the first time, victims must make a Shock (20) roll or automatically lose initiative. If a victim is grabbed they must make a Strength roll vs 20 or be dragged into the ch'aak's interdimensional "lair" where the ultimate battle for survival begins.

If a PC successfully hits a ch'aak in the player's own dimension, the beast will let its prey go if wounding damage exceeds 10.

**DA-HAN**

**RCD:** 20/8/18  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B12/C10/T16  
**ATK/DMG:** bite, weapons (knives, disc weapons)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (flak)

**SIZE:** 6'4", 175 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Da-han, Impspeak, +3 more  
**FORM:** Biped, Reptilian  
**HABITAT:** Plains, forests  
**LOCATION:** Empire (Skell)  
**STATUS:** Imperial Honored Slave

These slender, long-necked dinosaur-like aliens are covered with a sheen of tiny white scales, sometimes striped in red or black. Their long, nimble arms end in slim-fingered hands, well adapted to the manipulation of fine objects, machinery and circuitry.

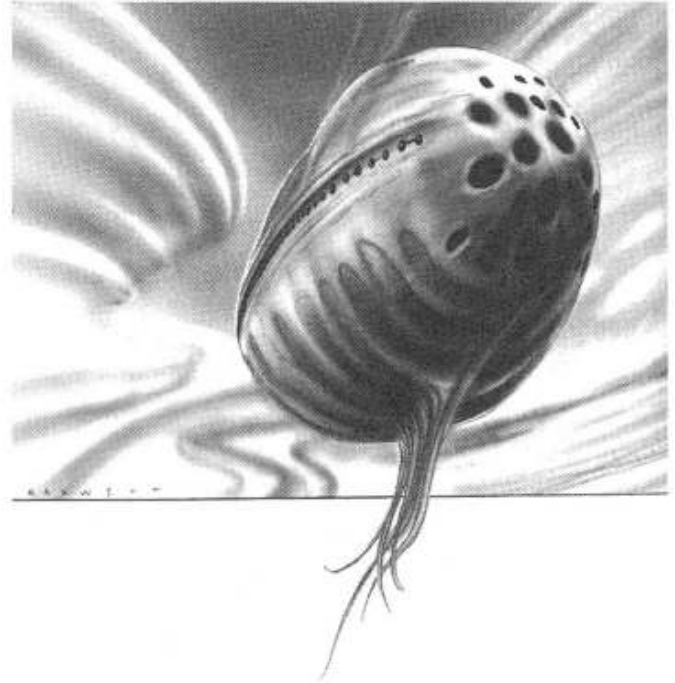
Da-han serve the Katha as honored slaves, and have risen to vital positions in The Empire, acting as administrators, overseers, accountants, military officers, traders and technicians. It is likely that The Empire would collapse (or at least stumble badly) should the Da-han ever choose to leave imperial service, but like the other honored slaves their devotion to The Empire is near-absolute. In return, Da-han are well treated within imperial space.

The Da-han are physically weak, but very quick, dexterous and intelligent. They dislike physical combat, preferring to flee or talk enemies out of fighting. They never serve in front-line combat units, preferring to lead from the rear, or to command starships.

**DHARDOUN****RCD:** 15/15/15**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C10/T10**ATK/DMG:** punch, weapons (any - can form melee weapons itself)**SPECIAL:** Shape change, immune to cutting or piercing physical weapons**SIZE:** ?**LANGUAGE:** Dhardoun (?), Impspeak, +3**FORM:** Unknown**HABITAT:** Any**LOCATION:** Throughout Known Space**STATUS:** Independent Race

No one knows where this race of shape shifting aliens originated, or what their natural form is, for they can take the shape of virtually any being or object of similar mass. They are rare – most are found within The Empire or Arthirian space. It is difficult to tell exactly how many exist, as all Dhardoun take the shape of another race.

Best known as agents and assassins of The Empire, Dhardoun are a constant threat to Guild officials, as there are few practical ways of detecting their presence. So far, the best means of penetrating Dhardoun disguise is through the psionic abilities, but Dhardoun agents are trained to resist mind-probes, so even this alternative is not always practical.

**DIRIGIBLES****RCD:** 8/6V/8**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C8/T8**ATK/DMG:** ram**SIZE:** 100' long, 5 tons**LANGUAGE:** Dirigible**FORM:** Alien**HABITAT:** Atmosphere**LOCATION:** Gas giant planets**STATUS:** Independent Race

These huge balloon-like entities dwell in the upper atmosphere of gas giant planets. They are widespread, indicating either a stunning example of parallel evolution or purposeful colonization. As the latter is the most likely explanation for the dirigibles' distribution, the question is who spread them throughout Known Space? The dirigibles themselves may be responsible, for they are clearly sentient, and their reproductive cycle may involve scattering spores into interplanetary space.

Dirigibles see light and color through a cluster of modified organs which girdle their bodies, giving them 360-degree vision. Manipulation is accomplished by means of a cluster of tentacles which hang below the main body.

Dirigibles are natural ramjets, sucking air into one end, heating it internally, and expelling it. This process works in both directions, giving neither a definable "front" nor "back." They feed on atmospheric algae and on smaller flying species.

As noted, dirigibles are sentient, often possessing material cultures in which objects are carried in panniers by individuals, or in the tentacles beneath the main body. All attempts at communication have failed, but this has not stopped Guild scientists from trying.

**DRACA****RCD:** 10/16/8**GEN SCI RCD:** B8/C24/T16**ATK/DMG:** bite, claw, tail (10/8+trip), weapons (cybernetics, melee, physical ranged)**DEF/AR:** armor (cybernetics, energy fields)**SPECIAL:** Cybernetics**SIZE:** 6'6", 300 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Dracan, Guild speak, +1**FORM:** Biped, Reptilian**HABITAT:** Desert, arid**LOCATION:** Guild, Dracan Holding**STATUS:** Guild Members, Dracan Holding, Independent Starfaring Race

The Draca are masters of one of the most powerful and violent states in Known Space. Reptilian warriors, Draca are naturally powerful and deadly hunters. They have increased their natural abilities, however, through the cult of Cybernetics, in which the "imperfect" body is modified with mechanical, electronic and technological devices. It is a rare Draca with no cybernetics, and the most accomplished members of the race are often so heavily modified as to be unrecognizable.

Draca are born with tails, but most have them removed soon after birth, as they are considered to be unwanted vestiges of the Draca's primitive ancestors. Some clans retain their tails, and cybernetically enhance them, as well.

Many Draca now live in the Guild, serving in the Guild military and, more recently in the House of Dha.

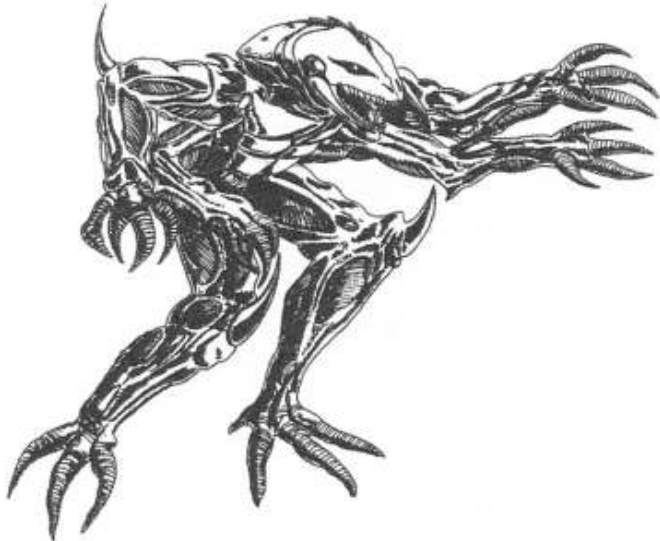
**DRASSK****RCD:** 16/16/10**GEN SCI RCD:** B6/C16/T16**ATK/DMG:** bite, claw, weapons (any)**DEF/AR:** armor (archaic, flak, powered suit)**SIZE:** 6', 200 lbs.**LANGUAGE:** Drasski, Arthirian, +1**FORM:** Biped, carnivore**HABITAT:** Jungle**LOCATION:** Sphere (Arassk)**STATUS:** Arthirian Citizens

The Drassk are a race of deadly beauty. Physically, the Drassk look like black-furred wolf-tiger hybrids, with muscular bodies and slender, delicately muzzled faces. Drassk eyes range from green to gold and have strange, barbell-shaped pupils.

A cunning and dangerous race, Drassk serve extensively in the Arthirian military. Their commanders specialize in stealth, ambush and deception, and in battle the Drassk have few equals. Their body weaponry is even more deadly than the Zin-Shee and they have few qualms about using high-tech weaponry or armor.

Drassk society centers around the creation and accumulation of fancifully-carved "honor-stones." A successful warrior is awarded one or more stones by his clan-mistress (a revered female ceremoniously "married" to all clan males), and the victor in single combat can claim one or more of his opponent's stones. Service with the Arthirians is seen as a great opportunity to gain more honor-stones, and the Drassk have taken to it readily.

Some Drassk tribes have left the Sphere altogether, and taken up lives as nomadic mercenaries, providing their services to the smaller warring states of Known Space.

**DREADAR**

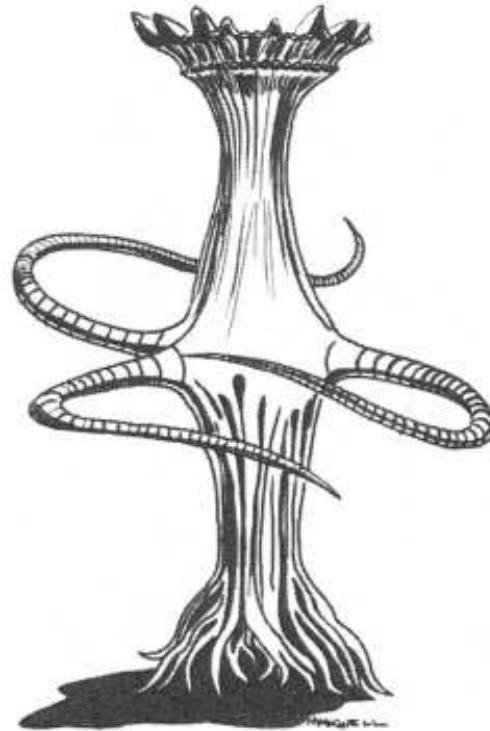
**RCD:** 15/25/4  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B20/CO/T4  
**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite  
**SPECIAL:** Immune to poison, acid, mind control, and the vacuum of space

**SIZE:** 5', 220 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Unknown (hive-mind?)  
**FORM:** Alien  
**HABITAT:** Unknown  
**LOCATION:** Rimward Space  
**STATUS:** Unknown

Small, fast, and strong, Dreadar are often seen in company with Horak, leading some to suggest that they are simply another one of the many sub-types of Horak themselves. Dreadar are similarly alien, with multiple arms, but have different internal arrangements and capabilities than their larger counterparts. They also seem to be nonsentient, or only marginally intelligent, interested mostly in violence and bloodshed. Their lack of useful role in any planetary ecosystem has led some scientists to speculate that they are not natural creatures at all, but an artificially created species intended for use in war.

Despite this, Dreadar also appear to be capable of limited communication with their fellow creatures — Horak, mind spiders, and similar horrific life forms. The mode of communication seems to be some form of hive-mind telepathy, although they also produce a savage hissing sound on occasion. It is not known whether this hissing is involved in communication.

Dreadar are quite adaptable, capable of moving swiftly in a variety of environments. Their heavy claws are often used to shred doors, armor, vehicle treads and other important objects. Horak seem to use the Dreadar as their initial "assault troops," following later to mop up the survivors.

**Eefo**

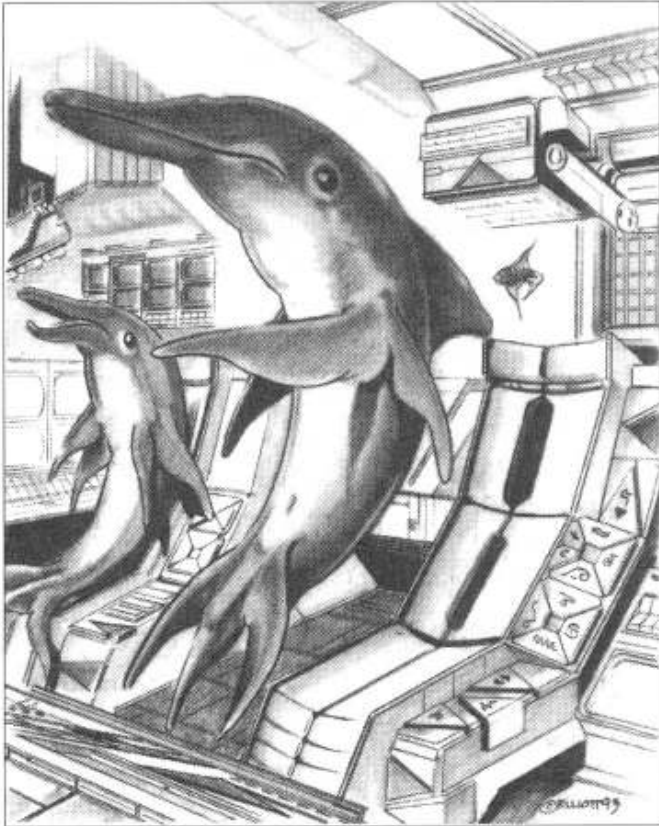
**RCD:** 8/24/8  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B20/CO/T4  
**ATK/DMG:** tendril whip, grab, crush, weapons (clubs only)  
**SPECIAL:** immune to mind control, double damage from fire or plasma

**SIZE:** 7', 150 lbs.  
**LANGUAGE:** Eefo, Zin-Shee  
**FORM:** Plant  
**HABITAT:** Forests  
**LOCATION:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy (Greenworld)  
**STATUS:** Zin-Shee Subject Race

Intelligent plant species are uncommon, and the Eefo are one of the best known. Encountered and easily conquered four centuries ago, the Eefo were pressed into service as gardeners and agricultural experts. They continue to be favored by their Zin-Shee masters, and are relatively well treated (i.e., watered regularly).

Eefo were non-technological at contact, and today retain very little talent for standard technology. They do, however, practice a form of Biotechnology, by which they adapted other plant species to form living buildings, bridges, water storage facilities, and other useful items. The use of Biotechnology for weapons never occurred to the Eefo, as warfare was unknown. The Zin-Shee have begun to observe the Eefo's Biotechnology at work, and are attempting to duplicate it.

Eefo really do not understand fighting. If given a weapon and told to shoot (and if they can figure out how to operate it), Eefo will follow directions, shooting in random directions, often hitting inanimate objects or friends. Occasionally, they will batter enemies with their limbs, or pick up clubs, but they do not seem to grasp the significance of such actions.

**HAMMU**

**RCD:** 12/15/18  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B12/C8/T14  
**ATK/DMG:** bunt, weapons (modified spear gun and pulse laser weapons)  
**DEF/AR:** airtuit

**SIZE:** 6' long, 320 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Hammu, Guild speak, +2  
**FORM:** Cetacean  
**HABITAT:** Aquatic  
**LOCATION:** Guild (Hammu)  
**STATUS:** Guild Members

One of the more unusual Guild races, the Hammu are warm-blooded aquatic creatures with slender, elliptical bodies and four long, manipulative fin-like appendages. Hammu also use their delicate, toothy mouths for holding and moving objects. Their aquatic culture was almost entirely non-material when the Guild encountered them 300 years ago, but today they ply the spaceways in water-filled starships and are known throughout GuildSpace.

Normally immobile on land, Hammu travel out of water in armored air-suits. Without artificial life support, a Hammu can survive for only d6 hours out of water.

Hammu communicate with sonar, and are capable of pitching their natural sound producing organs to mimic Anthropos speech.

They have recently begun experimenting with Kryll-style Biotechnology, adapting several non-sentient species of their home world to serve as biological supplements, computers, weapons, etc.

**HAOCHANN**

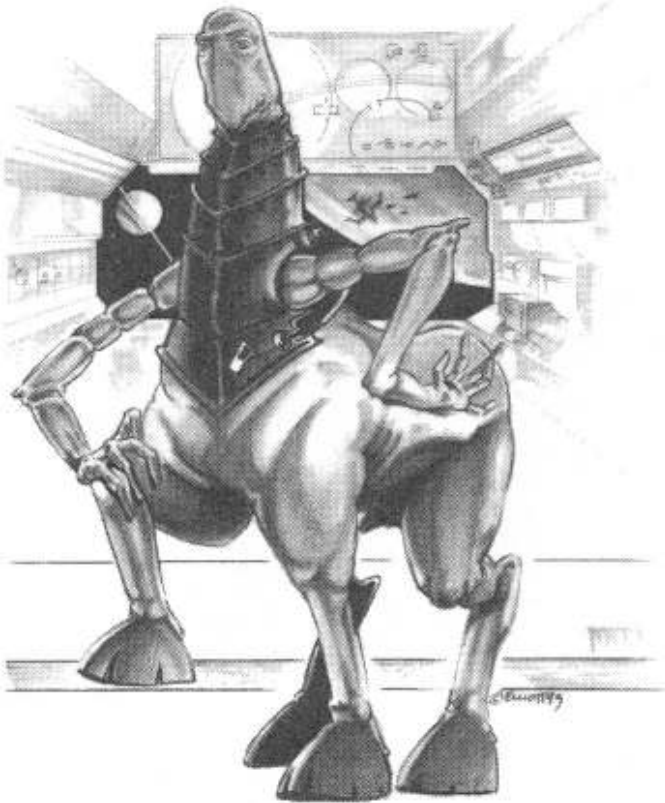
**RCD:** 8/6/28  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C4/T20  
**ATK/DMG:** slap (poison), weapons (prefer pistols)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (light suit armor)  
**SPECIAL:** Contact poison (paralysis 6)

**SIZE:** 5'6", 150 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Haochann, Impspeak, +2  
**FORM:** Biped, Amphibian  
**HABITAT:** Swamp  
**LOCATION:** Empire (Chreek)  
**STATUS:** Imperial Honored Slave

This race looks somewhat comical to Anthropos. Haochann are best described as upright, bright green tropical frogs with bulging red eyes and webbed fingers. They are a highly developed race with the ability to make complex mathematical calculations without artificial assistance, making them excellent pilots, Astrogators, mathematicians and accountants. They defend themselves with a mild skin toxin, which must be spread by direct contact and causes paralysis.

As one of the honored slaves of The Empire, the Haochann are found throughout Kathan space, often serving in prominent imperial positions. Haochann also command many Empire spacecraft, and even lead some larger imperial space formations.



**HELAV**

**RCD:** 12/24/12

**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/CI2/T20

**ATK/DMG:** stomp, weapons (spears, blasters)

**DEF/AR:** armor (flak)

**SIZE:** 6' tall, 8' long, 1500 lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Helav, Guild speak, + 1

**FORM:** Quadruped, alien

**HABITAT:** Plains

**LOCATION:** Guild (Ehlak)

**STATUS:** Guild Members

The Helav resemble mythical centaurs - a long, powerful quadruped body grafted to an upright, humanoid torso. The resemblance proves to be only passing, however, for Helav's brains are located in the "chest" portion of their "horse" bodies. The upper torso and head are used primarily for sensory input and manipulation. A Helav can survive with its head completely removed, although it would be blind and crippled as a result.

Helav culture is complicated, with numerous castes, linguistic levels, and subtle nuances in clothing and decoration denoting the various classes, guilds and castes. Several prominent xenologists are said to have had nervous breakdowns attempting to understand Helav society.

Nonetheless, Helav have become significant members of the Guild, serving as couriers, Astrogators, interpreters, administrators and adventurers. Several have even joined the House of Dha, and served with distinction. For their part, the Helav are somewhat arrogant, believing that they are the only truly civilized galactic race. That other races cannot understand their enlightened culture is simply considered proof that they are inferior.

**HORAK**

**RCD:** 8/40/10 (Atk 15)

**GEN SCI RCD:** B30/CO/T8

**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, knee spike, elbow spike, tail whip (15/10+trip), weapons (bio)

**SPECIAL:** Poison paralysis (Dif 20), immune to poison, acid, vacuum, and mind control

**SIZE:** 9', 1200 lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Unknown (hive-mind?)

**FORM:** Alien

**HABITAT:** Unknown

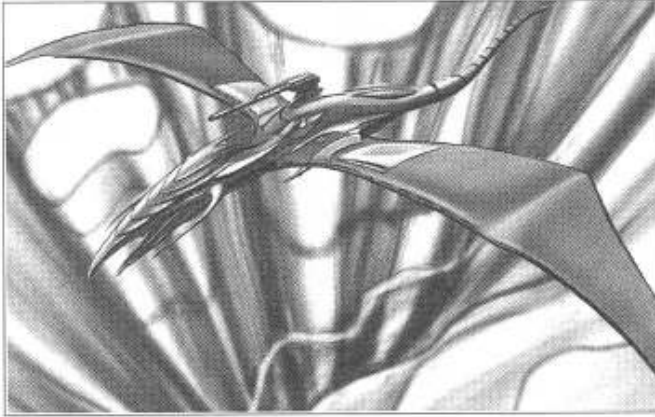
**LOCATION:** Rimward Space

**STATUS:** Unknown

These deadly creatures appearance is highly alien in nature, their bodies protected by heavy, bony plates. Horak abilities vary by individual, with some simple predatory killing machines which use their claws and teeth to inflict horrific damage. Others have poison glands, and inject paralyzing neurotoxins into their victims' bodies. A few seem to have basic but powerful psionic abilities, and can compel their victims to march unwillingly into their very jaws. They also use biotechnically engineered weapons much like the Kryll.

Some members of the Guild have even gone so far as to suggest that the parallels between Kryll and Horak do not stop there. Notwithstanding the major contributions which the Kryll have made to the Guild, some claim that the insect-warriors are actually the vanguard of an invasion force, sent here to gather intelligence and pretend to be friendly until the final attack. A few such critics even claim that the Kryll are themselves bioengineered servants of the Horak, but there is little real evidence of this.

Horak are rare near GuildSpace, found mostly in interstellar space and on uninhabited worlds. Some rumors claim that hordes of Horak and Dreadar have taken over entire starships, but this has not been confirmed.

**HORASSA**

**RCD:** 12/35/2 (MR 24 (air)/6 (land))  
**ATK/DMG:** beak, tail whip (12/15+trip), cyber mounted weapons  
**DEF/AR:** cyber armor

**SIZE:** 60' wingspan, 10' long, 1000 lbs  
**FORM:** Avian Dinosaur  
**HABITAT:** Desert, plains  
**LOCATION:** Dracan Holding  
**STATUS:** Domesticated Animal

These powerful creatures resemble flying dinosaurs, but are much stronger and can carry much heavier loads. On their home world of Alaki, the Horassa are flying predators, easily capable of hunting and snatching the large and dangerous fish-like life-forms of the world. When the Draca colonized Alaki, their scientists immediately began experiments upon the Horassa, intending to cybernetically adapt the flying beasts to serve as dray- and war-beasts. In this, the Draca were wildly successful.

Horassa are found throughout the Dracan Holding, serving in reconnaissance, transportation, and combat roles. Their massive wing-loading capacity allows Horassa to carry full-grown adult Dracan cyber lords, and to mount weapons as powerful as RCD 8V.

Although they make poor fighter aircraft - Horace's slow airspeed makes them vulnerable to faster and more maneuverable craft - their value as infantry support weapons and reconnaissance scout craft is unparalleled. Scout Horassa are usually modified only minimally, and are virtually indistinguishable from the flocks of ordinary Horassa which are found throughout the Holding and surrounding space.

Enemies fighting the Draca are faced with the choice of ignoring Horassa (and possibly allowing reconnaissance Horassa to observe them and transmit images back to the Draca), or wasting time shooting down every wild Horassa which they encounter.

**JANGIRI**

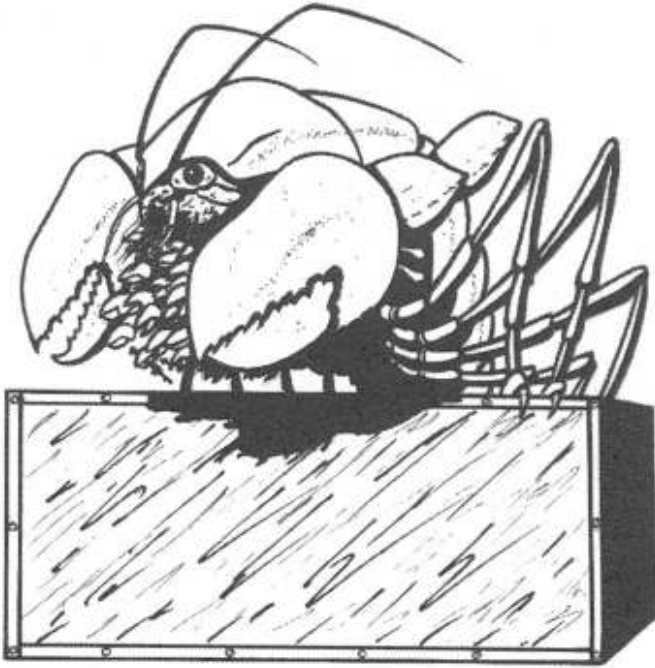
**RCD:** 12/8/12 (Dex 16)  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C6/T10  
**ATK/DMG:** bite, weapons (knives, pistols, slug throwers)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (flak)

**SIZE:** 4'5", 110 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Jangiri, Impspeak, +2  
**FORM:** Biped, mammalian  
**HABITAT:** Forest, plain  
**LOCATION:** Empire (Jangir)  
**STATUS:** Imperial Honored Slaves

Talented pilots, the diminutive (four to five feet in height) Jangiri wear overcoat-like garments and shun body decoration. Jangiri personality is gruff and straightforward, but not at all unlikable.

Although they retain the status of honored slaves, the Jangiri retain a greater streak of independence than other slave races, and sometimes grumble at Kathan domination. There is, at present, no real way out of imperial service, so most Jangiri keep their grumbling quiet and do nothing to endanger their position in The Empire.

Jangiri originated on a forest world deep within imperial borders. They were relatively civilized at Empire contact, having advanced to steam technology and maintained a peaceful society with few open conflicts. Today, they retain a dislike of violence, although Jangiri starpilots are among the finest in the imperial fleet.

**K'LAK**

**RCD:** IS/12/12 (MRS)  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B6/CS/T16  
**ATK/DMG:** battleclaw, biocharge 15/24 three times a day) Bioelectric discharge

**SIZE:** 6' long, 200 lbs. K'lak,  
**LANGUAGE:** Arthirian, + 1  
**FORM:** Crustacean  
**HABITAT:** Semi-Aquatic  
**LOCATION:** Sphere (Drahhmo)  
**STATUS:** Arthirian Citizens

The K'lak are a semi-aquatic race of crustaceans which are found primarily in the Arthirian Sphere. They resemble enormous lobsters with dozens of small, manipulative arms and larger battleclaws which are used in combat. K'lak constantly shed their smaller arms, growing new ones as needed. They can defend themselves with charges from their bioelectric organs.

K'lak communicate by a combination of clicks, hisses and squeaks, and have great difficulty duplicating Anthropos language without artificial translators. Most K'lak in the Sphere have had a translator implanted in their carapace, and speak in the flat, metallic voice of a computerized interpreter.

Evolved from highly primitive crustaceans, the K'lak have a fairly complex society. Their home world is a place of continent-sized mudflats dotted with huge, mangrove-like trees which form islands in their extensive root networks. The world is divided among dozens of K'lak "dynasties" which, prior to Arthirian contact, fought endless wars for influence and dominance.

K'lak serve in the Arthirian military as Astrogators and technicians. Their numerous small arms allow them to do many tasks quickly and almost simultaneously.

**KATHA**

**RCD:** 14/15/16  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B8/C12/T24  
**ATK/DMG:** punch, bite (12/8), weapons (any - prefer swords and disc guns)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (any)

**SIZE:** 6'2", 225 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Imperial Kathan, Impspeak, +1  
**FORM:** Humanoid  
**HABITAT:** Any  
**LOCATION:** Empire  
**STATUS:** Imperial Master Race

The masters of The Empire are grey skinned humanoids covered in bony protrusions and plates, which provide a significant amount of Natural Armor. The sole survivors of a genocidal war between the sentient races of their home world, the Katha developed a paranoid and xenophobic philosophy which claimed that other races were to be trusted only as slaves. To treat a race in a fair and peaceful manner was to invite betrayal and extinction. To this end, the Katha spread through the galactic arm, producing a mighty empire which was finally stopped only by the Guild.

Katha are extremely intelligent and technologically skilled. While their strength and basic attributes are slightly higher than Anthropos, their bony skin enables them to survive longer in combat.

In most Katha today, the warrior spirit has declined considerably. Substantial numbers of Katha still serve in the Empire military, but they are outnumbered by the subject races, who now have taken over much of the responsibility for running The Empire. Some Katha have even split off from the Empire to form a new state, known as the Kingdom, which they feel is more faithful to the Katha's heritage.

**KRYLL WARRIOR****RCD:** 8/18/8**GEN SCI RCD:** B24/C8/T4**ATK/DMG:** mandible, claw, tails pike (8/10 + poison), weapons (bio)**DEF/AR:** armor (bio)**SPECIAL:** Biotechnology, tail spike paralysis poison (Dif 6)**SIZE:** 6' long, 400 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Kryll, Guild speak, + 1**FORM:** Insectoid**HABITAT:** Hiveworld**LOCATION:** GuildSpace (Kryll-Hive)**STATUS:** Guild Members

The Kryll's first contact with the Guild nearly ended in tragedy. At first mistaking the Kryll for hostile aliens, the Guild realized its error before serious bloodshed occurred, and accepted the Kryll as Guild members. In an unprecedented move, the Guild also allowed the Kryll to join the House of Dha without a long and involved qualification procedure.

The Kryll are one of the most alien species in Known Space. An insectoid hive mind culture, the Kryll communicate pheromonally and live in vast genetically engineered spacecraft.

Given their truly alien nature, many scientists have expressed surprise that the Kryll are capable of interacting with other species at all. The secret to the Kryll's success lies in their hive-queen and their translator-caste Kryll, both of which are capable of absorbing and duplicating alien languages and thought-patterns.

A recent development in Kryll society is the evolution of free-willed warrior-caste Kryll who are capable of individual thought, and able to take much more independent action.

Kryll are masters of the science of Biotechnology, through which other life forms are genetically adapted to use as tools, weapons, and transportation.

For more details on this race, see the Races section in this book.

**KURG****RCD:** 8/8/12**GEN SCI RCD:** B14/C16/T18**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, tail whip (8/8+trip), weapons (knives, pistols, carbines)**Def / AR:** armor (archaic, flak)**SIZE:** 4', 85 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Kurg, Skrak, +2**FORM:** Bipedal Reptilian**HABITAT:** Unknown**LOCATION:** Throughout Known Space**STATUS:** Independent Race

It is generally thought that the Kurg are a subordinate race to the Skrak, but the actual relationship appears to be more complex. Kurg are often found in positions of authority on Skrak ships, and seem more like equal-status crewmen than slaves or servants.

The Kurg are small, nervous-looking reptiles with gleaming white, pink and black scales looking more or less like upright geckos. Their bodies are constantly at twitch, and their long, flexible tongues frequently flick out to test the air or clean the surface of the Kurgs' eyes. They do not have the same lust for battle as their Skrak partners, but will fight if necessary. The kurg's talent seems to be more as technicians, repair people and navigators than as warriors.

The kurg's origins and home world (if any) are unknown. It is possible that they are an entirely space-faring race, with no planetary culture whatsoever.

**KURR'SSA****RCD:** 20/12/4**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, eyebeam (20/16)**SPECIAL:** Eyebeam**SIZE:** 3' long, 20 lbs**FORM:** Quadruped, Feline**HABITAT:** Desert, plains**LOCATION:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy**STATUS:** Domesticated Animal

The Zin-Shee keep these intelligent cats as pets. They seem to have descended from the same root-ancestor as the Zin-Shee, and share several anatomical features. Kurr'ssa have grasping paws, which enable them to hold small objects. The Kurr'ssa share the glowing eyes of their Zin-Shee cousins, but have no psionic abilities.

The centers of the brain which evolved into the Zin-Shee's psionic control regions have, in the Kurr'ssa, become a sort of biological capacitor for storing bioelectrical energy. A Kurr'ssa's natural defense is a powerful pulse of light energy from its eyes, which can blind its target (roll Def vs. 20 or be blinded for 6L rounds) and inflicts 8M damage. Kurr'ssa can emit this charge only once per hour, but will use it to defend their owners if necessary.

Kurr'ssa are a familiar sight throughout the Matriarchy, and in Zin-Shee controlled facilities and planets within the Guild. They have retained a streak of cat-like independence, and non-Zin-Shee find them somewhat obnoxious and arrogant. Kurr'ssa tend to be loyal to their Zin-Shee owners, however, and are even employed as security sentries in sensitive areas, allowed to roam freely and trained to attack outsiders with their eye-beams.

Occasionally, a Kurr'ssa will accept a non-Zin-Shee as a companion, but this is comparatively rare. They are demanding pets, expecting to be fed regularly, constantly coddled and paid attention to, and generally given complete control over their owners' lives. Owners who deny Kurr'ssa the attention which the beasts seem to feel they deserve do so at their own peril, for unhappy Kurr'ssa have been known to turn their claws and eyebeams on the furniture and personal possessions of unsatisfactory owners.

**LIRRIT****RCD:** 12/6/10**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C6/T8**ATK/DMG:** bite, weapons (knives, pistols)**SIZE:** 5'2", 140lbs**LANGUAGE:** Urr, Zin-Shee**FORM:** Biped, mammalian**HABITAT:** Forest**LOCATION:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy (Urri)**STATUS:** Zin-Shee Subject Race

These subjects of the Zin-Shee Matriarchy are woolly mammals with thick, prehensile tails, short, stubby fingers and round, staring eyes. They are often employed as nursemaids for Zin-Shee children.

Urrit also serve as menial laborers with little complaint. The entire race seems rather tolerant - they are slow, methodical creatures who reach all decisions by consensus and have little in the way of formal government. Their forest-world home has been left more or less alone by the Zin-Shee, although psi-cat tourists sometimes visit there.

**MBARI**

RCD: 16/26/8

GEN SCI RCD: B4/C8/T8

ATK/DMG: punch, weapons (spear, knife, Axe, disc weapons, etc.)

DEF/AR: armor (flak, trooper)

SIZE: 7'6" 300 lbs

LANGUAGE: mBari, Impspeak, + 1

FORM: Biped, Humanoid

HABITAT: Tundra, Forest LOCATION: Empire (OkUmBari)

STATUS: Imperial Honored Slave

The Empire discovered the mBari 500 years ago, and quickly utilized their natural talents as warriors. The mBari were resistant at first, but in the face of imperial benevolence and the unbelievable riches brought home by those selected for Empire service, they soon adapted wholeheartedly, and soon became honored slaves.

The mBari resemble Anthropos, but are taller and more wiry. Facial features are flatter; there is no external nose, just nasal openings which may be closed at will. Skin color ranges from pearly grey to jet black, and eye color is always pale yellow. Many mBari decorate themselves with ritualistic scars in the form of tribal magic runes.

The mBari are fast, agile and strong, and are capable of prodigious leaps, up to twice as far as Anthropos. They fight with a wide variety of bizarre metal, stone and bone weapons, and have adopted the high tech weapons and armor necessary for survival only reluctantly (and in the face of substantial casualties). Males and females fight, but males rule tribes (albeit with female advice and consent).

If an mBari wishes to serve outside the tribe (such as in The Empire), he or she must join the dagger-brethren, a sort of "tribe outside the tribe." Dagger-brethren act as a single tribe, and most now serve The Empire. Today, Dagger-brethren feel that the empire has grown soft and has abandoned the martial excellence of the past, and some even consider the possibility that the Katha may need to be deposed at some point in the future.

Over the past few decades, mBari officers and soldiers have grown more numerous and important throughout The Empire as Kathan influence wanes. Several all-mBari regiments exist in contravention of the normal imperial practice of mixing species in units to prevent mutinies and coordinated resistance. Several of these mBari regiments have recently been moved to the Guild frontier, where they are sure to be in the forefront of any new attack on Anthropos space.

The mBari's warrior culture looks upon any coming war as a massive tribal conflict, and popular belief among the mBari paints the Anthropos and their allies as the emissaries of evil spirits whose ultimate goal is to end all wars, and therefore all opportunity for glory and advancement for the tribe. Without the glory of battle and accomplishment, the mBari believe, they will surely waste away and vanish, a fate which they will resist with all their hearts. Faced with such a culture, it is unlikely that the Guild can convert the mBari to a more constructive society any time soon.

**MINDSPIDER**

**RCD:** 15/10/3 (Str 15)  
**ATK/DMG:** grab (15/special)  
**SPECIAL:** Mind Control (Dif 5x rnds), immune to poison, acid, and vacuum

**SIZE:** 2' across, 8 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Unknown (hive-mind?)  
**FORM:** insectoid  
**HABITAT:** Space  
**LOCATION:** Rimward Space  
**STATUS:** Unknown

Called "spiders" simply due to their resemblance to the familiar arachnids, these creatures are actually quite different. They are often seen with Dreadar and Horak, and may be linked to a common hivemind.

Mindspiders are six-legged, parasitic creatures which scuttle along at high speeds, intent on attaching themselves to a larger victim. Should the spider succeed in attaching itself, it whips its positions itself on the back of the head, whips its split tail around either side of the victim's neck, grabs their head with its legs, and immediately injects its neural "stinger" into the victim's spinal cord.

Victims who make their Def roll vs. the spider's grab attack have avoided contact with the Mindspider. If the Mindspider hits, however, the target must then make a normal AR roll vs 10. If the roll fails, then the spider's stinger has penetrated the victim's armor, and the victim must resist the mind control (WP vs 5 times the number of rounds resisting).

Victims who fail are under the spider's complete control. The parasite now derives sustenance from its host's own body, and can manipulate the host as desired, utilizing the victim's skills, combat abilities, etc. The spider can only read a victim's surface thoughts, however, and cannot detect deeply hidden secrets, thoughts, etc. Likewise, a parasitized character can detect the surface thoughts of the spider's hivemind.

**MORIAM**

**RCD:** 15/6/15 (MR6 Land)  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C6/T20  
**ATK/DMG:** weapons (bows, small ranged weapons)  
**SPECIAL:** Echolocation

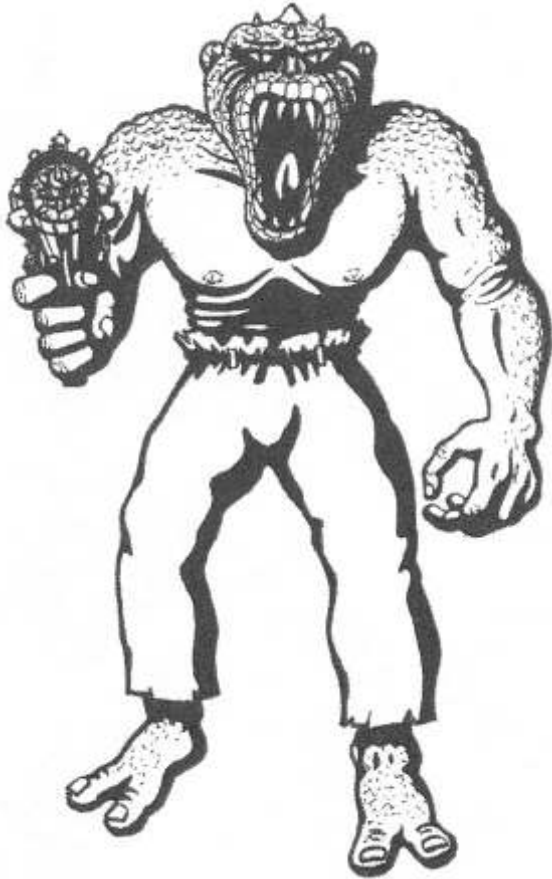
**SIZE:** 3', 75 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Mori, Arthirian, +1  
**FORM:** Biped, Chiropteran  
**HABITAT:** Forest  
**LOCATION:** Sphere (Moros)  
**STATUS:** Arthirian Citizens

Winged humanoids who stand only a meter or so tall, the Moriam are another significant race of the Arthirian Sphere. Evolved from flying insectivores, the Moriam retain limited flight capability and have a fascination with mechanical devices, their function and repair.

Each Arthirian starship has at least one Moriam engineer, and Moriam tinkerers are in demand throughout the Sphere. They have recently been allowed to travel in the Zone and GuildSpace, where they have had considerable success, sending huge amounts of income home to their families.

Moriam cities resemble forests, full of tall, cylindrical buildings with simple openings and perches at all levels. As Moriam do most short-distance travel by air, the concept of streets is unfamiliar, making Moriam cities extremely confusing for non-Moriam visitors.

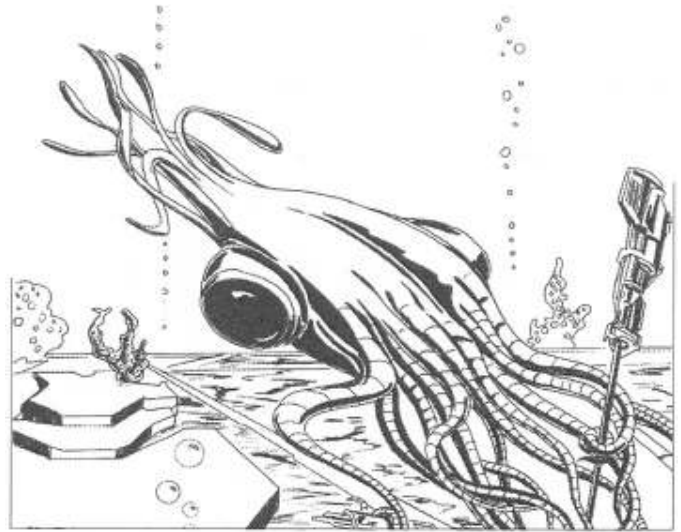
The Moriam can avoid obstacles in total darkness through the use of echolocation, and can locate even small objects.

**MURRK****RCD:** 12/30/6**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C8/T4**ATK/DMG:** punch, bite, weapons (melee and disk)**DEF/AR:** armor (archaic, flak)**SIZE:** 7'8", 375 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Murrk, Impspeak**FORM:** Humanoid**HABITAT:** Forests, Mountains**LOCATION:** Empire (murrkworld)**STATUS:** Imperial Honored Slave

Towering, lantern-jawed humanoids with rough grey skin, the Murrk are The Empire's primary shock troops, and serve the Katha as guards and enforcers. Murrk are generally ~considered dull-witted, only capable of following orders from authority figures. They have completely embraced The Empire and seem to relish their role as its primary warrior-race and bully-boy.

Murrk warriors who go off-planet dedicate their very lives to The Empire, and are known as "The Slain," since to their tribes and fellow warriors, they are as good as dead. Slain are never expected (or allowed) to return home alive.

The Murrk were a non-technological race easily conquered by the Katha. Over the centuries, they have been trained as modern warriors, and are now masters of hand-to-hand combat, although most energy weapons are too complex for them. They enjoy combat, and can shrug off even the most massive damage due to their massive Strength and Fortitude.

**NEIDASCA****RCD:** 12/24/12**GEN SCI RCD:** B8/C14/T16**ATK/DMG:** tentacle crush, bite, weapons (spear guns, disk weapons)**DEF/AR:** armor (water suit)**SIZE:** 18' long, 800 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Neidasca, +2**FORM:** Mollusk**HABITAT:** Aquatic**LOCATION:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy (Uukra' a)**STATUS:** Zin-Shee Subject Race

In the cold seas of Uukra' the Zin-Shee encountered a race like none they had encountered before. The Neidasca were a race of large, tentacled mollusks who maintained a level of steam-based technology deep beneath the surface. After an inconclusive conflict, the Neidasca agreed to serve the Matriarchy. Today, they are typically dispatched to explore the seas of new worlds, and the planet continues to pay tribute to the Zin-Shee in the form of minerals and sea produce.

Neidasca's numerous tentacles are very flexible, enabling them to reach around corners and even into closed boxes and through cracks in doors. Highly intelligent, they have advanced their technology to near-space faring levels, and have traveled throughout Zin-Shee space.

Neidasca can survive several hours out of water, but they tend to collapse without artificial support. Neidasca diplomats and technicians in water suits are becoming a common sight in Zin-Shee territory.

Neidasca use their watery home and environment against enemies. They will "shadow" schools of fish to confound detection gear, lurk in deep water, and hide in caverns or other natural features before swimming rapidly out to envelop enemies in their tentacles. They also use projectile weapons adapted to underwater use.



**NEODOGS**

**RCD:** 12/12/6  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C0/T8  
**ATK/DMG:** bite, weapons (melee weapons, rarely - small ranged weapons)

**SIZE:** 5', 100 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Anthropos  
**FORM:** Biped, canine  
**HABITAT:** Any  
**LOCATION:** GuildSpace  
**STATUS:** Independent Race

Neodogs are bipedal, genetically engineered descendants of the faithful dog of old. Their Intelligence has been raised to near-Anthropos level, and their vocal apparatus modified so that they may communicate verbally. Neodogs retain their friendly, loyal personality, and are often used as companions by adventurers.

Neodogs have been bred to resemble virtually any larger canine breed (the most popular are shepherds, huskies and retrievers). Although their intelligence has been increased considerably, Neodogs retain their pack instinct, and still see Anthropos as "masters," making them some of the most reliable friends in the galaxy. Several have served honorably as companions to members of the House of Dha, and one was recently honored with a posthumous decoration for saving its master in battle.

**OMAX**

**RCD:** 15/18/2  
**ATK/DMG:** beak, kick

**SIZE:** 8' tall, 600 lbs  
**FORM:** Biped, Avian  
**HABITAT:** Plains  
**LOCATION:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy, Guild  
**STATUS:** Domesticated Animal

Used as a food-animal by the Zin-Shee, Omax are also used as mounts both within the Zin-Shee Matriarchy and beyond. Omax are massive, flightless avians with comparatively short necks and larger heads. Their heavy beaks can be dangerous, but Omax will generally not attack unless they are attacked first. Hardy and capable of surviving in many different climates, Omax are used on exploratory missions in areas where vehicles are impractical (thick forest, for example).

**ORO**

**RCD:** 8/40/10  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C0/T10  
**ATK/DMG:** grab-crush, punch

**SIZE:** 8', 1000 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Oro, +1  
**FORM:** Humanoid (?)  
**HABITAT:** Mountains, badlands  
**LOCATION:** Cruz (Dracan Holding)  
**STATUS:** Independent Race

These massive, rock-skinned humanoids originated on a planet where temperature and climatic extremes made all life forms tough and hardy. One of few races to withstand the Dracan onslaught, the Oro were allowed to remain unmolested on their home world (the fact that Oro flesh proved inedible to the Draca might be another reason for the lizard-men's conduct). Now, they remain on their home world, although Oro guards, laborers and servants can be found throughout the Dracan Holding.

The Oro are fairly intelligent by Anthropos standards, but have little use for technology or machines. Their culture evolved as a contemplative, philosophical one, as Oro were frequently forced into long meditative states by extended storms and disturbances. They are slow to anger and rarely use violence.

Once an Oro's grab attack has succeeded, it inflicts crushing damage each round until the victim breaks the hold with a Str check or dies.

**PER'KIFF**

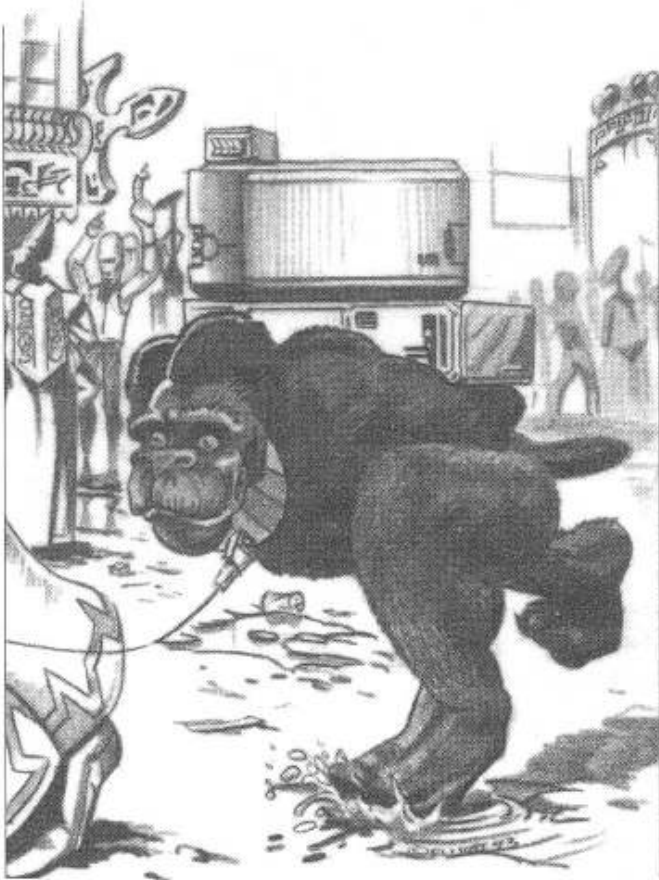
**RCD:** 18/4/20  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C16/T24  
**ATK/DMG:** none

**SIZE:** 4'6", 75 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Per'kiff, Impspeak, +1  
**FORM:** Biped, mammalian  
**HABITAT:** Jungle  
**LOCATION:** Empire (Kiffhaka)  
**STATUS:** Imperial Honored Slaves

A warm-blooded species with huge eyes, and feathery "fur," the Per'kiff are a quiet, high-strung species. Their delicate fingers and high dexterity make them outstanding spacers and electricians.

One of the more recent honored slave race, the Per'kiff have spread throughout The Empire, working in many different environments and worlds. They prefer quiet and do not work well under pressure, so owners and overseers have learned to allow them to work relatively unmolested.

Per'kiff will not fight under any circumstances. If threatened, a Per'kiff will flee, roll up into a fetal ball, or, in rare cases, die of heart failure. They hate violence, weapons and loud noises, and their culture is based on universal friendship and understanding. Crimes such as murder are unknown to the Per'kiff, and after imperial contact, the Per'kiff had great difficulty comprehending the concept of warfare. Even today, they are somewhat confused by the foolishness of other races, and continue to avoid all conflict.

**PORASHA**

**RCD:** 15/15/9 (Int 4 off planet)  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C6/T8  
**ATK/DMG:** punch, weapon (club, knife)

**SIZE:** 5'2", 200 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Porash, Impspeak  
**FORM:** Humanoid  
**HABITAT:** Plains  
**LOCATION:** Empire (Tummok IV)  
**STATUS:** Imperial Slave Race

Within The Empire, a breed of (apparently) semi-intelligent, heavy-bodied mammals (similar in appearance and build to gorillas) are used as slaves, carrying heavy loads, doing simple tasks, and so on. Widely thought to be non-intelligent, the Porasha situation is actually far more tragic. They are a group mind intelligence, and on their home world, quite bright. In fact, they concealed the true extent of their species' intelligence for fear of extermination, reluctantly giving up individuals to work in The Empire.

Porasha taken away from the home world, however, grow dull, listless and truly stupid, since they are out of touch with their group-mind. Should the Guild discover the Porasha's true intelligence, it will be another crime that the Katha have perpetrated on the sentients of the galaxy, and a massive rescue mission may ensue.

Porasha mental attributes decline to four when taken away from their home world. They increase by one for every ten Porasha located within one mile.

**POUNCER**

**RCD:** 18/24/2 (cyber 14/35/2)  
**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, cyber  
**DEF/AR:** cyber-armor  
**SPECIAL:** Camouflage (Dif 20)

**SIZE:** 10' long, 1000 lbs  
**FORM:** Quadruped, feline  
**HABITAT:** Plains  
**LOCATION:** Calemor, Dracan Holding  
**STATUS:** Animal

These predators are native to the planet Calemor, but have been exported off world for use in zoos and circuses. A few have escaped to become threats on other worlds.

Pouncers are giant (1000-pound, five feet at the shoulder) predatory, catlike animals. The fur of their back and shoulders has been modified into heavy, overlapping plates which protect them from harsh conditions, as well as enemies.

This beast's major ability is camouflage - a Pouncer can shift its pigmentation to match any terrain with almost undetectable accuracy. An Awa roll vs 20 is required to spot a Pouncer before it attacks.

The Draca took an immediate liking to Pouncers, capturing and importing them back to Dracan Holding, where they adapted them as cybernetically-enhanced riding beasts. Their massive carrying capacity also enables Pouncers to mount weapons, force fields and massive supplemental armor. Pouncers have proven to be deadly allies for the Draca, and the sight of a gleaming metallic cyber-lord astride his enhanced, armed and armored pounce mount is enough to strike fear into the heart of the bravest warrior.

**RAKKA**

**RCD:** 14/16/12  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C10/T16  
**ATK/DMG:** bite, weapons (melee, pulse)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (archaic, flak, lesser powered)

**SIZE:** 5'10", 175lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Rakka, Guild speak, + 1  
**FORM:** Biped, lupine  
**HABITAT:** Plains, forests  
**LOCATION:** Guild (PackDen)  
**STATUS:** Guild Members

The Rakka resemble upright, slightly stooped humanoid wolves. They retain the crooked, jackleg formation of their lupine ancestors, using their bushy tails for balance, and shunning footgear unless wearing armor.

The pack is supreme to the Rakka. The entire race is divided into eight major packs, but they view the Rakkian species as a pack in itself, and the Guild as yet another pack worthy of service and defense. The Rakka relish combat, and enjoy fighting at close quarters.

The Rakka and Zin-Shee fought several inconclusive battles over their history ("They fought like cats and dogs," as one prominent chronicler put it) and today the two species are still somewhat antagonistic.

**SAND-SQUID**

**RCD:** 12/60/2(MR4)  
**ATK/DMG:** tentacle crush, beak (if pulled under)  
**SPECIAL:** Tentacle attack

**SIZE:** 50' long, 8000 lbs  
**FORM:** Mollusk  
**HABITAT:** Sandy deserts  
**LOCATION:** Known Space  
**STATUS:** Animal

Harsh desert climates breed tough, deadly predators and the sand-squid is definitely one of these. Its massive body is usually buried deep beneath sand or gravel, and its large tentacles (up to a dozen) are kept hidden until prey approaches. When this happens, the tentacles whip out, seizing the victim and dragging it down to the toothy maw below. The squid's bloated body stores protein and moisture in preparation for long periods without nourishment, and its tentacles are tough, covered with a thick, calloused layer of flesh.

Sand squid will attack virtually anything which approaches them, regardless of hunger or need for prey. As they are sometimes found on the same worlds as Horak and Dreadar, it has been speculated that they are all part of the same hive-mind community. Scientific study of the squid has been limited due to its dangerous and aggressive nature.

Sand-squid have 10 tentacles. Each can grasp a different target. When the tentacles first erupt from the sand, victims must make a Shock roll vs. 18.

Once caught, a victim must make a Strength roll vs. 60 or be dragged under the sand (suffocation rules) to the squid's beak, which may then attack the hapless victim.

**SHANASK**

**RCD:** 12/8/24 (Vit 20)  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C0/T20  
**ATK/DMG:** weapons (Sorcel based, melee, small ranged)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (energy fields, physical shields)  
**SPECIAL:** Sorcel, radiate fear

**SIZE:** 6'6", 250lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Shanask, Guild speak, +3  
**FORM:** Cloak  
**HABITAT:** Unknown  
**LOCATION:** Guild, Shanask Moon  
**STATUS:** House of Dha Members

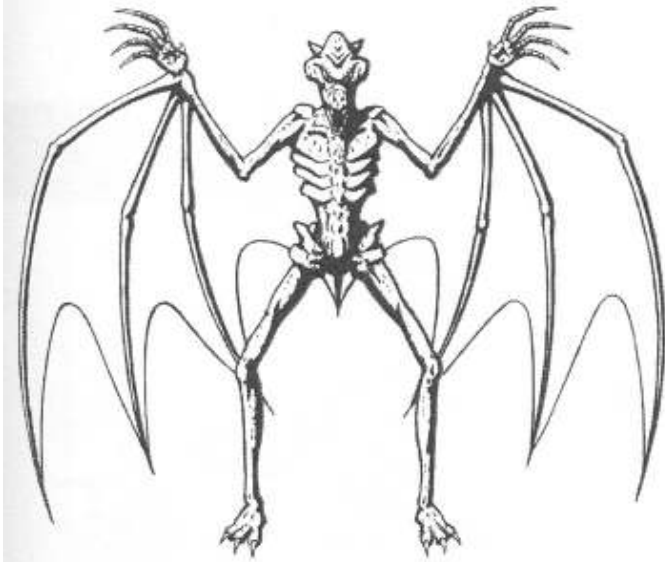
As the Kryll are one of the most alien of Guild races, the Shanask are unquestionably the most mysterious. Tall, cloaked beings which seem to exclusively inhabit the Shanask Guardian Moon orbiting Dha Prime, the Shanask are one of the weakest and most powerful species known.

Physically, the Shanask have little to recommend them. Although they are relatively tough, their strength and skill with normal weapons is minimal.

The Shanask's true power lies in the mastery of the strange energies known collectively as the Sorcel. Plainly put, the Sorcel is nothing less than true magic, a force capable of bending, breaking and rewriting the known rules of the universe and its physics.

Thus far, these cloaked aliens have used their Sorcel powers for the good of the Guild, but many remain nervous and doubtful of their true intentions.

For more information on the Shanask, see the Races section in this book.

**SHAR-KA**

RCD: 16/20/16

GEN SCI RCD: BO/C4/T10

ATK/DMG: grab, bite, claw, weapons (racially appropriate)

DEF/AR: armor (racially appropriate)

SPECIAL: Bite and drain

SIZE: 6'6", 200lbs

LANGUAGE: Shar-ka (?), +3

FORM: Biped, Reptilian

HABITAT: Any

LOCATION: Throughout ~own Space

STATUS: Independent Race

Like the shape-changing Dhardoun, humanoid Shar-ka roam widely throughout Known Space. These creatures possess a similar ability to the Dhardoun, in that through their feeding process they slowly begin to resemble the races they dwell among. It is this feeding process, however, which has caused many races to simply call the Shar-ka "vampires," after ancient legend. Many different races possess legends of vampires, in fact, leading scholars to speculate that the Shar-ka have plagued galactic civilization for millennia.

The Zin-Shee, for example, tell tales of their ancient empires, in which normally good rulers unaccountably grew greedy and evil, eventually being revealed as wicked alien beings disguised as Zin-Shee.

Even the Draca, normally fearless warriors, show discomfort and fear at the thought of these creatures. One of their legends tells of an entire world parasitized and converted by the Shar-ka. So corrupt was the world, the tales state, that the Draca were forced to send warriors to cleanse the planet by killing every living thing on it. Even then, several of the evil ones escaped and continued to wreak havoc throughout the Holding.

Few Shar-ka have fallen into the hands of Guild scientists, and of those, most were badly mutilated or decayed. The exact nature and process of their conversion ability is not known, although most suspect that their cells retain a virus-like ability to duplicate host genetic material and completely change their appearance and physiology. Regardless of their true biology, there is no question that the Shar-ka are a frightening and dangerous species.

In their natural state, Shar-ka resemble vaguely reptilian bat-like creatures, further enhancing the "vampire" legends. They feed by consuming the body fluids of their victims, rather than mere blood, however. Their long, flexible tongue is used to extract fluids from

victims immobilized by the Shar-ka's claws, leaving a withered husk which is easily disposed of.

Shar-ka like to attack from ambush when in their natural form. After transforming into the semblance of their victims' race, Shar-ka will try to win the confidence of victims, trying to lure them into an isolated area with promises of money, romance, or other desirable things.

If a victim fails his or her Def roll vs the Shar-ka's grab attack, then the Shar-ka has successfully grappled, and automatically hits with a bite attack for each round that the grapple is maintained (victims are still allowed an AR roll, however). Victims may break the grapple with a successful Str vs Str roll.

With each feeding, the Shar-ka grows to resemble its victim species more and more. Eventually (after 10-20 kills), the Shar-ka is indistinguishable from its victims, and may pass as one of them (although its basic statistics remain unchanged, and it gains no racial abilities such as Psionics), greatly improving its chances of finding easy prey. Transformed Shar-ka are always extremely attractive members of their host race, and carefully change their natural habits to conform with social norms and conditions.

If more than three days pass without feeding, however, the Shar-ka begins to transform back to its original form. After 1020 days, the Shar-ka is back to its native appearance, and must feed or die within another 10-20 days.

Shar-ka prefer to stick to a single species when feeding, so that their transformation is not unduly complicated, but sometimes they have no choice but to victimize another race. When this happens, the Shar-ka gains some traits of its new victim, which may be eliminated by returning to its original prey. Desperate Shar-ka often degenerate into hideous amalgams of a dozen species, and in this way are often detected and eliminated. Many horrific tales are told throughout Known Space of such freaks and the havoc which they cause; frighteningly enough, most of the stories are all too true.

**SHEEM**

**RCD:** 6/6/35

**GEN SCI RCD:** B8/C8/T32

**ATK/DMG:** weapons (small ranged - rarely)

**SPECIAL:** Psionics (telekinetics)

**SIZE:** 4', 80 lbs.

**LANGUAGE:** Sheem, Arthirian, +3

**FORM:** Humanoid

**HABITAT:** Forest/Urban

**LOCATION:** Sphere (sheem)

**STATUS:** Arthirian Citizens

Frail-bodied, thin-limbed humanoids, the Sheem are allies of the Arthirian Sphere. The Sheem live in tall, towered cities and elect leaders in a democratic process very similar to Anthropos. They are a gentle, relatively non-violent species, with highly developed telekinetic skills. While their range of psionic abilities is severely limited, their abilities with telekinesis (i.e., moving objects) exceeds even the Zin-Shee.

Sheem are common within the Sphere, and are excellent scientists. Their frail bodies make them poor warriors, but they feel that their culture has evolved well beyond the need for physical violence. Unfortunately for them, few other species in Known Space have attained this high degree of enlightenment and civilization.

**SIDERA****RCD:** 12/12/16**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C10/T12**ATK/DMG:** claw, beak, weapons (blow, blasters, fang rifle)**DEF/AR:** armor (flak)**SIZE:** 6'6", 210 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Sidera, Zin-Shee, +4**FORM:** Biped, Avian**HABITAT:** Plains, forests**LOCATION:** Zin-Shee Matriarchy (Kree'kree)**STATUS:** Zin-Shee Subject Race

The Sidera are descended from colorful predator-birds and still retain feathered, wing-like arms, as well as limited flight capabilities.

They serve their Zin-Shee masters as soldiers, teachers, philosophers and linguists, as their versatile vocal apparatus can reproduce virtually any language (including the click and clack language of the Kryll).

Long ago, the Sidera devastated their world in a series of titanic wars, which no one alive remembers the reason for. Peace was reestablished before the world was completely destroyed, and the Sidera adopted a much less destructive philosophy, based on personal enlightenment.

Over the intervening centuries, the Sideran home world was restored and transformed into a carefully-managed and -manicured paradise. Wars and squabbles still broke out, but the Oath of the Wise, as the philosophy was called, prevented any further holocausts.

When the Zin-Shee arrived, wise Sidera realized that any struggle against the picots was hopeless. They surrendered without a fight, asking only that their world be left in peace. The Zin-Shee complied, allowing Sidera to serve their Matriarchy. Today, the Sidera are still officially slaves, but their philosophy has modified traditional Zin-Shee society considerably. Although old-style Zin-Shee still favor warfare and conquest as the way to glory, the Oath of the Wise has gained great favor among Guild-sympathetic Zin-Shee.

The Guild race which most resembles the Sidera, at least in terms of personal philosophies, is the Calemora. The Sidera are different from the Calemora in that they seek to perfect the mind and soul, rather than the body, but in general the two species have a lot in common.

Individual Sidera tend to be quiet, thoughtful individuals. Most Sidera carry a copy of the Oath of the Wise, and a ceremonial weapon. This last is carried for personal defense only - the Sidera believe that carrying a weapon shows the ability, but not the willingness, to use it. Ideally, weapons are only drawn if all other means of avoiding conflict have been exhausted.

A true Sidera warrior is expected to spend idle hours meditating and studying the Oath of the Wise; many monasteries and colleges exist solely for this purpose.

The Oath of the Wise emphasizes peace and negotiation, but at the same time teaches that once combat has begun, it should be conducted in the most efficient and skillful manner possible. Sidera warriors are outstanding swordsmen, and are also highly skilled in the use of ranged weapons. Once combat has been initiated, Sidera will never surrender, but will always grant a defeated enemy mercy if it is requested.



**SKRAK**

**RCD:** 10/10/8

**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C8/T16

**ATK/DMG:** bite (10/6), punch, weapons (swords, ranged)

**DEF/AR:** armor (flak, trooper)

**SIZE:** 5', 175 lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Skrak, +1

**FORM:** Humanoid

**HABITAT:** Unknown

**LOCATION:** Throughout Known Space

**STATUS:** Independent Race

Along with their companion race, the Kurg, the Skrak are the only race known to make its living entirely through piracy.

Physically, Skrak resemble muscular, hairy humanoids with large heads and oversized hands. They fight ferociously, utilizing massive slug-throwing guns or stolen energy weapons, and generally do not take prisoners.

Skarak ships are considered a hazard of space along with asteroids and wormholes. They are generally small vessels, of a wide variety of designs, or they are stolen from other races and extensively modified to Skrak and Kurg tastes. Little more is known about these creatures, although a handful have actually settled down in the Guild and make their living as traders, with a little smuggling on the side.

**SKRIKKA**

**RCD:** 8/20/8

**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C8/T8

**ATK/DMG:** claw, weapons (melee, rarely blasters)

**SPECIAL:** Burrowing Attack

**SIZE:** 5' long, 200 lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Skrikka, +1

**FORM:** Biped, mammalian

**HABITAT:** Subterranean

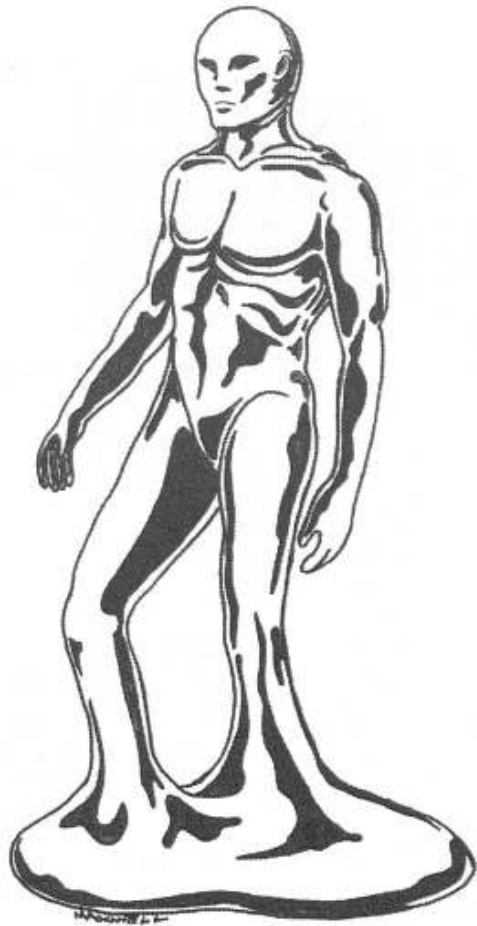
**LOCATION:** Gozom (Dracan Holding)

**STATUS:** Independent Race

A subterranean, heavily armored race of warm-blooded sentients, the Skrikka managed to frustrate Dracan attempts at genocide by burrowing away, ambushing, and engineering massive cave-ins which killed many Draca. Finally exhausted by the pointless struggle, the Draca offered the Skrikka mercy, claiming that they had shown themselves worthy of survival.

True to their word, the Draca allowed the Skrikka to survive unmolested, but occasionally employ Skrikka engineers for mining and excavation projects. Skrikka are amazingly strong and durable, but sensory apparatus is minimal. They can, however, detect vibrations in the ground very accurately, enabling them to easily determine what is going on above. Skrikka have begun to develop a machine-based technology with help from the Draca, and some actually have begun to train as Astrogators.

Skrikka favor burrowing beneath enemies and dragging them under. Anyone attacked in this manner must make a Shock (18) roll, or the Skrikka hits automatically. If threatened with defeat, Skrikka can actually burrow deep enough to avoid any major weapon attack.

**STELLARNITES**

**RCD:** 15/20/15  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C0/T10  
**ATK/DMG:** punch, weapons (any body or melee, ranged - rarely)  
**SPECIAL:** Shape change

**SIZE:** 6' ,500 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Stellari (?), +1  
**FORM:** Alien  
**HABITAT:** Hot worlds  
**LOCATION:** Guild (Zolik)  
**STATUS:** Independent Race

Beings of liquid metal, Stellarnites can survive in extremely hot climates, and possess a well-developed, sophisticated culture. As they have limited shape changing abilities, Stellarnites don't really have what could be called a material culture, content to shape their bodies into whatever tools and objects they need.

Recently contacted by the Guild, the Stellarnites have proven to be a race with great potential. Their liquid metal physiology enables them to change their bodies into virtually any shape, although (unlike the Dhardoun), stellarnites cannot add or subtract mass, and must shape themselves into objects or beings of their same general size. They are also able to go completely liquid, flow under doors, enter cramped or totally inaccessible spaces, and so on. These abilities have, of course, not gone unnoticed by the Guild, and it is highly likely that the stellarnites will eventually become important Guild members.

**SWAMPWORM**

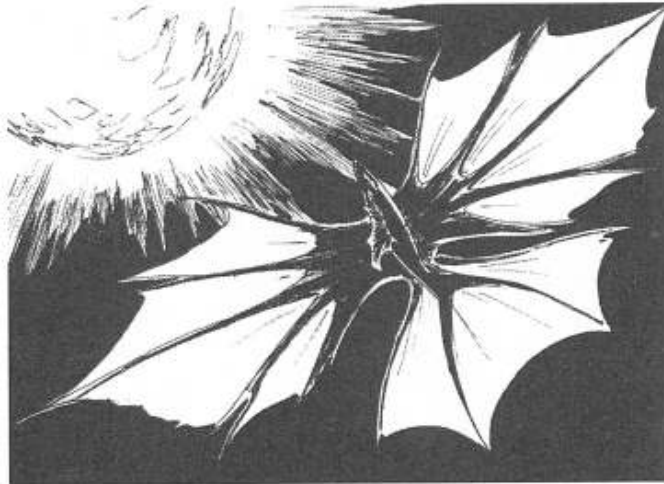
**RCD:** 8/12/1  
**ATK/DMG:** bite  
**SPECIAL:** Poison (Dif 10)

**SIZE:** 4' long, 120 lbs  
**FORM:** Wormlike  
**HABITAT:** Swamps  
**LOCATION:** Water- and swamp worlds  
**STATUS:** Animal

The Swampworm is another relatively widespread creature, with subspecies and genetic variants found on dozens of worlds. As these subspecies are all genetically related, Guild scientists have concluded that Swampworms were artificially, and possibly deliberately, spread over a wide number of worlds. Where they exist, Swampworms make travel dangerous, kill livestock, and damage economies. Their tough, prolific nature makes Swampworms difficult or impossible to fully eradicate from the worlds they inhabit.

A predator inhabiting swamps and bogs, the Swampworm kills with a deadly poison (victims must roll FR vs. 10 or die), then adheres to its victim, dragging it off to be swallowed (the worm expands like a snake to consume its meal). Swampworm poison degrades quickly in its victim, and so is virtually undetectable. Imperial assassins have been known to use Swampworm venom on knives, crossbow bolts, darts and other devices of covert murder.

The Empire itself has been blamed for the spread of the Swampworm through GuildSpace, although many subspecies are known to have existed long before imperial contact. Recently, however, imperial agents may well be seeding Swampworms onto vital worlds in the hope of disrupting economies and causing social upheaval. Where they appear, Swampworms inevitable damage their environment, developing rapidly from a pest to a serious threat.

**T'SKAA**

**RCD:** 12/800/14  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C8/T6  
**ATK/DMG:** ram, energy blast  
**DEF/AR:** natural force field  
**SPECIAL:** instantaneous communication

**SIZE:** 300' long, 10 tons  
**LANGUAGE:** T'skaa (psionic), Guild speak, +3  
**FORM:** Alien  
**HABITAT:** Space  
**LOCATION:** Guild (space)  
**STATUS:** Guild members

Space-dwelling entities are rare in the Guild, and those which are capable of communication are rarer still. The T'skaa, vast whale-like space-beings, are an example of this last type. Hundreds roam space in and around GuildSpace. The entire species seems capable of instantaneous mental communication over vast distances, so they are often used to carry important messages around the Guild.

T'skaa are solitary creatures which "feed" by going into orbit around a star for a period ranging from a week to a year, storing radiant energy in special organs, and slowly consuming it as they travel through space. This energy can also be discharged if the T'skaa is threatened, inflicting massive damage on enemies. The imperial gunship Benevolence was destroyed by a T'skaa recently.

The proven hostility of The Empire (its scientists want to study T'skaa in an attempt to find a means of enslaving the entire species) has driven the T'skaa to more fully support both the Guild and the Sphere. T'skaa often travel through imperial space, gathering intelligence, and communicating their information back to fellows in GuildSpace or the Arthirian Sphere. The Empire seems to be aware of the space whales' activities, but has thus far been unable to stop them.

**URUK**

**RCD:** 10/32/10  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C8/T8  
**ATK/DMG:** punch, grab-crush, bite, weapons (swords, blasters)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (archaic, flak)

**SIZE:** 8'4" 500 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Uruk, Guild speak, +1  
**FORM:** Biped, ursine  
**HABITAT:** Forest  
**LOCATION:** Guild (Uru)  
**STATUS:** Guild Members

These hulking, furred omnivores come from a relatively primitive world, but have taken to Guild membership and technology with few problems. They are enormously strong, rivaling even the Calemora, and can withstand appalling amounts of damage without apparent handicap.

Uruk culture is warm and family oriented, stressing violence only for self defense. Most Anthropos find the Uruk to be a pleasant, almost comforting race despite their great size and threatening appearance.

Although they are capable of being deadly warriors, Uruk are not inclined to use violence unless they or their families are directly threatened. This means that Uruk make relatively poor soldiers at first, but once links of friendship and camaraderie with fellow fighters are forged, they fight as well as any other race. In general, however, Uruk are a relatively peaceful race, and have absolutely no interest in war or conquest.

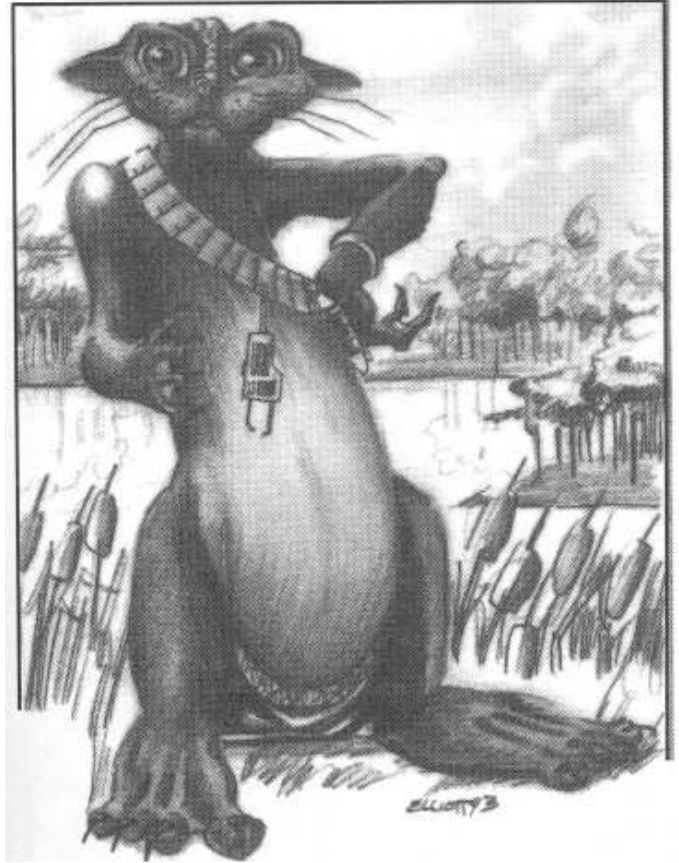
**VULPE**

**RCD:** 20/8/16  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B3/C8/T18  
**ATK/DMG:** bite, weapons (pulse, blasters)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (flak, trooper)

**SIZE:** 5'2" 140 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Vulpe, Guild speak, +2  
**FORM:** Biped, vulpine  
**HABITAT:** Forest, plains  
**LOCATION:** Guild (LaRukiru)  
**STATUS:** Guild members

A handsome, fox like race, the Vulpe are quite widespread throughout the Guild, traveling as merchants, starship pilots and freelance adventurers. Their dexterity and Awareness are among the highest in the Guild, making them excellent covert agents, hunters and trackers. Many Vulpe serve on the Guild military as scouts.

Vulpe value independence, and have nothing resembling a central government. The extended family appears to be the highest level of organization they have, but they will most commonly be encountered by themselves, or in the company of a single mate and up to four children.

**WURRO**

**RCD:** 14/12/10 (MR 10 Land)  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C8/T6  
**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, weapons (knife, crossbow)  
**DEF/AR:** armor (flack)

**SIZE:** 5'3" 150 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Wurro, Guild speak, +1  
**FORM:** Biped, mammalian  
**HABITAT:** Semi-aquatic  
**LOCATION:** Guild (Kambur)  
**STATUS:** Guild Members

These playful creatures are full Guild members, and are often found in GuildSpace. The Wurro are bipedal, otter descended bipeds with dexterous, webbed fingers and mischievous, somewhat comical expressions. The Wurro are fast, high-strung nervous creatures with short attention spans and little patience for real work.

The Wurro never attained a very high technological level for this reason, content to live in riverside dwellings, hunt and fish with the most basic bows, arrows and spears. After Guild contact, however, it was found that the Wurro's natural skill at hunting, tracking, and swimming, made them perfect scouts and spies.

A few more sedate Wurro were recruited into the Guild military, and are used for reconnaissance and covert missions on water worlds. For their part, the Wurro took to their new role with enthusiasm, considering it one of the most fun things they had ever done.

**XALTIR**

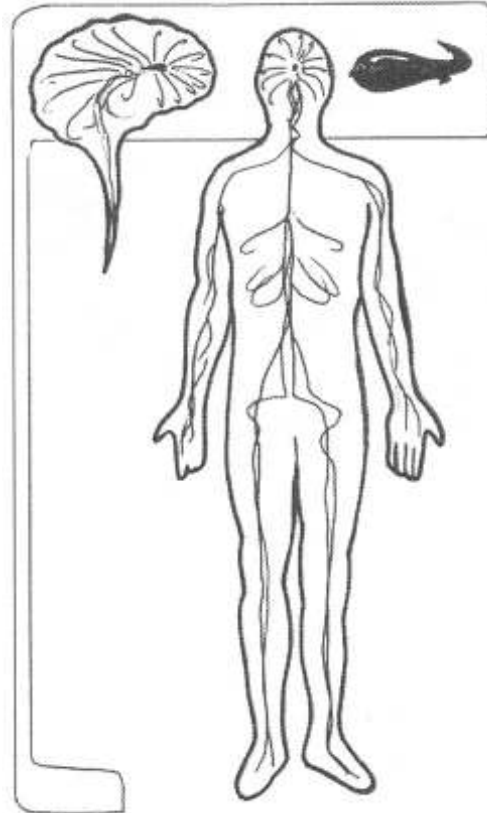
**RCD:** 16/16/6  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B8/C3/T4  
**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, canon-ball-dive, weapons (clubs)  
**SPECIAL:** poisonous back spikes (Dif 15)

**SIZE:** 5'8", 180 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Xaltir (?)  
**FORM:** Humanoid/Alien  
**HABITAT:** Lightly inhabited planets  
**LOCATION:** Known Space  
**STATUS:** Unknown

No one knows where Xaltir come from nor how, given their low tech level, they managed to locate themselves upon so many worlds throughout Known Space. They may be an ancient biological weapon gone berserk, or another of the Empire's evil schemes. One thing is certain - they are an extreme hazard wherever found.

Xaltir thrive on the pain, suffering, and fear of others. They prefer to locate several miles from small settlements. There, they stalk those who venture from the safety of their village. Xaltir prefer to toy with their victims, allowing them to become suspicious that they are being followed, then frightened, and finally terrified. Then the Xaltir capture their victims, take them back to their lair and torture them over several days to several weeks before finally killing and eating them. Xaltir all seem to be naturally cruel and evil.

One of the Xaltir's favorite attack forms is to run quickly, curl into a ball, and fling itself at the victim. Xaltir do this so that their back spikes, tipped with a natural paralysis poison, will render their victims helpless. Even if no damage is taken, this attack will knock over a victim who fails a Str (16) check.

**XLRALLI**

**RCD:** 12/4/24  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C0/T4  
**ATK/DMG:** none  
**SPECIAL:** Host being

**SIZE:** 3" long, 6 oz.  
**LANGUAGE:** Xlralli, +4  
**FORM:** Alien, piscine  
**HABITAT:** Any  
**LOCATION:** Throughout Known Space  
**STATUS:** Independent Race

These small, tadpole-like beings are actually a mutualistic symbiote, whose presence in the body of host creatures greatly magnifies Intelligence, WP and Healing. They are not well known, and are rare throughout GuildSpace. In addition, the Xlralli like to keep their existence a secret, fearing a rush on their world by eager individuals seeking symbiosis.

Xlralli can live in harsh conditions for long periods of time, awaiting the arrival of a suitable host. When a suitable host approaches, the Xlralli attaches itself to the flesh, secreting a natural anesthetic which prevents the host from feeling it. The Xlralli then fuses with the host's flesh, moving into the host's body and spreading throughout its system.

Once the symbiosis is complete, the Xlralli contacts its host telepathically, explaining what has happened. If the host refuses to allow the Xlralli to stay, it will immediately vacate the body, but this rarely happens. Anyone with a Xlralli symbiote experiences the following effects: + Id to Int, WP and Healing (to a maximum of 10H), and the poison resistance enhancement. The host may also communicate with the Xlralli.

**YRRAX****RCD:** 16/35/5**ATK/DMG:** bite, claw, grab, kick**SIZE:** 8' tall, 20' long, 3000 lbs**FORM:** Biped, Dinosaur**HABITAT:** Plains, swamps**LOCATION:** (Huxxa) GuildSpace**STATUS:** Animal

This 20-foot long, eight-foot high predator is similar to the raptor-class of predatory dinosaurs, with muscular arms ending in foot-long claws, and powerful feet, each with a single, forward curving sickle-like claw nearly two feet in length. Yrrax fight by grabbing with their arms while slashing with their sickle-clawed feet, inflicting terrible damage, and killing most prey animals instantly.

Yrrax are found on several different worlds, especially in Zin-Shee and Draca space. The Draca have tried to adapt the Yrrax as a cybernetically-enhanced war beast, but have so far been unable to overcome its vicious, predator nature. Instead, many Draca prefer to hunt Yrrax, tracking them down and killing them single-handedly as a test or demonstration of the prowess of cybernetic implants.

Zin-Shee and particularly daring Anthropos sportsmen also hunt Yrrax, but these beasts represent a challenge for even the most skilled hunter.

Yrrax habits vary from world to world. On some planets, they are solitary, claiming and defending hunting territory from others of their species. On other worlds, Yrrax are dangerous pack predators, hunting in groups of up to 20. Combining speed with a surprising intelligence, Yrrax packs are a truly deadly hazard.

A few Yrrax have been captured and placed in high security zoological gardens for study, but this proved to be hazardous when three Yrrax recently escaped from a lab on Arth and did considerable damage before being recaptured.

**ZIN-SHEE MALE****RCD:** 20/12/10**GEN SCI RCD:** B8/C10/T16**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, weapons (melee, hurled, ranged - prefer pulse and fang)**DEF/AR:** armor (force field, archaic, flack)**SIZE:** 6',200lbs**LANGUAGE:** Zin-Shee, Guild speak, +1**FORM:** Biped, Feline**HABITAT:** Plains, Jungle**LOCATION:** Guild, Zin-Shee Matriarchy (Sheapa)**STATUS:** Guild members, Zin-Shee Matriarchy Citizens

The catlike Zin-Shee rule a powerful matriarchy located coreward of the Guild. Although females, with their superior psionic ability, rule the state, Zin-Shee males are outstanding warriors, and help defend the matriarchy against its enemies. While they are fickle, vain and often somewhat foppish in their casual dress, Zin-Shee males are deadly foes in battle, and can be excellent adventuring companions.

**ZIN-SHEE FEMALE**

**RCD:** 16/8/16  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B6/C8/T16  
**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, weapons (melee, hurled, ranged - prefer pulse and fang)  
**Def / AR:** armor (force field, archaic, flak)  
**SPECIAL:** Psionics

**SIZE:** 5'6", 160 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Zin-Shee, Guild speak, + 1  
**FORM:** Biped, feline  
**HABITAT:** Plains, jungle  
**LOCATION:** Guild (Seril), Zin-Shee Matriarchy (Sheapa)  
**STATUS:** Guild Members, Rulers of Zin-Shee Matriarchy

Although male Zin-Shee are great warriors, females' psionic abilities have kept them in power for centuries, and helped to defend the psi-cats against outside threats. Female psi-mistresses are as common in the Zin-Shee military as male warriors, and with their potent psionic abilities, just as deadly.

Female Zin-Shee share many of the males' traits, tending to be high-strung, changeable and somewhat chaotic in their social and personal habits. They, too, favor a wide variety of clothing styles and personal decoration, although in combat they tend to favor force fields and less encumbering items.

For more information on the Zin-Shee, male and female, see the Races section in this book.

## GU Personalities

Many individuals, not least of whom are the player characters themselves, influence the fate and future of the Guild and Known Space as a whole. The major movers and shakers of galactic civilization are a motley bunch, with many different abilities and goals. Several prominent GU personalities are described in this section.

### BORAZZA IRIN, GENERAL ANTHROPOS MALE



RCD: 12/15/35

GEN SCI RCD: B8/C24/T32

ATK/DMG: punch, blaster pistol

DEF/AR: armor

SPECIAL: Cybernetically enhanced

SIZE: 6'5", 250 lbs

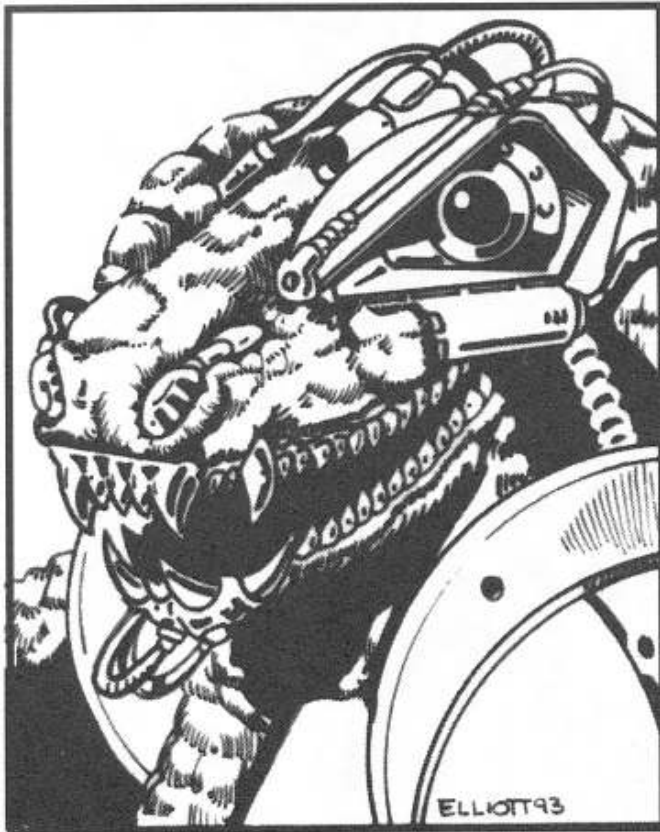
LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Guild speak

This Anthropos general is quite old (101), but retains a phenomenal intelligence and strategic sense. He leads the Guild's ground warfare arm. Badly wounded in a campaign against the rebel slavers of Armis X, Irin has had extensive cybernetic surgery, leading many Draca to nickname him "the Anthropos cyber-Lord." His enhancements give him the strength and mobility of a man half his age.

Irin is still a handsome man, his hair silver, his face sharp and weathered looking. He has four sons and six daughters, all of whom serve in the military houses.



## DAKKON HAKARISS, EGG-MISTRESS DRACA FEMALE



RCD: 18/40/20  
 GEN SCI RCD: B20/C40/T16  
 ATK/DMG: claw, bite, scythe-cannon, drac maul  
 DEF/AR: cyber armor

SIZE: 7'6", 400lbs  
 LANGUAGE: Dracan, Guild speak

The leader of the Draca has held his position for nearly five decades. She is a traditionalist who accepts relations with the Guild reluctantly. Dakkon's attention is currently absorbed in a campaign against unknown aliens spinward of the Dracan Holding, so she can spare little time for relations with the Guild.

Dakkon is heavily enhanced with many antique and near-sacred cybernetic devices dating back to the founding of Clan Hakariss. Her bodyguards, currently numbering 20 cyber-lords, are devoted to her and her clan, and have proven themselves highly capable and nearly undefeatable in challenge-combat.

Once Dakkon's attention returns to the Guild, she will find a host of new problems and questions which need immediate attention and answers. Is the Guild still worthy of survival? If not, should a war of extermination begin? And what of those Draca who have turned their backs on traditional Dracan society and joined with the Guild? Should their views be allowed to spread throughout the Holding, or should they be eliminated? These and many other questions are sure to confront Dakkon soon.

## DALOS SMITZ, GRAND ADMIRAL ANTHROPOS MALE



RCD: 20/16/30  
 GEN SCI RCD: B8/C12/T32  
 ATK/DMG: blast carbine  
 DEF/AR: flak

SIZE: 6'1", 175lbs  
 LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Guild speak

This slender, somewhat scholarly looking individual is actually a commander of great skill and an Anthropos of considerable hidden strength. Smitz commands the House of Defiance, and with it, one of the most elite naval forces in Known Space.

A witty, intellectual man, Smitz enjoys games of strategy and skill, is well read in the histories and philosophies of all major Guild races, and enjoys intellectual discussions. He is also fond of professional sports, and enjoys occasional participation himself. He enjoys entertaining at home, but can sometimes be persuaded to attend a state function or reception. He is devoted to his wife, but has no children.

On the bridge of the flagship, Defiant, however, Smitz is in his element. His instantaneous grasp of tactical subtleties helps him manage small fleets, while his intimate knowledge of the Guild and surrounding territory is invaluable in moving forces over long distances. He is also quite lucky, and on several occasions has managed to locate Dark Alliance and Skrak fleets with little more than intuition to guide him. Rumor has it that the Dark Alliance has placed a 1,000,000 cr price on the admiral's head, but he accepts such speculation with good humor.

**DAXX, GENERAL ANTHROPOS MALE****RCD:** 24/24/24**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C16/T24**ATK/DMG:** punch, disk pistol, pulse rifle**DEF/AR:** flak, trooper**SIZE:** 6'4", 280 lbs**LANGUAGE:** Anthropos, Arthirian, Guild speak

The current leader of the Arthirian Sphere is a career military man. He is a harsh-looking, wire haired Anthropos who is never seen out of his dark green and red uniform. An acknowledged master of blade combat, he often chafes under the restrictions placed on him by his status, and longs to leave the confines of his palace on Arth. He is loyal to his nation, however, and will continue to serve as long as he is asked to.

Recent events have driven this fiercely independent man to consider closer ties with the Sphere's old enemy, the Guild. Sabotage of Arthirian shipyards on Icebox, as well as increasing (albeit unconfirmed) reports of Imperial intelligence activity within Arthirian space have led many of Daxx's advisors to openly suggest that The Empire is preparing for war against both the Sphere and the Guild.

These reports, coupled with stories of the new imperial super-soldiers have made Daxx consider ending the age-old feud between Guild and Sphere in favor of formal alliance. Of course, this may be just the excuse The Empire needs, so Daxx will have to play his cards carefully.

**DUCHESS MUNIS'SHA QRR'SH, PSIMISTRESS****RCD:** 30/16/30**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C6/T12**ATK/DMG:** claw, bite, screamer, blaster pistol**SPECIAL:** Psionics**SIZE:** 5'7", 165lbs**LANGUAGE:** Zin-Shee, Anthropos, Dracon, Guild speak

The leader of House Dha's Zin-Shee is a strikingly attractive psi-cat. Her grey and white striped fur is distinctive, and her manner at once friendly and direct. A highly accomplished psionist, she was chosen to lead Dha's Zin-Shee after long, and sometimes boisterous, meetings throughout Zin-Shee space. Once assigned to Dha Prime, she took charge of the Zin-Shee moon, turning it into a place of typically Zin-Shee luxuries, with comfortable furniture, few real work spaces, and numerous cozy spots for napping.

This is not to say that the Dha Zin-Shee are lazy or do not contribute their fair share to the house - simply that their ways are less formal than other races. To avoid boredom, jobs are traded frequently, so that most Dha Zin-Shee have a wide range of computer, clerical and administrative skills.

Murris'sha is a frequent guest at parties and entertainments in the city of Glory, and is liked for her wit and good humor. Like most of her race, Murris'sha is flirtatious, somewhat nervous, and tends to have a relatively short attention span, but none of these traits seems to affect her skills as a leader.

**GORAK DRACA FEMALE**

RCD: 16/30/14

GEN SCI RCD: B16/C40/T20

ATK/DMG: claw, bite, pulse canon, cybersaw

DEF/AR: cybernetics

SPECIAL: Cybernetically Enhanced

SIZE: 6'6",375lbs

LANGUAGE: Draca, Guild speak, Anthropos

The Dracon Dha leader is a renegade cyber-Lord, who has openly broken with the Holding, and now claims loyalty only to the Guild. She is a truly fearsome-looking individual, heavily modified, with cybernetic eye implants, arms, leg enhancements, armor, built-in weapons, and many other metallic features.

Although her manner is typically Dracon - harsh, straightforward, and unforgiving - Gorak is a complex being, who feels the call of emotions and beliefs alien to her warrior race. Although she has been a merciless killer, she now understands that there is a time and place for healing.

These feelings are relatively new and unfamiliar to the mighty Draca, and she often has to forcibly overcome her natural inclination to solve problems with violence, and eliminate obstacles by eviscerating and devouring them. Those who have spoken to Gorak in moments of comparative repose have found her a surprisingly sensitive being, who is genuinely trying to change, and to understand the new and subtle philosophies which surround her.

**GRETAKK**

(No better image available)

The leader of the Kathan Emperor's Council of State is a mysterious being who always appears clad in a simple black robe, reminiscent of those worn by the Shanask. Gretakk is thinner and much taller than a Katha, and most believe that the being called Gretakk is actually an alien. Many even claim that it is a Shanask, whether a renegade, infiltrator, or normal Shanask playing its role in an unfathomable conspiracy, no one can say.

It is clear that the Emperor wields considerable power. Many of his capabilities are obviously Sorce-based. It may be that the Emperor's Sorce powers are gifts from Gretakk, or they may simply be the work of Gretakk itself, casting from concealment and allowing the Emperor to claim credit. The Emperor himself is no less mysterious than his most famous counselor - no one can claim to have looked upon him and survived.

No one has ever gotten close enough to Gretakk or the Emperor to confirm any of the numerous theories which have been advanced regarding this mysterious being, but one escaped palace slave claims to have seen Gretakk's true form - that of a withered, skeletal creature with dead, black eyes. While most dismiss this as the ravings of a superstitious primitive, others are not so sure. Whatever Gretakk is, its influence is considerable, and will probably continue to be for quite some time.

**HONORED DHA QUEEN KRYLL FEMALE**

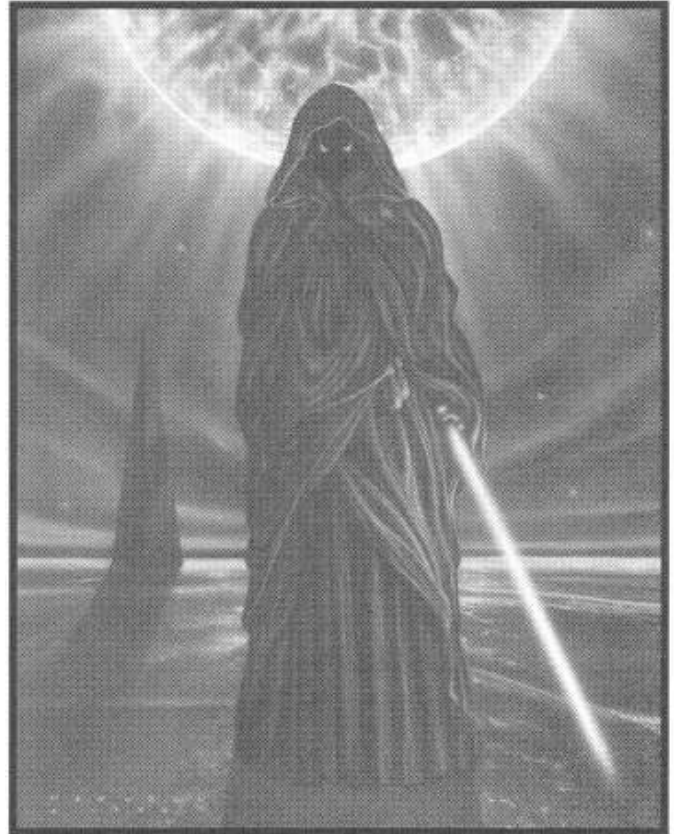
RCD: 20/60/16 (MR4)  
 GEN SCI RCD: B0/C20/T12  
 ATK/DMG: mandible, claw, psi-blast

SIZE: 20' long, 3,000 lbs  
 LANGUAGE: Kryll, Anthropos, Draca, Calemoran, Zin-Shee, Guild speak

Since her Kryll name is virtually unpronounceable, most Dha members prefer to call her by the rough translation, "Honored Dha Queen." She is the leader of the Kryll hive world.

This hive combines Kryll from numerous casts, as well as substantial numbers of independent, self-aware Kryll into a single unit. Honored Dha Queen was biochemically modified her own physiology so that her Pheromonal secretions instruct the hive to produce pure House Dha Kryll, whose first loyalty is to her and the Guild.

As a result of her contact with Shakna, Honored Queen is able to communicate with all major Guild races. Even when dealing with a race whose language she does not know, she can still communicate using translator-Kryll. Her personality (more of a pre-generated program than anything else, given the Kryll's lack of emotion) is polite and friendly, although she will change it as the situation and the race she is dealing with merits. Communication with the queen is always open, and any member of the House of Dha can easily reach her, providing she is not otherwise occupied.

**JODAR**

This particular Shanask is one of the most mysterious of a mysterious race. He is seen only rarely, and almost never spoken of. Nevertheless, he (or she, or it) seems to play a vital role in Shanask society.

Although the Shanask will neither confirm or deny it, many have speculated that Jodar is the leader of the Shanask. Other, however, contend that he is a rebel and an outcast.

Certainly, Jodar is one of the most powerful Shanask known. Even the other Shanask speak his name rarely, and then with great reverence.

Jodar claims that the greatest threat of the millennium is coming. He claims that what he refers to as "The Ancient One" has returned. As to the identity of this "Ancient One," Jodar remains cagey, but he has gone so far as to suggest that one of the House of Dha's guardian races is actually a spy for the enemy (although, predictably, he will not divulge which one). All that the mysterious Shanask will say is that, "The Ancient One is back, and the dark races must be assembled," and refuses to elaborate. Needless to say, Guild officials are growing weary of Jodar's obscure pronouncements.

Rumor has it that Jodar is working on some master plan to assist Known Space against this threat, in a way which is supposed to span the cosmos and beyond. Supposedly, he is going to test his plan out on the House of Dha (making Dha officials quite nervous).

Whether Jodar's claims are the rantings of a Shanask gone mad, or a warning of galactic danger is a popular topic among bored Dha warriors, but one which seems to make everyone a little uncomfortable.

## JORMM, VICE-PRESIDENT ANTHROPOS FEMALE



RCD: 20/10/38

GEN SCI RCD: B8/C20/T40

ATK/DMG: cyber darts (death poison 24)

SPECIAL: Cybernetically enhanced

SIZE: 6'1", 180 lbs

LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Guild speak

Company President Therrokhan's chief rival is this wizened (yet surprisingly strong), 90-year-old woman who has served the Company since birth. She has been a constant thorn in Therrokhan's side, but she is smart enough not to confront him directly, instead using younger allies on the Board to challenge the CEO's leadership and decisions, then stepping out of the picture if her allies are deposed or assassinated. Her skillful manipulation of other board members and stockholders has enabled Jormm to survive in a position of power for decades longer than most of her fellows.

Jormm is possessed of an incredible, if somewhat cruel and thoughtless, intelligence, and seems always to be one step ahead of her rivals. Many Company officials have attempted to unseat her without success, and her operatives may be found at all levels of the Company hierarchy, as well as outside of it, seeking commercial advantage for her in GuildSpace and beyond.

## KETUVORRA MORRAX, MARSHAL VULPE MALE



RCD: 32/16/24

GEN SCI RCD: B6/C10/T20

ATK/DMG: bite, disc rifle

DEF/AR: flak

SIZE: 5'4", 160 Lbs

LANGUAGE: Vulpe, Guild speak, Anthropos

This contemplative Vulpe is the commander of the Guides, the rangers and border scouts who patrol the fringes of GuildSpace. He is relatively shy and retiring, but is capable of backing his orders up forcefully should he need to do so (he rarely does - the Guides as a whole both love and respect their leader). "Old Foxy," as his troops call him, returns their respect, often visiting the wounded in the infirmary, socializing with ordinary scouts, and even accompanying dangerous missions personally. This last tendency drives many of his officers crazy, for they dislike the thought of their commander placing himself in jeopardy, but Morrax continues the practice nonetheless. A recent operation against Dark Alliance bases just within GuildSpace, for example, resulted in the marshal taking several wounds, but he continues to ignore requests that he play a less active role in running the Guides.

Morrax enjoys socializing in quiet settings, and loves wearing his black Guides dress uniform. He is known to be something of a dandy, and his office is kept spotless. Morrax is reluctant to talk about his past, but it is reliably rumored that he lost a wife and two children to a pirate raid several years ago, causing him to devote his life to keeping the Guild safe from such tragedies in the future.

## KRONN V ORROSK, WAR-MASTER ANTHROPOS MALE



RCD: 20/16/30 (Cha 40, MR 10)

GEN SCI RCD: B8/C30/T40

ATK/DMG: punch, combat knife, force gauntlet, pulse rifle, turbo plaz  
DEF/AR: flak, assault

SIZE: 6'6", 300 lbs

LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Guild speak, Draca, Skrak, Skull Cant

The current chief of the Council of Captains which rules the Dark Alliance, Vorrosk is a frightening-looking Anthropos with wild black hair and several cybernetic devices, which replace the eye, arm, leg, hand and ear which he has lost in combat over the years. His brutal life has hardened him into a singularly merciless individual with no regard for life or property.

Recent raids into Guild territory have brought Vorrosk into the limelight, and the reward currently offered to anyone who can bring him to justice has been increased to 100,000 credits.

While he is a virtual sociopath, Vorrosk is anything but stupid, and has an extremely well-developed sense of tactics. Any assault on the Dark Alliance would have to deal with Vorrosk's strategic expertise, a formidable opponent in itself.

In addition, Vorrosk's crew is a collection of some of the most dangerous and desperate fugitives in Known Space: renegade cyberlords, outcast Calemora, Anthropos mercenaries, and even a Zin-Shee psi-mistress named Kurr'kaath whose specialty is the infliction of pain.

## KOROK CALEMORA MALE



RCD: 20/55/16

GEN SCI RCD: B16/C6/T10

ATK/DMG: MA, kray, ta-oon

SPECIAL: psychosomatics

SIZE: 6'2", 450 lbs

LANGUAGE: Calemoran, Guild speak, Dracan

The leader of the House Dha's Calemora is over two centuries old, and has fought for most of his life. He vividly remembers the end of the Blood Feud, almost 70 years ago, and in gratitude to the Guild, he has served them for all the intervening decades. He has gone on many missions for the Guild, and several continue to live on in legend and popular fiction.

Few Dha members can claim a level of devotion and loyalty to the Guild equal to Korok's. He has repeatedly stated his willingness to die, kray in hand, defending the Guild against its enemies, and he instills this heartfelt belief into the Calemoran members of House Dha.

Dha membership, Korok believes, is one of the ultimate expressions of the Code of the Dragon, and he makes certain that those Calemora admitted to the house are the finest warriors available. He is blunt, conservative, and a Calemoran of even fewer words than is normal for his race. Most Dha members consider Korok to be their house's finest fighter, and he is widely respected for it.

**MORRSH, SLAYER MURRK MALE**

**RCD:** 16/60/10

**GEN SCI RCD:** B4/C16/T10

**ATK/DMG:** punch, bite, power axe, disc macro cannon  
**DEF/AR:** Flak

**SIZE:** 8', 400 lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Murrk, Impspeak

The most infamous of The Empire's Murrk-warriors, Morrsh leads his own personal unit of the Slain into battle against The Empire's enemies. He is tough, ruthless and highly skilled with both traditional Murrk weapons and modern imperial arms. He loves noise, and explosions, preferably if they are involved in tearing enemies apart. He personally slew the Dracan cyber-Lord Hakraa in single combat several decades ago, and since then his reputation has only grown. He relishes the thought of battle against the Guild in general, and the Calemora in particular.

Although Murrk are not well known for their intelligence and subtlety, Morrsh seems to have a sixth sense when it comes to tactics and command. Normally slow (and, in the eyes of many, downright stupid), Morrsh comes into his own on the battlefield, seeking out enemy weak points with uncanny accuracy, striking at exactly the right moment, and committing force in precisely the correct amount. Despite the fact that he is officially under Kathan command and control, Morrsh is usually his own man in combat, beholden to no one, given complete freedom by his Katha overlords, who trust his judgment implicitly.

**NELOS, ADMIRAL ANTHROPOS FEMALE**

**RCD:** 10/12/32 (WP 32)

**GEN SCI RCD:** B12/C16/T32

**ATK/DMG:** pulse pistol  
**DEF/AR:** Flak

**SIZE:** 5'9", 145 lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Anthropos, Guild speak, Calemoran, Draca, Zin-Shee, Impspeak, Kryll

The House of Dha's supreme leader is a middle-aged, tough-looking woman with graying hair and a stern, scarred face. She has fought along virtually every Guild frontier in her long career, engaging pirates, raiders, and various enemies from the small states in and beyond the Guild. Called out of retirement to command the Anthropos contingent of Dha, she at first refused, preferring to stay at her country estate on Guild home, tending garden and raising bees. When informed of developments on the imperial front, however, she agreed to the Guild's request, and today runs a tight, professional organization from her office on the Anthropos moon.

Nelos is a strong, uncompromising commander, but is at the same time both fair and compassionate. She has seen the horrors of combat up close, and now strongly believes that the best way to deal with conflict is to head it off before it begins, by whatever means necessary. She has little in the way of a social life, having dedicated her life to the fleet and (now) to House Dha. At formal occasions and parties (which she attends only reluctantly), Nelos is stiff and uncomfortable, preferring to be back at her desk managing Dha affairs.

## PAKK SHRAA, GROUND MARSHAL RAKKA MALE



**RCD:** 20/30/20  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C16/T20  
**ATK/DMG:** pulse rifle, plasma sword  
**DEF/AR:** flak

**SIZE:** 6', 190lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Rakka, Guild speak

A grim-faced, somewhat cynical Rakka who rose through the ranks to the high command of the House of War, Shraa is responsible for the ground and orbital space defense of the Guild. He is from the famous pack alpha on his home world.

Shraa has risen through the ranks, from a celebrated officer to a talented strategic commander, and finally, to supreme leader of Guild planetary forces. He takes his job very seriously, and has all but vanished from the affairs of his pack. Distraught, his fellow Shraa Rakka have selected a temporary alpha, but still consider him their leader.

Shraa's dislike of imperials may amount to downright prejudice, for his philosophy seems to be that "the only good Katha is a dead Katha." While this attitude is regrettable in any servant of the Guild, it is downright obstructive when dealing with imperial diplomats and representatives, so the marshal is usually left out of high-level discussions with the Empire.

Shraa is still a skilled soldier, who still likes to take the latest armored vehicle through its paces. His subordinates, Rakka, Anthropos and other races, generally respect him, but his humorless and demanding qualities have made him few friends.

## PETRA DREDD, CAPTAIN ANTHROPOS FEMALE



**RCD:** 20/24/20  
**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C16/T32  
**ATK/DMG:** punch, power axe, pulse cannon  
**DEF/AR:** flak, marine

**SIZE:** 6'2", 210 lbs  
**LANGUAGE:** Anthropos, Guild speak, Skull Cant

The best-known pirate in the Brotherhood of the Skull, Dredd is feared throughout GuildSpace and beyond. Few can claim to have actually seen her, so stories of her appearance and personality abound. Some claim that she is stunningly beautiful, and kidnaps handsome male Anthropos as concubines. Others say that Dredd was hideously disfigured in a battle with Guild ships, and constantly wears a suit of powered armor, slaying males and females alike as vengeance for her injury.

Whatever her true appearance and habits, Dredd's reputation is nothing short of legendary, and few have survived her attacks to tell of them. Those rare reports of her capabilities and tactics paint a portrait of a ruthless commander with a flotilla of up to a dozen well-equipped, stealth- and cloak-equipped starships.

The Guild has posted a massive reward for her capture, but thus far no one has even come close to succeeding. A flotilla of House Star' vessels was recently annihilated by Dredd's flagship, the Revenge, and the infamous pirate queen remains at large, free to ravage the spaceways.



## SHAENLL' AA, PSI-MISTRESS ZIN-SHEE FEMALE



RCD: 30/8/32

GEN SCI RCD: B8/C12/T24

ATK/DMG: bite, claw, blaster pistol

SPECIAL: Psionics

SIZE: 5'6",200lbs

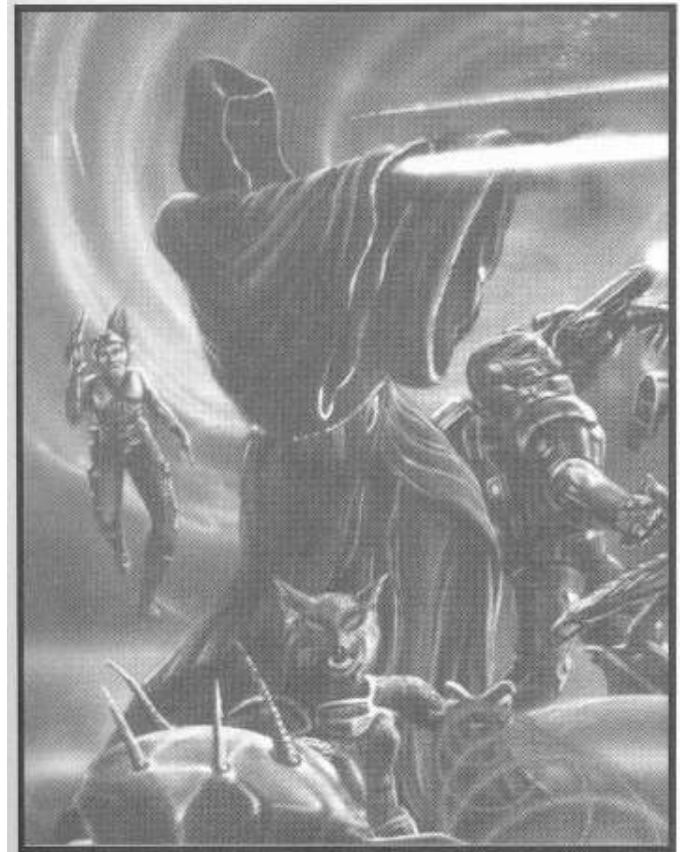
LANGUAGE: Zin-Shee, Anthropos, Guild speak

Acknowledged as the most powerful psionist in Zin-Shee space, Shaenll' aa has forsaken the chaos of traditional psi-cat society, and retired to her private planetoid, on the edge of Zin-Shee space. She allows a small number of female would-be Psionists to study with her each year. Applicants are expected to arrive at the minimal landing facilities hundreds of miles from Shaenll'aa's home, and travel the intervening distance on foot, with only as much food and water as they can carry.

Those who manage to reach Shaenll'aa's home still have a task ahead of them. Applicants must then prove their power and worthiness in a series of tests and interviews. In the end, Shaenll'aa accepts no more than five students a year, who are given the best psionic training possible, and are known throughout Zin-Shee and GuildSpace as the finest Psionists available.

Mistress Shaenll' aa herself is quiet, reserved, and contemplative, all rare traits for a Zin-Shee. No one knows how old she is, although her appearance is that of a young Zin-Shee female. It is also not known whether she takes consorts, but this is only one of many mysteries regarding the most celebrated psi-mistress in Zin-Shee space.

## SHAKNA



When the Shanask arrived in GuildSpace, their strange black moon appearing in the skies above Dha Prime, this lone, powerful Shanask was the first to contact Guild personnel. Since then, Shakna has been acknowledged as the leader (or at least the primary representative) of the Shanask. Shakna does not talk about his past, or the history of his race, save to drop a few veiled hints that he and the Shanask are very old, and remember ancient conflicts and enemies now lost even to legend.

Shakna obviously commands vast powers but, in keeping with the rather conservative Shanask personality, rarely shows them off in overt ways. He has no real statistics, as he is capable of doing virtually anything he wants.

When asked about Jodar and his proficiencies, Shakna only grows silent for a moment, then says that Jodar's claims are "hopefully the rantings of an old fool," in a disturbingly somber and introspective voice.

Like all Shanask, Shakna prefers to keep to himself and is rarely seen at Dha functions.

The rumors of Jodar, Shakna, and the Shanask are currently the hot topic among Dha personnel, but these rumors are only discussed behind closed doors and dim lighting with frequent interruptions to listen for strange sounds.

Shakna is intended to be a recurring GU who is a source of information, advice, and occasional assistance when PCs get in over their heads. His use should be sparing, and he should always be described in highly mysterious terms.

## TIANN SHEA, LT. COL. ANTHROPOS FEMALE



RCD: 20/16/32  
 GEN SCI RCD: B10/C20/T40  
 ATK/DMG: pulse laser pistol, combat knife

SIZE: 5'10", 155lbs  
 LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Arthirian, Guild speak

Colonel Shea is the highest-ranking fighter pilot in the Guild. Her fighter currently carries over 60 kill markers, with Dark Alliance, Combine, Skrak, and many other spacecraft to her credit. She is presently mulling over an offer to join the House of Dha as a fighter instructor, but is loathe to abandon her current active status and the excitement which it provides.

Several holovid series have chronicled Shea's career and adventures - thus far, all have portrayed Shea and her squadron as hard-drinking, devil-may-care outcasts. In the minds of popular entertainers, Shea's Black Cat squadron always pulls together just in time to save the Guild from yet another invasion from the Alliance or Combine, and manages to shoot down dozens of enemy craft without even having to look through gun sights.

Shea's real-life exploits are no less exciting than those portrayed in the popular media. Once shot down and presumed dead, she managed to land her crippled craft on a Dark Alliance forest world, make her way through hostile terrain to a pirate base and single-handedly steal a small starship, returning to the Guild with information on an upcoming Alliance raid. Returned to active duty, Shea helped to defeat the very raid she had warned of, scoring four more victories in the process.

## SHURRA HASSA, BARON ZIN-SHEE MALE



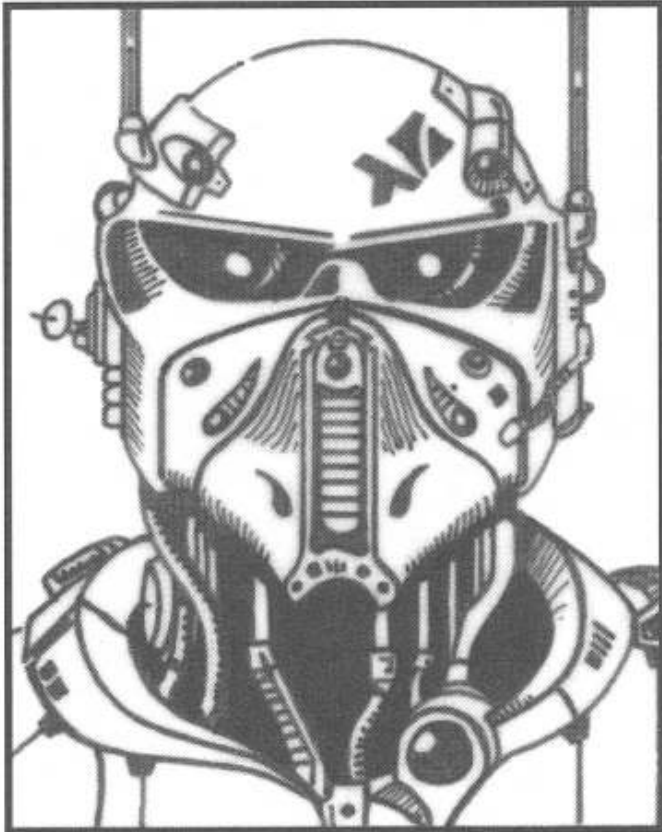
RCD: 35/18/24  
 GEN SCI RCD: B10/C12/T20  
 ATK/DMG: bite, claw, screamer, warrior claws  
 DEF/AR: force field

SIZE: 6'2", 200 lbs  
 LANGUAGE: Zin-Shee, Anthropos, Guild speak

The Zin-Shee merchant house, Hassa, is one of the largest in GuildSpace. Shurra, the male leader of the house, is a shrewd businessman with an innate ability to sense rich sources of profit.

Hassa is a typical Zin-Shee - fastidious, high-strung, changeable and fickle, but he manages to suspend his natural Zin-Shee disinclination toward hard work in regard to his extensive business holdings. Most of his subordinates and family members are less scrupulous, happy to spend the credits which Hassa earns, but he does not seem to mind.

The talent and business acumen of the Hassa family is famous throughout Known Space, and has not gone unnoticed by such powers as The Company, who thoroughly dislike the thought of a skilled competitor. Company assassins and operatives have acted against House Hassa on several occasions, with varying levels of success. Most of the time, however, damage to Hassa and its resources has been limited. The baron himself was once wounded by a Company attacker, but this has not deterred him in his drive to further profit and expand his business empire.

**T11 ANDROID**

**RCD:** 16/60/24

**GEN SCI RCD:** B0/C0/T40

**ATK/DMG:** punch, pulse rifle, disruptor (special), missile (16/30x)

**SIZE:** 7', 600 lbs

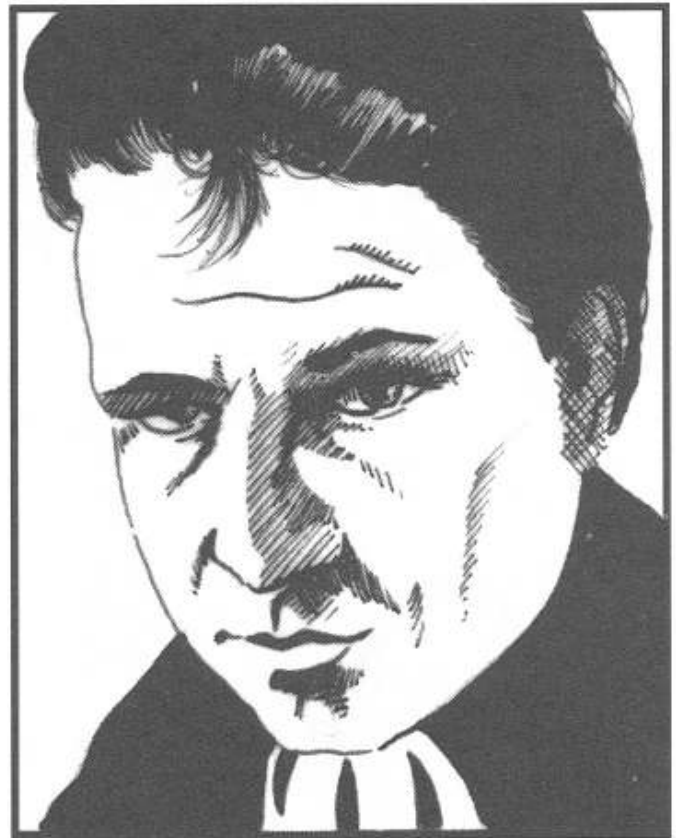
**LANGUAGE:** Anthropos, Guild speak

This highly intelligent android is the first successful member of what may become the Guild's newest race. T11 is currently a member of the House of Dha. While he is not the first self-aware member of the T series of androids, he is the most advanced and independent.

T11 is similar to the other members of the T series - bipedal, two arms, a humanoid head, sporting a complex sensor array, with mother-chip and central processing unit well protected in his armored midsection. He carries a variety of weapons, but is never without a curious weapon which he found in Aerolk space. Its main body is a single-shot rocket launcher, which shoots a missile that inflicts SMVx damage.

Atop the weapon, however, is a small device which resembles a targeting scope. This weapon is some sort of molecular disruptor which causes its targets to burst into light.

Once a hit is obtained with the weapon, it inflicts 6H cumulative damage per turn. This is not actual damage, for should the beam be interrupted, it inflicts no harm, and all accumulated damage is lost. Once the damage has exceeded the combined total of the target's AR and Vit, the target immediately bursts into a million twinkles of light and is gone.

**THERROKHAN, RRESIDENT ANTHROPOS MALE**

**RCD:** 24/10/32

**GEN SCI RCD:** B10/C20/T40

**ATK/DMG:** blaster pistol

**SIZE:** 5'8", 125lbs

**LANGUAGE:** Anthropos, Arthirian, Guild speak

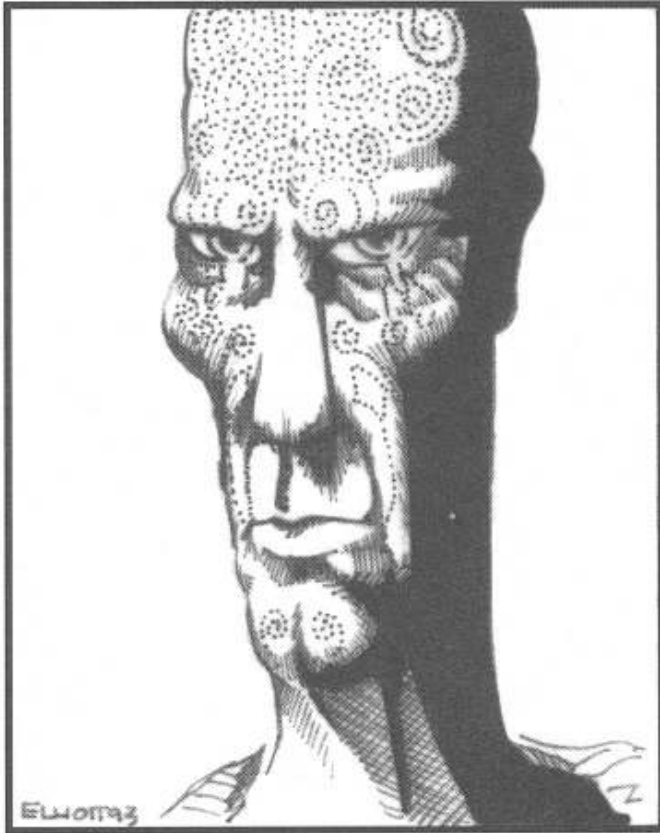
CEO of the vast, interstellar business empire known only as The Company, Therrokhan has served as its leader for the past decade. Profit has improved substantially under Therrokhan's command, and the Board remains pleased with his leadership.

Approaching 50 years of age, Therrokhan is currently in the process of completing the computer matrix which will store his awareness and personality, enabling him to serve as president indefinitely.

Therrokhan's origins are shrouded in mystery. Many claim that he is an outsider who bought his way into the company in a quest for power. Others believe that he is a genetically engineered being, created specifically as a creature of the company, to embody fierce competitiveness and an utter lack of mercy or human compassion.

Whatever his origin, there is no doubt that President Therrokhan is a ruthless businessman who never lets consideration for suffering, violence, or deprivation of others stand in his way. His current rivalry with Vice President Jorm may well split The Company, but time will tell what the actual outcome will be.

## TSEWA, HONORED SLAVE GENERAL MBARI MALE



RCD: 30/45/16

GEN SCI RCD: B6/C16/T16

ATK/DMG: punch, spear, disk rifle

DEF/AR: flak, scout

SIZE: 7'9", 325lbs

LANGUAGE: mBari, Impspeak

This mBari commander is one of the finest in The Empire. Favoring the extensive use of air support and cybernetic armor, he has advanced far from the primitive warfare of his ancestors. He is a very handsome member of his race, and has been granted the services of many "Honored Consorts" by the Emperor, but he does not let such indulgences cloud his judgment or skill.

Tsewa's most recent triumph was against well-armed and highly trained imperial gladiators on the planet Tenien. In a brilliant campaign, he cut the main force of rebels in two, defeating each in detail with a combination of prolonged air attacks and pinning assaults on their front with ground troops and cyber-tanks.

Currently, Tsewa is eager to tryout his new tactics against what he considers a worthier foe - the Guild. He has prepared extensive contingency plans for dealing with all aspects of the Guild military, but has not considered the possible effects of the House of Dha (its secret remaining intact, for now). Should this potent fighting force be added to a conflict between Guild and Empire, the general's plans may well be thrown into chaos.

## TURAVANA SYLA, CHIEF ANTHROPOS FEMALE



RCD: 24/14/32

GEN SCI RCD: B8/C12/T32

ATK/DMG: pulse (all), combat knife

DEF/AR: flak

SIZE: 6', 190lbs

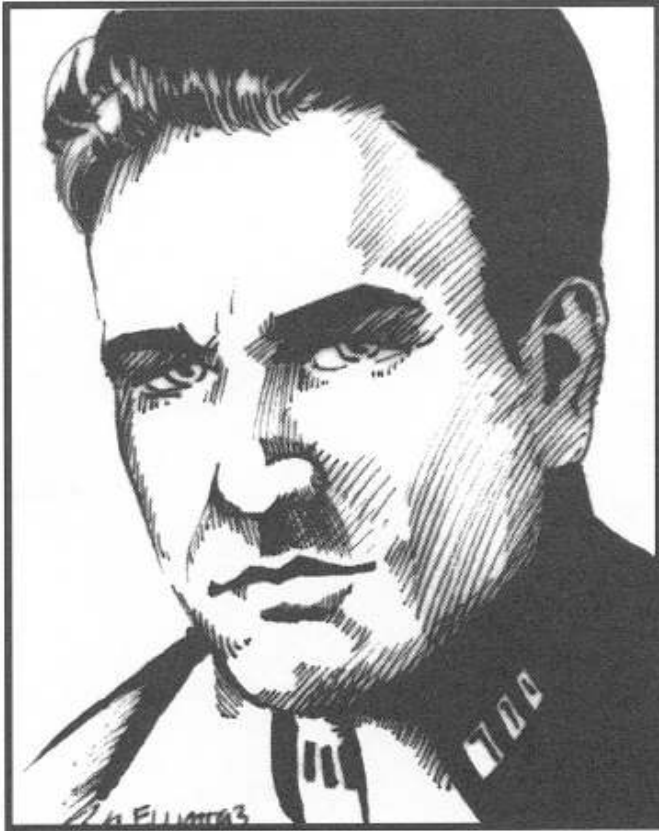
LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Guild speak, Skrak

The House of the Star is a rough, dangerous posting, where the space police, often outmanned and outgunned, fight an unequal struggle against pirates, raiders, smugglers, slavers, and other similar lawbreakers. Star is a place for rugged individualists who love a challenge and don't mind looking death in the face on a daily basis.

Chief Syla is a perfect example of this. Relatively young for such a posting, Syla enjoys the excitement and danger of police work, and (like Morrax of the Guides) will often accompany patrols on dangerous missions personally. Most of Syla's officers feel she has a death wish, but as this is not uncommon in the House of the Star, they don't make an issue of it.

Syla is a prime example of Anthropos development - strong, fast, extraordinarily lucky, and attractive enough to be the object of numerous fantasies on the part of younger officers (fantasies which, regrettably, never seem to be realized). She has no real interest in romance or relationships beyond those necessary to maintain her sanity. Syla's real love is police work, and nothing will distract her from it.

## VAL MARKALA, PRESIDENT ANTHROPOS MALE



RCD: 16/12/40

GEN SCI RCD: B8/C12/T24

ATK/DMG: pulse pistol

SIZE: 6', 165lbs

LANGUAGE: Anthropos, Draca, Zin-Shee, Guild speak

The elected leader of the Great House (and thus the Guild), Markala has spent a decade in the diplomatic and governmental corps, and is highly experienced in dealing with crises, both foreign and domestic.

A handsome man with little taste for combat, Markala can nonetheless turn into a veritable Pouncer-cat when he feels the welfare of the Guild is threatened. In times of crisis, Markala is able to twist arms and persuade enough Great House members to see reason that his emergency measures are usually passed quickly. He is currently preparing for hostilities with The Empire, as well as for conflict with a sizeable faction of Great House members who favor concessions to the Katha in exchange for peace.

Markala is sometimes criticized by political rivals for his rather uncompromising style and strong-arm legislative tactics. But few deny that the president is a capable leader, and that his style gets things done. He has made many enemies over the years, however, and some are willing to go to any length to unseat him, and may even consider using violent means to do so. Markala's skills as a politician and diplomat may be stretched to the limit should The Empire or his enemies ever decide to act against him.

## ZHA, ANCIENT DRAGON CALEMORA MALE



RCD: 32/40/20

GEN SCI RCD: B10/C4/T8

SIZE: 6'4", 550 lbs

LANGUAGE: Calemor, Catongi, Guild speak

In all the uncounted thousands of years of Calemoran history, only Zha has borne the title of Ancient Dragon. Possibly the most accomplished Psychosomaticist and martial artist ever, Zha is currently the spiritual leader of the planet Calemor, and is considered near-sacred by all Calemora throughout Known Space. His pronouncements and judgments are widely respected, and Calemora Mutak and dragons spend long hours studying and contemplating his words.

No one knows how old Zha is. He apparently remembers the Blood Feud, and seems to have extended his own lifespan through applied study and development of psychosomatic disciplines. Another widely held belief is that Zha was offered the chance to advance to the next stage of existence (although no non-Calemora can say exactly what that is), but voluntarily remained with his Calemoran fellows, desiring to guide and protect them.

Although he engaged in the bitter struggle against the Zin-Shee, Zha now counsels forgiveness and reconciliation. Most Calemora accept the wisdom of such pronouncements, but when they gaze upon the surface of their once-fertile land, smashed and devastated by Zin-Shee violence, many doubt that they can ever truly forgive their ancient foes.



***GM Manuel  
Booklet #GM7***

# Mobile

***By Blake Mobley***

## Production

**Game Design:** Blake Mobley

All of the following playtesters are personal friends, many are 'old' friends who have played with me for years and years.

**Master Playtesters:** Phillip Bagga, Steve Maybury, Blake Mobley, Steve Tobin, Charlie Bill Vincent, Dave Webb

**Regular Playtesters:** Chris Aitken, Damon Bailey, Will Grady, Carlin Daggett, Jake Hardy, Tim Kitchens, James (JR) Lantz, Chris Mullins, Jim Neff, Trevor Nielsen, Jeff Overton, Mike Tobin, Kyle Vaughn, Lihao Yang

**Notable Playtesters:** Mike Bergenheier, Zack Davis, Ivan Medlin,

Artwork has been provided by a number of talented artists. Their works move around so frequently in this "living game" that I only feel it appropriate to mention them all in each booklet.

**B/W Art:** Could include one or more of: Clint Collins, David Deitrick, Lori Deitrick, Darryl Elliot, Debbie Hughes, John Mayer, Mark Maxwell, Chris Shram, Timothy Wilson

## Special Thanks

**From Blake Mobley to:**

- Renay for allowing me to play late into the night for these many years and for supporting my dream.
- Phillip Bagga, Steve Tobin, and Dave Webb for their many deep conversations into the recess of RPG design and playability. Phillip for "keeping it real" and his watchfulness for the "fun" of gaming. Steve as a great sounding board for prototype concepts and services as a master GM. Dave for his unique ability to break bad rule systems and for his long time inspiration as a fellow game designer. You three have helped me more than you know.

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### **Living Game**

As a living game, you will find some odd differences from most systems. There will be editing anomalies everywhere. With over 650 pages, when a small rule is tweaked, it is often difficult to make the appropriate change thought the entire set of booklets. Thus, you will run into typos, contradictions, etc. We are currently working too minimize these as our top priority. This is a "living game." It breathes, grows, mutates, and changes. But, at this point, it is mostly being edited for clarity and consistency and expanded upon (adding more skills, equipment, powers, etc. to the already large list).

To download or buy other booklets and products:

**[www.mentalwinds.com](http://www.mentalwinds.com)**



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# Introduction

Many of the rules for vehicles, ships, and automatons (better known as ATMs) are the same.

## Space Travel

Starships can travel through space using a variety of techniques: sub light drives, hyperdrives, and wormholes created by quantum wedges.

## Sublight Travel

Sublight drives are commonly used during tactical combat and in-system travel. When traveling from one planet to another in the same solar system (i.e., in-system) a ship can travel a number of astronomical unites per day (AU<sub>pd</sub>) equal to its MR. An astronomical unit (AU) is equal to the distance between Arth and its sun (about 93 million miles).

The maximum possible sublight MR is 170 at which point the vessel is going about 99% the speed of light. Sublight drives are not capable of breaking the light barrier.

## Hyperspace Travel

And that's where hyperdrives take over. To engage a hyperdrive (known as "making the jump to hyperspace") the starship must be moving at maximum sublight speed in a straight line (no turns allowed).

The ship's astrogator must then go through a series of complex calculations before a jump is attempted. The calculations themselves are very difficult and time consuming, and the more rounds the astrogator spends on them, the easier a jump becomes. The astrogator may make an *astrogation* skill roll each round, and each round's result should be added to all previous results. Once the total reaches 100, the jump to hyperspace succeeds. Note, if the game is not in an Initiative state, there is no need to spend time making hyperspace rolls, just let it succeed.

If the starship turns, maneuvers, makes a defensive roll, or takes wounding damage, all cumulative astrogation rolls are reset to 0 and the process starts from scratch. The same is true if any roll critically fails. Normal *astrogation* failures do not reset the total.

When a vessel enters hyperspace, others simply see it rapidly accelerate, seeming to stretch out for an instant, and then vanish in a bright flash of light (as it breaks the light barrier).

A hyperdrive unit creates a field about the vessel which causes the ship to slip into another dimension known as "Hyperspace." In this space, some of the laws of physics are reversed. The speed of light becomes the slowest possible velocity instead of the greatest. Thus, a ship is constantly using breaking thrusters to maintain a slower speed.

Theoretically, the attainable speeds in hyperspace are infinite. Unfortunately, as speed increases, it becomes harder and harder to slow down. By going too fast, a starship begins to uncontrollably accelerate to infinity. Not even the best Guild scientists know what the effects of infinite acceleration are.

Safe hyper travel is equal to the ship's MR in light years per day. Going faster requires a *pilot* roll equal to the number of light years by which the safe limit is being exceeded. Failure indicates that the ship is lost in hyperspace. Whether a lost ship is shifted to another universe, destroyed, or merely reappears in some random distant place is up to the GM. Some legends speak of long-lost ships emerging from hyperspace thousands of years after they entered, but this has never been scientifically confirmed.

When in hyperspace, sensors and scanners are useless (except to scan the ship itself). The only thing visible is a tunnel of scintillating energy.

If a hyper-ship encounters another object in hyperspace (most often another starship), the crew has two choices: 1) drop out of hyperspace and into real space or 2) attempt to make astrogational adjustments (Dif set by GM, the greater the mass of the object encountered, the greater the difficulty). If astrogational adjustments fail, a *pilot* check at the same difficulty must be made or the vessel shoots off to infinity and is lost.

Due to the catastrophic consequences of failure, ships usually elect to drop back into real space when they encounter each other in hyperspace.

Hyperspace travel is not an exact science. With the best computing technology available, Astrogators are still only able to guide a ship "close" to the desired destination. When a hyper-ship reaches its intended destination and drops out of hyperspace into normal space, an astrogation check is required vs Dif 50. Success indicates the rare perfect drop out of hyperspace (the star ship is within a hundred miles of the intended destination). Failure indicates the number of AU the starship is away from the intended destination. Thus a roll of 40 (failed by 10) indicates that the ship is 10 AU from the destination.

Due to this error factor, hyperspace travel in-system is not practical — a bad drop could place your vessel further from its destination than it began.

## Worm Hole Travel

Even hyperspace speeds are not sufficient for practical long range space travel. Fortunately, there is an even faster means of travel, which ironically, can only be accomplished at very low speeds – worm hole travel.

A wormhole is a quantum phenomenon, a strange anomaly linking one region of space to another without distance (a sort of window, or doorway connecting two distance places).

When an object enters one end of a wormhole, it immediately emerges from the other without having traveled the intervening distance. Any object – an individual being, a vehicle, or even a starship, can travel over unimaginable distances by using wormholes, and never even exceed the speed of light.

Flying through a wormhole is a tricky business. A high energy quantum wedge is used to open a wormhole. When generated, wormholes rotate rapidly and are stationary in space. The pilot must avoid the arcs of high energy being pumped into the wormhole, as well as match the ship's rotation to that of the wormhole. This requires a *pilot* check (Dif based upon the size of the opening and the size of the vessel). Failure indicates that the vessel was struck by the wedge's power stream, taking damage equal to the amount of the failure (e.g., a roll of 12 on a Dif 15 hole results in 3 points of ship damage). No armor check is allowed.

Going through a wormhole cloaked or with shields up doubles the difficulty due to all the extraneous power fields being generated.

At first, when races just began space travel, they used some form of propulsion, nuclear, chemical, solar wind, to slowly move about their own solar system. But as they moved out exploring space and other races were contacted the need for faster space travel came about. Today, there are dozens of FTL (faster than light) methods of travel. A few of the more common are listed below.

**Hyperspace:** Hyperspace is the most common way to travel faster than the speed of light. Hyperspace is an odd "existence" that lies on top of normal space – actually throughout hyperspace just as infrared light lies on top of, yet is mixed into, visible or "normal" light. Consider hyperspace as a region of space that our reality can't see, just as infrared is a wavelength of light we can't quite see.

Hyperspace does not share the same laws of physics as normal space. For one, all movement in hyperspace is vastly exaggerated when one drops back into normal space. But, movement around hyperspace does not require "hyper" engines. Any means of normal space propulsion works, you simply need movement.

If you look out your ship's porthole or view screen in hyper space, you will see a coalescing, undulating mix of

colors, vortexes, waves, and odd, semi-intelligent looking motions. It is very mesmerizing. Most of the colors are dark such as black, dark purple, mid-night dark blue, burnt red, etc.

Direction seems to have little meaning in hyperspace. Perhaps it is all the vortexes, waves, hyperspace current, etc. But sometimes you can travel between jump gates and always be turning hard left, other times, never have to adjust course at all, but usually, many constant course adjustments must be made. So, how do you know where to go? You must have a signal beacon or a triangular set. Many, many ships have been lost in hyperspace, never to return. It is a dangerous place and a mysterious place where odd things occasionally happen.

**Jump Gates:** The most common means of entering hyperspace is to travel through a jump gate. Jump gates create a temporary vortex between normal space and hyper space. Half of the gate mechanism exists in hyper space. Typically a signal beacon is attached to both sides so the gate may be found. A signal beacon is nearly essential in hyperspace. Jump gates have three arms and an associated probe on both sides. Though the company and a few others have managed to manufacture small jump gates, only the relics of Aerolk space are powerful enough to function for large vessels or large quantity.

**Jump Engines:** Only large vessels of advanced technology possess true jump engines. These engines allow the vessel to open up a temporary vortex between hyper and normal space or vice versa. The complexity and energy needs for such jumps are such that only the jump engine vessel and "maybe" a few very small accompanying vessels such as a carrier's fighters, may make it through. As is obvious, activating jump engines will typically take nearly all of a vessel's power reserves, and once through, in either direction, the vessel is vulnerable.

**Hyper Space Wedge:** A hyper space wedge is a mix between jump engines and jump gates. The device with the wedge (usually a large space station, planetary grid, War Moon, or some other very large technology site) will activate a sort of Jump Engine. But, unlike Jump Engines, the hyper space wedge can sustain the opening for a period of time while other vessels enter or exit through the hyperspace vortex. Most common use is for military campaigns. A way of moving an armada off the jump gate grid.

**Hyper Drive:** The name is a misnomer. It doesn't allow you to enter hyper space or operate in that space. In fact, operating a hyper drive in hyper space will cause random, usually catastrophic effects. What a hyper Drive does is warp some wisps of hyper space around the vessel allowing it to travel much faster than it otherwise could. The techs call it a hyper warping field as it isn't a drive at all. Alone it will not take you

anywhere. But, when the vessel is wrapped up in the hyper field, it can use normal engines to travel at great speeds. Because of its nature, a few have called this a warp drive and used the term times the speed of light such as traveling warp 23 – meaning 23 times the speed of light.

Hyper Drive speed is dependent upon how far into hyper space the drive can warp the vessel AND how good the normal engines are – i.e., now that you are warped partway into hyperspace, how much thrust can you produce.

A ship will always travel faster, often much faster, in hyper space than when warped part way in. Obviously, if hyper space produces a speed of 100 with your engines, partial hyperspace with the same engines will produce a lesser speed.

The advantage of hyper drive engines are that they are “relatively” safe, and you can’t get lost in hyperspace, because if the engine fails, you drop fully into normal space. However, for better or worse, those in normal space can still see you and detect you and vice versa. Another advantage is that the power consumption and complexity are far less, thus smaller vessels can be fitted. But on the down side, it still takes a great amount of energy, typically rendering shields, weapons, etc. as non-useable.

A hyper drive vessel looks like a traditional vessel entering the atmosphere when the heat shield starts to turn bright orange and the glow and color streams all along the front of the vessel. Except that the colors match that of hyperspace and wisp along the warp field. All hyperspace color, “matter”, etc. seems to null itself out without trace. But the process still has some scientists very concerned. They liken it to ripping small holes in a water balloon.

This is it

**Worm Holes:** Worm holes are links between, usually, two points in space time. Note the word space and the word time. This means that the two ends can be at different locations AND at different times. For some reason, the universe does not like us traveling back in time. Often the future end of the wormhole cannot be found or opened, and any travel from the past to the future is a one way trip. Only if the two end’s times are fairly similar is travel between them in both direction possible.

HOWEVER, there are very very few worm holes large enough to fly a ship into, and even fewer who remain stable. But there are trillions upon trillions upon... of quantum (smaller than an atom) wormholes. Of course 99.999% of these have distances within microscopic levels. So, finding a wormhole useable quantum wormhole is, well, not quite impossible, but close. The other challenge is their size – subatomic. To open such a worm hole so that a ship can pass through it

requires vast amount of energy (far more than any hyper space entry) AND that this massive energy be focused to a point less than an atom across – i.e., into the mouth of the quantum wormhole. Now, the technology to do this is top secret, and it is unknown where the technology came from.

Unlike popular belief, traveling through a worm hole isn’t instantaneous. It could take a second to travel across the galaxy, or it could take five centuries to travel an inch. Pilots have described worm hole travel like, “Flying through a giant set of intestines made out of energy and plastic fog.

**Quantum Wedge:** Most never get to see such a device work, and some consider them myths. But they do exist. Very very advanced races with lots of money and very large vessels are able to operate a quantum wedge. It looks similar to when a War Moon fires its primary weapon, but the energy cone funnels down and appears to vanish in a point. Then, the quantum wormhole is pried open by the wedge (thus the name) and held so while other vessels enter.

Advantages of worm holes “can” be their extreme speed – instantaneous in some cases. Disadvantages is the unpredictability of the worm hole’s stability, the difficult piloting to avoid contacting the worm holes edges (doing so drops you out into some random point in space/time.

**Space Folding:** Another very rare way to travel is to fold space using very powerful Psionics. The exact mechanics are not know other than these few details. It takes either one or three Psionacists. They must be in a specially prepared area away from all other conscious minds. They must be on the vessel being transported. It is “thought” that by deeply believing they are somewhere else, then using Psionics to anchor that belief and radiate it outwards to all other minds on the vessel, that their absolute belief in reality is such that space folds itself and they appear at the destination. It has been called motionless travel. Oh, and the vessel needs to be at a “perceived” dead stop before and after. All must be calm.

Disadvantages are the rarity of such space folders. Their extraordinary price and often unusual time to prepare. Space folding’s usually need to be booked weeks or months ahead of time. So, it is best used as for pre-planned trips. You don’t wake up tomorrow and say, “Hey, let’s fold space to Nick’s.” Advantages are that the slowest ship around can travel any distance and, once the process beings, it will only take an hour or so.

**Dimension Travel:** There have been documented examples of what “appear” to be dimensional travel, where a vessel enters some other dimension or reality and then emerges elsewhere. Kind of like Hyperspace, but far less known or understood. Supposedly the

ancient enemy to the Shanask has been locked away in some other dimension.

**Void Walkers:** Void Walkers are a particularly powerful ancient knight who can open black portals and step through to emerge elsewhere, even on other worlds. Nothing more is known.

**Quantum Knights:** Quantum knights can travel in person or in their ships across vast distances in little to no time. One possible explanation is that they can shrink to the quantum level and enter the quantum wormholes. This is supported both by their name and by the way in which they themselves vanish (folding along the width dimension, then length, then height, into a point). However, when this theory was mentioned to a high ranking Shanask, it uncharacteristically laughed.

**Magic:** Powers such as the Sorce can also produce travel, if you can call it that. Powerful Shanask have even moved moons as witnessed around Dha Prime.

# Ship/Vehicle Systems

At first, it may seem unusual that we are listing the rules for vehicle and ship systems together. However, so many of the systems are the same that both are included in this section. The generic term "mobile" is considered to include both vehicles and starships.

The main thing to keep in mind is the relative scale of ships and vehicles. All the damage and armor listed below are of ship type (100 times greater than Personal type) when installed on ships and vehicle type (10 times greater than Personal type) when installed on vehicles.

Some damage and armor may go as low as Personal type ("P") or as high as World type ("W"), and are clearly noted when appropriate.

## LAYOUT POINTS

Each of the vessels listed below includes a certain number of Layout Points. These determine how many personal sized squares are available for floor-plan design. One square is considered to have a height of anywhere between five and ten feet. Larger spaces such as cargo holds may have ceilings of up to 20 feet or more, but each square then requires two or more layout points. Ventilation ducts, access tubes and other passages of less than five feet cost one-half layout point per square.

All spaces large enough for a character to move through require the expenditure of layout points. Smaller spaces, such as minor air ducts, conduits, etc., don't require the expenditure of layout points unless excessively used (GM's discretion).

Additionally, most systems and combat items occupy space, and therefore require layout points. For example, if the ship you are drawing includes an escape pod, you need to spend layout points and draw the pod (otherwise you have an escape pod in which no-one can fit). The same is true for labs, turrets, etc.

When drawing in systems, the exact area and volume of each one is up to you. Use common sense and discretion, however. It is unlikely that a massive galactic drive unit will occupy only a single square, for example. Stations will probably occupy a single square, labs require enough room for characters, assistants, automatons, space for equipment, and so on.

Wires, cables, and other circuitry do not require system points even if drawn.

Layout points automatically come with the ability to drawn in any **reasonable** number of related systems (those not listed in the system section below). Thus, such systems as turbo lifts, elevators, sensor doors, lights, carpeting, beds, showers, wall chests, portals, etc. don't

require any additional expenditure of credits or points. Consult your GM. If you are both in agreement that the layout of your vehicle is reasonable and logical, then anything is acceptable.

Finally, when laying out a ship, the number of decks, rooms, etc. is entirely up to you. Any configuration which fits within established hull dimensions, and incorporates the appropriate number of layout points is okay. Once more, work with your GM.

Some players and GMs may note that larger ships such as battleships and dreadnaughts have comparatively huge numbers of layout points. Of course, drawing out such a vessel at personal scale would be sheer insanity. Lay out such a vessel on a 1:100 or even 1:1000 scale, and detail individual sections as needed

Layout points are, above all else, an aide to roleplaying, and also help convey the sheer scale of the vessels which travel and fight throughout GuildSpace.

## Systems

Each vessel contains a number of systems. These may be control equipment, computers, laboratories, armor, etc. Each has a distinct function, and is important to role-playing, and is described in detail below. Weapon systems are listed later in this section (see below).

Each system has a short, two letter code (used for very brief ship descriptions), and a longer abbreviation, which is the standard notation for each system as listed below.

### Systems

<u>System</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Abbrev.</u>
All-Terrain Hydr.	Ah	ATHyd
Armor		
Plate	Ar	ArmPlt
Shield	Sd	Shld
Artificial Grav	Gr	ArtGrav
Auto Defense	Df	AutoDef
Central Computer	Cc	CenComp
Cloaking Device	Ck	Cloak
Flight Deck	Fd	FltDeck
Inertial Dampers	In	InDamp
Internal Integrity	Ii	Integ
Labs		
Engineering	Le	EngLab
Medical	Lm	MedLab
Science	Ls	SciLab
Life Support	Lf	LifSup
Overdrive	Od	OvrDrv
Pod Launch/Launcher		
Assault	Pa	APod
Escape	Pe	EPod

Work	Pw	WPod
Probe Controls	Pr	PrCon
Reactive Hull	Rh	ReacHul
Repulsor Beam	Rb	Repul
Scanners	Sc	Scan
Sensors	Se	Sen
Ship Drives		
Sublight Drive	Sb	SubltDr
Hyper Drive	Hy	HypDr
Quantum Drive	Qd	QuanDr
Quan. Wedge	Qw	QuanWd
Ship Drive Enh.		
Launch Gear	Lg	LnchGr
Atmos. Fittings	At	AtmFit
Tactical Fittings	Tc	TacFit
Stations		
Astrogation	Xa	AstSta
Captains Nest	Xc	CapSta
Comm.	Xm	ComSta
Driver	Xr	DrivSta
Engineering	Xe	EngSta
Helm	Xh	HelmSta
Medical	Xd	MedSta
Science	Xs	SciSta
Tactical	Xt	TacSta
Stealth Net	Sm	Stea
Tractor Beam	Tr	Trac
Transporter		
Intra-Ship	Ti	InTran
Short	Ts	ShTran
Medium	Tm	MdTran
Long	Tl	LnTran
Vehicle Engines	Ve	VehEng
Wheeled	*w	*w
Tracked	*t	*t
Hover	*h	*h
Grav	*g	*g
Walker	*k	*k
View Screen	Vw	View

## System Details



### ALL-TERRAIN HYDRAULICS

These are hydraulic, swing-out arms attached to a vehicle's wheels or treads which can apply additional leverage to lift a vehicle over rough terrain, out of tight

spots, etc. When these units are engaged to pull a vehicle out of a tight spot, their rating is used to improve the driver's skill.

### ARMOR

The generic term "armor" applies to any system, physical or energy based, which absorbs damage. Two major types of armor exist: plating and shields.

Starships and vehicles have hull point (HP) ratings, which act in the same manner as a character's Vitality attribute (except, of course, that ship HPs are at ship type and vehicle HPs are at vehicle type). When a vessel's armor or shields are penetrated, damage is inflicted against the HP.

### PLATING

Warships, exploratory vehicles, tanks, etc. are equipped with extra armor to protect hulls and chassis from damage. Ship and vehicle armor acts exactly as character armor; enemy damage must penetrate the armor in order to actually damage the hull.

### SHIELDS

Shields create a field around a ship or vehicle which absorbs all forms of damage. In addition, they block unauthorized communications, transporter and computer links, outside scans, etc.

Shielded vessels may fire weapons, launch missiles and torpedoes, transport out, scan, etc. through its own shield without difficulty.

Drawbacks include the fact that shields consume vast amounts of energy. Only atmospheric and maneuver engines can function while shields are up. Hyper drives, quantum wedges, and cloaking devices create too much of a power drain to be used simultaneously with shields.

Shields typically have a number of shield points that must be exceeded before the shields fail and hull damage can take place.

### ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY

This system creates a gravity field throughout the ship, enabling crew members to move about normally. Without artificial gravity, everything is weightless, and movement must be accomplished by pulling, pushing, UltraLock boots, Velcro, etc.



## AUTO DEFENSE

Auto defense is a series of antipersonnel weapons or systems designed to protect the interior of a ship or vehicle. The exact nature of the systems is up to the GM and players – they could be weapons, force fields, electrified corridors, etc.

As auto defenses are intended to deal with individual intruders, they generally inflict damage of the Personal type. When a vessel is equipped with auto defense, sufficient devices are included to cover major corridors, sensitive or high-security rooms, etc. Placement is up to the GM.

The exact programming of the auto-defense system is left up to player discretion (tactical officer) and should be written down for the GM. For example “attack anyone without a Dha communicator who enters this room.”

## CENTRAL COMPUTER

Most of the systems listed in this section include their own internal computer processors which enable each to do its assigned task. A central computer, however, is vital to coordinate all the functions of a ship or vehicle.

Central computers typically include vast stores of information on Guild Space and related areas, life forms, sciences, etc., and can function as a source of information at their assigned rating. Light category computers are semi-intelligent, while mediums are fully-intelligent, and heavies are nearly sentient devices with personalities, quirks, etc.

## CLOAKING DEVICE

Cloaking devices make a vessel “invisible” to vision, sensors and scanners.

## FLIGHT DECK

This item allows a starship (or very large vehicle) to store, maintain and launch smaller vessels such as fighters, shuttles, etc. A flight deck can contain a number of vessels equal to its value, and may launch a number each round equal to its level. Only fighter, bomber, or shuttle-class vessels may be maintained on a flight deck. A 6M flight deck, for example, can maintain up to 12 fighters or shuttles, and launch 4 per round.

## INERTIAL DAMPERS

When ships turn, accelerate, launch, or otherwise change speed or direction everyone on board feels the

effects (like slamming on the brakes in a car). Inertial dampers may be used to negate all but the most severe of these effects.

Characters on starships without dampers must remain strapped in during the above maneuvers. Otherwise, Dex (if standing) or Str (if holding onto something) checks must be made anytime unusual maneuvers occur (defensive, turns, launches, landings, etc.).

The difficulty of such checks should be set by your GM (and are typically equal to the difficulty of the maneuver). Failure indicates that the individual tumbles across the floor resulting in damage equal to the amount of the failure.

## INTERNAL INTEGRITY

This simply indicates that the interior of a ship or vehicle has been reinforced with heavy bulkheads, blast doors and force fields which protect the vessel from hull breaches, explosive decompression, etc. These items will automatically close if the area begins to depressurize. Of course, they can also be activated for security reasons.

Although primarily for use on board ships, pressurized vehicles designed for hostile environments and vacuum may use these systems as well.

## LABS

Labs have sufficient equipment for one lab tech per rating level. The exact components are largely left up to GM interpretation, but should increase as the lab rating increases. Every lab has stations (see below) of the appropriate type.

Each lab specializes in one or more areas. An area is generally considered a specific science or field (such as biology, physics, hyper drives, etc.) as determined by the GM. A lab performs operations in its general area (medical, science, engineering) at its normal rating, while it may make checks in its specialized area at bonuses as listed below. Lab ratings are combined (cat) with applicable skills.

**Light labs** are specialized in one area, add +2r to specialized lab checks, and have one lab station.

**Medium labs** are specialized in two areas, add +4r to specialized lab checks, come equipped with an 3r lab android, and have two lab stations.

**Heavy labs** are specialized in four areas, add +6r to specialized lab checks, come with two 4r or one 8r android, and have four lab stations.

## ENGINEERING LAB

Engineering labs will have equipment and supplies necessary to repair typical mechanical and technical apparatus.

Specializations include – computers, automatons, weapons, armor, vehicles, cybernetic construction/repair, sublight drive repair, etc.

## MEDICAL LAB

Medical labs have the supplies and equipment needed to heal damage, repair wounds and perform surgery.

Specializations include – limb attachment, disease, genetic enhancements, poison, acid and fire burns, cybernetic surgery, etc.

## SCIENCE LAB

Science labs have the supplies and equipment necessary to research and analyze items and phenomena.

Specializations include – biotechnology, genetics, physics, zoology, botany, astronomy, planetology, etc.

## LIFE SUPPORT

This system supplies the entire ship with recirculated air, controls temperature and humidity, runs day/night cycling, and includes built-in food replicators. Ordinarily, a life support system can support an entire ship and its normal crew complement indefinitely. If a ship is carrying an abnormal number of passengers (if, for example, a starship is full of refugees from a war or natural disaster), or if the life support system is damaged in some way, the GM should assess penalties to rolls against the life support system.

Crew members cannot normally survive in a ship without life support. Small ships such as fighters are often crewed by individuals wearing environmental suits.

## OVERDRIVE

Overdrive is a generic term for devices used to increase a vessel's speed. When overdrive is engaged, a vessel's speed is increased by +4r sq for a number of rounds equal to the overdrive's value.

Maintaining overdrive for extended periods is dangerous, however, for it may burn out a vessel's entire power train. Each round beyond the safety limit, roll the overdrive's rating vs a Dif number equal to five for every round that the limit has been exceeded. If the roll

fails, the power train has been damaged, and the vessel is immobilized until repaired. A natural "1" may (at the GM's discretion) result in the engine being permanently destroyed.

## POD/LAUNCHER

Each of the following systems provide one pod and associated launching facilities. The launch port includes an external hatch, ship side pod controls for remote flight, and the actual launch mechanism.

## ASSAULT POD

Assault pods can comfortably carry a crew equal to twice the pod's level. An assault pod is designed to fly into an enemy vessel, rip a hole into its side, create an artificial airlock, and allow its crew to exit and attack.

Once the assault team returns to the pod, it can detach and fly back to the mother ship. Assault pods throw up a stasis field prior to impact, protecting the crew from injury.

All *pilot* checks by an assault pod pilot are made with the pod's rating as a bonus. A pod's *pilot* check must exceed the enemy vessel's armor or the pod bounces off the shields or hull, or sticks into the vessel's side without creating a breach.

If a pod is stuck, a second roll is allowed. Failure indicates that the pod is permanently stuck unless further measures are taken.

## ESCAPE POD

Escape pods are designed to carry a number of passengers equal to the pod's rating value. These pods can be flown by characters, or by the auto-pilot, which flies at the pod's rating. Auto-pilots are set to send the pod toward the nearest planet or friendly vessel.

Escape pods are equipped with life support sufficient to maintain passengers for a number of days equal to the pod's value.

Escape pods cannot be launched from planets – once they land, the passengers are stranded. However, they all come equipped with a communication console and auto-homing signal (both at the pod's rating), and sufficient survival kits for all passengers.

## WORK POD

Work pods are small vessels used for repair, maintenance and travel on large starships or star bases. Each pod includes space for a number of crew equal to its level. They are equipped with attitude thrusters, eight

hour's life support, and manipulative arms for handling objects in space.

## PROBE CONTROLS

Probe controls may be wired into any station. These controls can operate any probe of equal or lesser rating. Only one probe at a time may be operated per probe control. The probe control's rating can be a buff to a trained operator.

Probe control units normally come equipped with ten probes. There are two types of probe functions mimicking the functions of either sensors or scanners. Scanner probes may be set to answer short, simple questions (see scanners), while sensor probes may be set to detect certain conditions and report back when they are encountered (see sensors). Before being launched a probe may be set to either function.

Each turn, a probe moves a number of ship squares equal to its value. A probe remains active for a number of rounds equal to its value, as well. Inactive probes may be retrieved by their vessel if they have not been destroyed. A Probe's Def is equal to its value; any weapon hit automatically destroys a probe.

## REACTIVE HULL

A reactive hull is a sort of sandwich, consisting of metal plating on the inside and outside, with a viscous, force-field contained proton gel in between.

Any time a hull breach occurs the reactive hull's rating may be checked vs the breach's Dif. Success indicates that the gel has oozed into the breach and hardened into a rocklike substance, sealing the hull.

## REPULSOR BEAM

Tractor beams and repulsor beams are similar. However, tractor beams can hold or pull an object where repulsor beams hold or push an object. The force of a repulsor beam's hold and push is determined by its rating. If a repulsor beam overcomes a target's defense, the target may be held or pushed back up to a number of squares equal to the beam's value each round.

## SCANNERS

Scanners are detection devices which can be programmed to search for a predetermined object, phenomenon, etc. During game play, the operating player must explain to the GM what is being scanned for. This should always be phrased as a simple question, preferably requiring a yes or no answer (although other types are acceptable if the GM agrees). Only one

question may be asked per scan. The GM can set a Dif for the scan or simply ad-lib based on the scan roll.

Examples of common scans and possible difficulties for Rank 1 characters follow: is the unknown vessel a Guild Ship (Dif 10), Is the unknown vessel registered to the space police (Dif 8), what are the vessel's call letters as painted on its side (Dif 2), how many life forms are on board (Dif 6), do I detect any Katha (Dif 8), what races do I detect (ad-lib around a Dif 40), are their shields up (Dif 2), where are the life forms located (Dif 10), are there gold bars in the cargo bay (Dif 10).

**GM NOTE:** You must carefully govern scanner use. Don't allow constant scanning rolls to be made. If your players get into a bad habit, simply tell them that each scan costs 1 Mega.

You will need to adjust scan difficulties along with the adventure. If the entire adventure is set around rescuing a cyber-lord, you may want to make scans for that particular cyber-lord very hard or very easy depending upon how the adventure should run. If players complain, explain how complicated scans are and that a hundred variables affect success (movement, cosmic radiation, planetary magnetism, intervening elements, etc.). If they still argue, simply explain that you are trying to maintain proper game balance (i.e., you are making adjustments to enhance their gaming enjoyment).

Finally, make broad-based questions very difficult. Encourage players to ask precise (and less game busting) questions. Reward creativity with lower difficulties.

## SENSORS

Sensors work in a manner similar to scanners. However, they are preset to detect some phenomenon or condition and alert the crew. Once set, they are left on, and no further character interaction is required.

Once the specified condition has been encountered, the GM will either secretly roll to see if the sensors detect the condition, or ask the player to make a sensor check (and call for good roleplaying if the check fails).

The exact number of conditions a sensor can simultaneously be set to detect is equal to the sensor's rating level. Sensor ranges are determined in the same fashion as scanners (see above).

Sample sensor settings and possible difficulties follow:

Sensors are set to detect:

- Proximity (i.e., objects very close to the hull) (Dif varies based on size of object)
- Unauthorized entry (i.e., intruder alert) (approximately Dif6)
- Space mines (Dif equals mine's rating)

- Hull breach (Dif 5)

## SHIP DRIVES

Starship drive systems are considered to fall into one of two generic categories — sublight and FTL (faster than light). Sublight drives propel ships within star systems and over relatively short distances, while FTL drives are used for travel between neighboring solar systems and beyond.

In addition to providing the impetus for movement, engines also supply power to a starship. Engine power is routed through a power plant and stored in backup capacitors (batteries). Capacitors can store enough reserve energy to power a ship for a number of days equal to the engine's rating, even if the engine is non-functional.

## SUBLIGHT DRIVE

Sublight (or in system) drives derive their power from a variety of sources. Some are fusion powered, some utilize matter-antimatter reaction, and primitive drives even use chemical fuel.

Power output and energy consumption vary according to a drive's rating. Light drives are most often chemical or fusion powered; medium drives utilize high-efficiency matter-antimatter units; and heavy drives use advanced ionic or quantum propulsion.

Most drives cause damage to their landing site if they land on a planet, and require specialized space ports to land without difficulty.

Light drives generally cause burning and minor damage to areas directly beneath them, medium drives can cause moderate to severe damage out to a hundred yards or more, and heavy drives can damage or destroy large sections of major urban areas.

Space ports are rated just like drives, according to the largest drive which can land at them without causing damage. For example, 6L ports can only handle ships with 6L sublight drives; 8M ports can handle any ship up to an 8M drive type, etc.

## HYPERDRIVE

No sublight drive is capable of accelerating a starship beyond the speed of light, making interstellar travel slow and unreliable. Hyper drive generators are devices which are used to modify existing drives, giving them true FTL (Faster Than Light) capabilities.

A hyperdrive unit creates a field about the vessel which causes the ship to slip into another dimension known as "Hyperspace." In this space, some of the laws of physics are reversed. The speed of light becomes the

slowest possible velocity instead of the greatest. Thus, a ship is constantly using breaking thrusters to maintain a slower speed.

Theoretically, the attainable speeds in hyperspace are infinite. Unfortunately, as speed increases, it becomes harder and harder to slow down. By going too fast, a starship begins to uncontrollably accelerate to infinity. Not even the best Guild scientists know what the effects of infinite acceleration are. Whether a lost ship is shifted to another universe, destroyed, or merely reappears at some distant random location is up to the GM. Some legends speak of long-lost ships emerging from hyperspace thousands of years after they entered, but this has never been scientifically confirmed.

When in hyperspace, sensors and scanners are useless (except to scan the ship itself). The only thing visible is a tunnel of scintillating energy.

When a vessel enters hyperspace, others simply see it rapidly accelerate, seeming to stretch out for an instant, and then vanish in a bright flash of light (as it breaks the FTL barrier).

## QUANTUM DRIVE

Quantum (AKA Galactic) drives are a new, virtually unknown, technology. They are the only known means for a starship to exceed the speed of light without a hyper drive field. A few Guild super dreadnaughts are said to be equipped with galactic drives, but the House of Defiance will not comment.

Rumor also has it that the Arthirian Sphere is refitting a full third of its fleet with such engines, but this is hard for most experts to believe.

These drives use the principles of quantum physics to make a quick series of quantum jumps in such fast succession that vast distances can be covered at unbelievable speeds. Using these drives, a journey of many hundreds of light years would take only an hour or so.

## QUANTUM WEDGE

*"The shortest distance between two points isn't a line, it's a wormhole."*

— Brom Cargon, Master Tech of House Gamah

A wormhole is a quantum phenomenon, a strange anomaly linking one region of space to another without distance (a sort of window, or doorway connecting two distance places). Most wormholes connect space over distances smaller than atoms, making them useless for interstellar travel. However, a few rare wormholes exist which link vast distances of space together.

When an object enters one end of a wormhole, it immediately emerges from the other without having

traveled the intervening distance. Any object — an individual being, a vehicle, or even a starship, can travel over unimaginable distances by using wormholes.

Unfortunately, natural wormholes have openings about the size of an electron (a tight fit for the average starship). Quantum wedges are devices which funnel the energy of several nuclear explosions into an area the size of a pinpoint. When this much energy is applied to the opening of a wormhole, it expands. The greater the energy, the larger the expansion.

The Guild has numerous science vessels combing Guild Space for long range wormholes. Perhaps only one wormhole in a million proves useful. Maintenance probes are left at such wormholes, channeling minimal power into the holes to keep them stable (most normal wormholes have a life span of only a few seconds).

The process of expanding a wormhole requires incredible amounts of energy, and only the largest vessels are capable of carrying quantum wedge equipment. Once generated, wormholes rotate rapidly, and can only be maintained for as long as the massive power output is present.

## SHIP DRIVE ENHANCEMENTS

Drives do not come with everything — they simply provide power and move the ship forward. In order to enter atmospheres, land on planets, or maneuver in combat, starships need special equipment known as drive enhancements.

A complete list of these enhancements follow along with a detailed discussion of each.

## LAUNCH GEAR

Many of the drives above have restrictions on planetary landings, due to the destructive force of the drives themselves. They are set with security codes (Dif 20r-100r) to prevent them from being used on planets or near inhabited areas. Guild law forbids unauthorized landings with such drives, and exacts heavy penalties against those who do. In order to land on a planet, ships must be equipped with launch gear (see below).

The game effect of this rule is to prevent players from using their starship's drive as a weapon and, for example, destroying the entire city where their enemy is hiding rather than tracking him down. Other, less scrupulous states, such as the Empire, have no qualms about using their drives as weapons, and often do so to instill terror in conquered populations.

There may come a time when players wish to override security codes and use drives for destructive purposes. Whether you should allow this depends upon circumstances. If the PCs are in dire straits, and

threatened with death, such a move may be a good one. Under no circumstances, however, allow drive-weapons to be used against innocent civilians, or to cause widespread death and destruction.

Launch gear provides a ship with all of the hardware necessary to land on or launch from a planet, except for the engine (see ship drives above). This includes retro rockets, landing gear, guidance systems, and visual reconnaissance systems.

Vessels with launch gear require a simple *pilot* check A(Dif 2r-5r) in order to land safely. A failed roll results in damage equal to the failure.

Ships without launch gear risk severe damage if they land on a planet. Each landing without launch gear should be at a high difficulty (two times the ship's HP value).

Launch gear enables a ship to land where it normally would be unable to, or forbidden from doing so. Ships with destructive drives may land on planets using launch gear.

Note that launch gear does not give ships any atmospheric maneuverability — it simply allows them to take off and land. Vessels desiring to fly through atmospheres risk damage if they are not equipped with atmospheric fittings (see below).

When a vessel is launching/landing, the engines are always taxed to the max. Thus, no system requiring a large amount of energy will function (e.g., shields and any system which can't be used in conjunction with shields are forbidden without some great engineering roll).

## ATMOSPHERIC FITTING

This system consists of the baffles, attitude jets, aerodyne shape, etc., necessary to enter planetary atmospheres without damage. As with launch gear, atmospheric fittings do not allow complex maneuvers while in an atmosphere, they simply allow a ship to enter an atmosphere and follow a simple glide-path.

If a ship without these devices enters an atmosphere, it must make *pilot* checks at high degrees of difficulty (10r-25r), with failure resulting in hard landings or crashes causing damage equal to the amount of the failure (i.e., a roll of 15 vs Dif 20 results in 5 points of ship damage - no armor).

Fighters and other smaller vessels may be equipped with both atmospheric and tactical fittings, and so may move freely, maneuver, dogfight, etc., in planetary atmospheres. Such modifications are impractical for larger vessels, which are lucky if they can even land on a planet without difficulty.

## TACTICAL FITTING

Tactical fittings are required in order to perform combat maneuvers while in space or atmospheres. Without them, starships may make only a single, 45-degree turn each round.

Tacticals employ a complex thruster array, an inertial sling, graviton grapplers, and other advanced equipment. The fittings enable starships to make sharp turns, rolls, etc. without the Newtonian drift and counter thrust problems common in unequipped vessels.

When tactical fittings are engaged, a ship may maneuver properly. A ship may make any number of turns or moves so long as their total MR is not exceeded.

## STATIONS

A station consists of a chair, computer console, keyboard, and other specialized equipment. Stations all come with intercoms (for communications within the vessel), basic computer functions (calculations, simple data lookup, etc.), security lockout and mini-view screens which may tap into the main view screen (if one exists).

Stations usually provide bonuses to their operator's rolls.

On some smaller vessels, the functions of several stations may be combined. In this case, several different station codes are separated by a slash (Med/SciSta, for example).

## ASTROGATION STATION

These terminals are often located close to the central computer. Astrogation calculations require extensive use of computer functions, as entire sector charts, nav reports, flight logs, treaty agreements, etc. must be inspected to properly plot a course.

Once the route has been determined, the astrogator must make complex calculations utilizing calculus, quantum physics, relativity, and other advanced mathematics.

Astrogation stations have the highest priority in the computer queue. Due to an astrogator's intimate relationship with the ship computer, all computer functions are routed to the nav-station. Astrogators are responsible for maintaining crew accounts, log-ins, editing the central net for outdated information, etc.

Astrogation stations are also wired into the communications array (if one exists) so that remote computer links can be made (requiring a check) for the purpose of up- or downloading information, breaking into an enemy vessel's computer network, etc.

Finally, these stations are always linked to the helm station so that reports can be fed to the helm officer.

## CAPTAIN'S NEST

This station comes with a large padded chair with special instrumentation on both chair arms. Readouts of all major ship systems are tied into the station. The captain's station is also given primary control over ship lockouts, self destruct controls, etc.

All major ship systems are routed to this station, allowing the captain to fully access and use all other station functions. Thus, the captain could fire forward guns (non-turreted weapons only), raise shields, scan, open communications, etc. from his chair. Note that the captain may only access the functions of stations that are actually on the ship — if a given ship does not have a science station, the captain may not use such abilities.

## COMMUNICATIONS STATION

The comm station is the only station which has direct access to the communications array (allowing off-ship communications). Once a communication link is established with a vessel (requiring a *comtech* check unless the other vessel is friendly and in close proximity), communications may be rerouted to any other station, allowing the captain, science officer, or some other individual to speak. Communications may also be switched to visual if a view screen exists.

Comm station users may jam the communications of any enemy within range. Jamming requires a successful *comtech* skill roll with the comm station's rating). If the roll exceeds the other vessel's comm rating, the jam is successful. Likewise, breaking a comm jam requires a successful *comtech* roll vs the enemy's comm rating.

A Comm check is always required to successfully operate the galactic translator. If successful, foreign language communication is possible.

The comm station includes a standard emergency transponder which can transmit ship ID, mayday, warnings or general messages.

## DRIVER STATION

Vehicles (only) contain these stations, which provide a driver with vehicle controls, readouts, and so on. A driver can also operate forward firing guns. This station's readouts will instantly alert the driver to any problems in a vehicle, and locate the source of the difficulty.

## ENGINEERING STATION

Engineering stations can be used to operate major systems: cloaking devices, transporters, shields, tractor and repulsor beams, sensors and scanners.

Engineering stations also provide numerous ship readouts on such items as hull points, hull integrity, system damage (to any major system), diagnostic routines, remote control of major ship systems, etc.

Finally, engine control is routed through the engineer's station allowing for power rerouting, engine lockout, activation of various types of engines (atmospheric, hyper drive, quantum wedge), etc.

Engineering stations also have a compartment which contains the same contents found in a typical engineer's kit.

## HELM STATION

Helm stations are rigged to control maneuver thrusters, launch/landing gear, atmospheric flight, sublight drive control, and FTL drive control.

Basic astrogation and forward gun controls are commonly tied into helm stations. Engine power control is also routed through the helm station although the engineering station has a higher priority on this function.

Helm stations have top priority access to the main view screen (if one exists).

## MEDICAL STATION

Medical stations contain life-sign monitors which provide readouts on any patients in the vessel's medic labs. These stations come with a detachable biomonitor which can scan a patient's vital statistics to determine any ailments or abnormalities (requiring a check). Users of med stations can display the condition of anyone on board the ship or vehicle who is wearing a biomonitor. Life support functions are also routed through the medic station.

A small neuro-chemical-replicator is built in which allows the medic to create drugs, anti-toxins, vaccines, antidotes, etc. (requiring a *medtech* check).

A holographic microscope is included in this station. It can holographically project microscopic organisms and objects at any size desired.

Medic stations are equipped with a first aid compartment which contains a medikit.

## SCIENCE STATION

Science stations are equipped with primary sensor and scanner controls (if they exist). An analysis chamber

is built into the station with a removable clear plasteel container and devices for scanning anything placed in the container. A holographic microscope is also built into the station.

All science stations are tied into any existing science labs so that reports on experiments can be monitored.

Probe launch controls, guidance, and readouts are all routed through the science station.

## TACTICAL STATION

The tactical station can control and remotely fire any ship or vehicle weapon, and may also control any auto-defense systems on board a ship or vehicle. All auto-defense functions are controlled through the tactical station.

Shields and assault and escape pods may all be remotely controlled from this station.

Tactical stations also display a tactical grid providing a relative display of all ships, vehicles or individuals involved in a battle within range. Readouts give positions, speeds, reports on known armament and shield condition, and identification of all known combatants. Any scanned information on enemy vessels is automatically displayed on the tactical grid.

Advanced tac stations can analyze battle situations and provide suggested tactics and bonuses to attack rolls (at the GM's discretion) if a successful station roll is made.

## STEALTH NET

A stealth net is a combination of a black, emission-absorbing coating and a silvery, web like network of high-tech material which diverts sensor and scanner waves, making the vessel effectively invisible to electronic detection.

Stealth nets are always "on," but they provide little protection against visual sighting (+1r).

A stealth net's rating is rolled vs the enemy's sensors/scanners to avoid detection.

Naturally, a black vessel stands out quite strikingly against any non-black background, so vehicular stealth nets come in a variety of camouflaging colors.

## TRACTOR BEAM

Tractor and repulsor beams are similar. However, repulsor beams can hold or push an object where tractor beams hold or pull an object. The force of a tractor beam's hold and pull is determined by its rating. If the beam hits its target, the target may be held or pulled. Each round a tractor beam may move a held object up to an number of squares equal to its rating value.

## TRANSPORTERS

Typically 1 or more Mega per transport is required to transport.

Transporters convert matter and energy patterns (i.e., beings/ objects) into reactive energy which is then transmitted to another location where it coalesces into the original matter and energy pattern.

A transporter can simultaneously transport a number of objects or beings of Anthropos size or smaller equal to the transporter's level.

Two *transporter* skill checks are involved in transporting (a lock and a transmit check). The lock is only necessary when the subject is not standing in the transport chamber. The transmit check determines if any unusual side effects occur.

If a lock fails, the subject simply can't be transported. If the transmit check fails, the subject receives an amount of cellular damage equal to the failure (e.g., if a check of 12 was made on a Dif 16 transport, the individual suffers 16-12 or 4 points of damage). Not even Natural Armor protects against transporter damage.

Note, transporters are preset with a number of safety precautions. Objects cannot be intentionally transported into other objects, unprotected life forms cannot be transported into space or other hostile environments without overriding the security system. Such an override requires a *transporter* or *counter security* skill check vs a Dif set by the GM (typically 20r-50r). Also, unwilling subjects are twice as hard to get a lock on (and a lock is required even if within the transport chamber).

Note to the GM: Although the above rules are quite logical, they are also provided to help prevent "transporter assassins". Occasionally, this adds a lot of flair to the game (and may even be the team's only hope – in which case you may want to soften the rules). However, don't let your players get into the habit of abusing transporters. Note that constant overriding of the security lock-out may result in transporter malfunction (or even an explosion for 5r damage).

The difficulty of transporter checks vary widely depending upon the circumstances, but all checks begin at a base Dif of 5. In general transports through energy intensive areas are difficult (such as shields, computer centers, etc.). Physical obstructions cause fewer problems unless they are very thick (typical ship armor doesn't interfere with transport). However, random physical obstructions such as sand storms and weather patterns cause problems.

Transporter ranges suffer the same penalty as due weapons under the optional range rules.

Table 15 lists typical transporter difficulties under various conditions. These are guidelines, and may be varied or ignored depending upon exact circumstances.

### Transporter Guidelines

Base Dif = 5

Action	Dif
Through Shields	+shield value
Through Storm	+3
Through Sand Storm	+8
Through 10 feet of rock	+3
Through 100 feet of rock	+10
Transporter to Transporter	-10
Trans to non-Trans Location	0
Non-Trans to Non-Trans	+10

### Intra-Ship Transporter

Intra-ship transporters are small one man pads with prewired destinations. They provide a simple and quick means of travel around a starship. They have no ability to transport off-ship. However, no roll is required.

## SHORT RANGE TRANSPORTER

Short ranged transporters include intra-ship capabilities and anything within one square of the ship or vehicle.

## MEDIUM RANGE TRANSPORTER

Medium ranged transporters include short ranged capabilities and anything within a number of squares equal to the transporter's rating level. Ship-mounted medium ranged transporters can also transport objects from low orbit to any part of the planet directly below the ship.

## LONG RANGE TRANSPORTER

Long ranged transporters include short ranged capabilities and anything within a number of squares equal to the transporter's value. Ship mounted long range transporters can also transport objects between low orbit and the facing side of the planet (i.e., anywhere on the visible hemisphere).

## VEHICLE ENGINES

Vehicle engines have ratings equal to the vehicle's move rating. The more power an engine has, the greater the vehicle's speed.

Engine fuels vary according to category and tech level. Light engines are powered by such things as internal combustion, crude fusion power, etc. Medium



engines range from fusion to solar energy, while heavy category power plants utilize such exotic sources as matter-antimatter, quantum black-hole generators, etc.

## WHEELED

Wheeled vehicles are common on low-tech worlds and in civilian use. They may move normally on roads and other flat, unobstructed surfaces, but movement drops by -2 on rough ground (rocks, gravel, etc.) and -5 in very rough or restricted terrain (forest, sand, broken ground, swamp, etc.). In addition, on very rough ground, a wheeled vehicle's driver must make a *driving* skill roll (Dif determined by GM) or become stuck.

## TRACKED

Tracked vehicles have somewhat better mobility than wheeled vehicles. Tracks are also much more efficient for extremely heavy vehicles. Tracked vehicles move normally on flat and rough ground, but move at -1d on very rough ground. On highly treacherous ground such as swamps or rocky terrain, the driver must make a skill roll to prevent the vehicle from getting stuck, flipping over, etc.

## HOVER

Vehicles using hover propulsion move on a cushion of air, channeled through large fans with fins and baffles. Hover vehicles may move freely over water, sand, swamp and other normally restrictive terrain, but are forbidden to move over broken (creviced) ground (where the air has nothing to push on).

## GRAV

This is the ultimate form of ground transportation – grav vehicles travel several feet off the ground, lifted by powerful antigrav generators. They may move freely over any terrain, although restrictive terrain such as thick forests slow them down just as much as any other vehicle.

## WALKER

Walkers are vehicles, often of a bipedal profile, which move on legs. Walkers follow the same movement restrictions as tracked vehicles, except that they can often navigate over larger obstacles (boulders, fallen trees, etc.) If a *drive* roll is failed, the vehicle may fall and cause severe damage.

The major advantage of walker-type vehicles is the elevation and increased observation abilities which they give their passengers.

## VIEW SCREEN

View screens do far more than simply relay visual images. They are capable of macro-enhanced views, with magnification powers up to 1000:1. They also screen out all optically harmful radiation, blinding light, etc. If a communications array is available, they can be patched into view screens on other vessels (if they have them).

The view screen system includes one large bridge screen, and the ability to patch into any number of linked screens throughout the vessel. A screen may show a number of different images equal to its level. All linked screens may choose between the available views.

## Weapon Systems

The weapons of GuildSpace are truly awesome – some are capable of annihilating entire cities.

### Weapon Systems

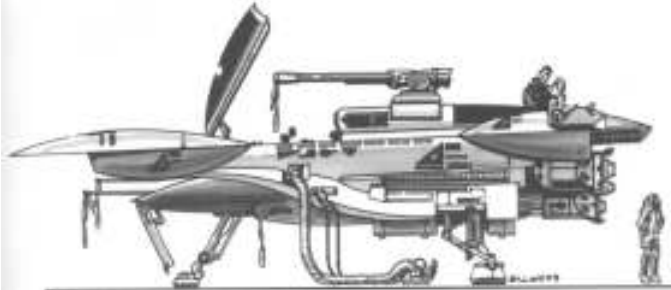
Weapon Systems	Code	Abbrev.
Cannons	–	Can
Blaster Cannon	Bc	BlstCan
Dual	Bd	BlstCan2
Quad	Bq	BlstCan4
Ion Cannon	Ic	IonCan
Dual	Id	IonCan2
Quad	Iq	IonCan4
Plasma Cannon	Pc	PlasCan
Dual	Pd	PlasCan2
Quad	Pq	PlasCan4
Projectile Cannon	Jc	ProjCan
Dual	Jd	ProjCan2
Quad	Jq	ProjCan4
Pulse Las. Cannon	Lc	PulsCan
Dual	Ld	PulsCan2
Quad	Lq	PulsCan4
Missile Battery	Ms	MslBat
Dumb	*D	*D
Guided	*G	*G
Smart	*S	*S
Tactical Uplink	Tu	TacUpl
Torpedo Tube	Tt	TorpTb
Ambush	*M	*M
Armored	*A	*A
Evasive	*E	*E
Hunter-Seeker	*H	*H
Logic Circuit	*L	*L

Rapid Run	*R	*R
Stealth	*S	*S

**Turret**

180	*180	*180
270	*270	*270
360	*360	*360

Weapon Arm	*Arm	*Arm
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**Weapon System Details**

The weapons listed below are appropriate for both ships and vehicles. Most weapons will be of the single, dual, or quad cannon type and may fire blaster energy, projectiles, plasma, pulse laser energy, or ionized particles.

**CANNON**

The basic weapon is a single barreled cannon, attacks once and inflicts the listed amount of damage. A cannon may be of any type (blaster, ion, etc.). Code for cannon is "c," abbreviation is "Can" (Pc and PlasCan = Single Plasma Cannon).

**Dual:** Dual cannon are independently firing weapons mounted on a single weapon chassis. They attack and do damage in a slightly different way from singles. Code for a dual is "d," abbreviation is "Can2" (e.g., Pd and PlasCan2 = Dual Plasma Cannon).

Dual cannon attack once. If they hit their target, they roll damage normally, but any wounding damage (that is, damage which penetrates the target's armor and inflicts damage against the target's HP) is **doubled**.

**Quad:** Quad cannon hit in the same manner as duals, but inflict their wounding damage four times rather than two. Quad code is "q," abbreviation is "Can4" (e.g., Pq and PlasCan4 = Quad Plasma Cannon).

**BLASTER CANNONS**

Large blasters, utilize the same technology as personal blasters but on a larger scale. All rules for blaster fire apply (see *EM, tech, weapons*).

**ION CANNONS**

Ions are atoms which have gained or lost electrons making them electrically charged, and thus highly reactive. When an ion burst strikes matter, it atomically

bonds with the matter forming a small nodule (like sticking gum onto someone's armor). The resulting damage from the impact is minimal. However, the excess electrical charge then dissipates rapidly from the point of impact, inflicting a massive shock upon the target.

**Optional Ruled:** If a target is well grounded (touching a conductive surface such as metal, water, or moist soil) the damage is +1r. Normal targets (individuals standing on a planet, surrounded by air) are considered neither grounded nor insulated, for while the air may provide insulation, the grounding value of the planet's surface cancels it out. If targets are well insulated (floating in air or space, surrounded by glass, dry sand, rubber, plastic, etc.) targets receive -1d damage. Mechanical devices receive an additional +1r Dmg.

Ion weapons make electronic equipment such as computers, guidance systems, etc., malfunction. If wounding damage results from an ion canon, one random system malfunction should be rolled (even though the vessel may not have taken critical damage).

**PLASMA CANNONS**

Plasma guns employ a unique type of ammunition – plasma. Plasma is a fourth state of matter, neither solid, liquid, nor gas. It occurs when matter is superheated to a state where the atomic structure breaks down into subatomic particles (protons, neutrons, electrons, neutrinos, etc.).

**PROJECTILE CANNONS**

Projectile cannon are simply long tubes which shoot shells and other non-energy ammunition at their targets. Projectile cannon are less effective against enemy shields, receiving a -1r Dmg penalty to any attacks against shielded foes. On the other hand, their sheer kinetic energy provides a +1r Dmg bonus against unshielded targets.

**PULSE LASER CANNONS**

Ship- and vehicle-category pulse lasers use the same rules as those listed under pulse lasers personal weapons.

**MISSILE BATTERY**

A missile battery is a bank of five missile launch ports, any number of which may be fired in a single round.

Missile batteries hit and inflict damage in the same manner as dual and quad cannon. The missiles fired from a battery need roll to hit only once, but inflict an amount of wounding damage equal to the number of missiles fired (see dual and quad cannon rules). The only exception is that missile damage is explosive, and can affect vessels outside the target square.

Missile batteries can fire missiles with ratings equal to their own (i.e., a 12 value battery can only fire 12 value or less missiles). When initially installed, batteries come equipped with 50 dumb missiles. Missiles come in three main types: dumb, guided, and smart. In both code and abbreviation notations, “\*d” indicates dumb, “\*g” indicates guided, and “\*s” indicates a smart missile.

**Dumb:** Dumb missiles travel in a simple straight line like a normal projectile. Dumb missiles attack normally.

**Guided:** Guided missiles are controlled through the use of a remote guidance system (thus they can turn up to 45 degrees). Guided missiles attack at +5r.

**Smart:** Smart missiles have built in tracking mechanisms. If they miss a target, they will circle around to attack again the next round. Smart missiles attack normally, however, they continue attacking each round until they hit or are destroyed.

Vehicle missiles cost 50 times their damage level (ignoring type) and ship missiles cost 500 times their damage level (also ignoring type). Guided and smart missiles are each considered one level higher than their actual rating.

A missile’s use the same rating system as do ships and vehicles (see the next section), furthermore, their ratings tend to match that of their vessel. However, their movement is different. One the first round they have a 10 MR, one the second a 20 MR, then 30, on up to 100. If they haven’t hit their target on the tenth round, they simply die or explode as determined by the user. A missile is destroyed if hit.

## TACTICAL UPLINK

These devices are installed on fighters and vehicles, and allow several vessels to link their firing computers and shoot together.

All fighters and vehicles in a tactical net must be of identical type (same armament, rating, etc.) have uplink equipment of the same rating, and must remain within two squares of each other for as long as they are linked.

When firing, vessels in a tactical net attack and inflict damage similarly to dual and quad weapons. Vessels in a tactical uplink net need roll to hit only once (using the highest skill available). If the attack succeeds, each vessel in the network is said to have hit the target once for the same amount of damage.

## TORPEDO TUBE

Torpedoes are similar to smart missiles, except that most of them are even craftier. Torpedo launch tubes are designed to fire one torpedo at a time. Loading another torpedo into a launch tube takes a number of rounds equal to the torpedo’s level. This number is reduced by one for each individual helping down to a minimum of one round. Unlike missile batteries, torpedo tubes can fire any torpedo of equal or lesser rating.

Torpedoes move just like missiles (see above). Nearly all torpedoes keep tracking their target until they hit or are destroyed. A torpedo’s damage is explosive type equal to their rating.

Torpedoes use the same rating system as ships and vehicles (see the next section), furthermore, their ratings tend to match that of their vessel. Unlike missiles, torpedoes have AR and are not destroyed unless they receive wounding damage (but even one point of wounding damage destroys them).

Vehicle torpedoes cost 100 times their damage level (ignoring type) and ship torpedoes cost 1000 times their damage level (also ignoring type). Each enhancement (listed below) increases a torpedoes level by one above its actual level.

Many different types of torpedoes exist, indicated by a small letter after the code or abbreviation.

**Ambush (\*m):** Waits for the next moving target to approach within level squares. It then turns on and attacks.

**Armored (\*a):** The torpedo gains +5r on its armor checks.

**Evasive (\*e):** The torpedo gains +5r on its defensive checks.

**Hunter-Seeker (\*h):** The torpedo flies in any preset search pattern and attacks the first moving target it finds.

**Logic Circuit (\*l):** The torpedo will select targets via a pre-programmed hierarchy stated by its user. This option is excellent when used in conjunction with ambush or hunter-seeker.

**Rapid-Run (\*r):** Doubles MR

**Stealth (\*s):** Torpedo is covered in a stealth net. Note that a single torpedo may have multiple enhancements.

## TURRET

Turret-mounted weapons gain the advantage of an increased arc of fire.

All turrets are armored (with the same rating as the ship), and come with a sophisticated gunnery control station. This station functions a lot like the targeting computer available as an armor enhancement.

However, all targeting information is displayed on the inside of the turret's dome.

The turret provides rotation, targeting, and fire control. Readouts on the gun's status, energy level, etc. are displayed.

Turrets' arc ratings indicate their field of fire (180, 270, or 360 degrees). Turrets may be mounted on the front (F), side (S), or rear (R) of a vehicle or starship.

## WEAPON ARM

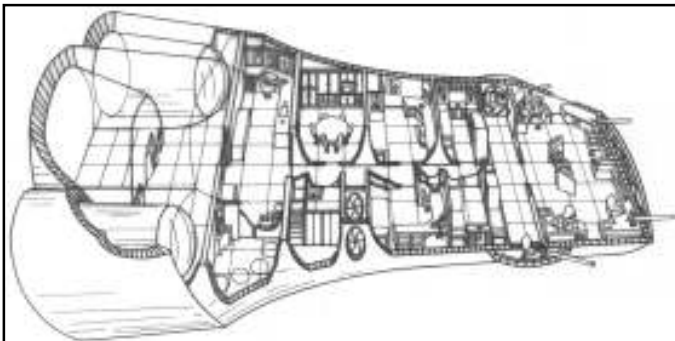
A weapon arm is a long, jointed extension with a turret mounted at the end.

They may be used to gain altitude, shoot over obstacles, engage in "pop-up" fire, and other activities. They are a favored item on military scout transports due to their flexible use and ability to serve as an armed observation platform.

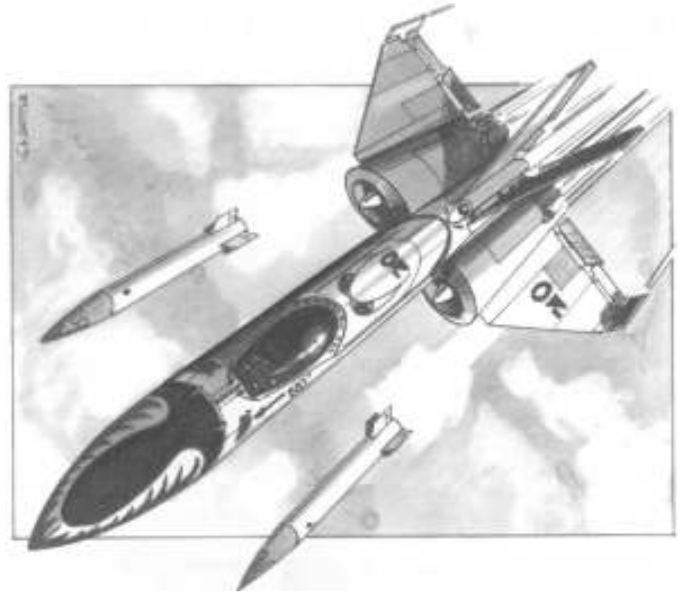
Arms turrets usually have a 180-degree field of fire, but this field is often increased by the arm's own ability to maneuver. The net effect is usually a full 360 degree field of fire.

## Ship List

### ALLIANCE-CLASS CORVETTE



### STARHAWK-CLASS FIGHTER



**Registry:** FA; Guild

Layout: 10

Crew: 1

**Rating:** 40\*/40V/8

**Weapons:** PulsCan-fx2, MslBat\*g-f

**Bridge:** Com/HelmSta, Sen

**Engineering:** Sublt, TacFit, TacUpl

Science/Medical: n/a

**Other:** AtmFit, LnchGr

The *Starhawk* is one of the best-known Guild fighters. It is the standard fighter on board Guild carriers, although it is slowly being superseded by more advanced models such as the *Shark* and *Puma* class ships. *Starhawks* are extensively used by the House of Dha.

### KNIFEWING-CLASS STARBOMBER



**Registry:** Guild, Sphere

Layout: 20

Crew: 2

**Rating:** 32\*/8S/10

**Weapons:** PulsCanx2-f, PulsCan\*180-r, TorpTb\*A\*180-sx2

**Bridge:** Com/HelmSta, TacSta, Sen

**Engineering:** Sublt, TacFit, TacUpl

Science/Medical: n/a

**Other:** AtmFit, LnchGr

Both the Guild and the Arthirian Sphere use these tough, versatile vessels extensively. Typically part of a carrier complement, *Knifewings* are a potent striking weapon, often escorted by fighter-craft.

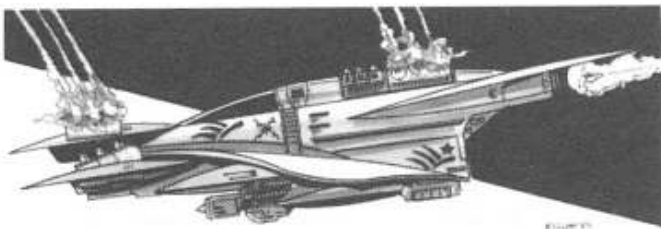
## OTHER STARSHIPS

The larger (or "capital") ships of the Sphere and Guild are awesome weapons of destruction. As such, they are not going to be commanded by player characters very often, but are listed here for reference.

The following entries include basic statistics for larger starships, including only the Rating, Weapons and Other.

Except when noted, all capital ships should be considered to include the following systems: artificial gravity, auto defense, central computer, sublight drive, hyper drive, inertial dampers, internal integrity, all labs, life support, escape pods, assault pods, probe controls, reactive hull, scanners, sensors, all stations, tractor beam, transporters, view screen.

## MISSILE BOAT



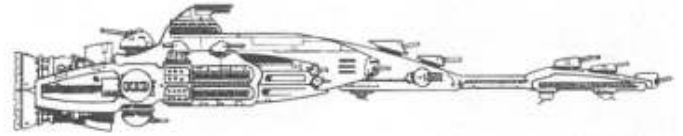
**Rating:** 16/12S/12

**Weapons:** PlasCan4\*360-sx2, MslBat\*S-fx6, TorpTb\*Rx6

**Other:** Missile boats carry five full reloads for each missile battery and torpedo tube.

The Arthirians employ these interesting vessels. Slow and lightly armored, missile boats are intended to hang far away from battle and fire salvo after salvo of missiles and torpedoes at opposing ships. Virtually useless alone, missile boats are always used in conjunction with other vessels, and will quickly jump to hyperspace if an enemy approaches them.

## DESTROYER



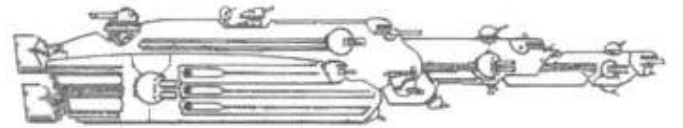
**Rating:** 12\*/16S\*/16

**Weapons:** PulsCan4-fx6, PulsCan2-rx6, PlasCan2\*180-fx4, PlasCan2\*180-rx4, TorpTb\*A\*180-sx6

**Other:** Some destroyers are equipped with launch gear.

These small ships are used as escorts for larger vessels such as carriers. Many variant destroyer designs exist. Some destroyer classes are equipped with launch gear, others are crammed with torpedoes and serve a function similar to Arthirian missile boats.

## LIGHT CRUISER



**Rating:** 12\*/20S\*/20

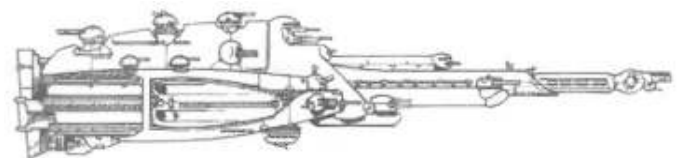
**Weapons:** BlstCan2-fx12, BlstCan2-rx8, PulsCan4\*360x8, IonCan4-fx6, MslBat\*G\*360x10

**Other:** Trac

Light cruisers are used as escorts when ordinary destroyers need more firepower. Due to their dependable design, and combination of good fire power with reasonable speed, they are a favored ship among smaller states and military organizations.

They can also operate independently, performing patrol and anti-piracy missions. This is the largest type of vessel normally operated by the House of the Star.

## HEAVY CRUISER



**Rating:** 10\*/24S\*/20

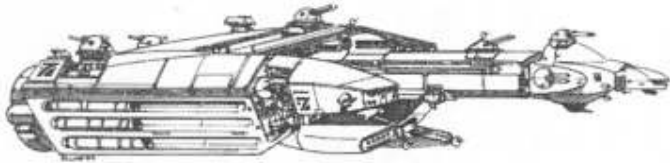
**Weapons:** BlstCan4-fx20, BlstCan2-rx20, PlasCan2\*360x15, PulseCan2\*360x30, MslBat\*G\*360x20, TorpTb-fx25

**Other:** Trac, Repul, QuanW

The backbone of both the Guild and Arthirian fleets, heavy cruisers come in a bewildering variety of classes. The above statistics reflecting the average, but the GM is free to expand upon their design.

The heavy cruiser is the smallest ship fitted with Quantum Wedge equipment, and is a vital link in the production of quantum wormholes.

## BATTLESHIP



**Rating:** 8/32S\*/24 (FltDeck 6M)

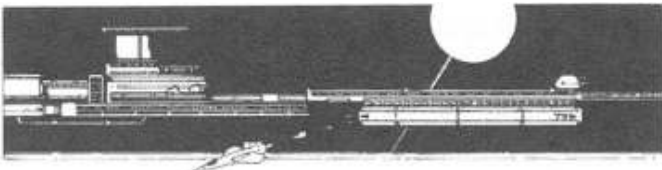
**Weapons:** BlstCan4-fx50, BlstCan4-rx40, PulsCan2\*360x30, IonCan2\*360x40, PlasCan4\*180-sx40, MslBat\*G\*360x25, TorpTb-fx25

**Other:** QuanW, Trac, Repul, FltDeck, 12 fighters or 6 bombers

Until recently, battleships were the largest vessels in space. The advent of the dreadnaught and the super dreadnaught ended the battleship's primacy, but these vessels are still important parts of both the Guild and Arthirian fleets. Powerful enough to operate on its own without fleet escorts, the battleship is often an important part of Guild diplomacy, the sheer power of its presence being enough to make warring factions think twice, or to dissuade potential enemies from attacking.

Battleships also carry quantum wedge equipment.

## LIGHT CARRIER



**Rating:** 8/16S\*/16 (FltDeck 24)

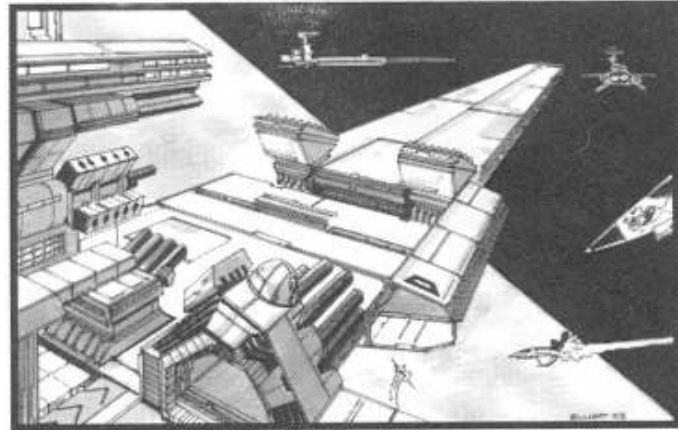
**Weapons:** PulsCan-fx4, PulsCan\*180-rx4

**Other:** FltDeck, 24 fighters or 12 bombers

Slow and underarmed, light space-carriers are nonetheless an important part of Guild strategy. Always escorted by destroyers or cruisers, light carriers operate in task forces, and are capable of launching two full squadrons of starfighters or starbombers.

Note that the fighter/bomber complement of a carrier may be varied – an individual vessel can carry 12 fighters and six bombers, six fighters and nine bombers, etc.

## HEAVY CARRIER



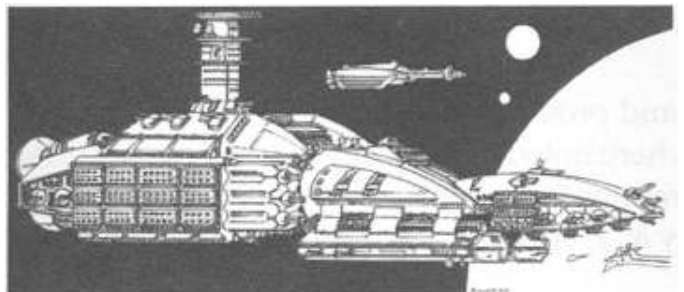
**Rating:** 10/20S\*/20 (FltDeck 40)

**Weapons:** PulsCan-fx6, PulsCan\*180-rx6, TorpTb\*R\*180-sx2

**Other:** FltDeck, 40 fighters or 20 bombers

This heavier version of the light carrier fills the same role, but can support a much larger complement of fighters and bombers.

## DREADNAUGHT



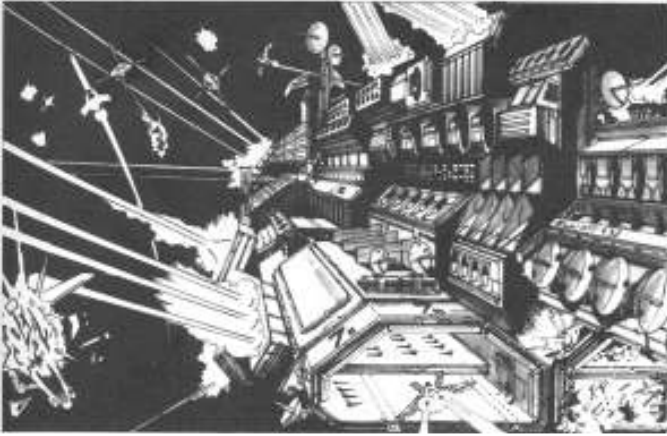
**Rating:** 8/40S\*/32 (FltDeck 20)

**Weapons:** BlstCan4-fx75, BlstCan4-rx75, PulsCan2\*360x50, IonCan2\*360x60, PlasCan4\*180-sx60, MslBat\*G\*360x60, TorpTb-fx40

**Other:** QuantW, Trac, Repul, Flt Deckx5, 100 fighters or 50 bombers per deck

These awesome ships were built to counter the threat of the Imperial slavemaster-class vessels. They have thus far filled the role admirably, combining armor, striking power and a substantial fighter into a truly awesome weapon.

## SUPERDREADNAUGHT



**Rating:** 6/6W\*/32 (FltDeck 24)

**Weapons:** BlstCan4-fx100, BlstCan4-rx100, PlasCan2\*360x100, PulsCan2\*180-sx100, IonCan2\*180-sx100, MslBat\*180x100, TorpTb\*180x100

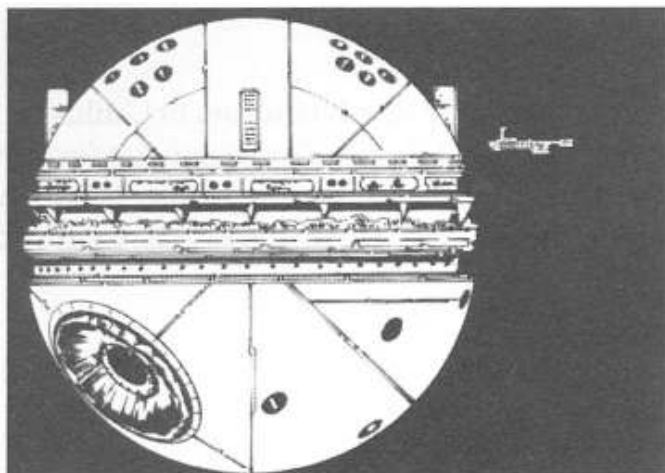
**Other:** QuanW, Trac, Repul, Flt Deckx10, 240 fighters or 120 bombers per deck

Easily the most powerful FTL-capable ship in Known Space, the super dreadnaught carries a large number of fighters, mounts massive weapons, and is fully equipped with quantum wedge equipment.

Until recently, these mighty ships were the largest vessel patrolling the space lanes (see war moon below)

Some of these vessels are said to be equipped with the mysterious Quantum Drive, but so far this has not been confirmed.

## WARMOON



**Rating:** 6/8W-10W/40

**Weapons:** BlstCan4x500, PlasCan4x500, PulsCan4x500, IonCan4x500, MslBat\*Sx250, TorpTbx250

**Other:** QuanWx4, Trac, Repul, Flt Deckx20, 800 fighters or 400 bombers

The Guild warmoon could more properly be described as a mobile fortress rather than a true starship, for it does not carry hyper drive equipment, and can only move very slowly. Nonetheless, warmoons are vastly powerful.

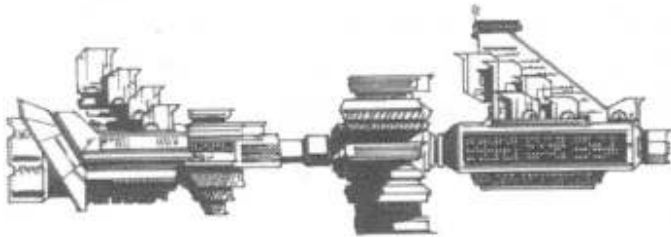
These vessels are exactly what they sound like – small moons or large asteroids hollowed out, armored and filled with huge amounts of military hardware. All of a warmoon's gun emplacements are fixed; turrets would be useless on such a gigantic vessel as its own horizon gets in the way.

At any time, 20 percent of all the vessels weapons can be brought to bear on a single target, (and at that brief instant, the target suddenly understands the true meaning of power). War moons have the capability of completely annihilating entire solar systems, one planet at a time.

Guild scientists theorize that a short range shot into the heart of a star would cause it to nova, thus destroying the entire system in one fell swoop. However, at such close range, it is highly unlikely that the moon itself would survive, and so far no moon commander has volunteered to test this theory.

Warmoons may only be moved over long distances through the use of wormhole generators, and the huge size involved requires several large Guild ships working together. Needless to say, warmoons are not moved in this fashion very often.

## OTHER STATES' STARSHIPS



Several other starship classes are discussed in this volume. In the interest of space, they cannot be detailed individually at this time (although they will definitely be described in future publications). If any of these vessels are encountered, use the following table to determine a Guild/Sphere equivalent.

Alien Vessel	Equivalent
EMPIRE	
Dartship	Fighter
Knifeship	Bomber
Bladeship	Corvette
Swordship	Frigate
Ramship	Light Cruiser
Lancer	Heavy Cruiser
Gunship	Missile Boat
Hatchetship	Battleship
Homeship	Heavy Carrier
Globeship	Dreadnaught
Slavemaster	Superdreadnaught

### DRACA

Little Dragon	Fighter
Claw Carrier	Light Carrier
Death-Egg	Missile Boat
Faithful Warrior	Destroyer
Noble Warrior	Light Cruiser
Berserker	Heavy Cruiser
High Serpent	Battleship
StarDragon	Dreadnaught

### ZIN-SHEE

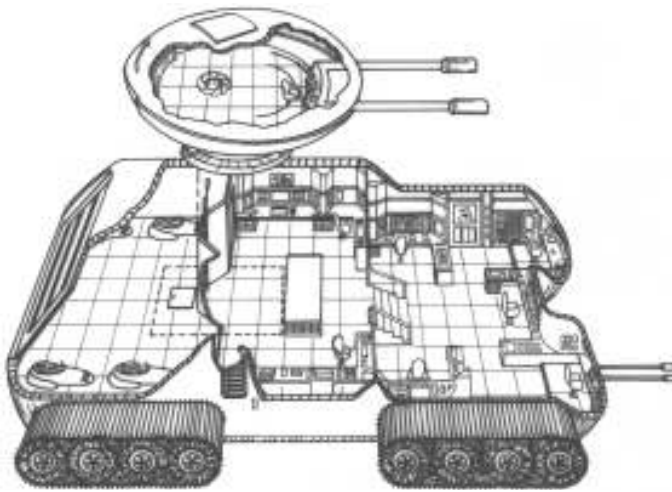
Claw-Fighter	Fighter
Talon-Bomber	Bomber
Chaser	Corvette
Tracker	Frigate
Lurker	Missile Boat
Pouncer	Light Cruiser
Hunter	Heavy Cruiser
Stalker	Dreadnaught
Denship	Heavy Carrier



# Vehicles

This section details several of the myriad vehicles available to adventurers in GuildSpace, and provides statistics for several more. Vehicles follow the same format as ship descriptions, but AR, HP, and Dmg statistics (except where noted) are considered to be of Vehicle type or times 10 (a 6r plasma cannon would therefore inflict 60r damage). Should any of the following ratings be personal level (a value 20 turbo-plaz mounted as an anti-personnel weapon, for example), the appropriate listing will be followed by a "P" for personal (the above example would then properly be noted 20P).

## HALBERD-CLASS ARMORED TRANSPORT



Layout: 180  
Crew: 5

**Rating:** 24/12V/12 (Sen 24, Scan 20)

**Weapons:** PulsCan2\*360, PulsCan2 (6HP)-s

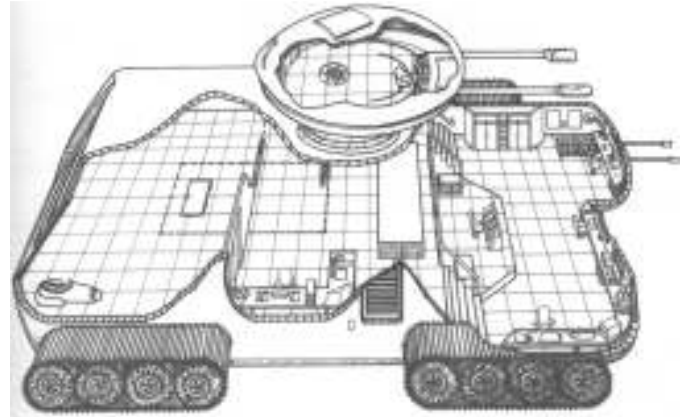
**Command Systems:** CenComp, CapSta, ComSta, DrivSta, SciSta, TacSta, MedLab, SciLab

**Engineering Systems:** Sen, Scan, VehEng\*T

**Standard Cargo:** 100 nutritabs, 2 hyperbikes

The *Halberd* has seen use throughout the guild, but is now the standard armored transport for the House of Dha. Its relatively small size and versatile design allow this vehicle to be transported even in relatively small vessels, and modifications by Dha technicians can add such useful equipment as shields, scientific equipment, more powerful weapons, etc.

## SCIMITAR-CLASS ARMORED TRANSPORT



Layout: 275  
Crew: 8

**Rating:** 20/20V/16 (Sen 32, Scan 24, Trans 12)

**HP:** 36

**MR:** 12\*T

**Defense:** 10L

**Armor:** 10M/8H

**Weapons:** PulsCan4\*360, PulsCan-sx4, PulsCan(8HP)-rx2

**Command Systems:** CenComp, CapSta, ComSta, DrivSta, EngSta, SciSta, TacSta, EngLab, MedLab, SciLab  
**Engineering Systems:** LifSup, Sen, Scan, Trans, VehEng\*T, ATHyd, OvrDrv

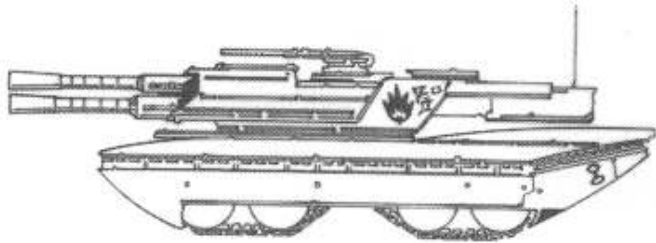
**Standard Cargo:** 100 nutritabs, 4 hyperbikes

This up-armored and up-gunned version of the *Halberd* is used in particularly hostile terrain, where it can be completely sealed and support a large crew complement. The *Scimitar* is capable of missions of days in length, even on the harshest of worlds. Equipped with an overdrive unit and all-terrain hydraulics, this vehicle is capable of maneuvering in highly restricted terrain, and has considerable military applications, as well. Some variants of this vehicle are equipped with a weapon arm, mounting pulse lasers or blast cannon.

## OTHER GUILD VEHICLES

A bewildering variety of vehicles are found in the Guild, and a few of them are listed below, in abbreviated form.

## WARRIOR-CLASS ARMORED FIGHTING VEHICLE



Layout: 150  
Crew: 3

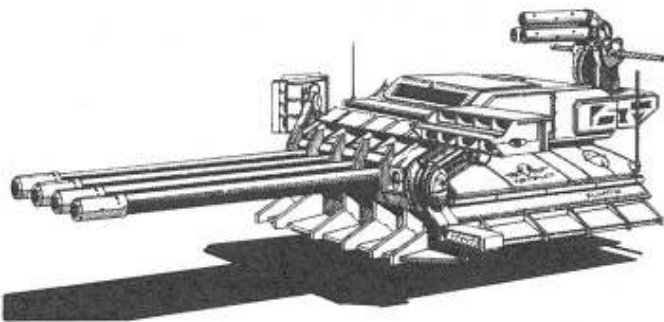
**Rating:** 12/24V/20

**Weapons:** PulsCan2\*360, PulsCan(8Hp)-f\*180x2  
**Command Systems:** CenComp, CapSta, DrivSta, TacSta  
**Engineering Systems:** Sen, Scan, VehEng\*T, OvrDrv

The *Warrior* is the Guild's main battle tank, deployed on thousands of worlds, and makes up the vast majority of the armored regiments which hold the frontier against the Empire. Despite its relatively primitive tracked propulsion system, the *Warrior* is a highly-reliable, low-maintenance vehicle capable of operation in many different terrains. Life support and AT hydraulic-equipped *Warriors* even serve on strategic airless worlds.

The basic armament of the *Warrior* is also quite variable — plasma, ion and blaster equipped vehicles are common.

## HUSSAR-CLASS ARMORED FIGHTING VEHICLE



Layout: 150  
Crew: 4

**Rating:** 10/40V/24

**Weapons:** PulsCan4\*360, PulsCan(10Hp)\*180-fx2,  
MslBat\*D\*270-fx2

**Command Systems:** CenComp, CapSta, ComSta, DrivSta, TacSta

**Engineering Systems:** LifSup, Sen, Scan, VehEng\*G

The Guild's largest gravtank is deployed mostly in important sectors, such as the Zone frontier and Guildhome. While no match for the Imperial heavy cybertanks, the *Scimitar* is still an excellent vehicle. Like the more common *Warrior*, several variants of this tank exist, incorporating different armament, more powerful scanners, and upgraded armor.

## IMPERIAL VEHICLES

The Empire does not trust its slave races to operate armored vehicles, opting instead for vehicles which have come to symbolize the cruel and pitiless nature of the Imperium — the cybertanks.

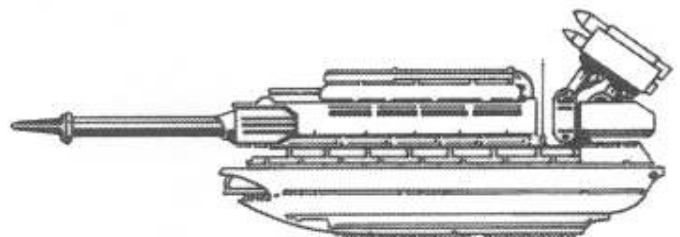
Cybertanks are massive, tracked constructs, slow but heavily armored, mounting large weapons with high destructive potential. These simple facts would be enough to make the cybertank a terrifying weapon of war, but the real horror lies inside the vehicle itself, for imperial cybertanks are controlled by living brains taken from members of Kathan slave races.

The brain which controls a cybertank is essentially mindless, driven to advance and fight by a combination of electric shocks and chemical stimulus. If any vestiges of the owner's original consciousness remain, all they know is an eternity of pain and suffering.

Needless to say, the free races of the Guild hate the Empire all the more for the criminal enslavement of these unfortunate individuals — denied even the dignity of death by an Empire which long since forgot the meaning of pity. Even the Draca cyber-lords, who strongly believe in the modification and improvement of biological beings through technology, express disgust at the Katha's excesses.

The major Kathan cybertanks are described below. These are, of course, only those which Guild intelligence knows of. Greater horrors may lurk deep inside the Empire, to be unleashed on the Katha's unsuspecting enemies.

## IMPERIAL CYBERTANK-A

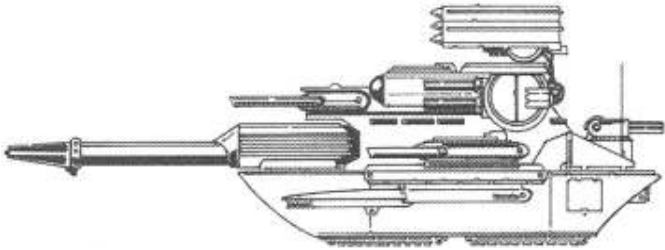


**Rating:** 12/24V/10

**Weapons:** PlasCan\*360, MslBat\*D\*180-sx4

This most commonly encountered cybertank forms the backbone of imperial armored units.

### IMPERIAL CYBERTANK-B

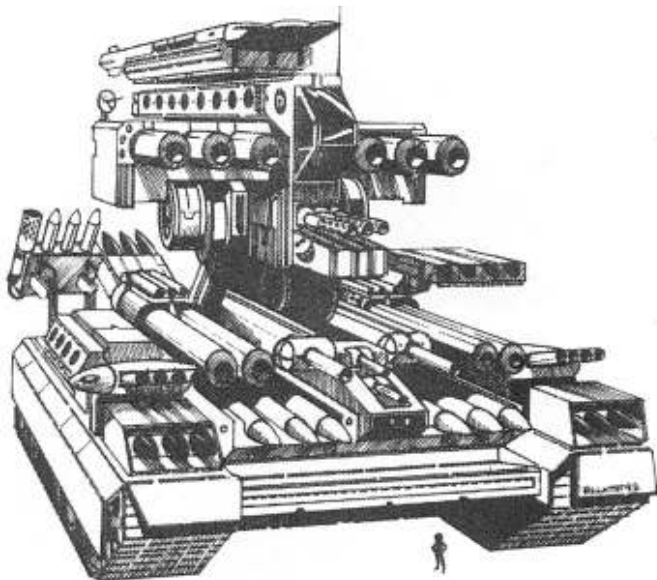


**Rating:** 10/32V/12

**Weapons:** PlasCan\*360, TurboPlaz (10Hp)\*360x8, MslBat\*D\*180-sx8

The heavy cybertank-B is used in sieges, and assaults on fortresses. Generally deployed in squadrons of four, these vehicles are attached to larger formations of cybertank-A's, or are used in support of the terrifying cybertank-X.

### IMPERIAL CYBERTANK-X



**Rating:** 8/6S/16

**Weapons:** PlasCan4\*360x6, PlasCan2-sx4, TurboPlaz (6LP)\*360x12, MslBat\*D\*180-sx10

Nearly 30 yards in length, bristling with weaponry, capable of devastating smaller units, fortresses and entire cities without support, the cybertank-X is one of the largest vehicles in Known Space.

## DRACA "VEHICLES"

The cyber-lords of the Draca Holding do not use vehicles in the traditional sense, preferring instead to cybernetically modify animal species and use them in battle. Two of the best-known of these biological "vehicles" are described below.

In place of hull points, the following entries list Vitality.

### DRACA KHAVAXX

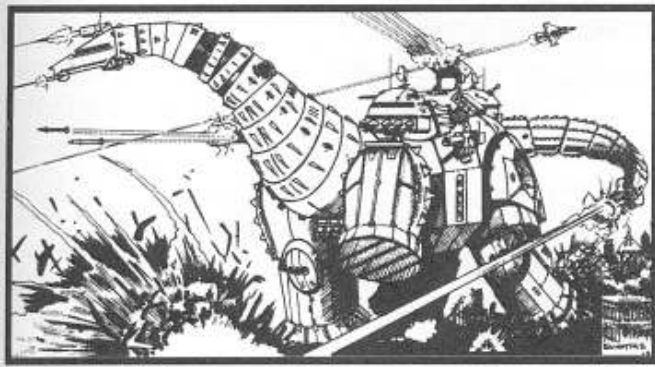


**Rating:** 12/20V/16

**Weapons:** ProjCan\*270-f, MslBat\*D\*180-sx2

The Khavaxx is a large mammal resembling a gigantic armored gopher. Supplemental armor plates and strap-on weapon systems makes this creature one of the most commonly used Dracan military bio vehicles. Khavaxx are remotely controlled by Draca commanders through the use of cerebral electrodes and direct communication with the Khavaxx's cortex.

## DRACA GURAK



**Rating:** 8/40V/20

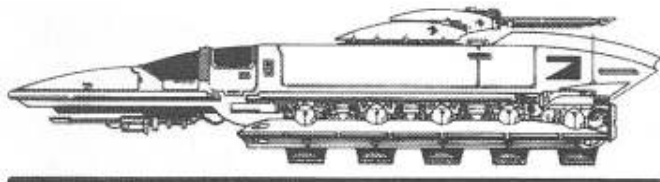
**Weapons:** ProjCan4\*270-f, PlasCan2\*180-rx2, MslBat\*D\*180-sx4, PulsCan\*360x2

The Draca's most potent bio vehicle, the Gurak is a huge, long-necked, quadruped saurian, resembling a brontosaurus. Armor plating protects the animal's body, while numerous weapon platforms sprout from its back and sides. A pulse cannon is mounted on the head, and the animal's snaky neck gives this weapon an unlimited field of fire, and a distinct height advantage (+1r to hit targets at ground level).

## ZIN-SHEE VEHICLES

The Zin-Shee favor speed and stealth over armor and sheer striking power. To this end, they have perfected grav- and hover-technology, and protect their lightly-armored vehicles with some of the most advanced shield technology known.

### ZIN-SHEE CUB-CLASS ARMORED TRANSPORT



Layout: 150

Crew: 2

**Rating:** 32/6V\*/16

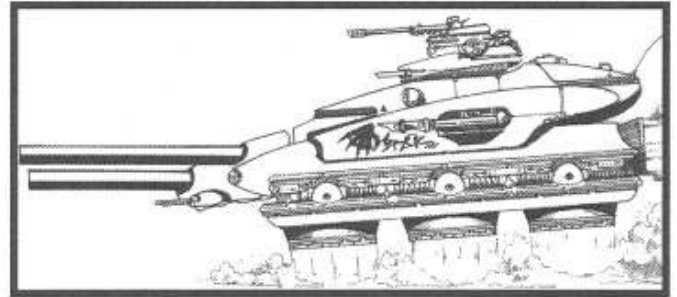
**Weapons:** TurboPlaz\*180-fx2(10HP)

**Command Systems:** CenComp, DrivSta  
Engineering Systems: VehEng\*H

**Standard Cargo:** One infantry squad, 1000 lbs. additional cargo

The ubiquitous *Cub* transport is found throughout Zin-Shee space. Light, fast and only minimally armed, the *Cub* is nonetheless well protected by advanced Zin-Shee shield technology. A *Cub* normally carries a squad of five Zin-Shee warriors and their equipment.

### ZIN-SHEE MOTHER-CLASS ARMORED FIGHTING VEHICLE



Layout: 200

Crew: 3

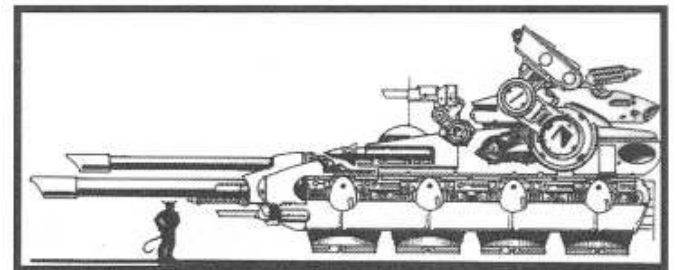
**Rating:** 20/16V\*/20

**Weapons:** BlastCan2\*360x2, BlastCan-fx2,  
TurboPlaz\*180-fx2(10HP), TurboPlaz\*180-r(10HP)

**Command Systems:** CenComp, CapSta, DrivSta, TacSta  
Engineering Systems: VehEng\*G

The Zin-Shee *Mother* tank is the most common military grav vehicle in the matriarchy. Like most Zin-Shee vehicles, the *Mother* is fast and lightly armored, and its weapons are generally inferior to its Guild or Empire equivalent. Speed and shield technology go a long way to making up for the deficiency, and *Mother* tanks have always held their own in battle, often beating vastly better-armed vehicles.

### ZIN-SHEE MATRIARCH-CLASS ARMORED FIGHTING VEHICLE



Layout: 250

Crew: 3

**Rating:** 16/32V\*/24

**Weapons:** BlastCan4\*360x2, BlastCan-fx2, TurboPlaz\*180-fx2(10HP)

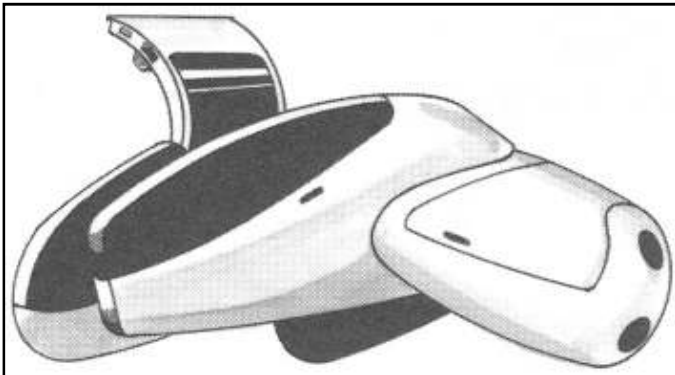
**Command Systems:** CenComp, CapSta, DrivSta, TacSta  
Engineering Systems: VehEng\*G

The *Matriarch* is the heaviest grav-tank of Zin-Shee manufacture (the Matriarchy also manufactures tracked vehicles, but these are mostly self-propelled artillery mounting ship-class weapons), and are deployed throughout the Matriarchy. Several of these vehicles have been purchased for use by the House of Dha, and are currently being modified to special Dha missions.

## SMALL VEHICLES

Hundreds of non-military vehicles types exist in Known Space, and listing even a fraction here would be pointless. The following give general descriptions of civilian vehicles and those likely to be used and encountered by adventurers in Known Space.

### SMALL VEHICLE - CIVILIAN GROUND CAR



Layout: 2  
Price: 5000  
Crew: 6

**Rating:** 24/16/8

This is the GuildSpace equivalent of the family car. Most are wheeled, although more expensive models are hover or grav-powered (8000 and 10,000 cr respectively). Most ground cars are unarmed.

### SMALL VEHICLE - HOVER TRANSPORT



Layout: 1  
Price: 15,000  
Crew: 2

**Rating:** 18/20/10

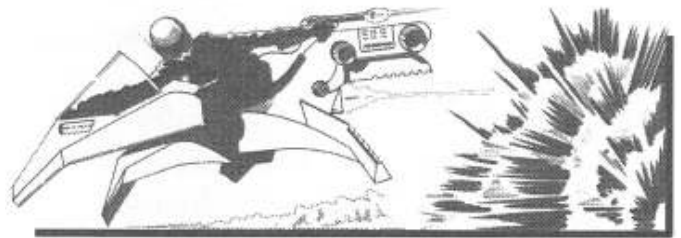
Most large-scale hauling on civilized world is carried out by huge flatbeds mounted on hover chassis.

These transports serve the same function as old world trucks. The cab section of a hover transport can be detached with ease and connected other flatbeds. The real hauling power is contained with the flatbed, not the cab. Thus, a simple two man cap can be connected up to a huge flatbed.

Flatbeds are often connected to each other with special AI (artificial intelligence) cables creating a long chain of beds. When towed, the AI cables make sure that each flatbed follows in the exact path of the previous bed. Thus, a flatbed chain could wind throughout a city for miles without danger.

The standard hover transport has no offensive capabilities.

### SMALL VEHICLE - HYPERBIKES



Layout: .5  
Price: 2500  
Crew: 1

**Rating:** 20/12/6

These small, personal grav-vehicles are standard equipment on most Dha transports.

The effect of hyperbikes is simply to improve an individual's MR rating, allowing anyone mounted on a hyperbike to move 20 vehicle squares per round.

All hyperbikes come with two external hard points and a built in targeting computer. However, weapons do not come with the hyper bike and must be purchased separately.

Some hyperbikes come with scientific equipment such as short-range scanners, sensors, or a small computer unit. These are in addition to the above price, however

# Stations Based Combat

This is an optional set of rules. Another approach to ship and vehicle combat. Each station will have a number of options that can be used. But these options require power and there is typically less power than station requests. With this method you get the fun of having players say, "More power to the shields" and meaning it.

During game play, each system or station should have a sheet with that system/station's options and capabilities including the power cost of each system option. Below are a number of examples. On vehicles and ships, it is important to design the system so that its high performance mode will utilize more power than the system will likely generate. This creates the very fun dynamic of requiring players to call for energy from engineering.

Stations will have a power capacity such as 8. At the beginning of each round, each station gets a power regain roll of DD. The regain roll is added to the system's remaining power with a maximum regain of up to the system's power capacity. Thus if the capacity were 8, the most power the system can store is 8.

If the station's ability requires more power than it has, the operator may always call for more energy from engineering. If the engines have enough power it may be routed to the station.

## **TURRET - DUAL BLASTER CANNON**

Power Points: 6

Atk is best of yours or ship's Atk

Dmg is Ship Dmg

2 - Normal fire

1 - 1 gun, damage is halved

6 - Super Charge barrel then fire - Dbl Dmg

3 - Super Charge over 2 rnds (so charge for 1 round before firing)

1 - Tracking computer on - gains +5 to Atk

2 - Tracking computer lock - gains +10 to Atk (once locked bonus is maintained until target destroyed or no longer a viable target)

## **FORWARD GUNS - PLASMA CANNON**

Power Points: 8

Atk is best of yours or ships Atk, or pilot skill

Dmg is Ship Dmg

- 4 - Normal fire which is ½ Atk and x2 Dmg

- 8 - Super Charge barrel then fire - x4 Dmg
- 4 - Super Charge over 2 rnds (so charge for 1 round before firing)
- 2 - Tracking computer on - gains +5 to Atk
- 4 - Tracking computer lock - gains +10 to Atk (once locked bonus is maintained until target destroyed or no longer a viable target)

## **SHIELDS**

Power Points 6

- 4 - Raise Shields
- 0 - Lower Shields
- 3 - Full Strength Shields
- 2 - ½ strength Shields
- 1 - ¼ strength Shields
- 6 - All power to the shields - doubles shields

## **TANSPORTER**

Power Points 6

- 1/2/3/4/5/6 - Transport 1/2/3/4/5/6 person within ship (to or from)
- 2/4/6 - Transport 1/2/3 persons to near orbit (or other ship) destination (to or from)
- 4 - Transport a person to any surface destination on planet
- 6 - SK must beat best of opponent Def, Ship Armor, or ECM - transport hostile here
- 4 - SK must beat ship Armor or ECM transport 1 person onto enemy vessel

## **DRIVE**

Power Points is 8

- 1 - Sublight at full MR
- 1 - More power to the engines adds d4 sq to MR
- 2 - More power to the engines adds d6 sq to MR
- 3 - Adds d8 sq to MR
- 4 - Adds d10 sq to MR
- 0 - ½ Defense for the round
- 1 - Normal Defense rolls for the round
- 3 - Double defense rolls for the round
- 1 - Thrusters (for maneuvering in space doc, etc.)
- 12 - Open Jump point (requires some extra energy)
- 1 - turn up to 90 degrees
- 3 - turn 180 degrees

## **ENGINEERING**

Rules

Any extra energy may be routed to any other system (Drive, Turret, etc.)

Can take Engines, Shields, or any gun system off line for an additional 1 point of Engineering power. Engines count as 2 points.

Power Points is 12

Roll two DD16 each round

- 1 - Auto Repair systems repairs d2 hull points
- 3 - Auto Repair systems repairs d4 hull points
- 1 - Life Support - otherwise everyone takes 1 pnt of Dmg the first round, then 2, 3, etc.
- 1 - Artificial gravity - or everyone floats around
- 1 - Inertial Dampers - or any turn of 90 degrees or better and any defense roll requires an Dex check or crash into wall/ceiling/floor for Dmg equal to ship's Atk rating

