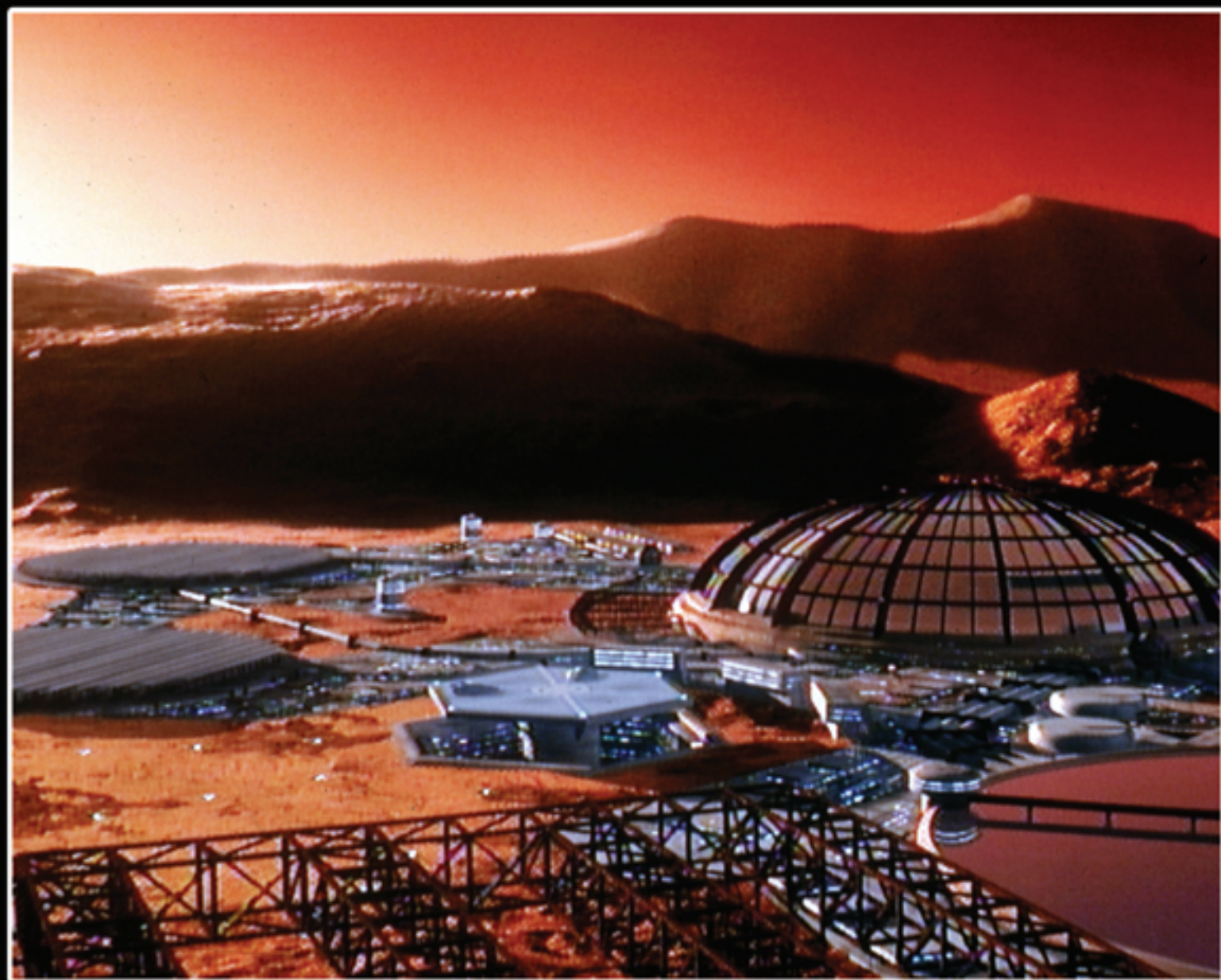


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The Earth Alliance Fact Book



Babylon 5 Created by J. Michael Straczynski

The Earth Alliance Fact Book

By
Bruce Graw

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Introduction

The Earth Alliance is one of the youngest spacefaring nations in the known Galaxy, yet they are also one of the largest and most influential. A hundred years ago, Humanity was on the verge of destroying itself in a global civil war when first contact was made with intelligent alien life. Since then, Man has spread throughout local space to occupy more than a dozen additional systems, fought and won two major wars and several smaller ones, and established diplomatic connections with virtually every race within a hundred light-years.

One of Humanity's primary assets is the overall adaptability and curiosity of its people. Humans love to explore, and the instant they got their hands on hyperspace technology, deep survey missions were being sent to every corner of the Galaxy. Humans also appreciate freedom, and eagerly flocked to new colony sites in search of new opportunities. A generally friendly race, they had little trouble meeting aliens and trading with them, in the process quickly advancing their level of technology up to a level where they could safely defend themselves from aggressive neighbours.

Humans are many things: diplomats, traders, farmers, designers, doctors, explorers, and much more. They are the ones who can do it all. Yet, despite their apparent friendliness and curiosity, they are a race fraught with internal problems. All too often their natural aggressiveness turns inward upon itself. Religious and ethnic groups are still at odds with each other despite centuries of alliance. Good-natured competition between nation-states and colonies all too often turns sour. The government, stable on the surface, internally struggles for control over increasingly independent-minded planets. Telepaths and mundanes remain constantly at odds, separated by genetics and decades of dichotomy. The human race may appear strong and confident from the outside, but internally, they are still struggling to find a measure of stability with themselves.

This book will detail the Earth Alliance in its entirety. From the homeworld of Earth to the colonies of Mars, Proxima, Orion, and more, every part of the Alliance can be found in these pages. Vehicles, weapons, equipment, characters, and more are examined in complete detail. The roleplaying possibilities are endless!

It had been a long day, Kanden thought as he nudged his Starfury into the docking cradle. Between raiders and VIP traffic making the patrol run around the station a nightmare, he was amazed one of his wingmen had not smashed themselves into space dust or ridden fire right into the afterlife. The universe had been smiling on his team, he had to admit. Four Starfuries left the Cobra bay this morning and now, six hours later, four were coming back. He was always worried when he went out that this run would be the one he punched out on, but he worried more about his fellow pilots. Some of them had families or people waiting for them to come back. He didn't. but then, that was life on the edge.

Just as he felt the massive mechanical arm secure around his fighter's harness point, BabCom flickered across his HUD with a priority message. 'Sorry, Zeta flight. We've got a Centauri noble leaving the station and he has pulled rank to get an escort all the way to the gate. It's a quick flight and the lane is clear, so do a spin and come back.' Before he could agree, complain, or just flat cuss at Command and Control, the contact broke off and the launch lights sounded all around his fury. With a heavy sigh, he relayed Commander Ivanova's words to the rest of the gang. There was all the grumbling he had wanted to do, but he cut them off after a deserved few seconds.

'Come on, flight. What do you think they pay us for?' he told his team and the bay lowered each of them into drop position. 'Besides, it's a cookie run. We'll be back in time for chow, and the beer's on me.' That quieted them down better than his orders ever could. The arms released and he sailed agains back into the black. The Centauri's ship was right where she should be, at the first marker waiting on her escort. With a thumbs up to Jen and the Manlin twins, he kicked on his thrusters and flew out to meet the sleek purple and gold cruiser.

Just as they surrounded the Centauri vessel in a standard flank and front pattern, the jumpgate in the distance flared like a dawning sun and spiralled open to disgorge an angular ship with a wide V-shaped fin on its dorsal side. She was coming in fast and if his readout was correct, her guns were hot. Even worse, she was bearing down straight at the ship behind him. He groaned, flipped on his uni-pulse pre-heats, and muttered, 'Some cookie run...' just as both cruisers opened fire.

History of the Earth Alliance

The middle years of the 21st Century saw a world in constant turmoil. Wars of varying intensity were commonplace, and terrorism became the primary tool for those nations or organizations not large enough to challenge their rivals through military force. The United Nations, which should have risen to the forefront of stability, proved not only unable to exert any influence, but to even determine what its own role should be. As a result, its power - if, indeed, it ever actually had any - was mostly ineffectual.

What the globe truly needed was a unifying force with the will to police the planet. Sadly, it took an event of truly world-shattering importance to finally bring about the necessary changes.

In 2080, growing tensions between India and Pakistan finally flared into war. While India possessed a higher population and greater resources than their smaller neighbour, the Pakistanis were better prepared and made significant advances during the opening clashes of the war. However, the front quickly stabilised and all hopes for a swift resolution began to wane, forcing both countries to call upon their allies for support. The United Nations once again proved unable to exert any influence of significance, and provided little more than a central location where diplomats could spout rhetoric and argue with each other.

At the end of the first year, no less than twelve different nations were involved in the hostilities in one form or another. Pakistan was at the forefront of a powerful trade alliance between many of the former Russian states that earned independence after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the late 20th Century. Without exception, these countries - Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tazikstan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, with the notable exception of Georgia - began to send troops and equipment into Pakistan to replace losses that nation's industry could not quickly construct. While individually their military power was limited, they proved quite effective when united. In response, India called upon its friends in Bangladesh and Nepal to join the fight, and began to put pressure on the Chinese to intervene.

China had no great desire to get involved in the conflict. Their economy was stretched to its limit with the task of supporting its nation's swollen population of over three billion citizens, many of whom were growing increasingly dissatisfied with their way of life. The vast majority of China's people were, effectively, peasants who watched from poverty while the rest of the world lived in ever-increasing health and comfort, particularly in the United States, European Union, and most infuriatingly, India. However, China's economy depended entirely upon trade with those very nations they looked upon with a jealous eye. Without the steady flow of outgoing goods that provided the foreign currency needed to support its internal expenses, China would quickly slip to the brink of collapse.

The United Nations urged China not to get involved, and indeed, the government in Beijing knew full well they could not afford it, but in the end several factors convinced them to fight. First and foremost, they could not let India lose, or the interruption of trade would weaken their economy to the point of no return. Secondly, the promise of victory would provide a morale boost to China's population, and allow for further suppression of dissenters among the citizenry - anyone who complained would be labelled a traitor and eliminated. Finally, a quick success in the conflict would give China the opportunity to seize some of the assets of the defeated enemy, as well as drain Pakistan's treasury to pay for any war reparations. In fact, if things went perfectly, China might even annex certain resource-rich areas of territory as spoils of war. The United Nations might complain, but what could they do?

To this end, China began pouring troops across the Pakistani border in early 2082. Pakistan had no chance to stop these advancing armies - if they pulled troops away from the Indian front, that line would shatter and all would be lost. In desperation, and indeed with no other choice available to them, Pakistani aircraft dropped three low-yield nuclear bombs atop the advancing Chinese spearheads, utterly annihilating them.

Reaction from the world was one of immediate outrage and panic. Global stock markets collapsed overnight as the threat of nuclear annihilation loomed. Fearing further strikes on Chinese territory, the government in Beijing ordered the launch of twelve nuclear missiles into Pakistan, but these never reached their targets. Instead, all of them mysteriously exploded at the highest point of their ballistic trajectory. A second strike also failed, as did a counterattack by Pakistan's few existing ballistic missiles.

Although long-range attacks were somehow rendered impotent, cruise missiles and tactical artillery shells were successfully exchanged, leaving the border between Pakistan and China a devastated wasteland. Limited nuke strikes also occurred within India itself, on or near the front lines, but both sides resisted the temptation to start destroying each other's cities.

Within the United Nations, the use of nuclear weapons by the warring powers was the object of heated debate. The Security Council produced a resolution condemning further use of such weapons, but this was summarily ignored. In response, the United States, Britain, and Russia unilaterally cut off all trade and financial support to the entire area. China's government collapsed within days, and its people exploded into a long-smouldering revolution. With no central command left to guide China's vast armies, each field commander took the opportunity to proceed as they felt necessary to suppress the revolt. The resulting civil war was incredibly bloody, and several parts of China broke into separate nations that would not be reunited for decades, or, in the case of Taiwan, over a century.

What remained of the Chinese military blamed the UN - and particularly Russia - for the disaster, which, for all intents and purposes, was probably inevitable anyway. The generals commanding China's remaining forces came together in mid-2082 and agreed, after examining intelligence reports gathered from dubious sources, that Russia had set the whole thing up as a prelude to invasion. Thus, in a move that totally surprised

nearly everyone, Chinese forces began streaming across the broad Russian border, capturing everything they could and destroying whatever they could not hold.

Once again intercontinental nuclear missiles were launched, but not a single one ever struck any target. It was at this point that the United States revealed a previously unknown array of automated global defence satellites capable of tracking and knocking down any ballistic missile within minutes of launch. This system, known as EarthShield, put the United Nations into an uproar. Every country, with the exception of Britain and Australia, argued bitterly. It was their contention that the use of such a system against active military forces was an act of war. America argued that had they not utilised EarthShield, most of Pakistan, India and China, if not the whole of Asia, would be a devastated zone of radioactive slag. In response, Russia and China withdrew from the United Nations, effectively causing that organization to cease to exist.

Over the course of the ensuing year, the ongoing war spread throughout Asia. Chinese armies rampaged through eastern Russia, but stalled as they approached Moscow. The winter of that year, heightened by nuclear-driven dust in the upper atmosphere, was one of the worst on record. Millions of Chinese and Russians died on the steppes. Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia all became involved in the fighting to one degree or another. The United States and European Union, suffering economically under the collapse of the world's stock markets, sent in troops to try to halt the fighting, but were fired upon by the very people they were trying to help. In the end, the military might of the two superpowers remained idle, waiting in offshore task forces or within neutral countries for the fighting to die down.

World War III, as it was now becoming known, did not officially end until 2084, although scattered fighting continued between India and Pakistan until the middle of 2085. Much of the region was devastated or entirely destroyed. The world markets gradually stabilised as China's armies retreated and resumed the goal of suppressing the revolution. Most of Pakistan's allies, their resources depleted by punishing Indian air strikes, pulled out of the war one by one. India eventually drove Pakistan back to its own border, but made no effort to advance further, fearing additional nuclear bombardment or, more likely, intervention by the United States, which was by then threatening to begin bombing both sides if the war did not come to an immediate halt. When all was said and done, very few borders changed, but over a dozen nations were left in ruins.

The world would never be the same.

Formation of the Earth Alliance

Very few people on the face of the Earth escaped World War III without some direct effect on their way of life. The nations involved in the fighting were but shadows of their former selves. Estimates suggested China alone lost well over a hundred million people during the bloody fighting, not to mention those who perished in the epidemics and starvation that followed,

or in the terrible winter of 2084. Over half of India's territory was a smoking ruin, as was a large swath of northern Pakistan. Inflation was rampant, with the value of the Euro and American dollar dropping by as much as fifty percent during the last three years of the war.

Worse still were the lingering bad feelings left by the intervention of American satellites in preventing the devastating nuclear exchange that would have likely swept India and Pakistan off the face of the planet. The Yanks, Brits and Aussies could only shake their heads as angry nations complained that the lack of a ballistic missile threat led directly to China's collapse and the subsequent invasion of Russia. Plus, the argument went on, the existence of such a system presented a direct threat to freedom the world over. After all, if a missile could be destroyed in flight, why not just about anything else? Could an orbiting laser not be turned upon an aircraft in flight, or a factory, or an entire city?

Things seemed bleak. Russia and China refused to rejoin the United Nations as long as the EarthShield satellites remained in place. In response, the United States argued that the day of the United Nations was over. That body had time and time again proven itself ineffective in its role. What was needed was nothing less than a unified global military both willing and able to do what was necessary to preserve peace. In a move that surprised everyone, including the American people, the United States government offered EarthShield - and the American military itself - as the core of what they called the Unified Earth Force. This was the very genesis of the combined arms establishment that would one day be known simply as EarthForce.

Under the broad and visionary - if overly ambitious - American plan, a new organisation would be created that would, at some distant point in the future, evolve into the first truly global government the world had ever seen. Obviously, this would not happen overnight, but over the course of many years, if not decades. No one was naïve enough to believe the world could be united swiftly, and many felt it would simply never happen at all. However, considering not only the present state of Asia, but also the economic effect the war had on the rest of the world, some argued that national economies were already so intertwined that a world government was already necessary to ensure effective management of resources and trade.

Initially, there was much resistance to the 'Unified Earth' proposal. Russia and China in particular insisted the United States was doing little more than uniting the world under its own banner. Few nations wanted to become just another star floating with hundreds of others above the red-and-white stripes that lined the Yankee flag. Many of these countries insisted that the threat of the EarthShield weaponry was a hammer waiting to descend upon them should they refuse to join the proposed alliance.

However, not everyone was so eager to complain. Britain and most of Europe readily backed the plan, immediately grasping the benefits of open trade and unified defence. Many of the poorer nations, such as those in Africa and South America, also agreed, primarily as a means to aid their own economies, which had fallen along with the world markets during the war.

Throughout the late 1980s, the Unified Earth Alliance gradually took shape and became known as simply the Earth Alliance. In 1987, the organisation was officially formed at a special conference in Geneva, Switzerland, later to become the official Alliance capital. All of North and South America, most of Europe and Africa, Israel, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, and a smattering of minor Asian and Pacific Rim nations were initial signers of the Alliance charter. Notable holdouts included Russia, China, India, Pakistan, France, Egypt, Libya, North Korea, Vietnam, and the whole of the Middle East except Israel.

All nations were invited to join, and - for the moment - no sanctions were put forth against those who remained independent. As time passed, the Earth Alliance quickly grew in power and influence. The borders between its member nations began to blur as they took on the aspect of states within a confederation instead of independent countries. A single currency, the 'credit,' was created in 1995, sending dollars, pounds, euros, and the like by the wayside.

Although the individual nations would continue to retain their own standing armies for decades, the core of EarthForce was formed in 1991 and grew steadily thereafter. This multinational force standardised on English as its primary language and operated equipment primarily provided by the United States and European Union. As trust continued to build, member nations began to share secrets with each other, resulting in a significant burst of technological advancement. New and cheaper ways to reach and explore space were discovered and put to use, resulting in the creations of permanent space stations and bases on the Moon and, later, Mars. These provided stepping-stones to the outer planets and resource-rich asteroids, and the promulgation of jobs and industry created a kind of Golden Age within those nations that made up the Earth Alliance.

The World Unites

From outside the increasingly affluent Alliance, the holdout nations looked on with growing disdain, jealousy, and greed. Resisting this growing power became more and more difficult. For some countries, like Russia and China, staying out of the Earth Alliance was a matter of national pride. For others, such as North Korea and France, it was their strong independent nature. Still other nations, including India, Pakistan and the Middle East, felt the organisation was too firmly rooted in Christianity to join. Most of these countries continued to remain apart from the Alliance through much of the 1990s, although Egypt and Libya entered the fold in 1993, and an increasingly isolated France finally gave in on January 1, 1996.

Each of these countries was welcomed with open arms, and although the first couple of years were difficult while integration proceeded, they soon began to enjoy the same prosperity as the rest of the Earth Alliance. Seeing this, a number of smaller holdouts joined as the century came to a close, with only China, Russia, India, Pakistan, the nations of the Middle East remaining outside the envelope. In an attempt to resist what they saw as an increasing threat of annexation, Saudi Arabia attempted to organise its Muslim neighbours into the League of Palestinian Nations, but could not convince the others to

accept any form of unified government that would result in the slightest reduction in sovereignty. A similar attempt by Russia to produce an alliance with the Asian holdouts failed utterly due to long-standing antipathies between all four nations.

In response to these unification attempts, the Alliance began to put pressure on the remaining countries to get their heads out of the sand and finally become part of the world community. Many within the Alliance saw these holdouts as a significant threat to world peace. A rearmed India and Pakistan were beginning to hiss at each other again, while Russia and China had turned their own border into a thousand miles of razor wire, mines, and gun emplacements waiting to fire at the slightest provocation. Worse still, the Middle East was fully involved in a terror campaign designed to undermine the Alliance and break up its members, particularly their ancient foe Israel.

Unlike the United Nations, however, the Earth Alliance had the power to enforce its will and the willingness to use that power. At first it began to influence the holdout countries by the skilful use of propaganda. Russia was seen by Alliance leaders as the key to all the others, so a campaign began to sway the Russian government and people to join the EA of their own accord. The benefits of membership were extolled in public displays and on-air broadcast advertising, focusing primarily on the economic advantages of unlimited trade with Europe and America. Even more important, though, was the promise of defence against the Chinese threat. No longer would Russia be required to hold the border on their own - should China invade, the entire Earth Alliance would come to their aid.

In the end, Russia swallowed its pride and agreed to join the Earth Alliance at the start of 2101. As soon as that announcement was made, China - convinced that Russia would rearm with Earth Alliance technology and then crush their longtime rivals once and for all - chose to jump the gun and launched an immediate invasion. The Alliance responded by declaring Russia a protected state and opened fire with advanced satellite weaponry, long-range aircraft, and other assets of a technological level well beyond anything the Chinese could deploy. The war lasted only five days before the devastated Chinese armies retreated. However, when Russia pressed to counterattack, the Alliance ordered them to stand down their forces, which they did immediately.

Shortly after the Five-Day War, China's government underwent a dramatic change. Virtually overnight, they began to put out feelers to the Alliance. The sting of their defeat was replaced with a burning desire not to let their Russian enemies enter into any arrangement that left the proud Chinese on the outside looking in. Ultimately, both Russia and China officially joined the Alliance simultaneously on the first of January 2101, although they continued to guard their mutual border for years afterward, and neither truly trusted each other for decades. Pakistan and India also took the hint and joined simultaneously, surprisingly without conflict, in 2102.

The Middle East proved a more difficult nut to crack. Each country there had become a sort of island unto itself, and each operated terrorists against nearly every country in the Alliance. The problem finally came to a head when a small nuclear

weapon was employed against Israel in 2105. The explosion was traced to a terrorist organisation operating out of Iran.

The Earth Alliance was outraged. Something had to be done, but the outright use of military force was deemed unacceptable. The Alliance did not feel that using force against Iran would solve the problem, only exacerbate it, as occurred during the War on Terrorism a century earlier. Instead, they responded by sealing off the entire Middle East from the rest of the world, isolating them as no other nations had ever been isolated before. All land routes were closed, and all sea lanes were patrolled by a military blockade. Ships leaving the harbours were captured and interned with minimal use of force, while any citizens caught were simply returned to their home countries.

Initially, terrorism continued unabated, but over time the Alliance finally managed to put an end to the threat. The trapped countries responded as if they were under siege, occasionally running suicide bombers out to attack guards, or firing missiles and artillery at their neighbours. The Alliance responded by gradually destroying anything that could be used as a weapon. Even this would not be enough to convince the besieged nations, so with no other options available, the Alliance decided to invade each country in turn. As Earth Alliance forces crossed the border, the greater portion of the people flocked to them as liberators, happy to be rid of their oppressive leaders. The era of independent nations had finally come to an end, and while it didn't happen the way the Alliance founders hoped it would, Earth was at last unified under a single government.

Expansion Into Space

Although all seemed to be going well for Earth, this was not entirely the case. Not every nation appreciated the way the Alliance conducted its affairs. The old nationalities were difficult to forget, after all. For every decision made that benefited one area or region, someone else felt slighted, or grew jealous of someone else's perceived prosperity.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in the Alliance's early forays into space. The United States and European Union had pursued space programs long before the formation of the Earth Alliance, and thus were naturally far ahead of all other countries. The Russian and Chinese programs were woefully behind following World War III, while no one else had the technology base to put anything significant into orbit. Worse still, the Alliance made a far-sighted error in continuing to operate their space exploration efforts from within America and Europe instead of expanding into other nation-states. As a result, the work performed in colonising the Moon and Mars became seen as a matter of American and European pride instead of something the entire Earth Alliance could share.

As the Alliance moved gradually into space, civilian investments naturally followed. Eventually, companies and wealthy individuals began to expand to the asteroids and outer planets, looking for mining opportunities. The solar system proved to be a vast storehouse of wealth just waiting to be tapped, but only those with the proper technological backing could get to them. Eventually, some of the less scrupulous

nations, as well as certain organisations just beginning to grow in power, discovered it was cheaper and easier to seize the profits of others instead of earning them honestly. This was the origin of the very first raiders, who began by lurking near established shipping lanes, but eventually moved on to scouring the asteroids and terrorising any honest miner they encountered.

In response to this, the ever-growing population of corporate miners demanded action. While some of these 'raiders' were independent, the vast majority were funded and backed by greedy nations or those who felt slighted by the greater influence of America and Europe. Unwilling to risk enraging those states by direct action, and lacking any sort of non-orbital space-based military funding, the Earth Alliance sat idly by and did nothing while the raiders grew in power.

Frustrated, the miners - now referring to themselves as 'belters' despite the fact that not all of them operated in the traditional Martian-Jovian asteroid belt - began arming their ships and fighting back. This resulted in an arms race and the development of the first organised raider bands. To counter this, the miners created the Belt Alliance, a group of like-minded beltters dedicated to defending its members against piracy in all forms. By the mid-2120s, this new organisation became quite formal, requiring membership by all beltters and operating under a code of honour that required all miners to answer distress calls from fellow prospectors. The old tradition of staking a claim and then earning all the wealth that strike offered was discarded in favour of a group-sharing program with bonuses for those who worked harder and found new opportunities.

In many ways, the Belt Alliance became a union that shared its profits and provided for its own defence. It was on its way to becoming the first privately owned military force in space, even going so far as to construct its own fighters. These simple, one-man craft, the precursor to what would one day become the hardy and inexpensive Delta-V, were attached externally to belter ships where they could quickly be deployed against any raider vessel that threatened them. In response, of course, the raiders quickly developed or bought fighters of their own, and soon both sides escalated to attack vessels and warships.

The Belt Alliance, often referred to as the 'BA,' is a product of the same stresses that created EarthForce. The two organisations are often thought of as half-brothers, although in fact, one has a strictly military purpose while the other does not. Where EarthForce is concerned with defending the Earth Alliance and all its interests, the Belt Alliance exists solely as a means to support civilian and corporate shipping.

Indeed, the Belt Alliance had its very origins in the corporate sphere. Once the asteroid belt was opened up to civilian prospectors in the early 2100s, various rival corporations sent teams out to secure the largest and most valuable asteroids - Ceres, Vesta, Pallas, Juno, and many others discovered centuries before by telescopes. Some of these huge rocks were as much a kilometre across, though most were far smaller. Once a suitable target was claimed, the corporation set up a mining outpost, using Martian industrial colonies as a base of operations - and as clients.

While most of the larger asteroids were quickly taken by corporations, thousands of smaller ones remained, and not just in the belt between Mars and Jupiter. The solar system literally swarms with chunks of debris and cometary material left over from countless millennia ago, and it was this that independent belters sought out with abandon. Many of these early prospectors became quite wealthy, and in much the same way as the gold rush of the 1840s drew hordes of miners to California, the outer solar system was soon inundated by would-be belters. Sadly, as the number of viable asteroids rapidly declined and the possibility of instant wealth dwindled to a memory, many of these poverty-stricken prospectors turned to piracy.

The Belt Alliance originated as a consortium of private companies who agreed to share resources and arm their ships against the growing organisation of raiders in the outer system. As raiders became more and more sophisticated and the size of their cartels grew, the Belt Alliance stepped up its own development, eventually expanding to the point where it achieved independence from any one group of corporations. By now it was more like a union, using dues and membership fees to finance the addition of weapons to otherwise unarmed freighters and mining craft. In addition, mercenary pilots rushed to join the newly created fighter corps, eager to see action and make a name for themselves.

By 2126, the Belt Alliance was large and strong enough to apply for legal corporate status, which was granted. Now legalised and legitimate, they attracted tremendous business to themselves and to Mars, where factories now turned out space fighters by the dozens. Even this, though, was unable to stem the tide of raider activity, which threatened to expand out of control. What few knew was that many of the companies on Mars that produced and sold arms for belter use were simultaneously arming raiders on the side, turning a tidy profit by acting as middlemen for both. They were, in fact, putting on their own war, all in the name of money.

Sadly, this fact did not come to light for many years. In the meantime, incidents began to mount, and raiders became bolder. In 2129 they attacked and seriously damaged a large mining station on Ceres, killing half the workers there and making off with almost six months' worth of processed ore. Early in 2130, a veritable horde of raiders descended upon a well-defended corporate outpost near Saturn's moon Triton, resulting in the first serious space battle in the history of the solar system. Although the raiders were defeated, the loss of life was tremendous.

Other incidents occurred, and while few were nearly as spectacular, the media on Earth and Mars turned them into spectacles. Vids of floating debris following raider attacks, especially those with flash-frozen corpses among the wreckage, were particularly enticing. A groundswell of public opinion encouraged the Earth Alliance to create EarthForce to help police the system and drive out the raiders. Initial encounters between Earth and belter forces were less than auspicious, but soon the Belt Alliance learned to just keep out of EarthForce's way. The power of the pirates was soon broken, and once the major cartels were defeated, EarthForce began to root out their suppliers. The trail led back to Mars, but of course by then most of the profiteers had departed with their ill-gotten gains.

Nonetheless, the aggressive search methods employed by Earth Alliance operatives left a bad taste in the mouths of more than a few Martian colonists.

The aftermath of the 'Raider War' left the solar system with two separate, independent military forces not tied to each other in any way. This was a significant problem for the emerging EarthForce, which did not have the power to forcefully cease Belt Alliance operations, and certainly did not want to endanger public opinion by attacking peaceful miners who wished only to defend themselves. In the end, the Belt Alliance was permitted to remain in existence, although legislation was passed limiting the strength of their weapons and the size of their ships, ensuring that they could never reach any level of true military power.

The Belt Alliance accepted this with good form, exchanging their responsibility to defend huge areas of space with EarthForce and concentrating strictly on convoys and specific mining facilities. Now a civilian police force, they remained stable for decades and likely would have eventually become a footnote in history were it not for the arrival of the Centauri in the 2250s. When that wondrous event occurred, it opened up the galaxy to human exploration. Soon the corporations were financing survey trips outside the solar system, and naturally they wanted to hire Belt Alliance escorts to keep them safe.

New ships and fighters were developed for interstellar use, and as Earth moved out into the galaxy, the Belt Alliance quietly came along for the ride. Because of the expense involved in locating a new mining site, securing it, and conducting mining operations, many corporations chose to hire the Belt Alliance for all those duties, not just defence. Soon, Belt Alliance mining stations were operating on dozens of worlds, all while continuing to contract out escorts and carriers to other merchant shippers, even their own competition. However, the Belt Alliance's leaders took great care to keep their company's reputation spotless, refusing to conduct anything that could be even remotely construed as raiding or piracy.

Soon other races learned of the Belt Alliance and began to hire them for escort work into or near Earth space. The Belt Alliance accepted these jobs so long as they did not come into conflict with EarthForce - clearly, it would not do to ship into enemy space during wartime, for example. Again, the leadership of the Belt Alliance went out of their way to ensure they operated wholly within the domain of their own charter, thereby ensuring good relations with Earth and the highest possible profit margin at all times.

In addition to working with alien races, the Belt Alliance soon began to hire alien citizens as well. Soon, Drazi, Brakiri, Narns, Centauri, Pak'ma'ra, and others could be found within the ranks of the Belt Alliance, usually operating on cargo runs or escort duty within their own territory. This, as much as diplomatic efforts, went a long way towards establishing humanity as one of the newer and friendlier powers within the galaxy.

The Belt Alliance attempted to stay out of the combat zones during the Dilgar War, although some ships were lost in territory the Dilgar invaded without warning. After those initial attacks, the Belt Alliance ceased shipping anything remotely resembling

weapons, but when the Dilgar didn't stop ambushing their freighters and slaughtering their escorts, the Alliance pulled back all its forces from the affected areas. The logistics of the war itself were for the most part handled by EarthForce military transports, although some Belt Alliance units took part late in the war and in the months that followed.

In the years after the Invasion, Belt Alliance vessels were highly active in rebuilding the logistics network linking the League together. While this effort was greatly appreciated by most of the affected worlds, some Vree guilds felt the Belt Alliance was hurting their profits and took action. Fighting was common for several years, but ceased once the belters convinced EarthDome to file a formal protest with the Vree government. After that, battles dropped off and were eventually dismissed as the actions of a few rogue mercenaries who happened to be flying Vree ships. Nonetheless, the Belt Alliance remains distrustful of the Vree even today.

The Earth/Minbari War was where the Belt Alliance truly proved its worth. Although the belters did not fight directly, except at the Battle of the Line, they were instrumental in rescuing thousands of refugees from doomed outposts and colonies. In addition, decades of experience with hyperspace travel in the region permitted the Belt Alliance to lead civilian transport ships away from pursuit down hyperspace paths the Minbari had yet to discover. In addition to these invaluable missions, armed Belt Alliance craft put themselves in harm's way on numerous occasions to ensure the survival of countless others, sacrificing their own crews in some of the most heroic acts to ever grace the spaceways. Even at the end, when Earth appeared doomed, the belters did not scatter to the stars, but stood firm with EarthForce and died by the thousands.

Despite these acts of selfless heroism, few belters were given the credit they deserved after the War. In public announcements explaining the surrender, EarthForce frequently remarked on the desperate heroism shown by its own members, but almost never mentioned the Belt Alliance. This left a bitter aftertaste in the mouths of the belter leadership, who responded by relocating their home base to the Proxima system following the war. Many belters believe that Earth's growing tendency towards 'terra-centrism,' and the constant treatment of colonists as second-class citizens, can only lead to trouble in the future.

While all this was going on, the Earth Alliance watched with growing concern. They simply could not sit idly by while open war progressed outside the atmospheres of Earth and Mars. The time had come to project their influence beyond the planets they protected. Even those nations who originally supported the raiders agreed to cooperate, for the pirates they funded were growing more and more powerful with each passing day.

The Unified Earth Force, until now concerned entirely with defence of Earth and its outposts, began to construct its first space navy. Known by the shortened name EarthForce, this unified military arm began operations in 2131 by patrolling the larger asteroids and the moons of Jupiter. Early on, some belters, not quite trusting the new peacekeepers, or simply mistaking them for approaching raiders, opened fire on EarthForce vessels. Ultimately, after a brief period of mistrust

and doubt, the Belt Alliance simply went back to business, happy to have someone else around to shoot down the pirates.

Although EarthForce was eventually accepted and even welcomed amidst the outer planets, the Belt Alliance did not simply disarm. EarthForce police ships and fighters could not be everywhere, after all. However, the Earth Alliance could not simply allow another military force - even one as decentralised as the Belt Alliance - to exist. Such a force might eventually challenge their sovereignty. In the end, a treaty was signed prohibiting the Belt Alliance from operating anything other than light fighters and small escort craft, in exchange for greater numbers of police vessels and established military outposts where belters could retreat if attacked.

In the end, EarthForce rooted out and destroyed most of the pirate organisations currently in place in the solar system. Some did survive, primarily by becoming nomads and operating in concert with turncoat belters who sold transit schedules on the side. Still, for the most part, peace was achieved, and a period of rapid expansion began. Yet, despite this seeming prosperity, the core of the Earth Alliance seethed with discord.

First Contact

As the decades passed, many of the promises of the Earth Alliance charter failed to appear. Nations that were poor remained, for the most part, poor. While the quality of life did improve significantly in those regions, it did not advance nearly as swiftly as in locations such as North America and Europe. This created a growing disparity in regions like South America, Africa, and much of Asia, who began to rumble about seceding from the Alliance.

In addition to this, those nations who joined by force or threat of force were not unilaterally accepted into the Alliance. The distrust and bad feelings did not fade as they had when the first round of holdouts, such as France, entered the union. India and Pakistan steadfastly refused to accept any orders to disband their militaries and, in fact, built them up at a rapid clip using funds that were supposed to go towards humanitarian aid and infrastructure. Similarly, China and Russia took the influx of Alliance technology and secretly built larger and more effective armed forces, including many outlawed weapons of mass destruction. These weapons included ground-based anti-satellite systems capable of tracking and knocking out the EarthShield defence network, theoretically providing a first-strike capability over their rival but, in fact, merely ensuring mutual destruction should war come to pass.

For a while, it did seem like war was inevitable. China's population remained among the poorest in the world and blamed the Alliance for all its problems. Russia continually chafed at the way their scientific and technological programs were hamstrung by deployment restrictions. The fact that they were using those very advancements to build up their military in direct violation of the Alliance charter did not stop either from protesting or the continuation of the illegal activities.

In addition to the difficulties with the larger nations, many smaller ones felt they were even worse off. The countries that

were forced to join against their will - in particular those that made up the Palestinian states - were particularly incensed by the way they were being treated. Underground leaders continued to operate terrorist cells throughout the world, surviving despite all attempts by security forces to eliminate them. One of these finally succeeded in doing the one thing the Earth Alliance feared most. They acquired a nuclear bomb, and used it in 2150 to destroy San Diego.

The response was immediate. The government declared the equivalent of martial law until those responsible were caught, significantly reducing freedoms worldwide. Although the terrorists responsible for the devastation on America's west coast were eventually caught, and most restrictions lifted, many people felt the Alliance acted too strongly. Some believed the leaders at EarthDome had too much power and that the Earth Alliance's influence had to be curtailed. Rumbblings of rebellion began to appear across the globe, even in places where such things would have been unconscionable a few decades earlier.

By the mid-2150s, Russia and China each had a military strength in excess of the Earth Alliance itself, and both sides were operating their own space forces as well. China secretly signed deals with Korea and India to aid them in any coming conflict, and in response, Russia and Pakistan formed their own alliance. Paramilitary groups began to form throughout the region on one side or the other, with the Middle Eastern nations joining in wherever possible. South America and Africa continued to threaten secession, and the Earth Alliance teetered on the brink of total collapse.

As the world prepared for the end, something unexpected happened. A Centauri survey vessel dropped out of hyperspace near Jupiter and made first contact with the human race. Within days the Centauri ship was in orbit of Earth, undergoing peaceful trade negotiations with the leaders of the Earth Alliance. Threats of war and secession vanished overnight as humanity learned it was no longer alone in the Universe.

For the average citizen, the arrival of peaceful aliens was a time of rejoicing. Suddenly all the petty fears and bickering among Earth's people became a thing of the past. Humanity was no longer trapped on a single habitable world amongst a few useless rocks that made up the rest of the solar system. Now, the entire Galaxy was open for exploration.

For the more pragmatic among the Alliance, the appearance of a seemingly benevolent race of aliens, possessing far more advanced technology and apparently occupying a very large empire, was met with suspicion and outright fear. The single survey vessel in orbit might have been capable of wiping out most, if not all, of EarthForce's naval capabilities on its own, and it was not even a warship. A small fleet could easily bring humanity to its knees, turning Earth into a slave state of the Centauri Republic.

In fact, had the Centauri discovered Earth a hundred years earlier, such a conquest might well have been the result. Fortunately for humanity, the Republic was now too busy with its own affairs and internal bickering to worry about territorial conquest. In fact, they had already undergone several decades of compaction in which former slave planets broke away and

declared independence. The last thing the Centauri needed was to antagonize another sentient race and send it running into the hands of its enemies.

Thus, while Earth's leaders declared and solidified their friendship and trade relations with the Centauri - even enduring, with good humour, a laughable attempt by Republic ambassadors to claim Earth as a lost colony - they secretly began working on a crash program to advance the technological base of the Alliance. All differences between the member nations were forgotten under the sudden, and very real, threat of domination from a much stronger outside power. Fear of the Centauri - and other races Earth was just beginning to become aware of - coupled with an almost instinctive desire to join and prosper within the newly discovered Galactic arena unified Earth as nothing else ever could.

Early Exploration

Although the Centauri survey ship claimed to represent the Republic as a whole, in fact they were little more than a splinter group of profiteers flying the flag of House Jaddo. Totally uninterested in conquest, they saw Earth simply as a means to increase revenues for themselves - not the Republic - through foreign trade. Since the naïve Terrans knew nothing about the Galaxy, House Jaddo took it upon itself to instruct its new 'partner' in the ways and means of interstellar relations. The Earth representatives sent on these first diplomatic missions to the stars smiled and nodded as the Centauri of House Jaddo extolled their virtues and pointed out the failures of their rivals among the many other races that seemed scattered throughout nearby space. Publicly, the Earthers pretended to eat this up, while in fact, they gathered information with a remarkable level of impartiality and returned to deliver their reports to the intelligence-starved government in Geneva.

From these early missions, the Earth Alliance discovered several facts. First, there were dozens of alien races out there. Second, none were particularly close to Earth. Third, most of the star nations were so bogged down with their own problems that they had no reason to bother with conquering a measly little backwater like Earth. And, finally, should that attitude change in the near future, EarthForce would have no chance of defending the homeworld from enslavement or destruction.

After a brief period of debate, Earth's leaders met in secret session and decided upon a course of action designed to bring the fledgling Alliance into a position of strength in the least amount of time. Because of Earth's distance from most of the stronger alien races, and the fact that even the once-mighty Centauri Republic had managed to miss finding them for centuries, the Alliance felt it had a window of opportunity to carve out a foothold in the region before someone stronger came along to seize that territory for themselves. This goal was extremely long-term, and Earth's leaders knew it would take decades to achieve, but they had little choice. Unless they expanded quickly and built up their military, they would be at the mercy of a greater power.

Turning the Earth Alliance from a single system into a Galactic empire required more than just a lofty ideal and a far-sighted

goal. It required a plan, a plan eventually referred to as the Aegis Program. Aegis was described on paper as a means to 'protect humanity from any threat,' but was, in fact, nothing less than a blueprint for expansion and rapid growth. The leaders in Geneva decided that three R's were needed: Reconnaissance, Relations, and Resources. And they were needed *now*.

To accomplish the first goal, EarthForce formed the Deep Space Exploration Command. The first mission of this auspicious organisation would be the generation and verification of a comprehensive map of nearby space. The DSE Command began by collecting information from Centauri databases and verifying this with trips to as many systems as possible. When the Centauri finished constructing a jumpgate in Earth orbit in 2159, Earth wasted little time in dispatching their first generation of extra-solar spacecraft to learn the tricks of navigating hyperspace and following beacons to established gates without the aid of the Centauri. To the surprise of these early explorers, many of the systems they encountered were unexploited, simply acting as transfer points for Republic exploration ships as they searched for established races with whom to establish relations. Several viable planets were located and earmarked for future colonisation, including Earth's closest neighbour, Proxima Centauri.

The second key R, relations, was given to a team of diplomats referred to as the First Contact Committee. This group began by signing a treaty with the Centauri - actually just House Jaddo, but that was enough for the moment - and initiating the flow of trade goods. From this beginning, Earth started to reach out to those nearby races who also traded with House Jaddo. Lacking any ships capable of visiting these distant nations, the First Contact Committee initially leased space on Centauri vessels, and soon after purchased a pair of smaller craft outright, in order to reach whomever they could. Rather than trust a Centauri interpreter, the cautious Alliance diplomats learned languages on their own prior to departure, ensuring that no possible misunderstandings could result. In this way, Earth made peaceful contact with a dozen nearby races during the early 2160s, including the Markab, Vree, Deneth, Mentabans, and even the more distant Brakiri and Drazi. However, they did not meet several others, who were either unknown to the Centauri or not on speaking terms with them. These included the Ch'Lonas, Koulani, Torata, Kor-Lyans, Yolu, and, regrettably, the Minbari Federation.

The final requirement, that of resources, was not so much assigned to any part of the Alliance as it was opened up to whomever wished to exploit it. In much the same way as the Americans opened up their West to anyone who could stake a claim and develop the land, the Earth Alliance opened up nearby space to whatever corporation could locate and secure the resources it offered. In addition, huge bonuses and payoffs were given to those with the wherewithal to acquire technology from whatever source presented itself. Hundreds of private companies sprang up overnight and rushed out into space in the mad hunt for profits, while behind it all the Belt Alliance initiated a steady expansion of its own. It was the Belt Alliance that would quietly form the backbone on which the Earth Alliance was built.

Growth and Challenges

The decade of the 2160s provided huge benefits to the fledgling Aegis Program. The habitable third planet of the Proxima Centauri system became Earth's first extra-solar colony, and thousands of eager settlers flowed forth from Earth looking for a new start. Other nearby systems, such as Orion, Ceti Gamma, and Beta 7, were claimed and occupied by rival corporations, and farther out, new outposts were constructed in places like Beta Durani, Deneb, Cyrus, Jericho, Vega, and Sinzar.

The Earth Alliance purchased jumpgate technology from the Centauri in 2161, and EarthForce quickly engineered its own jump-capable exploration craft. The original Oracle hull, the EAS *Argo*, set out on its maiden voyage in 2163 and established many of the earliest traditions of the Deep Space Exploration Command. In addition to locating potential colonies at Vega, New London, and Altair, the EAS *Argo* and those ships that followed her met with new races like the Kor-Lyans, Torata, and Cascor, plus mapped dangerous regions of hyperspace that precluded further study. One unfortunate side effect of this was a cessation of further exploration spinward, near the edge of the Galactic arm, due to treacherous regions of hyperspace in that area. Had Earth vessels proceeded in that direction, they might have met the Minbari under less aggressive circumstances.

While all of this was going on, EarthForce undertook a crash course in the development of an interstellar space navy. Using components bought from the Centauri and other races, technologies found on distant worlds, and information gathered from other means, Earth's military began to rapidly grow in power. A major element of this growth was the Starfury program, designed to develop Earth's first non-atmospheric fighter intended solely for interstellar use. Cheap Delta-class fighters, still in use by the Belt Alliance, could operate easily from carriers or ground bases, but these craft were adequate only for a short-range role and could not hope to stand up to a real starfighter. In 2168, the Starfury program bore fruit in the form of the Aries heavy fighter, though most people simply referred to the new design simply as a Starfury. This tradition would continue throughout the project's still-ongoing lifetime.

In addition to this capable fighter, the Alliance also deployed its first real interstellar task force in 2168. Charged with defending the Proxima colony and Earth's growing network of outposts, this group included the Epimetheus-class command ship - the first Terran combat vessel capable of initiating its own jump vortex - as well as early versions of the Hermes courier, Artemis frigate, Orestes dreadnought (later monitor), and Tethys frigate. All these vessels were slow and clunky, with weak thrusters and inadequate engines for their missions, but they were literally all Earth had to offer. Their weapons, however, were far more impressive for such a youthful race, including plasma cannons, particle weapons, missile racks, and blast cannons purchased or otherwise acquired from the Centauri and neighbouring races. The first Alliance ships did not look like much when manoeuvring, but at close ranges they really packed a wallop.

Their operational deployment also came at just the right time. The rapidly growing corporations, eager to make a buck wherever possible, were beginning to infringe upon the territory of neighbouring races, and not all of them appreciated the upstart Earthers and their expansionistic attitude. While some lodged formal protests with the Alliance over these gung-ho surveyors, a few reacted more aggressively. The first of these was the Koulani Directorate.

The Koulani occupied only a single system, but it was directly in the path of Earth's access to the Tokati, a friendly race looking to establish a viable trade route. The Koulani made no attempt to diplomatically protest the construction of such a route, but instead attacked Earth's outpost at Deneb (then known as the Signet Station) with a cruiser group in April 2169. In this historic first meeting of EarthForce units against an alien foe, the Epimetheus cruiser EAS *Asia* was heavily damaged and the outpost itself destroyed. While the hardy Aries fighters fought valiantly to delay the Koulani, the *Asia* and a fleet of shuttles managed to rescue a quarter of the station's crew before the base finally broke apart under concentrated enemy fire. Earth was forced to abandon the system, and the Koulani deactivated the jump beacon without delay.

In the time it took the Alliance to bring another jump-capable cruiser into the region, Earth's diplomatic corps managed to defuse the dangerous situation. With only a few dozen ships in the region, most of these light frigates and police craft, Earth was in no position to fight the technologically superior Koulani. Since all the Koulani wanted was to be left in peace, and the active Signet beacon was a threat to that peace, the solution was simply to not reactivate said beacon. This left the Koulani satisfied, and a nervous EarthForce backed cautiously away from its first interstellar conflict.

Many lessons were learned from the incident. The Aries fighters had been particularly successful, but were deployed in too few numbers to turn the battle. The EAS *Asia* was so badly damaged that it had to be decommissioned, but was quickly replaced by the new Beta model of the Epimetheus class, which operated a more powerful suite of weapons and the prototype of Earth's first interceptor weapons. Interceptors, developed through technology located by the IPX Corporation during a survey of a long-abandoned alien outpost, was another high point in the Aegis Program and was one of the primary advances made to Earth's navy during the period. Interceptors were the first weapon capable of dramatically increasing the defensive firepower of naval vessels, and were instrumental in freeing up fighters from the traditional escort role to intercept and strike missions.

However, perhaps the most important lesson learned was that a quiet neighbour can be a dangerous neighbour. By this point, Earth territory had expanded to the point where it bumped up against a number of alien races. Open trade was under way with the friendly Mentabans, Markab, and Centauri, while border treaties had also been signed with the Vree, Deneth, Sh'lassans, and just recently, the Koulani. There was, however, one other race of significant concern, and that was the Ch'Lonas.

The Ch'Lonas were a former Centauri subject race who valued their own independence and security over just about any other

concern. Earth ships attempting to set up trade relations were fired upon and forced to retreat without any attempt at dialogue. The Ch'Lonas made no argument when Earth claimed the nearby systems of Deneb and Ceti Gamma, but there was one additional system the Alliance had its eye on - Beta 7, home to a wealth of minerals and resources greatly in need as raw materials for Earth's growing colonisation program. Surveyors found no evidence of a foreign claim to the system, despite its proximity to Ch'Lon, so the Alliance decided to take control and hope for the best.

After what happened at Signet Station, Earth moved into Beta 7 with great care and deliberation. After publicly broadcasting their peaceful intentions in the area, EarthForce assigned the *Avenger* carrier group to defend the system and began the process of building a mining station. From the beginning, Ch'Lonas ships menaced this process, undertaking numerous close-range passes to gather information, but stopping short of actual armed combat. In response, EarthForce constructed heavier fortifications around the mining facilities, including rudimentary defence satellites and ground-based laser batteries to go along with orbital fighter assets.

However, when Earth finally began construction of an early Orion-class starbase in late 2169, they finally forced the Ch'Lonas into action. Unwilling to permit the existence of a nearby base capable of supporting a strike into their home system, the Ch'Lonas attacked in force in late January of the following year. They were met by a well-prepared and heavily armed Alliance task group consisting of the carrier *Avenger*, the Artemis-class heavy frigates *Merrimack* and *Lincoln*, and a veritable horde of Aries-class Starfuries.

Ch'Lonas tactics of the time depended upon use of their ships and fighters in a combined sweeping passes, but time and again the Aries groups drew off defending Ch'Lonas fighters into spectacular dogfights, forcing the destroyer group and supporting frigates to break off and regroup. In the end, the Ch'Lonas retreated after losing most of their fighters, and while neither side lost a ship, none of those involved escaped the fight without at least some damage.

The Earth Alliance responded to this 'unprovoked' attack with outrage, but the Ch'Lonas remained characteristically silent. Instead of suing for peace, they seemed content to enter a period of cold war with their enemies. Earth continued to fortify Beta 7, completing the Orion base in late 2170 and assigning additional ships to defend the system. Meanwhile, the Ch'Lonas continued to raid the outpost and neighbouring trade routes, although they made no attempt at military strikes against the vital supply line between Beta 7 and Sol.

It was not until decades later that EarthForce agents discovered just how much of a paper tiger the Ch'Lonas military really was. The vast majority of their ships were lightweight hulls reverse-engineered after the Republic's departure from its former slave state, and even at Earth's level of inferiority, the Alliance had equal or perhaps even better weapons overall than the Ch'Lonas did. Earth could easily have conquered Ch'Lon had they possessed the desire and courage to do so, but of course the Alliance had no intention of becoming an imperialistic nation. In retrospect, this was probably a good attitude to have, and

only added to the later-developed Terran reputation of being a race not willing to start wars, but perfectly capable of finishing them.

Putting Out More Brushfires

As the Earth Alliance steadily grew in power, many among the Centauri Republic began to grow jealous of House Jaddo's improved status. By operating as exclusive traders with the Earthers, Jaddo earned noticeably improved profits and enjoyed a steadily rising level of influence within the Centaurum. While some houses merely wished to establish their own trade relations with the Alliance, others saw House Jaddo as a threat and Earth the key to eliminating that threat. However, as is common within Centauri back-room politics, no direct action was taken. Instead, the disaffected houses began secretly hiring mercenaries and raiders to disrupt the trade lanes between the Alliance and House Jaddo's outposts.

In 2172, EarthForce agents discovered evidence directly linking certain Centauri houses with raider activity. Debate raged for some time over what to do. There was no consideration of going to war with the Republic, for any such fight could have only one result. Although Earth's leaders in Geneva were still learning about the intricacies of Centauri politics, they did at least correctly discern that their friends in House Jaddo were not at fault. In secret meetings, Earth's leaders confronted Jaddo with their knowledge and were promised an end to the raids but in fact, House Jaddo knew about them already and had already chosen to do nothing. The Republic was still in decline, and every house was out to cover its own interests. Jaddo knew that to publicly expose the raids and threaten any sort of action could lead to a disastrous civil war, one they would surely lose. So, instead, they provided only token support in the form of intelligence and technological data, without making any attempt to intervene militarily.

Earth's leaders were justifiably annoyed. They had to do something - already the Centauri raids were spilling over into trade with other star nations. As a result, EarthForce was ordered to gradually build up its forces along the border and aggressively pursue the privateers as far as the trail led, including into sovereign Centauri territory. Previously, Earth forces had stopped at the border, letting raiders escape with their booty, but that practice would henceforth cease. The pirates, desperate to escape, called upon Centauri border patrols to protect them, and incidents began to pile up. In most cases, the Alliance forces so outnumbered Republic pickets that the police craft did not dare intervene, but the raiders soon learned the trick of flying directly towards the nearest military garrison and begging for asylum. The result was a wrist slapping by local authorities and, usually, the return of whatever was stolen, but no reparations for battle damage or destroyed Alliance freighters.

Although the Centauri repeatedly protested the violations of their space, Earth continued to aggressively pursue raiding vessels despite the threat of military action. Eventually, things boiled over when an EarthForce fleet opened fire on raiders

taking shelter near a Centauri base. The base and picket ships returned fire, and in the resulting battle, most of the Republic's ships were destroyed.

As word of this reached Centauri Prime, the Emperor himself finally sat up and took notice. While scattered battles continued on the border, he conducted his own investigation and uncovered the actions of his own people. His response was measured, however, and not nearly as harsh as the Earth Alliance would have liked. The raiding was brought to a halt, and the Emperor issued an apology to Geneva for the actions what was labelled as rogue houses. In addition, he also put an end to the exclusive treaty House Jaddo had with Earth, opening up the entire Republic to trade with the new and emerging power. Although this infuriated Jaddo and angered a number of Terran companies getting rich through their virtual trade monopoly, the Emperor smoothed things over by publicly praising the obvious military skill exhibited by Alliance forces during the border skirmishes. This left the average Earth citizen with a feeling of well-deserved pride.

During the years that followed, expansion continued and colonisation began throughout what was now being known as 'Earth Space.' Borders were solidified and the Alliance began the long process of developing its vast territory. Colonies were founded and grew, outposts and bases were constructed, and new jumpgates were placed and added to the expanding hyperspace network. The old Centauri gate orbiting Earth was deactivated and dismantled, replaced by a new one in orbit around Jupiter's moon Io. This move greatly increased the security of the homeworld itself, as any military force approaching the planet would have to make its way to Earth on its own, without a handy jump beacon to point the right way.

While the Alliance enjoyed a period of relative peace during the last two decades of the 22nd Century, military technology continued to advance steadily. Exploration and trade vessels brought back examples of weaponry and other equipment from the far reaches of known space, resulting in improvements to laser, interceptor, and missile systems, as well as new engine and reactor technologies that vastly increased spacecraft capabilities. New models of the hardy Epimetheus, Orestes, Artemis, and Hermes were introduced, along with the next advancement in the Starfury program, the Flying Fox. In addition, joint efforts with the Belt Alliance resulted in the refinement of the Delta-V fighter, a popular and inexpensive short-ranged atmospheric craft used for a variety of roles. Unfortunately, samples of this fighter soon found its way into the hands of raiders, where it became the de facto standard pirate attack craft for years to come.

As time passed, however, problems within the Alliance began to surface. Colonies such as Mars, Proxima, and Deneb began to voice a growing argument for self-government, increasingly believing the desires of the leaders in Geneva were no longer the same as those on their own planets. Independence movements began to surface, and although Earth managed to quell the problem on the smaller colonies, Mars and Proxima proved more difficult. Mars, in particular, chafed under the demands of the capital at EarthDome. Demonstrations were held across the planet, and no small amount of support appeared at home. The Alliance insisted that humanity's best interests were better

served through unity, while Mars replied that Earth's various colonies should be treated as independent federated states, with complete self-determination in all ways but protected by a joint military force, the expenses of which would be shared by all.

While Alliance leaders struggled with these latest internal concerns, Earth finally came into contact with the expanding Narn Regime. The Narns had thrown off Centauri rule in 2195 and immediately began the process of building an empire of their own, in much the same way as the Earth Alliance had done in the decades following contact with the Republic. However, where Earth was content to occupy unclaimed systems and made no attempt to infringe upon the rights of established races, the Narns had no such compunctions. Space around their homeworld was littered with the remnants of former Centauri slave races, such as the Tachunq and Balosians. In order to achieve the level of power they wanted, the Narns approached these worlds under the guise of liberators, only to turn them into subject peoples once again. In some cases, as with Tachunq, their efforts met with success, but on other worlds, most notably Balos and N'chak'fah, Narn invasions - for that was what they truly were - were repulsed.

In due time, the Narns encountered the borders of the Earth Alliance. Relations were not formally established, and the Centauri Republic warned EarthDome that the Narns were dangerous rebels who could not be trusted. The Narns saw the Earthers as Centauri collaborators, and harassed and raided Earth trading and exploration operations along the border, seemingly proving the Centauri case. In truth, the Narns were merely probing Earth territory and taking the measure of humanity, but the Terrans had no way to be sure of this. However, these incidents did have one significant benefit - they provided an umbrella under which EarthForce could build up its military without arousing the suspicion or ire of the colonies.

For several years, warship and ground force production was of paramount importance. Technological advancements continued, and several new starship designs appeared, including the Olympus and Hyperion prototypes - vessels that would later become the backbone of the Earth navy for most of the early part of the next century. While many of the new task forces were indeed sent to the Narn frontier, many more were held in reserve for use in quelling any civil unrest. This proved to be a wise decision, for in 2212, the Mars colony erupted in open revolt. Rioting broke out in nearly every city, and the Martian underground moved to take control using its own paramilitary armed forces. When Proxima threatened to do the same, Earth began an overwhelming and well-prepared invasion of Mars, crushing all resistance within the space of a few weeks. During the final days of this revolt, when failure became imminent, a fanatic loyal to Mars managed to assassinate President Kiyoshi. This led to a series of punishing sanctions against the breakaway colony, setting a foul tone for Earth-Martian relations for decades.

With the threat of civil war abated, the Alliance was free to concentrate on shoring up the Narn border. The primary subject of argument was the Epsilon Indi system, a jumping-off point to Coriana and one of only two star systems with easily navigated jump paths into Narn space. The Narns claimed Epsilon Indi, but in doing so conveniently forgot to notice that

Earth explorers had mapped and logged the system many years before. Unfortunately, so few resources existed there - at least in comparison with other nearby systems - that Earth never fully developed the area. This, to the Narns, provided the necessary excuse to move in and occupy it for themselves.

During the middle part of the 2210s, the Narns occupied the outer planets in Epsilon Indi while Earth took control of the inner worlds. Both sides constructed their own jumpgates and defensive stations, but neither seemed willing to fight over a few relatively useless chunks of rock. The Narn leadership, the Kha'Ri, saw Earth's unwillingness to go to war as a weakness, while the Earth Alliance felt that they just didn't know enough about Narn capabilities to risk an armed conflict.

Things could not continue in this way for long, however, and finally in 2219 the fight began. Narn ships attacked an Earth cargo vessel on its way to deliver supplies, and reaction was swift. The Earth commander on the scene ordered a full pursuit of the Narns, and soon a general space battle broke out. Reinforcements were rushed to the scene by both sides, and the fight continued sporadically for the next several days until finally the remaining Narns retreated to the protection of their base.

The Narns made a serious blunder at this point, however. Instead of sending in two newly formed task forces to counterattack at Epsilon Indi, they instead began raiding Earth systems in Eridani and Epsilon. Although they scored some noteworthy damage, they were eventually driven out by defensive picket forces occupying the threatened areas. The only long-term effect the raids had was to allow new Earth Alliance reinforcements to finally overwhelm the Narn defences in Epsilon Indi, resulting in the destruction of the base and capturing of the jumpgate intact. The beacon was then deactivated, cutting off the system from the Narn Regime until assaults could be launched under the control of jump-capable command vessels, of which the still-young Narn military was in woefully short supply.

The Narns continued to harass the Alliance for the next several years, but were never able to seriously threaten Epsilon Indi or the other colonies. This was due in part to the Narn refusal to commit their entire military might against the Alliance, an action that would have seriously weakened their borders with the Centauri, whom they hated with all their hearts. Indeed, any attempted invasion of the Earth Alliance could have only one result - renewed subjugation - for even victory would have won them only a ravaged navy left wide open to attack by the hated Republic. Earth, too, had no interest in a full-scale war, sticking to their anti-imperialist guns and remaining content to fend off Narn attacks in their sovereign space. In the early years of the 2220s, the Kha'Ri finally began to put forth diplomatic feelers, and hostilities finally came to an end with the Epsilon Treaty of 2224.

To many in the Earth Alliance, the removal of the Narn threat ended the last serious military risk to humanity. Earth's economic and military might now overshadowed all neighbouring races with the exception of the Narn and Centauri, both of whom would never attack Earth without opening the door to an opportunistic counter-invasion by their hated rival.

Even the threat of civil war had now been abated, as Proxima and the outer colonies seemed content to return to the old ways following a few needed concessions by EarthDome. Only Mars continued to seethe under the surface, but there was little they could do in the face of overwhelming EarthForce might.

Thus, in many ways, the Alliance was exactly where it wanted to be. A period of prosperity and peace settled in, and many optimists suggested that perhaps the risk of interstellar war had finally abated forever.

Of course, they could not be any more wrong.

The Dilgar Invasion

Far beyond the bounds of Earth territory, in one of the farthest corners of known space, dwelled a race known as the Dilgar Imperium. A proud, warrior people, they believed themselves to be the centre of the Universe. All other races were destined to serve them, in whatever way the Dilgar saw fit. Unfortunately, the Dilgar were still new to interstellar travel, and seemed surrounded by much larger, more capable races than they could ever hope to defeat. What was needed was a long-term plan for conquest, but as it turned out, Fate did not give the Dilgar that time.

Through scientific research, the Dilgar learned that their sun would meet a catastrophic end sometime in the coming few decades. Their homeworld of Omelos was doomed. Suddenly they had no choice but to accelerate their plans. To a race as self-centred as the Dilgar, asking for help was anathema, and indeed, those in charge never gave it the slightest consideration. No, the Dilgar would carve out their own empire using whatever force was required, and then move their entire population to whichever conquered world best met their criteria.

In the 2220s, the Dilgar became very active in exploring and researching nearby space. Coreward, they found a powerful middle-born race known as the Tal-kona'sha, whose vast fleet of living starships brooked not the slightest intrusion. To antispinward lay only useless, burned-out systems and the void between Galactic spiral arms. Their only choices were spinward and rimward, where they discovered the scattered and divided races of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds.

For many years, Faksur-class spy ships and Protra-class scout vessels roamed through League space and neighbouring races, offering trade treaties and establishing diplomatic relations. The crews of these ships were actually highly trained spies adept at gathering intelligence and returning it secretly to their masters back on Omelos. Although some of these ships were caught and destroyed, the League was so compartmentalized that they never suspected what the Dilgar were truly up to.

Finally, in 2228, the Imperium made its first assault. Their early ship designs, constructed with the fruits of countless stolen technological data, would have been swept aside by most of the other races' larger fleets, so they wisely selected one of the weakest independent powers of the region, the Alacan Republic. Alaca was isolated and had very little in the way of defences, and was quickly overwhelmed. So quickly was their defeat

that even their friendly neighbours, the Abbai, could not rush to their aid. Only a single Alacan ship, the *Pyrotinia*, escaped destruction, fleeing into League space. This vessel would spend the next several years visiting everyone it could, trying to drum up support for a campaign against the invaders, but with little success.

The Dilgar, unwilling to waste time with a prolonged invasion of Alaca, killed most of the planet's population with a series of tailored diseases. After this, the Dilgar simply moved in and began the process of stripping the Alacan system of all its resources, shipping them back to Omelos for use in constructing additional military assets. Never before in the history of known space had a planet been so quickly and completely devastated by another race, and yet very little was done by way of protest. The Abbai responded with harsh words and by fortifying their own borders with the Dilgar, but they were a pacifistic people and did not see the rape of Alaca as a strong enough reason to go to war. The Draz, who also shared a border with the Dilgar, were more worried about the enormous Narn Regime than an upstart race with only a few planets to its name. The rest of the League saw the Dilgar as someone else's problem and ignored it.

Had they paid more attention, however, the Draz would have been more concerned. Prior to the Alacan invasion, the Dilgar had cleverly provoked an incident with the Narns and then rushed to pay reparations, following up their good faith with a treaty of non-aggression designed to keep the Regime out of the coming conflict. The ploy worked to perfection, and the Dilgar invaded both Draz and Abbai space simultaneously in 2230, without fear of aggression by the much larger power towards the Rim.

Initial successes were met on both fronts. The Abbai, who occupied only one colony of any significance, eventually fell back to their homeworld and circled the wagons there, under the guns of their powerful and well-shielded fortifications. The Draz also fell back initially, opening up some of their frontier worlds to horrible atrocities by the Dilgar, but eventually counterattacked and stabilised a front line. The Dilgar, unwilling to sacrifice the immense resources required to break through and utterly destroy their foes, instead settled upon a plan whereby those two borders would be used to initiate and train new crews, test newly designed weapons, and the like, while veteran forces continued to advance into League space. After all, the clock was ticking for the Dilgar, and neither the Abbai nor the Draz possessed a planet capable of supporting the entire population of Omelos. After all, the clock was counting down for the Dilgar and its doomed sun. The Abbai worlds were unsuitable for the entire population of Omelos, while the size of the Draz Freehold precluded pacification in a timely manner. The Imperium, therefore, pushed deeper into League space.

Thus, in a move that would seem foolish to anyone not comprehending the desperate nature of the Dilgar, the invaders pressed their attack further into the League. They occupied the surface of Balos, driving the Balosian people into the underground, where they operated as a guerrilla force for years. From there, the Dilgar advanced on Tirrith, driving out several races with claims to that system's vast resources,

and then proceeded to attack those very races directly. Even the powerful, much older Hyach were unable to stand up to the ferocious invaders, instead retreating to their homeworld in much the way as the Abbai had done. There, the Hyach retreated behind their bases, keeping the Dilgar at bay with powerful long-ranged laser guns. Rather than assault this position and suffer terrible losses, the attackers simply bottled up their enemies as they had the Abbai and moved on.

The Dilgar continued to roll up all opposition as they steadily advanced towards the Rim. The Brakiri, Cascor, and Ipsha soon found themselves under attack. Even as these races were bottled up at their respective homeworlds, the League of Non-Aligned Worlds still failed to act with any kind of unity. The races of that loosely organised group simply lacked the will to come to the aid of another, each steadfastly believing that the Dilgar would halt their attacks or exclude their nation. None ever thought it could happen to *them*, until the invasion fleet appeared along the border - by which time it was too late.

When the Dilgar conquered the tiny race known as the Mitoc, they finally found the planet they were looking for. A powerful base of operations was constructed on the Mitoc homeworld, and plans were initiated to start shipping population off Omelos to this new site. However, by now the Dilgar military had become afflicted with the 'conqueror's disease.' After so many successes, and with no race strong enough or willing enough to resist them, they saw no reason not to press their attack deeper

into the soft underbelly of the League. Further advances were made against the Drazi, and a breakthrough force knocked the Hurr out of the war with one single stroke. The weak Descari were rolled up within weeks, sending much of their population fleeing into nearby space as refugees. The Dilgar took great sport in hunting down and destroying these craft wherever possible, even pursuing some of them into the fringes of the Earth Alliance.

By this point, EarthDome was becoming concerned by the Dilgar drive. Early on in the invasions, a Dilgar task force destroyed the EAS *Persephone*, later claiming they mistook it for an enemy unit conducting espionage against their military. In fact, this was another attempt by the Dilgar to turn a 'mistake' into a non-aggression treaty, just as had been done to keep the Narns out of the war. In this case, however, it backfired, as Earth saw no reason to trust a race that fired first and asked questions later. In fact, the *Persephone* incident did little more than alert Earth to the threat posed by the Dilgar.

Still, the Alliance was in no position to intervene in the invasions by itself. Earth had, to this point, never fought a war beyond its own border. They did have a significant military, however, and since they shared no disputed territory with the Dilgar, they saw little risk of invasion by a race so far away. The Senate argued for months over what to do, even quietly stepping up warship and fighter production should the need arise to use them, but in the end, they chose to do nothing. Races like



the Brakiri and Abbai were far away, and the average citizen saw no reason to risk human lives to protect these distant aliens. Even the arrival of the *Pyrotinia*, and an escort of League ships, could not change the minds of the Senate. The League envoy did, however, provide valuable technological information in the form of captured Dilgar fighters, the examination of which proved instrumental in improvements to the Starfury project.

Eventually, the Dilgar advanced one step too far - they chose to invade Markab space. The Markab were one of Earth's strongest allies and best trading partners, and more than that, they shared a significant border with the Alliance. From either Tiree or Markab itself, the Dilgar could then directly threaten Altair, one of Earth's primary jump nexuses. Almost simultaneously with this invasion, the *Pyrotinia* envoy, led by Ambassador Kalika of the Abbai, made a final, desperate plea for Earth intervention. In this critical speech, Kalika compared the Dilgar to the oppressive Nazi regime of the mid-1900s. That, along with the suddenly visible threat to Earth security, finally opened the eyes of most of the Senate.

Although the Alliance had warned the Dilgar on numerous occasions not to attack the Markab, the Dilgar were unimpressed by Earth itself. Protra scout ships, sent out in the late 2220s, reported that Earth territory was a hollow shell, and its people singularly unwilling to fight. What was more, they insisted, the Terrans would never intervene directly unless the Dilgar made the mistake of crossing the border, something they were very careful not to do. While this strategy would have paid big dividends had the Alliance chosen not to attack, the unwillingness of the Dilgar to even consider the possibility of an Alliance attack left their badly overextended forces vulnerable to a concentrated strike.

Shunning diplomatic niceties such as a 'declaration of war,' the Earth Expeditionary Force crossed the Markab border and engaged Dilgar fleets in early 2232. In doing so, they took the Imperium completely by surprise. Although militarily they perhaps possessed the strength to resist Earth's early attacks, they were already at the fringes of their supply lines. What was more, the Imperium had awakened in the Markab a desperate need for revenge. The deeply religious Markab declared a jihad against the invaders and threw themselves against Dilgar with unfettered fury. This accelerated the Earth Alliance's pursuit of the Dilgar during their retreat, lest their allies destroy themselves against Dilgar fortifications.

For the better part of a year, the Earth Expeditionary Force, under the command of Admiral Hamato, gradually drove the Dilgar back one system at a time. Now the Dilgar propensity to surround homeworlds but leave them alone for later pacification worked against them, as the advancing Alliance freed up these bottled military assets for use against the Dilgar. The collected national fleets, out for revenge against their terrible oppressors, formed into a huge, poorly coordinated armada known as the Liberation Navy.

While this group moved from homeworld to homeworld, setting free such races as the Cascor, Brakiri, Hyach, and Abbai, the Earth Expeditionary Force pressed the attack directly against Dilgar bases and supply lines. The Imperium's promised new homeworld of Mitoc was lost, and in their anger the retreating

Dilgar turned the planet into an irradiated wasteland. They performed similar atrocities at each liberated colony world, infuriating the people of the Earth Alliance and leaving no room for negotiations. The people of Earth, treated daily to new scenes of genocidal acts on the part of the Imperium, knew just how close they had come to suffering a similar fate. Indeed, they felt the only appropriate response was to pound the Dilgar right back to the Stone Age.

Eventually, the Dilgar were driven back to their fortified positions at Alaca, Balos, Tithalis, and Omelos itself. Tithalis was the only system protecting the Drazi front, while Balos was the key to resisting the advancing Earth Expeditionary Force. The remaining Dilgar forces, now finally concentrated, were preparing to knock the Drazi completely out of the war when Admiral Hamato launched his offensive against Balos. He began by sending elements of the Free Balosian Navy, who had escaped the original invasion years before, intending to draw out the Dilgar defenders and spring the Expeditionary Fleet upon them in ambush. In this, Hamato employed another of the complex military plans that made him famous, but in this particular instance, his legendary luck and skill did not produce the desired results. The Dilgar did not take the bait, and in fact turned the tables by setting up an ambush of their own. Having temporarily retreated from Balosian space, the Dilgar returned with unexpected strength and managed to catch the Earth fleets in the process of landing troops to liberate the planet. The Alliance was forced to withdraw, leaving GROPOS units on the surface for months until a follow-up assault could be organised.

This apparently grave setback ultimately proved to be an unexpected boon to the Alliance when the stranded ground forces linked up with Balosian guerrilla armies, who had been harassing the Dilgar garrisons for months. Natural underground dwellers, the Balosians and their new and well-equipped GROPOS brethren became quite a thorn in the side of the occupying army, and when Hamato launched his second strike, they simultaneously sabotaged command and control centers, ground batteries, and communications stations, crippling the Dilgar defence effort. The Dilgar naval elements put up a valiant fight, but in the end the might and fury of the Earth fleets was too much to resist. The Dilgar retreated for good, sabotaging their fortifications at Balos and Alaca, and pulling back to their fortress at Omelos.

After the Drazi took Tithalis, they were suckered into an ill-advised assault on the homeworld, which was repulsed with heavy losses. The Dilgar hoped, in vain, that the sheer firepower of their defences would be enough to make at least the Terrans reconsider. They were wrong.

In late 2232, the assault on Omelos began. This battle was perhaps the most ferocious, vicious fight ever seen in known space. No quarter was asked by either side, and none was given. Crippled craft routinely rammed enemy units, and both sides employed numerous weapons of mass destruction. Admiral Hamato was killed when his flagship was smashed by a suicide attack, but in the end his forces won the day. The Dilgar were defeated, with only a few ships escaping into hyperspace. Most of these were later hunted down, but the one containing WarMaster Jha'Dur, perhaps the worst of the war criminals, was never found.

The victorious League forces imposed sanctions against the Dilgar intended to prevent them from ever taking aggressive action again. All surviving Dilgar citizens were rounded up and quarantined on their homeworld, and orbital satellites were emplaced to prevent any military construction or space flight of any kind. The victors remained unaware of the impending doom the Dilgar faced, a fact the Dilgar strangely allowed to remain hidden. In 2235, the secret came out, as the stellar event the Dilgar scientists predicted came to pass. All life was scoured from the face of Omelos, driving the Dilgar fire right out of the Universe.

The Golden Age

The period following the Dilgar War is often looked upon as the Golden Age of Earth Alliance power and influence. The races of the League all but fell over themselves in the rush to thank and reward the valiant Terrans, who sacrificed so much to liberate alien races many light-years from their own territory, and in some cases whom they had never even met. Generous treaties were formed with most of these appreciative nations, and the Alliance was quite helpful in reconstruction efforts when possible. Some of the more xenophobic nations feared the Terrans would attempt to occupy and hold some of their captured territory, but these fears proved groundless. EarthDome had no intention of hanging on to systems located so far from their own borders, turning over the responsibility of guarding Omelos to the League in 2233 and formally abandoning all their logistics stations over the next several years. Some of these facilities were scuttled, while others were purchased by League races or fell into the hands of one power or another. One forward logistics base, located in the Tirrith system, became the headquarters of the Tirrith Free State, one of the more civilised raider bands, who used it to set up an independent nation of their own.

Earth's victory over the powerful Dilgar was indeed a time of great rejoicing. The Alliance had, over the course of only seventy years, gone from a nation just beginning its first interstellar forays into one powerful enough to fight and defeat an advanced force that had all but conquered over a dozen established races. In the process, they effectively established themselves as one of the dominant powers in the region, taking their rightful place alongside the Centauri and Narns and earning the respect of both races. Indeed, both the Republic and Regime were resigned to making hollow accusations about how the other race had allowed an empire as horrible as the Dilgar to run rampant.

In addition to the positive effects on Earth's morale, total victory over the Dilgar also provided huge technological advantages. The Dilgar possessed weapons of a type never before seen, among them bolter and pulsar guns capable of operating not only in offensive ship-killing mode, but equally well as anti-fighter defence systems. These weapons led directly to the invention of the first pulse cannon by EarthForce in 2240, and corresponding improvements to ship designs like the Hyperion, Olympus, Artemis, Tethys, and Sagittarius.

During the war, the Alliance also developed and deployed the Starfury Nova, a craft made possible through the direct

application of technology taken from captured Dilgar Thoruns. This fighter proved only a stepping-stone to the more powerful and capable Aurora class of Starfury, which remains in service today. Although the Starfury Nova was quickly made obsolete and removed from the inventory, its name continues to live on in the Nova Dreadnought, a powerful gunship introduced in prototype form during the war and later fitted with combined laser/pulse weapons. Few ships of the era could stand up to a ship of this level of firepower in a head-to-head shooting match.

During the war, the Alliance also captured a variety of ships and ground installations, leading to broad improvements in not only military technology but also in civilian venues. Over the ensuing years, noticeable changes were made throughout the Alliance, vastly improving the quality of life for the average citizen.

Unlike the races of the League, Earth's economy was not harmed by the Dilgar conflict, but in fact, showed remarkable improvement. The need for a strong military had been proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, and few citizens protested the replacement of lost units and concentration of effort on research and development. Exploration, which came virtually to a halt during the Dilgar Invasion, resumed with a vengeance following the war. Earth's people were happy, its military was strong, and its reputation among the Galactic powers was impeccable. The Alliance stood poised on the brink of true greatness.

The war did have one unfortunate side effect, however. Earth's pride became swelled to the point where its leaders and military officers possessed an inflated view of their own abilities and strength. Despite warnings from the Centauri and other races, they saw themselves as capable of anything and deserving of a proper level of respect from everyone they met. They had not yet learned the lesson that, despite all their accomplishments and apparent power, they were as gnats before some of the technologically advanced races lurking out there in the Galaxy.

This was a lesson they would soon learn the hard way.

The Earth/Minbari War

As Earth exploration continued to expand, they began to hear rumours of an advanced but reticent race known as the Minbari Federation. So far, Earth intelligence personnel had known little or no contact with this mysterious people, despite the fact that they all but shared a border. The nature of hyperspace along Earth's spinward fringe did not lend to easy travel, and so most surveyors gave the region a wide berth. However, as hyperspace exploration became easier and less dangerous, Earth vessels started probing the area with greater interest.

One such group was the *Prometheus* task force, led by one Captain Jankowski, a seasoned veteran of the Dilgar conflict who believed Earth's forces superior to anything else in the Galaxy. It was unfortunate that such a man chanced to be in command of the first military force to encounter the Minbari, for that race, too, was equally confident in its own technological superiority. Worst of all, among the Minbari flotilla was the flagship of the Grey Council, which at that very moment was on a mission to explore the Rim.

Upon detection of the Earth task force, the Minbari closed with the Alliance fleet, hoping to set up a friendly dialogue. Unfortunately, communication proved impossible, as Minbari sensors were so powerful they overwhelmed the unprepared Earth network, shutting down circuits and deactivating jump drives. Captain Jankowski believed this to be a hostile act and put his ships on alert. When the Minbari ships entered firing range with gun ports open - a traditional show of respect among the Minbari warrior caste - Jankowski panicked and opened fire. The close-range salvo crippled the *Valentha*, the Grey Council's flagship, and killed Dukhat, the Chosen One and spiritual leader of the Minbari people. In the resulting confusion, Jankowski was able to withdraw his forces, but the damage was done. In that single act, he aroused in the Minbari a terrible thirst for vengeance. With a singleness of purpose, the Minbari people moved to make the humans pay.

And pay they did. The Minbari launched an immediate search for human worlds, which they so far had not bothered to map. They tracked Jankowski back to his base and destroyed everything they found there, but in the process the jump beacon was cut, denying the Minbari access to much of Earth space. This forced the enraged Federation to scour the region and gave the Alliance much-needed time to shore up defences and maximize production. In this the Alliance hoped to buy enough time to fend off the Minbari in the outlying colonies long enough to come to some sort of diplomatic solution.

It was a sound plan with one fateful catch. The Minbari had no intention of talking with the Alliance to discuss matters. Spurring all contact, they instead concentrated solely on destroying Terran military forces and slaughtering EarthForce personnel. The Alliance could do nothing to stop the inexorable advance. Even the most powerful vessels in the Earth inventory were no match for Minbari forces, which continually attacked with overwhelming strength. One by one the outer systems fell - Sinzar, Vega, Cyrus, Jericho. Nothing, it seemed, could stop the avenging Minbari host.

The problem was not simply one of weapon firepower. Indeed, in terms of close range direct destructive ability, the Nova Dreadnought was perhaps the equal of the Sharlin Cruiser. However, the Minbari had more than just big guns in their favour. They possessed better armour, longer ranged sensors, advanced gravitic propulsion systems, and best of all, a jamming system capable of preventing their inferior enemies from achieving any sort of useful weapons lock. Fighters, too, were perhaps equal in manoeuvrability and staying power, but the Minbari Nial, or Nighthawk, simply could not be locked onto by the otherwise capable Aurora Starfuries. This allowed Nial pilots to engage at range, carving up Starfuries before they could even the odds in a close quarters dogfight.

As the war pressed on, Earth was reduced to fighting desperate holding actions in the hopes of buying time for refugees to escape doomed outposts. Unable to turn the tide alone, the Alliance began to search the Galaxy for outside help, all but begging the other powers for military or economic aid. The Centauri demurred, fearful of bringing Minbari vengeance upon themselves, and simply told the beleaguered Terrans that they were warned not to provoke that which they did not understand. The races of the League, while publicly supportive for their

former liberators, knew full well that their ships would be as useful as a thrown rock in the face of a fanatic fleet of Minbari Sharlins. They, too, did not send military aid, although the Brakiri and Abbai did provide ships and support for evacuation and medical purposes. Only the Narns intervened directly by selling the Alliance weapons and other vital war materiel, gambling that the Minbari would stop at Earth and not pursue revenge against the Regime.

The addition of this new technology, while helpful on the surface, really did little to stem the Minbari tide. In desperation, Earth's new strategy was to evacuate all non-essential personnel and sabotage jump beacons, denying the Federation a direct path to the next colony. Despite this, the Minbari relentlessly searched along the various paths one after the other, rooting out and destroying Earth ships with ruthless abandon. Even counterattacks aimed at cutting off supply lines failed, for the Minbari were meticulous about planting defensive forces in every system they conquered. More than one Alliance task force arrived at a fallen colony with dreams of liberation, only to be crushed to the last fighter. Sometimes word of their fate never even reached Earth, so swift was Minbari response to such efforts.

The lone success in the war was that of Commander John Sheridan, who assumed command of a Hyperion-class cruiser after the death of his captain and then managed to destroy a Minbari task group flagship through a deception. Pretending to be disabled, he lured the *Black Star* in on an attack run and detonated pre-placed nuclear explosives in nearby asteroids. The powerful Minbari cruiser was destroyed, and Earth had its first hero of the war.

Still, even this was not enough. After a momentary pause, the Minbari advance proceeded steadily and with deliberate precision. The Alliance tried everything to halt the attackers, including desperate ramming attacks along with various traps and ambushes. The Minbari would not be fooled again. They checked every corner and turned over every rock as they drove on towards Earth. Cyrus fell, and Jericho, and soon the Federation fleets were attacking Earth's largest and most vital colony at Proxima. When contact with that final bastion was lost, the Alliance called its remaining forces home and prepared for the worst.

The worst was not long in coming. The Minbari found Sol and approached with the core of their mighty armada. Earth deactivated the Io jumpgate and activated an experimental solar blanketing device intended to prevent Minbari jump drives from functioning inside the asteroid belt. In the meantime, EarthForce called upon every ship or fighter capable of flying to form a line of defence around the homeworld. Earth must not fall, they declared, or it would mean the end of the human race. The line was drawn, they said, and the Minbari must not be allowed to cross.

The Minbari were not deterred. They arrived in the Sol system and made immediately for the capital, bypassing Io and ignoring Mars. The latter broadcast frantic messages of its own neutrality at the incoming fleet, a move that might have saved it had the attackers not already been seeking bigger game. Although this infuriated EarthDome, there was little

the Alliance could do at this point against this traitorous act. Later, the leaders of Mars would say they did what they did in an attempt to ensure the survival of at least some fragment of humanity, but Earth knew full well they were merely seizing an opportunity to once again claim independence. This attitude would poorly colour Earth-Mars relations for years following the conflict.

In the end, the Minbari ignored Earth's jump shield technology and exited hyperspace just outside the cobbled-together wall of desperate defenders. The invaders made no effort to bypass this Line of defending ships and attack from another angle, but instead tore right into the flimsy Earth defiance. The resulting battle was brutal and bloody and could have only one final result. Yet, in the midst of what must have seemed to be overwhelming superiority, the Minbari did the unthinkable. Without any sort of explanation, they suddenly heaved to and surrendered.

The leaders in Geneva met this move with flabbergasted shock. While Earth's few surviving ships regrouped, leery of some kind of trick, the President and his staff met with the Grey Council and accepted the immediate surrender of all Minbari forces.

Incredibly... inexplicably... miraculously, the war was over. And Earth had won.

Reconstruction

The surrender of the Minbari left the Earth Alliance in disarray. At first no one could believe it. Surely the Federation was involved in some sort of plot - perhaps they wished to demonstrate their overwhelming superiority and then turn the surviving humans into slaves. Yet even these terrible fears soon seemed unfounded. The Minbari proved the war was over when they left only a token embassy behind and pulled completely out of Earth space, not just from Earth but from every colony and outpost they had occupied during their invasion. They made no attempt to take prisoners, steal technology, or sabotage those installations they left behind. If they were indeed conquerors, they were like no conqueror the humans had ever seen.

With the departure of the Minbari, the Alliance found itself with a monumental task ahead of it. The Federation, despite surrendering, made no offers of aid or restitution, but simply left the smoking ruin of a once-proud space empire in their dust. Fortunately, in the final days of the assault, the Minbari did not destroy every ship and installation they found with the sort of single-minded determination observed early in the war. Instead, they were content to pacify what resistance they found and press on towards Earth. This had the side effect of allowing the Alliance to quickly repair and recommission a large number of heavily damaged starships, mostly of the Olympus and Hyperion class. In addition, a new generation of Myrmidon light combat vessels was swiftly constructed and sent to defend the colonies. With these, Earth quickly restored their frontier borders and secured them against alien incursion.

While the Koulani and Ch'Lonas both sent forces into Earth space to test the defences, they retreated quickly in the face of determined Earth task forces. These lone Earth groups, made

up of those grizzled survivors still capable of fighting, knew full well that they were all that stood between the remnants of the Alliance and an opportunistic alien invasion. They stood firm and toed the line yet again, and both races retreated after only a few skirmishes, believing that the Alliance survived the war in better shape than they actually had.

In fact, Earth space would have been an easy target for any alien race with enough determination and ships to invade, but no one dared risk it. After all, Earth somehow managed to survive total war with the Minbari. In fact, it was the Minbari who had finally surrendered - a fact the Federation did not bother to hide. Why would the Minbari, an apparently unstoppable juggernaut, do this without good reason? What if the Minbari were now thralls of the Alliance through some unknown means? No one wanted to bring the wrath of the Federation down upon their heads next by provoking the Alliance!

Of course, not everyone believed such a wild theory, but then, the Minbari surrender defied all other logic. The most likely explanation seemed to be that the Alliance withheld some sort of terrible doomsday weapon that they threatened, at the last, to visit upon both forces as an act of spite. Yet the Minbari said nothing about any such device, and while Earth diplomats were quick to seize upon it as a way to save face following what had been, for all intents and purposes, a disastrous defeat, they knew such an explanation would never stand up for long. They milked it for all it was worth, however, buying enough time to rebuild EarthForce, re-colonise their outposts, and return the Alliance to as much of its former state as was physically possible.

In addition to the repairs on existing hulls and new construction in surviving shipyards, EarthForce was also forced to recognise the superiority of the Minbari Sharlin war cruiser. No one in the Alliance had the slightest clue why the Minbari retreated when they did, and so there was no reason to expect they might not one day return to finish the job they started. Therefore, one of Earth's immediate goals was to develop some sort of craft capable of standing up to a Sharlin in direct combat. The Nova, while indeed powerful, was simply not equal to the task, for it lacked the speed and manoeuvrability to engage the superior Minbari war vessels, and the long-range weapons needed in a match with the Minbari cruiser.

To this end, a crash construction program developed a hybrid hull referred to as the Omega Destroyer. The Omega employed the best aspects of the Nova - heavy weapons emplacements and a well-armoured superstructure - with a gravity-positive rotating section and an array of defence weapons second to none. Even this craft, however powerful and capable, was still only a stopgap measure, for it alone was still not the equal of a Sharlin. Something better was needed. Indeed, an entirely new generation of Earth ship and fighter designs was required. As a result, a series of longer-ranged programs were initiated to produce these vessels, the first fruits of which are now beginning to appear in the form of advanced Thunderbolt-class fighters. As to what lies beyond, all anyone knows for sure are veiled rumours of a top-secret vessel code-named 'Warlock.' No other information is available about this 'black project' at this time.

The Babylon Project

Some time after the end of the war, once it became apparent that the Minbari had no intention of resuming the conflict, the leaders of Earth decided that they could not allow themselves to be brought to the edge of destruction once again. Ignorance of galactic power and politics had led them to the brink of doom, and the lack of any central forum to plead their case gave them no opportunity to offer reparations or make their case for peace. The Dilgar Invasion, also, was allowed to progress as far as it did because the League of Non-Aligned Worlds lacked the wherewithal to warn the others or request aid against the threat. Something was needed - some focal point where diplomats could meet in neutral space - to provide an outlet for grievances and diplomatic discussions. Thus was the Babylon Project born.

The Alliance chose a neutral site as close as possible to the conflux of Earth, Narn, Centauri, Minbari, and League territory. Here, they began construction on a massive starbase capable of supporting ambassadors from every known race and culture. At this site, representatives of all governments could meet in peace and resolve their differences. Earth's leadership wanted there to be no chance of any future misunderstandings, involving either themselves or anyone else, that could lead to a galactic war.

Constructing the Babylon station proved more difficult than it first appeared on paper. Not everyone agreed that such a place should exist. At least one of the first three stations is known to have been directly destroyed by sabotage, while others were

lost in suspicious accidents. The fourth, and largest, simply vanished on the eve of activation, with no trace ever found. Thoroughly disheartened, Earth was about to abandon the project entirely when the funds needed to construct the fifth and final Babylon station arrived from a totally unexpected provider - the Minbari Federation.

The Minbari, it seemed, had their reasons for wanting the station built. For certain considerations, they offered to pay for virtually the entire construction project, although they invited and later accepted further help from the Centauri, Narns, and League of Non-Aligned Worlds. Although Babylon 5 was not nearly the size of Babylon 4, it was still quite capable of performing its intended function. It came on line in 2256, ushering in a new era in the realm of Galactic affairs. No longer did the races bicker and argue behind closed doors, or operate in a political vacuum. Now they had a place to meet and share their experiences and differences. With the help of Babylon 5, the age of interstellar war seemed past.

Yet, despite all that has been accomplished, the Earth Alliance remained in turmoil. The question of what to do with Mars was still not answered, and the growing rift between telepaths and mundanes remained a significant concern. The reason for the Minbari surrender had never been adequately determined. Worst of all, there seemed to be constant rumblings out on the Rim and beyond, rumours of a strange new power rising to the fore, threatening to draw the Alliance once more into conflict.







Earth Alliance Characters

Humans are extremely adaptable and are excellent choices for any of the major classes in the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*. A human's bonus feat and extra skill points make him extremely capable in just about any role, while the ability to select any class as favoured allows for extreme versatility.

Although the Main Rulebook gives a very general overview of humans, there are a tremendous number of variations on this listed standard. People from different parts of Earth or from the different colonies have slight differences and additional potential abilities. Although there are no adjustments to ability scores or skills, a person from Europe, Africa, Proxima, or any other part of the Alliance will have access to a few feats that others are less likely to have. Exactly which nationalities or colonies possess which abilities is gone over in much greater detail in the Life in the Earth Alliance chapter. The various feats available are shown in the Appendix.

In addition to this, humans also have a wide variety of different prestige classes available. Because they are so adaptable, humans take on an amazing number of jobs and roles throughout their lives. Some of the various possibilities are listed hereafter. Note that any roleplaying suggestions found in these descriptions are extremely general in nature. Individual characters tend to have their own nature and mannerisms that might differ from these basic concepts.

Ambassador

Ambassadors are the pre-eminent diplomats of their race. Usually assigned to a specific location or embassy, they dedicate their lives to representing their government and its interests with respect to other nations. Although the actual title of 'Ambassador' is reserved for only a select few high-ranking officials, the Ambassador prestige class is used to describe the diplomatic staff, aides, and other officials who collectively make up a given embassy. A player character will almost certainly not be Earth's Ambassador to Babylon 5, for example, but they could easily be part of that individual's staff.

Each level of the Ambassador class represents

additional duties, responsibilities, and abilities available to the character. Keep in mind that each time a given ambassadorial 'perk' is used, there can be consequences. Diplomatic immunity is good for avoiding local law enforcement, but this can cause incidents with other nations, or dire consequences when one's own government takes a hand in the investigation. Abuse of ambassadorial privileges is a sure way to lose those privileges in the future!

Requirements

To qualify to become an Ambassador, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Charisma 13+.

Skills: Diplomacy 8 ranks, Gather Information 6 ranks, Knowledge (alien life, law, or star systems) 6 ranks, Listen 8 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks.

Feats: None.

Class Skills

The Ambassador's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (None).

Skill Points Per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Ambassador prestige class.



The Ambassador

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Gregarious
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Contact, Diplomatic Pouch
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	Diplomatic Immunity, Improved Diplomacy
4	+2	+1	+1	+2	Contact, Spy
5	+2	+1	+1	+3	Government Resources
6	+3	+2	+2	+3	Contact, Improved Diplomacy
7	+3	+2	+2	+4	Spy
8	+4	+2	+2	+4	Contact
9	+4	+3	+3	+4	Improved Diplomacy
10	+5	+3	+3	+5	Contact, Spy, Improved Government Resources

Hit Points Per Level: 1.

Feats: Because they get so much practice in public speaking and dealing with others, Ambassadors automatically gain the Gregarious feat at 1st Level. Ambassadors may also select the normally restricted Level-Headed and Open-Minded feats as if you were a member of the appropriate Earth Alliance nationality.

Job: Ambassadors are employed by their government and as such receive food, lodging, and a basic weekly stipend. This depends greatly on the location of the embassy and the nature of their job. A 1st level Ambassador on Babylon 5 or similar outpost is typically given small quarters, daily meals of average quality, and 200 credits per week. With each level attained, this stipend increases by 50 credits weekly, the meals become slightly better, and the cabin might be upgraded depending on available facilities.

Contacts, Improved Diplomacy, and Government

Resources: Ambassadors gain these abilities at various levels as if they were Diplomats (See page 27 of the Main Rulebook).

Languages: At each level, the Ambassador automatically receives one new language he has been exposed to through his normal duties. These can be any language a human is normally permitted to learn.

Diplomatic Pouch: At 2nd Level, the Ambassador receives the ability to carry a special sealed diplomatic pouch, which is usually about the size of a briefcase or similar item. By international convention, this container may not be opened by anyone except another member of the same ambassadorial staff. Ambassadors normally use these pouches to hold sensitive information and important data crystals, but they can

also be used to smuggle weapons or other restricted materials into secure locations. Since it is normally expected that such illegal things not be carried, this is something that should not be flaunted. International incidents are not something any ambassador wants to have to deal with, after all.

Diplomatic Immunity: At 3rd Level, an Ambassador receives diplomatic immunity in the nation, city, or station where he has been assigned. Using this ability, the Ambassador can literally do anything he wants without fear of arrest or similar action. Diplomatic immunity sounds very powerful, and indeed it is - but it must be used sparingly. A person who regularly flaunts immunity will quickly find it has been revoked, often at the very worst possible time. Similarly, producing diplomatic incidents between two nations is not going to make your own government happy, nor does it protect you from the laws of your own people - if you commit murder and use immunity to escape justice on an alien world, you will likely still be tried for the crime when you return home! In general, most members of an Ambassador's staff use diplomatic immunity only as a last resort. A member of the Ambassador class can, as a general rule, benefit from diplomatic immunity only once per month, with an additional infraction permitted for each two levels achieved after 3rd - so a 5th level Ambassador could get away with two incidents, a 7th level three, and so on.

Spy: At 4th level and again every three levels thereafter, the Ambassador gains access to a spy. This non-player character operates much like a diplomatic contact, except they are capable of far more insidious activities. A spy can be directed to find out top-secret information, interrogate certain individuals, undertake sabotage, or even assassinate a specific target. While the spy is capable of many things, he cannot do them instantaneously - most require operations that take time to set up, or require the right combination of events to take place. For

example, getting hold of a secret data crystal might involve several days of reconnaissance of the target site, followed by a night time operation to break into the office and filch the item. Then, of course, it must be smuggled out of the site and back into the Ambassador's hands. There is also no guarantee that a given spy will be successful in his mission, and in fact, they could even be captured or killed if the operation is sufficiently complicated. The Games Master will determine the difficulty and consequences of each such attempt - the Ambassador will not have a direct hand in his spy's operations, and in fact will likely never even know his true identity. Typically, a spy is referred to by a code name or designator, such as 'Vigilant,' 'X-50,' or '007.'



Responsibilities: Ambassadors have a duty and a responsibility to carry out their jobs and represent their government to the best of their ability. Although they have great latitude in how they accomplish this mission, they must still adhere to these basic concepts at all times. An Ambassador who regularly flaunts immunity, smuggles drugs or other illegal items in diplomatic pouches, and provokes incidents with foreign governments will be warned, disciplined, and potentially fired. Typical disciplinary actions include a reduction in pay, revoking of various privileges, loss of access to contacts, spies, and government influence, and finally, the loss of all abilities. An Ambassador who has been fired can no longer access any contacts, resources, or spies they received from the Ambassador prestige class, although they do retain those they had from any Diplomat levels. They can no longer receive immunity or use diplomatic pouches, and cannot advance in Ambassador levels any further unless they somehow regain the trust of their government. This could require any sort of penance the Games Master requires, and could be the subject of an entire adventure on its own!

Combat Medic

Every military unit has access to one or more field medics, whose job is to diagnose and patch up wounded soldiers on the battlefield. Combat medics focus first on halting bleeding, treating shock, and stabilising a patient, but do not undertake surgeries on their own. Only if the injury is truly life-threatening will they take the time for detailed work, which they prefer to leave to the doctors at the combat hospital. While a combat medic is first and foremost a healer, they are also competent soldiers as well, with most of the abilities and features of that class.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Combat Medic, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Wisdom 13+.

Skills: Base attack bonus +2 or higher, Medical 8 ranks.

Feats: Nerves of Steel.

Class Skills

The Combat Medic's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Medical (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Technical (Int).

Skill Points Per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Combat Medic prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 3.

Specialist (paramedic): At 1st Level, the Combat Medic automatically receives the Specialist (paramedic) feat as described in the Appendix.

Rapid Response: At 2nd Level, the Combat Medic is capable of performing Stabilisation and First Aid as a move equivalent action, rather than a standard action.

The Combat Medic

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Specialist (paramedic)
2	+2	+2	+0	+0	Rapid Response
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Improvised First Aid
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	Weapons Training
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	To the Limit (Con)
6	+6/+1	+3	+2	+2	Level-Headed
7	+7/+2	+4	+2	+2	Combat Healing
8	+8/+3	+4	+2	+2	Weapons Training
9	+9/+4	+4	+3	+3	Ultra-Rapid Response
10	+10/+5	+5	+3	+3	To the Limit (Con)

Improvised First Aid: At 3rd Level, a Combat Medic can make use of any handy implements or substances to stabilise a victim or perform First Aid without the need of a first aid kit. Instead of the usual -4 penalty, only a -1 penalty is imposed. This ability cannot be combined with Rapid Response (i.e., using improvised materials is still a standard action, not a partial action). Note that there must be at least something available - vines, torn clothing, or whatever - to be used with this ability. If both medic and victim are naked in an empty room, for example, Improvised First Aid cannot be attempted.

Weapons Training: Combat medics receive these abilities as Soldiers do, at the levels listed on the chart hereafter.

To the Limit (Con): Combat Medics receive the Soldier's To the Limit ability at 5th and 10th level, but must add the bonus point to Constitution.

Level-Headed: At 6th Level, the Combat Medic automatically gains the Level-Headed feat.

Combat Healing: At 7th Level, the Combat Medic is so skilled with First Aid that he can perform such checks even while unstabilized and/or losing hit points. In addition, when he succeeds in his First Aid check, he restores 2d6 hit points to the victim, not the usual 1d6.

Ultra-Rapid Response: At 9th Level, a Combat Medic can stabilize a victim virtually in his sleep. As long as he has a first aid kit in hand, he can stabilize a wounded comrade as a free action. If he does not have a first aid kit ready, he can make an improvised stabilization attempt as a partial action, not a standard action. In addition, the Combat Medic can now

perform improvised first aid checks as a move equivalent action, not a standard action.

Demolitionist

Demolitions experts are, quite simply, the ones you call when you need something blown up. They excel at the planting of explosives designed to accomplish a specific goal. While anyone with the proper training can set a charge, only a true expert can ensure only the desired target is taken out safely. Demolitionists are also skilled at deactivating explosives. In civilian life, they are often members of the 'bomb squad' attached to local police or security elements. Sadly, a few of those trained in this art turn to crime or terrorism, employing their abilities to bring destruction wherever they travel.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Demolitionist, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Dexterity 13+, Wisdom 13+.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Listen 6 ranks, Spot 8 ranks, Technical (mechanical) 8 ranks.

Feats: Alertness.

Class Skills

The Demolitionist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str),

Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Technical (Int).

Skill Points Per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Demolitionist prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 3.

Concentration: By far the most important skill for a Demolitionist is Concentration.

A single distraction at the wrong moment can cause a slip of the finger and result in disaster.

Therefore, he receives +1 to his Concentration check for every Demolitionist level he achieves.

A high-level Demolitionist could probably disarm a bomb in the middle of a raging hurricane.

Specialist: Demolitionists are specialists in the construction of explosive devices, and this knowledge automatically translates to other types of mechanical equipment. At 1st Level, they automatically receive the Specialist (technical/mechanical construction) feat.

Explosion Evasion: At 2nd Level, the Demolitionist's constant exposure to explosive devices and bombs has given him an uncanny ability to duck and avoid the effects of blasts. If exposed to any explosion that allows a Reflex save for half damage, he takes no damage on a successful save. Evasion can only be used if the character is wearing light or no armour, and functions only if the individual is alert and aware of his surroundings. This Evasion ability does not work against non-explosive effects such as automatic gunfire and the like.

Fine Details: At 3rd Level and every three levels thereafter, a Demolitionist's ability to spot fine details earns him a cumulative +2 bonus to Spot checks.

Level-Headed: At 4th Level, the Demolitionist is so used to working

carefully on bombs and other nerve-wracking devices that he automatically receives the Level-Headed feat, if he does not already have it. At 8th Level, the effect of this feat is doubled, so the appropriate Will saves and Concentration checks receive +4 bonuses, not +2.

Explosive Supplier: At 10th Level, the Demolitionist has established connections - either legitimate or otherwise - that permit him to purchase or otherwise acquire explosives pretty much at will. Despite any import laws, smuggling restrictions, or mandatory searches, the Demolitionist finds a way to get his hands on what he needs. Explosives are not available in unlimited quantities, of course, and are not free, but if he needs a few pounds of C-15 for a special mission, he will have no trouble buying them. Additionally, a Demolitionist of this level



The Demolitionist

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	Specialist, Concentration
2	+1	+0	+2	+0	Explosion Evasion
3	+2	+1	+2	+1	Fine Details
4	+3	+1	+2	+1	Level-Headed
5	+3	+1	+3	+1	
6	+4	+2	+3	+2	Fine Details
7	+5	+2	+4	+2	
8	+6/+1	+2	+4	+2	Level-Headed
9	+6/+1	+3	+4	+3	Fine Details
10	+7/+2	+3	+5	+3	Explosive Supplier

can make crude explosives out of common chemicals and other materials if he has access to them. A Technical (mechanical) check (DC 25) is required, the DC modified by the Games Master based on the readiness of available materials.

Missionary

Missionaries are normally thought of as bible-thumping preachers come to spread the word of God to unenlightened masses. Most of them rarely live up to this stereotype, however. Religion often does play a big part in their lives, but their main goals are to promote peace and provide humanitarian aid and support. Missionaries need not actually have backing from any particular religious organisation. A Missionary could be a lone crusader as well as part of a larger group, such as the Peace Corps or Catholic Church. Missionaries are as much seekers of wisdom and enlightenment as they are promoters of any specific religion. While not necessarily pacifists, they are not adept at combat and have very little actual fighting ability.

To qualify to become a Missionary, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Wisdom 12+, Charisma 13+.

Skills: Knowledge (any three) 8 ranks.

Feats: None.

Class Skills

The Missionary's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha),

Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points Per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Missionary prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 1.

Knowledge: During their ongoing quest for wisdom, Missionaries pick up a great deal of knowledge about various subjects. They receive +1 competence bonus to all Knowledge checks.

Sanctuary: Missionaries are respected in nearly all cultures, even militaristic ones like the Drazi Freehold. Beginning at 2nd Level, by wearing the appropriate clothing - simple robes or tunics, or whatever dress is appropriate to the native culture - and taking no hostile actions, a Missionary can avoid coming under fire. Whenever an enemy is selecting targets in combat, he will automatically ignore any Missionary character that is not undertaking any hostile manoeuvres or doing anything obviously contrary to the antagonist's interests. For example, a Missionary could safely walk across a room during an exchange of gunfire, but if he headed towards the release controls for a nearby prison cell, a guard might then consider him a valid target. The Missionary must be visibly unarmed to use this benefit. Note that Sanctuary does not protect a Missionary from area effect or saturation weapons, and will not be of any use



The Missionary

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Knowledge
2	+0	+0	+0	+3	Sanctuary
3	+0	+1	+1	+3	Group Influence
4	+1	+1	+1	+4	Aura of Wisdom
5	+1	+1	+1	+4	Enlightenment
6	+1	+2	+2	+5	Group Influence
7	+2	+2	+2	+5	
8	+2	+2	+2	+6	Aura of Wisdom
9	+2	+3	+3	+6	Group Influence
10	+3	+3	+3	+7	Enlightenment

against attackers who are firing sight unseen - e.g., an artillery barrage, or a strafing run from a distant fighter.

Group Influence: By delivering prayers or impassioned speeches, Missionaries are capable of adjusting the overall feelings and intentions of groups of people. At 3rd Level, the Missionary receives +2 to Diplomacy checks when making such a speech, and upon a success can shift the emotions of a group one level - from angry to displeased, displeased to neutral, neutral to happy, happy to ecstatic, or in the opposite direction. At 6th Level, he receives +4 to such checks and can shift attitudes up to two categories, giving him the ability to turn a neutral crowd into one ready to riot, for example. At 9th Level, the bonus is +6, and on a success, he can manipulate the group's attitudes to whatever he chooses. He is so charismatic in such cases that he can literally convince a troop of violent rebels to surrender peacefully to authorities, or turn a happy lot of citizens into a rioting mob.

Aura of Wisdom: At 4th Level, the mere presence of a Missionary is extremely beneficial to the morale and mental foundation of his comrades. All companions within 30 feet of the Missionary receive a +1 morale bonus to their Will saves as long as his presence is known. This bonus increases by a further +1 every four levels thereafter. On a starship or other enclosed area, the benefit applies only to those in the same room as the Missionary. Through his own beliefs, the Missionary also benefits from his own aura, but the auras of multiple Missionaries in the same area do not stack.

Enlightenment: At 5th and 10th Level, the Missionary's pursuit of knowledge has provided new insights on himself and the nature of the Universe. He receives a +1 inherent bonus to his Wisdom score. This bonus is in addition to any regular increases gained through normal means.

Reporter

Also called a Journalist, the Reporter is a travelling seeker of information. Not just any information, though - only information that is interesting to the public. Reporters sometimes travel with camera crews and other groups, but those are actually rare. There are far more undercover journalists, writers, and reporters travelling around behind the scenes than anyone knows. Not all of these actually work for news services. Some are researching articles, books, and other publications.

In the end, though, journalists are all good at one thing and one thing in particular - digging for secrets. To find out what they need to know, they will often do or say anything at all. They do have their own level of integrity, however. In pursuing their knowledge, all good reporters instinctively obey the following rules:

Verify the Facts: Journalists never report information as truth without verifying them first. Something that is unverified is merely 'alleged.' If they have two or more independent sources who corroborate on a piece of data, that is enough to consider it a fact. A reporter who fails to obey this rule receives a -2 penalty on all future Bluff checks against people familiar with them.

Protect the Source: Good reporters never reveal the source of their information unless given a court order to do so. A reporter who gives up his source quickly receives a reputation as untrustworthy and finds it much harder to get anyone to turn over information. A reporter who does not live up to this restriction suffers a -2 penalty to all Gather Information checks from people who recognise them.

Remain Impartial: A good journalist always avoids making judgments about what he learns, even if he is an eyewitness to events. The reporter's job is to present the news or information strictly as it exists, without any attempt to analyse it. If a reporter resorts to judging the news or telling others what to think, he tends to make others angry and upset. He receives a -2 penalty to all Diplomacy checks from anyone who knows the Reporter's identity.

To qualify to become a Reporter, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Intelligence 12+, Charisma 13+.

Skills: Bluff 8 ranks, Diplomacy 8 ranks, Gather Information 8 ranks.

Feats: None.



Class Skills

The Reporter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pick Pocket (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Technical (Int).

Skill Points Per Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Reporter prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 1.

Information Gathering: The Reporter is highly skilled at gathering information from nearly any source. He receives a +1 competence bonus per level to his Gather Information skill.

Journalistic Sense: Reporters have a 'nose for news.' They can instinctively tell whenever someone is hiding something, or if there is more to a story than it appears on the surface. A journalist receives a +1 bonus to Sense Motive checks for every two Reporter levels he achieves. In addition, his Sense Motive skill is considered constantly operational for the purposes of getting a 'hunch.' There is no need to spend any time at all concentrating upon it.

Calm Under Pressure: Skilled journalists are able to remain steady under any kind of stress. At 3rd Level, they receive the Nerves of Steel feat automatically, if they do not already have it.

Sex Appeal: At 4th Level, a Reporter has learned new tricks to gather information and get into places he normally could not reach. By over-emphasising his natural charisma - and, if necessary, using his personal charms as well - he can accomplish more than he would otherwise. If desired, the Reporter may double his Charisma bonus for any class skill that requires that ability (Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, or Intimidate), but only against a member of the opposite sex. The Games Master should require an amusing bit of roleplaying to pull this off. However, if the check fails, the consequences will be greater than they would otherwise - a slap to the face, perhaps, or something similar. Even a success might have undesirable consequences, too. The Reporter might have to make certain promises to get what he needs - and the victim might not be too happy if those promises are not met!

Intuition: Reporters who reach 5th Level develop a sort of natural intuition about events that occur around them. This manifests as an almost psychic ability to see things coming. Whenever some major event is about to happen, such as an ambush, explosion, or something similar, the Games Master makes a secret Will save (DC 15) for the Reporter. If this save succeeds, the character receives some information - a hint, a feeling, or whatever - that points him in the direction of the event to come.

Memory for Facts: At 8th Level, the Reporter's mind has become a steel trap. Very few tidbits of information are forgotten. Even obscure names and facts heard weeks or months ago can be recalled without difficulty. This is not a Knowledge skill, although it does have some similarities. It is

The Reporter

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Information Gathering
2	+0	+0	+0	+2	Journalistic Sense
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	Calm Under Pressure
4	+1	+1	+1	+2	Sex Appeal
5	+1	+1	+1	+3	Intuition
6	+2	+2	+2	+3	
7	+2	+2	+2	+4	
8	+2	+2	+2	+4	Memory for Facts
9	+3	+3	+3	+4	
10	+3	+3	+3	+5	Greater Intuition

more of a trivia collection. Any time the character needs to recall something he once saw, read or heard, and that piece of information does not fall under a specific Knowledge category, he may make an Intelligence check (DC 12) to remember it, with a -1 penalty for every six months that has passed since he originally encountered the information. A retry is permitted once per hour.

Greater Intuition: This ability operates alongside standard Intuition (above). The basic Intuition check is made more frequently and for less major events, as well as those that create a personal danger to the character - this could be treated as the Telepath's Danger Sense ability for most purposes. In addition, whenever the Will save is exceeded by 5 or more, the character receives a sense of what is going to happen. He will not learn any exact details, of course, but knows enough to take cover if an explosion is imminent, for example.



To qualify to become a Scout, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Wisdom 12+, Constitution 13+.

Skills: Survival 8 ranks, Search 8 ranks, Pilot 8 ranks.

Feats: Endurance.

Scout

Scouts are explorers. They like to see new things, visit new places, and tread where no other human has trod before. Scouts are often employed by companies for the purpose of locating and studying distant stars or unexplored worlds. They could also be independent travellers looking for excitement and adventure. Scouts tend to be free spirits with a real wanderlust, and rarely stay in one place for long.

Class Skills

The Scout's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Medical (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Profession (any) (Wis), Search (Int), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Technical (Int).

Area	Description
Earth Space	Earth and its colonies
Minbari Space	The Minbari Federation and Minbari Protectorate
Narn Space	The Narn Homeworld and all Narn colonies
Centauri Space	The Republic and its colonies
Near League Space	The closer League races who regularly permit visitors to their territory (Vree, Markab, Gaim, Cascor)
Far League Space	The farther League races who permit visitors (Brakiri, Hyach, Abbai, Balosian)
Drazi Space	The Drazi homeworld of Zhabar and its colonies
Coreward Space	Systems beyond the Narn and Centauri, including those League races who permit visitors (Corillani, Pak'ma'ra, Hurr, Grome, and Lumati)
The Rim	Lesser known systems rimward of the Earth Alliance, including many distant planets not yet claimed

The Scout

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+0	+0	Explorer, Individualist
2	+1	+2	+0	+0	Survivalist
3	+2	+2	+1	+1	Surveyor
4	+3	+2	+1	+1	Light Sleeper
5	+3	+3	+1	+1	Bonus Feat
6	+4	+3	+2	+2	
7	+5	+4	+2	+2	
8	+6/+1	+4	+2	+2	
9	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	
10	+7/+2	+5	+3	+3	Personal Ship

Skill Points Per Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Scout prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Explorer: The Scout has been to a great many places and seen many things. He receives the Explorer feat at 1st Level, if he does not already have it. In addition, he has also spent a significant amount of time visiting planets and systems in a particular region of the Galaxy. Select one choice from the following list. The Scout receives a +2 bonus to all Knowledge checks related to general facts about those worlds, i.e., how to get there, what sort of people live there, and so on. More detailed Knowledge checks do not benefit from this bonus. At 4th Level, and again every four levels thereafter, the Scout may choose another region from this list.

Individualist: Scouts prefer to be alone, and work better by themselves. When operating solo, they receive a +1 bonus to the following skills: Concentration, Drive, Gather Information, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Pilot, Search, and Spot. This bonus increases to +2 at 5th Level and again every five levels thereafter.

Survivalist: Scouts are adept at survival in a great many environments. They receive a +1 bonus to their Survival skill each level, beginning at 2nd Level.

Surveyor: At 3rd Level, a Scout has been to a great many planets and seen far more than most humans. He receives a +2 bonus to all Knowledge checks related to distant worlds, interstellar navigation, and travel throughout the Galaxy. This bonus is

increased by a further +2 every three additional Scout levels; i.e., it is +4 at 6th Level, +6 at 9th Level, and so on.

Light Sleeper: At 4th Level, the Scout has trained himself to be able to operate with less sleep than normal people. He receives the Light Sleeper feat for free, if he does not already have it. At 8th Level, all benefits of this feat are doubled.

Bonus Feat: At 5th Level, a Scout receives a bonus feat related to his exploration specialty. Depending on the choice he made when he received the Exploration feat at 1st Level, he receives one of the following feats: Mountaineer, Forester, Desert Dweller, Seagoing, or Low/High-G Tolerance. For the latter feat, the Scout may select either type at his option.

Personal Ship: At 10th Level, the Scout acquires his own ship. The type of vessel can vary, but generally will be of the pinnacle class or smaller. The precise type depends on the sort of missions the scout has been undertaking - a surveyor would prefer a smaller, less noticeable craft, while someone with a more commercial bent will pick up a freighter or fast freighter. Exactly how the ship winds up in the Scout's possession depends upon the events currently occurring in the campaign, but it will not simply appear from thin air. It might be a reward from a satisfied employer, or a derelict the Scout discovers while exploring a distant star. He could even win it in a card game! Regardless of the means, the ship is the Scout's property - he owns it, along with all the responsibilities it brings. He will not sell it, however, unless the circumstances are dire. After all, he has worked his entire life and career to get his own ship. He will not give it up easily or on a whim! The ship is a unique item, so if it is destroyed or lost, it will not be replaced.

Smuggler

When someone wants something delivered from one place to another without it being noticed or detected, the Smuggler is who they call. While most Smugglers operate illegally, shipping contraband items at a constant risk of discovery and arrest, others are simply otherwise honest businessmen trying to duck taxes and import duties. A few are highly trained specialists who work for corporations or other organisations moving restricted goods from place to place without the knowledge of the government. Still others are adept at smuggling people, be they criminals on the run from the law, blips trying to avoid the Psi Corps bloodhounds, or anyone else trying to move to a new location without being found.

Whatever their true nature, Smugglers are adept at the art of concealment, and because they know all the tricks, they can find things equally well. A high-level Smuggler could hide the Tower of London in a freighter and make it past three security checkpoints and a customs official on his way out of Earth Alliance space.

To qualify to become a Smuggler, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Intelligence 13+, Charisma 12+.

Skills: Bluff 8 ranks, Disguise 8 ranks, Forgery 8 ranks.

Feats: None.

Class Skills

The Smuggler's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Profession (any) (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), and Technical (Int).

Skill Points Per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Smuggler prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Cargo Disguise: A Smuggler is a master of disguise, but only for cargo and other items, not necessarily for himself or other people. When he conceals something, he hides it using a Disguise check, but cannot benefit from any Charisma bonuses - the object or

item does not have a relevant Charisma score of its own. This Disguise check is then used to oppose the Spot or Search check used by anyone looking over the cargo or object. A Smuggler earns a +1 bonus to his Disguise skill per level to conceal items in this way, but not for any other purpose.

Holdout: At 2nd Level, a Smuggler may conceal any one small weapon or similar object somewhere on his person in such a way that anyone searching him will suffer a -4 penalty to spot the device. The weapon could be a small gun, blade, or other item, but nothing larger than a pistol. This ability only applies to standard pat-downs or electronic detection devices, not a detailed strip-search or anything truly thorough. This bonus will not affect telepathic attempts to locate a weapon by reading the Smuggler's mind. At 6th Level, the searcher's penalty is increased to -8, and at 10th Level, the Smuggler is so good at hiding a weapon that it simply cannot be found at all without a thorough search. Note that this ability functions on only a single weapon or other object, regardless of level, and works only on the Smuggler himself, not someone else. Hiding an item in this way requires two full rounds. Also, if the item hidden is a weapon, locating and drawing it requires a full round action due to the methods used for concealment.

Air of Legitimacy: At 3rd Level, the Smuggler is able to carry himself in such a way that others just naturally believe he is who he says he is, and is where he is supposed to be. He receives a +2 bonus to his Bluff, Disguise, Forgery, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks where these relate to his own person and his presence. This bonus is increased by a further +2 every three levels, so it becomes +4 at 6th Level, +6 at 9th Level, and so on.

Hidden Compartments: At 4th Level, a Smuggler can build a hidden compartment in nearly anything. Even something as simple as a wristwatch or belt buckle can be modified to conceal small objects. Installing a hidden compartment requires a Technical (Mechanical) check at a DC determined by the Games Master based on the size and complexity of the object in question. Putting a false bottom in a desk drawer, for example, would not be nearly as difficult as hollowing out a tiny earring.



The Smuggler

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+0	+0	Cargo Disguise
2	+1	+2	+0	+0	Holdout
3	+2	+2	+1	+1	Air of Legitimacy
4	+3	+2	+1	+1	Hidden Compartments
5	+3	+3	+1	+1	
6	+4	+3	+2	+2	
7	+5	+4	+2	+2	
8	+6/+1	+4	+2	+2	
9	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	
10	+7/+2	+5	+3	+3	Smuggler's Escape

The Smuggler must, of course, have the proper tools to create a secret compartment. Once constructed, the compartment adds +4 to any Disguise checks used to conceal items within the original object. However, if the Technical roll fails, no compartment may be installed in that item at all. Depending on the size of the object, considerable repairs may also be necessary, and small items may well be destroyed by the failed attempt.

Smuggler's Escape: At 10th Level, a Smuggler has become so careful and cautious about his dealings with others that he calculates escape routes without even thinking about it. Whenever a situation occurs that could have terrible results - a blow that would kill him, the destruction of his fighter, his capture by police forces, or similar events - he may invoke the Smuggler's Escape. His desperately groping mind manages to calculate some amazing means of escape that otherwise might have eluded him. Just as the death blow strikes, he turns his head away so the force of the strike hits the nearby wall instead. As the missile is about to hit his fighter, he dives in panic and watches the explosion blossom harmlessly a few metres away. The police forces that had him at their mercy forgot to guard a ventilation shaft just wide enough to fit through. And so on. Regardless of the route used, the Smuggler manages to escape for the moment, although not necessarily without injury. Of course, if he does find a hole to wriggle into, he must still actually get out of the area before pursuit can relocate him. The escape is not always successful in the end. This ability can be used once per day.

Sniper

The Sniper is a highly trained specialist in stealth and marksmanship. Patience and timing are his greatest allies. Lurking in the shadows, the Sniper can wait motionless for hours, waiting for just the right moment to strike. Once his job is done, he melts away into the darkness. In addition to the obvious military use of sharpshooters of this quality, they are also highly in demand by police squads, security agencies, criminal elements, and terrorist organisations. Some of the very best are not in the employ of the Special Forces, but make their living as assassins.

To qualify to become a Sniper, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Dexterity 13+, Will save 6+, base attack bonus +5 or higher.

Skills: Balance 6 ranks, Concentration 8 ranks, Hide 8 ranks.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (any rifle weapon).

Class Skills

The Sniper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Technical (Int).

Skill Points Per Level: 2 + Int modifier.



The Sniper

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Marksmanship, Gun Readiness
2	+2	+0	+2	+0	Aim Mastery
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Bonus Feat
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Gun Mastery
5	+5	+1	+3	+1	
6	+6/+1	+2	+3	+2	Bonus Feat
7	+7/+2	+2	+4	+2	
8	+8/+3	+2	+4	+2	
9	+9/+4	+3	+4	+3	Bonus Feat
10	+10/+5	+3	+5	+3	

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Sniper prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Marksmanship: At 1st Level, the Sniper automatically receives the Marksman feat. Furthermore, at 10th Level, he may use this feat without losing the aiming penalties.

Gun Readiness: At 1st Level, a Sniper who has a rifle in hand and ready to fire receives a +4 to his Initiative check in combat. This bonus is increased by +2 at each three levels thereafter, so at 4th Level it is +6, at 7th Level +8, and so on.

Aim Mastery: At 2nd Level, the Sniper's abilities when aiming are increased. On the third round of any aiming attempt, he receives +4 to hit instead of +3. At 4th Level, his bonus on the second round is increased to +3 and his bonus on the third becomes +5. At 6th Level, his bonus on the first round is +2, on the second +4, and the third +6. At 8th Level, he may continue to aim even if his target disappears from view for no longer than the duration of a single round. He may not shoot during the round the target is out of sight, but can fire when they reappear or may continue aiming at that point at his option. Aiming bonuses do not accrue while the target is out of view.

Bonus Feats: The Sniper gains a variety of increased abilities over time. At 3rd Level, and again every third level after that, he receives a bonus feat from the following list: Alertness, Endurance, Improved Critical, Nerves of Steel, Precise Shot, Rapid Aim, Weapon Focus, Level-Headed, or Unflappable. Rapid Aim is not available until 6th Level, however. The Level-Headed and Unflappable feats may be selected even if the Sniper is not from a listed region or colony.

Gun Mastery: At 4th Level, the Sniper is so skilled with guns that he can literally pick a fly off a companion's head at fifty metres. He receives a +2 competence bonus to his attack all with any rifle weapon, so long as it is not rapid-fired. This bonus does not apply to grenades or any other sort of ranged weapon and does not stack with aiming benefits. The Gun Mastery bonus is doubled to +4 at 8th Level.

Troubleshooter

When something goes wrong with any sort of equipment or machinery, experts are called in to make repairs and get things running again. These troubleshooters are skilled in the art of making things work, from the simplest piece of electronics up to the most complicated starship engine. Even a troubleshooter with no training at all in a particular field has enough general knowledge about the basic process to piece things together. A true master of the art can take what looks like a pile of junk and turn it into something useful in less time than the average person takes to have breakfast.



To qualify to become a Troubleshooter, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Dexterity 12+, Intelligence 11+, Wisdom 14+.

Skills: Technical (any) 8 ranks, Computer Use 8 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus (technical).

Class Skills

The Troubleshooter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Technical (Int).

Skill Points Per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Troubleshooter prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Repair Mastery: A Troubleshooter is a master of repairs. He can take virtually any broken object or piece of equipment, study it for a moment, and figure out how to fix it - even if he

has never seen anything like it before. He receives a +1 per level bonus to all Technical skill checks made to repair any broken item.

Continuing Education: The Troubleshooter is also highly educated. If he hasn't had a specific course on something, he probably has a technical journal or manual about it somewhere in his quarters. He receives a +1 per level bonus to any one Knowledge specialty of his choice. This bonus need not be applied to the same specialty every level, but could be assigned to any field he wishes. For example, a 5th Level Troubleshooter could have assigned +3 to Knowledge (Astrophysics), +1 to Knowledge (Structural Engineering), and +1 to Knowledge (Law).

Kit Bashing: Troubleshooters of 2nd Level or higher have the uncanny ability to build things out of seemingly unrelated pieces of equipment. For example, if the team's only functioning radio has been destroyed, a Troubleshooter could probably figure out a way to cannibalise a hand computer and or similar item and turn it into a working communicator. The device he builds may not work for long, or very well, but it will get the job done. The Games Master determines the amount of time and equipment necessary to perform this amazing feat, and may require a Knowledge check depending on the type of item and the nature of the materials. The Troubleshooter then makes a Technical check at a DC determined by the Games Master based on the difficulty of the task and the available resources. Building a PPG out of a couple of pieces of bailing wire and a copper tube would be almost impossible, for example, while constructing a radio given a roomful of computer equipment

might not be all that tough - at least, not for a Troubleshooter. At 2nd Level, devices built using this ability must be fairly simple, on the order of a clock or communicator. At 6th Level, the machines can be much more complex, possibly including simple weapons, small vehicles, or even explosives. At 10th Level, the Troubleshooter can build almost anything the Earth Alliance has in its inventory, given enough time and the right materials. He could even construct a nuclear weapon, if he had access to the proper radioactive elements.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd Level, and again every three levels thereafter, the Troubleshooter gains a bonus feat. This must be selected from the following list: Data Access, Efficient, Fierce Competitor, Forward Thinking, Level-Headed, Skill Focus (computer use, concentration or technical), Stubborn, or Vehicular Engineer. The Troubleshooter is permitted to select feats on this list that are normally reserved only to residents of a particular region or colony.

Single-Mindedness: At 5th Level, a Troubleshooter engaged in any sort of technical work (engineering, mechanical, repairs, or whatever) can become so engrossed in what he is doing that he literally fails to notice anything going on around him. He receives a +8 bonus on the first Concentration check required over the course of that single task, and has a +4 bonus against the second Concentration check. Further checks are made with no bonus. At 10th Level, a Troubleshooter's single-mindedness is almost impossible to crack - these bonuses are doubled! A nuke going off close by might not be enough to distract a high level Troubleshooter in the middle of a project...

The Troubleshooter

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	Repair Mastery, Continuing Education
2	+1	+0	+2	+0	Kit Bashing
3	+2	+1	+2	+1	Bonus Feat
4	+3	+1	+2	+1	
5	+3	+1	+3	+1	Single-Mindedness
6	+4	+2	+3	+2	Bonus Feat
7	+5	+2	+4	+2	
8	+6/+1	+2	+4	+2	
9	+6/+1	+3	+4	+3	Bonus Feat
10	+7/+2	+3	+5	+3	

Telepaths

The history of telepaths on Earth begins in 2115, when two students at the Harvard School of Medicine produced a study called 'Investigations Into Biochemical Sensory Transmission.' Intended as a joke, the paper was actually intended to debunk telepathy. Instead, the researchers found the first recorded evidence that telepaths did, in fact, exist. Later research by the John Hopkins University Medical School confirmed the findings, and extrasensory perception became an established fact of science.

The results were immediate. People tend to fear the unknown, and here were monsters right in their very midst! A person who could read another's mind was capable of violating one's very privacy and uncover the darkest secrets of their soul. Worse still, the military possibilities boggled the mind. A telepathic spy could easily compromise any governmental secret just by being in the same room as someone with confidential information in their mind. And, as perhaps the final nail in the coffin, there was no way to prevent a telepath from using his abilities. Technologies for protection simply did not exist.

Initially, all that was officially desired was a way to regulate telepaths and prevent these crimes from happening. This was not enough, though. The people of the world went on what can only be described as a witch hunt. Telepaths were hunted down and killed because of their abilities, regardless of how weak those powers actually were. Even some normals were shot or lynched simply because they appeared to demonstrate psychic talent. A large number of the victims were only children. The development of a genetic test to identify telepaths, successful in approximately 70% of all cases, only caused the witch hunt to intensify.

In 2117, Senator Lee Crawford appeared on television to appeal for reason. He used a telepathic child to manipulate the show's host into appearing ashamed for what was being done to those with extrasensory powers. Although his purpose was entirely political, he did manage to arrange for the formation of the Metasensory Regulation Authority (MRA). This was a global organisation intended to give telepaths a safe place to live and practice their abilities without fear of persecution. The Metasensory Compound, also known as 'Teetown,' was constructed near Geneva for this very purpose. All telepaths were required to register themselves and live there. Those who did not were forced to take a newly developed anti-psycho drug in order to live their lives. A few - those who could not be detected by genetic markers - remained on the run, trying to stay under the Metasensory Regulation Authority's radar.

For a while, these rogues remained safe as long as they kept their powers a secret. This changed when a powerful telepath named Blood joined the MRA for the purpose of hunting down rogues. Blood, whose real name was Desa Alexander, was a ruthless killer who tracked and killed those telepaths who refused to obey the law, as well as anyone who got in her way. Blood, and those who followed her, believed telepaths to be her own kind. Furthermore, she felt that normal humans were not even members of the same species. If a telepath, or 'teep' as they were becoming known, needed to be killed, a telepath

would be the one to do it. Normals did not have the right to do so.

This eventually led to serious problems. During a hunt, Blood shot and killed a non-telepath guard who had just shot her quarry. This led to a public outcry and a Senatorial investigation of not only the incident but the entire Metasensory Regulation Authority. During the hearings, a group of rogue telepaths attempted to assassinate one of the senators in attendance. However, Blood detected the plan and gave her own life to stop it. In response, the Senate admitted it made a mistake and all charges against the MSA were dropped, ending the threat to the organisation and securing Senator Crawford's position.

Years later, after the arrival of the Centauri, a new wave of hatred swept across the Alliance. The discovery that the Centauri also had telepaths among their number suggested that perhaps those with extrasensory abilities were part of some deep-lying alien plot. Only after much loss of life did reason finally prevail. Telepaths were recognised as a necessary part of the human race, if for the sole reason that since alien races had them, humans needed them as well - if only for their own defence.

To further make use of telepaths, the Earth Alliance created the organisation known as Psi Corps in 2161. Senator Crawford, a normal, was appointed to head this new group, but was killed in a car bomb explosion shortly thereafter. This was the work of the very same rogue telepath who tried to break up Blood's hearings decades before. The result was Kevin Vacit's appointment to the leadership of the Psi Corps. He was one of those few telepaths who could not be detected by genetic screening. Vacit managed to keep his abilities a secret for years as he rose in the Alliance hierarchy, and now he was where he wanted to be. From here, he tried to assist telepaths as best he could, especially his own daughter, who was now a rogue.

His daughter Fiona was instrumental in creating the first organised resistance against the Psi Corps. The resistance, secretly aided by Vacit even as he strengthened the Corps, gradually grew in power. Its members rescued rogues, helped their fellows escape from re-education camps, and bombed the factories that produced sleeper drugs. Things quickly got out of hand, and Vacit was forced to take action. He learned the location of a resistance base and ordered it attacked, but he wanted the prisoners taken alive for re-education. He did not want martyrs, nor did he wish to harm those he considered his own people. Tragically, his daughter and her husband killed themselves rather than be taken to Teetown for conversion. They left behind a son, whom Vacit decided to raise as a true child of the Psi Corps. He renamed the baby Alfred Bester.

Bester was an extremely powerful telepath who ironically grew up to become a hunter of those in the underground who were once his own family. In 2223, he killed the leader of the resistance, and later established the Bloodhound Units, who would hunt down rogues and other criminals. He eventually moved to kill the director of Psi Corps itself, a normal who hated all telepaths. In doing this, Bester became one of the most influential men in the Corps, and now heads their efforts to root out rogues and advanced the cause of telepaths through any means necessary.

Psi Corps

All telepaths are required to register with Psi Corps. In order to ensure compliance, a variety of tests are performed on humans throughout the Alliance. Although it is possible to avoid these tests, such things are extremely rare. Even those living in poor nations or remote areas are still required to deliver all children up for examination. Hiding a baby or falsifying tests is a crime punishable by fines, imprisonment, or worse.

The original DNA check developed in 2116 is still used as the first investigation of telepathic potential. This test is accurate in 70% of cases. The test does not identify any single gene in particular, but a scattered arrangement of potential genes that determine overall telepathic strength. These genes tend to be passed on to children, primarily through the mother's chromosomes.

Those who are missed by the original testing can still be located by further examinations later in life. A good number of telepaths still escape even this, however, and are not recognised until they begin to manifest their abilities. This manifestation is referred to as a 'telepathic awakening,' and often occurs during puberty, although this is not always the case. Some latent telepaths do not discover their abilities until adulthood. An awakening could be gradual, and on some occasions might even be denied or ignored by the individual. Sometimes, brought on by stress or other factors, it can be extreme, resulting in an uncontrollable telepathic or telekinetic outburst called a 'mindquake.'

Once a telepath has been located and identified, they are tested and assigned a psi rating, or P-rating. This rating generally remains fixed throughout one's life, although there are rare instances of it growing slightly powerful over time, or being increased through drugs or other manipulations. Psi Corps has also been attempting to increase telepathic power by genetic matching, or pre-determined pairings of compatible male and female telepaths. These pairings may even be forced upon unwilling partners, or alternative methods of inducing offspring may be used.

In general, the P-ratings are treated by Psi Corps as follows:

P1-P2: These are relatively weak abilities, sometimes empathic in nature. Telepaths of this level are rarely trained or used in breeding programs, but they are still telepaths and are treated as part of the 'family.'

P3-P4: Those with these mild abilities are given typically administrative or bureaucratic positions within the Corps. They also operate testing facilities and the like.

P5-P6: This is considered 'average' telepathic strength. Those at this level are given commercial positions and jobs with companies or businesses. Their typical duties involve overseeing transactions and deals to ensure both sides are living up to their sides of any arrangement. They are paid, but this money belongs to the Corps, not the individual.

P7-P8: Stronger telepaths are often given positions of leadership or management within the Corps. They are also frequently assigned as military liaisons to various EarthForce units. Some become spies or agents.

P9-P10: These very strong individuals are capable of a great many powerful abilities, and are frequently used as indoctrinators of other telepaths. They can be ruthless interrogators, but also make excellent teachers and educators.

P11-P12: Those at the very highest level of telepathic power are used for the most difficult and dangerous jobs. A large number of them become Psi Cops, but others also act as spies, deep cover agents, and the like.

P13+: While it is generally considered impossible to achieve these levels under ordinary circumstances, they can be reached temporarily through the use of certain disciplines or with the aid of drugs or other equipment. Some Psi Corps experiments have been undertaken to permanently increase telepathic ability, but these have generally been failures. Individuals who reach this level, even briefly, experience a breaking down of the structure of the universe into its components, at least from a mental point of view. While telekinesis, telepathy, and other metasensory abilities are drastically increased, most people cannot deal with such powers and quickly go insane.

After a telepath has been rated, he is usually taken to Teetown and raised as part of the Corps. This occurs regardless of the telepath's country of origin, and even applies to those on other colonies. The Psi Corps becomes their 'mother and father' from that point on. A child of normal parents may still see them at regular visitation periods, but their emotional connection is gradually stripped away. The young telepath is taught to control his own powers as he matures, and is also educated in the ways of the Corps, at a place called the Minor Academy. Training is difficult, but those who struggle are assigned mentors who help them eventually succeed. Telepaths do not give up easily, a lesson that is taught over and over again in the Academy.

There is another school in Teetown - the Major Academy. This special college is used only to educate the most powerful P11s and P12s for future work as Psi Cops. Even so, only the very best are permitted to join the 'Telepath Police.' The rest become Bloodhounds, or take on some other, less dangerous position.

Regardless of a telepath's strength or potential, they do not have the freedom to choose their own careers. The Psi Corps assigns them a job based on their aptitudes and abilities. Of course, they try not to put someone into a position that they despise, but this is not always possible. Telepaths go where they are needed. They do, however, rotate around frequently, so even someone placed in a hated job will eventually receive some relief.

Members of Psi Corps outside of Teetown almost always wear the Psi Corps badge to identify them to other telepaths and to normals. They also frequently wear gloves and long-sleeved, full-body clothing to minimise direct contact with others, although this is not an absolute requirement. The only exception to these general rules might be a telepath acting on some sort of undercover assignment. Otherwise, a telepath

without the Psi Corps badge will be considered a rogue, or 'blip,' and will be hunted down by his own kind if discovered.

Within the Earth Alliance, telepaths must follow certain other rules, most of which are created to ensure the privacy of normals. First and foremost, telepaths may not scan another unless specifically authorised by that person or his next of kin. This prevents most telepaths from using their powers to strip information out of an unwilling target. They also are not permitted to intrude into a person's mind in any other way, such as to insert thoughts or deliver messages, unless that person agrees to it in advance. Information gained by telepathy can be employed for the purposes of acquiring a search warrant or take other actions for security purposes, but is not admissible as evidence in court. A scan of a dying person, if authorised by that individual or his next of kin, is permitted, but this is the only exception.

For Psi Cops, the rules are slightly different. A Psi Cop always has the right to scan any telepath, who is required by Psi Corps rules to submit without resistance. Psi Cops can also deliver messages to others without restriction. Although they are technically not allowed to scan others without authorisation, they have some ability to get away with it due to their position. Repeated violations will result in discipline, but a few scans here and there - if proven to be necessary - are permitted.

Despite the overwhelming nature of Psi Corps, not all telepaths join that organisation. The choice is always left up to the individual, although in the case of more powerful telepaths, significant pressure can be put on them to change their minds. Those who still refuse are required to take sleeper drugs, generally just called 'sleepers.' These are taken in controlled doses once per week, but continued use can cause severe depression and other mental problems. Full rules for sleepers are found on p185.

There are, however, a few others who choose a third option: going rogue. A rogue telepath, or 'blip,' must first manage to escape all the genetic tests and pass through puberty without manifesting any powers. Those few who do slip through the cracks must also make a conscious choice to keep their powers a secret, as otherwise they will be quickly located and apprehended by the dreaded bloodhounds. Since self-training is very difficult, blips generally receive help from some source, either sympathetic normals or the 'underground railroad.' The fate of a rogue who winds up captured is either the submission to sleepers or forced indoctrination into Psi Corps - a painful procedure that can drastically alter one's personality until they no longer seem to be the same person at all.

Telepath Characters

Telepaths within EarthForce have their own separate society, one that is totally different from that of normal humans. The creation of Psi Corps was only one reason for this schism. Another is simple genetics, and the basic differences between telepaths and normals. Most telepaths honestly believe they are superior. They insist that the mutation that created them and their abilities is one that represents the next step in the evolution of humankind. As homo sapiens differs from the neanderthal,

so do telepaths feel they differ from ordinary people, leading to a belief in the evolution of homo superior.

Even more importantly, the separation of telepaths from human society has only acted to further divide the two peoples. Normal humans - 'mundanes' - tend to view telepaths with suspicion and fear. Even a mundane that tries to hide his true feelings outwardly cannot keep his emotions secret from someone who can literally read thoughts. Because of this, most telepaths avoid mundanes at all costs and keep to themselves when forced to be among them.

Psi Corps is not a large organisation. The number of actual telepaths it contains is unknown, but is probably less than a million humans. Compared to a galactic population of over twelve billion, that is an extremely small percentage. Psi Corps does not seem interested in actively increasing their numbers, only in separating their people from the mundanes and training them in the use of their special abilities. Exactly what Psi Corps's ultimate goals are, if anything lies beyond this simple exterior, remains a mystery.

Psi Corps does train a few of its best and brightest for special missions. These translate into some of the prestige classes listed hereafter. Blips, too, are available as a special class, although they are treated somewhat differently.

Black Ops Specialist

Some telepaths are specifically trained to use their gifts for military or espionage purposes. While technically still part of Psi Corps, they are specifically trained in methods to hide their true abilities from others. This allows them to move among mundanes without fear of discovery. A Black Ops Specialist may appear to be a soldier, diplomat, agent, scientist, or even an ordinary worker, but in fact they are an undercover agent for Psi Corps...or perhaps some other organisation. They might be part of some even deeper conspiracy that even they themselves are unaware of.

Deep Sleep Ops: In extremely rare cases, a powerful Black Ops Specialist may be selected for a deep cover operation. Known as a 'deep sleep' or 'sleeper,' such an individual is imprinted with a totally different personality that is unaware it is actually a spy. The new personality is, for all intents and purposes, a completely different character, one that may or may not possess any telepathic powers of its own. The personality is so ingrained that it has its own memories, background, and life, although it may not possess any skills or abilities the original person had. A Deep Sleeper must train himself in any unusual skills prior to undertaking the mission.

The mental manipulations required to create a Deep Sleeper are extremely complex and detailed, usually requiring weeks of telepathic work involving numerous P12-level Black Ops Specialists, many of whom must use the gestalt ability to achieve the level of mental power required to complete the operation. Once converted, the Sleeper is delivered to his new location with a totally false series of memories explaining his reasons for being there. The new personality takes over from this point, and is so perfectly installed that even a telepathic

deep scan will not locate the original. Only a special mental code, delivered at the conclusion of the mission, will return the individual to his original state. The false personality is totally destroyed when this is done, with no hope of recovery.

While the Sleeper is in hiding, his personality may not normally perform any direct activities, although he is aware of anything and everything that occurs. Only late at night, while the false personality sleeps, can the hidden personality come out. This can only be done for a period of no more than an hour, while the overlying personality is completely submerged in a dream state. The Sleeper can then take control of the body, which moves as if sleepwalking. The Sleeper cannot engage in combat in this state, but can attempt to use simple skills, and can use telepathic abilities that do not require intense concentration or long-term activities. Typically, the Sleeper does this sort of thing very sparingly, to avoid giving his presence away. One use might be to secretly send a report back to Psi Corps on a regular basis. The Sleeper is always careful to ensure he does not awaken while anyone else is present, and does not leave any evidence of his nocturnal activities.

In *Babylon5*, being a Deep Sleeper has little direct value for a player - this ability would be more appropriate for a non-player character. One potential exception might come if a player discovers, through the course of a module or scenario, that his character is actually a Deep Sleeper in disguise. This could make for some very interesting roleplaying. What does a person do when he discovers, to his surprise, that he is actually a powerful telepathic spy - and that the issuance of a single mental command would result in his personality's instant annihilation? Is there any way he could turn the tables and destroy that hidden time bomb in his psyche? Such an effort could be the subject of a long and complicated scenario.

To qualify to become a Black Ops Specialist, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Charisma 13+, Intelligence 13+. A Black Ops Specialist does not need to be a particularly strong telepath to be useful in this role, so no specific P-rating is required. He must, however, be a member in good standing of Psi Corps.

Skills: Bluff 6 ranks, Concentration 8 ranks, Knowledge (Telepathy) 8 ranks, Telepathy 8 ranks.

Feats: At least two telepath feats.

Class Skills

The Black Ops Specialist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (telepathy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Technical (Int), and Telepathy (Cha).

Skill Points Per Level: 8 + Int modifier.



Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Black Ops Specialist prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Enhanced Telepathy: The Black Ops Specialist is trained in a wide variety of different telepathic abilities. At 1st Level, and again every four levels thereafter, he receives an additional bonus telepath feat.

Accident-Free: A Black Ops Specialist has such amazing control over his telepathic abilities that he need never worry about accidental scans.

Psi-Assisted Skills: A Black Ops Specialist has been trained in the art of secretly employing telepathy while attempting various skills. Beginning at 2nd Level, he may roll a Telepathy check (DC 20) prior to attempting any of the skills on the list below. The amount by which the roll succeeds is then applied to the skill check as a bonus, but if the check fails, the amount by which it fails is applied as a negative modifier. A psi-assisted skill requires direct concentration, so this feature may be used only if no other telepathic abilities are currently in operation. Note that if the target is a telepath or latent telepath, they will immediately become aware that telepathy is being used on them, which could affect their reaction to the skill. Since none of these skills actually force the target to do anything against their will, there is no saving throw, but their reaction to the attempt could be completely altered by the knowledge that telepathy is involved. For example, an attempt to manipulate a Bluff check would be a dead giveaway that a lie is involved, thus spoiling the skill - but an Intimidate check might actually be enhanced by the knowledge that the interrogator is, in fact, another telepath!

Level	Assisted Skill	Suggested Use
2 nd	Gather Information	Discover the desired information or where to find it
3 rd	Perform	Convince a single viewer that they enjoyed the performance
4 th	Pick Pocket	Make the victim not notice the pickpocket
5 th	Move Silently	Slip past or distract a single guard
6 th	Disguise	Make a viewer unable to see through the disguise
7 th	Sense Motive	Determine whether the speaker is lying
8 th	Diplomacy	Make a single target believe you are more charismatic
9 th	Intimidate	Convince someone to do what you tell them to
10 th	Bluff	Make any lie sound believable

The use of any psi-assisted skill is so subtle that it rarely leaves a psychic fingerprint. Anyone attempting to read the target or area for telepathic activity using the Sense Telepathy ability will come up empty, unless the original psi-assisted skill's Telepathy check failed by 5 or more.

Absolute Secrecy: Beginning at 3rd Level, a Black Ops Specialist is so highly trained in keeping his abilities secret that he can conceal his true nature from others. Even if he employs a telepathic ability in the presence of someone of a higher P-rating, they will not detect it unless they are in direct physical contact with the Black Ops Specialist. Additionally, another telepath cannot detect a Black Ops Specialist's telepathic abilities or P-rating with the Sense Telepathy ability. They could, however, discover it with a deep scan.

P-Strengthening: At 4th Level, a Black Ops Specialist gains the ability to temporarily increase his P-rating by focusing his entire being on the ability he is attempting. Using this ability automatically costs 2 points of subdual damage regardless of success. The character must succeed simultaneously in both the normal Telepathy check and a Concentration check of the same DC. Failing the Telepathy check works as usual, but failing the Concentration check does not cause the telepathic ability to fail - it only leaves the effective P-rating unchanged. (Of course, if the ability being attempted requires a higher P-rating than the user now possesses, failure is automatic.) If the Concentration check succeeds, the telepathic ability is employed as if the character had a P-rating 1 point higher for every 5 points or fraction thereof that the Concentration check was successful. Thus, succeeding by zero to four points above the required threshold increases the P-rating by +1, five to nine +2, 10 to 14 +3, and so on. The increased P-rating functions only for that single telepathic ability for as long as it is maintained without interruption - the telepath's P-rating is not improved for any other purpose. The P-Strengthening ability may permit a telepath to employ an ability normally beyond their range, if the success rolls are high enough. A Black Ops Specialist can use this ability once per day for each level above 3rd; i.e., once at 4th level, twice at 5th, three times at 6th, and so on.

Psychic Invisibility: At 10th Level, a Black Ops Specialist has honed his stealth abilities to a level beyond those of most telepaths. In effect, he can make himself invisible, allowing him to walk through a crowded room or past a security guard post without being noticed. Psychic invisibility can affect up to a number of individuals at any given moment equal to the Black Ops Specialist's P-rating (which could possibly be enhanced by P-Strengthening). The Black Ops Specialist simply makes them not notice his passing. He is not actually invisible, and can be detected by other observers beyond the effective range of 100 feet, or by electronic security devices. If any observers are telepaths, they will detect the presence of telepathic abilities in use on a successful Telepath check, but cannot determine the source or direction. Psychic Invisibility can be used three times per day, plus one for each level above 10th. Each use lasts

The Black Ops Specialist

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Enhanced Telepathy, Accident-Free
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Psi-Assisted Skill
3	+2	+1	+1	+2	Absolute Secrecy
4	+3	+1	+1	+2	P-Strengthening
5	+3	+1	+1	+3	Enhanced Telepathy
6	+4	+2	+2	+3	
7	+5	+2	+2	+4	
8	+6/+1	+2	+2	+4	
9	+6/+1	+3	+3	+4	Enhanced Telepathy
10	+7/+2	+3	+3	+5	Psychic Invisibility

no more than one minute, and requires the telepath's complete concentration - any interruption or use of another ability or skill cancels the invisibility at once. The telepath may not attack while invisible without losing concentration automatically. He can, however, perform simple activities such as picking up or dropping small objects, writing a message, or touching a few keys on a keyboard without losing his invisibility.

Bloodhound

Bloodhounds are the hunters of Psi Corps. Their main job is to locate, track, and bring in rogue telepaths, wanted criminals, dangerous revolutionaries, and other unsavoury types. They do their job in any number of ways, but generally depend on stealth and guile to surprise their targets. Often, a wrongdoer has no idea that a bloodhound is on their trail until the moment the arrest is made.

Bloodhounds occupy a unique place in between the cracks of society's laws. To carry out their function, they are authorised to make surface scans of anyone they encounter during the course of carrying out their duties. Anything they learn in this way must be kept in the highest confidence and cannot be revealed to anyone, even other telepaths. In this, Bloodhounds are held to a standard of conduct higher than any other members of Psi Corps.

Legally, a Bloodhound may not use evidence obtained through telepathy as the basis to make an arrest. Of course, this does not apply to any blips he discovers, but if he finds a criminal or terrorist - or even someone just planning to commit a crime - he can use what he learned to begin a more detailed investigation. Most of the time, there are far too few Bloodhounds to track down every petty thief they stumble across, so they are rarely used for this purpose. Instead, a Bloodhound will be sent to an area where enemies of society are known to lurk, where the telepaths perform random scans of passers-by. In areas where security is particularly critical, Bloodhounds sometimes make more intrusive scans, but these require permission. Of course, anyone who refuses to grant that permission is promptly escorted out of the area, to be treated with the greatest of suspicion thereafter.

Note that a Bloodhound is only authorised to make scans of unwilling subjects when actually performing their job, and only when local authorities are informed of his presence. Under any other circumstances, he must obey the same rules as any other member of Psi Corps.

To qualify to become a Bloodhound, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Charisma 12+

P-Rating: 9 or higher.

Skills: Bluff 6 ranks, Concentration 8 ranks, Telepathy 8 ranks.

Feats: Mindshredder and at least one other telepath feat.

Class Skills

The Bloodhound's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pick Pocket (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Technical (Int), and Telepathy (Cha).

Skill Points Per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Bloodhound prestige class.

Blip Hunter: Bloodhounds are specifically trained to sniff out Blips and can overcome a rogue's psychic stealth ability. The Bloodhound receives a +1 per level bonus to his Telepathy check when opposing the Blip's Bluff check.

Scan Specialisation: A Bloodhound is particularly skilled at the Sense Telepathy and Surface Scan telepathic abilities. For every two levels he possesses, he gains +1 to his Telepathy check when using these powers. I.e., at 2nd Level he has +1, 4th Level is +2, and so on.

Enhanced Telepathy: Bloodhounds are also highly trained telepaths with a wide variety of abilities. Beginning at 2nd Level, they receive a bonus telepath feat every 4 levels.

Personal Memory Erasure: At 3rd Level, a Bloodhound learns the ability to automatically forget anything he wishes, completely wiping it from his mind so that neither he nor any other telepath can ever find it again. In general, this is done for any thoughts he accidentally reads that are of no use to him during his job - a sort of mental purging, if you will. The Bloodhound may also use it to destroy mental evidence of his own actions, even from himself. Once deleted, memories may never be recovered.

Maintain Concentration: At 4th Level, the Bloodhound receives the standard telepath's ability to maintain concentration on telepathic abilities used in a previous round, just as described in the Main Rulebook.

Psi-Assisted Skills: Beginning at 5th Level, the Bloodhound receives the ability to use his telepathy to assist certain skills. This functions in the same way as the ability of the same name used by the Black Ops Specialist, except that the Bloodhound is not nearly as good at it as his ultra-secret brethren. At 5th Level, he may psi-assist his Move Silently skill, at 7th Level he may assist his Sense Motive skill, at 9th Level he may assist his Intimidate skill, and at 10th Level he may assist his Bluff skill. No other skills may employ this ability.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Psi Experiment

Psi Corps has been known to occasionally conduct medical, genetic, and cybernetic experiments on telepaths in an attempt to alter or increase their abilities. The drug Dust is an outgrowth of one of these programs. Other experiments have been catastrophic failures, resulting in uncontrolled mindquakes, insanity, feeble-mindedness, death, and any number of lesser effects. A very small number are, however, successful - if only in limited fashion.

Within the Corps, a person who has survived a telepathic alteration experiment is known as a Psi Ex, usually shortened to PsiX or sometimes just 'X.' Their activities are usually closely monitored, often without their knowledge, to ensure they do not become dangerous or insane. Most of the time, an X remains stable, but his enhanced and altered abilities are known to have uncontrollable side effects, called 'quirks.' As time passes, many Psi Experiments find their powers changing and evolving, towards what they do not know. With each new ability, however, there is always a down side. Constantly fighting to keep themselves under control, the X's life is often a struggle just to keep the Corps from declaring them a menace. When that happens, there can be only one result...

To qualify to become a Psi Experiment, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Charisma 14+, Wisdom 14+, P-Rating 10 or less. A character selected for one of these experiments must have an extraordinarily stable mind and unusual strength of character. Extremely powerful telepaths are never selected, as they are too dangerous if they become uncontrolled.

Classes: A PsiX must be a Telepath. Blips and latent telepaths are not selected for experimentation.

Skills: Telepathy 8 ranks.



Feats: Iron Will, any two telepath feats.

Special: Must have been chosen by the Psi Corps to be experimented upon.

Class Skills

The Psi Experiment's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (telepathy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Telepathy (Cha).

Skill Points Per Level: The character receives skill points at the same rate as a Telepath of his P-rating - i.e., 8+Int Modifier for a P1-P2, 6+Int Modifier for a P3-P5, 4+Int Modifier for a P6-P8, or 2+Int Modifier for a P9-P10.

The Bloodhound

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Blip Hunter
2	+1	+2	+0	+2	Enhanced Telepathy, Scan Specialisation
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Personal Memory Erasure
4	+3	+2	+1	+2	Maintain Concentration
5	+3	+3	+1	+3	Psi-Assisted Skill
6	+4	+3	+2	+3	Enhanced Telepathy
7	+5	+4	+2	+4	Psi-Assisted Skill
8	+6/+1	+4	+2	+4	
9	+6/+1	+4	+3	+4	Psi-Assisted Skill
10	+7/+2	+5	+3	+5	Enhanced Telepathy, Psi-Assisted Skill

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Psi Experiment prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 2.

Constantly Advancing: A PsiX's abilities are constantly expanding and growing. If the character is multi-classing, the Psychic Experiment class must be selected at least every other level.

Strong-Willed: The X is under a constant struggle to control the ever-changing abilities at his command. For every two levels he takes in this class, he receives a +1 to his Will save when this saving throw relates to telepathic abilities (either his

own or those of an opponent being used upon him). Thus, he receives a +1 bonus at 2nd Level, +2 at 4th Level, and so on.

Random Power: Each time a new level of Psi Experiment is selected, the X's abilities grow and mature, manifesting a new power from the list below. The player should roll 1d20 on the following chart to see which ability appears. Most powers cannot be received more than once - if the roll indicates the same power again, simply re-roll. Exceptions are noted in the text. The player is permitted to add +1 to the d20 roll for every three full levels of PsiX he has achieved, but this is optional. If he takes this bonus here, he must also take it when rolling for random quirks, as listed hereafter.

Random Powers

Die Roll	Power
1	Automatic Communication: The telepath's Communication ability is enhanced (and he may use this ability even if only of the P1 level). Anyone with whom he is very familiar - i.e., friends or regular travelling companions - may receive messages from him at any time as a free action. No success roll is required, but the usual subdual damage is still received.
2	Inner Reserve: Once per day, the telepath may stand completely still as a full round action and recover 1d4 points of subdual damage that were caused by telepathic abilities. An X may receive this power several times, but each is used separately (i.e., if you have it twice, you cannot use both in the same round to return 2d4 subdual damage).
3	Ghost Projection: The telepath may create a 'ghost' of himself that moves and acts as he directs. Full concentration is required, and the telepath may not move or take any actions while controlling his projection. The ghost must remain within Medium range, and cannot speak or actually manipulate any objects. It appears solid and will be detected as a false image only on a Spot check (DC 25) unless it does something obviously abnormal, like walk through a wall or table. When created, the ghost appears anywhere within range that the telepath directs. This ability may be used no more than once per day and causes 1 point of subdual damage for every 3 rounds the ghost is being projected.
4	Improved Mind Shield: The telepath is always considered to have a Mind Shield active regardless of his P-rating. In addition, he receives a +1 bonus (per Psi Experiment level) to his Telepathy check when using Mind Shield.
5	Telepathic Sense: The telepath is capable of sensing telepathic emanations in any area he enters. He is considered to be permanently using the Sense Telepathy ability to detect evidence of telepathic actions in his immediate area. There is no subdual damage cost for this power and no concentration or Telepathy checks are required.
6	X Focus: The telepath has the uncanny ability to focus all his mind and will on a single telepathic task. The ability in question costs 2 points of subdual damage instead of 1 point, but the Telepathy check is at +8. This ability can be used once per day plus one additional time for every three levels of Telepath Experiment achieved.
7	Rock of Stability: The telepath's concentration is very difficult to break. When employing a telepathic ability, he automatically succeeds in the first Concentration check made to sustain that ability. The next Concentration check on that ability is at +4, the next is +3, and so on until no further bonus is available.
8	Unnatural Reactions: The telepath's reaction times are increased dramatically. He receives a +1 to all saving throws as long as he is conscious.
9	Unnatural Senses: The telepath's senses are heightened. He receives +2 to all Listen and Spot checks.
10	Mind over Body: The telepath can temporarily trade some of his physical strength for mental ability or strength of personality. For each level of PsiX he attains, he can trade 2 points of Strength or Constitution for 2 points of Intelligence or Charisma per day. Activating this power is a full round action and lasts 10 rounds. Strength or Constitution may not be lowered below 3 by this ability. The telepath need not trade all available points at once - for example, a 3 rd Level X could convert 4 Strength to Intelligence early in the day and 2 Constitution to Charisma later on. All trades must, however, be performed in 2-point increments.
11	Psychic Healing: The telepath can use his powers to literally heal wounds. Each day, he may heal a number of hit points of damage on himself or any other person he touches equal to his Charisma bonus plus his PsiX level.

12	Far Telepathy: The telepath receives the Far Telepathy feat. If he already has that feat, or acquires it later, it is increased to Ultra-Far Telepathy. At this level, the telepath can use any ability that requires line of sight regardless of the actual distance, so long as he can see the target.
13	Increased Rating: The telepath receives a permanent +1 to his P-rating. This does not affect the number of skill points received per level, however. This ability can be received multiple times. If this increases your P-rating over 12, roll twice for quirks on the chart hereafter.
14	Mental Fortress: The telepath receives the equivalent of the Mental Fortress feat. If they already have that feat, or acquire it later, the Damage Reduction is increased to +4.
15	Combat Enhancer: The telepath can temporarily increase his attack rating through the use of his enhanced psychic abilities. The attack rating can be increased by +1 for each level of PsiX he has attained. Each added point lasts 10 rounds and can be used but once per day. The X can use these bonuses as a free action but must declare them before any attack rolls are made. Each point can be added separately or in combination.
16	Hidden Power: The telepath can use any of his abilities without giving his presence away to other telepaths. For Communication, Locate Mind, Mind Shield, Second Sight, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan, and Warning, this is done automatically whenever the ability is manifested. For all others, the telepath must choose to hide the power and must pay an additional point of subdual damage to keep it hidden.
17	Shield of Force: The telepath is capable of erecting an invisible shield of psychic energy around his body for short periods. This shield has a DR of 1, plus a further 1 point for every 3 full levels of the PsiX class - i.e., 2 at 3 rd Level, 3 at 6 th Level, and so on. This DR stacks with any other form of DR the character may have from armour or other sources. Activating the shield is a move-equivalent action, and it lasts for 5 rounds plus 1 round per X level. Added DR points can be used together or divided up as desired, but each point can only be used once per day.
18	Ranged Touch: Once per day per PsiX level, the character may employ one telepathic ability from close range, even if it normally has a range of touch only. Alternately, they may increase the normal range of an ability by one level - close to medium, medium to long, or long to line of sight. Using this power imparts a -2 penalty to the related Telepathy check. At PsiX level 5, this penalty is reduced to -1, and at level 10, the penalty is eliminated entirely.
19	Lightning Speed: The telepath can use this power to temporarily increase his speed. This can be used once per day, plus one additional time for every three full levels of PsiX after the 1 st - i.e., a second time at 4 th Level, a third time at 7 th , and a fourth at 10 th . A character moving at lightning speed has his movement rate doubled and may make two complete actions during a round. Add 10 to the character's initiative roll. He may make his first action at that point in the initiative sequence, and his second at his normal position. If he delays or holds during the first action so that the second action drops to position zero or below, the second action is lost for that round but returns on the following round.
20	Physical Enhancement: The telepath's mental abilities have had a synergistic side effect on the body's strength and reflexes. The character receives +1 to all of the following physical skills: Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Search, Swim, and Tumble.
21	Physical Toughness: The telepath's abilities give him an increased physical ability to withstand damage and stand up to fatigue. The character gains two additional hit points for every level of PsiX he achieves. This ability is retroactive to any levels previously earned, so if gained at 5 th Level, for example, the PsiX would immediately acquire 10 additional hit points.
22	Invulnerability: Once per day, the telepath can make himself invulnerable to a single attack of any type. The character may use this ability at any time as a free action, even after learning how much damage is scored or whether or not the effects can be avoided with a saving throw or other ability. Invulnerability blocks only physical damage, not telepathic abilities, radiation, gas attacks, or the like. The ability acts relatively instantaneously and quickly fades, so it would affect a PPG shot or gout of flame, but would not work if the character stood in the middle of a fire, jumped into a pool of molten lava, or entered the void of space. The character normally may use this ability only once per day, but at 6 th Level of PsiX, he can employ it twice, and at 10 th Level, he can use it a third time.
23+	Psychic Luck: This is one of the most powerful PsiX abilities and is the one that the character has the least control over. It manifests capriciously, often disappearing when needed most, then reappearing at a critical moment. Any time the character fails a die roll, ability check, or saving throw, the Games Master secretly makes a Telepathy check for that character at a DC equal to the general importance level of the roll being made. This is a very subjective judgment, so no specific chart can be created for it, but examples include: attempt to avoid damaging blow in combat - DC 25; saving throw that could prevent great harm - DC 20; skill check that is a matter of life and death - DC 15. Some events may be so crucial that the Games Master might permit a second roll automatically, but these should be extremely rare. Basically, the more critical, the easier the likelihood that psychic luck will come into play. If the Telepathy check succeeds, the character's luck holds, and he may make a second attempt at the original action. However, he must live - or die - by the results of the new roll. Psychic luck is constantly operational and can take effect any number of times per day.

Quirks: The Psychic Experiment's abilities are not without cost. Each time a power is acquired, a potentially dangerous quirk also arises. Roll 1d20 on the chart below. If the character has voluntarily accepted a bonus when rolling for a power, he must take that same bonus on the quirk chart hereafter, potentially subjecting him to the most dangerous problems.

Random Quirks

Die Roll	Quirk
1	Unavoidable Accidents: The telepath is much more susceptible to making accidental scans. The secret Telepathy roll made to avoid making the automatic scan is at a -2 penalty, plus an additional -1 for each level of PsiX the character has attained. Characters with this quirk frequently develop a touching phobia and will do anything to avoid personal combat. After 5 th Level, the telepath must make a Will save (DC 20) to avoid involuntarily moving away from anyone who approaches within 5 feet of the character, even in combat.
2	Involuntary Pain: The telepath's abilities, even those that are used on friends and allies, cause pain. To prevent this from happening, the telepath must make a Concentration check (DC 20). If he fails this roll, he involuntarily uses the Pain ability on the subject. This use also includes the point of subdual damage for making use of that power.
3	Critical Failure: Any time the X fails to use a telepathic ability, this is treated as a critical failure. The Games Master determines the exact effect, but basically the power backfires in some way. Surface scans receive bogus information, deep scans broadcast the telepath's memories into the target, communications attempts give a completely incorrect message, and so on. The telepath will always be aware that a failure has occurred, but has no control over the actual result of the failure.
4	Split Personality: The telepath begins to manifest a separate personality that acts independently of the original. If the character has any levels of any classes besides Telepath or Psi Experiment, those classes become the second personality. If not, a second personality is created that uses all non-telepath skills such as Diplomacy or Intimidate. The second personality may speak with a different accent or in a different language than English, if the character knows one. Both personalities dislike each other immensely. When the character wishes to employ abilities available only to the other - such as a Soldier's combat skills or the PsiX's telepathic abilities - the player must make a Concentration check (DC 15) as a move-equivalent action to switch between personalities.
5	Phobia: The telepath develops a strong phobia that relates to something he is reasonably likely to encounter - i.e., nothing too specific, like a fear of flamingos or mealworms. The acquisition of a phobia gives the character a -4 penalty to all rolls, saves, and checks when related to the object of their fear. This is an extremely severe phobia, so the character will not be voluntarily able to interact with the object unless he makes a Concentration check (DC 20). Sample phobias appropriate to this quirk are: Zoophobia - animals; Amaxophobia - being in a vehicle; Hematophobia - blood; Pedophobia - children; Frigophobia - cold or cold things; Cyberphobia - computers; Rupophobia - dirt; Aviophobia - flying; Ligyrophobia - loud noises; Mechanophobia - machines; Agoraphobia - open spaces; or Claustrophobia - enclosed spaces.
6	Involuntary Jamming: As long as he is conscious, the telepath constantly emits a jamming field that impedes the ability of other telepaths within medium range. This can be shut off only by concentrating and making a Telepathy check (DC 16). The jamming penalty is -1 per PsiX level the character has attained. The character may not adjust this amount, although he may attempt to use the standard Jamming ability (if eligible). If successful, the Jamming attempt overrides the automatic jamming screen for as long as it is maintained, even if it is of a lower level of effectiveness.
7	Visible Manifestation: Whenever the telepath employs any ability that is not always on, such as Mind Shield or any PsiX ability that is involuntarily active, there is a significant visual and/or audial display that accompanies the power. This takes the form of a flashing light, buzzing sound, beeping, colour display, glittering shower, or some other random glow or noise. The manifestation will be visual half the time and audial the other half, but the exact display is totally random and up to the Games Master. The more the Telepathy roll succeeds by, the less noticeable the effect, so that if the roll succeeds by 10 or more, there is no display at all. If the roll succeeds only barely, the flash or noise is sufficient to require a Concentration check for anyone within medium range who is busy with some other task.
8	Psychic Wounding: Each time the telepath uses an ability that causes subdual damage on himself, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer actual damage instead of subdual damage.
9	Psychic Distraction: Whenever the telepath succeeds in any ability that requires a Telepathy check, he must make a Concentration check (DC 15) or become so distracted by his own power that he loses his next action.
10	Capricious Misdirection: Whenever the telepath attempts any ability that reads or affects another individual's mind, the Games Master rolls a secret Telepathy check (DC 20 -1 per point by which the original check succeeded). If this roll fails, the character receives false or misleading information, or if altering the target's mind, does not do so in exactly the way desired. He so believes that his attempt was successful that further probes or attempts to check his own work do not reveal his mistake. Note that any information gathered will have some basis in truth, but get the details wrong - it will not be totally mistaken. For example, if a person is hiding the fact that they embezzled millions of credits from their employer and the telepath deep scans them but fails the secret Telepathy check, the Games Master might reveal that they have become rich from gambling winnings. After all, in a sense, this is true - the details are merely off.

11	Broadcasted Thoughts: The telepath's mind occasionally broadcasts one thought or another to others around him. The thought could be any random musing, or more likely might relate to the current situation in some way. It could be a secret of some kind, particularly if they are presently engaged in some illicit activity. Everyone within close range will hear the thought, which will be no more than one sentence in length - basically anything a person could utter in a single normal breath. Those who hear it and are unaware of the PsiX's true nature simply think he said something out loud, and do not realise the sound came from within their minds.
12	Telekinetic Manifestation: When the telepath uses any ability, strange things happen. The winds pick up, small objects move around, and items fall off the walls. A superstitious person might believe a poltergeist is at work. The Games Master determines the exact nature of the telekinetic effect, but like visible manifestations, the display is random and uncontrollable. The more the Telepathy check succeeded by, the less violent the telekinesis. A check that only barely succeeded will require Concentration checks for everyone within range who witnesses the telekinetic events. Although the telekinetic manifestation can be surprising or scary, it cannot cause damage to anyone, though it could break small or fragile items.
13	Electrical Discharge: The use of a telepathic power produces an electrical discharge between the telepath, his target, and any objects within close range. The telepath may suppress this with a Concentration check (DC 20). Anyone caught in one of these discharges suffers 1 point of electrical damage, and all computers or electronic items are disrupted unless shielded. Electronic locks and other security devices will not be affected. Any device can be reactivated with a Technical (Electronics) check (DC 15). The discharge will not penetrate walls or other solid barriers.
14	Mental Weight: The constant pressure of the X's abilities puts an almost tangible weight upon his shoulders. His speed is reduced by 10 and he has an Initiative penalty of -2. These penalties are cumulative with any loads the character is carrying.
15	Body Disruption: The PsiX's mind disrupts some part of the body every time a telepathic ability is used. Whenever a telepathic power is employed that causes subdual damage to the X, he also temporarily loses 2 points of a random statistic for each subdual point lost. These attribute points return after 3d6 minutes. Attribute loss occurs after the Telepathy check and any other related checks are concluded, so any effect on skills will not take effect until after success has been determined. Statistics may not be reduced below 1 by body disruption.
16	Mental Vulnerability: The telepath's constant need to control his own powers makes him vulnerable to telepathic attack. He receives a -4 penalty to all attempts to avoid or resist telepathic abilities used against him.
17	Poor Quality Attack: The telepath can no longer sustain telepathic attacks against others as well as before, nor can he break through mental defences. Any unwilling target of his telepathic abilities receives a +4 bonus to his attempts to resist or counter the attack.
18	Skill Atrophy: The telepath's focus on his own mental powers severely limits his ability to pick up other, non-telepathic skills. Beginning immediately with the level this quirk is acquired, he receives one rank of Telepathy and one rank of Concentration with each PsiX level, and no other skill points whatsoever (including those from Intelligence bonuses). In addition, for each level of PsiX he previously achieved, he must lose one rank of any other skill except Telepathy or Concentration. The character has been so busy bolstering his own mental powers that he has completely forgotten or lost these skills.
19	Brain Fuel: The telepath's brain is now operating at such a high level that the character must eat and drink twice as often as a normal person to keep himself properly fuelled. If he cannot do so, he suffers a -2 penalty on all Telepathy and Concentration checks for each missed meal, in addition to any fatigue or other effects from starvation or thirst.
20	Forgetfulness: The telepath's abilities have adversely affected his memory. He receives a -3 penalty to all Knowledge checks. In addition, any time he wishes to recall a particular piece of information, such as directions to an office or the communications channel used by an associate, he must make a Concentration check (DC 25) to recall it. A PsiX with this quirk must force himself to write notes to himself at every turn.
21	Loss of Concentration: The PsiX can no longer control his concentration over telepathic abilities. He receives a -2 per X level penalty to all Concentration checks, but only for those that relate to telepathy.
22	Brain Damage: The PsiX's abilities have affected the part of his brain that deals with telepathy and strength of will. He loses all telepath feats as well as the Iron Will feat. This does not include any feats or feat-like abilities acquired from the PsiX's Random Powers chart.
23	Schizophrenia: This brain disease is normally easily treatable by drugs, so much so that it has been virtually eliminated from present-day life. Not so for the PsiX who receives this quirk. Drugs will not help him. He begins to see hallucinations, or hear voices giving him suggestions or orders. He becomes paranoid and might believe that others are conspiring against him. Delusions of varying levels are commonplace. He may talk to himself or pay little attention to his surroundings. Sometimes he becomes violent. A schizophrenic character requires a significant amount of roleplaying effort to play properly - the player and Games Master may wish to research the disorder in more detail. However, in a nutshell, the game effect is that the character becomes very difficult to deal with socially. Delusions may cause him to believe that things are happening when they are not. Voices may whisper that his friends are plotting his demise. In some way, the character knows that something is wrong, but cannot control it. Whenever he wishes to undertake any action, such as engaging in combat, using a skill, or employing a telepathic ability, he must make a Concentration check (DC 20). If this fails, he either does nothing, takes action but in a different manner than originally planned, or does something completely different, at the Games Master's option.

The Psi Experiment

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Special Abilities, Quirks
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Strong-Willed
3	+2	+1	+1	+2	
4	+3	+1	+1	+2	
5	+3	+1	+1	+3	
6	+4	+2	+2	+3	
7	+5	+2	+2	+4	
8	+6/+1	+2	+2	+4	
9	+6/+1	+3	+3	+4	
10	+7/+2	+3	+3	+5	

Teek

The term 'teek' is telepath slang for 'telekinetic.' Teeks are those extremely rare telepaths who have the mysterious ability to move things with their minds. Those with this power are often afflicted with a variety of mental problems, as their ability makes them somewhat unstable. Most telepaths look at Teeks as curiosities at best, dangerous liabilities at worst. The vast majority of Teeks live their lives in Teeptown, prohibited from leaving for fear of what havoc they might cause on the rest of the world. A very few are able to control their abilities well enough to be allowed into normal society. An even smaller number possess telekinetic powers without the knowledge of the Psi Corps.

This prestige class focuses on the latter type of telekinetic. Afraid to reveal his powers for fear of being locked up within Teeptown, the Teek develops his abilities in secret. Whether his telekinetic, or TK, powers have been with him his entire life, or have come on recently through a new awakening, a Teek lives in constant fear of discovery. He must be cautious in how he uses his powers, lest the Bloodhounds come for him.

Note: Telekinetic abilities can be quite powerful, and true Teeks are extremely rare. Because of this, the Games Master may choose to disallow or limit this class if he wishes. Alternately, because TK powers manifest so infrequently, he may permit this prestige class to be used only in certain special circumstances. In the Babylon 5 show, for example, Babylon 5's resident Psi Corps officer Talia Winters only received telekinetic abilities after an encounter with a fully evolved Psi Experiment.

To qualify to become a Teek, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Charisma 13+, Intelligence 14+, P-Rating 5+.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Telepathy 8 ranks.

Feats: At least three telepath feats.

Class Skills

The Teek's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Telepathy (Cha).

Skill Points Per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Teek prestige class. Note that any ability listed as Telepathic is treated just like any other power of a telepath - it requires a Telepathy check, incurs one point of subdual damage, can be detected by other telepaths who observe the wielder, and so on.

Hit Points Per Level: 1.

Mental Disorder: At 1st Level, and again every 3 levels thereafter, a Teek receives a mental disorder from the list below. This represents the effect on the telepath's fragile mind as he constantly wars with himself over control of his abilities. Mental disorders may be treated and controlled by commonly available psychological drugs, but if this is done, the Teek may not use any telekinetic abilities while under the influence of his medication. The disorder received may be rolled randomly or selected by the Games Master based on events occurring in the character's life. The player himself may not choose the disorder.

Mental Disorders

Name	Description and Effect
(1) Panic Disorder	The Teek is prone to sudden periods of panic and fear. Whenever exposed to stress or involved in combat, he must make a Will save (DC 15) or flee the area in panic. He may make another Will save after 1d6 rounds to shake off the effects, but will be at -2 to all attack or ability checks until the stressful situation is resolved. If he fails this second save, he collapses into a trembling heap of terror and remains totally useless for 3d6 rounds.
(2) Dizziness and Disorientation	Whenever the Teek concentrates on a task (i.e., makes a skill check or attack roll), his mind begins to spin and he begins to lose touch with reality. If he fails a Will save (DC 15), he automatically fails whatever he is attempting and loses any remaining actions for the rest of the round while he recovers.
(3) Obsessive-Compulsive	The Teek lives a very regimented life. Everything he does must follow a regular, predictable pattern. Brushing his teeth, for example, requires a perfect count of the number of strokes. A Teek with this disorder must first go through a small ritual before attempting any skill or ability check, such as making hand gestures, saying a prayer, and the like. The ritual is different for every skill or ability, but each requires a full round of concentration before that ability may be used. If the Teek is rushed, he may attempt a Will save (DC 15) to avoid the compulsion, but if he fails, he freezes and may not do anything - including the ritual - until the following round.
(4) Amnesia	Whenever asked to remember anything or recognise someone, the Teek must make a Will save (DC 15) to recall it. In addition to general knowledge, this applies to any use of the following skills: Appraise, Computer Use, Disguise, Forgery, Gather Information, Knowledge, Medical, Perform, Profession, Speak Language (anything other than a native tongue), or Survival. If the Will save fails, the character cannot remember anything about the item, person, or ability in question for the remainder of the day, but can check again the following day. This version of amnesia tends to come and go.
(5) Attention Deficit Disorder	The Teek has difficulty keeping his attention focused on anything. Whenever attempting any activity that takes more than a single action, he must make a Will save (DC 20) or be distracted by something else, no matter how small. If he fails, the distraction automatically causes the action in progress to fail. Attention-deficit disorder is not something that can be avoided by a Concentration check. In combat, the Teek who fails this save in any round may not attack but must move to some other location or do something else besides fighting - he might become convinced that he needs to get a better view of the proceedings, for example.
(6) Manic-Depressive	The Teek goes through periods of hyperactivity followed by periods of depression. Each time the Teek awakens from a night's rest, roll 1d10. On a 1, 2 or 3, he will spend the day depressed, while on an 8, 9 or 10, he is hyperactive. Any other roll represents a generally normal state. Depression: A depressed Teek feels hopeless and unwilling to do anything. Before attempting any action, even combat, he must make a Will save (DC 15). If he fails, he refuses to act on that round, complaining that whatever he is doing - even fighting - is a waste of time. In general, he must be pushed and prodded to get him to even move. Hyperactivity: A hyperactive Teek cannot stop moving around, talking, and doing things. He is impatient to finish whatever he tries, so every action he takes is at a -2 penalty. In order to continue any action that takes more than one round without spoiling it through his haste to finish, he must make a Concentration check at a -2 penalty.

Other disorders also exist and may be added at the Games Master's option. The effects of these disorders should be realistic within game terms, and of an approximate level as the ones listed above.

Simple Telekinesis (Telepathic, DC 15, close range): At 1st Level, a Teek has the ability to move small objects with his mind. Objects may be no larger than Diminutive size and may only move in straight lines. They cannot be held in place, but instead move quickly - the duration of a standard action and no longer. Using this power, the Teek can throw switches, move keys, pull triggers, and the like. He must be able to see the item being moved, so a gun in a holster could not be made to fire involuntarily, but one sitting on a desk certainly could. Using this ability, a Teek cannot cause damage with an item he moves, although the consequences of that motion could cause injury. In other words, he cannot throw a coin across a room with

enough speed to hurt someone, but if he triggered a demolitions switch with his mind, the resulting explosion would be treated normally.

Psychic Slap (Telepathic, DC 15, close range): At 2nd Level, a Teek can create a quick burst of solidified air that creates a 'slap' effect on anyone within range. The slap cannot cause damage, but is enough to surprise someone, forcing them to make a Concentration check or have whatever they are doing interrupted. Every two levels after 2nd, the range on this ability increases, so that at 4th Level it can be used at medium range, at 6th long range, and at 8th level it has line of sight.

The Teek

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Simple Telekinesis, Mental Disorder
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Psychic Slap
3	+2	+1	+1	+2	Hover Object
4	+3	+1	+1	+2	Mental Disorder, Pyrokinesis
5	+3	+1	+1	+3	Enhanced Telekinesis
6	+4	+2	+2	+3	Psychic Blow
7	+5	+2	+2	+4	Mental Disorder
8	+6/+1	+2	+2	+4	
9	+6/+1	+3	+3	+4	
10	+7/+2	+3	+3	+5	Superior Telekinesis, Mental Disorder

Hover Object (Telepathic, DC 20, close range, Concentration required): At 3rd Level, a Teek can levitate Diminutive objects and cause them to hover or move slowly about an area. They may make occasional shifts in position strong enough to, for example, push buttons on a keyboard or write letters on a wall. This cannot be used to attack under most circumstances, although a confined prisoner might be unable to avoid a blade or other weapon moving across his skin. The Teek can manoeuvre the object as much in a single round as he could if he were holding it himself. Each round this ability is maintained, one point of subdual damage is scored on the Teek. At 8th Level, the hovering object may be of Tiny size, but the DC is increased to 25 for such attempts. An object being held by this ability can be manoeuvred into position for an eventual telekinetic ability - e.g., a gun could be hovered around a corner, and then fired

- but the moment another TK ability is used, concentration on the hover power is lost.

Pyrokinesis (Telepathic, DC 20, touch, Concentration required to sustain): At 4th Level, a Teek can excite the molecules in an object enough to cause burns, or even ignite flammable materials. This ability is resisted by a Fortitude roll save of DC 15 plus 1 for each point by which the Telepathy roll succeeded - the target's Will save has nothing to do with it, as it does not affect the mind in any way. If the target is a living thing, it receives 1d6 points of Fire damage, ignoring all DR that is not specifically designed to block Fire attacks, and suffers agony as if affected by a telepath's Pain ability. If the target is something flammable, like paper, wood, or fuel, it bursts into flame when this power is invoked upon it. At 9th Level, this ability can be used at close range.



Enhanced Telekinesis (Telepathic, DC 20, medium range): At 5th Level, a Teek gains the power to move larger objects at a greater distance. This ability costs 2 points of subdual damage to employ. Objects moved can be no larger than Tiny size or smaller, and can be flung with as much force as a thrown weapon. Using this ability to attack requires a standard attack roll for any ranged weapon.

Psychic Blow (Telepathic, DC 20, close range): At 6th Level, a Teek may use this enhanced version of the Psychic Slap to make

invisible, unarmed attacks. These attacks may deal either normal or subdual damage at the Teek's option. When making an attack, the Teek moves his hands or feet in a pantomime of an actual blow - throwing a punch, making a kick, etc. The target will always be considered flat-footed with any initial attack, but if he sees the Teek's actions, he will make the obvious connection and avoid this status in future rounds. Psychic blows cause 1d3 damage at 6th Level, 1d4 damage at 7th, 1d6 at 8th, 1d8 at 9th, and 1d10 at 10th. The range also increases to medium at 8th Level and long at 10th.

Superior Telekinesis (Telepathic, DC 25, long range): At 10th Level, a Teek can move much larger objects from very long distances. This ability costs 3 points of subdual damage. Objects moved can be of Small size, and can be flung as a weapon using the standard ranged attack rules. Alternately, a Tiny object can be thrown using this ability at such speed that it has +2 to hit and +2 to damage.

Black Fist

Some telepaths of very low P-Ratings are dissatisfied with their lot. Unwilling to accept that their mental abilities are fixed by genetics, they become convinced that they can become more powerful by bringing their mind and body into perfect harmony. Sometimes they do this for their own private reasons, while other times they set out to prove to the Corps that they are better than a simple low-class administrator or labourer. Whatever the reason, the path is a difficult one, and most

achieve few or no results. While the Corp has no normal use for these individuals because of the shift in their abilities from telepathy to biokinesis, they can find something to do with them. These special psychics join the ranks of the Black Fist, an omega-level cabal within the Psi Corps used for the removal of 'undesirables' and other military ends.

A Black Fist foregoes standard telepathic abilities in favour of those that affect his own body. All the powers listed for this prestige class are Telepathic in nature and require the usual Telepathy check, but have a range of personal only. They cannot be used on others. Unless listed otherwise, all powers require the usual telepathic drain of one point of subdual damage.

To qualify to become a Black Fist, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Abilities: Wisdom 12+, Charisma 13+, P-Rating 1 or 2 only.

Skills: Balance 6 ranks, Climb 6 ranks, Jump 6 ranks, Medical 6 ranks, Telepathy 8 ranks.

Feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude.

Class Skills

The Black Fist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Medical (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Telepathy (Cha), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points Per Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Black Fist prestige class.

Hit Points Per Level: 3.

Body Purity: A Black Fist is adept at keeping his body functioning normally and is capable of throwing off debilitating effects with psychic skill. He receives a +1 per Black Fist level bonus to all saving throws against disease, poison, or radiation.

Self-Stabilisation: At 1st Level, a Black Fist's understanding of his own body allows him to automatically stabilise wounds without the use of medical equipment. Using this ability is a move equivalent action that requires a Medical check, not a Telepathy check. There is no subdual damage requirement for this power. At 5th Level, the Black Fist's ability to do this is so ingrained that he can do it as a free action, even if unconscious.

Self-Healing: At 1st Level, the Black Fist can heal his own wounds, converting true damage to subdual damage on a one-for-one basis. Using this ability requires a Medical check, not a Telepathy check, and does not cost any additional subdual points. The amount of hit points that can be healed in a given



day is equal to the character's Black Fist level. Not all points need to be used at once. Self-healing is a full round action, regardless of how many points of damage are actually healed.

Fast Recovery: At 2nd Level, a Black Fist recovers subdual damage at the rate of 1 point every half hour, not one point every hour. At 6th Level, this increases to 1 point every fifteen minutes, and at 10th Level, he recovers one point every ten minutes.

Body Strengthening: Every three levels, the Black Fist's intense focus on his body's structure produces results that improve his abilities. One point is permanently added to his Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution score at his option. This is an addition to any other ability increases gained through normal level advancement.

Power Strike: At 2nd Level, the Black Fist increases his fighting abilities as a result of his intense control over his body's power. He gains the Power Attack feat, even though that feat is normally not available in *Babylon 5*. However, employing it in combat results in 1 point of subdual damage scored at the end of the fight, regardless of how many times Power Attack was employed during that battle. He also earns +1 damage to any blows struck in melee combat. This is increased to +2 at 6th Level and +3 at 10th Level. Bonus damage scored is subdual damage only as a result of the stunning force of the character's blows.

Natural Armour: At 3rd Level, the Black Fist can increase his body's toughness, earning 1 point of natural Damage Reduction. Activating natural DR is a move-equivalent action and lasts for 2 rounds plus 1 round per Black Fist level. A Telepathy check (DC 15) and 1 point of subdual damage are required. At 6th Level, 2 points of DR are acquired, and at 9th Level, the Black Fist gains 3 points of DR when using this ability.

Body Adjustment: At 4th Level, the Black Fist knows his body so well that he can temporarily draw on mental or physical abilities for other uses. No Telepathy roll is required, but this power does cause one point of subdual damage. Essentially,

the Black Fist temporarily trades 2 points of any attribute for another, e.g., 2 points of Strength for 2 points of Intelligence. The trade lasts for one minute, plus one minute per Black Fist level, and he can employ a given trade once per hour. Every two levels after 4th, the Black Fist can trade a further 2 statistic points, so at 6th Level he could trade 4 at a time, 8th 6 at a time, and so on. Not all points need to be used at once or on the same attributes, but all trades must be in increments of 2.

Massive Blow: At 5th Level, a Black Fist can focus his energies into a single powerful strike in melee combat. This requires a Telepathy check (DC 15) and a point of subdual damage, but if successful, his next hit has +2 to the attack roll and scores 1d4+1 bonus damage. If he misses, he may make a Concentration check (DC 15) to maintain focus for his next attack. Using this ability is a free action. At 10th Level, damage is increased to 1d6+1.

Intangibility: At 10th Level, the Black Fist has access to his most impressive and dangerous power, the ability to turn intangible. This ability requires a Telepathy check (DC 21), costs 3 points of subdual damage, and requires a full round to activate. The following round, the Black Fist's body and possessions (not to exceed light encumbrance level in weight) become ghostlike and insubstantial. He may move up to half his normal movement rate in any direction - up, down, or sideways - as he wishes, passing through all solid objects in the process. He can travel through any physical barriers, but cannot pass through strong electromagnetic fields like an energy shield, wall of force, or deck plate used to produce artificial gravity. He cannot be harmed or damaged while in an intangible state, nor may he take any actions against any solid object, although he could attack another intangible character or object. At the end of the round, the Black Fist may make a Concentration check (DC 21) to maintain the intangibility if desired, at the cost of a further 3 points of subdual damage regardless of success. If he succeeds, there is no interruption in his intangibility, but if he fails, he drops back into a solid form instantly. Should he materialise inside a solid object, he is instantly killed. If part of him is trapped inside an object, that body part is destroyed without hope of recovery, even if he later becomes intangible again.

The Black Fist

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Self-Stabilisation, Self-Healing
2	+2	+2	+0	+0	Fast Recovery, Power Strike
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Body Strengthening, Natural Armour
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	Body Adjustment
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Massive Blow
6	+6/+1	+3	+2	+2	Body Strengthening
7	+7/+2	+4	+2	+2	
8	+8/+3	+4	+2	+2	
9	+9/+4	+4	+3	+3	Body Strengthening
10	+10/+5	+5	+3	+3	Intangibility

Life in the Earth Alliance

From a viewer on the outside, the Earth Alliance is a single nation with one people, a unified government, and no internal strife. This is an illusion the leaders in Geneva would prefer was true, but the reality is quite different. Even today, almost a hundred years after the arrival of the Centauri brought all nations firmly under the Alliance banner, Earth and its territories remain a loose collection of semi-autonomous nation-states. Even the colonies, struggling to survive and grow among the stars, possess their own unique identity. Some, far from Earth, have even begun to talk of independence.

Earth space is normally thought of as comprising the homeworld and ten additional colonies. In truth, the Alliance controls twenty-four different stars, though the majority of these possess only small outposts or mining stations. Several systems contain worlds with the potential for colonisation, but certain problems - slight atmospheric incompatibilities, the proximity to alien borders, or similar issues - have delayed their addition to the Alliance. There are no alien races within Earth territory, nor would EarthGov ever consider annexing alien worlds. The Alliance is committed to remaining 100 percent human.

Earth's first colony was Mars, although that world proved difficult to colonise due to the thin atmosphere and low gravity. Terraforming efforts have improved things somewhat, but so far, ordinary citizens still cannot walk around outdoors without breathing gear and pressure suits. Perhaps another hundred years remain before Mars becomes truly Earthlike.

After the Deep Space Exploration Command began surveying nearby stars, several potential colony sites were located and claimed. The most promising of these was Proxima 3, a beautiful world located very close by. Several corporations immediately began efforts to develop this unspoiled planet, and their outposts quickly grew into small towns, and then cities. Earth's first extra-solar colony grew not out of any specific plan by the Alliance, but because of simple capitalism. People flocked to these new sites for many of the same reasons that colonists fled Europe to the Americas during the Industrial Age - plenty of space, opportunities for wealth, unfettered freedom, and the promise of a new life.

Other colonies were also planted on other worlds, some by design and some through a similar sort of corporate-sponsored growth. Beta Durani, Orion 3, and Deneb 4 were among these. Troubles with the Koulani slowed the growth of the Deneb colony, but as with Proxima, the world was simply too rich, too habitable, and too compelling to ignore. The Alliance eventually convinced the Koulani to permit reactivation of the beacon there, setting up a lucrative trade route to the friendly Tokati and vastly increasing the importance of Deneb in coming years.

Other, more distant colonies followed. Jericho, Cyrus, Sinzar, Vega, and Theta are the largest, but these pale by comparison to Proxima and Deneb. Several other systems, including Beta

7, Beta 9, and Ceti Gamma, possess fledgling colonies of immense promise, but have not yet been formally inducted into the Alliance. Once they are, they will be given formal names instead of simple star chart representations.

Earth

During the 20th and early 21st Centuries, Earth was made up of over 200 individual nations constantly struggling for dominance and autonomy. Vast barriers of culture, language, and religion existed and persisted, creating fear and hatred even among neighbours. The first two world wars simply showcased these problems, as the Old World of Europe was wracked by immense conflicts that led to untold devastation and the development of terribly destructive nuclear weapons.

The Cold War that followed saw the two main superpowers of the age doing nothing less than struggle for domination of the world. Eventually, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics collapsed, heralding the end of communism as a viable government. The sole remaining power, the United States, could easily have overwhelmed the world with its military and economic strength, but instead stepped away and allowed the United Nations to come to the fore. After several decades of difficulties, culminating with the Terrorist War in the early 21st Century, the United Nations eventually became the centre of world activities and the first step towards a true global government.

The years that followed saw the birth of the European Union as a new superpower to rival that of the United States. Similarly, both China and Russia took steps to solve their own internal problems and increased their economic and military power, unifying and merging with several nearby countries in order to increase their strength. In order to compete, a number of other organisations formed, beginning as simple trading coalitions and eventually coalescing into federations similar to the European Union. These included the Republic of South America, the Indonesian Consortium, the United Islamic Nations, the Pan-American League, the Oceania Trade Alliance, the North American Federation, and the Asian Conglomerate. Many of these groups did not form immediately, some taking decades or more. Many never quite reached the same level of trust and association that the others did, and even today remain only loosely connected. Other nations, such as Japan, Korea, India, and the United Kingdom remained staunchly isolationist for many years to come.

World War III brought nearly all of the groups and many of the independent countries into the fighting, and by the time it was all over, most of the smaller nations were gone. Japan became part of the Oceania Trade Alliance, the Pan-American League merged with the North American Federation, and all of the former Soviet republics were drawn into either the European Union, Asian Conglomerate, United Islamic Nations, or Russian Federation. The remaining African nations, still lagging far behind the others in terms of economic and social progress, formed the South African Coalition. Although a few independents remained, the era of small, individualist nations had evolved into one featuring groups of like-minded states banded together for mutual support and trade.

For the most part, those same organisations continue to exist on Earth in 2259. If Earth is considered to be a 'country' within the loose structure that forms the Earth Alliance, then the various trade associations that formed in the mid-21st Century are the 'states' of that union. The nations that once populated the globe are now, for the most part, footnotes in history, although people born and raised in certain areas still like to think of themselves as 'Germans' or 'Britons' or 'Japanese,' or any of hundreds of other former nationalities.

What follows is a list of the various groups, associations, and organisations that still exist on Earth. Although they appear on the surface to be part of an integrated whole, they are in fact co-dependent nations in all ways save autonomy. Each elects senators through a democratic process and sends them to the capital at Geneva, but beyond that, these organisations govern themselves as they see fit. In matters that affect the Earth Alliance as a whole, especially where relations to alien races are concerned, they generally present a united front, but on Earth itself they are ferociously competitive.

EarthGov

The Earth Alliance government, collectively known as 'EarthGov', is essentially a republic. Each of the national organizations and colonies elect one or more individuals to serve on the Senate, which is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. There are no multiple branches, lower houses, or any other complications, because each of the colonies and organisations that make up the Alliance are free to govern themselves. The Senate is only responsible for two things: management of the Alliance as a whole, and defence of Earth and its holdings.

Each of the component organisations of the Alliance receives a number of 'slots' in the Senate based on a complex formula. The calculation takes into account such things as population, productivity, economic strength, contributions to the Alliance since the last election, and dozens of other lesser factors. The exact formula is not known to the public, in order to prevent 'fudging' by census takers and the like in order to squeeze another senator out of the mix. However, the ultimate effect is that the larger and more influential blocs possess more votes in EarthGov than the smaller ones do. This of course leaves the lesser nations and nation-states feeling left out, as if their vote doesn't matter.

Senatorial Representation: The number of senators for each organisation and colony in the Alliance are as follows. Note that these are by nature fluid, and can change up or down with each election period based on a variety of factors.

United Kingdom:	3
European Union:	18
North American Federation:	18
Republic of South America:	12
Russian Consortium:	14
Republic of China:	18
United Islamic Nations:	3
Oceania Trade Alliance:	6
Indonesian Consortium:	2
Indian Union:	5

South African Coalition of Nations: 5

Israel:	1
Mars:	2
Proxima:	3
Orion:	1
Deneb:	1
Vega:	1
Durani:	1
Io:	2
Jericho:	1
Sinzar:	1
Cyrus:	1
Ceti Gamma:	1

Total: 120 Senators.

Others, such as Regula, Beta 7, Beta 9, Titan, Luna, Theta, Vatican City, and a few other small independent nation-states do not have senatorial representation. They remain too small to meet the requirements, or - in the case of Regula - are not yet officially part of the Alliance.

In general, all senators in a given bloc tend to vote the same. This is not always the case, especially in matters where the people of a nation or organisation are sharply divided on their decision. Some groups, especially those with strong democratic governments, allow their people to vote on major issues, such as whether or not to go to war with an aggressive neighbour. Others, particularly the Republic of China and the United Islamic Nations, simply instruct all their senators to cast their ballots as a unit. Note that internal issues, particularly those involving the budget, are taken care of strictly through an immediate Senatorial vote, without waiting for the individual organisations to poll their people.

There are no specific rules on how each individual senator receives his exalted title. In the democracies, most senators are elected by the people every two years. A senator's position lasts six years, so in the European Union (which has 39 senators), for example, 13 are elected bi-annually. In other colonies or organisations, senators are appointed by their governments or the nation-states that comprise them. For example, the United Kingdom has eight senators, which are appointed by Parliament. Most of the time, these are evenly divided between England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, although this is not always true.

The President of the Senate is elected by popular vote from the entire Alliance. Usually he is a senator with at least two terms in office, although this is not a requirement. The President must be at least thirty-five years of age and a citizen of Earth or any of its colonies, so long as the colony in question had reached official status at the time of the candidate's birth. Most of Earth's colonies at present fit this criteria, although a resident of a system like Regula would not be eligible. There are no other official requirements for the office, but of course the public and the media tend to make their own. A candidate with a poor education, criminal record, anti-government tendencies, and other flaws would not last long on the campaign trail.

Although the President is an important figure, he does not have dictatorial powers. In most matters, the Senate's vote holds sway. The President's main purposes are to cast



deciding votes, call special sessions of the Senate, and act as a popular figurehead for the government. Most of the time, his presence in Geneva is merely a matter of public image, although he is also extremely important diplomatically. In this area, he is empowered to act as the official representative of Earth, although he rarely travels without an entire troupe of ambassadors.

The President does have two other important powers that bear mentioning. The first, and perhaps most important, is the 'close election veto,' also referred to as the 'President's Prerogative.' In any Senatorial vote that does not have at least a two-thirds majority, the President has the power to change any vote as he sees fit. When doing this, he is expected to objectively consider the Earth Alliance as a whole, not his own country or colony. In practice, the veto is rarely used unless it seems obvious that national interests swayed the decision. For example, an important vote that went bad because the senators from Asia and the Pacific Rim voted against allocating further funds for colonial expansion could be vetoed if the President believed the nations involved were looking out for themselves instead of the good of the Alliance.

The other Senatorial power comes in time of war. The nature of the Senate, which requires time-consuming voting and debate to come to a conclusion, precludes its use in a wartime situation. When needed, the President can declare war and manage the conflict as he sees fit, with complete control over the military

as necessary. The Senate may meet without the President's approval and condemn a war, and even has the ability to strip him of his powers if they believe the war to be unjust. Of course, a two-thirds majority is required, as otherwise the President will simply use his veto to block the attempt. In practice, of course, wars are fought only as a last resort, typically with Senatorial backing (as in the case of the Dilgar War).

Naturally, if war is forced upon the Alliance, as occurred when the Minbari attacked in 2247, voting has little effect on the conduct of the conflict. During that fight, as the Minbari wrapped up victory after victory, some senators began to look for a scapegoat to blame for the military's failures. The President weathered a storm of no confidence, ultimately resulting in the declaration of martial law to restore order. This particular power is seldom used, and is seen only as a last resort.

Although the name 'Senate' suggests a large gathering of people in a single place, they are rarely all together simultaneously. Even during an important vote, many senators send official representatives from their staff to cast their ballots. Senators are usually found roaming about Earth and its territories, meeting with constituents and performing other governmental duties. The last time all the Senators were together in one place was in Geneva to accept the Minbari surrender following the Battle of the Line. These days, they usually try to avoid forming a large group in order to avoid heavy losses should the capital come under attack.

The Many Nations of Earth

The United Kingdom (UK)

The organisation known as the United Kingdom consists of several small, isolated nations who have been closely tied together for centuries. The collected group contains the following smaller states and territories: England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Gibraltar, the Isle of Man, the Falkland Islands, and various small islands scattered throughout the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean. Ireland, long divided from the United Kingdom, formally agreed to join the rest of the Commonwealth in 2036. The detached island group containing most of the United Kingdom's land mass is known as the British Isles.

During the early part of the 21st Century, as the European Union began to take shape, the United Kingdom remained staunchly independent, refusing to link its extremely stable economy to that of its much larger, struggling neighbour. Instead, it greatly strengthened its ties to the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. The United Kingdom was far more mindful of global affairs than the reticent European Union, and was always on the front lines whenever the need for peacekeeping missions or war intervention arose. Having suffered decades of internal terrorism, they not only hated that deplorable tactic but were skilled at fighting it, and were among America's strongest allies during the Terrorist Wars.

During World War III, the British were among the first to intervene alongside the North American Federation, and were also quick to condemn the European Union for not helping stop the inevitable escalation that followed. Although this attitude helped convince the rest of Europe to get involved, it also earned some measure of enmity from the rest of the continent, colouring trade and economic relations for decades.

England today is one of the most technologically advanced nation-states on Earth. Most services are automated, and the people enjoy the highest quality of modern conveniences. Cities are clean and well maintained, and the countryside is free of pollution. The population density is quite high, even in the suburbs and outlying regions, and adequate public transportation remains a constant concern. The vast majority of Britons have jobs in services such as banking, insurance, and businesses, with heavy industry occupying only a tiny percentage of the workforce, except in parts of Ireland and Scotland. Unemployment is low and most citizens are comfortable, although there is also a seedy underground that continues to operate despite all attempts to eradicate it.

The British people are great believers in formality and tradition. Although the monarchy has been obsolete for centuries, they still follow the activities of the Royal Family with great interest. The current head of the monarchy is King Robert, who hails from Portsmouth. His wife is Queen Gladys of Wales. Their only child, Princess Gwyneth, is currently planning to marry an Italian commoner whom she met while attending Oxford. This news has produced great hue and cry throughout the Kingdom, as no non-Briton has married into the Royal Family in well over a hundred years. The possibility that Britain may one day have

an Italian king is a matter of much debate, and there is much speculation over whether or not the feisty Queen Gladys may refuse to permit the wedding to take place. Such things are always on the minds of everyday Britons, who see the Royals as much more than simply an outdated set of governmental figureheads. They are, in fact, the very heart and soul of their national identity.

Some notes on the larger nation-states within the United Kingdom are listed below. Each includes notes on roleplaying characters from that state, along with any required sub-racial traits. Note that all humans, regardless of their state of origin, begin with the standard racial package described in the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook.

England

England is the largest state in the United Kingdom, occupying a considerable chunk of the largest of the British Isles. The history of England dates back to the Roman Empire, when they were a far-flung Roman colony. As an island nation, they were able to resist invasion better than most during the Middle Ages. At one time, the British Empire covered a quarter of the Earth's surface, and England's naval power reigned supreme.

The end of colonialism and the devastation of two World Wars put an end to Britain's status as a global superpower, but they refused to pull back from world affairs. England, along with the United States, became a huge advocate of the role of arms in protecting the cause of peace. Their failure to act strongly enough in the opening stages of World War II and World War III has greatly reinforced the idea that terrorism and aggression must be acted upon firmly and with determination. They remain a staunch advocate of the use of force whenever it is necessary to combat evil.

England's capital, London, is a massive city that ranks among the largest in the world. Vast arrays of office and corporate buildings line the streets, connected by a multi-level maglev transit grid unlike any other in Europe. Surface streets are choked with ground cars travelling on mostly automated patterns that permit high-speed access to any part of the city with little risk of accident or injury. Public transportation is entirely privatised, and while maglev fares can add up, the average Briton can reach any part of London - or, indeed, any location in the entire country - without too much difficulty. Even getting across the Channel and the North Sea can be easily accomplished via underwater tunnels, surface craft, and a veritable fleet of airbuses and fixed-wing aircraft.

The English people are creatures of tradition and formality. They dress impeccably and retain a high level of decorum at all times. Even the leaders of their criminal underground tend to be prim and proper - 'polite but deadly,' as they like to put it. Brits retain this tendency even when under times of great stress, and are unflappable as a general rule. Faced with incredible hardship, an Englishman will simply grit his teeth and press on with work and the daily routine of life. It is very difficult to convince a Brit to give up or surrender simply by wearing him down. 'Hanging on in quiet desperation is the English way,' or so the classic song explains.

English Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None.
- Additional Feats Available: Unflappable, Savoir-Faire.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Britons speak a highly regimental dialect of English (or, as they call it, the Queen's English) that can confuse other English speakers. They tend to be well-educated and use their extensive vocabulary to its fullest. The English appreciate formality and carry themselves with an air of confidence, sometimes so much that others think of them as stuffy and self-absorbed. The British appreciate humour and love to make fun of any viable target, even themselves. They accept criticism relatively well, but are not shy about giving it - so much so that a thin-skinned recipient will often feel they have been insulted.
- Names: Chelsea, Lindsay, Wendy, Bradley, Hollis, Kent.

Ireland

Ireland is the most recent addition to the United Kingdom. The smaller island of Eire suffered many attacks and invasions by the English throughout the Middle Ages. In the early 20th Century, the majority of this nation achieved independence from the United Kingdom and remained separate until the early 21st Century, when efforts to reunite the main part of the country with Northern Ireland resulted in reunification with the British Commonwealth as a whole. This came about in part because of Irish and English joint cooperation in fighting off the Middle Eastern terrorist networks that then infested the world. The irony of these two former opposites - terrorists and their victims - working together to defeat another type of terrorism should not be lost on the casual reader.

Ireland is a more industrious nation than England, with approximately half its population engaged in high-tech manufacturing work. Over half the products produced in Ireland are used elsewhere in the United Kingdom, while the remainder are distributed throughout the world. Ireland's education system is among the best in Europe, and is highly compartmentalized, so that the vast majority of university graduates go on to become specialists in their field.

The Irish people are gregarious and detest solitude. They love to get together for raucous parties and enjoy singing and dancing, especially in group settings. As more than one Englishman has observed, there is no such thing as a 'small' Irish gathering!

Ireland itself is a lush, green place with thick forests that are said to be the legendary home of fairies, leprechauns, and the 'little people.' Legends about such fantastic creatures are as numerous as the trees in Ireland's gorgeous, sprawling forests. Ireland is among the wettest regions in Europe, with rainy days far outstripping sunny ones. Summers tend to be mild and winters quite cool, but never to terrible extremes.

Irish cities are in sharp contrast to its beautiful outlying regions. The larger towns, particularly the capital of Dublin, tend to be cramped, densely populated zones with little in the way of parks

and vegetation. Irish buildings are functional but unappealing, existing solely for the purpose of accomplishing whatever task is at hand. Even outlying suburbs possess overcrowded multi-level structures optimised for maximum housing in a minimum of space. For this reason, visitors to Ireland seldom stay in the cities, but prefer to journey into the surrounding countryside, where they can experience the intense, well-maintained beauty Ireland has to offer.

Irish Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None.
- Additional Feats Available: Gregarious, Specialist.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Irish love to fight and love to party. An Irish celebration is a wild, rowdy affair marked with loud group-oriented song and dance that can last for many hours, usually ending only when the last of the alcohol has been consumed. Individual Irishmen typically discover their aptitudes and desires early in life and undertake a career in that field, rarely changing unless something else radically affects them or their environment. The Irish have large families and many friends, and tend to be extroverts. They do not make good loners.
- Names: Dierdre, Fiona, Maureen, Damon, Keenan, Mulcahy.

Scotland

Like Ireland, Scotland had a long history of conflict with neighbouring Britain, but the two were effectively united hundreds of years before the World Wars. Scotland's frequent battles with England were generally bloody. Even during its period of independence, Scotland remained a poor nation. Alliance and unity with Britain brought a general prosperity and contentment between the two peoples. They do, however, like to make fun of each other in a generally good-natured way.

Scotland has a unique history and culture. Families, known as 'clans,' are of high importance, and each clan is known by its own unique design pattern generally found on their clothing and headgear. The Scots have a variety of well-known cultural objects unique to them, such as bagpipes, kilts, and those colossal two-handed swords known as claymores. The typical Scotsman bears a unique accent or 'brogue' with pride and makes no attempt to hide or conceal it in his speech.

Scotland is divided geographically into three areas - the Highlands, Midland Valley, and Southern Uplands. The south is by far the most industrial and technologically advanced, and contains several large cities and production centres. The Midland Valley, occasionally called the Lowlands, is more populated, but the people are much more spread out. The northern Highlands region tends to be undeveloped, especially along the craggy coastlines. Scotland's terrain is generally rocky and rough and contains a disproportionately large number of lakes (or 'lochs'). Tourism is an important industry, especially in the Highlands, although the weather tends to be poor most of the year.

Scottish people are resourceful and enjoy the outdoors. Camping and hiking are favoured activities, and the Scots do

not shy away from exploring new places. Physical activities are of great importance, even to those in the cities, and tests of strength are commonplace. Not surprisingly, Scots tend to be physically burly and powerful, although many also overeat to the point of obesity. They love a challenge and do not accept failure, trying a given task repeatedly until they succeed or realise they have no chance - at which point they retreat, find a way to increase the odds through knowledge or physical improvement, and try again.

Scottish Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None. Some in the north still speak Gaelic, and a few in the Southern Uplands have their own tongue known as 'Scots,' but these are mostly dead languages today and are not general knowledge.
- Additional Feats Available: Explorer, Stubborn.
- Available Exotic Weapon: Claymore.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Scots love a challenge but rarely gamble, instead simply finding a way to succeed, one way or another. If you tell Scotsman he cannot possibly do something, just sit back and watch while he proves you wrong. Because of this ability, Scots tend to be proud and boastful. Defeating a Scot in a fair fight, duel, or contest is the surest way to earn his respect - but cheat, and you have an enemy for life. Many people view Scots as belligerent and barbaric, especially if they encounter one in a bar.
- Names: Bonnie, Gavina, Tara, Bruce, Kirk, Wallace. Scottish last names frequently begin with 'Mc' or 'Mac.'

Wales

Wales is the name given to a chunk of the western British mainland located within a wide expanse of mountains. Descendants of the Celts, the Welsh used this terrain to successfully resist Roman and British rule for centuries. Their lands were formally separated from the rest of England by the construction of the 240-kilometre-long bank and ditch known as Offa's Dyke in the year 784. The dyke became the geographical dividing line between the two nations for the remainder of British history.

Wales spent most of the remaining centuries bouncing back and forth between semi-independence and pseudo-dominance by the Crown. Even after Wales became a full partner in the British Empire, its people found themselves either oppressed, distrusted, forgotten, or ignored. The Welsh have spent the vast majority of the remaining years struggling to keep their culture alive, and for the most part have succeeded. Their language, although difficult to speak, is not nearly as forgotten as Gaelic and Scots are in the north and west.

The Welsh are a proud, tenacious people with much in common with both Scotland to the north and England to the east. They can be difficult to understand, both culturally and linguistically. They are passionate about everything they do, living by the tenet 'anything worth doing is worth doing well.' To a Welshman, taking up a hobby is more like taking a second job - they want very much to be good at whatever they do. Typical Welshmen

have multiple interests and tend to be jacks-of-all-trades more than they are specialists.

Wales is a rocky, rugged, mountainous country in all areas except the coastal lowlands. The population tends to be centred in several large cities or sprawling communities scattered in valleys throughout the high hills. Cities and towns are highly advanced, but only the largest are connected to each other with maglevs and transport tubes. Getting around the rest of the country is accomplished by ground car, aircar, or any of a large network of airbuses that flit from village to village. Virtually every Welshman knows how to fly an aircar or personal speeder, and because of this they tend to make good starship and fighter pilots.

Welsh Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Welsh.
- Additional Feats Available: Jack-of-All-Trades, Born Pilot.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Welsh do not like to be ignored, and frequently make their opinions known even when not specifically asked. They are proud and protective of their culture and possessions. A typical Welshman is a complex individual with many different faces and interests. The Welsh do not like to fight, but will not back down easily, especially when insulted. They enjoy celebrating almost as much as the Irish, but do not do so with nearly as much zeal. They like to sing, especially during religious festivities. Their hymns tend to be complex, with many different individuals singing different verses simultaneously. Far from being disharmonious, this gives their voices a surprisingly haunting air.
- Names: Wynne, Branwen, Gwyneth, Carey, Gavin, Rhynnon. Welsh names tend to have a disproportionately large number of consonants, making them difficult to pronounce.

The European Union (EU)

The European Union consists of those nations that were once independent countries within the continent loosely defined as 'Europe.' Not every nation on that country is a part of the Union, but most are. The exceptions generally fall into one of the other groups, although the United Kingdom steadfastly remained independent even until the present day.

A complete listing of nation-states that make up the European Union is as follows: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Greenland, Herzegovina, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. Notable nations absent from this list include the United Kingdom and several members of the Russian Federation (Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, and Estonia, plus a large chunk of Russia herself).

The European Union is perhaps the most diverse of all the global organisations. Although the North American Federation

includes a large contingent of peoples from all over the world, these have gathered in the region for centuries into a huge 'melting pot' that eventually turned them all in to North Americans. Europeans, on the other hand, spent literally thousands of years developing their own nationalistic identities, often within only a comparatively small section of land. Within their borders, they developed their own culture, language, currency, and way of life that simply could not be altered within the space of a few generations.

The first winds of change for Europe came near the end of the 20th Century. During those final years of a millennium that brought untold strife to this continent, the individual nations finally began to take the steps that would turn them from a quarrelling, bickering lot into a true world power strong enough to rival that of the then-dominant United States. The first change was to adopt a centralised currency and integrated business marketplace, but even this did not occur overnight. Most of the nations that are part of the Union today resisted this change for decades, some not joining until the mid-21st Century. In addition, many of Europe's individual nations continued to hold onto outdated trade barriers and tariffs all the way up until the advent of World War III.

Over the early decades of the 21st Century, subtle changes occurred that also brought the European Union together. Police forces, emergency crews, rail and air travel, and the like slowly drifted under the control of the Union itself instead of local nations. Travel across borders became a simple matter not requiring the use of a passport or any sort of customs check-in. Free association of people from opposite sides of formerly fixed borders brought integration through intermarriages and the like. And, perhaps most importantly, the Union began to standardise on a single language.

A common language was one of the most formidable barriers to true unity faced by the emerging superpower that was the European Union. Nearly every country had its own tongue, some with multiple dialects. Spanish, French, Italian, German, Dutch, Swedish, Polish...the list was nearly as long as the number of nations in the Union itself. Sometimes the people on one side of a river did not speak the same dialect, or even the same language, as those on the opposite bank. Again, this was a situation that took millennia to develop, and simply could not be corrected overnight.

However, the development of a global communications network had an insidious effect upon the world. Slowly, gradually, the English language began to creep into everyday use in nearly every nation. Just about every venue - from software to entertainment to military equipment - employed English as its base mode of communication. While many also included translations or secondary instructions in one of the more common tongues, particularly Spanish and French, English was always there. Schools and training centres across the world took note and began to teach English to young children as a secondary, or often primary, language. By the year 2050, well over 50% of the world population spoke English fluently, and another 25% knew enough to get by in casual conversation. In Europe, the percentages were even higher. Thus, in 2054, the same year the last of the old currencies was finally retired, the European Union - which, paradoxically enough, included

no originally English-speaking countries within its borders - formally adopted English as its official language. Today, nearly every person born in the Union is taught the language of his home state and English side-by-side.

The European Union is one of the most heavily industrialised organisations in the world. Virtually every nation-state within its borders possesses several very large cities coupled with immense factory and production centres. No single state is overpopulated, although many of the cities themselves possess high concentrations of people. Unemployment is very low, and anyone who wishes to work can find a job easily enough. For the most part, those living in the united Europe are satisfied with their lot. The main social problem remains that of prejudice against those within neighbouring states, a difficulty that will probably never completely go away, human nature being what it is.

Some notes on the larger nation-states within the European Union's borders are listed below.

Switzerland

This landlocked nation originally resisted entry into the Union, as its people preferred their independence and detachment from the rest of the continent. Most inhabitants enjoyed the highest level of freedom with the lowest taxation of just about any country on the face of the world. In the end, they joined after agreeing to host the Earth Alliance capital in exchange for the right to self-determination and no significant changes to their lifestyle.

Life in Switzerland is generally easy and carefree. The Swiss are not inordinately wealthy, but have one of the highest standards of living in the European Union. This leads some to consider them lazy and pampered, but in fact the Swiss simply see no reason to work more than is absolutely necessary. They prefer to enjoy life to its fullest, avoiding drudgery and tedium at all costs. The more affluent among them love to travel almost as much as they enjoy coming home to share their experiences with friends and family.

Switzerland is an open country where people can generally come and go as they please, as long as they follow the rules. Their legal system is among the simplest on Earth, with quick justice and high penalties for infractions. Non-residents who break the law are generally expelled permanently rather than imprisoned. Switzerland places a high importance on personal and business privacy, especially where it relates to banking. Funds in numbered bank accounts are protected by the most efficient and impartial security systems on Earth, making Swiss banks the ideal locations to store legitimate and ill-gotten gains with equal ease.

The capital city of Geneva is by no means the largest or most populous city in the Alliance. In fact, it is quite deliberately the opposite. There are few industries, and the residents are almost all employees of the government - less than half of all citizens of Geneva are actually from Switzerland. Tourism is discouraged, and security is kept on a constantly high level to fend off terrorism. Diplomatic visitors are treated to a clean,

beautiful, secure city worthy of calling itself the capital of one of the most powerful organisations in the Galaxy.

Switzerland itself is a placid nation surrounded by high mountains. The people tend to prefer a quiet lifestyle, with short work days and plenty of time to enjoy themselves. The climate tends to be cooler than usual, and the inhabitants are used to cold weather and winter sports. Swiss people generally have light skin and blond hair, and are slightly taller than the average human.

Swiss Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Swiss.
- Additional Feats Available: Cold Tolerance, Mountaineer.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Swiss are, in general, used to a life of peace and calm, and do not stand up to stress or hard work very well. They are smart, but do not lord their intelligence over others. They consider their country the best on Earth and consider those who believe otherwise to be merely jealous. This attitude often leads their neighbours to think of them as lazy, hedonistic snobs, although this is rarely a fair assessment.
- Names: Greta, Heidi, Brigitte, Armin, Crispin, Lorenz.

Spain

Spain is one of the nations that originally colonised much of the world, including Mexico and vast areas of South America. Because of this, the Spanish are a proud and traditional people. Despite the fact that advanced technologies have existed for decades, many of their buildings use simple brick and mortar designs, giving their cities a classic 'Old World' feel. Visitors to Spain's interior and smaller communities sometimes wonder if they might have somehow transported themselves back in time. The cities and industrialised areas are, however, quite modern, and Spain's factories turn out some of the more advanced products in the entire Earth Alliance.

Spain's capital, Madrid, is a charming combination of high-tech spires and travel tubes mixed with open-air food markets and street vendors. Even the most professional companies have an atmosphere of casualness about them - executives in Spain eschew business suits in favour of simpler garb, and the lunchtime siesta is still a common practice. English is spoken in formal meetings and during important communications, but Spanish remains the common language of casual speech. A visitor to Spain will find his English skills far less important in the countryside, where the use of that language immediately marks him as a 'gringo.'

Spain considers itself the 'Cultural Centre of Europe.' Its people have adopted not only their own native culture, but embrace many others, even building museums, displays, and other facilities dedicated to alien races. The typical Spaniard prides himself on his open-mindedness and tolerance. The Spanish are one of the few groups on Earth who are not overwhelmingly in favour of keeping the Earth Alliance a humans-only club. They would prefer we embrace our differences and learn from them rather than shut out all others simply because they were born

into a different race. Spaniards abhor prejudice in all its forms. Perhaps not surprisingly, they tend to be strongly spiritual, and their people practice a wide variety of different religions.

Spain is a medium-sized country occupying the majority of the western end of Europe, a tongue of land known as the Iberian Peninsula. This commanding position along the North and the Mediterranean Seas gave it great power during the Age of Sail. Spain's influence waned during the 19th and 20th Centuries, however, and they managed to avoid direct involvement in World War I and World War II. They were among the founding members of the European Union, however, and are proud of their role in the world today.

Portugal, for a long time an independent nation on the very tip of the Iberian Peninsula, retains very close ties with Spain and is considered by many to be merely a sub-state of Spain itself. While this view is comfortable enough to Spaniards, the Portuguese simply smile and accept the fact that outsiders don't understand the obvious differences between the two. Portuguese speak their own language, and although their native tongue has a number of similarities to Spanish, it is definitely more than just a simple dialect. Still, for game purposes, a character hailing from Portugal can use the same basic statistics as one from Spain.

Spanish Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish or Portuguese. A native character with either of these languages receives a +2 synergy bonus with the other.
- Additional Feats Available: Glib Tongue, Open-Minded.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Spanish are tolerant and open-minded as a general rule. However, they tend to expect that same attitude from others and are often unpleasantly surprised when that proves not to be the case. Spaniards are used to eating large meals at lunchtime and taking a siesta break thereafter - even a Soldier, trained to standardise his lifestyle with that of his fellow members of the military, may find this pattern hard to break. Native Spaniards are quite used to speaking their own language for day-to-day activities, and tend to lapse into Spanish from time to time, either completely or by inserting the occasional word - or expletive - into ordinary speech.
- Names: Isabel, Belinda, Claudia, Eduardo, José, Ramirez.

France

France was not only one of the founding members of the European Union, but was also one of the most vocal advocates of a strong mutual defence pact between the many nations that made up the fledgling organisation. It is through their efforts that the initial adoption of a unified currency took place, and they were at the forefront of early 21st Century plans to create an overall European military structure not tied to any single nation. By the time World War III occurred, the French could rightly say that it was because of them the Union was prepared to participate in the conflict as a unified whole. Perhaps the only thing they regret is the adoption of English as the language

of choice, as they possessed a strong lobby for their own tongue until the rest of Europe pointed out that fewer than 5% of its population could speak more than a few words of French.

France had little luck in the first two World Wars, when it was forced to rely on others to come to the rescue of its people. This, coupled with a strong socialist economy in which the government retained a strong interest in business, caused much of the world to treat France with a certain amount of scorn. In response, the French developed a bitter streak, especially against those who lost so much liberating them from their conquerors. This attitude persists today in a general feeling of intolerance towards anyone who appears stronger or more affluent than they are.

France itself is a flat to gently rolling country consisting of huge swaths of open space used for farming and wine production. The state is divided into a large number of sub-regions, each with their own unique culture and way of speaking. The French are surprisingly competitive, especially in the arts and sciences. Although they are generally comfortable as far as wealth goes, they tend to value esoteric pursuits far more than the actual acquisition of capital. There are more 'starving artists' in France than any other nation-state on the face of the Earth.

France's largest city, Paris, has been frequently described as 'the City of Ten Million Tourists.' Functioning as what is generally considered to be Europe's art and music capital, Paris annually draws visitors numbering in the billions. The city itself is a mixture of artefacts from centuries past to a celebration of the most modern artistic visions. Nowhere is this better seen than in the architecture of downtown Paris, where buildings possess sweeping curves and bright colours that seem more likely to be at home on Minbar than on Earth. Yet, in the midst of this grandeur, simple structures like the Arc d'Triumph continue to highlight such classic locations as the Champs Elysees.

French Racial Traits

- Bonus language: French.
- Additional Feats Available: Charming, Connoisseur.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Where the Spanish are open-minded and tolerant, the French are very much the opposite. They tend to see their way as the best and everyone else's way as unimportant or just plain wrong. They rarely admit they are mistaken about anything, and even when faced with undeniable proof that they made an error, their response is to shrug it off and change the subject. Frenchmen are often seen as arrogant and self-absorbed, although frequently this is simply a misinterpretation of their own vanity. When he puts his mind to it, a Frenchman can be just as friendly and outgoing as the next human, if not more so.
- Names: Arnaud, Gaston, Noel, Yves, Adrienne, Dominique.

Germany

The nation-state known as Germany is one of the most militaristic countries to ever march troops across a border. When its citizens were not fighting in wars as mercenaries or

raiding their neighbours and seizing territory for their own uses, they were setting out to conquer entire other nations wholesale. World War I and World War II were both dominated by huge and powerful German armies, and during the second war, Nazi Germany very nearly took over the entirety of Europe. Only committed resistance by the United Kingdom, Russia, and later the United States, drove Germany to eventual defeat. Unfortunately, the victorious powers could not agree on what to do with the conquered aggressor, eventually dividing it into two halves, where it languished for decades during the Cold War.

With the fall of Communism, Germany was reunited despite fears of eventual rearmament. The new democratic state proved totally uninterested in engaging in further military action, instead concentrating on establishing itself as an economic and manufacturing centre. The uniting of Europe saw the emergence of Germany as one of the predominant industrial states of the new organisation. Germany was Europe's leader in production of a variety of mechanical and electronic devices, including computers, ground cars, steel products, building materials, and perhaps not surprisingly, weapons. From Germany's factories flowed the tanks, supply trucks, vehicles, and ammunition that enabled Europe to fight effectively in World War III, and eventually form the core of EarthForce's police elements during the early days of the Earth Alliance.

Although Germany possesses a wide variety of different types of people, the vast majority of the population is engaged in the manufacturing trade or in the military in one form or another. There are more Germans in the EarthForce Army than any other nation-state or colony in the Earth Alliance. The German people are highly industrious and make very skilled workers, but are not particularly adept at any other profession. They are knowledgeable about their past and for the most part regret the spread of Fascism in the mid-20th Century, honestly regarding this as the darkest stain on their image. It is for this reason that Germans are the most fervent anti-imperialistic faction in the European Union. They were violently against entering the Dilgar War, for example, until the League ambassador to Earth finally gave the Dilgar a Nazi spin, changing Europe's attitude virtually overnight and opening the doors to EarthForce intervention in that conflict.

Germany's capital, Berlin, is one of the largest industrial cities in Europe. The city was divided in half for most of the Cold War, and still bears some of those scars even today. Some of the worst slums in the Union are located in East Berlin, and some of the wealthiest and most influential live in the West. Although the city benefits greatly from modern anti-pollution technologies, it is still a dark and dreary place compared to most of the other European capitals. Other German cities have the same sort of grey, aesthetic functionality, all sharp corners and angles with little attempt at beauty or grace. Visitors to Germany often come away with the attitude that its people are like the cities - cold, hard, and impersonal - but this is not necessarily the case. Germans work hard, but play hard as well. They appreciate sports and fun whenever they can, perhaps more so than those who lives involve less labour - they are just not as flashy about it.

Austria and Hungary, two neighbouring states, have always had close ties with Germany. Prior to World War II, they were on-

again, off-again portions of the overall German nation. Austria-Hungary was at one time a single country, but eventually divided over religious and other matters. Both countries were among the Soviet satellite states during the Cold War that were eventually returned to independence following the break-up of the Soviet Union. Both Austria and Hungary retain many of the same features as Germany, and characters from those nations can use the statistics provided hereafter with little modification. Austria's capital is Vienna, and Hungary's is Budapest.

German Racial Traits

- Bonus language: German or Hungarian. A native player with either of these languages receives a +2 synergy bonus with the other. Austrians speak German.
- Additional Feats Available: Militaristic, Industrious.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Germans tend to be direct and to the point about everything. Their demeanour, like their language itself, is perceived as gruff and harsh. Perhaps not surprisingly, they can also be extremely passionate in their beliefs and actions. Their skills in battle and industry are also a matter of great personal pride. A German will readily fight for what he believes in, or to defend himself against an insult, real or imagined. They make excellent allies and implacable enemies.
- Names: Guenther, Adolf, Wilhelm, Brunhilde, Elsa, Gretchen. Note: Germans pronounce a 'W' with a V-sound.

Poland

Poland was one of those countries left in the control of Russia after World War II. The nation suffered for decades under communist rule until the collapse of the Iron Curtain set them free once again. For some time, the nation was a hodgepodge of Poles, Russians, and Germans, but after the retreat of the Soviets, the Germans mostly emigrated home, leaving Poland one of the most homogenous states in the European Union.

Poland is also unique in Europe as it is one of the most self-sufficient states in the Union. The nation-state contains some of the largest and most diverse supplies of natural resources found in any one place anywhere in the world. This, combined with a considerably large land area devoted to farming, has resulted in a state that exports much and imports little. Despite this, however, intense governmental controls over businesses and farmlands - re-introduced following disastrous unemployment that occurred following stock market failures in the early 2000s - have kept Poland's economy relatively stagnant.

Poland's industries are controlled almost completely by the government itself, which calls itself the National Solidarity Party. Although technically a parliament with a constitution and elected officials, the otherwise socialistic structure has many detractors, but it has managed to keep the nation totally stable despite the many rises and falls of European markets that took place in the 21st Century. While the rest of Europe, and most of the world, languished in bitter, harsh conditions following World War III, the Polish people went on pretty much as before, without a noticeable decrease in the standard of living. Poles freely admit that their system of government does not produce

huge dividends in prosperous times, but it also avoids the terrible downswings that accompany the inevitable depression that follows. In other words, the Polish people prefer stability to the opportunities - and risks - accompanying a free market economy.

The capital of Poland, Warsaw, is a city of contrasts. Harsh industrial buildings, similar to those that make up most of Berlin and Munich, sit alongside massive, beautiful cathedrals. Blocks filled with apartment-style tenements occupy sections adjacent to architecturally grandiose modern skyscrapers, all linked by curving skyways and high-speed electromagnetic monorails. Other cities boast similar arrangements, with incredibly intricate public transit systems connecting all sections of the city, and individual towns with each other. Because the Polish government provides free transportation to all workers when moving to or from their jobs, very few native Poles actually own their own vehicles.

Poland is one of the few European states with a dominant religion, in this case Catholic. This fact survived decades of persecution under Stalin and the communists who followed him, and was perhaps strengthened by it. Poland retains close ties to Vatican City and is a great leader in the Catholic religion worldwide. Nearly one-third of the Popes in the last three centuries have been Polish.

Polish Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Polish.
- Additional Feats Available: Repetitious, Team Player.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Polish people are extremely stable individuals with a highly conservative mindset. Even the occasional Polish traveller, out to experience the Galaxy, still tends to adhere to these beliefs. Poles seek out comfortable, familiar surroundings and do not do well in changing environments. Faced with the choice of a well-paying, dull job or an exciting but risky opportunity to make tremendous wealth, the typical Pole will always choose the one that offers the best job security. For this reason, 'average' Poles make poor adventurers, but then, player characters are rarely average!
- Names: Henryk, Jozef, Stefan, Jana, Katya, Zytka.

Italy

Italy is one of the oldest nations on the face of the Earth. Originally known by the name of its current capital, the Roman Empire once stretched almost the entire length and breadth of Europe and into parts of Asia and Africa as well. That ancient nation collapsed, but survived in a fragmented state throughout the turbulent Dark Ages and well into the 20th Century. Under the fascist dictator Mussolini, Italy fought on the side of Germany during World War II, but the alliance was a tenuous one at best. In the end, Italy turned on Hitler and as a result was spared much of the late-war devastation that so tortured his once-proud nation.

Because of the fracturing of their population that occurred in the decades prior to World War II, Italy was made up of a hodgepodge of different peoples who lacked even their own

common language. The nation made great strides towards improving their nation in the 20th and 21st Centuries, vastly improving its economy, infrastructure, and industry. Highly mountainous areas of Italy, long thought to be uninhabitable or difficult to reach, were made accessible by new transportation technologies. High-speed maglev trains linked the peninsula with France to the west, Switzerland and Austria to the north, and the Balkan states to the east. Underwater transport tubes connected the large islands of Sicily and Cyprus to the mainland, and Italy became a thriving, booming centre of commerce for all of southern Europe.

Italy's status of a trading hub resulted in the movement of the official European Stock Market to Rome in the 2020s. While this brought significant improvements in Italy's economy, it also permanently linked its people's standard of living to that of the European Union's prosperity in the global marketplace. When stocks fell, Italians suffered noticeably, resulting in corresponding rises in unemployment, poverty, and unrest. During good times, however, there was wealth to be had all around. This has produced a nation-state populated by opportunistic capitalists willing to take risks and live with the consequences, wherever the chips might fall.

This willingness for risk-taking has also produced a large gambling industry across the entire peninsula, especially on the islands of Sardinia and Sicily. Gambling is entirely legal in Italy, but all casinos and similar businesses are strictly controlled by the government to prevent cheating and fraud. Profits are redistributed to the people in the form of improved public works and lowered taxes. Italians will bet on nearly anything, but their favourites are vehicle racing, especially those involving high-speed ground cars of classic, flashy designs. Because the life of a professional racer is the surest means to personal wealth and glory, driving and piloting courses are taught early, and those with the proper reflexes are tested and trained for potential racing careers. While few actually become professionals, nearly all Italians become skilled drivers, and a disproportionate number of them are qualified as pilots.

Italy is another of the rare European states where a single religion is king. Nearly all Italians, especially those located near the independent Vatican City - still an independent city-state even in the 23rd Century - are Roman Catholics. As a general rule, they hold their religion in high regard, and the Pope's word is as much law as that of a Senator or the Earth Alliance President himself. Italians do, however, tend to be somewhat intolerant of other religions, especially Islam.

Italian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Italian.
- Additional Feats Available: Gambler, Professional Sportsman.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Italians are commensurate gamblers in every sense of the word. They tend to be impulsive, preferring action to thoughtful contemplation. Faced with two seemingly identical choices, they will select one at random and proceed without hesitation rather than gather information and consider all their options. In other words, they tend to 'look before they leap.' Italians love to wager and enjoy

the thrill of a good race or sporting event, but they are also generally honest and do not appreciate being tricked or lied to. Bad choices sometimes lead unlucky Italians to a life of crime, where they frequently build Mafia-style 'families' based on a single activity, such as smuggling or drug trafficking. Even in this they remain honest in all dealings, even amongst themselves. Of course, the very act of performing these criminal acts is a risk unto itself!

- Names: Aldo, Guido, Luigi, Dona, Isabella, Serena. Note: Male names typically end in -O or -I, while female names end in -A or -E. For example, Alberto is male, while Alberta is female.

The Scandinavian League

During World War III, as the rest of Europe geared up for war, the Scandinavian countries surprised and angered the rest of the Union by refusing to fight. They agreed to provide resources and arms to their allies, but would not commit their soldiers to the battle. This provoked a variety of sanctions, and in response, the Scandinavian nations (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland) threatened to secede from the European Union. In the middle of a global war, they held meetings for the purpose of creating a new organisation called the Scandinavian League. However, after years of debates, the only thing they could really agree on was that they did not want to simply return to independent status. The benefits of being part of a larger, interlinked organisation were too great, and the risks involved in remaining independent were compelling. Germany was already rumbling about sending troops into Denmark, and there seemed to be little hope of convincing the rest of Europe not to stop them.

In the end, the proposed Scandinavian League never took hold. As the war neared its end, first Sweden and then the others began to participate at last. Since they were the least affected by the fighting, they also assumed a significant amount of the post-war reconstruction burden. Raw materials from Norway flowed into production centres in Sweden and Finland and from there to the countries that needed them the most. The rest of Europe forgave the Scandinavians for the most part, although accusations of cowardice persisted for decades. In truth, they were not cowards, just pacifists unwilling to sacrifice the lives of their people fighting in parts of the world in which they had no interest. Scandinavian historians like to point out that had the rest of the world possessed similar attitudes, World War III might not have been such a huge, painful ordeal.

Scandinavia is made up of five nations with common roots and similar cultures. The early Vikings were great influences in the region, and were the original colonisers of Iceland. Never blessed with large populations, the countries themselves are somewhat harsh lands with long winters and short summers. Much of Norway is rocky and barren, although modern terraforming techniques are beginning to transform some areas into more appealing land. Sweden's population is sparse, distributed mostly along the coasts in small fishing villages that retain a quaint Old World charm even today. Finland's people are more concentrated and the cities much more industrialised. Denmark is a curious combination of Scandinavian and German

culture. Iceland, while the most isolated of the five nation-states, is in many ways the most modern, with high-tech cities, airports, and a public transportation system second only to Italy's.

The Scandinavian people do not like war as a general rule. They believe in a policy of peace through strength. Their people are extremely tough and tenacious warriors, perhaps due in part to the harsh terrain in which they dwell. They tend to be progressive and forward-thinking, often undertaking long-term projects like the terraforming of vast sections of Norway despite the expense and the decades of work required. They are strong believers in the government's role to serve the people, with all public works, medicine, and the like managed by the state. Scandinavia is rich in resources and its people tend to be somewhat wealthier than most, though they are not flashy about it.

All five nation-states possess a different language, although most share a common root. Icelandic is virtually identical to the language spoken by the original Vikings, so an Icelander speaking to a Norwegian sounds very much like Olde English compared to modern English. Swedish and Danish are also highly similar in structure to Norwegian. Finnish, however, is totally unlike any of the others, and indeed has very little in common with any other language on the face of the Earth.

Norway's vast resources are in great demand elsewhere in Europe and the rest of the world. Raw materials from Norway are usually shipped first to Sweden or Finland for use in the factories there. Finland is by far the most industrious of the group, building a wide variety of products for use everywhere in the Earth Alliance. Sweden is more specialised, producing high-tech items like communications equipment, computer parts, and aircraft. EarthForce buys virtually all its atmospheric aircraft - both fixed-wing and VTOL types - from the Saab factories scattered throughout Sweden.

None of the Scandinavian states have impressively large cities like most of the rest of Europe. The largest is Reykjavik, an impressive capital that has grown steadily for the past hundred years thanks to Iceland's low tax rate and constant demand for jobs. Oslo, Norway's capital and largest city, is a sprawling town with few excessively tall buildings. Sweden's capital of Stockholm is a manufacturing centre with an impressive array of modern factories. Helsinki, the capital of Finland, is one of the smallest capitals in Europe and looks more like a town than a modern city. Denmark's capital is Copenhagen, another modern city with towering spires and curving overhead maglev transports that make getting around a simple task.

For the most part, the nations of Scandinavia are sparsely populated with plenty of wide-open spaces and fresh air. They are favourite destinations for people looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of denser areas. They are, however, cold places with frequently poor weather. Iceland and parts of Norway sit above the Arctic Circle, so sunlight patterns vary throughout the year, with the sun often not setting at all for months, while it is completely absent for the entire winter.

Scandinavian Racial Traits

- **Bonus language:** Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Icelandic, or Danish. A native player with Norwegian, Swedish, or Danish receives a +1 synergy bonus with any of those and a +2 synergy bonus with Icelandic. A native speaker with Icelandic receives a +1 synergy bonus with Swedish or Danish and a +4 synergy bonus with Norwegian.
- **Additional Feats Available:** Cold Tolerance, Forward Thinking.
- **Roleplaying Suggestions:** Scandinavians tend to be fair-haired and fair-skinned, although this is not necessarily the case for those living in southern areas. They are often quite attractive, and have pleasant, friendly personalities. Scandinavians often think about others before themselves, and usually consider the good of the group more important than their own advancement. Slow to anger and reluctant to employ force, they nevertheless fight when called upon to do so. Scandinavians tend to be tenacious and rarely give up once they start down their chosen path.
- **Names:** Dana, Viveca, Inga, Ashby, Davin, Jens.

Greece and the Balkans

The Balkan states have had a long history of rivalry and dislike of one another. Many of them are actually little more than the broken pieces of larger nations, while others contain regions taken from the others through conquest or annexation. Whereas most of the remaining member states of the European Union have long since resolved most of their differences, this is not the case in the Balkans. In fact, the very word 'balkanised' means 'to break up a region into smaller, hostile units.'

The problems that cause this inherent dislike are many and varied, so much so that a discussion of the reasons would consume a good number of pages of this book. In addition to long memories of historical atrocities, the nation-states are divided on ethnic and religious lines. Perhaps the only other part of the world so ferociously split on religious lines is the Middle East. These seething hatreds often burn over into violence, rioting, assassinations, and even the occasional civil war. EarthForce actually keeps a significant amount of peacekeeping troops present in the region to quell these problems. Nonetheless, acts of terrorism and random attacks are a frighteningly common occurrence.

The most stable of the Balkan nation-states is Greece, a country made up of a large chunk of land and a tremendous number of islands scattered throughout the Aegean Sea. Greece is a modern country whose people appreciate fine art and architecture. Their cities have been built with advanced technologies, but use classic Greek designs - columns, high arches, and the like - to give them a distinctively Hellenic feel. The various islands are all connected by a labyrinth of undersea transport tubes, but a large number of the citizens there possess aircars for easy commuting to the mainland. The sea is an important part of the average Greek's life, with nearly everyone able to swim and most capable of doing so for long periods.

In the decades prior to World War III, the semi-annual Olympic games gradually went from travelling from one city to another to a series of fixed locations that rotated over a twenty-year period. The Olympic Committee instituted this change because of widespread, uncontrollable corruption in the selection process, and bad feelings that inevitably resulted when one nation was selected over another. Athens, the original home of the Olympic Games, constructed a tremendous series of amphitheatres and outdoor facilities for the summer games, and after World War III - during which the Games were suspended for the first time since 1944 - the Greek capital became the permanent home of the Summer Olympics. As a result of this, Greeks have come to value physical sports more highly than the rest of Europe, with a large public activities program and one of the most impressive sporting events calendars in the world.

Despite its comfortable and calm exterior, Greece is still very much a Balkan state at heart. The Greek people loathe the Turks, and resent being part of the same European Union that houses their most hated rivals. Both sides have been arguing about territorial borders since the 20th Century, and their religious factions - Greeks are mostly Orthodox Catholics, while the Turks are almost entirely Moslems - could not be more at odds. After World War III, both nations frequently employed terrorism and military provocations against each other as a matter of national policy. Greece has also had a long-standing feud with nearby Macedonia, and they have occasionally attempted to annex Albania and parts of Bulgaria. Although Greece is strongly linked to the rest of Europe, they have few trade relations with the other Balkan states and almost none with Turkey.

The remaining Balkan states - those known as Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Yugoslavia during the early 21st Century - are as technologically advanced as the rest of the European Union, but lag far behind most of the other nation-states in their modernisation efforts. Much of their annual budget is spent on repairing damage done during any of the constant fights and brush wars that crop up from time to time. The Balkans - and, to a lesser extent, Greece - are dependent upon financial aid from the other members of the European Union, a fact that they do not like to be reminded of. While the Balkans do produce a number of useful commodities and resources, their trade routes with other states are insufficient and their transit capabilities limited. Since trading with one Balkan entity is a sure way to convince the others not to deal with you, there is little incentive for other nation-states to bother serving the smaller market that remains.

A large number of the Balkan nation-states are former chunks of the much larger country of Yugoslavia. This country broke up during the late 20th Century into several pieces that eventually formed the independent states of Montenegro (later renamed Yugoslavia), Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (the latter itself fracturing in the mid-21st Century into two independent nations). The break-up of the larger Yugoslavian parent nation occurred over the course of numerous civil wars producing hundreds of thousands of casualties, all of this over ethnic and religious differences between native Croats, Serbs, and Muslims. All of these countries remain heavily divided along these same lines, even today. They also despise

not only each other but their neighbours, including Bulgaria, Turkey, and Albania, all of whom have fought territorial and religious disputes since the Dark Ages.

Albania is a small country with a tortured history far more complex than its size might indicate. Frequently in conflict with its neighbours, it embraced communism after World War II and allied strongly with Russia after breaking diplomatic ties with Yugoslavia. Later, they switched allegiances to China, and eventually Western Europe, always winding up dependent upon foreign aid to keep their government afloat. The people are strongly tribal and clannish by nature, seeing the family as a unifying force. There are more men than women in Albania, a trait not shared by any other European nation-state.

Bulgaria is one of the few formerly Communist countries that benefited greatly from that form of government, seizing the opportunity to industrialise and improve education and inadvertently preparing the country for democratic rule. Bulgaria's people were mostly Slavic until the early 21st Century, when growth rates among ethnic Turks eventually brought the Orthodox and Moslem populations into conflict. This flared into civil war in 2031, sending thousands of refugees flowing into neighbouring Turkey, Greece, and Macedonia. Turkey then intervened, ostensibly to come to the rescue of their brothers in Islam, only to have Greece also enter the fight. The entire war was broken up by United Nations peacekeepers within the space of six months, but Bulgaria expelled its Turkish population and never forgave Turkey for the attack. The two remain hated enemies even today. Bulgaria has one of the best education systems in the Balkans and a preponderance of industry, and is fond of its ability to claim that its small country is more powerful and enlightened than the entirety of their loathsome rival Turkey.

Romania is one of the larger nation-states and one of the few that remains almost exclusively socialist in nature. The government controls nearly all public works and has a strong hand in most business dealings. Perhaps because of this, public transportation and medical services are among the best in Europe. Several parts of this country, particularly the Transylvanian region, have changed hands numerous times in Romanian history, giving most residents a well-deserved fear and dislike of almost all their neighbours.

The Balkans are relatively under populated compared to the dense levels of habitation found throughout most of the rest of Europe. Cities, even the capitals, are fairly small, and the people prefer living in the countryside as a general rule. While some cities, particularly those in Greece as well as Kosovo, Sofia, and a few others, employ the latest advances in architectural technology, the vast majority are decades behind the rest of Europe in modernisation.

Life in the Balkan states, with the exception of Greece, can be difficult. Wealth is difficult to acquire and even harder to hold onto. An individual who acquires sufficient resources frequently packs up and moves to a better part of Europe, or somewhere else in the world, rather than stay and try and improve an economy and social order that has remained virtually unchanged for hundreds of years. This results in one of the highest poverty levels in Europe. Crime and social

unrest are correspondingly high, and most Europeans consider the Balkans the dark underbelly of their otherwise prosperous Union.

Greek (Balkan) Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Greek, Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Macedonian, or Slovenian.
- Additional Feats Available: Professional Sportsman (Greek only), Streetwise (non-Greek only), Distrustful.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Most Balkan natives are highly distrustful and suspicious of outsiders. They do not make friends easily and tend to use others rather than establish long-lasting relationships. Their family lives are quite the opposite, however, as they see the bond of family as the one unifying force in their existence, and relatives as the only people they can truly trust. They tend to be greedy and sanctimonious, seeking wealth in all its forms but rarely hanging onto it long once they achieve it. These traits generally hold true across the whole of the Balkans, although these aspects are far less extreme in Greece. The Greeks also possess a fondness for art, architecture, and culture not shared by most members of other states.
- Names (Slavic): Bela, Kamilia, Sonja, Juri, Mikhail, Vassily.
- Names (Greek): Alyssa, Caitlin, Ida, Julian, Nikolai, Stefan.

Turkey

The people known today as Turks are the descendants of a nomadic race who once roamed throughout the Middle East. In settling their current land, they absorbed a number of other ethnicities, including Greeks, Kurds, Armenians, and many others, the vast majority of whom converted to Islam and became Turks in much the same way as anyone who legally immigrated to the United States during the latter half of the Second Millennium was immediately accepted as an American. The Turks did not force this change on anyone, but accepted those who wished to join without question. This openness has led millions of refugees into Turkey from neighbouring nations over the years, greatly swelling the population and making an 'ethnic Turk' all but indistinguishable from anyone else.

The Turks have been responsible for many wars in the region over the centuries, particularly in the Balkan states, where they have no small measure of enemies. They are generally thought of as fanatical soldiers, although that term is often somewhat extreme. They are also a detail-oriented people, well suited to administration, banking, and other careers that permit their natural attention to detail to shine through. Turks make good mathematicians, physicists, and researchers. They are very studious, and their country has one of the better education systems in Europe.

Turkey is one of the few European nations all but united under a single religion. Over 95% of the population is Islamic, the remainder being Jews, Protestants or Catholics. This difference has made them antagonistic towards their non-Moslem neighbours, although they have for the most part avoided

descending into the black pit of terrorism that consumed the United Islamic Nations throughout most of the 21st Century. When the leaders of that organisation called upon all of Islam to rise up in a holy jihad against the newly formed Earth Alliance, Turkey refused to throw away its connection with the European Union and was ostracised by its Islamic 'brothers.' This allowed Turkey to prosper and grow over the decades that followed, while the United Islamic Nations were - to hear them tell the tale - ground under the merciless boot heel of the heathen devils. Turkey's 'Great Betrayal' remains a sore point between that nation and the other Islamic countries even today.

The nation of Turkey was once generally arid, but technological improvements have made much of its formerly inhospitable terrain into rich farmland. Well over half the population is involved in farming in one way or another. Turkey also has a huge textile industry, producing a tremendous amount of clothing, fabrics, and the like, including the inevitable 'Persian rugs' that decorate floors throughout the Earth Alliance and beyond. The country has conveniences as modern as any other European nation, but is not nearly as industrialised as might be expected. Its people depend on imports for most of their manufactured goods.

Turkey's capital, Ankara, is an intriguing mix of modern buildings and classic Arab-style architecture. Of particular interest are the towering mosques that seem to occupy nearly every city block. Because Turkey has absorbed so many other cultures, Ankara shows signs of Russian, Greek, and other national styles in its buildings and designs, but these are much more difficult for the average visitor to discern.

Turkish Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Turkish.
- Additional Feats Available: Heat Tolerance, Open-Minded.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Turks are an ethnically diverse people with a great deal of respect for others, even aliens. They see anyone who does not share this same view as dangerously prejudiced. In general, they tend to think first and act later. Turkish scientists are fanatics about the 'scientific method,' forming a hypothesis and testing theories about even simple procedures, and assuming nothing is definite until directly proven. Turks appreciate works of art, particularly paintings, sculpture, and architecture. Quite a few are avid collectors.
- Names: Akasma, Cari, Karli, Hasad, Onur, Kemal.

The North American Federation (NAF)

The North American Federation is dominated by one of the most powerful countries on the planet, the United States. Because North and South America were among the last continents to be discovered, they were also among the last to be settled. Virtually every nation that is a part of the Federation was once either a French, Spanish, or British colony founded in the latter half of the Second Millennium. The older countries

that are now part of the North American Federation include the United States, Canada, Mexico, Bahamas, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Belize, Trinidad & Tobago, and several other small Caribbean islands. The Federation also includes a smattering of other tiny island territories elsewhere in the world, although these are little more than tourist attractions with no significant industry or population. Virtually every landmass in the North American sphere is part of the Federation, with the notable exception of Greenland, which is part of the European Union thanks to its long association with Denmark.

Cuba, the Virgin Islands, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Panama, and Pacifica (a series of islands including the Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Wake Island, and Samoa) all became a part of the United States of their own free will during the period 2130-2150, when that nation began consolidating the region as part of a program to bolster its own economy to compete with that of the rapidly growing European Union. The Americans were already busy pumping billions of dollars into those territories or independent nations, so bringing them into full statehood cost little and promised much in the way of humanitarian and economic improvements. The intent of the program was actually to convince both Canada and Mexico to join as well, but both proved impossible to convince. In the end, the United States settled for the creation of the North American Federation, a treaty that followed on the heels of the successful but limited NAFTA, NAFTA II, and NAFTA III series that preceded it. Trade barriers virtually dropped overnight, and a consolidated currency instituted in the late 2040s put an end to the last major problem facing the banks and stock markets in the region. The resulting organization proved to be an excellent competitor and foil for the powerful European Union, although the Federation did not truly reach the same level across the board until the addition of the Pan-American League after World War III.

The United States

The United States of America (USA) is a nation of 58 individual states, 56 of which are located in North America. The vast majority of these were added to the union in the last two decades of the Second Millennium, with the final eight joining during a brief flurry of regional consolidation in the mid-21st Century. While most residents of the United States like to consider their country the founders of democracy, their government is actually a republic, very much like that employed by the ancient Roman Empire. The main difference is that those who govern are elected directly by the people for short terms, not appointed for life or influenced by wealth and social standing.

The United States has always been extremely active in global affairs, ostensibly to promote world peace and global relations but generally in order to protect its own interests. They were late showing up to all three World Wars and were instrumental in winning all of them, a fact that still irritates many Europeans (particularly the French) - especially since the Americans never seem to tire of reminding them of it. Despite their tremendous economic and military strength, they have always avoided invading other countries for the purpose of subjugating them.

That has not stopped them from sending troops across borders for other reasons, however. This tendency, as well as their vast wealth and decadence, attracted the ire of many nations over the years, resulting in series of terrorist wars that lasted throughout much of the 21st and 22nd Centuries, culminating in the nuclear destruction of San Diego in 2150. Only the formation of the Earth Alliance and eventual pacification of the United Islamic Nations brought an end to these activities, although even today they are still used as a tool by certain fanatical groups.

The United States, which is often referred to as 'America' despite the fact that the word really refers to the two continents on that side of the world, is a large country made up of a wide variety of different nationalities. For most of its existence, the borders of the United States have been open to immigrants, who were attracted to the young nation by the promise of freedom and a new start in life. Although America has known its share of prejudice and ethnic strife, the nation as a whole is extremely tolerant of those who are different. Americans are therefore more likely to accept and mingle with aliens than people from less enlightened societies.

For many years, the United States was the dominant economic and military force in the world. The creation of the European Union changed this basic fact, and by the middle of the 21st Century, the Americans found themselves no longer on top of things. The Republic of China and Russian Federation also grew to the status of superpowers alongside the United States, soon eclipsing it economically. Fearful that their long-accustomed role in world affairs would continue to decline, the United States saw to the formation of the North American Federation in 2041. Canada and Mexico stopped short of adding their provinces to the stars on the American flag, but over the course of several decades the governments and infrastructure merged until they were all but indistinguishable from a single nation. Today, virtually everyone in the Union refers to themselves as Americans, regardless of which country they actually hail from. This is a marked difference from most of Europe and other areas. A person from France, for example, usually thinks of himself as French first and European second.

The United States is made up of a wide variety of different terrains. Just about every imaginable environment can be found within its borders, including deserts in the Southwest, swamps in the South, high mountains in the Midwest, and rainforests of the Northwest. People from the various regions tend to have their own unique accents and way of speaking. Although the predominant language is English, Spanish is a common second language, especially in the southern areas, and many Americans also speak other tongues depending on their family's origins.

The capital of the United States, Washington, is actually part of a huge metropolis of several interconnected cities including Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City. The entire area is really a huge maze of buildings, maglev tracks, travel tubes, and subway lines that is all but indistinguishable as anything but a single tremendous city - and by that definition it is by far the largest in the world. Aside from a few other very densely populated areas in Texas, California, Colorado, Florida, and the Pacific Northwest, much of the remainder of the United States is open land. Farming is a huge industry, and America exports far more food than it consumes. Although America also possesses

an immense quantity of natural resources and production facilities, it is also a huge importer of goods and technology. Its people are incredible consumers, a fact that makes most of the rest of the world think of Americans as aloof and decadent.

American Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Chinese, or Japanese.
- Additional Feats Available: Adaptable, Jack-of-All-Trades, Wealthy.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Americans come from a wide variety of backgrounds. They are equally at home in cities as well as the countryside, and in deserts as well as forests. They tend to be affluent and expect certain comforts and technologies, without which they find themselves at a loss. Although Americans are racially tolerant, they also have a high opinion of themselves that often comes off as vanity or boorishness. Americans like to travel and often have a number of hobbies and secondary activities with which to amuse themselves.
- Names: Mary, Lisa, Melissa, Michael, Robert, Thomas.

Canada

The nation of Canada has enjoyed a relatively quiet and stable history. Originally a French colony, it achieved independence without the kind of bloodshed that their southern neighbours required. Aside from a few border squabbles with the United States, their country has never been threatened militarily. They did, however, fight in the World Wars alongside the Americans and for the most part have been friendly and sociable with their more populous neighbours.

Although the economies of the United States and Canada were inexorably intertwined by the dawn of the Third Millennium, the Canadians never for a moment seriously considered turning their provinces into American states. Even the province of Quebec, whose population was almost exclusively French-speaking, would not have considered joining the United States had their many referendums actually resulted in independence. Canadians quietly laughed behind the backs of the Americans when they began their push to convince other nations on the continent to agree to annexation during the 2030s and 2040s. Even after the formation of the North American Federation, Canada remained steadfastly independent and refused to consider themselves in any way subservient to the United States. They are, in fact, equal partners in the continental alliance.

Canada is made up of thirteen provinces and territories. The country is one of the largest of Earth's nation-states in terms of sheer landmass, but is not particularly well populated. Most of the people are concentrated in the southern areas or along the coasts. There are a few large cities, including Edmonton, Quebec, Halifax, Winnipeg, and the capital of Ottawa, but only the Toronto area can truly be considered a metropolis. The vast majority of Canada is made up of huge coniferous and boreal forests that stretch all the way from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast. Canada draws millions of tourists annually, most of whom come for the chance to hunt, fish, camp, hike, and basically get back to nature.

Canadians are, for the most part, at home in the woods and forests. They enjoy spending time outdoors whenever possible, and make good explorers and surveyors. Even those who live in the cities and towns prefer outdoor activities in their off time. They do not enjoy being cooped up for long periods, and those on Babylon 5 are frequently found in the many gardens and parks.

One of Canada's largest industries is lumber, but they are extremely careful about harvesting their forests. Over centuries of timber development, they have conservation down to a science. However, Canada is only so large, and their wood production is necessarily limited. The steadily growing population of the Earth Alliance has resulted in many timber companies moving to the unspoiled countryside of some of the colonies, where decades of forest growth are finally beginning to turn a profit. However, Canadian lumber will always be in demand on Earth, as the freight charges are not nearly as extensive.

Canadian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: French.
- Additional Feats Available: Cold Tolerant, Forester, Explorer.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Canadians are a generally quiet people who appreciate solitude. They do not mind cold weather, and in many cases prefer it. Canadians tend to be hardy and can swim, hike, and hunt for extended periods of time. They speak English with a noticeable French accent and a few of their own special pronunciations ('ow' sounds as 'oo', for example). Canadians drink more beer per capita than any other nation-state on Earth.
- Names: Denise, Harriet, Jacqueline, Darcy, Louis, Jean-Paul.

Mexico

Mexico is a fairly large country located south of the United States and north of the Pan-American League. Large portions of the north are arid, rocky, or desert terrains, while the south tends to be more heavily forested and somewhat mountainous. The native peoples are descendants of native tribes or Spanish settlers who came to the country in the mid to late centuries Second Millennium. Virtually everyone in Mexico speaks Spanish as a second language, but unlike the Spaniards, they primarily speak English, just like most of the rest of Earth's nation-states.

During the 19th and 20th Centuries, Mexico languished in poverty while the United States and Canada became steadily stronger and richer. This led large numbers of impoverished, jobless Mexicans to cross the border illegally and find work in America. The United States tolerated this for a while, but it gradually became a significant problem. Mexicans were treated poorly, paid less than American workers, and had no real benefits or future. Additionally, the growing disparity between the two countries led to increasingly bad feelings. Americans thought of Mexicans as contemptible and pathetic, while the Mexicans hated the snobbish, wealthy Americans they were forced by circumstances to serve. The only solution was for

Mexico to solve its own social and economic problems, and yet for a variety of reasons they were unable to do so.

The early decades of the 21st Century saw little change in this situation. Short of building a huge wall to keep the Mexicans out, as well as blocking off all ports in the Gulf of Mexico against refugees fleeing Cuba and other impoverished Caribbean nations, there seemed to be no way to halt the daily tide of migrant workers crossing the border. Although Mexico as a nation was possessed of huge amounts of resources and no physical reason why they could not lift themselves up by their own bootstraps, none of their many changing governments seemed capable of success until the arrival of President Luis Alonzo Gutierrez in 2024.

Elected by virtue of his promises to bring reform to his country, Gutierrez surrounded himself with loyal friends dedicated to his vision of a new and prosperous Mexico. After surviving several assassination attempts, including the complete destruction of his presidential palace in 2025, he actually began to succeed with his programs. Most surprising was the way he drove his scythe through corruption in all forms, slicing away the bloated fat that was dragging down his country. This led to an attempted coup in 2028 that was fought back with the help of United States forces, who were in position after CIA investigators discovered the rebel plans. After this Gutierrez declared martial law and called off national elections, leaving himself president for as long as he felt necessary and promising to give back power when the emergency was over.

Since historians can count on one hand the number of times a dictator has voluntarily yielded up his powers once he seized them, the Americans were doubtful, but Gutierrez lived up to his promises. After four additional years of driving out corruption, rebuilding Mexico's infrastructure, altering taxation and economics, and encouraging growth by offering huge incentives to native and foreign investors, the president declared an end to martial law and permitted free elections once again. While he was himself ineligible, his vice president won easily and kept Gutierrez on his staff, permitting reforms to continue. Within the space of a decade, Mexico went from one of the poorest and hopeless nations in the hemisphere to a wildly growing and improving country worth remaining a part of. The flow of workers into America slowed to a trickle at last.

Ironically, had these reforms not come to pass, Mexico probably would have jumped at the chance to join the United States in the 2040s. Indeed, with the problem on the border continuing unabated, the pressure from America may have proven too great to ignore. As it was, however, Mexico saw no reason to throw away all the advancements they had made in the previous decade, and declined the offers put forth by the United States. They were still tempted, however - much more so than Canada - and the votes to permit the merger were somewhere around 30% of the population. The Mexicans did, however, see the great value in open trade and commerce with their northern neighbours, and were one of the largest proponents of the North American Federation when it was first proposed.

Mexico is a warm country, but today much of the uninhabitable land has been turned into farms by modern irrigation and terraforming techniques. However, ecological damage in the

north still remains in the form of wide desert expanses that are being pushed back only gradually. There are few large cities, although the capital of Mexico City is a massive metropolis on par with Dallas Fort Worth, Daytonnati, and Greater Los Angeles. Although much of Mexico is not nearly as advanced as the United States or Canada, the tourist havens of Acapulco, Puerto Vallarta, and Cancun are gleaming monuments to modern technology.

Mexicans are darker skinned than most Americans or Europeans, but they have a bronzed appearance rather than a black one. They tend to be hard-working folk with a distinctive culture that owes much to Spain, but is also uniquely their own. Mexicans are generally poorer than their northern neighbours, although the gap has changed radically since the 20th and 21st Centuries. They are proud of their own accomplishments and the fact that they were able to correct their country's problems without outside aid. Mexicans do not like to be reminded of the way their country was before the days of President Gutierrez, one of their prominent national heroes.

Mexican Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish.
- Additional Feats Available: Desert Dweller, Heat Tolerant.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Mexicans are a proud people with a high level of culture and national identity. While many prefer urban areas and rarely venture into the countryside, others are at home in the vast open areas of their nation. They tend to be very self-sufficient and do not like to be forced to rely on others. They share the concept of the siesta with the Spanish, and many residents have strong ties to the mother country. Although Mexicans tend to be somewhat poor, they do not whine and complain about it, but concentrate on improving their lot. Mexicans do not appreciate corruption, especially in government, and are extremely quick to condemn those who practice such activities.
- Names: Maria, Reyna, Raquel, Enrique, Jorge, Pedro.

The Pan-American League

The formation of the Republic of South America in the early 21st Century left the countries of Central America as a cluster of orphans. Panama's economy was by then too closely interlinked with that of the United States to invite them into the Republic, and the other nations were too poor and too distant to be of much interest to the southern continent. Within Panama, a growing movement to apply for statehood with the United States struck fear into the other nations that they would be next, perhaps not nearly as peacefully. Central Americans had already lived in fear of the 'Colossus of the North' for many generations, and none of them wanted to become United States satellites or puppets.

While not openly antagonistic to each other, the nations of Central America each had a long and difficult history of independence and internecine warfare. These countries literally invented the concept of guerrilla warfare, fighting from the hills and jungles and never surrendering under any circumstances. That nations like this would ever join together was something of

a miracle, and a testament to the desperation they were already feeling. Mexico was growing more powerful with every day, and South America seemed to be taking off as well. Central America would surely be left in the dust if its nations did not do something about it.

What they did was form the Pan-American League, a loose federation of member nations that included Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Cuba. There was no central government of any kind, and all the nations were free to govern themselves as they saw fit. Borders were relaxed, however, and trade relations were expanded amongst all the countries.

Then, in 2044, a new united currency was introduced, despite the objections of several members. Proponents of the new 'amero' argued that it would do for Central America what the euro did for Europe, while detractors suggested that it would destabilise the nations with weaker economies and encourage graft and corruption. The amero was adopted despite these complaints, but Cuba and Panama refused to integrate and shortly thereafter withdrew from the League.

The Pan-American League eventually appointed an oversight committee to manage the banking and financial aspects of the organisation as a whole. This committee eventually grew into a governing body similar to that of the United Nations - a place for the various member states to talk, propose, argue, and decry, but without very much power on its own. The nations of Central America simply did not wish to unite in any way other than commercially. They remained this way until the formation of the North American Federation, which they initially resisted. Eventually, however, they realised that once again they were in danger of left behind by the rest of the world. They joined on the promise that they would never be dominated by the much stronger powers to the north, and for the most part that promise was kept.

The nations of the Pan-American League are sparsely populated as a general rule. Even their cities tend to be small and lag behind in modernisation efforts. The jungles that cover nearly every Central American state are quite thick, and in many cases are very dangerous places to visit. Travel between cities or in country must be accomplished by aircar or other transportation, as there are few roads and even fewer maglev rails.

Guatemala is the northernmost state in the Pan-American League. It contains a wide variety of terrain, including mountains, rainforests, jungles, lakes, and volcanoes. The vast majority of inhabitants are Mestizo, descendants of native tribes or mixed Amerindian-Spanish. Guatemala has some of the most widely varied flora and fauna of any location its size anywhere in North America, or indeed, in the world. The large quantity of Mayan ruins is of particular interest to archaeologists.

Belize is a small state with the lowest population in Central America. It has an extremely dense tropical rainforest, and possesses the longest coral reef on the continent. Formerly known as British Honduras, Belize has a population that is almost exclusively black Creole, rather than the Spanish who make up most of the rest of the League.

Honduras is the least developed nation in the Pan-American League. The people live in simple dwellings, and the cities are small and poorly developed. The primary industry is tourism, with most visitors coming to explore the Mayan ruins, experience the rainforests and mountains, or visit the impressive resorts on and around the Bay Islands. Travel within the country is difficult as roads are almost nonexistent. Crime is also a significant problem, as is the drug trade.

El Salvador is the tourist centre of Central America. Virtually the entire state is organised around attracting and entertaining visitors. The climate is Spring-like almost year-round, with surprisingly little rainfall. Guests are treated to an incredible variety of open-air activities in and around the glittering, modern resorts and amusement parks. Despite this, there is little that is 'real' about El Salvador, and many consider it something of a 'tourist trap.' The swarms of people that descend upon this tiny nation, especially from areas trapped in harsh winter climes, can be quite intimidating. Those who prefer a quieter, more subdued vacation are advised to visit Honduras instead.

Nicaragua is the Pan-American nation with the most violent past, and for a long time was one of the least developed nations in the Western Hemisphere. This began to change after the Sandinista rebels took over and then relinquished power to a democratically elected government in the 1990s. The new regime undertook a long-term plan to improve their country, eventually building Nicaragua into the most industrial nation in Central America. Population is high here, especially in the cities, where the living conditions tend to be very poor. Beautiful, modern spires stand alongside dark and dreary tenements and factories that operate around the clock. Nicaragua is one of the world's most prolific exporters, turning out almost 90% of its production to other nations and Earth's colonies rather than use its products internally.

Costa Rica is one of several states in the League that borders both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. In 2060, following the addition of Panama to the United States, Costa Rica built a canal between the two oceans to rival that of the 'betrayers' in the south. This canal and the Panamanian one were rivals for decades before Costa Rica's was devastated in a series of terrible earthquakes that followed a northern volcanic eruption in 2094. The North American Federation eventually helped rebuild the canal on the promise that competition between the two would be kept to a minimum.

Pan-American Racial Traits

- Bonus language: French (Belize) or Spanish (others).
- Additional Feats Available: Jungle Dweller, Guerrilla Fighter.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Most Pan-Americans are friendly enough, but they tend to have very strong beliefs and will defend them to the death. If a Central American believes something to be unfair or unjust, they will take action to correct the problem rather than sit around and complain about it. They are not above taking up arms and fighting when they feel it is necessary, which can be an unfortunately common occurrence. Central Americans do not shy away from

using force to achieve their ends, be they criminal or altruistic in nature. Most are adept at moving around in their native terrains, and they can be surprisingly stealthy when they want to be. Central Americans have the same general complexion as Mexicans, except for the inhabitants of Belize, who are among the blackest people in the world.

- Names: Luisa, Paquita, Rosario, Vito, Santiago, Lucio.

The Republic of South America (RSA)

The Republic is made up of the countries of Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, and Antarctica. During the early years of the 21st Century, these nations began to grow closer economically. Taking an example from the expanding power of the European Union, the leaders of Argentina, Brazil and Peru began to contemplate a similar organisation for their continent. There seemed to be little reason why such an effort could not succeed, as the South American countries had long been tied together by trade markets and geographic location. They also had very little in the way of past grievances to get over.

The primary difficulties proved to be rooted in simple greed. Venezuela had become wealthy through the sale of oil, particularly to the United States, the world's number one consumer by far. Colombia's main export was drugs, an industry which continued to expand despite all attempts by other nations to eradicate it. The government of Colombia, despite claims to the contrary, was totally dependent on the drug trade. Several other countries also had roots in this highly lucrative enterprise. The governments of Brazil, Argentina, and Peru did not wish to form a continental alliance only to become economic slaves to an industry that could only cause disaster later on.

The founding members pressed on, but did little to entice the primary drug producers to join the new alliance, which was originally known as the Federation of South American Nations. In fact, the Federation included anti-drug legislation in their initial charter, insisting that any nation joining the group take whatever steps were necessary to eliminate illegal production as quickly as possible. The northern countries of Colombia, Venezuela, Suriname, and Guyana declined to join, while several others entered only on the promise of international aid in eliminating the drug producers that operated deep within their nations, beyond the reach of their government.

By the 2020s, new technological advancements were causing trouble for oil-producing nations around the world. Development of fuel cell cars and cheap solar power began to cut into the profits of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), of which Venezuela was a member. OPEC was forced to lower prices and responded by reducing production, attempting to create a supply-and-demand increase in overall profits. This only drove automakers and other industries to further embrace hydrogen and other alternative fuel sources, making them more cost-efficient. Venezuela's

economy crashed, taking with it that of Suriname and Guyana and driving them straight into the hands of the Federation.

As one of the conditions of the economic merger, Brazil sent in troops to eradicate drug production facilities. In response, the well-established drug cartels fled these countries en masse. They had only one place to go - Colombia - but that country already had its own well-established drug industry, which did not appreciate the competition. The result was a bloody series of wars for domination of the drug trade, culminating in a massive civil war in 2026. While the rest of the world watched in horror, Colombians exterminated each other on the streets, all in the name of profits from illegal substances.

Unwilling to sit back and do nothing, the nations of the Federation of South America, acting in concert with American troops in Panama, crossed the border in early 2027. Fighting was fierce, and most of the surviving cartels turned themselves into guerrilla fighters in the Colombian jungles and mountains. Once the initial fighting died down, the United States withdrew its troops at the request of the Federation, which set up a new government that promised to eliminate drug trafficking. Corruption was largely eliminated through the efforts of Federation watchdog groups, but the drug cartels were never completely eradicated. In the end, Colombia joined the Federation under less than ideal circumstances, but they did in fact become members.

The Federation was officially renamed the Republic of South America in the early 2030s after the member states concluded a constitutional convention in Buenos Aires. The overall government had two purposes - ensuring fair dealings between members and with the rest of the world, and controlling drug trafficking as best they could. The Senate did not attempt to govern the individual states in any way, leaving them all totally in control of their own nations. In this respect the 'Republic' name was something of a misnomer, and the 'Senate' little more than an international committee. However, as the years passed, the Senate grew steadily in power until it is now the de facto government of the South American community.

After these initial difficulties, South America began to slowly grow in power and influence. Although the organisation never reached the strength of the European Union or the North American Federation, it is no longer a backward region to be simply ignored or shrugged aside. The individual nations are not as wealthy or modern as the rest of the world, but the people for the most part live comfortably and are highly concerned with Earth Alliance affairs.

South America is a huge land with a variety of different terrains and climates. The north is covered with huge forests and jungles, while the south is made up of plains and steppes and the west is extremely mountainous. South Americans speak a variety of languages depending upon their country of origin. They tend to stick together and are very family-oriented. They are not particularly wealthy, but make up for this with a hard-working, no-nonsense attitude about business. Although the government of the South American Republic has tried very hard to eliminate crime and drug trafficking, large numbers of its citizens remain mired in organised cartels and other illicit

operations. A large number of South Americans are, in effect, Lurkers.

Argentina

One of the founding members of the Republic of South America, Argentina is one of the most technologically advanced. Its people are highly educated and extremely hard-working, especially in the realm of agriculture. The capital of Buenos Aires is one of the largest and most modern cities in the world, but most of the rest of the country is open and undeveloped. A large number of Argentines are farmers or ranchers, and the interior of this nation has much in common with America's Great Plains states. Argentina produces more food per acre than nearly any other country on the planet.

Argentina is the financial centre of the Republic of South America. Banking and monetary issues are handled primarily in the capital of Buenos Aires, also the capital of the Republic. Wealth is easier to come by in Argentina than any of the other South American nation-states, and crime tends to be better controlled. The climate is fair, and there is a great diversity in terrains, from jungles in the south to tundra and glaciers in the south. This gives Argentines a great natural adaptability.

Argentinean Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish.
- Additional Feats Available: Adaptable, Agricultural.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Argentines are very familiar with farming and ranching and are at home in agricultural settings. Botany and biology are common fields of study and are taught with great skill at universities in Buenos Aires and elsewhere. The people are worldly and keep track of what is going on elsewhere on Earth and in the Alliance as a whole. They do not tend to be avid travellers, but enjoy meeting new people and sharing experiences.
- Names: Generally Spanish with some Portuguese and Italian.

Colombia

Colombia is a mountainous country with thick jungles. The region has a generally hot, moist climate with very mild winters. The mountains are honeycombed with thousands of mines, mostly constructed in search of emeralds and gold. A large number of Colombians work as gem cutters and jewellers of great skill, and can become quite wealthy in that trade. The distribution of wealth in Colombia is very widespread, however, with the rich tending to be extremely so, and the poor well below the world poverty average.

Although Colombia has on the surface taken great strides in the eradication of the drug trade, the truth is that the drug cartels simply took advantage of new technologies and advancements to remain better hidden and create more insidious drugs. The vast jungles of Colombia still produce trillions of credits' worth of drugs annually, all of which are distributed through well-hidden worldwide networks to dealers across the Earth Alliance.

Even drug suppliers on Babylon 5 can trace the delivery path of their illicit substances back to either Colombia directly or one of the cartels' many subsidiaries throughout the world.

Colombian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish.
- Additional Feats Available: Jeweller, Miner.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Colombians like mining and spelunking and are accustomed to underground settings. Because of the constant threat from the drug cartels, Colombians live in one of the most dangerous countries on Earth, and are accustomed to violence. A typical Colombian considers force as the solution to a problem before a more peaceful solution. Associating with an impulsive Colombian is a dangerous proposition!
- Names: Typically Spanish.

Venezuela

The country of Venezuela is dominated by the Orinoco River, a huge and winding ribbon of water that stretches the length of the country. The forests, mountains and coasts are quite beautiful, and the nation is a frequent destination for tourists. Although the drug cartels are active here as well as in neighbouring Colombia, they are not nearly as dangerous or violent.

After the collapse of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries in the early 21st Century, Venezuela was forced to find a new path in order to survive economically. The merger with the Republic of South America provided plenty of new opportunities, but the dependence upon oil production and refining left the people with no knowledge of how to pursue those new paths. With the help of Argentina, Brazil, and the United States, Venezuela modernised its country and became a strong industrial power in its own right. Although this took over a century, the result was a prosperous nation of hard workers who are used to physical challenges.

Colombian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish.
- Additional Feats Available: Industrious, Jungle Dweller.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The typical Venezuelan seems to be constantly busy. From the moment they awaken at the start of the day, they are off working on one task or another. Many are masters of time management, undertaking two or more tasks at once without even thinking about it, and rarely just sitting around 'doing nothing.' If travelling in a vehicle, they always bring along something to work on, for example. Venezuelans seem to be always on the move, and are almost never idle.
- Names: Typically Spanish.

Brazil

Brazil is one of the largest nations on Earth in terms of sheer surface area. The country possesses a wide variation in terrains, from mountains and rainforests to wide-open plains in the south. The Amazon, one of the longest rivers in the world, dominates

most of the northern jungles. The Brazilian people are a strong mix of Portuguese, Spanish, and local Native American tribes.

Brazil is the most industrial nation in South America. Natural resources harvested from the forests, mountains, and coastal regions are turned into a variety of high-tech goods including electronics and communications devices used throughout the Earth Alliance. Universities in the capital of Rio de Janeiro and other cities offer a wealth of hands-on training that often lead to careers as specialists. Some of the best technicians and engineers in the Alliance are from Brazil.

Brazilian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Portuguese.
- Additional Feats Available: Gregarious, Specialist.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Brazil is known for its passionate people, who love to work hard and play hard. Brazilians are a gregarious and social folk and have many celebrations and festivals.
- Names: Typically Spanish or Portuguese.

Chile

Chile is an unusually long country that runs for much of the length of western South America. The climate tends to be tropical or temperate. There is very little land suitable for farming, with mining of the Andes the primary trade. Chile is not particularly industrialised and much of the raw materials it produces are shipped to production centres in other South American countries and abroad.

Chile is a nation of traders, with a tremendous number of modern ports and transportation companies located in its borders or flying its flag. Most of Chile's businesses relate to importing or exporting. Chile has a disproportionately large number of spaceports per capita, with direct connections to a wide variety of trading stations in the Earth Alliance and beyond, including Babylon 5.

Chilean Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish.
- Additional Feats Available: Mountaineer, Trader.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Chileans enjoy travelling and finding new markets for goods produced in their home country. They are commensurate salesmen and will make deals for just about anything. They tend to be honest in most dealings, as they are usually looking for as much repeat business as possible.
- Names: Typically Spanish.

Antarctica

The continent of Antarctica was considered international territory until the latter part of the 21st Century, when the land began to be exploited by the Republic of South America. The increase of mining and drilling technologies made possible the discovery of vast caches of untapped resources beneath the icy surface of the frozen continent. Chile, Argentina, and Brazil all had prior claims to Antarctica, as did quite a few European nations and the United States, but South America had the

advantage of proximity. The organisation used its newfound international muscles to shove aside the claims of other nations and establish their own colonies in several locations. Careful steps were taken to ensure the natural ecology of Antarctica would not be upset by the new operations.

Although Antarctica's climate is exceptionally harsh, especially in the long winters, that did not dissuade the South Americans from continuing to develop the region. The reason for this soon became clear - one of the resources located buried deep beneath the ice was none other than Quantum-40, the rare element that made hyperspace travel possible. Q40 was previously unknown on Earth, and the South Americans had done well to keep its discovery secret. By the time Quantum-40 production was traced to Antarctica through Chilean trading companies that began exporting more than they imported, it was too late for the European Union or North American Federation to contest the claims.

Today, Antarctica is a small nation-state technically little more than a territory of the Republic of South America. The continent is governed by the Republic but managed by a consortium of mining companies with roots in Chile, Argentina, and Brazil. Most of the inhabitants are natives of the southern regions of those countries, or from other cold regions of the world, such as Scandinavia and Russia. In fact, there are more Siberians amidst the Antarctic population than any other nationality.

Antarctic Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Spanish, Portuguese, or Russian.
- Additional Feats Available: Cold Tolerance, Insulated Skin.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Antarcticans are at home in cold, ice, frost, and blizzard conditions. They enjoy winter sports such as outdoor ice hockey, skiing, and swimming in zero-degree weather. Perhaps not surprisingly, they do not frequently travel to warmer climates, and when they do, they are slaves to air conditioning. Antarcticans tend to be show-offs, and love to take risks and endure extended periods in their harsh environment just to win a bet or show their courage.
- Names: Spanish, Portuguese, or Russian.

The Russian Consortium (RC)

Russia - or, to be precise, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - was one of the two duelling superpowers that dominated the Cold War of the mid-20th Century. The Soviet Union of that time was made up of the colossal Russian nation and a large number of socialist or communist states that it dominated in the years following World War II. Russia's long-term program of uniting the world under communism was resisted firmly by the Western democracies, and in the end, communism would up the loser. Russia collapsed in 1991 and splintered into fifteen independent republics, including many Islamic countries that later joined the United Islamic Nations.

For a number of decades, Russia struggled to find its way in the world as a democratic nation. Poverty and inflation were high, corruption and crime ran rampant, and the people often wondered if they were not better off under communism. Still, the young Russian Federation persevered, in part because their long time enemies the United States were determined that they should succeed. The Americans provided no end of monetary aid, loans, food donations, and advisory assistance, without which the road to prosperity would have been a much longer and torturous path indeed. Although the United States claimed they did this out of a sense of responsibility for Russia's well-being - continuing a pattern of reconstruction of defeated foes dating back through several wars - the simple truth was they needed Russia to remain powerful as a threat and buffer state against the swollen Chinese population teeming in Southeast Asia.

China was, indeed, a significant problem in the region. Despite governmental controls on population growth, the Chinese nation continued to explode, consuming their own resources at a prodigious rate. Although they seemingly could not afford it, China not only continued to operate a huge military but also continued to fund vast and expensive research and weapon construction programs that the rest of the world could not ignore. In addition to guarding the Chinese border, Russia also had to defend a number of disputed borders with former members of the old Soviet Union. Insurgencies and guerrilla wars nipped at their heels in the Baltic States as well as in Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan.

Russia tolerated these border difficulties until the arrival of World War III, when they found they could no longer afford to split their attentions in both directions. In a swift and surprising move, Russia invaded the Baltics and the Ukraine in overwhelming force, conquering a large amount of territory in a swift blitzkrieg that stunned the world. As their victorious forces turned east, Georgia and the Moslem states to the south signed swift and solid border agreements ceding territory and Caspian Sea rights that solved all the disputes overnight. Guerrilla attacks in those countries ceased immediately and the Russian Army was free to move to defend Moscow against the Chinese advance. Although there was scattered resistance in the Baltics and much more significant fighting in the Ukraine, the terrible winter of 2083 prevented anyone in Europe from taking direct action. By the middle of the next year, the rest of the world was so busy in Asia that no one cared about a few small countries in western Russia. And, once the fighting finally concluded, the United Nations was so weary of war that they resorted only to a few weak diplomatic attempts to break up the somewhat larger Russian Federation.

Of course, by this point Russia was firmly out of the United Nations, protesting America's EarthShield satellite network that had done so much to save their country. The costs were high - a crashed economy, millions dead from starvation and direct combat, and a good amount of shattered cities and infrastructure - but the nation survived, whereas a nuclear exchange with China could have had only one result. Russia insisted EarthShield be dismantled, but instead, the United States began using it as a tool to convince other nations to join the proposed Unified Earth Alliance. Russia at first refused to join, but could do little to stop the rest of the world from forming the new

organisation. Their economy and military were still too badly damaged by the recent war, and the threat from China remained strong. As the Alliance grew in power and its people became more comfortable, Russia began to see the advantages in membership. They finally gave in and joined in 2101, as much to eliminate the Chinese threat as for any other reason. China invaded in response, only to be stopped by the Earth Alliance in a war that lasted only five days.

The decades that followed saw a slow but steady improvement in Russia's situation. The cities and infrastructure destroyed during World War III were rebuilt with the help of the Earth Alliance, and new advancements in technology greatly improved the quality of life for the citizens. Better still, the subjugated Baltic States and the Ukraine no longer had a reason to fight against Russian dominance. As member states of the Alliance, they were free to form their own governments with strong ties to the Russian Federation. While they technically were no longer members of that organisation, by this point their economies and social structures were so heavily integrated that the line of demarcation could no longer be finely drawn. In essence, the entire point became moot.

Although Russia's situation improved greatly in the decades prior to the Centauri arrival on Earth, they were consistently jealous of the North American Federation and European Union, both of whom seemed to always get the best of everything. The Russian people began to grow noticeably - and perhaps justifiably - jealous of the rest of the world. New advancements were always seen first in America or Europe, to be doled out to Russia only after a noticeable delay. The most lucrative contracts for industry, research, and space exploration were always awarded to countries based elsewhere in the world. Russia began to feel they were providing the labour and raw materials for the advancement of other, more affluent nations. Many Russians claimed the Earth Alliance was merely a dog-and-pony show designed to cover up the fact that the rest of the world was now, in effect, slaves of American and European masters.

In response, Russia's government began to authorise secret programs designed to build up a secret military force capable of standing up to the entire Alliance. China, meanwhile, did the same, and the world was soon threatened once again by war. Only the arrival of the Centauri stopped the pending global conflict that might very well have eradicated much of Asia.

In truth, Russia's government was actually quite happy to have the threat of war lifted from their heads. Events had progressed far beyond their ability to control, and the country's economy was being drained so badly by war production that their own social programs were falling by the wayside. Europe and America also realised how close the world came to the brink and began to make greater efforts to include Russia and the other disparaged countries as full partners in the Alliance instead of backward nations deserving only of technological table scraps. During the first missions to the stars, Russians figured prominently among the crews, alongside Chinese, South Americans, Africans, Moslems, and virtually every other nationality on Earth.

Today, the Russian Consortium - also occasionally still called the Russian Federation - is a vast organisation with great power and influence throughout the world and the entire Alliance. The people are generally happy and live in comfortable, modern cities and towns. Vast regions of the interior, especially the Siberian tundra, are being opened up to exploration and settlement thanks to advanced terraforming technologies. Relations with China and the United Islamic Nations remain tense, however, and trade with those organisations is very limited. The scars of World War III still run deep.

Russia

The country of Russia is the largest in land mass anywhere in the world. Stretching from the east side of Europe all the way to the Pacific Ocean, Russia occupies over 17 million kilometres of total land area, the vast majority of which is inhospitable tundra in the northern regions. In most parts of the country, winters are extremely cold and the summers relatively short.

Russia has been a constant victim of terrorism since World War III and the formation of the United Islamic Nations. Although the Terrorist War of the early 21st Century and the bombing of San Diego in 2150 are the most popularised historical records of this sort of activity, Russia has suffered through decades of much lower profile acts of terrorism throughout most of the previous two centuries. Acts have included lone suicide bombers all the way up to entire armed paramilitary groups attacking and destroying city blocks and military facilities. Chemical and biological weapons have both been used against Russian towns, the most notable being the gassing of Chechnya in 2167 by fanatical freedom fighters engaged in a guerrilla war the rest of the country's people had long forgotten.

Russia also maintains a strong presence along the Chinese border, and incidents between the two rival nations are frequent. Every now and then, relations wane between the two countries for some reason or other, and the Earth Alliance is usually forced to step in to keep civil war from breaking out. Curiously, Russian and Chinese people who work together off world typically do so with few problems - the difficulties seem to be entirely local to the population on the ground.

Russians are hard-working and very tolerant of extreme environmental conditions, especially cold weather and periods of heavy rain or snow. They see fighting and war as necessary facets of life, and to them conflict is as natural as birth and death. This does not mean they seek out battle merely for battle's sake, however, only that they stand ready to defend their beliefs and 'Mother Russia.' Russians are a common sight in EarthForce, most joining in order to defend the world as well as the country they call home and love so dearly.

Russian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Russian.
- Additional Feats Available: Cold Tolerance, Fierce Competitor, Level-Headed.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Russians are extremely proud of themselves and the way they have survived so much pain and suffering through the previous three centuries. They honestly feel that their country is the greatest

on Earth. In addition to the sheer size of the nation itself, to hear a native tell the tale, *everything* is bigger and better in Russia. Russians are fond of pointing out the many inventions and innovations their people have seen fit to bestow upon the world. They perform exceptionally well in situations where deadlines loom or where they are racing against a rival. Most thrive under pressure and remain level-headed in times of stress. Russians seldom back down from a fight and are excellent combatants, comparing themselves to the tenacious bear that is their nation's symbol.

- Names: Anastasia, Ilia, Katrina, Dimitri, Nicolai, Pavel.

Ukraine

The Ukraine is a large nation-state located in the south-eastern side of Europe. The country has always enjoyed close ties with Russia and was part of that nation for a large portion of its history. Ukrainians have their own language, which is closely tied to Russian, but approximately half its residents consider themselves part of the 'mother country' rather than an independent nation. Were elections held today to determine independence, the population would be split almost evenly down the middle.

The Ukraine is mostly a level, treeless plain called a 'steppe.' The Carpathian Mountains are to the west and vast pine forests line the north. Water and hydroelectric power are supplied by the Dnieper River, one of Europe's longest and cleanest waterways. The Ukraine's climate is moderate, and although winters are quite cold and snowfall high, they are nothing like those found in Russia's northern areas. The high levels of precipitation experienced in the Ukraine make it ideal for farming, and indeed, the country is one of the largest producers of agricultural products in Europe. The Ukraine is also the largest exporter of sugar and sugar-related products in the hemisphere.

The country is also rich in natural resources and is highly industrialised. The Ukraine's factories turn out a variety of different products, but their main focus is on civilian vehicles and public transportation equipment. If you get on an airbus or maglev pod anywhere in Europe or Asia, the chances are you are aboard a vehicle designed in whole or in part by Ukrainian production facilities. Perhaps not surprisingly, their education system turns out a good number of vehicular engineers.

Ukrainian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Russian or Ukrainian.
- Additional Feats Available: Agricultural, Vehicular Engineer.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Ukrainians are a curious mix of quiet farmers and high-tech engineers. They tend to be quiet and subdued, rarely becoming excited about anything unless it is of critical importance. They are slow to anger, but once pushed beyond the line, they pursue an enemy with single-minded determination. About half of all Ukrainians consider themselves Russians to the core, while the others are fiercely independent - putting both types in the same room is a recipe for a brawl.

- Names: Anita, Orynko, Sofiya, Borysko, Ivan, Mychajlo.

Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus)

These nations were heavily exploited during the Russian occupation of the 20th Century, with most of their industry and science geared towards the advancement of Moscow rather than local issues. After they achieved independence, the Baltics - originally just Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, but later joined by Belarus - became part of the NATO and the European Union primarily for the economic aid, but also worked closely with each other to improve their situation. Virtually all industries and education facilities had to be torn down and rebuilt from the ground up. They did not do this alone, but formed a very close alliance, closely integrating their economies and defence networks together over the course of several decades.

This did little to prevent Russia from re-conquering the Baltics during the early days of World War III. Russia did not, however, plunder its new acquisitions, but permitted them a large amount of sovereignty that did much to prevent rebellion. Once the Russian Federation joined the Earth Alliance, the question of Baltic independence was mostly put to rest, although just like the Ukraine, large amounts of the population continue to consider themselves Russian - particularly those in Belarus.

The Baltics are not particularly large or industrious, but their country possesses one of the best education systems in the world, the primary focus being on the medical sciences. In addition to a variety of large medical research centres, the Baltics are the primary location for alien biological and botanical studies on Earth. During the Minbari War, when EarthForce was desperate for anything that could stop the Minbari advance, it was the Xenobiological Studies Institute in Riga (Latvia) where dead and captured specimens were brought for study.

Baltic Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Belarusian, or Russian.
- Additional Feats Available: Surgeon's Touch, Xenobiologist.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Citizens of the Baltics are extremely well educated and make excellent scientists and doctors. They have a natural curiosity about themselves, the world, and the galaxy as a whole. They travel frequently and rarely stay in one place. They often do not feel much of an attachment to their homeland, seeing themselves as citizens of the world or the Earth Alliance much more than members of other nation-states.
- Names: Typically Russian. Citizens of Belarus gravitate towards Ukrainian-style names, while those in the west tend to be more Polish. A fraction of Estonians have Finnish or other Scandinavian names.

The Republic of China (RoC)

China is one of the world's largest nations. It is one of the last countries on Earth that still embraces a form of communism, although it is perhaps better to say China's government is a sort of communism/republic hybrid. The people all work for the good of the state, which in turn provides the basic human needs: food, shelter, medical care, and so forth. The government itself is made up of several hundred senators representing various areas of the country. A position in the Senate is for life, however, and a new one is elected only upon the death of his predecessor. The government is actually more suggestive of ancient Rome than anything else.

After Russia's collapse in the late 20th Century, China began a long-term program designed to bring their nation into the same superpower status as that of the United States and the European Union. They certainly had the resources and population to achieve such a goal, but their massive head count worked as a severe drain on their economy. The gap between the privileged few and the peasant worker began to grow steadily, leading to dissent and repression. On its face, China promoted itself as a friendly nation interested in trade and human rights, but internally they were quite the opposite. Anyone who spoke out against the state was treated brutally, and any hint of rebellion was quickly crushed.

Worse, China's attempts to limit its population growth were unsuccessful. Children continued to be born and raised in secret, and periodic purges only raised the ire of foreign nations. China eventually turned to sterilisation and other radical procedures to limit growth, but even these could not stop the population from swelling to three billion by the middle of the 21st Century. Despite all China had done to increase its technology and military power, it was teetering on the brink of collapse. The start of World War III only pushed them over the edge.

In a perverted sense, the great losses China faced in the terrible years of World War III only helped the struggling country in the long run. China was left in several independent pieces that were free to act in whatever way they saw fit to deal with their local problems. The smaller nations were able to institute mass sterilisation programs and claim that Russian biological agents used during the fighting were the cause. Deaths from radiation fallout and long-term damage further lowered the population to more manageable levels, without affecting their technological base and military power. In addition, China actually came out ahead in the war, capturing several chunks of additional territory, although the advantages were not truly seen until reunification occurred some years later. At that time the reunified nation also accepted North Korea into the fold as a pseudo-independent satellite state. Mongolia, devastated by nuclear fallout, also came under the Chinese umbrella just prior to the formation of the Earth Alliance.

Today, the Republic of China remains one of the largest and most powerful influences on Alliance policy. Although the population is by no means nearly as large as it once was, and

growth is controlled by the state, the country's vast resources and production capabilities make it invaluable. Although China's cities and industry are of the most modern technology, and advancements are swiftly put to use by the wealthy and those in the government, the lower classes in China continue to be the poorest in the world, with little chance of improvement on the horizon.

China

The creation of the Alliance was a great boon to China. Technologies they previously had to work very hard to steal and then develop in expensive long-term projects were now handed over on a silver platter. At the Earth Alliance's urging, China became a 'democracy' insofar as public elections were periodically held to choose new senators, but these were always fixed so that the party favourites continued to hold power. All other positions of any importance were appointed, which only cemented the existing regime's grip. China's poor population remained extremely poor, and the abundance of cheap labour encouraged other nations to build factories and industry within China's borders. Soon, this massive influx of trade and commerce linked this nation inexorably to the rest of the world, particularly the North American Federation and European Union, who cheerfully turned a blind eye to China's repressive government in exchange for low prices and few restrictions on imported goods.

This policy continues today with very little change. China's rulers quickly learned that since they determined which privileged few were permitted to have families and create the next generation of loyal Chinese, they had only to cull the dissidents by refusing to give them a 'child license' and waiting a few decades. The Chinese people discovered that unless they were perfect, hard-working citizens, they had no chance of raising a family. Within fifty or sixty years, the vast majority became 'reproduction slaves' who did not dare attempt to revolt or stand up to their leaders.

Worse still, they had little reason to do so. The state provided all their real needs, except for the luxuries brought by wealth. Typical Chinese citizens have a home, public transportation, food certificates, water rations, free medical care, and everything else a human being needs to survive and work. They are not mistreated, and workdays are no longer or harder than anywhere else in the world. Travel within the country is permitted almost at will, but crossing the borders is difficult and most Chinese have no interest in doing so.

Those peasants who have a desire for something more than their dreary existence are encouraged to join EarthForce, at which point they basically are cast off from Chinese society. The day a working-class citizen takes the oath of allegiance to the Earth Alliance is the day he is no longer a citizen of the Republic of China. Although they are permitted to return and visit their families, they are not eligible for any social benefits and cannot even get a job. Most who join EarthForce say goodbye to their parents and friends and never go back, which is why there are so few Chinese in the Alliance military.

For those in government or among the few wealthy families, things are very different. Ambassadors, agents, government officials, Senators, and the like are treated to the best China has to offer. If you look at one of the modern, high-tech zones of any Chinese city, you can be assured that this is either a government zone or a place where only the affluent dwell. These fortunate few actually do very little work and enjoy taking advantage of their privileges. They care nothing for the fate of their unlucky countrymen on the streets and in the slums. In a sense, they are very aristocratic, although they have no specific titles as such. Their worst fear is that they will make some mistake and have their wealth taken from them, to be cast down and live as a commoner. Wealthy Chinese travel frequently and enjoy vacations, especially to distant and normally inaccessible locations.

China itself is a huge land with a wide variety of terrain types and weather conditions. The people are not particularly adaptable, however, as they tend to stay in a single location for most of their lives, while the wealthy enjoy a more comfortable existence indoors. Long-standing problems of pollution, flooding, and droughts have been brought under control in recent decades by technological advances, but still remain troublesome. Desertification, a significant problem during the 20th and 21st Centuries, has been reversed, and today vast regions of formerly arid land are now farms or rice paddies. The vast majority of Chinese citizens have agricultural jobs.

Chinese Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Chinese, Mandarin, or Cantonese.
- Additional Feats Available: Agricultural, Wealthy.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The vast majority of Chinese found on Babylon 5 will be either members of the Earth Alliance, or wealthy individuals who are travelling or assigned to the station in some diplomatic or administrative role. A lower-class citizen might possibly be found there, but would almost always be a Soldier or Lurker. High-class Chinese are very much addicted to their status and consider themselves privileged, often looking down the nose at the common folk and treating them as no better than servants. Those from the other side of the fence are not necessarily jealous of the wealthy, but feel they are beneath contempt. The dream promised by communism has become corrupted, they feel, by a select few who deserve only to be cast down from their gilded thrones. There are few revolutionaries, however. Those who escape feel pity for those they left behind, but do not believe there is anything that can be done to change the current situation.
- Names: Hui Ying, Li Ming, Xia, Chen, Kuan-Yin, Shing.

War of the Koreans: Korea has been a divided nation since the mid-20th Century. The northern half, a communist regime under the control of a succession of dictators, languished in poverty and internal strife for decades. The leaders always looked upon their southern brethren with a jealous eye, watching with disdain as ties with the West resulted in prosperity and a much higher standard of living. There was little the North could do, however. Any attempt to invade would be met with the greatest

of force by the rest of the world, particularly the United States. Even the development of nuclear weapons would do little good, as there was no point in using them on a country they intended to conquer. Why destroy that which you wanted for yourself?

In World War III, however, North Korea finally took the opportunity they had been looking for. They invaded the South, but were met with stiff resistance. The United States and other nations already had troops deployed in the region and were easily able to come to the aid of South Korea. Wary of Chinese invention, however, the allies did not press their attack, instead launching a campaign of air strikes that left much of North Korea in flames. The Chinese eventually did cross the border, shoring up the North's defences, but did not invade the South.

After the war, the Chinese did not leave. Instead, they left troops behind 'to prevent Southern aggression' and installed military advisors in various posts. Within ten years, North Korea was little more than a Chinese puppet state, and when China joined the Earth Alliance, they brought their new satellite along for the ride.

Today, conditions in North Korea are even worse than those in China. North Korea is governed entirely by Chinese senators, who ensure the North remains in poverty. The citizens look across the fortified Southern border with longing, and the South generally feels it should help its brothers in the North as much as possible. A growing revolutionary movement in both countries is beginning to stir up interest in North Korean independence from the Chinese sphere.

The United Islamic Nations (UIN)

Many of the nations of the world that embrace Islam as their primary religion united during the early-21st Century in an effort to resist what they felt was a growing threat to their people and their way of life. The War on Terrorism in the early part of the century signalled the beginning of this movement, as the United States and much of the rest of the United Nations began a campaign of rooting out terrorist camps by sending in troops regardless of whether or not they had the permission to do so. Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Somalia were the first of these, but multinational forces were soon crossing the borders into many others, pursuing terrorist groups like Al-Qaida wherever they fled.

The original six members of the United Islamic Nations were Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. The agreement they initially signed was a secret one in which they pledged to fight the 'Great Satan' throughout the world and stand together should they come under any further attack. They also swore to ensure the downfall of Israel in any way possible. Other Islamic nations secretly provided aid to them and their activities, among them Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, but these did not officially join the new organisation.

Terrorism continued to operate from the United Islamic Nations for many decades until a nuclear bomb exploded inside Israel's borders in 2105. Just as it had happened a hundred years ago after the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York City, the world was outraged. The newly established Earth Alliance sealed off the Islamic Union and isolated its member nations, gradually picking off all military forces using long-range attacks. In the end, the oppressive regimes of these countries were overthrown following a full-scale invasion, and the people within those nations rejoiced in finally being liberated from the dictatorships that controlled them for so many years.

The United Islamic Nations did not end with the defeat of the original countries. Instead, the organisation became a symbol of Islam itself, in much the same way the Confederate flag became a symbol of America's South following that country's Civil War in the 1800s. A number of countries flocked to the banner, which symbolised free trade and religious integration in the new Alliance. Nations that now consider themselves part of the Islamic Union include Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bashkortostan, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kurdistan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, the Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mindanao, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen, and Zanzibar. Note that a good number of these countries are located in Africa and Asia, not the Middle East.

As a general rule, the countries that make up the Islamic Union tend to be hot and arid, a virtue of their location in the world's warmest climate zone. Ethiopia is the hottest nation on Earth, and quite a few of these countries are located entirely in desert terrain. Most tend to be relatively poor, with most wealth concentrated in a few affluent families. The days of vast bank accounts gained through the sale of petroleum are over, however. Oil is still produced and sold, of course, but is by no means the dominant commodity in the Earth Alliance.

Islam is similar to many other common forms of Western religions, and in fact, the God of Christians, Jews, and Protestants is the same for Moslems, who refer to Him as Allah. Moslems are very firm in their belief that Allah is the only true Power in the Universe. Whereas a Protestant might utter a prayer to Jesus or a Catholic might call upon one of the Saints, a Moslem would pray to Allah only. Prayers are made several times a day at a mosque or other holy place. The Islamic bible is called the Koran or Qoran, and most followers have a copy on their person or among their belongings. Although Moslems believe their religion is the true path to God, they generally do not tend to force their beliefs on others. There is, however, a growing movement to spread Islam to alien races, especially in places like Babylon 5 where a wide variety of different aliens are known to gather. So far these efforts have met with very little success.

General Islamic Union Racial Traits

- Bonus language: National tongue (varies widely).
- Additional Feats Available: Desert Dweller, Religious Influence, Radiation Tolerant (Pakistani).
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The number of different countries in the United Islamic Nations precludes describing them all, and descriptions must therefore be very general. Typically, they are strong believers in their faith who practice it daily. The Earth Alliance is dedicated to the concept of freedom of religion, so its Moslem citizens generally see little need to employ the sort of fanatical fervour they once did. There are some exceptions, of course, but these are frowned upon by virtually everyone who practices 'true' Islam.
- Names: Typically Arabic or African.

Egypt

Like many countries in the Islamic Union, Egypt has undergone massive changes in the last few centuries. At the start of the Third Millennium, this was a poor country with vast areas of arid wasteland surrounding the fertile Nile Valley. It took a hundred more years before Egypt finally brought itself to a point where it was no longer dependent upon the Nile for virtually every aspect of its civilisation. Irrigation and other technologies eventually made the deserts bloom, allowing Egypt's population to spread out away from the teeming cities that lined the river.

Today, Egypt is one of the most advanced nations in Africa. Control of the Suez Canal, long a sticking point with their Israeli neighbours, is no longer nearly so important in today's age of cheap air transport. Vast areas of Egypt are agricultural land or wide swaths of solar energy farms, supplying power to North Africa and much of Southern Europe. Egypt's cities are clean and modern, with great attention paid to the country's cultural background. Restoration of the classic monuments, such as the Pyramids and the Sphinx, have made Egypt one of the more popular tourist destinations, especially for those who like to dabble in archaeology.

Egyptian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Egyptian.
- Additional Feats Available: Historian, Heat Tolerant.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Egyptians are extremely mindful of the past and like to study history, even if only as a hobby. Education facilities in the country tend to focus on this specialty, leading a great many Egyptians to become historians and archaeologists. Although most Egyptians are Moslems, they do not practice it as aggressively or openly as some. They tend to have dark skin and wear heavy clothing, especially on their heads. Egyptian women tend to cover themselves similarly, but rarely wear the kind of all-inclusive, sexless traditional garb that they were forced to endure hundreds of years ago.
- Names: Akila, Habibah, Nephthys, Bakari, Haji, Ramses.

The Oceania Trade Alliance (OTA)

The group known as the Oceania Trade Alliance is a trade union formed during the early 21st Century as a way to unite most of the Pacific markets against the growing economic power of the Indonesian Consortium. Originally known as the Japan-Korea Trade Alliance, the OTA was founded by Japan and South Korea in 2029. The Philippines and several other small Pacific islands joined over the ensuing years, but the group did not become the Oceania Trade Alliance until Australia and New Zealand joined in 2042. With the addition of the huge Australian market, the OTA dominated the Far Eastern sphere, competing for decades with the Republic of China and the Indonesian Consortium in what amounted to an economic cold war.

Although the three groups never struck a single military blow, their financial activities were quite vicious. Hackers from all sides regularly invaded each other's banking computers, trying not only to steal money but to leave traces pointing the finger at the third party. Billions of dollars were lost in this ongoing high-tech war of numbers until World War III came along and crashed stock markets around the world. South Korea was left devastated not only by this but also a failed North Korean invasion, and Australia and New Zealand both lost a large number of troops operating in India and Pakistan on behalf of the United Nations. All the countries in Oceania were more than happy to join the Earth Alliance, whereupon their economies slowly returned to previous levels.

With money once again flowing freely, the economical terrorism returned with a vengeance. China stayed largely out of the fighting this time, however, allowing the other two groups to go at it tooth and nail. The biggest battlers were Japan and Indonesia themselves, which both trained their hackers so well that they could break into nearly anything. When they began making attacks on uninvolved parties, however - trying to put the blame on each other - the Earth Alliance stepped in and put a halt to the financial war. Even so, the Oceania Trade Alliance and Indonesian Consortium remain huge rivals to this day.

Japan

Japan ceased being a military power after World War II, but instead focused on becoming an economic powerhouse. The Japanese people adapted well to capitalism and a free market economy, for they are very business-oriented and possess a culturally driven loyalty to their employers. Within the space of a few decades, their commercial and technical abilities had virtually taken over the Far East, outstripping all other countries by several orders of magnitude. This, of course, led to the formation of the Indonesian Consortium and Japan's eventual interest in creating a trade alliance between themselves, Korea, and any other independent nation in the region.

Japan is one of the most populous nations on Earth, in terms of sheer population density. Tokyo, which ranks in the top five in city size, has the world's highest buildings, all of which are interconnected on several levels by maglev rails and transport tubes. Visitors to Tokyo are frequently amazed by the sheer

number of aircars and other vehicles zooming around, all of which somehow manage to avoid accidents. Virtually all of these are on automated flight patterns and communicate automatically with each other through sophisticated wireless computer links to prevent collisions.

All the Japanese islands are connected by maglev lines and a wide variety of airbus services. A person can literally board a personal maglev pod in Sapporo, on the northernmost island of Hokkaido, and emerge an hour and a half later in Fukuoka, on Kyushu to the south - all for a single low transit fee. The entire trip would be fully automated, and would be accomplished without any stops. Underwater transit lines also provide access to South Korea, although these do not pass into North Korea or China. There are no connections as yet to the Republic of China or Russia, limiting travel to those nations to air or surface ship only.

Life in Japan is extremely fast-paced, and the citizens are accustomed to high levels of stress. The Japanese have acclimated themselves to less sleep than residents of other countries, in order to work extra hours as necessary and still have time for leisure. They tend to be smaller than average humans and tend to be less developed physically.

Japanese Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Japanese.
- Additional Feats Available: Light Sleeper, Level-Headed.
- Available Exotic Weapon: Katana.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: The Japanese have an ancient culture that emphasizes loyalty and ethics above all else. Honour is of paramount importance. Although ritual suicide is rarely seen as punishment for failure in modern times, a Japanese will usually 'fall on his sword' - i.e., suffer the consequences himself - rather than let others take the blame for his mistakes. Japanese citizens are used to high-pressure, stressful work environments and are rarely fazed by sudden surprises. They tend to avoid direct physical conflict. Their leisure activities often involve things that people from other cultures find strange, unusual, or just plain bizarre. A Japanese soldier might, for example, take a fancy to flower collecting.
- Names: Aiko, Kei, Sakura, Hiroshi, Shiro, Yoshi.

Australia

Australia is one of two nation-states that are also continents, the other being Antarctica. Originally a territory of the British Empire, Australia is a country in its own right, earning independence in 1901 and becoming a full-fledged republic with no ties to the Crown in 2014. The nation is made up primarily of seven states: New South Wales, Northland, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia. The Capital Territory and a number of small dependent islands round out the rest of the geography.

Australia has a vast amount of land area and a comparatively small population. Virtually every terrain type imaginable is found somewhere on the mainland, from the rainforests and

swamps in the north to the deserts and rugged mountains of the largely unsettled Outback. 90% of the population of Australia is located within 50 miles of one of the coasts. The cities tend to be very large, with sprawling suburban areas, but are generally separated by sparsely populated areas with little habitation.

Australia has an indigenous people, the Aborigines, who are left to themselves in the central and western locales. They are generally peaceful and do not mind visitors, as long as they do not intrude too much on their lives. Troublesome tourists are reported to the Australian government, which will deal with the problem rapidly. The Aborigines have their own culture and beliefs and live primitively, but are not ignorant of the rest of the world. Some are even reasonably well educated, and from time to time the occasional individual will set out to learn more about what lies beyond his homeland.

Australia is rich in natural resources and has several very large industrial zones on the eastern and southern coasts, where raw materials are produced for shipment elsewhere in the world. They are among the world's leading exporters of food products, industrial chemicals, and steel. Australia also has several very large construction yards for starship parts, particularly those employed in the Omega and Hyperion classes.

Australian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None (Aborigines have a native tongue dependent upon their tribe).
- Additional Feats Available: Primitive (Aborigine), Explorer, Adaptable.
- Available Exotic Weapon: Boomerang.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Australians have a well-deserved reputation as laid-back, fun-loving rogues who enjoy nothing more than to kick back and enjoy the good life. They are not, however, lazy by any means - they just look at life as a chance to have some fun. This gives them an optimistic way of looking at things that can sometimes be misinterpreted as a lack of interest in important events. Australians like to succeed, but shrug off failure easily. They particularly enjoy exploring, and will visit just about any new location they come across just for the chance to tell a good story about it later.
- Names: Fern, Leigh, Willa, Acker, Blake, Corwin.

The Indonesian Consortium (IC)

Indonesia began to achieve a certain level of economic strength in the early years of the 21st Century, quietly building up an interwoven trading network with a number of neighbouring countries. These included the following nations: East Timor, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

In constructing this economic empire, Indonesia attracted the ire of Japan, which at the time was involved in a little empire-building of its own. No one is sure who fired the first shot in the resulting financial war, but Japan and the rest of the Oceania

Trade Alliance fought Indonesia's cluster of nations bitterly for decades, even after the formation of the Earth Alliance. The only lull in the ongoing conflict was World War III, in which the nations of the Indonesian Consortium suffered greatly. In addition to direct fighting in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, the populations of all the various nations were driven into poverty by the resulting market crashes that followed the war.

Since then, the Indonesian Consortium has returned to prominence and become one of the most influential financial organisations in the world. They have managed this through a series of skilful investments and well-timed sales - sometimes so well-timed as to be of questionable legality. The sudden collapse of the global sugar market in 2095 was, at least in the eyes of the Japanese, directly caused by Indonesia and its allies. They retaliated by claiming Japan was responsible for deliberately inflated titanium prices the following year. These accusations and others were never conclusively proven, but the fact remains that the Indonesian Consortium is far more wealthy than its actual gross national product would suggest.

Citizens of the Consortium come in two basic types: rich and poor. The two live virtually alongside each other in the cities, where gleaming modern towers are surrounded by pathetic slums, and high-speed maglev tubes crisscross the skies over streets packed with bicycles and oil-burning ground cars that were obsolete a hundred years ago. Those of the upper class are bankers, stock brokers, insurance moguls, and financial speculators risking everything in the hopes of getting even richer than they already are. The lower classes are labourers, farmers, public servants, and criminals hoping for the big score. As for the middle classes, there are none.

Vast swaths of the Indonesian Consortium are jungles that are difficult to penetrate, although many of the lower classes are quite familiar with them. Indonesia itself has more islands than any country on the planet, while other countries have plenty of swamps and rivers meandering their way through the terrain. It should come as no surprise that most residents of these areas are as comfortable on the water as they are on land.

Indonesian Consortium Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Malay (Indonesia or Malaysia), Dutch (Indonesia), Vietnamese, Khmer (Cambodia), Lao, Thai, Burmese
- Additional Feats Available: Streetwise, Jungle Dweller, Seagoing.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Wealthy members of Consortium society appreciate the art of the deal. They are always looking for the next big score, and ways to increase their wealth and influence beyond what they already have. Those who are down on their luck can become somewhat desperate, and will stop at nothing to return to prominence. Those from the other side of the tracks spend their lives labouring in the hopes of saving enough money to buy a ticket out of the region for themselves or their children. Given a chance to escape to a better place, they will jump at the opportunity, often regardless of the cost. In their desperation, they often turn to crime. Quite a few have escaped to Babylon 5, only to wind up in worse shape in the end.
- Names: Bian, Huyen, Thuy, Chien, Minh, Nguyen.

The Indian Union (IU)

India, like Pakistan, is a nation still struggling to recover from the devastation of World War III. Vast areas of territory are uninhabitable, and long-term cleanup operations are under way in regions contaminated by fallout. Most of the southern and eastern areas are in good shape, however, as are the associated nation-states of Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Despite the war-ravaged areas, India also sports one of the world's largest populations. The vast majority of the inhabitants are Hindu, although Islam is practiced in some areas and in most of Bangladesh.

Despite the high population, life in India is generally comfortable. There are several large cities, including the capital of New Delhi, but the vast majority of the people live in smaller outlying towns scattered throughout the countryside. These enjoy modern conveniences including easy transit to any other area using a comprehensive maglev rail link that traverses the country, even connecting Sri Lanka via surface bridges. The Indian people pride themselves on efficiency, and their transport network is proof of their optimisation and design abilities.

The Indian people generally live simple lives. Work is steady and constant, and unemployment is generally low. Although there is some farming, the vast majority of jobs are in advanced, high-tech fields such as computers and communications. India has three work periods - morning, afternoon, and night - so that at any given moment, one-third of its population is on the job, one-third is involved in leisure activities, and the remainder are asleep or resting. This efficient system ensures that crowding is kept to a minimum, although travelling during a shift change can be difficult sometimes.

Indian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Hindi
- Additional Feats Available: Efficient, Radiation Tolerant, Religious Influence.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Indians are efficient workers and good thinkers. They are constantly trying to come up with better ways to do things and refuse to accept the status quo. An Indian would never accept 'because that's how it's always been done' as a valid explanation. Most Indian citizens are practicing Hindus who hold their faith in high regard, although some of the old ways have been updated for modern times - you will not find cows roaming free on the streets in New Delhi any more, for example. Because Hindus believe in reincarnation, the people are very respectful of life in all forms, including members of alien races. In a universe filled with intelligent creatures, it is clear there is no guarantee your soul will be reincarnated as a human. The Narn you meet today might have been a distant ancestor in a former life.
- Names: Chanda, Karuna, Rati, Duhkha, Kabir, Pani.

The South African Coalition of Nations (SACN)

While the rest of the world advanced technologically through the 21st Century, most of Africa remained undeveloped and backward. The sole exception was the nation of South Africa, which managed to at least keep up with the latest technologies, even if it could not necessarily afford to implement them. South Africa also had its own problems, including lingering racial tensions following the death of apartheid, overpopulation, environmental issues, and the AIDS epidemic. The country also suffered from a distinct lack of fresh water, with no convenient lakes or rivers for use in irrigation.

Advancing technologies solved many of these problems, particularly the lack of water and desertification of formerly forested areas. South Africa's problem with AIDS convinced the government to concentrate its education and medical resources on the epidemic, resulting in a cure for the disease in 2035. Distribution of the vaccine greatly improved the conditions in much of the continent and brought worldwide accolades to South Africa, which thereafter became a world leader in disease treatment and prevention. Cures for herpes, Ebola, snake fever, blood flu, and Stafford's Plague all eventually came from the disease centres of South Africa.

South Africa watched the growing influence of world organisations, such as the European Union and North American Federation, with an air of some jealousy. They wanted very much to make a similar group for their continent, but initially this proved very difficult. Africa is strongly tribal, with vast differences between nationalities and long histories of warfare that simply could not be erased through good feelings and a desire for unity. Still, South Africa pressed on, beginning with trading and technology sharing agreements with many of its neighbours, including Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Mozambique, and Madagascar. Since South Africa had most of the technology, the other nations took advantage of these arrangements without much complaint. South Africa also proved its good intentions by distributing cures to AIDS and other diseases for free, with no strings attached. By the time World War III came, quite a few other nations were involved in the growing coalition of nations, including Tanzania, Zaire, Congo, Gabon, Malawi, Angola, Botswana, the Central African Republic, and Kenya.

After the war, the nations of Africa struggled to recover from economic devastation and new problems of famine and plague. South Africa once again stood at the forefront of these efforts, helping the other countries while asking little in return. Liberia, Uganda, Ghana, and Cameroon joined the coalition, while most of the Moslem countries chose to side with the United Islamic Nations instead. When the Earth Alliance was formed, the nascent South African Coalition was among the founding members.

Africa was initially a great burden to the Alliance. Nearly all the countries there were extremely poor and lacked even

a semblance of modern facilities. Billions of credits were pumped into the region to solve these problems, educate the people, and improve sanitation and stabilise the economy. Africa generally reacted with indifference to these advances, and in many cases the people responded with irritation at having their way of life disrupted. After a while, however, they began to take the flow of aid and support for granted, even going so far as to riot when their supplies were late or misdirected. In much the same way as spoiled children constantly demand more attention, Africans began to expect every new development and modern convenience to come their way. They also wanted more attention from international businesses and corporations, but for the most part growth came slowly. Africans had by now developed an all-take-and-no-give attitude that did little to attract business to their side of the world.

Once again, South Africa stepped up to the plate and took control of the situation. The solution, they figured, was to let the other countries work to solve their own problems. This policy showed some promise, but for the most part it was too little, too late. As Alliance support was gradually withdrawn, at the request of South Africa, the remaining countries began to become upset. At the same time as this was going on, other nations such as China and Russia were also complaining about lack of Alliance support, and the African nations seized on this as reason to secede. In another situation South Africa's plan might well have succeeded, but the timing was all wrong. The Alliance may well have fragmented shortly thereafter had the Centauri not arrived and changed everything.

After the furore of First Contact wound down, the Earth Alliance promised unilateral support to all nations, including those in Africa. However, they also made it plain they expected all countries to pull their own weight or be left behind. With South Africa there to prod the other nations on the continent, the rest of Africa fell gradually in line. Industries were constructed, improvements were made to the local terrain, food production was increased, and the people began to adjust to a lifestyle still strange and foreign to most of them. Even today, large numbers of Africans remain simple farmers and low-class workers, and are for the most part content with their lot.

South Africa and a few of its neighbours are the sole exceptions to the general low-tech nature of the African mainland. South Africa is as modern and advanced as any country in the world. Lacking rivers and lakes of any significance, the people have constructed their own using terraforming technologies purchased from other races. The country is a maze of artificial rivers and maglev lines running between the major cities, all radiating outward from the largest city, Johannesburg. Although Pretoria is technically the capital, it is just a small suburb of the Johannesburg metropolis, which sprawls across dozens of square miles.

South Africa's economy is strongly focused on business, technology and services. Although there are some labourers among them, most are professionals of one form or another. South Africa has a large number of corporations with ties to space, and some of these companies are quite large. Many South Africans become high-profile doctors, lawyers, and government officials.

South African Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Afrikaans
- Additional Feats Available: Disease Tolerant, Forward Thinking.
- Available Exotic Weapon: Blowgun.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: South Africans think ahead before they act. They tend to take into account the greater good when making decisions, not necessarily their own advancement. South Africans are socially conscious and for the most part strive to be fair and just, often taking jobs as judges, doctors, and lawyers. They are altruistic and make good philanthropists, but they are not particularly religious. They believe everyone is entitled to a long, happy life, and many dedicate their own lives to ensuring that is the case for others.
- Names: Halima, Lakisha, Rashida, Anwar, Kofi, Yera.

Other Independents

A few small nations remain independent of any group. Although the Earth Alliance considers them to be members, they are more like territories than actual individual states. They have no voting power and pay no taxes directly to the Earth Alliance, but they also do not receive much in the way of benefits or support from the global government. Most of the rest of the world considers them quaint little backwater communities at best, useless Neanderthals at worst.

Nation-states that fall into this category include Kuwait, Bermuda, Madagascar, Nepal, Singapore, Israel, and Vatican City. Descriptions of a couple of these are listed below.

Israel

Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people, and lies right in the centre of the Middle East, surrounded by the members of the United Islamic Nations. To say these two sides dislike each other is like saying the North Pole is 'a little bit cold.'

Israel was created following World War II as a permanent home for the Jews, who suffered terribly at the hands of Hitler during the conflict. The United Nations, who saw to the formation of the new country, selected the location for its historical importance to the Jewish people. In this they neglected to note its importance to the followers of Islam, who objected stridently to the new nation in their midst. Several wars followed, but Israel survived, in part because of their sheer tenacity and partly because of support from the rest of the United Nations, particularly America, which seemed determined to ensure their survival.

When Israel was not fighting off Egyptian, Lebanese, and other nations' invading armies, they had to deal with constant terrorism from the native Palestinian population. Although not a country in its own right, Palestine had a large contingent of followers who wished to see Israel removed and a Palestinian state created in its place. Stopping terrorism proved all but impossible, so the Israelis simply knuckled under and endured. Every home had its own gas masks and chemical-proof basements, and Israel's military grew steadily more and more

adept at tracking down and locating suspected terrorism - whom they dealt with quite ruthlessly.

Israel came under direct attack several times during the 21st Century, winning each war with little trouble. During World War III, Egypt and Syria took the opportunity to invade, only to lose large swaths of territory in the resulting counterattack - leaving Israel in possession of the eastern side of the Suez Canal. This only increased the country's difficulties in controlling native populations, however. Even after the formation of the Earth Alliance, they continued to fight an ongoing struggle against terrorism and insurgency. This finally came to a head with a low-yield nuclear strike by Palestinian suicide terrorists in 2105. In response, Israel simply deported all non-Israeli citizens over a period of several years and participated in the walling off of the rest of the United Islamic Nations along with the rest of the Earth Alliance.

Today, Israel is almost exclusively a Jewish state. Walls built during the early 22nd Century are still in place, and no public transportation exists across the borders. Terrorism from fanatical religious groups is still common, unfortunately. Israelis are used to this by now, and explosions and sniper attacks rarely faze them. Most citizens regularly wear protective body armour and carry firearms of one type or another. Israel's anti-terrorist organisation, the Mossad, is one of the most prestigious and ruthlessly efficient paramilitary units in the Earth Alliance. Because of its impressive skills, it has been known to undertake missions outside Earth territory on rare occasions.

Israeli Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Hebrew
- Additional Feats Available: Religious Influence, Militaristic.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Israelis are used to living in an area where they could be the victim of terrorism at any moment. Virtually all citizens are competent with weapons and various types of military hardware, such as gas masks and full-body chemical gear. Service in the military or local police forces is mandatory for all Israelis - one of the few places on Earth where this is still true. Israelis are not, however, intolerant of Islam or any other religion, they simply have come to accept their lot as targets of a hostile people who refuse to accept religious tolerance on their own. Israelis judge people by their words and deeds, and if those turn out to be hostile, an Israeli is usually prepared to respond in kind.
- Names: Debora, Josephine, Rebekah, Adam, Jacob, Solomon.

Vatican City

Also known as Holy See, Vatican City is a tiny independent city-state located in Rome, Italy. The country is the home of the Catholic faith across the whole of the Earth Alliance. Virtually everyone who lives in Vatican City is a high-ranking member of this religion - a bishop, archbishop, cardinal, or even the Pope

himself. A few priests and deacons are also occasionally sent there on special missions of importance to their diocese.

Vatican City has no industries or exports of note. Its sole useful commodity is its massive libraries, a storehouse of information not only about Catholicism but about all religions and much of Earth's history as well. Although many of these publicly accessible libraries are in the form of books, the true gem of the Holy See is the massive electronic databases that store just about any piece of information a person could want - provided they know the right question to ask.

Over three-fourths of the residents of this tiny nation are male. Women are no longer as restricted in advancement in the Catholic hierarchy as they once were, but they are still far less common in the higher ranks. There have been no female Popes, and none have even seriously been in the running for the position. Female cardinals exist, but are extremely rare.

Vatican Racial Traits

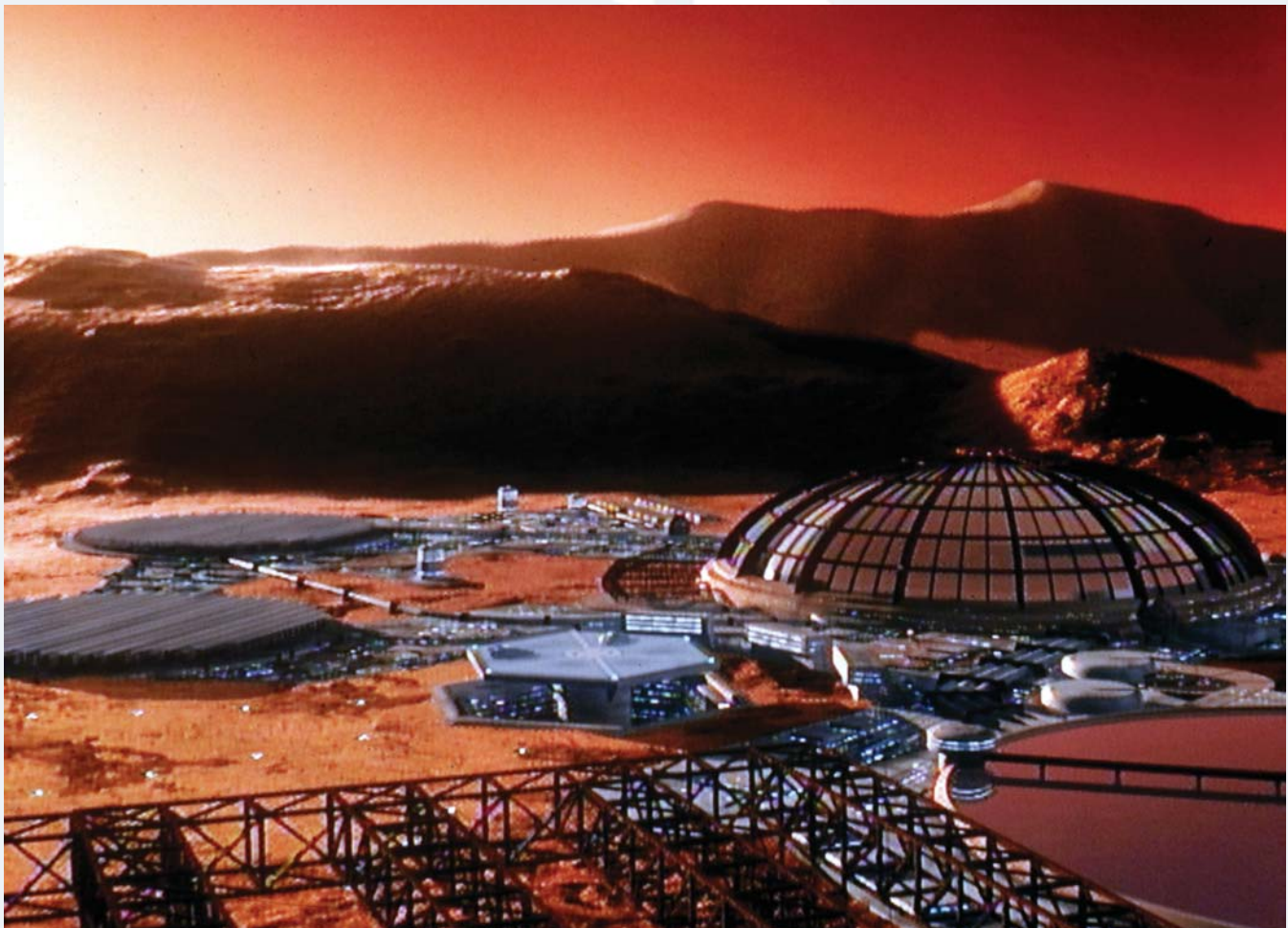
- Bonus language: Latin
- Additional Feats Available: Religious Influence, Historian, Good Listener.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Citizens of Vatican City are exclusively Catholics with a high degree of religious power - some former residents have lost this influence, however, for one reason or another. They tend to be

extremely knowledgeable about a great many things, but have little practical experience in worldly matters. Most are extremely charismatic, although they tend to avoid using their abilities for combat or military purposes. Because the Catholic religion teaches forgiveness and requires periodic confessions by its followers, most priests and higher-ranking religious officials are trained in the art of listening and providing absolution. In other words, they make excellent shoulders to cry on.

- Names: Cecilia, Faith, Laura, Donato, Lionel, Titus.

Mars

After many years of debate and planning, Earth began launching manned missions to Mars in the 2050s. Known as the Ares Program, this project involved combined elements of the North American Space Agency, European Space Agency, and Russian Space Agency in a remarkable show of international cooperation. These efforts culminated with the successful landing of Ares 3 on the surface of Mars on July 4, 2057. Although exploration lasted only a week before orbital requirements forced the ship to return to Earth, the mission was a huge success that drew world attention back to space



exploration and lifted the eyes of humanity once again towards the stars.

Sadly, as with most space exploration efforts, problems and accidents were inevitable. For every two steps forward, there was one step back. In 2072, the Ares 13 probe suffered a catastrophic failure of its braking system while landing, killing all seven crew members. The various space agencies performed a thorough investigation to ensure no further mistakes would be made, but before the next mission could launch, World War III broke out.

In fact, no more probes were sent to Mars until 2101. These new missions were sent under the umbrella of the recently formed Earth Alliance, and also employed international crews. The first few probes stayed for a short while and returned, but as the years passed, they stayed longer. The first permanent scientific base was installed in 2134, followed by several others. Studies aimed at eventually terraforming of Mars were among the primary interests, but the Alliance simply lacked the technology to do this properly.

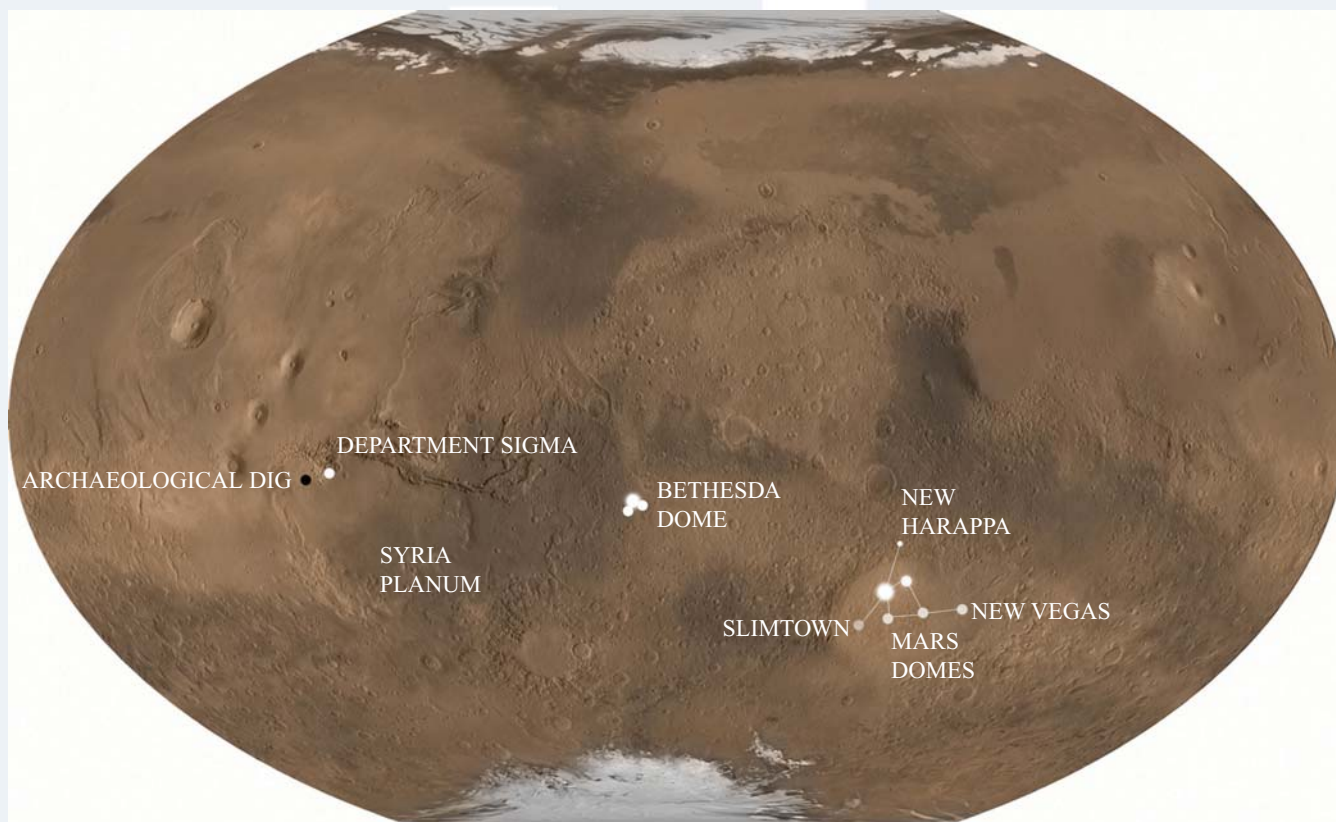
In 2148, the IPX Corporation - then, as now, a front for EarthForce military research - made a surprising discovery. In an area southeast of the huge extinct volcano known as Olympus Mons, explorers discovered fragments of highly advanced alien technology buried underneath the surface. Samples were returned to Earth and studied in secret, where their tremendous potential was realised almost immediately. Suddenly Mars was no longer just a diversion from Earth's problems or a mere scientific curiosity. The things buried under the sand and rock at Syria Planum could be the most important discoveries since the wheel!

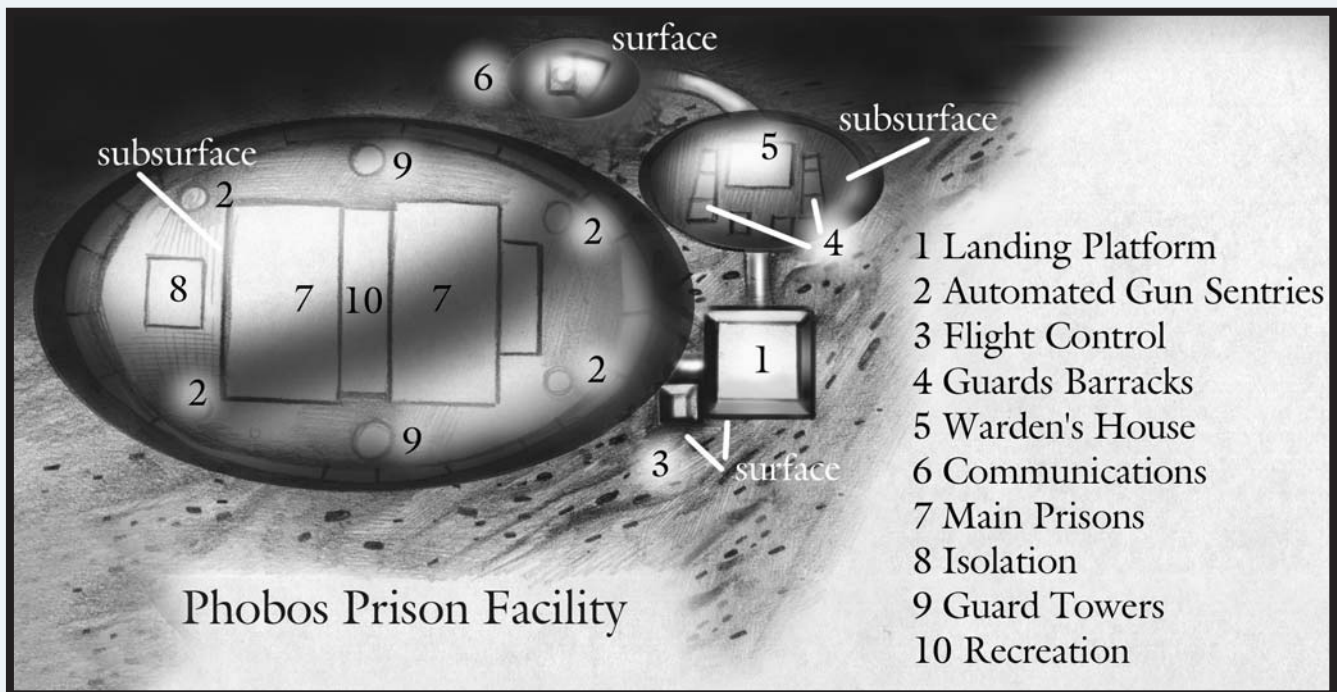
In order to get their message across, they turned to terrorism, setting off a bomb in 2177 that destroyed most of MarsDome One, killing 487 of the colonists, one of whom was John Carter. The survivors were taken to the Mars One research facility as well as other stations until repairs could be made to the dome.

The actions of a few radicals did not end Earth's push towards the colonisation of space. New outposts and colonies were planted in systems beyond Sol, and new construction continued on Mars. In 2198, the Centauri provided advanced technology designed for the purpose of terraforming the planet. Although this process would take well over a century, EarthDome signed off on the project and began melting the south polar ice caps. Over the ensuing decades, the atmosphere slowly began to thicken, normal weather patterns began, lowlands began to fill with liquid water during the summers, and temperatures started to rise. If things continue as they are, Mars may become a nearly Earthlike world as early as 2350.

Over the decades that followed, relations between Mars and Earth began to strain. Earth was the sole source of food for the growing number of colonists, who felt the homeland was using this as a whip with which to flog them into submission. Hours were long on Mars and working conditions poor. Volunteer colonists were soon joined by those sent to Mars as a kind of punishment, or who were fleeing prosecution back on Earth. In many ways, this mirrored the initial colonisation of North America, but without a native population to exploit.

Eventually, the colonists began discussing secession from the Earth Alliance, but this remained just a murmur until the Earth/Minbari War provided their opportunity. As the Minbari approached Sol, Mars declared neutrality and refused





to participate in the defence of Earth. The Alliance could do nothing to punish the recalcitrant colony until after the Minbari surrender, at which EarthDome retaliated by cutting off food shipments to Mars. The colonists responded to the shortage by rioting and destroying the various hydroponics labs and other production facilities, the mob mentality overriding the illogic of their actions.

Unwilling to sit back and watch the Mars colonists kill each other or starve to death, EarthForce sent in troops to suppress the riots. Fighting was fierce and damage was severe. In the end, the colony was forced to accept a provisional government answerable directly to EarthDome, a situation that persists today despite several failed attempts to depose it. The most famous of these was the Free Mars rebellion in 2258, which was violently put down, forcing the surviving rebels into hiding underground. Today, Mars remains a hotbed of revolutionary propaganda ready to boil over at any moment.

Several secret activities are also in progress on Mars. The original Syria Planum archaeological dig site is still in operation, as the scientists continue to believe far more lies below the surface than has yet been discovered. This was proven in 2253 when an alien craft of immense size was located and uncovered, only to be taken away by a similar vessel before studies could be completed. What else lies below can only be imagined.

Psi Corps also has several facilities on Mars, the most prominent being Department Sigma, a research facility located close to Syria Planum. The site was constructed in 2173 and is still in operation today. The connection between Department Sigma and the research being conducted at the Mars One labs is still unknown.

Today, the Mars colony is made up of a series of interconnected domes of varying sizes. These domes are constructed of

several layers of highly advanced polymers capable of resisting meteor strikes, explosions, and anything less than a direct military attack. Inside the domes, a local ecosystem is carefully maintained and preserved. Air recycling is accomplished only as a backup measure, as the plant life exactly complements the animal life for purposes of air quality. Cities look surprisingly similar to a modern town back on Earth, with high-rise buildings, multi-level apartment buildings, hotels, business districts, parks, schools, police, and everything else you might expect to see in a small city. Ground and air cars are used to get around, while high-speed transport tubes connect each town to its neighbours.

The cities of Mars are the colony's most visible face. A number of large corporations operate out of these towns, including Edgars Industries, the fourth-largest company on Earth and one with a huge investment in the future of Mars. In order to combat Earth's aggressive economic efforts, many of the companies located on Mars have formed the Mars Conglomerate, a monopolistic group with vast financial power and a monopolistic hold on trade. After the last riots, they threatened to pull out of the colony, an act which would have devastated the economy of Mars.

Despite the placid appearance above the surface, any resident will tell you the real action on Mars happens underground. This is where the entertainment facilities, small businesses, and hydroponic farms operate. A complex network of tunnels connects towns with each other and any of the many mining operations located beneath the surface. These tunnels also lead to less savoury things like smuggling operations, black market shops, and hiding places for rebels and runaway telepaths. If one wishes to hide from pursuit, the deep tunnels are one of the best places in the Solar System to run. Care must be taken, however. An individual might find help and shelter, but just as easily might be exploited or enslaved. Undercover police and security forces roam the underground, as do Psi Cops looking

for rogues or wanted criminals. Known as 'bloodhound units,' these telepaths make random scans of citizens and arrest anyone they find who has something to hide.

The planet Mars has a diameter about half that of Earth. The revolutionary period is about 687 days, so its year is approximately twice as long as Earth's. A Martian day is 24 hours and 37 minutes long, although the extra 37 minutes are conveniently 'expended' at midnight each evening in order to stay on standard Earth time. Mars orbits the Sun at a radius of approximately 141 million miles, some 44 million miles farther than Earth. There are two satellites, Phobos and Deimos, both of which are very small - 7 miles and 4 miles in diameter, respectively. From the ground, both appear to be bright lights in the night sky and move quickly, making the crossing several times per day.

On Mars, the gravity is noticeably lighter. A person weighs approximately one-third their normal weight, and long time residents are very adaptable to low-G environments. Outside the Martian domes, the air pressure is sufficient to support human life for short periods. A person requires a breather mask, of course, as the air quality remains very poor. The temperature can get extremely cold at night, dropping as low as -50 degrees Centigrade in winter. However, when the sun is out in summertime, the temperature regularly rises above freezing. Weather is infrequent, but storms do occur. A few icy rivers have formed in the more temperate areas, and lakes created by the melted ice caps are commonplace. They are, however, too cold to support fisheries, except for the smaller ones that are artificially heated.

The Mars colony itself is made up of a number of domed cities ranging in size from the largest, MarsDome One, which supports some 300,000 inhabitants plus an unknown number living in tunnels below the surface. Other cities are scattered about near large mining sites and other items of interest. Some 250 other towns and settlements exist in various locations, most of them connected to the others by a vast network of transit tubes. Many simple homesteads, planted by those wishing to escape the rigours of normal society, can also be found, connected to the others only by underground tunnels. All told, Mars supports a population numbering in the millions, although the actual count cannot be known for certain. There may be as many living below the surface as there are in the cities, towns, and outlying homes.

Some of the more interesting locations on or near Mars are listed hereafter.

MarsDome One: Also known as Capital City, this is the largest dome on Mars. It supports a massive city with thousands of residents. The most striking sight in the city is the amazing skyline, made up of towering spires that seem to scrape the roof of the inner dome. The place is amazingly clean and free of pollution. Maglev rails connect the buildings, and aircars flit about carrying passengers from point to point quickly. The whole place is extremely high-tech and futuristic, and is the one thing most people think of when they remember Mars in their mind.

What they do not see is the sprawling, dark underground of tunnels stretching down into the depths, filled with low-class dives, drug peddlers, black market activities, revolutionary meetings, and desperate people. Visitors to the city are advised not to venture there without personal protection or an armed escort.

New Vegas: The entertainment capital of Mars, this city is patterned after Las Vegas in the American desert. A glittering, flashy town filled with a wide variety of hotels, entertainment facilities, casinos, and restaurants. Although gambling is legal here, the police and casino security tolerate very little foolishness, and illicit acts are dealt with swiftly. A single infraction of theft, cheating, drug use, or similar activity will get you kicked right out of the city. Entry through travel tubes and underground access points is carefully monitored.

As with MarsDome One, the underground below New Vegas is a hive of illicit activity. The drugs and other black market items prohibited in the paradise above are found here in great quantities. Prostitution, smuggling, and other crimes are practiced regularly despite all attempts to stamp them out. The top three crime syndicates on Mars also operate out of the New Vegas Underground.

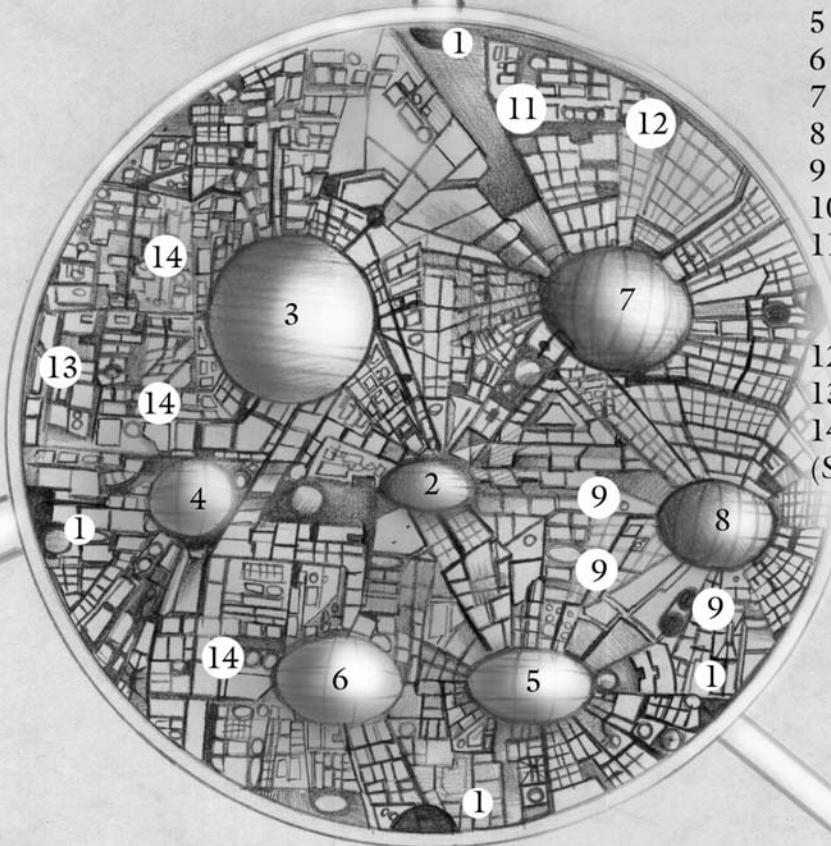
Slimtown: This is a dome built along a crease between two mountain ranges rich in minerals and ores. It gets its name from the fact that it is not a typical hemisphere, but is shaped like a long ellipse if seen from above. The city has expanded three times in size since its initial construction, primarily because of the vast influx in population drawn to the mining opportunities in the nearby mountains. Gold, silver, platinum, diamonds, titanium, chromium, and more have all been located in significant quantities. Most of the residents of Slimtown are either miners or craftsmen who turn prospected materials into jewellery and other high-value items, many of which are then smuggled out of the city using underground networks in order to avoid Earth's high taxes and tariffs.

Slimtown has almost no food production capability, but is totally dependent on imports from other town and from Earth. This was the site of one of the worst food riots after the Minbari War and some of the most brutal repression that followed. The people of Slimtown are among the most reactionary on Mars, and are the first in line whenever secession from the Alliance is discussed. It is rumoured that the tunnels underneath this town are packed with hoarded weapons, foodstuffs, and other materials needed to fend off any EarthForce attack.

New Harappa: This is a typical small town on Mars. Seen from the surface, it looks like a very small dome that supports a hydroponic garden and a few small buildings. The population here is less than 1,000 people. Underneath the surface, however, multiple layers of tunnels and underground structures resemble an anthill or termite mound. Living quarters, businesses, farms, and a variety of other services create a sizeable underground town that belies its simple surface appearance.

Unlike the cities, the tunnel areas of New Harappa and other Martian towns are much less seedy. Since the common citizens tend to live below ground instead of above, they do not tolerate as much lawlessness and illicit activities. The tendency of

MARS DOME ONE



- 1 Monorail Station
- 2 Earth Dome Mars
- 3 Edgars Sub Dome
- 4 IPX Sub Dome
- 5 Market Dome
- 6 Sub Dome One
- 7 Sub Dome Two
- 8 Sub Dome Three
- 9 "Earther" Housing
- 10 High District
- 11 Waste and Atmosphere Processing
- 12 Power Generation
- 13 Internal MassTrans
- 14 Redsands Row (Slums)

people to move into the domes and make way for the criminal element rises as cities become larger.

Phobos Outpost: This is not a colony, but a maximum security penitentiary on the largest of Mars's two moons. Considered by most to be escape-proof, the site is located almost completely underground in the tiny world's hollowed-out interior. Weapons on the station are attuned directly to the guard's DNA, so they will not function in a prisoner's hand. Even if an escape took place, there would be no way to get to the surface. The sole weekly shuttle lands under automatic systems authorised only if it receives the proper passcode from the station, which changes on each trip. No escape from Phobos has succeeded to date, a record the warden is quite proud of. However, that does not stop the inmates from trying.

Martian (Marzie) Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None
- Additional Feats Available: Miner, Streetwise, Low-G Tolerance.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Martians (or 'Marzies' as they prefer to be known) hail from virtually all corners of the Earth. While a large percentage of Marzies are honest people involved in legitimate businesses, a growing number are criminals or underworld types who came to Mars to escape prosecution back home. Most are united in their dislike of Earth and a desire for independence, primarily as a means to avoid the heavy-handed control of the provisional government or as a means to finally end the high taxes and tariffs that dominate the Martian economy. A surprising number of Martians are competent with weapons and have received at least some training in guerrilla fighting.

Because of the lower gravity, many long time residents of Mars are capable of getting along well in similar environments but have trouble adapting to higher G forces. While most of the more honest citizens do not like the underground and the black market, most are familiar with it and can get around well enough. A typical Marzie can spot a non-resident within moments, and with the exception of New Vegas, an 'Earther' out by himself is likely to be viewed with hostility and suspicion.

- Names: Virtually any Earth nationality.

The Rest of the Solar System: Earth and Mars tend to occupy the limelight in the Sol system, but there is a lot more going on there than near those two planets. Some sites consider themselves colonies, although with a couple of exceptions, very few have truthfully reached that level. Here are brief descriptions of some other locations of interest:

Luna: A good number of corporations operate mining sites on the Moon, although most of these are small. The Moon is comparatively light on resources compared to the asteroids and the satellites of the outer planets. There are also a couple of military bases here, most of which specialise in training troops to operate in full space gear and low-gravity conditions. There are also several tourist sites centred around some of the early lunar landing missions from the 20th Century, but otherwise there are very few reasons to actually visit the Moon.

Venus: Like Mars, Venus is the site of an extremely long-term terraforming experiment designed to reverse the rampant greenhouse nightmare that currently envelops the planet. So far, scientists in the orbiting Lucifer research station have managed to successfully introduce large amounts of oxygen and nitrogen into the mostly carbon dioxide atmosphere of Venus, reducing surface temperatures to somewhere in the 200-300 degrees Centigrade range, but this is still too hot for safe exploration in anything other than heavy heat-resistant armour. Scientists believe that perhaps in another 10 to 15 years, they might be ready to start dropping algae and other plant life into the polar regions in the hopes that the carbon dioxide count in the air can be reduced still further. However, the cloud cover must be cleared away first in order to permit photosynthesis. If all goes well, Venus may become habitable sometime in the early 2400s.

Mercury: Although Mercury may seem too close to the sun for significant development, the little planet does have a few underground mining sites. Because the surface of the planet can exceed 400 degrees Centigrade during the daytime, all underground facilities were constructed during the 29-day night. They remain covered by heat-resistant shields when the sun is out, effectively locking the residents underground for almost a month of Earth time. If anything goes wrong during that period, rescue operations would be incredibly difficult. For this reason, miners on Mercury are paid well for their time, but tend to not stay particularly long. Mercury's primary exports are various ores and rare metals.

Io: Io, one of the moons of Jupiter, is home to a large mining colony and a military base protecting the Solar System's central jumpgate. This colony is detailed in full on p.102.

Ganymede: Jupiter's largest moon is actually bigger than Mercury. Its surface is covered with a thick layer of permafrost, reminding visitors of the northern regions of Siberia as if that land were located on a planet with no atmosphere to speak of. Early explorers of Ganymede discovered evidence of alien visitation at some point in the distant past, and a large complex of scientific outposts has been constructed to investigate the archaeological remains. For this reason, Ganymede is currently off limits to colonisation or mining efforts. The only residents are scientists and a military force kept on site to protect the base from any surprises.

Titan: Like Ganymede, Saturn's moon Titan is large enough to be classified as a planet if it weren't a satellite of another world already. Titan has a thick atmosphere made chiefly of nitrogen and methane, which near the surface have been converted through photochemistry to ethane, acetylene, ethylene, and hydrogen cyanide. This, combined with the extremely low temperatures - below -150 degrees Centigrade - make the moon quite inhospitable to human life. Even mining is difficult due to the constant risk of catastrophic explosions set off by the highly flammable elements in the air. There are a few domed outposts on the surface, mostly local mining or scientific expeditions studying the possible formation of life. After all, the previously mentioned hydrogen cyanide compounds are one of the building blocks of amino acids, themselves a building block of all living things.

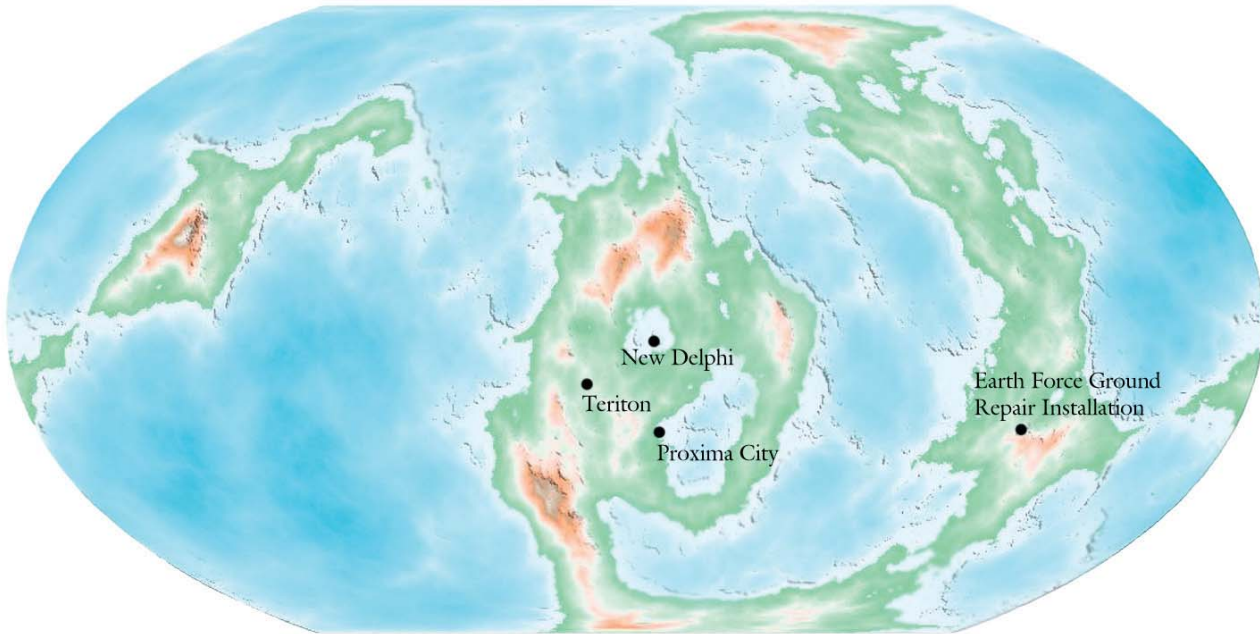
Pluto: Of all the places in the Solar System, Pluto may well seem to be the least likely site for anything useful. After all, it is so far from the Sun that it receives almost no light or heat whatsoever. Still, the icy surface of both Pluto and its huge moon Charon hide a vast wealth of resources just below the surface. Both worlds have virtually solid cores, so mining efforts can penetrate as deep as desired, just as with most of the asteroids. Several companies operate large mining stations on Pluto or its moon. The system is also a jumping-off point for scientific research in the Oort cloud, where comets are formed.

Proxima

One of the first missions undertaken by the newly formed Deep Space Exploration Command in 2159 was to scour nearby space looking for potential colony sites. The recent difficulties on Earth only showcased the need for additional expansion room, as well as the very real fear that Earth could be annihilated in a global war or other catastrophe. The colonies on Mars were working well, but were far from self-sufficient. In order for the human race to survive, new colonies were needed on other worlds.

Fortunately for the Alliance, Earth is located in a long-neglected pocket of hyperspace that had so far gone unnoticed by other nearby races, including the Centauri Republic and Minbari Federation. Although it was later discovered that aliens had, in fact, visited Earth before - most notably the Vree and the Vorlons - this fact was unknown in 2159. Even the Centauri admitted that they had not really explored much of nearby space, and considering its distance from the Republic, they were content to let the naïve humans play their games and learn to

Proxima 3- Colony World- Earth Alliance



Circumference: 21,300 miles Water Percentage: 79% Equatorial Mean Temperature: 89 degrees F

navigate hyperspace without too much fear. After all, thought the Centauri, such a low-tech planet as Earth would surely be unable to take advantage of anything they found. Even the much older Vree and Cascor, two of the galaxy's pre-eminent explorer races, still occupied only their homeworlds and a couple of scattered colonies. Had the Centauri realised just how explosive humanity's spread to the stars would be, they might well have reconsidered giving the Earth Alliance unfettered access to hyperspace!

As it was, the Deep Space Exploration Command struck gold on its very first mission. The Proxima Centauri system, home to not one or two but three stars, not only had planets, but actually had two that were habitable. Proxima 3, which actually orbits Alpha Centauri - a sun very much like Sol - was found to have a climate, gravity, and atmosphere that were almost perfect replicas of Earth. Some life existed, but nothing larger than a small bird or rodent. Better still, Proxima 4, a world a bit larger than Earth, also had a mild climate and breathable air, but the life forms there proved to be significantly more vicious. Higher gravity and atmospheric contaminants on Proxima 4 have made long-term colonisation a greater challenge, but the outlook was still promising. The rest of the system, while not nearly as habitable, was still packed with resources ready for the taking.

When word of the initial survey reached Earth, the news exploded like a bomb over the populace. Tales of the beautiful, unspoiled planet of Proxima 3 - which soon became known simply as 'Proxima' - stirred up long-buried pioneering spirits in many people. Soon, colonisation missions were being planned all across Earth. The leaders in Geneva tried to halt most of these programs, claiming that not enough was actually known about Proxima to begin the colonisation process, but few paid

heed. Getting to the planet became something of a race, with each group, company or nation rushing to stake its claim on the best sites on Proxima. EarthForce tried to stop as many ships as they could, but it was like trying to dam a waterfall - far more settlers reached the new world than could possibly be intercepted. In the end, EarthDome just let out a collective sigh and allowed free access to Proxima, employing EarthForce strictly as a means to preserve order and settle claim disputes.

Actually, there were few real difficulties. Proxima has a great deal of land - unlike Earth, on which over 70% of the surface is covered with water, Proxima is almost exactly the opposite. Settlers and companies had plenty to choose from. In no time at all, small cities and towns were springing up all across the vast, largely unexplored world. Perhaps not too surprisingly, most people tended to settle with others of their nationality, creating a sort of patchwork replica of Earth's culture, but with different borders. No one planned this - it just sort of happened on its own.

Of course, the sudden arrival of tens of thousands of humans had an immediate effect on the local flora and fauna. Disease organisms brought along by people killed off virtually all animal life except for those samples kept in protective environments. Terran fungi, moss, and other types of plants quickly overwhelmed the unprepared native vegetation. This was of great concern to scientists and environmentalists, but not to the colonists, who were happy to replace the useless alien forms with imported trees, fruits, vegetables, and other useful plants. Within the space of thirty years, a visitor to Proxima would be almost unable to tell the difference from Earth, as only a few species of harmless native insects remained as evidence of a once thriving ecosystem.

The colonists did learn one interesting lesson about their new world fairly early on. Because Proxima Centauri is a trinary system, the sky is rarely completely dark. Beta Centauri was located in the same orbital plane as Proxima 3, only about twenty times farther out. As a result, it is visible in the night sky for about half the year, a fact that wreaks havoc with the regular cycles of most Terran life forms, including humans. (Proxima Centauri, a very small sun, is even farther away and simply appears as a normal, albeit bright, star.) Since Proxima has no moons, tides are very low, and those plants and animals that counted on tidal motion for various biological functions had a difficult time adapting. After a few generations, however, most of them made the shift without too much trouble.

Proxima has enjoyed a relatively stable history, primarily because there is enough room for everyone to move around relatively freely, without having to compete for resources. The world is entirely self-contained, with plenty of food for everyone and enough industries to support the entire planet should the rest of the Earth Alliance suddenly vanish tomorrow. A representative government takes care of global affairs, and Proxima has its own senators back in EarthDome. However, a growing independence movement believes Proxima should peacefully sever the umbilical to the mother world, without violence if possible. Most Proximans believe they should not be forced to answer to Earth for what they consider their own affairs.

Other Proximan Worlds: Proxima is the third planet in a system containing eight worlds, the first five of which orbit Alpha Centauri. Proxima 1 and 2 are lifeless rocks, while planets 5 and 7 are small gas giants. Proxima 6 and 8 are small worlds with poisonous atmospheres. Interestingly, Proxima 5 has a highly eccentric orbit brought on by its close passage to Beta Centauri, actually accelerating as it approaches and decelerating after passing by. The world has no moons, and most scientists believe Proxima 5 will eventually be torn out of orbit and drift into some new arrangement.

Proxima 4 is slightly larger than Proxima 3 and has a thick atmosphere with a variety of poisons and toxins harmful to human life. A person could survive without a breather mask or spacesuit for approximately fifteen minutes before the effects set in. For each fifteen-minute period that skin is left unprotected, a Fortitude save (DC 15) must be made or one hit point of chemical damage will be sustained. Similarly, for each fifteen minutes a breather mask is not used, a Fortitude save (DC 20) is required or the individual suffers 1 point of chemical damage. Regardless of the save, a person without a breather mask takes 1 point of subdual damage every fifteen minutes.

The primary reason Proxima 4 has yet to be colonised in any significant numbers is the vast array of hostile life forms. Proxima 4 is home to a huge number of carnivorous creatures, including burrowing, flying, and jumping types that are surprisingly good hunters. Worse, they tend to hunt in packs, swarming any likely target they find. Since most of Proxima 4's herbivores rely on stealth to escape these hunters, a human marching unprotected through the thick jungles is little more than a moving target. Even so, there are still a few outposts on Proxima 4, most safely hidden behind thick defensive walls. Even the scientists who venture forth to study this violent

ecosystem do so with the protection of heavy armour suits and groups of well-armed defenders.

Today, the planet Proxima is an excellent place to live. Lacking a millennium of atmospheric and water pollution, the air is clean and fresh, almost seeming like a paradise compared to Earth. Towns and businesses have been placed in pre-planned locations, avoiding some of the random sprawl that has turned so much of Earth into a patchwork mess. Even the large cities are tiny by comparison with the world capitals back home. It should not be surprising that Proxima attracts literally thousands of new colonists annually, all of them anxious for a new start in a new place.

Proxima's people are widely diversified and are widely spread across the planet's five different continents. North Americans, Europeans, Russians, Chinese, and Africans are among the most common colonists, each settling in their own areas. These do not consider themselves independent states, however, but simply a small division of the greater Proxima colony. Most have very little ties with their original homelands, having cast all that aside to come find a new life on Proxima.

Proxima is very important strategically to the Earth Alliance. The only jump path to Narn, Centauri, and much of League space goes directly through Proxima. The system is therefore heavily fortified, with several large bases and a defence grid second only to Earth's. Should the Narns or Centauri invade Earth territory, Proxima is the nexus point where the largest battles would be expected to take place. During the Earth/Minbari War, Proxima was the last colony to fall before Sol itself was attacked, although ground and sea resistance continued well after the space forces were defeated. Proxima is proud to say its government never officially surrendered to the Minbari, with vast numbers of its people retreating into the hills and forests to hide and fight a guerrilla action against the technologically superior invaders. How long they would have lasted after the fall of Sol is another matter, but the Proximans insist they would have never given up.

Proxima's prime location at the junction of numerous jump routes into League, Narn, Centauri, and Minbari space has made it something of a trading hub. A surprising number of corporations, businesses, and manufacturers have set up shop on the planet, delivering a wide variety of exports to Earth's frontier colonies and to a number of alien races. Proxima is one of the major suppliers to the Vega and Orion systems and also ships quite a bit of food and other products to the Sol system as well. Many Proximans are craftsmen and artists as well, and the planet is a frequent producer of tri-vid entertainment shows rivalling those created in Hollywood and elsewhere on Earth. In fact, Proxima houses a wide variety of different types of entertainers, from singers and dancers to acting troupes and companies that travel widely throughout known space.

In addition to the obvious surface facilities, Proxima also houses a huge military presence, most of which is centred at the Orion-class orbital base and associated shipyards. Proxima was at one time as large a military production centre as Earth, but it is still struggling to recover from the devastation of the Earth/Minbari War. Ground factories turn out fighters and shuttles in large numbers, while the orbital yards produce Omegas, Hyperions,

and other warships at a steady pace. Proxima also sports the largest repair facilities in all of Alliance territory.

Proximan Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None (virtually all speak English exclusively).
- Additional Feats Available: Guerrilla Fighter, Entertainer.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Above all things, Proximans value their freedom. They are not a violent crowd, but make ferocious defenders who have very recent experience in guerrilla fighting. Proximans love to entertain and be entertained. A good number of them have taken up the craft themselves, travelling from town to town to put on shows or even visiting other systems inside and outside Earth territory.
- Names: Virtually any Earth nationality.

Disney Planet: This is not a colony in the strictest sense of the word, but rather an entire small moon purchased by the Disney Corporation in 2235. Disney Planet is located in the Proxima system and orbits Proxima 4, a gas giant with few other satellites. The world is no larger than Luna, but is extremely dense, with a gravity approaching that of Earth. Like Earth's moon, the world has no water or atmosphere and is basically little more than a dead rock.

When DisneyCorp announced its plans to turn their new acquisition into a theme park the likes of which the Galaxy had never seen, most people laughed. Ten years passed before ground was even broken on the project. The Earth/Minbari War almost ended Disney's plans, for the efficient Minbari destroyed the first domes in their ignorance, thinking what they were attacking was a secret EarthForce military base. After the conflict, construction resumed, and eight years later the first attractions opened with a huge amount of fanfare.

Within the immense pressure-sealed geodesic dome, visitors are treated to a near-perfect replica of Earth in the Twentieth Century. Portions of classic American, European, and Asian cities are reproduced in perfect detail, just as they appear in ancient video and printed records. The simulated environment also includes a beach, rainforest, desert, swamp, and even a central lake complete with locally grown fish that can be hunted the old-fashioned way - with a pole from the deck of a 20th Century watercraft. Interspersed amongst the historical novelties are, of course, a variety of rides and attractions, as well as shows and re-enactments of historical events. Visiting the Millennium Dome is very much like stepping back in time two hundred and seventy-five years, complete with festivities and parades.

Disney Planet's second attraction, Victorian Dome, is scheduled to open in late 2259. This dome, accessible via a quick tram ride from the spacedock and luxury hotel complex, will reproduce the Victorian Era in perfect detail, from the dark and misty streets of London to America's untamed frontiers. Other features are planned, including Roman Dome, Arthurian Dome, and even Alien Dome, which will allow visitors to experience alien worlds and cultures without actually having to visit those places.

You may not play a character 'from' Disney Planet, but any citizen of the Earth Alliance will at least have heard of the place. Advertisements for tours and tickets are all over the media. Getting there is not cheap, however, costing upwards of several thousand credits for just a single week's low-end tourist package. Despite the expense, Disney Planet has attracted millions in its few years of operation, and is by all accounts a huge financial success.

The Orion System

The early explorer ships that discovered Proxima eventually found their way to Orion, a red giant nearing the end of its life span. Since red giants form as stars die, swelling and destroying any planets in their original 'life belt,' the survey ships did not expect to find anything worth colonising in this system. To their surprise, they found not one but two habitable worlds.

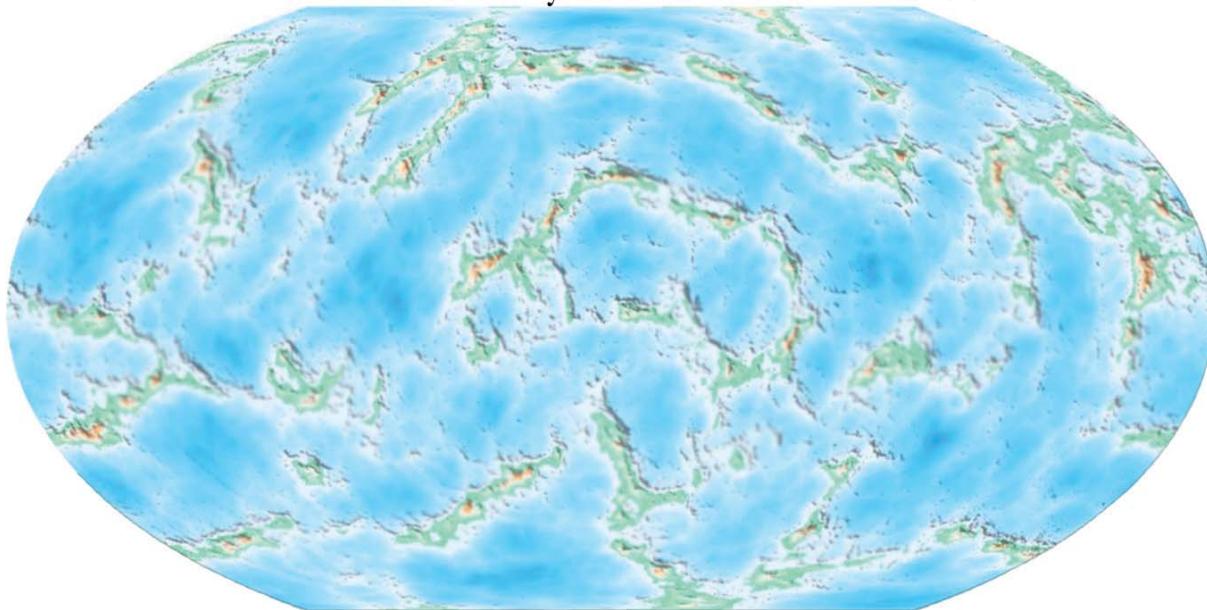
When Orion's star expanded several million years ago, it put forth a nova shockwave that shattered many of its planets and threw others out of their original orbits. The resulting star system is extremely chaotic. Many worlds circle their star in unstable patterns or off the usual ecliptic plane. The destruction of several large planetary bodies has also created a vast, if sparse, asteroid belt between 60 and 100 million miles out from the star's surface. It is within this belt that the two habitable worlds spin slowly along, in the midst of a small swarm of rocks, asteroids, and other debris.

Orion 3

Orion 3 is by far the most temperate of the two planets, but it is almost entirely covered by water. Approximately a dozen large archipelagos are scattered about the equatorial zones, the last remnants of mountain ranges that capped continents inundated by melting polar icecaps. Underwater surveys have discovered evidence of an ancient low-technology civilisation that once dwelled on the land surface before the sun's collapse. The only surviving life forms on land are plants, birds, and a few small reptiles. The seas, however, teem with life, from vast swarms of plankton all the way up to immense whale-like creatures called 'leviathans.' Leviathans are so large and slow-moving that the original surveyors thought they were floating islands. Some specimens are so sessile that they actually have small trees growing on their backs.

After the haphazard manner in which Proxima was colonised, Earth took better steps to control the development of Orion 3. Survey teams explored each island to ensure it was safe for colonisation, finally opening up the world to civilian interests in 2190. Because most of the islands are small, the average being just a few miles across, each was assigned to a specific group or company depending on a variety of factors. Many islands are entirely owned by corporations involved in various mining, industrial, or farming activities, while some have a single town

Orion 3- Colony World- Earth Alliance



Circumference: 21,550 miles

Water Percentage: 86%

Equatorial Mean Temperature 82 degrees F.

surrounded by simple homes and farms. A few are covered with high-rise cities and support a multitude of businesses.

Because of the sheer number of islands on Orion 3, most travel is taken care of by surface ships, aircars, and the like. Since areas of deeper water contain large and dangerous life forms, there are few maglev rails or underwater tubes except around islands that are very close to each other. Some undersea tunnels have been built between the largest cities, but for the most part, long-distance travel is undertaken by air. Submarines are almost unknown, as certain very large underwater creatures are known to attack them on sight.

European and North American colonists settled the largest archipelago, known as the Green Isles, in 2191. This chain of some 24 medium-sized islands and atolls are all located in a relatively shallow zone and form what amounts to a small country connected by a maze of maglev rails. There are several large cities occupying entire isles, while several others are employed entirely for the purpose of housing. Most of the water within the archipelago's borders is used as a commercial fish farm using both native and imported species. The people here are used to water travel and tend to be strong swimmers - races between islands are commonplace, and an annual 'circle tour' draws hundreds of highly fit participants. The Green Isles are also the primary training centre for the 'Killer Whales' Combat Swimmer Flotillas of the Special Assault Service.

Although several other main archipelagos exist on Orion 3, most are similar to the pattern presented by the Green Isles. While most use maglev rails for easy transit, some do not have these at all, relying entirely on aircars and surface craft. Some of the islands, particularly the smaller ones, are covered with a spider

web of canals and artificial rivers, so much so that the towns have more in common with Venice than any other Earth city.

Orion 3 Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None
- Additional Feats Available: Seagoing, Strong Swimmer.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Colonists of Orion 3 are frequently referred to as 'fishmen,' a term most bear with pride. They enjoy swimming, fishing, diving, and other aquatic activities. Those who travel like to visit places on other worlds where swimming is common, particularly the Mediterranean Sea and Caribbean Sea on Earth. Quite a few, particularly those whose jobs entail working in or under the water, have been fitted with artificial gills. Orion 3's people tend to be businessmen, with sea-grown foods the primary export. Quite a few are also scientists, many of whom spend long periods underwater observing the local wildlife.
- Names: Generally American or European.

Orion 7

Orion 7 is a slightly smaller, denser world than Orion 3. Orion 7 has a solid core and relatively high gravity. Its orbit brings it within less than 10 million miles of Orion 3 at its closest approach every two years, at which point both worlds experience severe tidal fluctuations. Orion 7 was not originally habitable until the expanding sun brought it into the appropriate temperature zone. The planet's atmosphere is somewhat thin, and the only indigenous life is single-celled.

Because Orion 7 is less glamorous than Orion 3, colonisation of this world was undertaken at a much slower pace than its sister planet. Orion 7 was selected as the site of a large EarthForce naval base in 2195, and the first settlers were the families of servicemen stationed at the outpost. The discovery of deeply buried caches of minerals, ores and gems attracted the first commercial ventures in the following year. Most of the workers brought in came from less affluent parts of the world, such as China, Africa, and the Middle East, where there were no shortage of volunteers among the poor. Even today, the vast majority of residents of Orion 7 have strong ties to their homelands. Most natives are black, Oriental or Arabic. The primary religions are Moslem and Hindu, which act as a sort of dividing line between the two indigenous cultures.

Orion 7 has only approximately 150,000 colonists, less than a tenth of the number on Orion 3. Virtually all the inhabitants are involved in either military or mining work. The planet has a small but growing industrial base, most of which has sprung up to support the new orbital shipyards in place near the starbase overhead. Still, the vast majority of raw materials are still shipped directly off world to Earth, Orion 3, or other colonies. The people of Orion 7 work long, hard hours for only average pay, but most are happy with their lives and feel they are better off than they were back on Earth.

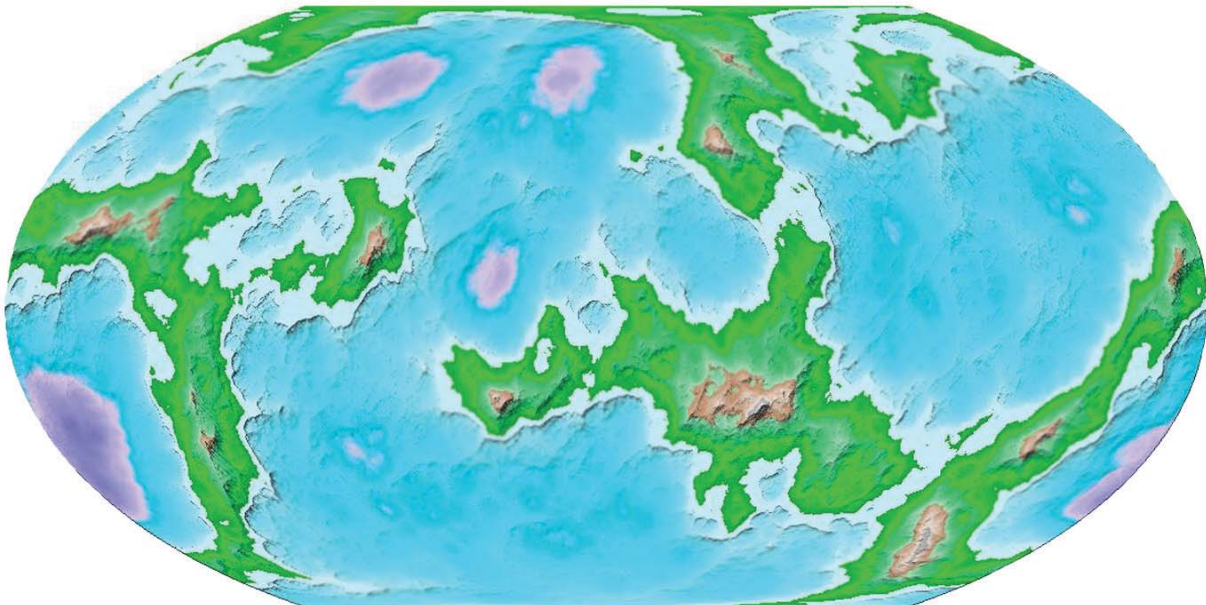
Because Orion 7 has a thin atmosphere, most of the people use breather masks when moving around outdoors. A great deal of effort has been put into thickening up the air using imported greenhouse gases and other terraforming activities, but these are extremely long-term programs that will take many more decades to complete. Virtually all towns and settlements are located underneath Mars-like domes or in underground tunnels. There are no particularly large cities, and industrial buildings dominate the largest towns.

Orion 7's gravity is also somewhat stronger than on Earth, so the people there have become used to the higher gravity. No amount of terraforming will change this particular planetary feature.

Orion 7 Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Afrikaans, Chinese, or Arabic.
- Additional Feats Available: Miner, High-G Tolerance.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Residents of Orion 7 are used to high-G environments and are actually uncomfortable on other worlds. They tend to be shorter than other humans and suffer more back and neck problems. Those who have lived on the planet their entire lives tend to be stocky and extremely muscular. They tend to have short life spans compared to the rest of the Earth Alliance. Perhaps 55% of the population is Moslem, 40% is Hindu, and the rest are scattered miscellaneous religions. Most residents are extremely avid practitioners of their religion, and the two major factions tend to keep to themselves. They are not particularly tolerant of others, and tend to view outsiders with suspicion.
- Names: Typically African, Chinese, or Arabic.

Orion 7- Colony World- Earth Alliance



Circumference: 24,000 miles

Water Percentage: 77%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 79 degrees F.

Deneb 4

The original base in the rich and highly desirable Deneb system was called the Signet Outpost. Construction of a base in this system had the dual purpose of securing the Alliance's claim on Deneb and opening up a trade route to the nearby Tokati. Unfortunately, that race was located on the other side of the xenophobic Koulani, who attacked Signet to prevent the activation of the Tokati jump beacon. A treaty was eventually signed that permitted the use of Signet Outpost without intruding on Koulani privacy.

Over the years that followed, the Deneb system saw heavy mining and development. Deneb 3, an extremely hot planet, was found to possess large quantities of iron, copper, and titanium. Deneb 5 and 6 were also rich in minerals, particularly very rare substances like gold and antimony. Best of all, Deneb 7 contained deposits of Quantum-40 buried deep below the surface. And, to top it all off, Deneb 4 was a nearly perfect Earthlike world in a perfect location to support the mining operations that were increasing at a rapid pace. Within a few years, Deneb grew from a few thousand settlers in to a collection of towns and cities spread across the planet's single continent. Today, over ten million people dwell in a variety of locations across the land, and on some of the offshore islands as well.

Because the military situation between Earth and the Koulani prevented colonisation for so long, the planners in the Earth Alliance had an unusual opportunity to plan ahead for the proper development of Deneb 4. Each of the major factions in the Alliance was given the opportunity to select a location for a city, and people from their area were allowed to settle there first. The result was a sort of microcosm of Earth itself, but without

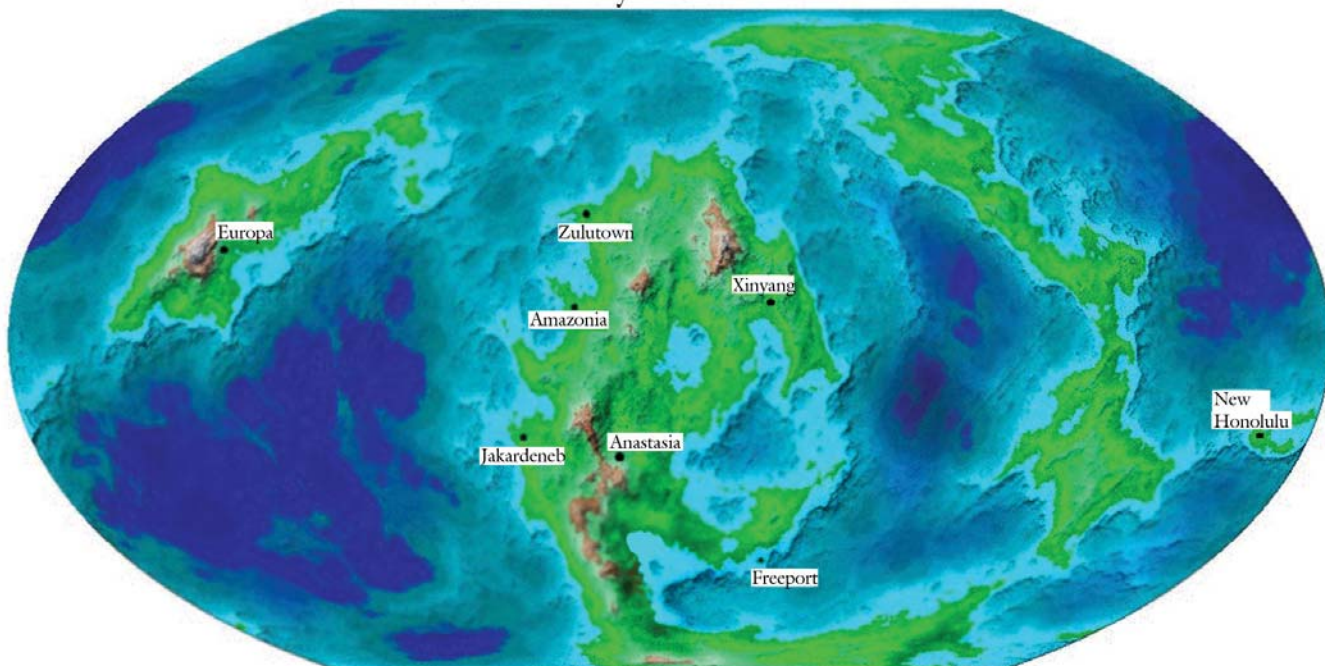
any official borders or limitations on intermixing. (Readers may wonder why a supposedly united Earth would bother with regional distributions. The reason is simple - they would have happened anyway! The history of the Proxima colony is proof enough of this. People migrated to the areas their organisations or ethnic groups gravitated towards. The Deneb colony was simply an official acknowledgement of this tendency.)

The sole major landmass on Deneb 4 is called Denebia. It is shaped something like an 'S' turned on its side, with mountain ranges dominating each of the three primary segments. The highest mountains are on the western side, but all three ranges draw immense amounts of precipitation. As a result, a multitude of rivers flow down and to the sea, ending in a number of highly fertile deltas - prime city locations. Most of Earth's regions selected one of these spots for their 'home town,' although a couple did choose one or another of the larger offshore islands.

New Honolulu: This city is located on Deneb's largest island, located about a hundred kilometres off the western shore of Denebia. America's site of choice proved to be rich in natural resources, and contains some of the most amazingly pristine white sand beaches in the entire Alliance. The primary disadvantage of this site is its distance from the rest of the world, which has forced the inhabitants to endure higher import costs for food and other goods.

Europa: Europe's choice initially seemed odd - why pick a site near a swamp, without easy access to fertile farmland? Yet the Europeans knew what they were doing. Europa is located at the base of a mountain range jam-packed with ores and other valuables. Once the swamps were cleared away, the land beneath turned into some of the richest agriculture regions on the planet. The only significant difficulty is its remoteness at

Deneb 4- Colony World- Earth Alliance



Circumference: 27,850 miles

Water Percentage: 80%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 91 degrees F.

the far end of the continent's 'S' shape, giving it direct access to only two other cities.

Anastasia: Named for a Russian legend, this city is in one of the prime spots on Denebia, just inside the southern concavity, where it can connect to most other towns through rail lines running outward like spokes from a wheel. This mostly Russian city includes a perfect replica of St. Peter's Basilica and the Kremlin in homage to the originals, which were destroyed during World War III. Anastasia is known for its vast agriculture production, but little else.

Xinyang: China selected a spot along the northeastern side of Denebia, near one of the most fertile deltas in the region. The nearby mountains are also mined for a wealth of materials, including rare ores like silver, gold, and tungsten necessary for electronics production. Xinyang's modern factories turn out most of Deneb's communications equipment and computer innards. Sadly, the social structure in this city and the surrounding area are little different from those found back on Earth.

Freeport: The people of the Oceania Trade Alliance could not agree on a name, so they selected something a little more generic for their choice. Located on an island just off the southern coast, Freeport is centrally located and is the nexus for a web of air transit routes to nearly every city and town on Denebia. Freeport's main industries are fishing and textiles, but it also operates as the economic hub of Deneb 4, possessing most of the banking and insurance companies and acting as the central stock market.

Amazonia: South America's choice of cities is located, perhaps not too surprisingly, on the fringes of a dense jungle along the northern coast. The jungles consist of thick, fast-growing trees that provide the source of most of the wood used on Deneb 4. The coastal waters also boast excellent fishing sites, particularly *targa*, a local delicacy harvested from the deeper reaches just beyond the continental shelf.

Jakardeneb: A conglomeration of the system name and Indonesia's capital of Jakarta, this city is located along the western shore, near a conflux of three rivers. Massive hydroelectric dams and solar power arrays provide energy for most of Denebia. The people of this town are skilled engineers and designers, and many are hired out for construction work in other cities. The Indonesian Consortium is fond of bragging that their people have built more structures on Deneb than all the other cities combined, and this may well be true.

Zulutown: Africans who emigrated to Deneb 4 did so with the intent to make a fresh start without falling behind the other towns, and they have done so with dramatic flair. Their city is impressively tall, compact, and clean, despite its less-than-optimal location near the northwestern tip of the continent. The people are craftsmen and artisans, and are particularly skilled at working the jewels they dig out of the nearby mountains.

Despite the multi-national appearance of Deneb 4, the planet is extremely unified. It is governed by a Senate that provides for five representatives from each of the eight major regions, plus one representative from each smaller town or island that meets the population requirements. Currently, there are fifty-four senators. Decisions are generally made with the best interests of the planet itself in mind. Advance planning by the Alliance ensured that problems like overpopulation, pollution, and crowding would be dealt with before they became troublesome, so life on this world is relatively idyllic compared to Earth. Immigration continues to be high, however, and since Deneb 4 has less than a quarter of the actual land area of Earth, the population will eventually swell to problem levels.

Denebian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Varies by city.
- Additional Feats Available: Agricultural, Fierce Competitor, Professional Sportsman.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Denebians are highly competitive by nature, but tend to keep this all in fun. They are fond of sports, racing, and tri-vid games that pit teams from their city or region against others on the planet. Deneb 4 has its own professional sports leagues from nearly every athletic contest known to Man. Although they will root for their team as fiercely as anyone else, they are good sports and tolerate losing well. A large number of Denebian citizens are involved in agriculture in one way or another, so much so that the colony actually exports food rather than import it. Perhaps 40% of all agriculture is based in the oceans.
- Names: Varies by city.

Vega 7

The colony of Vega 7 was originally a research station built by the IPX Corporation and later abandoned due to the difficulty involved in keeping the base open. Vega 7 is an extremely cold world, with an environment similar to that found in northern Alaska or parts of Siberia. Even at the equator, summers last only a few months and winters are ferocious, with frequent blizzards and ice storms. IPX initially built the base to study ruins found in nearby caves, but soon found little of value and departed.

The settlers who came later extended the original base by digging into the natural caverns that honeycomb the bedrock beneath. The caves are created by snow melting and draining towards the deep water table over many eons. They are also interconnected for hundreds of kilometres, and remain a constant above-freezing temperature over the entire year, no matter what the weather is like on the surface. Vega 7 is a very stable planet with no significant volcanism or plate tectonics, so the likelihood of an earthquake or cave-in is very slight.

Over the years since Vega 7's official founding in 2195, the colonists have made excellent use of the natural caverns to

build a significant network of towns beneath the surface. Due to size limitations, there is no such thing as a 'city' under the surface, but each town is connected to the other with several maglev rails and tubes. Aircars are also used in the larger areas, especially by thrill seekers who enjoy racing through the dark tunnels. Food is grown in hydroponic gardens located near natural underground lakes or rivers, with light provided by artificial solar projectors. One thing the Vega 7 colony does not lack is fresh water, which steadily drips down from the surface all year long. Light, power, and fresh air are the most pressing concerns, particularly the latter, since the atmosphere above is filled with toxic elements that must constantly be filtered.

Vega 7 has little in the way of industry, importing most of its metals, electronics, and similar equipment. Its primary industry is mining, particularly rare earths, ores, and jewels, which are relatively common in the deep caves. Spelunkers also enjoy visiting the planet for the wealth of cave exploration opportunities it offers. Vast areas of the underground remain unexplored even today, and there are rumours of strange alien life forms to be found in the depths.

Vega 7 is also encircled by a huge series of rings made of chunks of ice formed from an exploded moon and millennia of comets captured by the planet's gravity. These ice crystals contain chunks of ores and other valuable materials and are a frequent source of mining operations by belters and other private companies. The colonists consider Vega 7's rings part of the planet and charge a significant tax on all mining operations, which serves to limit profits significantly. A small fleet of

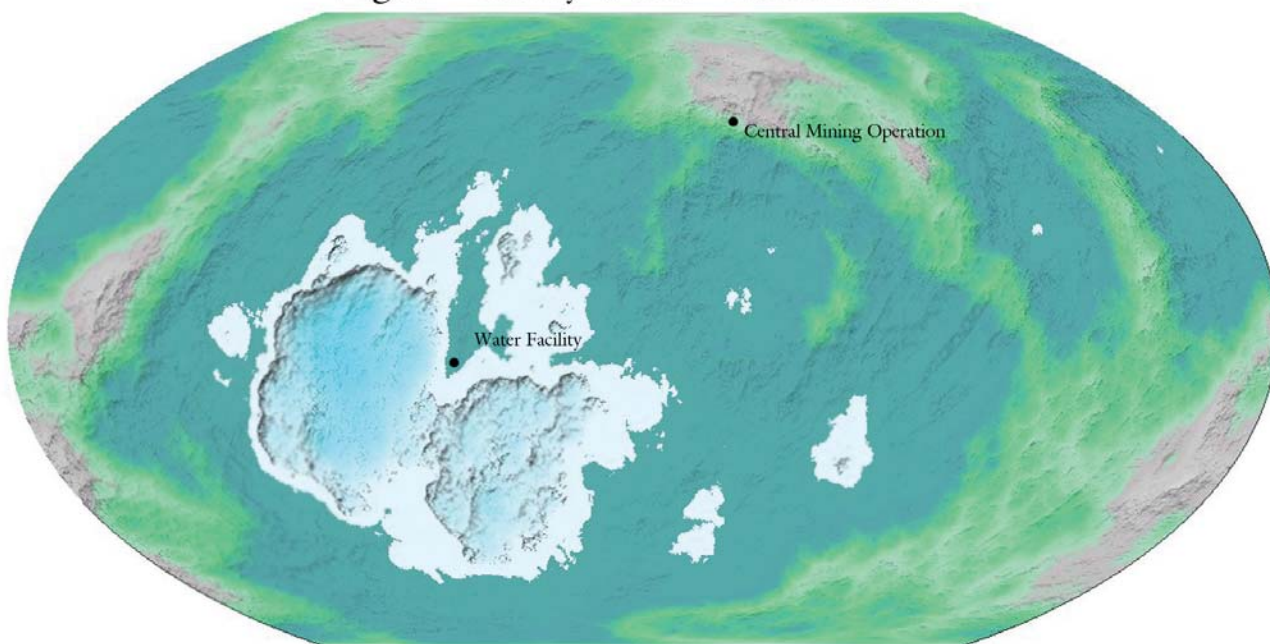
police ships ensures none of the belters run off without paying their required fees.

The original settlers of Vega 7 were pioneers from the Russian Consortium who purchased rights to the abandoned base from IPX. Although settlers have since emigrated from nearly every country on Earth and many other colonies, the highest percentage of the population is still Russian, and that language is spoken by most of the inhabitants.

Vegan Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Russian
- Additional Feats Available: Spelunker, Jeweller.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Vegans are used to relatively constant temperatures, usually ranging from 5 to 30 degrees Centigrade throughout the year. They seldom venture onto the surface and are usually surprised to encounter strange weather or atmospheric conditions. They are used to conditions of low light and still air. Many enjoy exploring the vast cave networks that surround their homes, and they are particularly fond of showing their favourite spots to tourists and visitors from other worlds. They are at home underground, but can be somewhat intimidated by wide-open spaces. A good number of them suffer from agoraphobia (a fear of open areas), often without even realising it. Claustrophobia, however, is almost unknown in the tunnels underneath Vega 7's surface.
- Names: Typically Russian or Ukrainian.™

Vega 7- Colony World- Earth Alliance



Circumference: 26,650 miles

Water Percentage: 11 %

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 5 degrees F

Beta Durani

Like Proxima Centauri, the Durani system has more than one star. Alpha Durani is a large orange star prone to massive surface disruptions, while Beta Durani is a much smaller blue dwarf that orbits at approximately the same distance Saturn orbits Sol. Several planets of varying sizes orbit Alpha Durani, but none of these are habitable. The single planet orbiting Beta Durani is habitable, but only barely. It is about half the size of Earth and had no liquid surface water until terraforming efforts began to bring shipments to the planet in the 2190s. The small polar icecaps were also melted using the same technology used on Mars.

Beta Durani is the culmination of the Earth Alliance's first fully successful terraforming efforts. After the lowlands filled with enough water to support life, plankton and various other simple plants were introduced at a steady pace. Once those took hold, animals were brought in to balance the growing ecology. Over the years, larger and larger life forms were introduced, virtually all of these from Earth. By the early 2200s, Beta Durani had a thriving ecosystem and was ready for human colonisation. A few squatters were already present, but officially, the world was not made available for habitation until 2229.

One of the problems with the Beta Durani colony is the presence of two suns in the sky. The blue dwarf is closest, bathing the surface in an azure glow throughout the standard 10-hour day. However, the orange giant also overlaps the day at a steadily shifting rate over the course of the colony's 196-day year. During the 'summer,' both suns are close to each other in the sky and create extremely hot conditions during the day, especially along the equator - but the nights are the coldest of the entire year. In 'winter,' however, one of the two suns is overhead almost all the time, so there is never really a true night, and temperatures tend to be very stable. Beta Durani's spring and autumn seasons are actually almost indistinguishable from each other. This extremely unusual arrangement sorely tested the adaptability of the plant and animal life during the first few decades of terraforming. Even today, flowering plants still have trouble adapting to strange lighting conditions, and the only trees that grow to any significant height are evergreens. Creatures like opossums and bats that rely on the night for hunting have had a lot of adapting to do, but most eventually succeeded. In general, smaller creatures had a better time of it than larger ones.

Humans on Beta Durani have also had to get used to the strange seasons and lighting cycles, along with the even more unusual colour shifts brought on by the nearest star's blue shade. In this light, reds tend to appear black, while other colours are dulled or altered entirely. This has had a surprising effect on some new generations of colonists, who have started using some of the cones in their eyes in ways their ancestors never dreamed of. These people have actually developed the ability to see slightly into the ultraviolet spectrum, picking out colours and details other humans simply cannot see. The constant barrage of ultraviolet radiation has also made the skins and eyes of Duranians highly resistant to solar radiation.

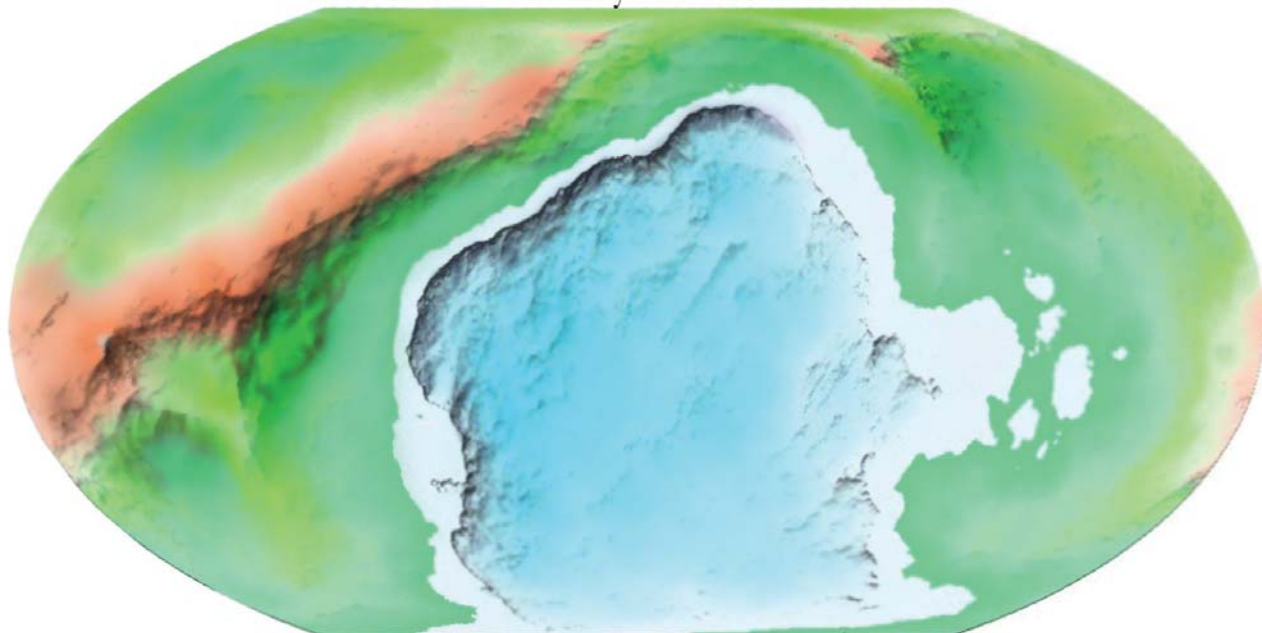
After the colonists arrived and began their inevitable searches for minerals and other underground wealth, several ancient ruins were discovered. Created by a long-dead alien race, these immediately attracted a host of scientists and archaeologists to the area. Apparently, Beta Durani was once home to a highly developed civilisation that left for the stars millions of years ago. There is evidence that changes to the star Alpha Durani caused them to depart. The aliens apparently possessed sufficient technology to protect their planet from the expanding sun, but eventually gave up and chose to leave. Once the shields were gone, the world rapidly deteriorated into the state the Earth explorers found it. When they departed, the original inhabitants apparently took most of the plant and animal life on the surface along with them. Where they might be today, no one knows.

The settlers of Beta Durani came from a wide variety of places on Earth, and some were also transfers from Mars. The first to arrive were groups of competitors from the Oceania Trade Alliance (specifically, Japan and South Korea) and the Indonesian Consortium. These speculators spent billions of credits to set up hasty production facilities modelled after successful developments on Orion 3, Deneb 4, and Proxima. These were completed long before enough colonists were actually on site to support them, and with the much better conditions on other colonies, the corporations actually had trouble attracting people to work in their facilities. In the end they had to resort to significant work contracts and transfer bonuses in order to drum up interest. They recruited heavily in regions of China, South America, and Africa where the people were poor and in many cases desperate for a new start. Corporate recruiters also visited Mars, taking a surprisingly large number of low-class individuals who were actually anxious to escape the hand of justice.

The result of all this was a colony built using what many on Earth consider the dregs of society. Beta Durani is often referred to as 'the armpit of the Alliance.' Although the people there work hard to disprove this unfortunate belief, it is as often true as not. The residents tend to congregate together in specific ethnic and religious groups, with fights and riots between them a commonplace occurrence. Crime is a fact of life on the colony, and estimates suggest better than 40% of the population is involved in criminal or black market activities. Beta Durani is one of the largest producers of illegal drugs in the Alliance, and far worse things are rumoured to take place in the back alleys of the sprawling slums that surround the planet's huge industrial facilities.

To combat this, the Alliance keeps a firm grip on the government of Beta Durani. Security forces and military presence is higher here than on any of Earth's other colonies, with the sole exception of Mars. The provisional government puts on a strong show of power whenever riots or fighting break out, and also claim to be working hard to combat the organised crime cartels that operate across the planet, but little progress is ever actually made. Quite a few believe that high-ranking members of the government itself are corrupt, using Beta Durani as a means to line their own pockets with bribes and other ill-gotten gains. Whether or not this is true, no one knows.

Beta Durani- Colony World-Earth Alliance



Circumference: 13,400 miles Water Percentage: 22% Equatorial Mean Temperature: 58

Despite all its problems, Beta Durani is actually one of the better production centres in the Alliance. The planet is home to a small but growing suite of shipyards, most of which turn out civilian freighters and small frigate-type craft. Mining operations bring resources to the huge corporate factories, which then ship their products into orbit for use in ship construction or for delivery elsewhere in the Alliance. Several large medical companies are set up on Beta Durani, most of which mass-produce medicines and antitoxins for use across the Alliance, but are also rumoured to create less legal drugs in secret. Beta Durani also cranks out large quantities of building materials, wiring, electronic equipment, light weapons, and plastics, some of which are sold to the Deneth, Tokati, and other outposts towards the Rim. Beta Durani's crime syndicates are rumoured to have connections with the Deneth, who provide a significant number of ship hulls to raider groups operating elsewhere in the Galaxy, but no one knows just how deep these tendrils run.

in the slums is still higher than many parts of South America, Africa, and China, or the underground tunnels of Mars. Most people work a decent job under a contract that guarantees employment cannot be terminated without cause, so as long as they work hard and do not get caught doing anything illegal, they can live fairly comfortably. Nonetheless, upward mobility is extremely limited, so most turn to other activities to earn additional money. Some become smugglers or drug dealers, while others undertake more subtle activities like computer-related crimes. Sadly, many of these activities are condoned or even solicited by the corporations, who actually pay bonuses to those who can find new ways to earn money under the table. While not every Duranian resorts to these underhanded tricks, enough do that the colony is truly worthy of its reputation.

- Names: Typically Spanish, African, or Chinese, with some Japanese, Indonesian, or Korean.

Duranian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Japanese or Malay. Most settlers of Beta Durani were brought in under the umbrella of either an Indonesian or Japanese corporation, whereupon they were taught the use of that nation's language for use on the job. English remains the standard language for all other purposes.
- Additional Feats Available: Criminal Connection, Ultraviolet Tolerant, Streetwise.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Duranians, as they call themselves, are generally thought of as second-class citizens to the rest of the Alliance. Just telling others you are from Beta Durani can be met with derisive stares or snickers. However, the standard of living

Io Colony

Earth's colony on Io began life as a small military base established in 2132 to help EarthForce patrol the outer planets in search of pirates. The initial Io base was placed in a synchronous orbit behind Io that kept the station free of Jupiter's intense magnetic fields. Later, as protective technologies improved, the base was located directly on the surface of the moon, atop a stable, non-volcanic mountain.

Io, one of the most violent moons in the solar system, is a tremendous source of sulphur, silicates, and other valuable minerals, much of which are readily available on the

surface. It was not long before belters began to brave the earthquakes, molten sulphur flows, intense magnetic fields, and electromagnetic disturbances to collect these resources. Since Io always keeps one side facing Jupiter and the other towards space, most belters stayed on the outward-facing side to avoid the giant planet's constant output of radiation. Even so, residents of the slowly growing colony gradually became used to an almost constant electrical charge on everything they touched. Io's low gravity also proved something of a challenge, but long-time residents found themselves slowly adapting to their environment.

Today, Io Colony is a collection of dozens of small domed villages positioned atop hills and mountains considered generally safe from volcanic activity. The domes are reinforced against impacts from meteorites and chunks of rock thrown up by nearby eruptions. Floors and transit tubes are made of flexible materials designed to withstand the constant shocks of eruptions and the slight twisting and stretching of Io's surface by massive tidal forces caused by Jupiter, Ganymede, and other Jovian moons. Most residents wear protective gear at all times and have helmets at the ready, just in case a seal is breached despite all the colony's safety precautions.

Life on Io is difficult, harsh, and stressful. Nearly all civilians are miners who spend the majority of their time engaged in heavy labour. Of course, since the gravity is only one-sixth that of Earth, they can lift a great deal more than they could back home, but their jobs are still exhausting. All the 'free' resources

on the surface have by now been stripped away, so the miners are constantly scraping around in a search for new veins to exploit. Digging, tunnelling, and drilling are performed on a regular basis, but are quite dangerous. The worst nightmare for an Ionian is to accidentally break into a buried volcanic fissure and release molten sulphur or lava directly into the homestead. For this reason, most drilling is done remotely and with explosives ready to collapse the tunnel before too much damage is caused. Explosives are not generally used to excavate the land, however, lest they set off an eruption or an earthquake chain reaction.

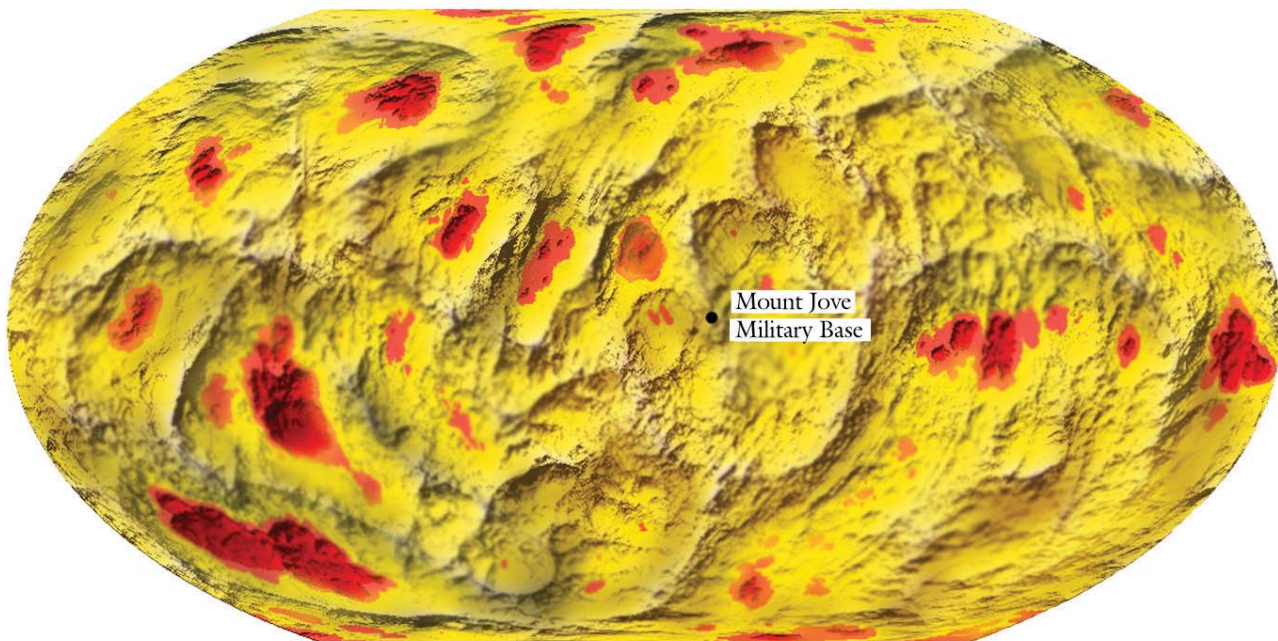
Io still supports the original military base, which occupies the top of Mount Jove, overlooking the colony like a huge natural tower. The base supports a significant military population as well as rescue workers ready to evacuate miners at a moment's notice. The main job of the base is not to oversee the colony, however, but to guard the nearby Io jumpgate, Earth's primary civilian entry point into hyperspace. Literally hundreds of spacecraft pass through this gate on a daily basis, and since the transit time to Earth via normal space is several hours, the defenders must be housed somewhere nearby. Io Station is the largest nearby base of any significance.

Ionian Racial Traits

- Bonus language: None
- Additional Feats Available: Low-G Tolerance, Electrical Tolerance, Miner.

TM

Io- Colony World- Earth Alliance



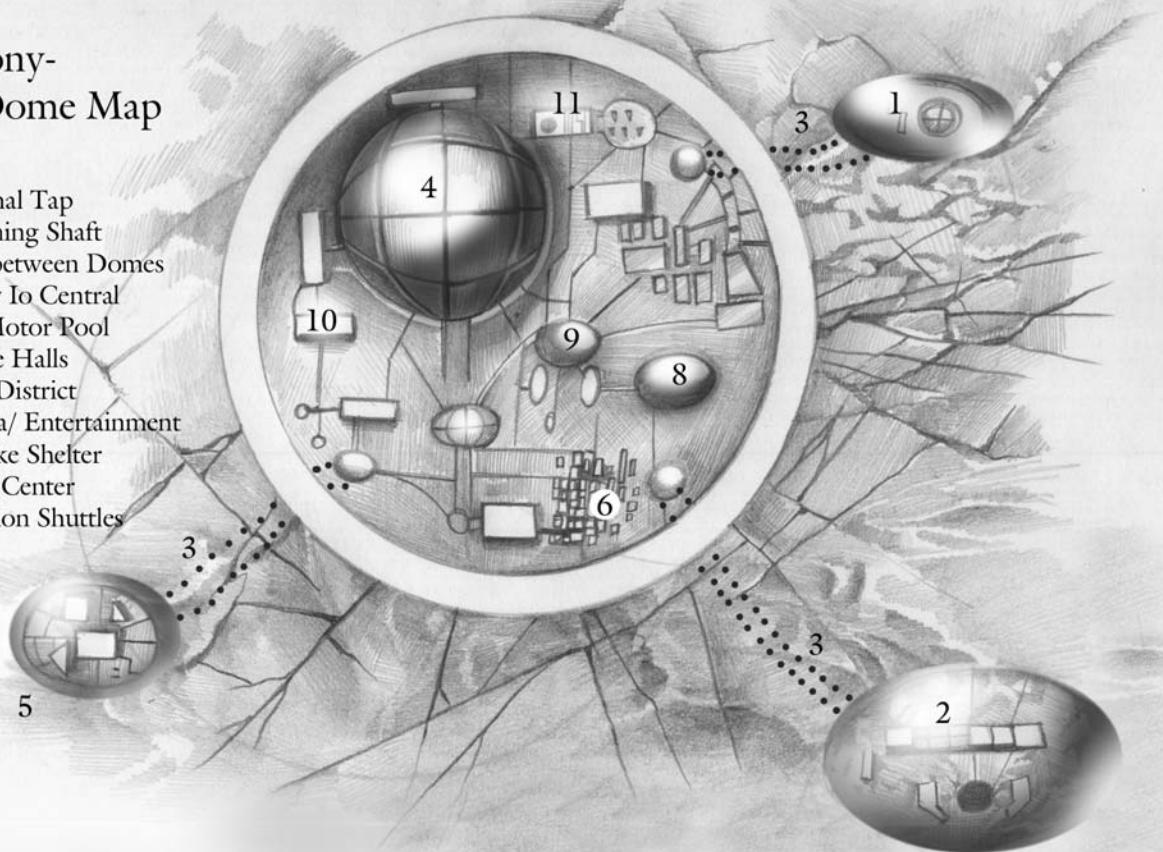
Circumference: 7090 miles

Water Percentage < 1%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: -238 degrees F

Io Colony- Main Dome Map

- 1 Geothermal Tap
- 2 Main Mining Shaft
- 3 Tunnels between Domes
- 4 EarthGov Io Central
- 5 Colony Motor Pool
- 6 Residence Halls
- 7 Business District
- 8 Vid Arena/ Entertainment
- 9 Earthquake Shelter
- 10 Medical Center
- 11 Evacuation Shuttles



- Roleplaying Suggestions: Ionians hail from many different places in the Solar System, but the majority are from Mars Colony or the Belt Alliance. Literally any nationality might be found here, hoping to earn enough money to retire in comfort before being killed by an eruption or severe earthquake. Purchasing a homestead on Io costs about fifty thousand credits, and a hard-working resident could turn that into millions over the course of twenty years. There are no corporate sponsors, and all miners are required to join the Io Miner's Guild - an organisation with the dubious distinction of being the last union to experience the Rush Act prior to its activation on Babylon 5 in 2258. Under the Guild umbrella, all of Io's profits are pooled and shared equally based on a percentage of production. Ionian residents live hard and fast and are prone to burning out before their retirement profits can be earned. Some never readjust to normal lives and stay away from Earth or other locations with standard gravities, looking for anything to keep themselves busy.
- Names: Depends on original nationality.

found there. As yet, the Centauri government has not directly released the system to Earth exploitation.

Regula contains six planets and a small asteroid belt. Most of the worlds found there have been stripped by ancient Centauri mining efforts. Regula 4 shows signs of significant ecological damage, but in the hundred years or so since the Republic departed, this has begun to slowly repair itself. The atmosphere is somewhat thin and slightly contaminated by radiation and heavy particles still floating around in the stratosphere, where high winds are commonplace.

Although Earth has yet to officially authorise colonization, a small city has sprung up on Regula 4's main continent, near the equator. This site is the most habitable location on the planet, but still suffers from extreme temperatures in summer and winter. Weather patterns are surprisingly subdued, however, and precipitation is fairly constant. The colonists have built a home for themselves, fertilising and tilling the land using natural methods that would have been appropriate five hundred years ago. Very few machines are found on Regula 4, and those that are present are only used for emergencies.

Regula 4

The Regula system is claimed by the Earth Alliance, but has not yet been formally annexed by the slowly expanding human empire. The system contains the remnants of an old Centauri outpost, and the Republic technically has a claim to the planets

The reason for this is simple. Regula's colonists have literally sworn off technology. They believe that the proliferation of high-tech materials has made humanity so dependent upon science that they are now slaves to it. Technology, they say, will lead to either the death of humankind or its replacement by man's own creations. Eschewing science, the Regulans live simple, idyllic lives of the kind that few experience anywhere else in the Alliance. Because of their legacy of peace, they

attract a slow but steady amount of new converts to their cause, who drift in from all over the Alliance, leaving their old lives behind them forever.

On rare occasions, a resident of Regula 4 will choose to leave and return to the rest of the Galaxy. This is a permanent decision, and the person will not be welcomed back if he changes his mind. Since only the truly committed are allowed to join in the first place, and life is so quiet and perfect, very few choose to depart. The majority are children who have grown up wondering what the rest of the Galaxy is like, hearing stories from the occasional supply or trading ship that drops by.

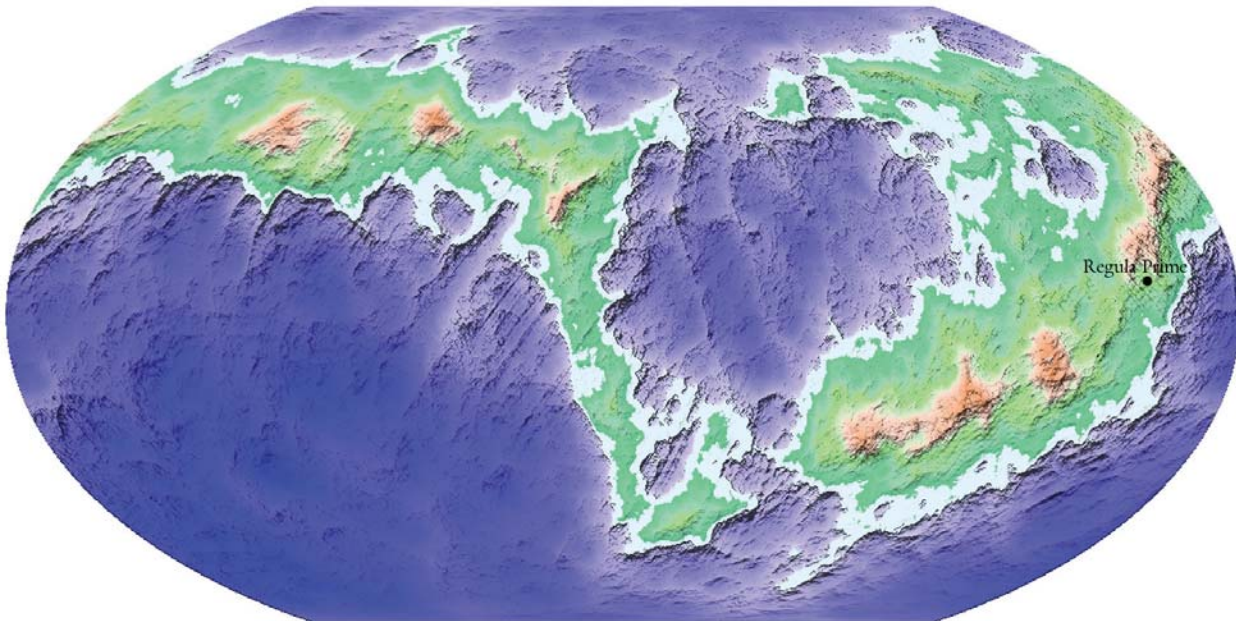
Regulans are proud of their ability to 'go it alone' and love to flaunt the fact that they have stepped beyond the Earth Alliance. They delight in ignoring all the customs and formalities normally practiced by the rest of humanity, especially those that have no meaning today but are followed as a matter of standardisation. For example, they see no reason to follow a 24-hour clock, but have designed their own time units based on divisions of four and sixteen. They also find the decimal numeric system cumbersome and use base-16 for everything - a number that divides and multiplies much easier. They even use a simplistic language once proposed as the Alliance's common tongue, but rejected simply because it was barely known. Given enough time, the Regulans will probably no longer be recognisable as members of human society.

Regulan Racial Traits

- Bonus language: Esperanto
- Additional Feats Available: Radiation Tolerance, Primitive.
- Roleplaying Suggestions: Regulans are quiet folk who appreciate peace and calm in all things. Most are very religious, although the planet has no official state religion and tolerates members of any peace-loving faith. The original settlers of this colony were Europeans, but today, residents of any colony or nationality are permitted to join. The primary language is Esperanto, an extremely simple and custom-designed tongue made from a combination of Spanish, Portuguese, and English. Regulans consider themselves no longer part of the Earth Alliance at all, and even those who later re-enter 'civilised' society feel like outsiders.
- Names: Regulans have only a single name, which is usually polysyllabic and is formed from elements of the parents' names. For example, a child of Michramas and Ellyssiano might be called Michellys, Ramasano, or some other combination, or possibly something totally unique.

BABYLON™

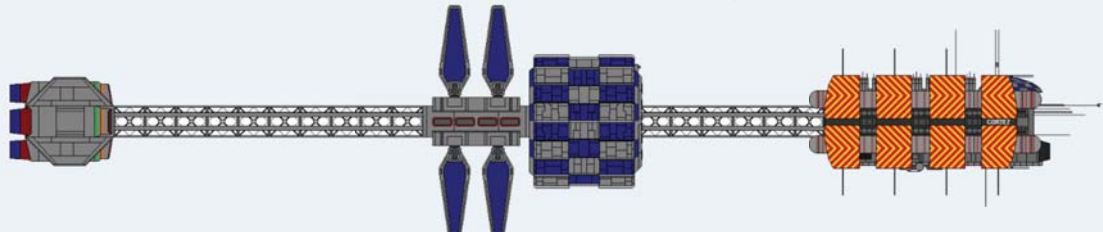
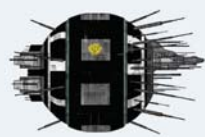
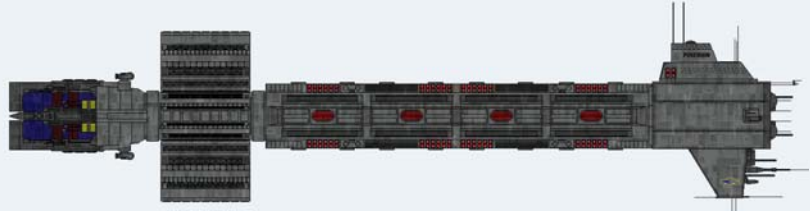
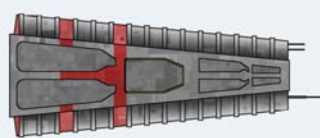
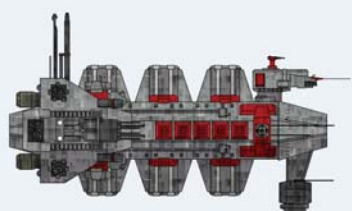
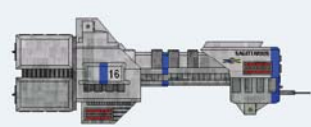
Regula 4- Colony World- Earth Alliance

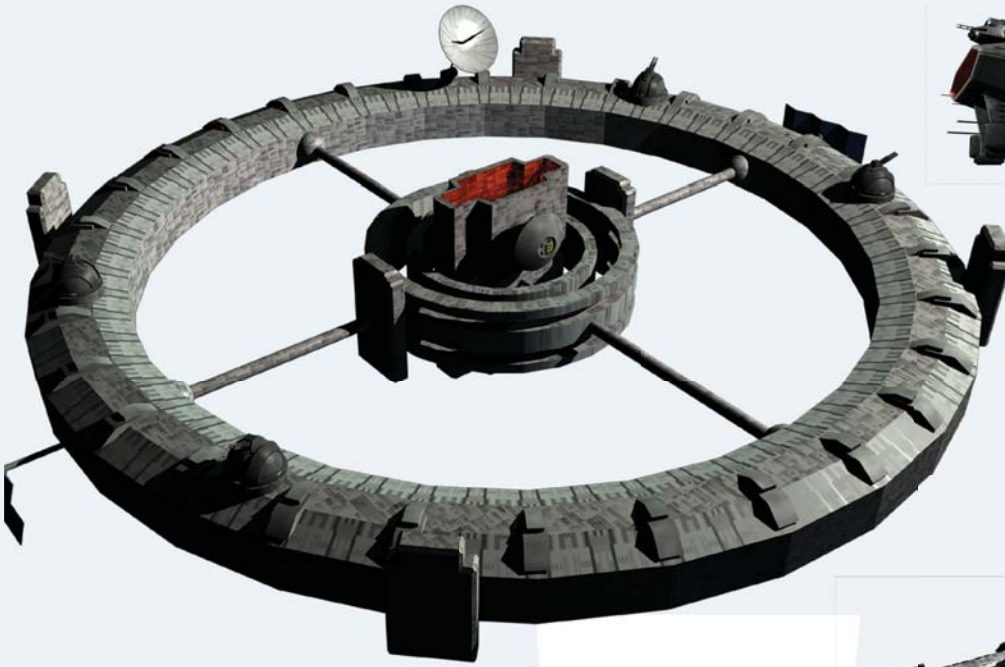


Circumference: 21,300 miles

Water Percentage: 79%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 89 degrees F





Earth Alliance Spacecraft

Although the Earth Alliance is relatively new to the Galactic scene, having been an interstellar power for only about a century, much of their technology is homegrown. This is in sharp contrast to the Narn Regime, which is also fairly new to the region. Narn technology is almost exclusively constructed around stolen Centauri concepts or devices purchased from their immediate neighbours. For example, their standard G'Quan-class heavy cruiser utilises construction concepts and internal systems taken from pilfered Centauri hulls, and the ship's primary weapons - the heavy lasers, twin arrays, and light pulse cannons - are stolen from the Republic or purchased directly from the Earth Alliance. Only the energy mines are exclusive products of Narn research and development.

Humanity, on the other hand, has shown remarkable innovation for a race so new to such advanced technologies. While many of their weapons began from a common root purchased or taken from a foreign source, virtually everything in the Alliance inventory has been improved or developed far beyond its original purpose. Nowhere is this more apparent in the area of

pulse weaponry. Prior to 2240, many races operated particle guns that launched a single blast of energy in a powerful destructive bolt, and indeed, this concept was quite effective when used to combat fighters. During the Dilgar Invasion, the Imperium improved upon these guns by developing rapid-fire and multi-shot versions. EarthForce was not content to simply copy these ideas, but made several technological breakthroughs after the war that culminated in the original light pulse cannon first seen in prototype form in 2239. Shortly thereafter, advancements resulted in medium and then heavy cannons, which proved surprisingly flexible against both fighters and enemy starships.

This ability to innovate also proved its worth in the area of spacecraft. When the Alliance began its first forays into space, it began with simple designs intended for use in asteroid mining and cargo transport. The need to defend against raiders produced the first military craft, which sported weapons and external fighter links designed to hold early Delta-class vehicles. In the decades prior to Centauri arrival, the first true warships appeared, among these the original Tethys, Orestes, Laertes, London, and Tyche classes (see detailed timeline hereafter). It was from these that the EarthForce navy was built.

The acquisition of interstellar technology gave the Alliance an opportunity to reverse-engineer and copy several alien



designs, including certain old Centauri hulls as well as wrecks and derelicts brought in by the Deep Space Exploration Command. Early on, however, the Alliance leaders made a deliberate decision not to utilise these craft for anything other than research. They did not wish to see Earth become dependent upon any foreign technology, nor did they intend to antagonize some distant alien race once word of what they had done became public. After all, it would be difficult to hide an obviously re-engineered hull from the Centauri Republic or someone else they had not yet met.

To this end, the Alliance continued to construct their own designs, incorporating improvements and advances as they came. The ships that resulted were in no way pretty to look at, but were surprisingly functional and powerful for such a young race. In addition, they were, for the most part, designed for easy upgrades and refits, as well as for longevity. Where many races intended for a single ship of a given class to operate for only a few decades, the Earth Alliance, seeing through the long-range eyes of the Aegis Program, produced ships perfectly capable of operating - with the requisite maintenance, of course - for well over a century. Indeed, many of the first Oracles built in the 2160s are still around today, and quite a few Laertes-class vessels are still in service, albeit as pirate sloops. In a similar vein, a number of Hyperion and Tethys hulls have been through so many refits and upgrades that they barely resemble their original design, except in basic exterior shape and form.

Earth's ground forces and surface vehicles have also followed this same general pattern. Tanks, such as the Odin and Thor class, are little more than improved versions of armoured vehicles operated in one form or another for centuries. Except for internal differences in internal engine capabilities, the ground cars seen zooming around open-air Alliance cities are similar to those seen back in the days of fossil fuels. Earth's refusal to copy alien designs, coupled with its ability to invent and improve new technologies, is a matter of great national pride, and seems unlikely to change at any time in the future.

Ranks in the EarthForce Fleet

- **Comissioned Officer (All Fleet service is at officer rank)**
 - o Ensign
 - o Second Lieutenant
 - o Lieutenant
 - o Lieutenant Commander
 - o Commander
 - o Captain
 - o Rear Admiral (1 star)
 - o Vice Admiral (2 stars)
 - o Admiral (3 stars)
 - o Fleet Admiral (4 stars, only during times of war)

Starship Design History

No discussion of Earth Alliance spacecraft can begin without a thorough understanding of the history of ship development. In the early days, prior to World War III, space exploration was slow and expensive. Most of those nations actually occupying space were in competition with each other, instead of acting in concert. The symbol of cooperation, the International Space Station, began to see less and less use as the various nations - the United States and its allies, the European Union, Russia, and China - began to construct their own independent facilities. By the time the war arrived, each also possessed a rudimentary set of fighting spacecraft, although these were little more than manoeuvrable satellites with crude lasers or missiles attached. The most sophisticated of these were operated by the United States in support of the EarthShield project, which was actually made up of sophisticated communications satellites that also happened to possess highly accurate anti-missile lasers.

True fighting ships did not begin to appear until the period of raider activity that followed the first expansion into the solar system. The first recorded use of a weapon was a modified laser used by one prospector to defend a claim against another. Soon, pirates were using similar devices as standard equipment, and the beltters responded by installing not only laser guns but the first external fighter linkages as well, employing simple one-man craft of the Alpha and Beta designs. These crude fighters were little more than frameworks built around a thruster and pilot-aimed laser cannon or missile rack. They had no armour or superstructure, and a typical pilot's life expectancy was only two or three sorties. Still, the prospectors were willing to take the risk considering the profits available from a valuable claim, while the raiders figured they could make a lifetime's fortune with just one or two successful attacks.

As the raiders grew in power, two things happened. First, the Belt Alliance organised into a fighting force, producing the first armed freighters and guard carriers, intended to protect small outposts and convoys. Then, in the 2130s, EarthForce built its own naval elements, spearheaded by the Orestes dreadnought, which existed for the sole purpose of leading strikes on pirate strongholds. These expensive command ships were assisted by Tethys frigates, Laertes destroyers, and London light combat vessels (short-ranged craft rather like large fighters). In the days prior to the Starfury program, the Alliance operated the Raptor-class attack fighter as well as Beta and Gamma fighters, which had originally been designed by the Belt Alliance. Also appearing were a variety of civilian freighter hulls, as well as EarthForce One, the well-known presidential transport that later came to be a mobile symbol of the Earth Alliance.

Naming Conventions: Early spacecraft, such as America's Space Shuttle, Russia's Near Earth Orbiter, the European Union's Lunar Transport, and the wide variety of combat satellites were not given specific class names. It was not until the actual formation of a space navy appeared that the Alliance began to contemplate naming a specific type of ship as a class name.

Of course, the military did not build spacecraft on its own, but instead employed civilian contractors from a variety of nations. The basic process involved was to solicit design proposals, choose finalists, accept bids, and employ the lowest bidder. Early on, a wide variety of design firms competed for the potential profits involved, but only one, Lockheed-Hyatake Aerospace, proved capable of actually coming through with most of their promises. This particular company was actually the product of a dozen mergers of American, European, and Japanese firms dating back to the 20th Century. In their internal documentation, they referred to early ship classes by Greek names, and it was these that eventually wound up on the final prototypes.

Actually, not all Earth Alliance craft use the Greek naming convention. Ships like the London, Avenger, Cotten, Condor, Nova, and even Warlock are well-known examples of exceptions to the usual progression. In most cases, these represent ships not designed by Lockheed-Hyatake Aerospace, either because they were not the typical combat vessels, or for reasons of security. The Warlock, for example, is so top-secret that no one is truly certain which space design firm is actually building it.

Over the next twenty years or so, only one additional ship class appeared, the Tyche light cruiser, built as a faster alternative to the lumbering Orestes. However, improvements were made to the existing designs, showcasing the early Alliance commitment to modularity and longevity. Significant improvements were also made to early weapons technology, resulting in the production of the first non-laser guns in the form of early plasma cannon and particle beam devices. These were added to new version of the Tethys and Laertes, as well as the emerging Delta fighter.

After the arrival of the Centauri, the Alliance began its first efforts to construct ships capable of interstellar travel. Existing hulls were improved to survive the rigors of hyperspace, and new designs began to appear that were specifically intended for use away from Sol. Of particular interest was the new exploration ship called the Oracle, named for a Greek legend involving a seer who could provide information to anyone who desired it. Other new ship designs included the Epimetheus command cruiser, which replaced the Orestes in that role once that hull proved unsuitable for hyperspace missions. Also appearing were the Avenger, Earth's first dedicated carrier; the Aries, a product of the Starfury program for use specifically in the Avenger's internal bays; the Hermes, a military transport capable of high-speed travel between systems; the Artemis, an advanced frigate with better armour and weaponry than the existing Tethys; and the Orion, a ring-shaped starbase that could be constructed in highly modular sections. The first truly capable Prometheus defence satellites, armed with rapid-fire missile racks, also began to appear in this era.

These new units operated weapons captured or purchased from alien races and then improved by Alliance scientists. These devices included missile racks, light particle beams, medium lasers (at the time referred to as 'heavy' lasers, of course), and the first interceptors.

The years that followed saw the appearance of several new designs intended to support existing military vessels, not just fight on their own. These included the Cotten tender, a sort of mobile repair and resupply craft, as well as large bulk freighters, ore barges, and even the first Q-ship designs. The need for a ground invasion capability resulted in the first assault vehicles capable of carrying troops to a target world, and while these were capable enough, they did not exist in any sort of quantity capable of truly fulfilling the mission at hand. The Galahad class assault transport, along with its array of Bolt assault shuttles, could likely capture a single small installation or town, but would have no hope of actually invading and controlling a populated world. This lack of ground strength was one of the major contributors to the Alliance's unwillingness to take armed conflict into alien space, despite the opportunities presented by the Ch'Lonas and Koulani, and later the Narn frontier.

The final years of the 22nd Century saw new improvements in weapons technologies. The Alliance finally perfected the interceptor, and produced its first railgun, heavy plasma cannon, standard particle beams, and particle cannons. These advancements resulted in new models of the Laertes, Epimetheus, Orion, Orestes, Artemis, Tethys, and Hermes, as well as the next generation of Starfury, the Flying Fox. In addition, Delta-V fighters, the pinnacle of Delta advancement, made their appearance and rapidly entered widespread service, not only in the Earth and Belt Alliances but also by raiders and even foreign powers. New support ships included the short-lived Tahiti fleet collier, which was later supplanted by improvements to the Cotten tender; and the Perseus minesweeper, which - coupled with a suite of new captor mine designs - greatly improved the defences at most major Earth Alliance installations.

It was the early decade of the 23rd Century where the Earth Alliance first began to develop the strength that would be so sorely tested during the Dilgar War. Several important hulls appeared for the first time, without which the Alliance would have had terrible difficulty defeating the Imperium. These ships included the Olympus corvette (actually a destroyer), the Hyperion heavy cruiser, the Nova dreadnought, the Condor long-range troop transport, the Sagittarius missile cruiser, and the vastly improved Starfury known as the Tiger. Although few new weapons appeared during this period, advancements were made in missile technologies as well as engine, thruster, and reactor capabilities that vastly extended the range of older ships in the inventory. This resulted in new versions of the Tethys, Artemis, Oracle, and Orestes.

The latter vessel, long limited to only its home system, received a better engine suite enabling travel through hyperspace at a tremendously ponderous rate. Rather than retire the class, the Orestes was assigned the role of monitor, a sort of pocket dreadnought intended only to defend fixed points. Meanwhile, the addition of the Hyperion and Olympus to the inventory allowed the Alliance to finally retire the aging fleet of Epimetheus and Laertes class vessels, although some examples of those classes continued to operate for years after they technically became obsolete. Similarly, the London light combat vessel, which had the short range of a fighter but lacked the guns of a frigate, was finally shelved once the capable Tiger fighter came on the scene.

The advent of the Dilgar War saw new, hastily built versions of the Olympus, Cotten, Sagittarius, Hyperion, Tethys, Condor, and Artemis, not all of which were particularly effective. Wartime experimentation also resulted in the Midway-class fast carrier, which traded fighter capability for speed and was quickly retired; the Valkyrie fighter, a design produced in competition with the recently developed Starfury Nova; the highly capable Hades assault shuttle, which quickly replaced the ponderous and poorly named Bolt; and a variety of military conversions of civilian units including advanced Q-ships, missile barges, and even the Dionysus mid-range base for use as a logistical hub in occupied systems. Considering that the Earth Alliance was only in the war for a couple of years, the number of new ships, improved variants, and conversions is actually quite staggering.

The decade that followed the war produced some of the most intense changes in the Earth Alliance navy that had ever been seen. Just about every ship class in service, and indeed nearly every individual ship, underwent at least some form of refit to upgrade its capabilities and take advantage of new technologies. The Hyperion alone saw no less than five new variants appear during the decade of the 2240s.

Those ships that benefited most from advancements were the Hyperion, Avenger, Orion, Nova, Olympus, Oracle,

Artemis, Tethys, and Orestes. The Aurora Starfury also appeared, quickly forcing the existing Tiger and Nova designs into retirement. Several new ship designs were also tested and prototyped, including the Kittyhawk carrier, Valiant minesweeper, Myrmidon light combat vessel, and several other civilian ship types. Most of these were considered failures, although the Myrmidon was adopted for use by several colonies for independent local defence. Mars, for example, intended to use these against Earth should a war of independence come to pass.

The Cyclops: One ship of particular interest was the Cyclops, a heavily modified Nova Dreadnought constructed around a spinal laser. This huge weapon was heretofore only in use by the Hyach, one of the races the Alliance helped rescue during the Dilgar War. The Hyach did not provide Earth with specifications on this weapon of their own free will, and yet, shortly after the war, EarthForce came into possession of this technology through some means never revealed to the public.

The spinal laser was the largest single weapon the Earth Alliance had ever attempted to install on a starship. On paper, it appeared simple enough - the barrel was almost as long as the Nova it was to be built upon, and the rest of the ship was to be filled with power generators and cooling devices. Work on this black project proceeded for almost a decade of cost overruns



and Senatorial investigations before the original prototype finally made its first test firing in 2244. Sadly, although the gun worked for a few shots, the stress involved in firing it required the ship to shut down for hours after use. In the end, the Cyclops was deemed tactically useless and mothballed, only to be reactivated in time to be destroyed at the Battle of the Line. The only shot it ever fired in anger missed, another victim of Minbari jammer technology, and the horde of Sharlin cruisers quickly cut the ship to pieces before it could shoot again.

As it turns out, the Hyach were able to construct and maintain spinal lasers due not to their mastery of laser technology, but because of their advancements in miniaturization. Without such a technological base to draw upon, Earth could never hope to operate such a huge weapon successfully. However, rumours persist that the Alliance has, in fact, perfected some sort of massive gun for use on ships of the future. What this might be, or how powerful it really is, remains a mystery.

The primary advancement that made all of this possible was the pulse cannon, which eventually appeared in three varieties: light, mostly for anti-fighter work; medium, for use as secondary firepower on cruiser and destroyer class vessels; and heavy, to provide maximum flexibility on large gun emplacements. A blast from a heavy pulse cannon could knock virtually any heavy weapon off the side of an enemy cruiser, or sweep any but the heaviest fighters right out of space. Pulse cannons of all sizes began to appear on frontline combat elements as early as late 2240, making them one of the fastest weapons to ever make their way from the drawing board to full-scale production. The Alliance also made a fortune selling examples of this weapon to neighbouring races, particularly the Narns, who installed light pulse cannons on most of their ships within the space of that same decade.

The development of the pulse cannon came just a few years before the arrival of the Earth/Minbari War, but neither that gun nor any of the other post-Dilgar technologies were enough to stop the Federation's steady advancement into Earth space. After the war, EarthForce embarked on a crash program to develop new ships and weapons capable of stopping the Minbari should they choose to return. In addition to new variants of the Hyperion, Nova, Orestes, Orion, and Tethys, the Alliance also produced the highly effective Omega Destroyer and Poseidon Supercarrier, as well as Bellerophon heavy defence satellites and a two-seat version of the Starfury known as the Badger. In addition, funds were also allocated to produce the next generation of Earth units, including prototype Thunderbolt fighters just coming on-line, and that mystery ship known only as the Warlock.

Alongside the improvements made in the basic Navy, other factions within the Alliance have also made advancements since the Minbari War. The Belt Alliance upgraded a number of their ships to new technologies, and Psi Corps is known to have launched a few vessels for their own use, including a mothership, transport, and even their own fleet of Starfuries. Civilian craft include the well-known luxury liner seen cavorting about the colonies, as well as corporate escort ships and independent pirate hunter designs.

Analysis of the Future: The black program known only as 'Project Zeus' is geared towards the production of the next generation of EarthForce naval craft. An analysis of names uttered in Senatorial meetings and documents passed around between various oversight committees has discovered the following highly classified information. Note that much of what follows is strictly rumour, and cannot be verified through any direct source, except as noted.

Warlock: This ship is big - larger than an Omega, if sources are to be believed. Presumably, it will either replace the Omega or become Earth's new class of dreadnought. Curiously, silhouettes examined in classified files show no rotating section, suggesting a return to the zero-G warships of decades past, unless of course Earth scientists have finally unlocked the secret of artificial gravity. The front end of the aforementioned silhouette suggests some sort of large weapon emplacement, but no data is known about its capabilities.

Delphi: Very little is known about this ship, but the name - in Greek legend, the city where the Oracle was located - suggests a new scout or exploration class. Considering the age of the Oracle fleet, and the limited numbers of that vessel that survived the Earth/Minbari War, a new design is not only necessary, but required.

Apollo: Another design about which very little is known. Both the silhouette and the name suggest some sort of missile cruiser - Apollo was the god of archery in Greek mythology - and since almost nothing remains of the Sagittarius fleet, a new long-range fire support ship is greatly needed. However, many analysts point out that missiles are largely obsolete in today's Navy, especially in the face of Minbari jamming technology that greatly cuts down the range of such weapons. Unless, of course, a way to defeat the jammer has finally been discovered...

Cronos: The only thing we have on this ship is a blurry, oblong silhouette and a few vague notions of potential uses for the design. This class may not even actually exist, for all we know. If speculation is to be believed, the Cronos will replace either the Artemis heavy frigate, Olympus corvette, or both. However, since production of both those units continues, no one can be entirely certain.

Ship Classes

Because of the history of Alliance ship development, culminating in the Omega Destroyer design, there is some confusion as to the strength of any given hull classification. For example, which is more powerful, a frigate, destroyer, or cruiser? In truth, these class names have changed in meaning over the centuries, so it is only natural that they should do so once again. In the Age of Sail, a frigate was among the most powerful ships in existence, while today, they are little more than light picket ships barely capable of engaging raiders.

For most modern navies, the following definitions apply:

Police Cutter (or Corvette): A very small ship used strictly for patrols and inspections. Generally, these vessels employ just a few weapons and almost never see military combat. Some

aces, humanity included, operate cutters in both a civilian and military role, however.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Tethys.

Military abbreviation: PC.

Note: The Tethys is actually both a police ship and a military frigate, depending upon its armament and which arm of the Earth Alliance it is assigned to.

Frigate: The smallest military warship, usually possessing great speed at the expense of armour and staying power. A dreadnought can usually obliterate any frigate with a single salvo, provided it actually manages to hit such a nimble target. Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Artemis.

Military abbreviation: FF.

Note: The Artemis is usually referred to as a heavy frigate, while the Tethys is considered a standard frigate when employed as a combat element.

Destroyer: These vessels occupy the nebulous gap between the lighter frigates and bulky cruisers. They typically possess the speed of a frigate, the armour of a cruiser, and firepower somewhere in the middle. Some are optimised for special roles, like long-range bombardment or close-in escort support. Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Olympus.

Military abbreviation: DD.

Note: Because the Olympus was designed to replace the Laertes, it received the 'corvette' class name when in truth it is functionally a destroyer.

Light Cruiser: Designed to operate a much larger weapons suite than any frigate or destroyer, light cruisers are gunships that typically cover the flanks of much larger command vessels. Unlike destroyers, which are usually too specialised to operate alone, light cruisers are perfectly capable of independent assignments. Some even carry a small contingent of fighters for defence or patrol missions.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Hyperion.

Military abbreviation: CL.

Note: The Hyperion was originally given the classification of heavy cruiser, and is still referred to in that way, even though the Omega has supplanted it in that role.

Heavy Cruiser: The mainstay of any navy, heavy cruisers are the most balanced ship the military operates. Able to operate independently or as the core of a fleet or task group, heavy cruisers possess powerful weaponry, formidable armour and excellent endurance. A typical heavy cruiser 'does it all' within the naval structure, and can take on virtually any mission. It should be no wonder that assignment to such a vessel is usually the most desired post in any fleet.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Omega.

Military abbreviation: CA (the original heavy cruisers were referred to as 'armoured cruisers,' hence the 'A' in the acronym).

Note: The Omega is referred to as a 'destroyer' because EarthForce did not wish to offend Hyperion crews by downgrading their class to 'light cruiser' once the Omega began to appear in the inventory. Because the Olympus used the 'corvette' moniker, that left 'destroyer' unclaimed by any design at present. Although this causes no end of confusion when comparing Earth ships to their foreign equivalents, Alliance analysts have learned to make the mental adjustment without thinking about it.

Battleship/Dreadnought: Ships of this type are designed for only one thing: combat. They do not waste internal space worrying about crew comfort, laboratories, medical facilities, or anything else a typical cruiser might need to use for whatever mission might come to pass. Instead, the dreadnought exists solely to lead assaults on enemy fleets and starbases. Lacking any significant long-range endurance, they usually wait at a supply point until a mission arises that requires their abilities, whereupon they execute the task and quickly return for supplies. In times of war, battleships and dreadnoughts are great assets, but in peacetime, they are useless for any purpose other than deterrence, and their high cost makes them unpopular in the role of monitor.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Nova.

Military abbreviation: BB/DN.

Note: There is technically very little difference between battleships and dreadnoughts, at least in a functional sense. Depending on whom you ask, a dreadnought might be the larger type, better armoured, or with a greater weapons suite - or exactly the opposite. According to EarthForce, the only difference is the battleship is designed as a fleet command element whereas a dreadnought's primary purpose is raw firepower. This, at least in part, explains why the Narn Bin'Tak is referred to as a dreadnought, whereas the Centauri Ocuturion is called a battleship. Since the Nova possesses no improved command structure, it is treated as a dreadnought. The closest approximation to a battleship in the Earth Alliance inventory is the Poseidon, although as a heavy carrier, it is almost never used in that particular role.

In addition to these basic classes, there are a number of other ship types that often appear in a race's force structure:

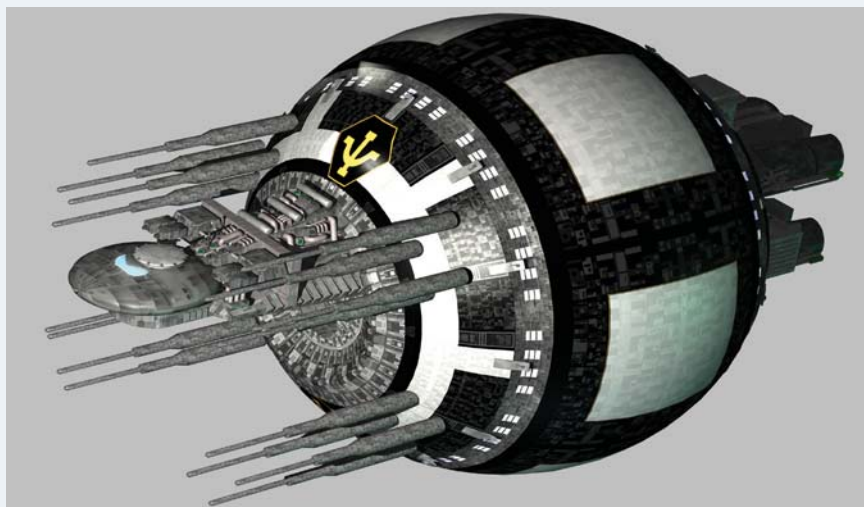
Carrier: Optimised for fighter deployment, these ships typically have little in the way of offensive firepower, but defend themselves with the best their race's technology can offer. While the carrier itself is no more expensive to build than a typical dreadnought, the fighters it holds are so valuable that most races defend these ships with a horde of escorts. Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Poseidon or Avenger. Military abbreviation: CV (CVA for heavy carrier, CVL for light carrier).

Escort: This term can refer to a ship of just about any size that exists for the purpose of defending another, more important ship from attack. In today's Galaxy, that typically means defending a carrier from attack by fighters, but some escorts, like those operated by the Centauri, also protect flagships from incoming fire.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Certain Tethys variants.

Military abbreviation: Sometimes EE or ES, but usually dependent upon ship class. Note: Earth does not operate a dedicated escort, but uses modified Tethys hulls in this role, as well as the occasional specialised Olympus and Artemis. There is even a Hyperion with escort-type weaponry aboard, although that variant is generally considered a failed effort.

Monitor: Also referred to as pocket dreadnoughts, a monitor is a sort of mobile gun platform with little purpose other than defence. Many monitors cannot even enter hyperspace but are limited to defending the system in which they are built. Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Orestes.



Military abbreviation: MN.

Tender: These are not combat ships, but usually trail the fleet, carrying supplies and repair equipment for use as necessary. While not capable of fixing severe battle damage, they can often get a wounded vessel back into battle, or salvage enough of a cripple to enable it to limp back to drydock for repairs. The class name of 'tender' also includes specialised craft like tankers and colliers.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Cotten.
Military abbreviation: TN.

Assault Ship: In modern military uses, the term 'assault' is shorthand for 'ground assault.' Ships of this type are employed in attacks meant to take control of ground installations or population centres. Many races employ atmospheric-capable assault vessels to aid in this role, but others do not; the exceptions depend upon a fleet of assault shuttles that carry GROPOS to their targets. In general, an assault ship is not particularly well armed, as it counts on a naval victory and space superiority before beginning the ground invasion.
Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Condor.
Military abbreviation: GV.

Minesweeper/Minelayer: Some races use modified cargo ships for this purpose, but others, including the Earth Alliance, operate ships dedicated to the purpose of conducting mine warfare. In today's navy, the terms 'minelayer' and 'minesweeper' are usually interchangeable, for any ship operating in one role is perfectly capable of working in the other. In addition to specialised racks capable of dropping mines on demand, minesweepers also possess sophisticated sensors capable of sniffing out enemy mines, as well as weapons capable of destroying or deactivating them before they go off. Many minesweepers are also heavily armoured in the event these methods fail to work adequately.
Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Perseus.
Military abbreviation: MS.

Base: Bases are not technically starships, since they cannot travel from one point to another, but are still considered elements of the navy. They operate as resupply points, cargo transfer sites, stockpile centres, and repair yards, depending upon their size and mission. Most bases are armed, although

generally only enough to defend their cargo against raiders. Larger military outposts and starbases contain enough weapons to fight off small fleets, and often take on the role of monitors in addition to their other duties. Bases of all sizes usually employ squadrons of fighters to defend themselves and patrol local space.

Earth Alliance modern equivalent: Orion.
Military abbreviation: BS.

Construction of Starships

A new ship design typically begins with a concept, based on a perceived need for a particular mission within the overall fleet

structure. Sometimes, new ships are requested directly by the Admiralty, either by a particularly high-placed individual or a like-minded group. Alternately, a design may be suggested by military analysts or civilian think-tanks. Rarely, the fires of war will demand the immediate construction of a new ship type, which usually begins by a cobbled-together variant on the front lines and ends with the new model entering general production.

Once a design has left the concept phase, a prototype is created. If the new ship is a totally different hull, an entire shipyard must be taken off line and converted to the new type - a costly and time-consuming process that explains why most new Earth Alliance ships are simply variations on existing craft. A variant does not require a major shipyard retooling, and in fact can often be tested simply by bringing a standard model into a repair yard and making modifications directly to the superstructure.

Regardless of the method employed, a new ship requires a significant amount of testing before entering service. Far more new ship classes undergo this process than ever reach production, and those that fail are usually scrapped, or - in the case of a variant - changed back to their original design. Every now and then, a failed prototype will still enter service, usually because converting it or decommissioning it will at least result in something useful from a failed project. Rarely, one of these ships is given an 'extended field test' in order to prove its worth, although this almost never works out. 'Orphaned' prototypes still in service are referred to as 'nomad hulls,' or in the case of those that are total failures, a 'fleet albatross.'

Ships that actually make it through the prototype process become the first in a line of either a new class or variant, depending on whether they are a new hull or based on an older one. Approved variants receive an official Greek alphabet letter to describe them, and are occasionally referred to as by that letter instead of their name - for example, the first Beta model Artemis is sometimes called 'the Beta Artemis.' Ships of a brand-new class offer their name as the class name. Thus, the very first Hyperion is actually named the EAS *Hyperion*, 'a heavy cruiser of the Hyperion class.'

After the prototyping process is over, a ship selected for production is assigned one or more dedicated shipyards, which

are located either in the Sol, Orion, Proxima, or Beta Durani systems. Sometimes a new shipyard is built for this purpose, although if the new hull replaces an obsolete design, the older yard will simply be converted to the new class.

A shipyard is a kind of immense orbital factory that takes the form of a long cylinder with a retractable door on one end. These structures are not ships in and of themselves and cannot move. They do not rotate and are little more than an open framework designed to support the construction process. Workers are required to do their jobs in zero gravity, from within the protection of double-reinforced space suits. While this may seem difficult and dangerous - and, indeed, it certainly can be so - the lack of gravity makes moving very large pieces of construction equipment a simple matter of leverage. Constructing a ship the size of even an Olympus or Artemis would be difficult, if not impossible, on the ground.

While a shipyard is responsible for assembly of a vessel, the actual parts themselves are manufactured in ground-based factories and shipped into orbit. As is frequently done within the Earth Alliance's free market economy, dozens or even hundreds of different companies often supply the various pieces. This 'lowest bidder' aspect has understandably led to a few noteworthy quality problems, and has many detractors, but it also prevents monopolies and keeps the cost of each individual ship as affordable as possible. Additionally, a variety of military and civilian watchdog groups keep a careful eye on prices, ensuring that the days of thousand-credit toilet seats are long since over.

Construction of a new ship takes anywhere from a month for small craft to well over a year for the largest vessels. While it is impossible to specify the precise amount of time it will take for any given ship to roll out of its drydock, a few simple rules of thumb can be listed here. First and foremost, larger ships take longer, plan and simple. Second, the longer a ship has been in general production, the less time a new vessel will require, because the 'yard dogs' get more efficient at putting the pieces together in the right order.

Location also has an influence on creation time, as does the local economy and the availability of the needed parts. A world undergoing a recession or labour shortage will not produce critical resources fast enough to keep up with the construction process, sometimes causing work to slow or even stop while the next supply shipment is awaited. Similarly, shipyards over the better-populated worlds such as Earth and Proxima are more efficient than those near Mars or Beta Durani, where labour is less available and often not nearly as motivated.

The following chart shows an approximate production time for various ships in the present Earth Alliance inventory. Remember that these are only estimates, and can vary widely depending on location and other factors.

½ Month: Cargo Pod (or any variant), Any Light Combat Vessel, Prometheus Defence Satellite
 1 Month: Commercial Freighter, Tanker, Pinnacle, Tethys Frigate, Bellerophon Heavy Defence Satellite
 2 Months: Bulk Freighter, Passenger Liner, Pirate Hunter, Artemis Heavy Frigate

3 Months: Hermes Priority Transport, Olympus Corvette
 4 Months: Ore Barge, Space Liner, Q-Ship
 5 Months: Cotten Tender, Condor Troop Transport, Perseus Minesweeper
 6 Months: Hyperion Heavy Cruiser, Oracle Scout Cruiser
 7 Months: Sagittarius Missile Cruiser, Orestes Monitor
 8 Months: Avenger Carrier
 9 Months: EarthForce One
 10 Months: Omega Destroyer
 11 Months: Nova Dreadnought
 12 Months: Poseidon Supercarrier
 18 Months: Explorer Deep Survey Ship
 24 Months: Orion Starbase

Modern Starship Classes

This section provides a description and statistics for each ship design currently operated by the Earth Alliance or its affiliates in the Belt Alliance and civilian service. Ships without any versions still in service are not defined, nor are individual prototypes or ships not yet known to exist. Note that many ships have several currently active variants, each of which is described fully in the text hereafter.

Variants: The Earth Alliance was unlike many governments in that it did not design its ships solely for one mission or around any single technology. Each hull possessed systems that could be removed and swapped out many times over the lifetime of the ship itself. Of course, EarthForce was not in the habit of altering standard weapon suites for no good reason, primarily for standardisation purposes.

Over the course of a hull's lifetime, many new arrangements of systems and weapons were tested for feasibility and functionality. Ships of this type were referred to as 'test bed' or 'prototype' hulls. The Hyperion and Tethys were the frames most commonly employed for this purpose, although virtually all other ships underwent some level of prototyping. The vast majority of test beds proved to be failures and were quickly switched back to a more useful design, but some survived to see mass production. When this occurred, rather than reclassify the ship under an entirely new name, the existing design was given a variant designation.

Perhaps not surprisingly, variants were referred to using letters of the Greek alphabet. In order, these letters are: *alpha*, *beta*, *gamma*, *delta*, *epsilon*, *zeta*, *eta*, *theta*, *iota*, *kappa*, *lambda*, *mu*, *nu*, *xi*, *omicron*, *pi*, *rho*, *sigma*, *tau*, *upsilon*, *phi*, *chi*, *psi*, and *omega*. The most varied hull to date has been the Tethys, but even that ship has yet to approach the 'omega' variant, so the Alliance did not mind selecting Omega as a base hull classification.

New Special Quality for Starships

ELINT Ships: ELINT ships are not particularly powerful on their own, but can use their sensor bonuses for a variety of special purposes during combat. These effects can be initiated or applied on the ELINT ship's initiative and last until changed,

or until one of the ships involved are destroyed. ELINT also has a range of only 15 on the game map. If either ship moves out of range, all benefits cease until they close the distance again.

An ELINT ship can spend its sensor bonus points (pluses) for special abilities as it wishes. There is no requirement to spend them; it can keep them for its own use. No sensor point can be employed for more than one purpose at a time. Sensor points are used on a one-for-one basis except as noted. A ship can benefit from several ELINT abilities at a time, but points received from multiple sources do not stack. ELINT ships may use their abilities on themselves, but this restriction applies to them as well.

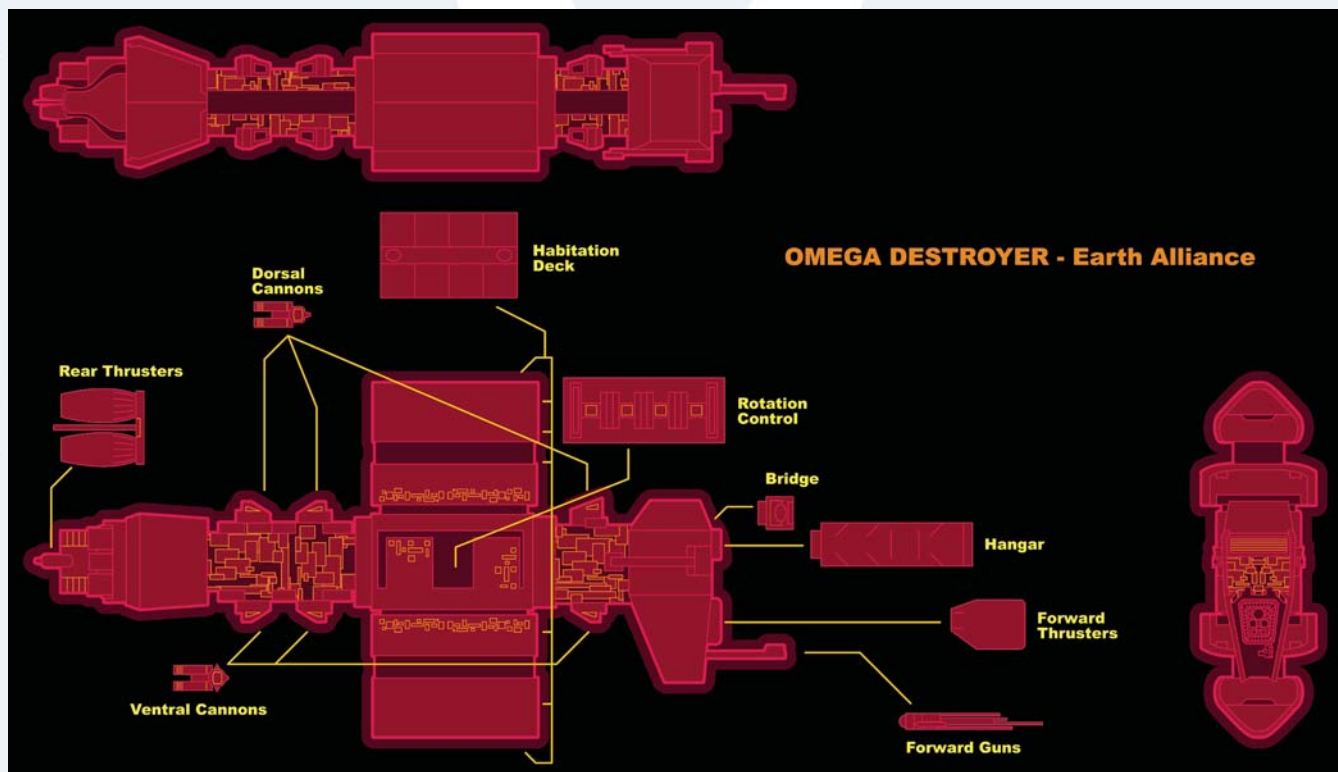
- **Improved Sensors:** Sensor points can be loaned to friendly ships, temporarily increasing the target's sensor rating. Each point loaned increases the target's sensor rating by 1.
- **Improved Defence:** Sensor points can be used to defend friendly ships. Each point applied to a target increases the DV by 1.
- **Improved Stealth:** Sensor points can be used to increase a friendly ship's stealth. Each point applied increases the Stealth rating by 1.
- **Degraded Sensors:** Sensor points can be applied on enemy targets to lower their sensor rating. Each point applied decreases the sensor rating by 1, to a minimum of +0.
- **Blanket Defence:** Sensor points can be used to defend all friendly targets within a 5-hex radius. Each five points applied increases the DV by 1. This will not affect enemy units within the defended zone.

Omega Destroyer

Mainstays of the Earth Alliance fleet, these powerful vessels are the equivalent of the heavy cruiser class in most navies. They are not pretty to look at, but are extremely functional, with a long primary hull surrounding a flat rotating section for crew comfort and more efficient operations. The hangar can support up to two full squadrons of Starfuries or the newer Thunderbolts, although not all destroyers carry these fighters at all times.

The genesis of the Omega came within days of the end of the Earth/Minbari War. At that time, the three most crippling problems to Earth's space forces were: (1) the lack of adequate fighter support, fighters being the one unit that showed the most promise during the conflict; (2) the inability of the Alliance's heavy warships to operate for long periods in space; and (3) the inability of Earth ships to adequately target and damage the Federation's warships. EarthForce solved the first two problems by designing a cruiser capable of hauling up to half the number of fighters operated by a standard Avenger carrier, and adding to that hull a rotating section that improved comfort and greatly extended the ship's range. Although nothing could be done technologically as yet to crack the Minbari jammers, the Omega Destroyer was still more powerful than any vessel in the inventory save the Nova Dreadnought, and faster and more manoeuvrable than the surviving ships of that class.

Omegas come in several variants. The most common version is equipped with two heavy laser cannons forward and two aft, plus two heavy pulse cannons forward. A slightly less frequently seen variant uses nothing but pulse cannons. All Omeas possess a unique array of six defensive particle beams



on each side of the primary hull, plus a highly efficient series of interceptors that can block or disperse incoming fire.

Statistics:

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 750; DV 3 (-12 size, +5 agility); DR 24; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor +2 (+3 on Gamma model); Stealth 12; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Artificial Gravity (Rotating Section); Cargo 150,000 lb.; 12 Officers (16 on Gamma model), 28 Pilots, 24 Sensor Operators, 132 Crewmen (140 on Gamma model)

Historical Summary

Prototype Model (2248): Heavy laser and heavy plasma cannons.

Alpha Model (2250-present): Heavy laser and heavy pulse cannon mix.

Beta Model (2255-present): Heavy pulse cannons only.

Gamma Model (2259-present): Command variant with heavy laser/pulse arrays. Rare.

Alpha Model Weapons:

Two Twin-linked Heavy Laser Cannon; 1 Forward, 1 Aft; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Twin-Linked Heavy Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire

Two Hex-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Forward, 1 Aft; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Six Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Beta Model Weapons:

Two Twin-Linked Heavy Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire

Two Twin-Linked Medium Pulse Cannons; 2 Aft; 1 Boresight, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Two Hex-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Forward, 1 Aft; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Six Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Gamma Model Weapons:

Special Notes: The Gamma model is optimised for command and receives +1 to its Initiative check in combat.

Three Twin-Linked Heavy Laser/Pulse Arrays; 2 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10 laser/20+3d10 pulse; Critical 19-20/20; Range 6 laser/5 pulse; Rapid Fire on pulse only

Two Hex-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Forward, 1 Aft; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Six Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

24 Starfuries or Thunderbolts, 2 Shuttles

Nova Dreadnought

When the first Nova prototypes appeared in 2215, few among EarthForce's officer corps believed the ships would actually work. The massive array of guns simply seemed greater than any hull or power plant could withstand. At first, the doubters seemed correct, as initial tests showed a number of faults in the design. However, as time passed and refinements were made, the ship proved not only functional, but quite deadly. Few opposing ships of the era could stand up to an array of eighteen individually mounted medium laser cannons! Yet that was not the only advantage of this particular hull - the long, rod-shaped superstructure lent itself well to a cavernous internal fighter bay capable of supporting up to four flights of Starfuries. Indeed, if the Nova lacked anything, it was a significant anti-fighter defensive capability, and the ship's high cost encouraged the Alliance to escort it regularly with several Tethys frigates optimised for anti-fighter work.

Although the Dilgar War proved the worth of these powerful but pricey command ships, the Nova proved highly difficult to support in the period of peace that followed. Keeping the weapons array functioning properly was a difficult task, and any test firing run inevitably resulted in a long period of maintenance and retrofits. Additionally, the ship's dependence upon laser cannons as its sole armament made it increasingly vulnerable to incoming fighter swarms.

When pulse cannons appeared on the scene in 2240, EarthForce knew it finally had the replacement weapon they wanted for the Nova. The question, however, was how to install the new guns. Should all the lasers simply be replaced, or should some be swapped for pulse cannons while others remained? No one could decide for certain, so in the end, a hybrid laser/pulse array device was created. This weapon, unique to the Nova's specialised gun mounts, was capable of firing either as a medium laser or medium pulse cannon, depending on the situation. While this definitely resulted in a much more powerful and flexible dreadnought, the guns remained extremely high-maintenance items, leading many a repair crew to curse their jobs and wish the Alliance had simply picked one weapon over the other and be done with it.

Unlike many Earth ships, only one variant of the Nova is currently in operation today. A design employing a combination of heavy pulse cannons and heavy lasers, developed shortly after the Earth/Minbari War, was a failure and is no longer in production.

Statistics:

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 650; DV 2 (-12 size, +4 agility); DR 22; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +0; Sensor +1; Stealth 12; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged; Cargo 125,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 28 Pilots, 20 Sensor Operators, 62 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2215-2245): Medium laser cannons only.

Beta Model (2242-present): Laser/pulse arrays.

Beta Model Weapons:

Four Twin-linked Laser/Pulse Arrays; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10 laser/10+2d10 pulse; Critical 19-20/20; Range 5 laser/2 pulse; Rapid Fire on pulse only
 Ten Laser/Pulse Arrays; 5 Left, 5 Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10 laser/10+2d10 pulse; Critical 19-20/20; Range 5 laser/2 pulse; Rapid Fire on Pulse only
 Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

24 Starfuries, 2 Shuttles

Hyperion Heavy Cruiser

For several decades, the Hyperion class formed a solid core to the EA fleet. Hyperions have been a part of virtually every Alliance military engagement since the turn of the century. The ships are hardy, well-armoured, and have a wide array of variants built for whatever purpose is required. Sadly, they had little chance against the Minbari during that war, and were destroyed in huge numbers. Most Hyperions operating today were built after the conflict, where they were hastily constructed to shore up EA defences against opportunistic neighbours. Only within the last few years have the more advanced Omega Destroyers begun to supplant them in the naval inventory, but there seem to be no plans to completely cancel the reliable, proven Hyperion design. Instead, they continue to operate both independently and alongside the more expensive and powerful Omegas.

The most common Hyperion, the Theta model, has a forward battery consisting of two heavy laser cannons, two medium plasma cannons, and one medium pulse cannon, plus two additional heavy lasers aft and one pulse cannon bearing to either side. An array of interceptor guns protects the vessel from incoming fire, but this defensive arrangement is nowhere near as sophisticated as that found on the more modern Omega class. Other currently operational Hyperion variants include anti-fighter, troop transport, command, missile, pulse cannon, and railgun varieties.

History of Hyperion Development: In 2161, EarthForce began a project to field its first jump-capable cruiser. This project bore fruit in 2164 with the Epimetheus Alpha replacing the pre-contact Tyche class. This groundbreaking design was to prove to be the source of controversy for decades to come. Rapidly improving technology gave rise to regular incremental upgrades to the Epimetheus, with the Beta in 2168 adding interceptor technology; the Gamma in 2177 with early missile racks and the new Interceptor Mk I; the Delta in 2184 which debuted the new 'standard' missile rack and the basic Particle Beam; and finally, the lacklustre Epsilon version of 2193.

This rapid production of five designs in less than thirty years sounded alarm bells in the EA Senate. Events such as the resounding defeat of the Ch'Lonas in 2170 and the increasing ability of the Earth Alliance to stand up to the Centauri had given several Senatorial factions the confidence to propose that

funds be diverted from EarthForce ship procurement into areas more beneficial to their constituents and other backers. Other, more pacifist factions became alarmed at what they saw as the increasing ability of EarthForce to wage wars of aggression.

The consequences for EarthForce were serious. The rapid pace of EA ship development slowed drastically, with only a handful of new designs obtaining funding after 2200. Attempts to fund a replacement cruiser design foundered in Senate hearings for several years. Finally in 2205, the go-ahead was given for a brand new class of cruiser, the Hyperion. The first prototype was fielded in 2208 and was a major success, in part because it was designed from the ground up to have interceptor technology, jump drives and the latest weapons and systems. However, further senate battles prevented EarthForce from fielding the Production Alpha model. In addition, internal dissension was coming to a head and the Senate was more concerned with the possibility of civil war.

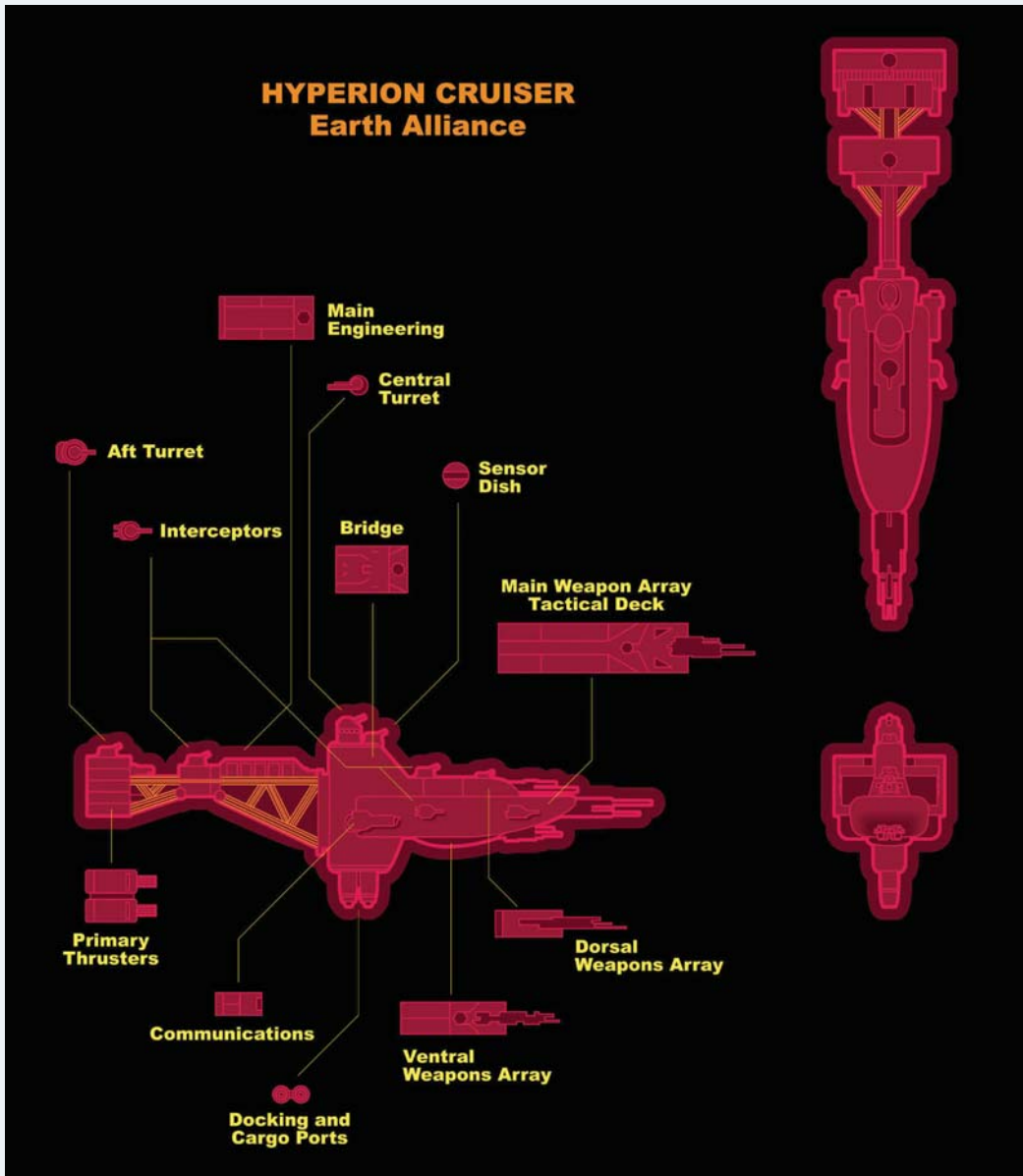
Civil war of a sort did indeed break out in 2212. EarthForce rose to the challenge and it was quickly put down. The new President was mindful of the value of a strong EarthForce, and increasing tensions with the Narn Regime were sufficient excuse to allow funding for the Nova Alpha in 2215, with the Hyperion Alpha being placed into full production in 2216. The Artemis Gamma and Oracle Gamma were also placed into production during this window of opportunity. Ironically, the delay had allowed EarthForce R&D to make several breakthroughs in structural engineering that would allow the production of a more capable design. However, the consensus amongst EarthForce was that the resurgent 'dove' faction of the Senate might take fright at the recent introduction of a dreadnought, so it would be best not to delay and to place the design into immediate production and refit the cruiser later. These improvements were implemented on the missile armed Beta in 2217. Unfortunately, the substantial increase in EarthForce capability of this period, coupled with memories of the interminable Epimetheus upgrades, ensured that the EA Senate set its face against a new cruiser design. The defeat of the Narns at Epsilon Indi in 2219 only hardened the feeling that a new design was unnecessary.

Finally, in 2225, EarthForce was able to make a case for a 'test bed cruiser' design. This culminated in the launch of the Hecate Alpha in 2228. This design mounted no radical new technology and was produced in surprisingly large numbers. Funding for the program was often siphoned away from authorised Hyperion Alpha production. These Hyperions were a rude surprise for the Dilgar in the war of 2232. To allay the suspicions of less militarily astute senators, test bed designs were commissioned on the Hecate frame, but the numbers were small.

In 2239, EarthForce at last managed to obtain funding for an upgrade of the Hyperion Cruiser. The Hecate *Tsiphone* was converted to the first Hyperion Delta in short order, proving the value of the test beds to the EA Senate in reduced development time and costs. The Hyperion name was retained for the class so as not to flaunt the deception in the faces of those Senators who might have taken a dim view of the subterfuge.

The Earth/Minbari war saw many new ship designs; there were no longer funding problems for EarthForce to contend with. All surviving Hyperion Alphas, Hecate Alphas and the majority

HYPERION CRUISER Earth Alliance



of the other Hecate test beds were converted into the latest Hyperion classes. After the war, EarthForce had little difficulty in obtaining funding for new designs. The Hecate was relegated to a true test bed role and the Hyperion was openly the latest cruiser design.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 500; DV 6 (-10 size, +6 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +3 (+4 on Epsilon model); Stealth 14; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged; Cargo 150,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 10 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators (20 on Lambda model), 38 Crewmen (plus 400 troops or 30 ground vehicles/aircraft on Gamma variant)

Historical Summary:

Prototype Model (2208): Heavy and medium plasma cannons. Alpha Model (2216-2247): Medium plasma cannons exclusively.

Beta Model (2217-2232): Class-S missile racks. The Sagittarius quickly supplanted this design. Gamma Model (2230-present): Assault version optimised to carry troops. Delta Model (2240-2247): All-pulse model used to test the new pulse cannon. Epsilon Model (2246-present): Missile, plasma and pulse command variant. Zeta Model (2246-2247): Unpopular railgun model. Eta Model (2246-present): Laser and heavy pulse version. Theta Model (2246-present): Mixed weapon variant. The most common design. Iota Model (2248-2258): Laser and maximum pulse variant, unpopular due to power shortages. Kappa Model (2256-present): All-pulse minesweeper version. Lambda Model (2257-present): Escort variant optimised for fighter-killing. Rare.

Gamma Model Weapons:

Three Heavy Plasma Cannon; Two Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 35+4d10; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Twin-linked Medium

Plasma Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer);

Damage 30+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2

Tri-linked Particle Beams; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Epsilon Model Weapons:

Special Notes: The Epsilon model is optimised for command and receives +1 to its initiative roll in combat.

Twin-Linked Heavy Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire

Three Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Boresight, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Four Standard Missile Racks; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 10

Tri-linked Particle Beams; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Eta Model Weapons:

Twin-linked Heavy Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6
Twin-Linked Heavy Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire
Three Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Boresight, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Tri-linked Particle Beams; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Theta Model Weapons:

Twin-linked Heavy Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6
Three Medium Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Twin-linked Medium Plasma Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 30+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2
Tri-linked Particle Beams; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Kappa Model Weapons:

Five Medium Pulse Cannon; 3 Boresight, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Two Twin-Linked Light Pulse Cannon; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+4d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
Tri-linked Particle Beams; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire
Minesweeping System: Sensor range doubled for mine detection. All weapons +3 to hit when shooting at mines.

Lambda Model Weapons:

Tri-linked Particle Beams; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3
Three Twin-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Forward, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Two Anti-Fighter Missile Racks; Guidance 7; Damage 40 (fighter/shuttle or smaller only); Critical 20; Speed 10; Fuel 10; Reloads 10

Aegis Defence System: Ship receives +3 Sensors versus up to six fighter or shuttle sized targets per turn, and +4 DV for itself and up to three friendly units within 2 hexes, versus incoming missile attacks only.

Craft:

6 Starfuries (Gamma has 12 Assault Shuttles, 2 Breaching Pods, 30 Ground Vehicles or Aircraft; Kappa has 60 mines), 2 Shuttles

Olympus Corvette

When it was originally developed in the 2190s, the railgun was initially thought to be the forerunner of a new class of ultimate weapons employed by the Earth Alliance. Railguns, which operate by accelerating solid matter to extremely high velocities through a magnetic barrel, are based on concepts dating back as far as the 20th Century. Prototypes had been tested for years, but were thought by many to be useful only on ground bases and fixed points. In addition, most detractors believed the technology unsuitable for anything but bombardment until samples of a Centauri hyper-velocity matter cannon system were recovered in 2185.

Railguns in Combat: Although railguns do not appear to do much damage on paper, they do have one very significant ability that they share with all other matter guns, including the Centauri matter cannon and Belt Alliance blast cannons - they ignore a target's damage reduction (DR). Damage from a railgun or similar device does not count towards reducing DR for purposes of any other weapons fire on the same combat round, and does not actually lower the DR permanently like some advanced devices can do. All railguns do is bypass it entirely through the sheer kinetic force of impact from their ammunition. If they strike adaptive armour, like that found on Vorlon ships, they ignore only the base value of that armour, not any adaptive abilities 'trained' to resist matter weapons.

Most railgun ammunition takes the form of solid metal pellets designed to blow through any level of armour. There are some special 'shells,' however, that are used in special circumstances. Special shells can be fired at any time - they do not require any unusual arming procedures - but come in only limited numbers. No more than twenty percent of a ship's railgun shells can be of any special types, and the exact ones must be determined beforehand. A railgun-armed ship cannot simply create whatever shells it needs, but must get them from the same logistics centres that they get the rest of their ammunition.

Power Shell: These trade range for damage, adding an extra 1d10 to the damage, but halving the usual range of the weapon.

Range Shell: These make the opposite trade, sacrificing 5 points of damage to increase the range by 50%.

Shrapnel Shell: This receives a bonus of +4 to hit fighters, but scores 5 points less damage and cuts its range in half. In addition, chunks of additional material score 1 point of damage to any other fighters, including friendly ones, within 1 square of

the target. This 'shrapnel damage' ignores all armour, but does not affect any unit larger than Gargantuan size.

The railgun first appeared on Orion bases, Orestes monitors, and Epimetheus command ships during the 2190s, but it was not until its appearance on the Olympus corvette that the weapon really came into its own. The hardy Olympus was not much to look at, being little more than a box with a few control systems protruding along the sides, but the railguns made opponents sit up and take notice. The weapon's ability to ignore all damage resistance gave it a phenomenal ability to knock opponents out of space. Unfortunately, the very design of the railgun, which required a long, unbroken corridor to achieve the proper velocity, precluded its use on most spacecraft, which explains why it is not employed more frequently.

The Olympus was first seen in 2200 as a replacement for the smaller Laertes class. It served well for several decades until the Dilgar War, when logistical problems began to surface. The Alliance required an immense supply train into League territory, and keeping enough ammunition available for the many Olympus hulls in the fleet became a difficult challenge. A special laser variant was produced for the last years of the war, based on prototypes then undergoing tests, but this was eventually retired. Another less popular version built after the Invasions utilised captured Dilgar bolter technology, which later evolved into pulse cannons, but even this was eventually scrapped in favour of the much better known Delta model still in service today.

Olympus Corvettes are extremely uncomfortable vessels not really suitable for patrol or border defence missions. In peacetime, they are generally treated as small monitors and left to guard bases or colonies. An Olympus would rarely, if ever, be seen escorting a convoy, and they would never be sent on long-range survey or exploration duties. In the aftermath of the Earth/Minbari War, many among EarthForce believe the Olympus is obsolete and needs to be replaced. Rumours persist of a new design intended for this purpose, code-named 'Cronos,' but nothing is known of this black project at this time.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 375; DV 10 (-10 size, +10 agility); DR 16; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +3; Stealth 15; Cargo 25,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 4 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 24 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2200-2241): Railguns, plasmas, and early missile racks.
Beta Model (2229-2244): Medium lasers and particle cannons only.
Gamma Model (2235-2247): Early bolter and pulse cannon test bed.
Delta Model (2241-present): railguns, pulse cannons and missile racks.

Delta Model Weapons:

Two Railguns; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+1d10 (ignores DR); Critical 20; Range 6; Ammunition 50; No Reloads

Two Twin-Linked Medium Pulse Cannon; 1 Forward Left, 1 Forward Right; 1 Boresight, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Two Standard Missile Racks; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 10

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

2 shuttles

Oracle Scout Cruiser

The Oracle was Earth's original hyperspace exploration ship. Developed after the arrival of the Centauri on a new hull constructed specifically for the purpose of interstellar travel, it was one of the most capable vessels of its day. The first Oracles were the ones that braved hyperspace to locate nearby systems for colonisation and survey missions that would reap huge dividends in the decades to come. If there were no Oracles, there would be no Proxima, or Orion, or Deneb, or any of the other extra-solar colonies. Earth would be little more than another member of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds - if even that.

Since the original Oracles sailed the stars, great leaps have been made in EarthForce sensor technologies. As soon as these improvements began to appear, many Oracles were converted for use as electronic support platforms in a fleet environment. In this role, they are referred to as ELINT ships. ELINT stands for Electronic Intelligence, and refers to several special abilities a ship of this type can do in support of nearby ships. For rules on ELINT ships, see the New Special Quality section at the beginning of this chapter. Interestingly, the Oracle bears more than a superficial resemblance to the later Hyperion class. Many of the systems employed on the scout hull were used for the Hyperion, although of course there is no ELINT sensor suite available for the heavy cruiser.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 500; DV 6 (-10 size, +6 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +8; Stealth 14; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged; Cargo 100,000 lb.; 3 Officers, 6 Pilots, 16 Sensor Operators, 35 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2163-2174): No offensive weapons, strictly an explorer.
Beta Model (2168-2247): Early missile rack, first ELINT suite.
Gamma Model (2216-2254): Medium lasers, standard missile rack.
Delta Model (2242-present): Medium pulse cannons, standard missile rack.

Delta Model Weapons:

Two Medium Pulse Cannon; 1 Forward Left, 1 Forward Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Four Particle Beams; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
 Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

4 Shuttles

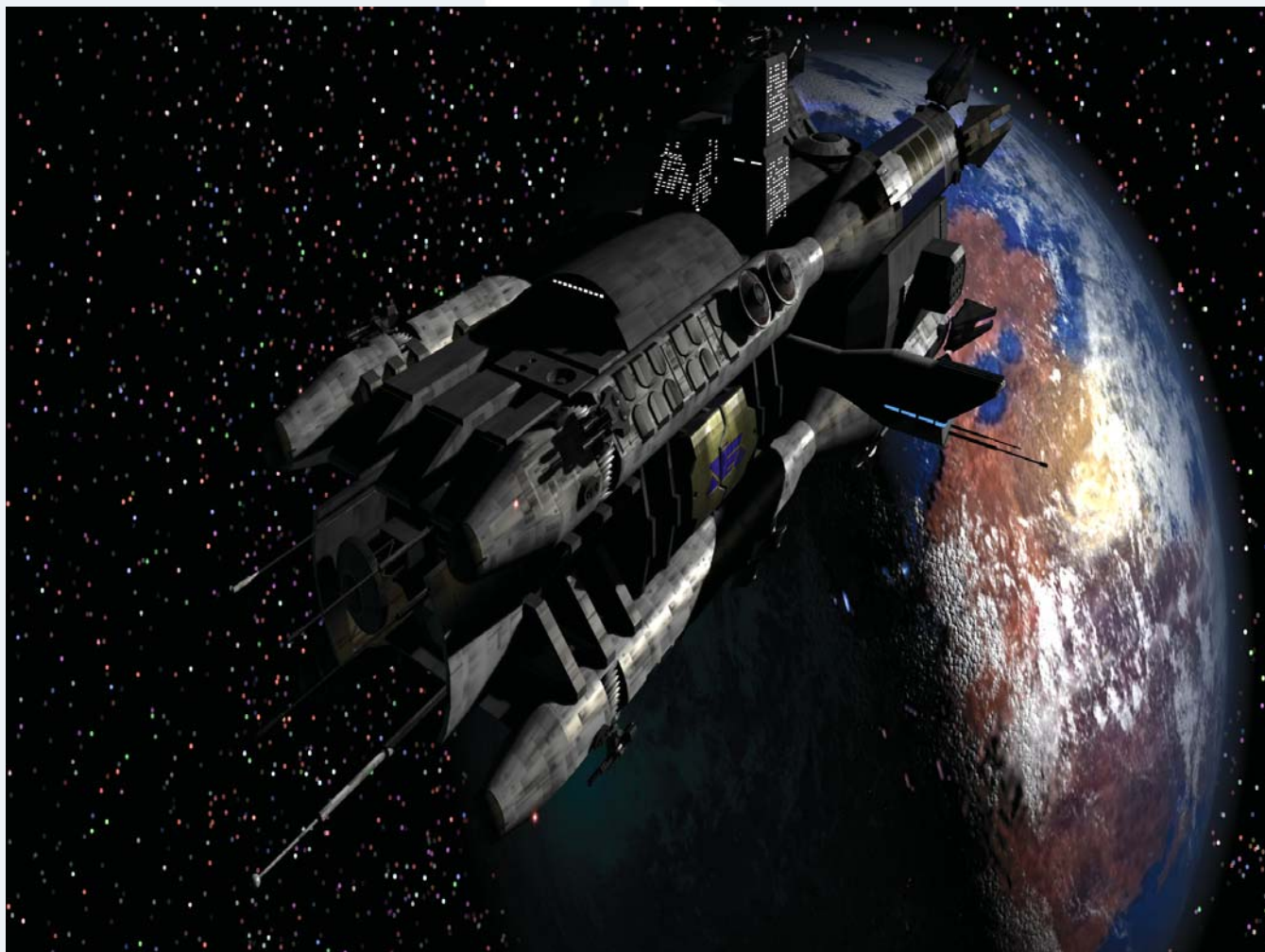
Artemis Heavy Frigate

The Artemis is an early destroyer design produced shortly after the arrival of the Centauri on Earth in the mid-2100s. The first version employed strictly plasma guns and the original prototype interceptor. At the time, it was one of the most heavily armoured vessels in the inventory, with an ability to stand up to incoming fire as well as any cruiser. However, those who served on the stubby little 'coffin with engines' considered it one of the worst ships in EarthForce, primarily because it was uncomfortable internally, but also because its chosen weapons - plasma cannons - were not terribly effective at anything but close range. The heavy armour the Artemis possessed did little more than convince the opponent to concentrate fire on the little nuisance, and once the armour was penetrated, the internal shell came apart quickly.

Later versions attempted to alleviate this problem by introducing new weapons intended for longer ranges or greater firepower. Perhaps the most successful of these additions was the railgun. Where the Olympus operates a couple of railguns in addition to its other armament, the Artemis takes the railgun concept to a whole new level. Not content to simply arm this heavy frigate with a just a couple of these powerful guns, the Alliance literally wrapped the ship around six of them. The resulting ship cost EarthForce almost as much to build as a Hyperion, but the Artemis was at least as capable in battle, if limited in serviceability.

Like the Olympus, the Artemis is an uncomfortable vessel suitable only for use in combat. The ship resembles a flattened coffin in shape, and has only the bare minimum of staterooms available for the crew. Assignment to an Artemis is considered one of the worst jobs in the Fleet, and turnaround is high. Perhaps not surprisingly, their crews are not among the best skilled in EarthForce.

Due to the sheer number of railguns the Artemis class operates, they put serious pressure on any logistics supply train, and unlike the Olympus, they are all but useless once they run out of ammunition for their guns. More than one Artemis retreated from battle during the Dilgar War and waited off the front lines for resupply craft to arrive.



After the Dilgar War ended, virtually every Artemis was assigned as a base picket or put into mothballs. A few received refits that changed the railguns to less logistics-intensive weapons, also freeing up some of the internal space for crew quarters, but these were generally unsuccessful. The sole exception was the Zeta model, which employed pulse cannons in a strictly escort role. Thanks to their armour, these ships were capable of escorting fighter groups right into the thick of combat. In addition, the removal of much of the hull-intensive railgun systems permitted more crew and cargo space, greatly increasing the ship's range.

Most surviving Artemis variants were destroyed in the Earth/Minbari War. They are rarely seen today. Rumour has it a new design is in the works that will replace both this hull and the Olympus, but little is known about this ship.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 350; DV 10 (-10 size, +10 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +1; Sensor +3; Stealth 14; Cargo 15,000 lb. (25,000 on Zeta model); 4 Officers, 3 Pilots, 5 Sensor Operators, 26 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2168-2201): Medium plasma cannons.
Beta Model (2190-present): Railguns.
Gamma Model (2216-2236): Heavy blast cannon test bed using weapons taken from the Dilgar.
Delta Model (2225-2236): Medium laser escort variant. Not particularly useful.
Epsilon Model (2235-2247): Heavy plasma cannons, intended to alleviate supply issues.
Zeta Model (2242-present): Medium pulse cannon escort variant.

Beta Model Weapons:

Six Railguns; 2 Front Left, 2 Front Right, 1 Rear Left, 1 Rear Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+1d10 (ignores DR); Critical 20; Range 6; Ammunition 50; No Reloads
Two Twin-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Zeta Model Weapons:

Six Medium Pulse Cannons; 2 Front Left, 2 Front Right, 1 Rear Left, 1 Rear Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Two Twin-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

2 shuttles



Tethys Frigate/Police Cutter

The Tethys is another one of those ships developed early in the history of EarthForce that still exists in the modern Navy. The Tethys can trace its origins back to the original early anti-raider operations that took place during the conquest of the solar system. Originally intended for use strictly as a police vessel, it has since been employed for virtually every mission EarthForce is capable of assigning. When employed for civilian or defence purposes, it is referred to as a police cutter, but when in Naval service it is used as a frigate.

More versions of the hardy Tethys have existed than any other ship class in the Alliance inventory. Because it is so small and cheap to build, it is frequently employed as a test bed for new technologies, where its sturdy construction allows it to stand up to the rigors of field testing. As far as Earth ships go, it is among the most manoeuvrable, although even this is not saying much. Terran ships are just not designed for grace and fluid motion, after all. They are blocky and functional, but little else.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 250; DV 10 (-8 size, +8 agility); DR 10; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +3; Sensor +2 (targeting computer); Stealth 16; Cargo 10,000 lb.; 3 Officers, 4 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 16 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2130-2172): Light lasers. Pre-First Contact model, later heavily restructured.
Beta Model (2140-2177): Medium blast cannons.
Gamma Model (2168-2199): Medium plasma cannons.
Delta Model (2178-2209): Medium laser cannons.
Epsilon Model (2191-2236): Medium plasma cannons, various hull improvements.
Zeta Model (2212-present): Standard missile racks (missile frigate).
Eta Model (2219-present): Medium and light lasers (laser frigate).
Theta Model (2231-present): Anti-fighter missile racks (escort frigate).
Iota Model (2243-present): Medium lasers, light pulse cannons (police leader). Rare.

Kappa Model (2246-present): Medium lasers, light pulse cannons (standard version, most common).

Zeta Model Weapons:

Three Standard Missile Racks; 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 10

Three Particle Beams; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +1

(targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Eta Model Weapons:

Two Laser Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5

Four Light Laser Cannons; 2 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 15+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Theta Model Weapons:

Two Anti-Fighter Missile Racks; 1 Left, 1 Right; Guidance 7; Damage 40 (fighter/shuttle or smaller only); Critical 20; Speed 10; Fuel 10; Reloads 10

One Particle Beam; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

Three Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Iota Model Weapons:

Special Notes: The Iota model is optimised for command and receives +1 to its initiative roll in combat.

Two Laser Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5

Four Light Pulse Cannons; 2 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Kappa Model Weapons:

Two Medium Pulse Cannon; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Four Light Pulse Cannon; 2 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

2 Shuttles (Theta model adds 6 Shuttles or Armed Shuttles in an aft bay)

Sagittarius Missile Cruiser

The Sagittarius hull was a specialised design first seen in the early 23rd Century. The original aim of the ship was to operate as a test firing platform for newly developed missiles. As experimentation progressed, larger and more stable hulls were produced, eventually mounting no less than eight missile racks on a lengthy cruiser-sized hull. The addition of a dedicated reload device further improved firing capabilities, and shortly thereafter EarthForce began to take interest in the hull as a specific starship design. Engines and thrusters were strapped on, and the first actual Sagittarius left the slipways in 2225.

The ship was not particularly popular, primarily because its complete dedication to the missile bombardment role left it little room for flexibility. Service aboard a Sag (pronounced 'saj') was, in a word, boring. Because of its specialised role, the Sagittarius was totally unsuitable for use in anything other than a fleet environment, so no other missions could be undertaken. During combat, the ship stayed away from the battle and fired at whatever target the fleet admiral ordered, leaving the captain little more than a figurehead. Even a gunner's role was of little interest, as he simply launched his missiles and sat back to watch their flight, without any ability to control the path of the computer-guided ordnance. Worse still, the Sagittarius had little in the way of defences, lacking even a jump drive to make its escape should things go badly.

Despite these disadvantages, the Earth Alliance sent many of these slow, clunky barges into the Dilgar War, where they flew amidst the core of larger fleets and fired salvos of missiles at key enemy targets. The Dilgar soon learned the trick of targeting any Sag with long-range fire and then swarming them with fighters, making the life expectancy of a typical Sagittarius rather low. In response, the Alliance developed a longer-ranged missile rack capable of firing at targets well before they closed the range, but even this did not solve the fighter problem. Eventually, EarthForce responded by defending missile cruisers with fighters of their own, and after the war, began to produce missiles designed to specifically go after approaching fighters before they could get into strafing range.

After the Dilgar War, the Sagittarius was largely forgotten in the rush to develop new bolter and pulsar technologies taken from the Imperium. Besides, the Sag suffered from the same sort of logistical problems the Artemis and Olympus did - the logistics of resupplying expendable munitions over long distances. Most Sagittarius hulls were mothballed, only to be hastily recalled and destroyed during the Earth/Minbari War. The few survivors were rebuilt and are now being used to test new missile and missile rack technologies as part of Project Zeus.

Additional Missile Types: With the development of the Sagittarius, the Earth Alliance also began to experiment with a variety of different types of missiles. Most missiles were of the basic type, as shown in the missile rack statistics hereafter and with other missile-capable ships in EarthForce's inventory. Some alternate designs exist, however, as listed below.

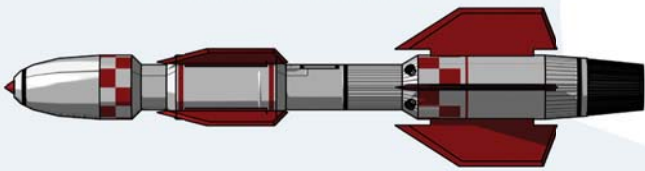
A ship can carry no more than a certain number of special missiles per rack. As a general rule, a standard rack will have at most two, and a small rack (the kind used mostly on early

hulls and civilian ships) no more than one. In times of war, these quantities are doubled for EarthForce elements, but not for civilian craft, auxiliaries, or Q-ships.

Launching a special missile requires no advance notice. A missile rack operates with a rotary magazine permitting it to fire any ordnance it wishes on demand. Not every special missile will be available, however. A ship's quartermaster must requisition the desired types and have them on hand in advance, and when they get used, he must ensure they are replaced. Thus, a ship that has been operating for long periods on a frontier may not have any special missiles available, while those that have recently been resupplied might have a convenient surplus.

The types of missiles, their year of availability, and their special rules are listed below. If a specific statistic is not listed for a given warhead, assume its value is equal to the statistic given for the basic missile.

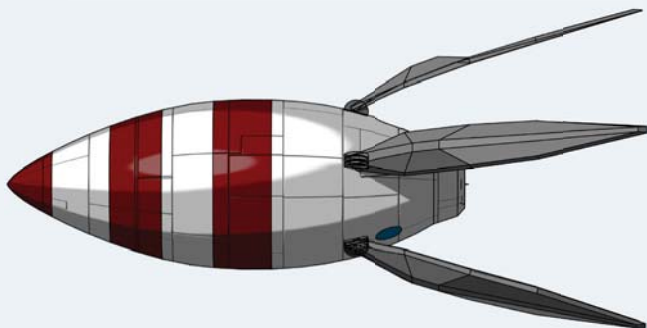
Basic (2165): The standard missile operates as shown in the stats hereafter. Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 10



Flash (2229): This missile's warhead is plasma-based, scoring slightly less damage with an improved chance of critical hits. Damage 20+2d10, critical 19-20.

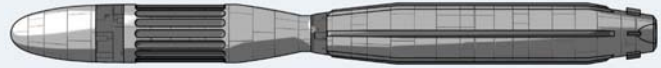


Heavy (2225): Heavy missiles are ship-killers, scoring extra damage at the expense of range. Many ships keep one or two around just in case an enemy gets extremely close. Damage 60+4d10, critical 20, speed 4, fuel 4, cannot engage Huge or smaller craft.



Anti-Fighter (2231): Developed during the Dilgar War for use against the Thorun swarms that were the bane of every Sagittarius, anti-fighter missiles receive a bonus to hit fighters

but generally score less damage. Damage 40, critical 20, speed 10, fuel 10, can only engage Huge or smaller craft.



Long-Range (2225): These missiles sacrifice warhead strength for extended range. A Sagittarius with these missiles can effectively bombard a base from outside its guns' effective range, although there are usually not nearly enough long-range missiles to completely destroy the target. Damage 40+4d10, critical 20, fuel 20.



Piercing (2244): An emergency weapon developed for use against the Minbari, these expensive missiles employed shaped charges designed to penetrate armour. Unfortunately, their range limitations made them ineffective against stealthy Sharlins. Damage 30+3d10, critical 20, speed 4, fuel 4, ignores 10 points of an target's Damage Reduction.

HARM (2248): This was another weapon intended for use against the Minbari but developed far too late to be of use. HARM (High-explosive Anti Radiation Missile) warheads are programmed to follow an enemy's active sensor lock back to its source, detonating against the sensor array in a burst of electromagnetic interference. No damage is scored directly, but the target's sensor rating is reduced by 3d6 for three rounds. A sensor rating cannot be reduced to less than +0. On a critical hit, the duration of the effect is doubled. This missile does not affect units smaller than Colossal size. Missiles of this type are particularly effective against ELINT ships. Damage 0, critical 20, fuel 3, guidance equals half of the target's sensor bonus.

Multi-warhead (2256): Also referred to as a MIRV missile, these break up into six smaller sub-munitions upon launch. All targets must be of Gargantuan size or smaller and must be in a position to be attacked by the ship - i.e., within range and in the proper firing arc. Each sub-munition attacks a different target; they cannot 'team up' without cancelling each other out by colliding during flight. A sub-munition will not target friendly units. Damage 10+1d10, critical 20, fuel 2, 6 separate attacks against Gargantuan or smaller units.

Chaff (2230): These devices are designed not to damage opponents but to weaken their ability to fight or to aid in an escape. They are typically employed against vessels that need to be captured, not destroyed. The missile's explosion surrounds the target with a cloud of 'chaff' - metallic particles that interfere with sensors and weapons fire and produce a -3 penalty for all weapons fire. These penalties affect the enemy for a full round, during which the firing ship can either escape or subdue the target with fighters or its own guns. A chaff missile can also be detonated immediately upon leaving the tube, causing the same effect to the launching ship but giving all enemies beyond range 1 a penalty of -3 to hit for a full combat

round. On a critical hit, chaff missiles double their penalties but not the duration. Damage 0, critical 19-20, Speed 6, Guidance +8.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 450; DV 5 (-10 size, +5 agility); DR 17; Spd -; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 13; SQ Long-Ranged; Cargo 130,000 lb. (mostly spare missiles and inert warheads); 4 Officers, 6 Pilots, 10 Sensor Operators, 42 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2225-2232): Standard missile racks.
Beta Model (2230-present): Long-range missile racks.

Beta Model Weapons:

Eight Long-Range Missile Racks; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Front/Left, 2 Front/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Guidance 5; Damage 40+4d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 20; Reloads 80
One Twin-Linked Particle Beam; Turret; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Two Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

2 Shuttles

Avenger Carrier

The Avenger was one of the first EarthForce ships to appear after the arrival of the Centauri on Earth in the mid-2100s. At that time, fighters were generally carried externally, where they were used to hunt down raiders and patrol trade lanes. The little craft were not designed for long-range travel, and would likely as not be torn apart if they attempted to enter hyperspace. Even early Starfuries, while capable of travelling into hyperspace, did not have the range to reach a distant colony on their own.

The rapid progression of the Starfury program meant that EarthForce needed some way to deliver its new fighters into battle. The Aries was not designed for external mounting, and none of the ships of the era possessed bays large enough to carry them in any quantity. To this end, the Avenger class was developed. Early Avengers were a simple wedge-shaped craft with row after row of hangars, each capable of deploying and recovering a fighter on its own. However, while launching operations were straightforward, recovery systems were not. A pilot had to match speeds and manoeuvre his craft into a small capture arm that brought him aboard. These early forerunners of Cobra Bays were not pressurised, forcing the pilot to wait while his fighter passed through an airlock into the maintenance section of the ship. Needless to say, this kept fighter operations slow, and landing during combat was a dangerous activity fraught with peril. Later versions of the Avenger corrected this problem by stretching the hull and adding internal landing decks, complete with built-in rails capable of sliding fighters into position without any help from the maintenance crews.

Although the Avenger excels at its role, the ship has little in the way of armament and generally stays out of any fight. Its

typical strategy is to deploy fighters and stay a good distance from the battle, retreating into hyperspace if things go poorly. Fighters are usually given an emergency rendezvous point where the ship reappears later for recovery operations. Usually this works well, but if the enemy pursues or is in the area when the Avenger emerges, the results can be catastrophic. The Dilgar, in particular, were very good at tracking and ambushing Avengers.

The Avenger fell somewhat out of favour after the Dilgar War, with Nova Dreadnoughts often being used for carrier operations instead of otherwise tactically useless Avengers. However, in peacetime, they make excellent fighter conveyors, delivering whole squadrons to outposts and forward support positions along the frontier. After the Earth/Minbari War, a few were kept around specifically for this purpose in support of the new Poseidon Supercarrier, considered by many to be the ultimate carrier in the Galaxy.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 475; DV 5 (-10 size, +5 agility); DR 16; Spd -; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +3; Stealth 15; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged; Cargo 175,000 lb. (mostly fighter parts); 4 Officers, 64 Pilots, 8 Sensor Operators, 24 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2168-2212): Blast cannons, individual landing pads.
Beta Model (2203-2246): Plasma cannons, separate internal bays.
Gamma Model (2240-present): Plasma cannons, light pulse cannons.

Gamma Model Weapons:

Three Medium Plasma Cannons; Boresight; 1 Front, 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 15+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 2
Six Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear Left, 1 Rear Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

48 Starfuries (in eight separate bays), 2 Shuttles

Poseidon Supercarrier

As Earth began to field Nova Dreadnoughts in greater numbers, particularly after that ship's successes in the Dilgar War, Avengers were relegated to fighter shuttling missions. After all, there was little need to field a dedicated carrier and its inevitable escorts when two highly capable Novas would work just fine in that same role, and fight better in the bargain.

Still, many among EarthForce preferred a specialised role for any given starship. Giving a vessel too many separate purposes degraded its ability to perform any single one of those missions well. After all, if a Nova captain was too concerned with what his fighters were doing, he would not be thinking about what he

should be worried about, which was the next target for his considerable array of laser/pulse cannons. Besides, giving a Nova even greater importance on the field made its loss all the more crippling. No one wanted to see two squadrons of fighters abandoned because the fleet flagship was destroyed.

To this end, the Alliance began working on a new class of carrier that would be capable of supporting a tremendous number of fighters independently of any other concerns on the battlefield. The new vessel, code-named Poseidon, was to be given the best defences and escorts available to the Alliance. In addition, its long, flat array of interlinked fighter bays was capable of not only launching its entire fleet of fighters in the space of minutes, but of recovering them in the same period of time. In this, the Poseidon became the modern-day equivalent of aircraft carriers that used to sail Earth's oceans in the 20th and 21st Centuries. Indeed, Poseidon crews often refer to their vessels as 'flattops' in homage to these ancient naval units.

The first Poseidon was launched in 2247 and was quickly destroyed in the Earth/Minbari War. Construction was so time-consuming that only few have been built since. Recent designs possess slightly expanded bays to permit the use of the Thunderbolt designs now on the drawing board, but the first model could only employ Aurora Starfuries.

The modern Poseidon is not only a heavy carrier, but also a fleet flagship, absorbing that role after the general decline of the Nova. Large EarthForce armadas are literally constructed around the Poseidon at their core, in much the same way that 'wet navy' task groups were built around aircraft carriers. Advanced communication and control gear permits any force headed by a Poseidon to benefit from improved coordination during a large battle. Not surprisingly, Poseidons possess huge arrays of defensive guns and are surrounded by escorts at all times.

Statistics:

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 750; DV 4 (-12 size, +6 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 12; SQ Jump Point, Long-Range, Fleet Command Ship; Cargo 350,000 lb. (mostly fighter parts); 24 Officers, 152 Pilots, 20 Sensor Operators, 112 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2247-2247): Pulse cannons, separate internal bays. Unique.

Beta Model (2255-present): Pulse cannons, command facilities, advanced Mk II interceptors. Rare.



Beta Model Weapons:

Special Notes: The Beta model is optimised for command and provides +1 to its initiative roll in combat for itself and all allied EarthForce units within 50 hexes.

Four Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Rear Left, 1 Rear Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Two Twin-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Ten Mk II Interceptors; 2 Front Left, 2 Front Right, 1 Left, 1 Right, 2 Rear Left, 2 Rear Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

96 Starfuries or Thunderbolts (in eight separate bays), 2 Shuttles

Orestes Monitor

The Orestes class originally looked much different than its present configuration. Its early role was to act as the core of a task force engaged in rooting out and destroying raider outposts. The first Orestes, therefore, was a heavily armoured battleship capable of shrugging off serious amounts of firepower. Unfortunately, it was also extremely expensive to operate, and once the pirates were driven out of the solar system, most examples of the class were placed into mothballs.

The Orestes received a new lease on life after the Centauri were contacted in the mid-22nd Century. At that time, the Orestes was the largest ship in the Alliance inventory, as well as one of the best able to stand up to enemy fire. Unfortunately, its engines and thrusters were completely unsuited for use in hyperspace, and modifications failed to produce a vessel that could travel any respectable distance at a reasonable speed. Still, the Orestes did pack a tremendous amount of weaponry, so it did prove useful as a kind of mobile defence craft. When a new outpost was threatened, an Orestes would be flown in and left behind, freeing fleet elements for use elsewhere.

In this way, the Orestes changed from a dreadnought class vessel to a simple system monitor, but this turned out to be ideal. Orestes class vessels have been used as system defenders for decades. The presence of one can be enough to thwart pirate attacks and deter alien aggression. Unfortunately, they are so slow and ponderous that employing them for anything other than defence is a waste of resources. Sending one any significant distance through hyperspace is a long and difficult assignment fraught with peril, and more than one such vessel has been swept away by a freak hyperstorm.

During the Dilgar War, some Orestes monitors were flown outside Earth space to defend recently liberated systems, thereby permitting League vessels to join the Liberation Navy and press on to Omelos. After the war, most were recalled, but the more devastated navies leased a few Orestes as protection against raiders and opportunistic neighbours. Several of these ships were even sold to the Gaim, where they were re-designated the Geun Defender. Modifications made by the insectoid aliens have changed the original hulls so much that they only barely resemble the original design.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 525; DV 2 (-10 size, +2 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +3; Stealth 13; Cargo 125,000 lb.; 3 Officers, 16 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 28 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2130-2184): Early missile racks, light lasers, light plasma cannons.

Beta Model (2168-2196): Heavy and medium plasma cannons. Gamma Model (2190-2232): Particle cannons, railguns, plasma cannons.

Delta Model (2217-2247): Particle cannons, railguns, medium plasmas, particle beams.

Epsilon Model (2249-present): Heavy and medium lasers, railguns, pulse cannons.

Epsilon Model Weapons:

One Twin-linked Heavy Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6

One Twin-linked Laser Cannon; Rear Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 40+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5

Two Twin-Linked Medium Pulse Cannon; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Two Railguns; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+1d10 (ignores DR); Critical 20; Range 6; Ammunition 50; 50 Reloads

Two Particle Beams; Turret; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2

Two Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

12 Starfuries, 2 Shuttles

Hermes Priority Transport

Originally, the Hermes was a military vessel intended to bring critical war supplies and personnel to the front lines in combat. Armed with two missile racks, as well as four defensive particle beams, the Hermes is also capable of defending itself from Raider vessels and enemy frigates that attempt to slip past the lines to attack this valuable logistical element. The ship not only carries a flight of six Starfuries for its own defence - or for delivery to carriers in need of replacement fighters - it is also capable of opening its own jump point into hyperspace. In fact, it is the smallest Earth Alliance vessel that can accomplish this feat.

Ships of the Hermes class are not known for their battle prowess like the flashier Omegas and Hyperions, but have nevertheless been a vital part of the Alliance since the late 2100s. Since that time they have performed many dangerous and difficult missions, including the evacuation of numerous Earth colonies during the Minbari war. Despite the fact that they were massively outgunned, many Hermes stood up to the Minbari at the Battle of the Line and were destroyed in huge numbers.

Unlike many Earth military vessels, the Hermes was constructed in civilian shipyards, although its weapons were added at a naval drydock. Its huge success in the military made it a natural for civilian activities as well, and hundreds of the hardy vessels now ply the space lanes as independent freight haulers, passenger liners, and the like.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 350; DV 9 (-10 size, +9 agility); DR 16; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 18; SQ Jump Point; Cargo 50,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 6 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 16 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2168-2201): Light particle beams and early missile racks.
Beta Model (2195-present): Particle beams and standard missile racks.

Weapons:

Four Particle Beams; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Left and 1 Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Two Standard Missile Racks; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 10
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

6 Starfury Fighters, 4 Shuttles

Explorer Deep Survey Ship

The Explorer is an excellent example of Earth's commitment to a return to power in the years following the Earth/Minbari War. EarthDome knew they could not afford to be caught by surprise again, so they began an aggressive program to explore as much territory as they could. The theory was that if they met every race that could ever be a threat, they would be able to evaluate the risk and prepare themselves beforehand. Also, if they found any new star systems or useful alien technology in the process, so much the better.

The Explorer's primary mission is to fly deep into uncharted areas of hyperspace, occasionally dropping out when something interesting is detected. Usually, 'something interesting' referred to a planetary system, although sometimes nebulae, developing stars, black holes, and the like would be studied. If a new star system was indeed located, a detailed survey would be conducted, often over the course of many months. In the event the system had any resources of significance, the Explorer would construct a jumpgate in orbit around an appropriate planet, which allowed EarthDome to send miners, surveyors, or archaeologists to the site at a later date. In those rare cases where something of real value was discovered, a more permanent presence could be arranged, but this did not happen often. Earth's leaders usually considered such locations far too remote to adequately defend, and EarthForce agreed. Thus,

in the end, corporations usually developed such sites. Today, the Rim is literally dotted with corporate mining, research, and survey outposts, all linked to Earth space through jumpgates planted by Explorers.

Any given Explorer was perfectly capable of travelling for years through the far reaches of space without being resupplied. The vessels were designed to literally be small cities in space. They carried not only officers, crew, scientists, and researchers, but also entire families on what were essentially the longest extended remote tours in military history.

Despite their immense size, Explorers are not particularly hardy in combat, as they were never intended to be used in battle. If they come under attack, they launch fighters and attempt to flee. On long missions, the fighters themselves rarely fought, as replacing them was a difficult undertaking. An Explorer carried enough spare parts to make many repairs, but only enough to construct at most a complete set of spares. In those rare cases where one of these ships completely lost its entire fighter complement, the captain then had the difficult choice of returning all the way to Earth space for more, or pressing on and risking a potentially dangerous confrontation without any significant means of defence. While the Explorer is armed, these weapons will not be all that useful in a serious battle and are in fact rarely used.

Statistics:

Colossal V Spacecraft; hp 1,500; DV 2 (-14 size, +6 agility); DR 20; Spd -; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +10; Stealth 10; SQ Jump Point, Ultra Long Range, ELINT, Artificial Gravity (Rotating Section), 24 Starfury Replacements, 5 Jump Point Construction Modules; Cargo 750,000 lb.; 16 Officers, 36 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators, 160 Crewmen, 480 Civilian Scientists and Passengers

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2253-present): Heavy pulse cannons.

Weapons:

Twin-Linked Heavy Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire
Two Quad-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Eight Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front, 2 Left, 2 Right, 2 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

24 Starfury Fighters, 6 Shuttles

Cotten Tender

The Cotten is one of those unglamorous ships that few people know or care about, but without which a fleet would be hard pressed to operate at combat efficiency. Cotten-class tenders are responsible for resupplying ships, field repairs, personnel transfers, cargo movement, and in some rare cases, delivery of war materiel to allied forces operating in remote areas. In

at least one well-documented case, a Cotten Tender was used to ferry commandos to a target behind the front lines, but for the most part, these ships take on routine tasks with little or no opportunity for glory.

The original Cotten was built after the Alliance began its early explorations of hyperspace. The existing merchant fleet simply did not have the endurance or range to reach some of the new colonies and outposts on the rapidly expanding frontier, while the existing Hermes transport was not capable of some of the heavier work needed by larger ships and military forces. To this end, the Cotten was designed to fly incredibly long distances, deliver its cargo, conduct repairs, and return to the nearest base without the need for refuelling. Alternately, during times of war, Cottens travel alongside fleets, usually remaining in hyperspace while any battles are fought, then shuttling cargo and replacement items over to the warships at the conclusion of hostilities. Without a steady train of Cottens moving back and forth between forward fleet elements and Earth space, the Alliance could not have fought and won the Dilgar War.

Although the Cotten is not designed for combat, it does possess a small suite of weapons to protect it from raiders and small craft, or the occasional fighter squadron that attempts to track it down in hyperspace. As with most Earth vessels, weapon technologies have advanced through the years, but not nearly as frequently as with warships. A lone Cotten will generally avoid combat and flee at its best possible speed.

Cottens do carry fighters, but only for the purpose of replacing a carrier's lost Starfuries, never for attacks. In fact, unless a given Cotten is in a particularly hazardous area of space, the fighters aboard will usually not even be ready for combat. A Cotten's crew complement does not even include pilots for those Starfuries, instead relying on a shuttle transfer to bring the appropriate crew aboard before transferring the replacements.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 400; DV 6 (-10 size, +6 agility); DR 16; Spd -; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor +3; Stealth 16; SQ Jump Point; Cargo 500,000 lb.; 5 Officers, 8 Pilots, 5 Sensor Operators, 22 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2176-2247): Light particle beams and early missile racks.

Beta Model (2230-2248): Particle cannons and standard particle beams.

Gamma Model (2246-present): Pulse cannons.

Weapons:

Two Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Four Particle Beams; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Left and 1 Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

12 Starfury Fighters, 6 Shuttles

Condor Troop Transport

The Condor is an atmospheric-capable craft shaped rather like a huge cargo aircraft straight out of the 21st Century. The vessel is designed for one thing and one thing only - the transportation of troops from one place to another. When the mission calls for it, a Condor can land under fire and deploy its cargo of GROPOS directly onto the battlefield. Under normal conditions, however, it avoids combat whenever possible, preferring to send troops down to a planet's surface using its squadron of assault shuttles.

For many years after the formation of EarthForce, the Alliance did not possess a ship dedicated to the assault mission. The existence of such a vessel was anathema to EarthDome's anti-imperialist doctrine. No Senator would ever support the development of a vessel capable of being used to support a war of conquest! Unfortunately, this short-sighted view failed to note several points, one being that without any means of undertaking ground actions, EarthForce could control space but not enforce policy on the surface of any world. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, there is simply no feasible way to actually conquer an entire populated world using troops delivered from orbit. In order to pull off such a mission, the attackers would need to undertake continual bombardment with weapons of mass destruction, something the Alliance was not prepared to do.

Still, the proposed Condor design languished in obscurity for decades, forcing EarthForce to employ converted civilian vessels for troop movements until finally the threat of Narn incursions forced the Senate to relent. The Alliance was not openly concerned with invading Narn space, but rather with their own ability to retake frontier outposts occupied by the Narns. Intelligence reports, mostly provided by Centauri operatives, showed that the Narns possessed a large cruiser capable of delivering enough troops to overwhelm the defenders of small outlying settlements. Lacking any means of liberating such locations, the Alliance knew the Narns could win territory and keep it, even if they did not possess the means to fight a protracted war.

Of course, this was not the only reason to suddenly cave in and allow the production of an assault vessel. Several colonies, primarily Mars and Proxima, were beginning to talk about independence, so EarthDome took the opportunity of the perceived Narn threat - admittedly very real, of course - to construct a small fleet of troop ships called Condors. These vessels remained close to home, ostensibly for training missions and to be ready to respond to any border, but actually for use in putting down any armed revolt that might occur. When the Mars rebellion finally happened in 2212, Condors were a great help in putting down the insurgents, and a squadron of Condors in orbit over Proxima were enough to convince the rebels there to lay down their arms.

Condors did not see actual wartime use until the Dilgar War, where they remained mostly behind the scenes, landing troops only after space superiority had been achieved over

the objective. Still, on a few occasions they came under fire, usually when the Dilgar pulled off one of their infamous ambushes. One such fight occurred at Balos, where large numbers of Condors were caught on the ground. Many were lost before they could retreat, stranding several divisions of GROPOS on that planet for months until a follow-up attack could be mounted.

Since then, Condors have been used only sparingly in combat. Quite a few were sent to recapture lost bases or colonies during the Earth/Minbari War, but rarely reached their objectives. Generally, the Minbari destroyed the attacking fleet before it could clear the way for the transports, but sometimes they did manage to deploy their troops. In such cases, they almost never survived the inevitable counterattack. Most of the surviving Condors were wiped out at the Battle of the Line, where they pitted their puny weapons suite against the attacking Minbari host and were swept aside like chaff. Since that war, a few have been rebuilt, but the Alliance does not seem to be in a huge hurry to replace lost troop transports when greater needs exist elsewhere.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 450; DV 7 (-10 size, +7 agility); DR 16; Spd 18; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +4; Sensor +3; Stealth 16; SQ Atmospheric Capable, Long-Ranged; Cargo 100,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 24 Pilots, 8 Sensor Operators, 32 Crewmen, 800 troops or 60 ground vehicles/aircraft

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2209-2254): Missile racks, standard particle beams.

Beta Model (2232-present): Enlarged shuttle capability in exchange for troop space.

Gamma Model Weapons:

Two Small Missile Racks; 2 Front/Left/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Guidance 5; Damage 20+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 5

Two Twin-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Forward, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front/Left/Right, 1 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

24 Assault Shuttles, 60 Ground Vehicles or Aircraft

EarthForce One

In the early days of space exploration, the President of the Earth Alliance visited space installations purely for the purpose of public relations. Later, as colonies became established, he found other reasons to leave Earth and travel to the stars. To perform these duties, he needed a ship, one that was not only fast and secure, but comfortable and classy enough to host diplomatic meetings. This vessel became known as EarthForce One.

Early models of EarthForce One were reasonably comfortable, but were still zero-G affairs. After the development of the Orion Starbase, Alliance designers came up with a rotating internal section for the spherical body of EarthForce One, using centrifugal force to produce artificial gravity. This allows the President and other dignitaries to live in a near-Earth environment, even enjoying such comforts as indoor plumbing, running water, gardens, and even a park with a small, simulated sun. While the President and his staff are aboard, every possible means is employed to give the illusion that he is not on a spaceship at all, but simply within an ordinary office building. Unless the ship is accelerating or decelerating, this illusion can usually be maintained without too much trouble.

EarthForce One is not technically a ship class, as these huge vessels are not built for use outside the diplomatic community. They are armed, but only for emergency use, or to impress visiting dignitaries with flashy lightshows. When EarthForce One carries the President, it is usually escorted by at least a squadron of Starfuries with elite pilots. A second ship of this class, EarthForce Two, carries the Vice President when he is on a mission of his own, and it is no less defended. The Alliance also maintains two additional ships of this class at all times in reserve should something happen to the primary craft, but no other samples of this ship exist.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 400; DV 8 (-10 size, +8 agility); DR 16; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +4; Sensor +3; Stealth 15; SQ Long-Ranged, Artificial Gravity; Cargo 200,000 lb.; 12 Officers, 16 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators, 66 Crewmen, 120 Passengers

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2130-2169): Early missile racks, light lasers, no rotating section, no fighters.

Beta Model (2168-2192): Early missile racks, light particle beams, prototype interceptors.

Gamma Model (2190-2251): Particle beams, standard interceptors, fighters replace missiles, rotating section.

Delta Model (2251-present): Particle beams, advanced interceptors, hangar enlarged for advanced fighters.

Delta Model Weapons:

Two Particle Beams; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2

Three Mk II Interceptors; 1 Front/Left/Right, 1 Left/Rear, 1 Right/Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

12 Starfuries or Thunderbolts in two bays, 2 Shuttles (usually armed light shuttles)

Perseus Minesweeper

In the late 22nd Century, the Deep Space Exploration Force published an in-depth analytical report indicating the propensity of the Centauri and other nearby races to routinely engage in mine warfare. At that time, the Alliance used specially modified freighters to break through the weak minefields employed by

raiders, but studies of Centauri field designs indicated such methods would not be effective in wartime. Centauri minefields were not just explosive proximity types guarded by a few seeking captor mines, but complicated layered affairs designed to draw a minesweeper into their web before destroying it with mass energy weapons fire. Furthermore, freighters were too slow to make effective combat minesweepers, as they could be easily hunted down and destroyed by enemy fleet elements.

To this end, the Perseus hull was designed. Heavily armoured and armed with short-ranged anti-mine weapons, the new ship was fully capable of locating and destroying mines in short order, even deconstructing Centauri fields layer by layer. Although it possessed no offensive guns of any significance, the occasional Perseus also served in an escort role, defending against fighter strikes with its close-range weaponry. In a typical mission, however, it would precede the fleet, searching for mines and cutting a path through any field before it had a chance to damage or destroy the more critical lead ships. Needless to say, this left it vulnerable to long-range fire from a base or fleet on the opposite side of the mines, so Perseus designers included the maximum armour and stealth equipment available. While the ship is not particularly manoeuvrable, it is among the hardest ships to hit and damage in the Alliance navy.

In addition to its role as a minesweeper, the Perseus can also carry a large contingent of mines for its own use. Generally, these are employed around friendly bases and outposts, or to replace lost mines from existing fields. Sometimes, especially when dealing with raiders, the Perseus will remove mines from an enemy field and replace them with friendly ones. Many a pirate, fleeing into the imagined safety of a pre-placed minefield, has suddenly found itself crippled by a 'surprise' planted there days or weeks before by a patrolling Perseus.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 450; DV 10 (-10 size, +10 agility); DR 20; Spd -; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +3; Sensor +3; Stealth 10; SQ Long-Ranged; Cargo 200,000 lb. (mostly mines); 6 Officers, 8 Pilots, 15 Sensor Operators, 26 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2196-2247): Plasma cannons, particle beams.
Beta Model (2245-present): Pulse cannons exclusively.

Beta Model Weapons:

Six Light Pulse Cannons; 2 Front, 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
Four Mk I Interceptors; 2 Front/Left/Right, 2 Rear/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire
Minesweeping System: Sensor range doubled for mine detection. All weapons +4 to hit when shooting at mines.

Craft:

4 Shuttles (usually armed light shuttles for additional minesweeping support)

Myrmidon Light Combat Vessel

The class of ships known as light combat vessels, or LCVs, are among the oldest in the Alliance. The first was the London class, produced in the early 2130s as a kind of long-range fighter. Fighters of the age were simple affairs, lacking even a significant superstructure, and incapable of anything other than very close-in work. A carrier would haul its fighters along on external linkages, with pilots enduring the journey in spacesuits until the time for the mission arrived. Then, they would launch, engage the enemy for a short period, then return and remain in the docking clamp for the trip home.

The LCV was intended to alleviate this difficulty, and for a while, they served EarthForce well. With their crew of four to six individuals, they were cheaper to operate than a full-sized ship, yet possessed the ability to fly all the way across the solar system and back if need be. Still, compared to a fighter, they cost as much as ten times the price, so they never quite managed to edge out their rivals in the minds (and budgets) of EarthForce. Even the development of the more capable Delta fighter did not end the career of the London LCV, as the Delta could never hope to match a London's range.

The arrival of the Centauri and interstellar travel was what finally spelled the end of the Alliance's LCV project. The London had no ability to survive the rigors of hyperspace, and designing a carrier capable of fielding them using internal bays was not a viable option. Feasibility studies were conducted towards this end, using information gathered from a nearby LCV specialist race called the Deneth, but in the end EarthForce deemed LCV-carriers too expensive to pursue. Thereafter, LCV production slowly ground to a halt, with existing hulls relegated to colonial defence.

The LCV concept was not resurrected again until after the Earth/Minbari War. At this time, virtually every holding in the possession of the Earth Alliance was left undefended, as there simply were not enough ships available to cover every vulnerable site. While starship production was underway at a furious pace, too few shipyards survived the war to construct enough of them at a rapid enough clip. Something small and easy to build was required, and the light combat vessel was reborn.

The new Myrmidon class possessed one thing the early Londons lacked, and that was the ability to travel through hyperspace. After all, by now the Alliance had learned enough to produce Starfuries capable of making journeys into that torturous alternate dimension, so adapting those technologies to use on LCVs proved to be no particular challenge. In a matter of months, squadrons of LCVs were speeding their way to the outer colonies, where they took up picket duty, guarding against alien incursions. A swarm of these, along with several larger ships, were enough to convince the Ch'Lonas not to attack Beta 7 in 2247. Myrmidons were also instrumental in preventing raider attacks in nearly every corner of Earth space.

Today, Myrmidons continue to operate as system defence boats, but rarely leave the systems to which they have been assigned. They can fly from one star to another, but their lack of any other

significant range prevents them from acting as a fleet support unit, a role better left to fighters.

Myrmidons carry a small crew and firepower far in advance of any fighter, but cannot employ heavy weapons. Their crew compartments are cramped and uncomfortable, with only the barest necessities available for survival. In the event of damage, the lack of a carrier provides no easy means to return to base for repairs. Despite these disadvantages, LCV crews tend to become attached to their little ships, and have developed quite a rivalry with 'stuck-up fighter-jockeys.'

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 75; DV 12 (-4 size, +6 agility); DR 8; Spd 20; Acc 8; Dec 4; Han +5; Sensor +2; Stealth 15; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 1,000 lb.; 2 Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 3 Crewmen

Weapons:

One Medium Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

One Twin-Linked Light Pulse Cannon; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+4d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

One Mk I Interceptor; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

None.

Defensive Installations

Orion Starbase

In the early days of the Alliance, space stations were built for singular purposes, rarely for defence. A wide variety of different types existed, from military docking ports to scientific research outposts and commercial cargo transfer points. Just about every company that ventured into space built its own orbiting administrative centre, and the Earth Alliance was no exception. While these bases existed in many forms, the one thing they all had in common was a circular or cylindrical shape, enabling them to spin in place for rotational artificial gravity.

The arrival of the Centauri produced an immediate need for a large base capable of operating simultaneously as a defence station and an orbital headquarters. The first Orion was built over Earth in 2168, alongside the Republic's jumpgate, but soon Orions were popping up throughout the newly established colonies.

Production of one of these immense structures was generally the sign that the Alliance was here to stay. In fact, construction of such a base was the spark that finally provoked the Ch'Lonas to attack Beta 7 in early 2170.

Orion bases seemed like the perfect platform on which to mount railguns, and indeed, railgun-equipped models were the standard configurations for most of the 23rd Century. Recent pulse cannon models have changed this trend, but for the most part, an Orion possesses a strong combination of long-range anti-ship weapons and short-range anti-fighter guns. This allows these huge bases to defend themselves against any threat without a need for escorts. Still, the Alliance usually assigns at least a few ships to each Orion to ensure security. Typically these are of the Orestes and Myrmidon class, although a few Tethys usually attend as well to operate as mobile police forces.

Orion starbases are ring-shaped, with a central hub for docking and cargo transfer purposes. The outer areas contain crew quarters, storage facilities, administrative offices, military barracks, and the like. Security is generally tight on these bases, as terrorists and pirates see them as huge, highly visible targets.

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2168-2222): Early missile racks, plasma cannons.

Beta Model (2190-2242): Railguns, standard missile racks, heavy plasma cannons.

Gamma Model (2220-2246): Upgrades missile racks to starbase quality.

Delta Model (2240-2246): Heavy plasma cannons become heavy pulse cannons.

Epsilon Model (2246-2246): Heavy laser model to combat Minbari.

Zeta Model (2246-present): Heavy lasers, advanced interceptors.

Eta Model (2254-present): Heavy lasers, heavy interceptor batteries, larger fighter hangars.

Statistics:

Because an Orion starbase is a very large space object, it is treated as a station rather than as a starship for purposes of damage and combat. The Orion starbase has two quadrants that equate to its defence grid and a number of critical sections that determine its overall hit points. See Damaging the Orion Starbase for information on how it tracks damage and The Orion



Defense Grid for details about its weaponry. Like all space objects large enough to be classified as stations, the Orion can fire all of its weapons into as many of its four quadrants as it wishing during a combat turn. Due to its construction, an Orion is immobile, is considered long ranged, and has artificial gravity through rotating sections.

Damaging the Orion Starbase

Every section of the Orion Starbase is assumed to have Damage Reduction 20 and 200 hit points, unless noted otherwise. Once this damage has been scored, a vital area of the hull will be breached and any further damage that gets through its Damage Reduction will knock out that section. See individual sections below to determine what befalls the Orion if this occurs. Specific sections can be targeted; there are large enough that if an attacker wishes to specify a given section, it is hit if the attack roll beats a DV of 10. Missed attack rolls do not hit the station at all. Instead of attacking a specific section, an enemy can simply shoot at the superstructure section; attacks against it are against a DV -6 (-16 size, +0 agility).

Superstructure: 1000 hit points. If destroyed, the Orion starbase breaks apart in 1d4 rounds and is effectively disabled. Numerous personnel would live through a station breakup, but many would die and the systems of the starbase will cease working in any event.

Weapons Platforms: The Orion has two of these, one for each side of its defense grid. If this section is destroyed, the weapons of the defense grid cannot fire in that arc and attacks made in the other arc suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to hit.

Crew and Troop Section: At any given time, the Orion holds 24 Officers, 48 Pilots, 24 Sensor Operators, 1,200 Crewmen, and 400 Troops. If the crew section is holed, enough essential personnel are killed that the station suffers a -2 circumstance penalty on every significant action it attempts to take. If the section is destroyed, the remaining personnel can operate the station but at a much larger -4 penalty.

Docking and Cargo Hub: If this section is holed, no ships may leave or enter the Orion until it can be repaired out of combat. This freezes all remaining fighters and shuttles and makes it difficult for the station to conduct normal business. If the area is destroyed, all fighters and shuttles remaining inside the Orion are destroyed and any ship currently docked with it suffers half its total hit points in damage (DR not applicable). The Orion can carry 2,500,000 lb. of cargo.

Command and Control: This area, if holed, kills enough command staff that the starbase loses a full round and is at a -1 penalty to all actions thereafter until the officers can be replaced out of combat. If it is destroyed, the Orion is effectively shut down and can take no direct action against external enemies. No one anywhere else on the station is harmed, which will allow it to repel boarding actions without the -1 penalty if need be. Fighters and shuttle can still use the bays and ships may still dock with the hub.

Sensors and Stealth

Boosted by an integral sensory network and multiple slaved XP-7 tracking units, the Orion starbase has a Sensor score of +8 and a Stealth of 10.

The Orion Defence Grid

The Defence Grid of an Orion starbase is divided into two sides, left and right, with a 180 degree field of fire each and has the following weaponry:

Zeta Model Weapons:

- Six Heavy Laser Cannons; 1 in each facing; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 40+4d10; Critical 19-20; Range 18
- Six Heavy Pulse Cannons; 1 in each facing; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 15; Rapid Fire
- Eight Starbase Missile Racks; 2 Turret, 1 in each facing; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 60
- Twelve Mk II Interceptors; 2 in each facing; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Eta Model Weapons:

- Six Heavy Laser Cannons; 1 in each facing; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 40+4d10; Critical 19-20; Range 18
- Six Heavy Pulse Cannons; 1 in each facing; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 15; Rapid Fire
- Eight Starbase Missile Racks; 2 Turret, 1 in each facing; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 60
- Six Heavy Interceptor Batteries; 1 in each facing; Attack +6 (targeting computer); Damage 30+5d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5; Rapid Fire

Spacecraft Complement

An Orion starbase has the following spacecraft permanently assigned to it, kept within docking bays:

36 Starfuries held in 6 bays (Eta model can hold Thunderbolts)
6 Shuttles

Dionysus Mid-Range Military Base

The Dilgar War forced many changes and improvements in EarthForce. Prior to that war, the Alliance simply had no intention of conducting any sort of war that would carry them any distance into foreign territory. The Senate refused to acknowledge any need for anything remotely imperialist - not just on moral grounds, but also to assure their smaller neighbours among the League that they had no intention of embarking upon a war of conquest.

The sudden need to occupy large swaths of territory required the creation of a huge line of supply unlike anything the Alliance had ever known. However, the civilian ships, Hermes transports, and similar vessels needed to support the war effort simply did not possess the range to press the attack home to the Dilgar. Constructing an Orion starbase in every occupied system was also unfeasible, considering the sheer amount of raw materials required, not to mention the amount of time it would take to produce such an immense facility.

The solution was the Dionysus, an armed logistics station that could be quickly and easily assembled from prefabricated parts. In basic form, it strongly resembled a miniature Orion, although its size was still considerable. Segments of a Dionysus could be stored within a standard cargo pod and hauled to their destination, where several Cotten tenders would then assemble the parts and set it to rotating. League ship captains, rushing to the front lines, were often stunned to see a functional Dionysus already in place within a recently captured system. Heavily damaged vessels, desperately begging the Fleet to send the next tender their way, were frequently told to simply limp to the nearest Dionysus instead because it would be faster. By the time the war ended, the remark 'Instant Starbase – Just Add Water' came into regular usage.

After the Invasion, EarthForce used the network of Dionysus bases to aid its gradual withdrawal from liberated space. Many of the outposts were dismantled and taken home, where they saw new life as cargo drop-points and secondary bases within colonial systems. Many were purchased by corporations, after which, stripped of weapons, they became civilian control centres for mining and research firms. A few Dionysus bases were left behind in League space, having been sold to grateful races for fractions of their value - and the promise of lucrative trade treaties. One eventually morphed into the Freedom station operated by the Tirrith Free State (see 'Fiery Trial' for more information).

The Dionysus base is much like an Orion in its basic design. The central hub operates as a docking port capable of servicing up to two vessels, while the outer rings contain storage, living quarters, and whatever else is required in the appropriate system. When used as a military outpost, these external decks contain fighters, troops, weapons, parts, and supplies for ships operating in the field.

Statistics:

Colossal III Starbase; hp 750; DV -2 (-12 size, +0 agility); DR 20; Spd N/A; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +4 (dual sensor arrays); Stealth 10; SQ Immobile, Artificial Gravity (Rotating), Long-Ranged; Cargo 500,000 lb.; 24 Officers, 40 Sensor Operators, 200 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2230-present): Particle cannons, Starfury fighters only.

Beta Model (2255-present): Pulse cannons, Starfuries or Thunderbolts.

Statistics:

Because a Dionysus base is a very large space object, it is treated as a station rather than as a starship for purposes of damage and combat. The Dionysus has two quadrants that equate to its defence grid and a number of critical sections that determine its overall hit points. See **Damaging the Dionysus** for information on how it tracks damage and **The Dionysus Defence Grid** for details about its weaponry. Like all space objects large enough to be classified as stations, the Dionysus can fire all of its weapons into as many of its four quadrants as it wishing during a combat turn. Due to its construction, a Dionysus is immobile, is considered long ranged, and has artificial gravity through rotating sections.

Damaging the Dionysus

Every section of the Dionysus is assumed to have Damage Reduction 18 and 100 hit points, unless noted otherwise. Once this damage has been scored, a vital area of the hull will be breached and any further damage that gets through its Damage Reduction will knock out that section. See individual sections below to determine what befalls the Dionysus if this occurs. Specific sections can be targeted; there are large enough that if an attacker wishes to specify a given section, it is hit if the attack roll beats a DV of 10. Missed attack rolls do not hit the station at all. Instead of attacking a specific section, an enemy can simply shoot at the superstructure section; attacks against it are against a DV -2 (-12 size, +0 agility).

Superstructure: 600 hit points. If destroyed, the Dionysus breaks apart in 1d4 rounds and is effectively disabled. Numerous personnel would live through a station breakup, but many would die and the systems of the starbase will cease working in any event.

Weapons Platforms: The Dionysus has two of these, one for each side of its defense grid. If this section is destroyed, the weapons of the defense grid cannot fire in that arc and attacks made in the other arc suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to hit.

Crew and Troop Section: At any given time, the Dionysus base holds 24 Officers, 40 Sensor Operators, and 200 Crewmen. If the crew section is holed, enough essential personnel are killed that the station suffers a -2 circumstance penalty on every significant action it attempts to take. If the section is destroyed, the remaining personnel can operate the station but at a much larger -4 penalty.

Docking and Cargo Hub: If this section is holed, no ships may leave or enter the Dionysus until it can be repaired out of combat. This freezes all remaining fighters and shuttles and makes it difficult for the station to conduct normal business. If the area is destroyed, all fighters and shuttles remaining inside the Dionysus are destroyed and any ship currently docked with it suffers half its total hit points in damage (DR not applicable). The Dionysus base can carry 500,000 lb. of cargo.

Command and Control: This area, if holed, kills enough command staff that the starbase loses a full round and is at a -1 penalty to all actions thereafter until the officers can be replaced out of combat. If it is destroyed, the Dionysus is effectively shut down and can take no direct action against external enemies. No one anywhere else on the station is harmed, which will allow it to repel boarding actions without the -1 penalty if need be. Fighters and shuttle can still use the bays and ships may still dock with the hub.

Sensors and Stealth

Boosted by an integral sensory network and twin slaved XP-7 tracking units, the Orion starbase has a Sensor score of +4 and a Stealth of 10.

The Dionysus Defence Grid

The Defence Grid of an Orion starbase is divided into two sides, left and right, with a 180 degree field of fire each and has the following weaponry:

Alpha Model Weapons:

- Four Twin-linked Laser Cannons; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 40+6d10; Critical 19-20; Range 15
- Four Twin-Linked Particle Beams; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Beta Model Weapons:

- Four Twin-Linked Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 12; Rapid Fire
- Four Twin-Linked Light Pulse Cannon; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+4d6; Critical 20; Range 9; Rapid Fire

Spacecraft Complement

A Dionysis base has the following spacecraft permanently assigned to it, kept within docking bays:

24 Starfuries held in 4 bays (Beta model can hold Thunderbolts)
4 Shuttles, one in each of the fighter bays

Prometheus Defence Satellite

After the arrival of the Centauri in the mid-22nd Century, the Alliance found itself faced with the terrible realisation that alien races exist and could show up at any moment as conquerors. Lacking any sort of significant military to fight off such an invasion, EarthForce began the construction of a global defence satellite network intended solely for use against attackers located outside Earth's orbit. There were plenty of combat satellites already in place, but these were concerned as much with targets on the ground or rising up from the missile silos as they were against spacecraft approaching from outside the atmosphere. Now, for the first time, the Alliance focused its defences against ships arriving from other locations.

The first Prometheus defence satellites used early rapid-fire missile racks and possessed a few limited short-range guns for use against fighters. As time passed, improvements were made to the missile delivery systems at various stages until they eventually possessed the same firepower and speed as those found on advanced starbases.

Standard defence satellites are unmanned, but possess a docking port that can allow service and resupply crews aboard for repairs or reloading purposes. The satellites are controlled by remote devices at the local starbase or from ground installations. Satellites cannot move during combat, but have sufficient thrusters to change orbit when needed, or to pivot in place to face their targets.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 100; DV 2 (-8 size, +0 agility); DR 15; Spd N/A; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +4; Stealth 20; SQ Immobile, Long-Ranged; Cargo 10,000 lb. (mostly spare missiles); No Crew

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2169-2212): Early missile racks, light particle beams, prototype interceptor.

Beta Model (2194-2247): Standard missile racks, particle beams, and interceptor.

Gamma Model (2247-present): Starbase missile racks, light pulse cannons.

Gamma Model Weapons:

Two Starbase Missile Racks; 2 Forward; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 60

Two Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 9; Rapid Fire
One Mk I Interceptor; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Craft:

None

Bellerophon Heavy Defence Satellite

After the Earth/Minbari War, EarthForce was faced with the immediate need to replace huge arrays of orbital defences around virtually every colony world and outpost in the Alliance. In addition to new models of the standard satellite (see above), a program was designed to develop a much larger device capable of mounting heavy weapons. Originally intended for the defence of Earth, Bellerophon heavy satellites were soon emplaced over nearly every major colony in significant numbers. Control of these orbiting death platforms was left in the hands of the Alliance military, ensuring that a rebelling colony could not use these weapons for their own purposes. As an unintended side effect, this also permitted a satellite to be turned upon the very world it defended, should it fall into the wrong hands.

The original Bellerophon employed a pair of linked heavy laser cannons, but alongside that design, the Alliance experimented with a massive particle cannon based in part on technologies 'acquired' from the Drazi Freehold. Heavy particle cannons alone do not score more damage than a pair of heavy lasers, but are more effective at scoring critical damage and possess a greatly increased range - one made even more impressive when fired from a fixed platform. These massive weapons so far defy any attempt to place them on a starship, as they seem to require a heavier and more stable hull than anything the Alliance can yet construct. Perhaps if artificial gravity technologies were one day mastered, a heavy particle cannon might find a home on a warship of the future.

Like the Prometheus, Bellerophon heavy satellites are not manned. They do have a large docking port capable of supporting shuttles and freighters for resupply purposes. Satellites cannot move during combat, but have sufficient thrusters to change orbit when needed, or to pivot in place to face their targets.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 300; DV 0 (-10 size, +0 agility); DR 16; Spd N/A; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +4; Stealth 20; SQ Immobile, Long-Ranged; Cargo 30,000 lb. (mostly spare missiles); No Crew

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2252-present): Laser version.

Beta Model (2252-present): Heavy particle cannon version.

Alpha Model Weapons:

Twin-linked Heavy Laser Cannon; Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 80+8d10; Critical 19-20; Range 18

Four Starbase Missile Racks; 2 Forward; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 60

Four Light Pulse Cannons; 2 Left, 2 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 9; Rapid Fire

Two Mk II Interceptors; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Beta Model Weapons:

Heavy Particle Cannon; Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 75+7d10; Critical 17-20; Range 30

Four Starbase Missile Racks; 2 Forward; Guidance 5; Damage 30+3d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 5; Reloads 60

Four Light Pulse Cannons; 2 Left, 2 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 9; Rapid Fire

Two Mk II Interceptors; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Craft:

None

Minefields

Minefields have been a part of warfare almost since the development of explosives themselves. Early designs appeared on land and sea as a passive means to kill troops and damage or sink enemy ships. By nature, they are an inexpensive means of defence, but have the side effect of affecting friendly forces as well as the other side. Also, because they are so cheap, they tended to proliferate throughout the ages. Even on Earth today, there are still regions of lesser developed nations so choked with ancient minefields that no one dares venture there.

Space-based minefields first appeared in the early 22nd Century as a way to defend larger mining outposts from raiders. These mines were not explosive types, but rather floating gun platforms controlled from the station itself. The development of more advanced automatic triggers did not appear until EarthForce itself began using mines to shield its own assets from potentially hostile forces in the middle part of the century.

One of the truths about space is that it is three-dimensional, so minefields had to cover a much wider expanse of territory than on land or the ocean's surface. For this reason, it is impossible to use mines to cover, say, every potential approach to a planet or base. Mines typically occupy territory near the objective or in high orbit around a world. Any scenario involving such fields will represent only a small portion of the actual quantity of mines in that region. If, for example, an alien race defends a small moon with mines, it will not be possible to reach the surface by simply flying around the mines on the game map.

The field will extend all the way around the planet, so some means to breach it will need to be found.

On a planet that contains ground installations, there is generally a 'safe corridor' prepared in advance for friendly forces to use without fear. This approach frequently requires several turns at pre-defined waypoints. A ground station may also insist upon some sort of deactivation code to turn off pre-programmed DEW mines in the back of the field. Lacking the proper signal, a ship or shuttle trying to sneak onto the planet may well find itself under attack.

Literally hundreds of types of mines have appeared over the past few decades, but after the Earth/Minbari War, a new generation began to appear. The most popular of these are listed below, defined by letter-coded class types (mine classes do not receive proper names like ships do). Many other types have also been seen and might appear in future products.

There are three basic types of mines in service. These are: (1) proximity mines, which explode with great force when a spacecraft gets too close; (2) captor mines, possessing thrusters capable of seeking out nearby targets; and (3) directed energy weapon (DEW) mines, with the obvious array of guns to train on more distant opponents.

Proximity mines, the cheapest, have the shortest range and tend to be used only in very well-defined areas. In combat, a proximity mine is deployed secretly, invisible to the opposition. When a ship or shuttle enters its explosion range (1 hex from the mine unless otherwise noted), the mine blows up, scoring damage equal to its Explosion statistic against every unit within the blast radius. Mines of this type cannot identify friend or foe and will explode regardless of what it detects, but they can be pre-set to ignore certain sizes of units. A mine intended to destroy ships, for example, might be set to detonate only against Colossal spacecraft or larger. Similarly, a raider outpost that employed only Colossal II ships could order its mines to explode only if some unit of any other size entered its detection radius. Regardless of programming instructions, however, the actual explosion will damage anything - friend or foe - within the blast zone.

Captor mines are insidious, as they are hardest to spot and can home in on a ship even if it passes by at relatively high speeds. As with proximity mines, they can be programmed to engage only certain sizes of units. When an appropriate target enters their detection radius - which is much larger than that of a proximity mine - they immediately lock on, fire their thrusters, and speed towards the hull, exploding upon impact. In battle, resolve this by placing the captor mine on the map the moment it activates. The mine receives an initiative value equal to the activating unit's, but immediately before that unit. The next time the mine's initiative comes up in the combat sequence, it instantly moves up to its listed range and explodes against the target, damaging that unit and any other craft in the same hex. Friendly forces have until that time to shoot down the mine. The only other means to prevent the captor mine from hitting is to move out of range, fly behind a planet or other large object, or escape into hyperspace. If any of these occur, the mine loses tracking and does not activate its thrusters, returning to its inert state and waiting for the next potential target to appear.

DEW mines, because of their expense, rarely appear alone, and are generally deployed near active installations or behind shields of other, cheaper mines. If located and undefended, they can easily be picked off by long-range weapons fire. DEW mines possess standard weapons as shown in the statistics list presented hereafter, and fire them like any other unit would. They use initiative levels as described under the captor mine description. Once activated, they fire at any eligible target within their range at every opportunity. If more than one potential target exists, they choose the closest one.

Statistics:

All mines are Immobile and are classed as Large Satellites. They have N/A speed, acceleration, deceleration, and handling statistics. They have a DV of 9 (-1 size, +0 agility). They carry no cargo and are unmanned. Other statistics by type are listed below:

Class-P1 Proximity: hp 5; DR 5; Stealth 16; Damage 10+1d10

Class-P2 Proximity: hp 5; DR 5; Stealth 21; Explosion 20+2d10

Class-P3 Proximity: hp 5; DR 5; Stealth 19; Explosion 30+3d10

Class-C1 Captor: hp 10; DR 5; Stealth 19; Speed: 2; Fuel 2; Damage 10+1d10

Class-C2 Captor: hp 12; DR 6; Stealth 17; Speed: 2; Fuel 2; Damage 20+2d10

Class-C3 Captor: hp 10; DR 5; Stealth 15; Speed: 2; Fuel 2; Damage 30+3d10

Class-D1 DEW: hp 20; DR 7; Stealth 19; Range 3; Interceptor.

Class-D2 DEW: hp 30; DR 6; Stealth 18; Range 3; Particle Beam.

Class-D3 DEW: hp 25; DR 7; Stealth 15; Range 6; Plasma Cannon.

Class-D4 DEW: hp 35; DR 5; Stealth 12; Range 8; Laser Cannon.

Class-D5 DEW: hp 35; DR 5; Stealth 12; Range 9; Pulse Cannon.

Historical Summary:

All mines shown here are in service today. Dates below indicate the year of introduction.

Proximity: P1 2201, P2 2248, P3 2251

Captor: C1 2231, C2 2250, C3 2255

DEW: D1 2210, D2 2221, D3 2216, D4 2236, D5 2244

DEW Mine Weapons:

All mine weapons are omnidirectional. While most DEW mines operate under automatic controls, some are programmed to accept commands from nearby bases. This allows the larger mine types to fire beyond their normal activation range, and can supersede pre-defined size definitions. Note that as soon as a DEW mine fires, it is automatically detected regardless of its stealth value.

Class-D1: One Mk I Interceptor; Attack +3; Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Class-D2: One Particle Beam; Attack +3; Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 3

Class-D3: One Medium Plasma Cannon; Attack +2; Damage 15+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Class-D4: One Laser Cannon; Attack +2; Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 15

Class-D5: One Medium Pulse Cannon; Attack +2; Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 12; Rapid Fire

Fighters and Shuttles

Aurora Starfury

Often regarded as the first line of defence for many Earth Alliance installations and outposts, the Starfury has undergone many revisions and upgrades throughout its service history, but remains a frontline non-atmospheric fighter capable of retaining space-superiority. Its unique X-foil design, which mounts the pilot in an upright position to reduce the effects of high-gravity manoeuvres, allows for superb agility in space combat but the Starfury is often found wanting in more specialised missions as it is utterly incapable of entering a planetary atmosphere. However, with main armament comprising two forward firing JC 266 20-megawatt uni-pulse cannon controlled by a Duffy 1018 MJS smart targeting computer, it is a craft capable of successfully battling almost any alien fighter. Two lighter raid-firing pulse cannon are also mounted in the wing roots above the pilot's position, though restrictions in the Starfury's fusion reactor output means both sets of weapons may not be fired simultaneously.

Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 30; DV 15 (-2 size, +7 agility); DR 6; Spd -; Acc 10; Dec 6; Han +6; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; SQ Afterburners, Ejector Seat, Grapple, Pivotal Thrusters; Cargo 10 lb.; 1 Pilot

Historical Summary:

Aries Starfury (2168-2186): Ultralight particle beam, no wing thrusters.

Flying Fox Starfury (2180-2207): The final non-split wing design, and the first to experiment with outside thrusters.

Tiger Starfury (2203-2236): Uni-pulse cannon, split wings, fully pivotal thrusters.

Nova Starfury (2230-2247): Many improvements based on captured Dilgar Thorun Dartfighters.

Aurora Starfury (2244-present): Current design with multiple uni-pulse cannons and grapple.

Weapons:

Twin-linked Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 4d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1
Twin-linked Light Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Thunderbolt Attack Fighter

The Thunderbolt is the next generation of advanced fighters developed along the ongoing Starfury program. As with most previous incarnations along this line, the new fighter is known by its class name of Thunderbolt instead of the overall moniker

of Starfury. As older Aurora types are phased out, however, it is likely that the Thunderbolt, or T-bolt as it is frequently known, will also take on the overall Starfury name. However, this might take some time, as most existing carriers cannot easily operate the slightly larger, atmospheric-capable T-bolt frame.

Thunderbolts possess several improvements over the basic Aurora. In addition to obvious advances in thrust, acceleration, armour, and staying power, the T-bolt also mounts a more compact gatling pulse cannon that scores more damage than the Starfury's uni-pulse cannons while occupying less space on the fuselage. Thunderbolts also possess wing-based missile racks capable of deploying two missiles per combat round, although if fired in dual mode, both must be at the same target.

The Thunderbolt also has a back seat that supports an optional navigator. If a navigator is present, he frees up the pilot to pay more attention to the battle, resulting in overall improvements to the fighter's handling and firing abilities. In addition, the navigator can deploy missiles on his own. Without a navigator, the pilot can fire either the gatling pulse cannon or the missiles during one round, but not both.

At present, Thunderbolts can only be employed on the following ships and bases: Omega, Poseidon, EarthForce One, Orion, and Dionysus. The fighter is still so new that no refits have yet been put into service to permit other carriers, such as the Avenger and Hyperion, to operate T-bolts.

Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 35; DV 16 (-2 size, +8 agility), or 17 (+9 agility) if Navigator present; DR 8; Spd 32; Acc 12; Dec 8; Han +6 (+8 if Navigator present); Sensor +3; Stealth 16; SQ Atmospheric Capable, Afterburners, Ejector Seat, Grapple, Pivotal Thrusters; Cargo 10 lb.; 1 Pilot, 1 Navigator (optional)

Historical Summary:

For other Starfury models, see previous entry.
Thunderbolt (2259-present): Standard model.

Weapons:

Gatling Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer), or +3 if Navigator present; Damage 4d10; Critical 19-20; Range 1
Two Fighter Missile Racks; Boresight; Guidance 4; Damage 15+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 3

Badger Starfury

Badgers are a long-range variant of the Starfury designed to fly ahead of its carrier by at least a full hyperspace jump before returning. They possess an extended cockpit with a navigator's seat facing towards the rear. The navigator controls the tailgun and can operate the missiles as well, but neither pilot nor navigator can fire his uni-pulse cannons and launch missiles on the same round. Thus, a Badger could fire missiles and one of its two sets of guns, but not all three. The Badger does not possess the light uni-pulse cannons found on the basic Aurora design.

Badgers are very uncommon due to their expense and the navigator requirement. They can be used on any carrier that

operates normal Auroras, but no more than one-quarter of any carrier's complement can be Badgers. Across the whole of EarthForce, perhaps no more than 5% of the total number of existing Starfuries are of the Badger type, and this number will likely decrease now that the Thunderbolt is on the scene.

Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 35; DV 16 (-2 size, +8 agility); DR 6; Spd -; Acc 10; Dec 6; Han +7; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; SQ Long Range, Afterburners, Ejector Seat, Grapple, Pivotal Thrusters; Cargo 25 lb.; 1 Pilot, 1 Navigator

Historical Summary:

Badger (2255-present): Standard model.

Weapons:

Twin-linked Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 4d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1
One Uni-Pulse Cannon; Tailsight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1
Twin-linked Light Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1; Rapid Fire
Two Fighter Missile Racks; Boresight; Guidance 4; Damage 15+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 3

Light Shuttle

A standard utilitarian workhorse found across the colonies and outposts of the Earth Alliance, the shuttle is a basic but highly adaptable design that has gone relatively unchanged for many years. Originally envisioned as a light transport for Earth Force, its use has since spread to commercial operations though the relatively high cost of even used models still reserves it service to large corporations rather than the common man. The shuttle is highly modular in nature and can be adapted to a variety of functions, with some military vessels even sporting a single uni-pulse cannon normally found on the Starfury heavy fighter.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 40; DV 9 (-4 size, +3 agility); DR 6; Spd 25; Acc 5; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +0; Stealth 16; SQ Afterburners, Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 2,500 lb.; 1 Pilot, 3 Passengers

Weapons (optional):

One Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1

Standard Transport Shuttle

Slightly larger than the light shuttle, this vessel lacks the atmospheric capabilities of its counterpart but is able to bear a far heavier payload. It is typically used to ferry passengers and cargo from large ships to the docking facilities of Earth Alliance colonies and space stations, though it is also capable of transporting its crew great distances between the stars by utilising jumpgates, and doing so in relative comfort.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 50; DV 10 (-4 size, +4 agility); DR 7; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 13; Cargo 5,000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 24 Passengers

Hades Assault Shuttle

The Hades is a highly specialised shuttle designed solely for the purpose of delivering troops into potentially hazardous situations. It is a very large shuttlecraft and possesses extendable wings to aid in atmospheric flight operations. In the event there of resistance at the target site, the Hades is equipped with a single uni-pulse cannon like that found on the Starfury. This weapon can also be used to fend off enemy fighters, but the Hades would never be employed strictly as a space combat unit.

A given Hades can carry up to 50 combat-ready troops or two large ground vehicles or aircraft and their crews. While combat vehicles could emerge in a battle-ready state upon landing, any aircraft loaded aboard would be deactivated, with wings and engines folded in a safe position for transport. These could not be deployed into a scenario straightaway, but require approximately thirty minutes of preparation and fueling. A Hades cannot carry Starfuries, other shuttles, or anything not designed to fit within its hollow interior.

The Hades is based upon a very early assault shuttle design called the Bolt. Bolts operated in the decades prior to the Dilgar War, and were the primary landing craft employed on the Condor troop transport. The Dilgar Invasion forced the Alliance to develop the more capable Hades, which has served EarthForce since that time.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 60; DV 10 (-4 size, +4 agility); DR 9; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +3; Sensor +3; Stealth 16; Cargo 10,000 lb.; 2 Pilots, 50 Troops or 4 Ground Vehicles/ Aircraft

Historical Summary:

Hades (2230-present): Standard model.

Weapons (optional):

One Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1

Lamprey Breaching Pod

One major difference between combat in space and combat on the high seas is that the lack of atmosphere makes boarding actions difficult. Early on in Alliance history, taking control of an enemy vessel usually required the destruction of the target's weapons, followed by full-fledged docking procedure. Combat with alien vessels is more difficult, as docking ports often don't align properly. This forces the Earth ship to either send troops across the gap through open space, blasting their way inside the hull, or conduct a risky assault through an open shuttle bay. In many cases, especially when dealing with raiders, the refusal of an opponent to surrender meant the assault teams could expect heavy losses trying to break into the otherwise subdued target.

The breaching pod, developed just prior to the Earth/Minbari War, was a way to reduce the risk to Earth's marine assault teams. Pods of the Lamprey class are highly specialised shuttles designed to directly attach themselves to a vessel's hull, whereupon they cut their way through quickly using short-ranged lasers slung underneath their bodies. A makeshift airlock then equalises pressure on both sides, permitting access by the marines. In the event adequate surprise has been achieved, the assault troops can then make their way to the bridge or other control centre, securing the vessel and ending the fight.

Even with this added protection, however, losses among marine contingents remain high, and breaching actions are used only when no other solutions exist. Sometimes, particularly when capturing civilian installations or very large bases, a few breaching pods have a chance of succeeding where an entire fleet might fail. Special operations teams, inserted at just the right location, can sometimes take out the facility's leaders and bring an end to any resistance, without the need for a drawn-out space battle.

Breaching pods are designed to take up slots normally allocated to assault shuttles in a vessel's inventory. They do not fit in standard fighter bays, and cannot be used in place of Starfuries or Thunderbolts. Sometimes, a warship will alter its normal shuttle hangars to use breaching pods instead of regular light or transport shuttles, but this is a complicated procedure that must be planned well in advance. In other words, a regular warship out on patrol will not have breaching pods in its bay unless the mission called for it. The sole exception is found in the case of troop transports, which are known to replace assault shuttles with breaching pods on a regular basis. The Hyperion assault cruiser variant even carries a couple of Lampreys as standard equipment.

Lampreys are not armed. They are rarely used in direct combat, preferring to make their attack once the enemy's guns have been silenced. To attach, they must end their movement in the same hex as the target unit and be moving at the same speed and in the same direction. Typically, they adjust their speeds as they enter the hex, and if this is done, the enemy cannot prevent them from attaching. Note, however, that a breaching pod cannot connect to a non-metallic hull, or one with advanced armour, like a Vorlon vessel.

Once attached, the breaching pod requires two full combat rounds to pierce the hull, and a further round to affix the docking port. After this, the marine contingent within can enter the ship and begin to undertake its mission. Typically, this will involve taking control of the vessel, but it could also involve the rescue of a captive, theft of some important artefact or device, sabotaging the ship, planting explosives, or anything else a special operations team could reasonably be expected to do.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 50; DV 10 (-4 size, +5 agility); DR 8; Spd -; Acc 6; Dec 6; Han +4; Sensor +3; Stealth 16; Cargo 2,500 lb.; 1 Pilot, 20 Troops

Historical Summary:

Lamprey (2244-present): Standard model.

Lifeboat

Lifeboats are small shuttlecraft designed to operate as escape vehicles from doomed ships. They are used on civilian as well as military vessels, although the military type is much harder. Unlike the escape pods used on fighters, lifeboats can support several individuals for days adrift in space. Once launched, lifeboats are programmed to seek each other out, collecting together in a group to improve their chances of discovery. Each has a small set of thrusters capable of manoeuvring in open space, or to enter a reasonably stable orbit if ejection occurred near a planet.

Lifeboats have no combat capability. In a combat situation, they exist only as targets, or objects to be rescued. Virtually all lifeboats are programmed to broadcast a constant distress signal, enabling them to be easily located by the first potential rescue vessel to come along. Even in times of war, a survivor would rather be rescued by the enemy than left to die of asphyxiation when the lifeboat's air supply runs out.

Military Lifeboat Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 30; DV 7 (-4 size, +1 agility); DR 4; Spd -; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +1; Sensor +1; Stealth 10; Cargo 1,000 lb.; 8 Passengers

Civilian Lifeboat Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 20; DV 6 (-4 size, +0 agility); DR 2; Spd -; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +0; Stealth 0; Cargo 1,000 lb.; 12 Passengers

Psi Corps Units

The Psi Corps is known to operate its own ships for special missions known only to its highly secretive leaders. These vessels often remain in hyperspace for extremely long periods, returning to base only for repairs and maintenance. Few among the Earth Alliance are even aware of the existence of these craft. Exactly how many are operated by the Psi Corps remains a closely guarded secret.

Mothership

Unbeknownst to most members of EarthForce, the Psi Corps has secretly built a number of special motherships designed to remain in hyperspace for virtually unlimited periods of time. These huge vessels possess little in the way of armament but are not intended for combat. Instead, they appear to be little more than mobile bases for the private use of elite telepaths. Whether they operate exclusively in hyperspace or instead operate as immense shuttles between secret destinations is a mystery. Their exact purpose remains unknown, except to the upper echelons of Psi Corps itself.

Statistics:

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 850; DV 0 (-12 size, +2 agility); DR 21; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor +2; Stealth 10; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Artificial Gravity (Rotating Section); Cargo 550,000 lb.; 6 Officers, 28 Pilots, 15 Sensor Operators, 95 Crewmen, 200 Passengers

Weapons:

Four Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Rear Left, 1 Rear Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Four Particle Beams; 2 Forward, 2 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Four Mk II Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

24 Starfuries, 6 Shuttles

Shadowcloak Escort

Similar in design to the Tethys Police Cutter, the Shadowcloak Escort is designed as a swift, capable fighting ship with the ability to undertake many cover missions. Although it does not possess a jump drive of its own, the Shadowcloak is quite at home in hyperspace. Ships of this class are often mistaken for Tethys hulls at long range, although close up they are obviously something different entirely.

The Shadowcloak is something of a mystery to most Earth Alliance observers. Reports of such a ship have crossed the desk of several military analysts, who believe the vessel little more than a rumour, or at best a classified Earth Alliance prototype.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 200; DV 12 (-8 size, +10 agility); DR 9; Spd -; Acc 5; Dec 3; Han +4; Sensor +2 (targeting computer); Stealth 21; Cargo 5,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 2 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 10 Crewmen

Weapons:

Two Medium Pulse Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Two Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

2 Shuttles

Fighter Transport

The Psi Corps has been known to operate these specialised carriers for various secret missions throughout Earth space and beyond. Designed to appear as ordinary freighters from a distance, they share many of the same attributes as Q-ships. Indeed, they use exactly the same detection rules unless boarded or until they launch their fighters, at which time their true nature becomes obvious.

Although a Psi Corps fighter transport is armed, it generally does not stick around to fight. Once its Black Omegas have been deployed, the ship retreats and remains at a distance until

the battle is over. On some particularly dangerous missions, the transport will actually stay in hyperspace throughout the entire mission, or even return to base while the fighters make their way home via a different route.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 200; DV 5 (-8 size, +3 agility); DR 8; Spd -; Acc 1/2; Dec 1/2; Han +1/2; Sensor +0; Stealth 13; Cargo 10,000 lb. + 2 cargo pods; 3 Officers, 12 Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 4 Crewmen

Weapons:

Two Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Two Particle Beams; Turret; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1

Craft:

12 Starfuries, 2 Shuttles

Black Omega Starfury

Starfuries operated by the Psi Corps are referred to as 'Black Omegas' because of the distinctive Greek letter painted above their cockpit. While much has been speculated in the press

regarding special 'stealth' abilities of these fighters, the truth is that they have no particular special abilities of their own. They are simply normal Aurora-class Starfuries with a distinctive paint job and a telepath for a pilot. All other statistics are as found under the Aurora description earlier in this chapter.

Belt Alliance Units

When the Belt Alliance was formed, the vessels it built were basically cobbled-together warships with weapons and fighters tacked onto the hull wherever they would fit. After EarthForce came on the scene following the 'Raider Wars,' the Belt Alliance no longer felt rushed to get designs into the field. True fighting craft began to appear after that point, but virtually all of them retained a significant cargo capacity in the event they were needed to rescue supplies from a crippled freighter under their care.

Belt Alliance ships are slow, poorly manoeuvrable, lightly armed, and easy prey for a serious warship. However, since their main activity lies in fighting raiders and mercenaries, they have no difficulty accomplishing their mission.



Vindicator Heavy Gunboat

The Belt Alliance charter does not permit large warships, and if held to the very letter of that agreement, the Vindicator would exceed the standards set forth therein. To get around this limitation, the Belt Alliance refers to it as a 'heavy gunboat' - when in truth it is really a light cruiser - and keeps its numbers low enough to stay under EarthForce's radar.

Blast Cannons: The blast cannon is the one weapon system the Belt Alliance can truly claim as its own. Developed out of early experiments in matter cannon technologies, the blast cannon fires a scattering of shrapnel-like 'pellets' towards a target. While the weapon actually fires no more often than once per round, the sheer quantity of material in the shot gives it a rapid-fire effect. However, each individual 'shot' must be employed against the same target, unless using a cluster shell (see below).

Like other matter weapons, blast cannons ignore DR (see the description of the railgun on p.120 for more information on this procedure). They also have a limited amount of ammunition that can be used during a battle. Most Belt Alliance ships carry enough spare material to reload their guns after any fight, but not while one is in progress. Ammunition for different sizes of blast cannons cannot be traded between gun systems.

Two kinds of special shells exist, but no more than 10% of all ammunition in any given launcher can be from one of these categories. As with a railgun, these shells can fire in any combat round without any special preparation.

Penetrating Shell: Adds 1 point of damage for light, 2 for medium, and 3 for heavy cannons, but reduces the range by 1 square.

Cluster Shell: Instead of firing multiple shots at a single unit, each rapid-fire attack can be used against a different target. There is no effect on range or damage, but the to-hit chance is reduced by 1 for each new target after the first.

The Vindicator was developed in the early part of the 23rd Century as war with the Narn Regime appeared inevitable. The Belt Alliance determined, quite correctly as it turned out, that Narn raiding elements would cross the border prior to the actual outbreak of hostilities. Although the heavy gunboat was not by itself able to stand up to Narn raiding parties, the Vindicator was rarely alone, and the swarms of fighters deployed by a Belt Alliance convoy group proved very difficult for Narn ships of the era to effectively defeat.

Like most 23rd Century Belt Alliance designs, the Vindicator has changed little since its inception. The ship operates a wide variety of blast cannons, plus the typical defensive weapons employed by other Earth craft. It employs up to six fighters, but these are carried on external links, not internal bays. Only fighters designed for external use, such as the Delta-V and Starfox, can be used on these links.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 300; DV 8 (-10 size, +8 agility); DR 15; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 16;

Cargo 75,000 lb.; 3 Officers, 10 Pilots, 3 Sensor Operators, 20 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2213-present): Standard version.

Alpha Model Weapons:

Heavy Blast Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 6; Ammunition 10; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
Medium Blast Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 8+2d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 3; Ammunition 20; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
Two Light Blast Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 6+1d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 2; Ammunition 40; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
Four Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

6 Starfox or Delta-V fighters (on external fighter links), 2 shuttles

Harrier Medium Gunboat

This ship was originally developed in 2188 and served for many years as the largest Belt Alliance warship in service. The Belt Alliance designed a ship perfectly capable of being built alongside Tethys police ships, so that civilian contractors engaged in building one could construct the other when nothing else was going on.

The Harrier is poorly armed as far as fighting craft go, but is slightly more manoeuvrable than the Tethys and is cheaper to build. They are also among the longest-ranged vessels in either Earth or Belt Alliance service, often travelling for many jumps before needing to refuel. The oldest Harrier in service, one of the first ones built in the last 22nd Century, boasts that it has flown more light-years than any other human craft in existence.

Like the Vindicator, the Harrier is designed to defend small outposts and escort convoys, but has no business operating in a military environment. It does not carry fighters, but operates solely as a defensive unit.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 200; DV 8 (-8 size, +6 agility); DR 9; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +3; Sensor +2 (targeting computer); Stealth 17; Cargo 35,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 3 Pilots, 3 Sensor Operators, 14 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2188-2219): Standard weapons, prototype interceptors.

Beta Model (2213-present): Standard interceptors.

Beta Model Weapons:

Medium Blast Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 8+2d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 3; Ammunition 20; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
 Two Light Blast Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 6+1d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 2; Ammunition 40; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
 Two Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
 Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

1 Shuttle

Liberator Light Gunboat

The Liberator is the Belt Alliance's answer to the Earth Alliance London class of light combat vessel. Early on, the Belt Alliance saw little need for these expensive units, instead concentrating on externally linked fighters, but the arrival of the Centauri changed their attitude. A new fighter-like unit was now required for missions that extended into hyperspace. Rather than purchase Londons from the Earth Alliance, the Belt Alliance instead produced their own design. The new Liberator class borrowed liberally from the London but also included some elements of the Delta-V, being smaller and much cheaper to build. The single blast cannon provided decent firepower for such a small unit.

Unlike the London, the Liberator never fell out of favour, remaining in production and constant use throughout the Belt Alliance's century or so of existence. The Belt Alliance experimented with a ship design capable of carrying a flight of Liberators into battle, but this was eventually rejected and passed meekly into history.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 65; DV 11 (-4 size, +5 agility); DR 7; Spd 24; Acc 6; Dec 4; Han +4; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 2,500 lb.; 2 Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 2 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2165-2221): Blast cannon, prototype interceptors.
 Beta Model (2218-present): Blast cannon, particle beams, standard interceptors.
 Gamma Model (2254-present): Light pulse cannons replace particle beams.

Beta Model Weapons:

Medium Blast Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 8+2d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 3; Ammunition 20; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
 Two Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
 One Mk I Interceptor; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Gamma Model Weapons:

Medium Blast Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 8+2d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 3; Ammunition 20; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
 Two Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
 One Mk I Interceptor; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

None.

Protector Carrier

Early Belt Alliance carriers supported fighters on external mounts, a policy which continued up until hyperspace travel began. For many years, it remained difficult or dangerous to carry fighters externally through interstellar space. An early carrier called the Guardian took care of this duty, although it also employed linkages instead of a standard bay. The external links were simply covered up by sliding panels during flights through hyperspace. This arrangement required a significant amount of extra space that virtually negated all benefits of the linkage system, at least as far as ship construction goes.

After the Dilgar War, the Belt Alliance began working on a new carrier capable of hauling fighters in a true internal bay. Each slot in the bay includes a link for Delta-V or Starfox fighters, which are designed for external carriage, but these linkages can be retracted to make room for mercenary fighters from other races. This allows the Protector to better support operations in League races operating light or medium fighter types. A Protector does not normally carry top-of-the-line heavy fighters, but sticks to the smaller kinds in use by civilian and trading forces. Thus, in Narn space a Protector will carry Goriths but not Frazis, or in Brakiri space, Falkosis instead of Pikitos. Many heavy fighters are simply too large to even fit in the narrow bays of this carrier type.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 325; DV 6 (-10 size, +6 agility); DR 15; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +3; Stealth 15; Cargo 125,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 48 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 38 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2252-present): Standard version.

Alpha Model Weapons:

Two Light Blast Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 6+1d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 2; Ammunition 40; No Reloads; Rapid Fire
 Four Light Pulse Cannons; 2 Front/Left, 2 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
 Four Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

36 medium or light fighters (in internal bay), 2 shuttles

Mediator Escort Carrier

The Mediator is another early Belt Alliance unit with external fighter links enclosed behind sliding panels. The original ship, also known as the Mediator but bearing little resemblance to later designs, was a simple superstructure with linkages running along its length. Since then, many improvements have been made, resulting in the current design.

The current Mediator is specifically designed to operate outside of Earth Alliance territory. In addition to the panel-protected external links, there is an internal bay capable of holding light or medium fighters. Sometimes the Mediator operates as a troop transport as well, replacing the internal fighters with assault shuttles. If this is done, the internal cargo space is converted to store the listed ground troops and vehicles. Cargo and troops cannot occupy the ship simultaneously, however.

It should be noted that even in the troop transport mission, the Mediator avoids combat and does not launch GROPOS into hostile areas. The Belt Alliance is not in the habit of operating as mercenaries in wartime, and takes great pains to avoid any suggestion that it might be a combatant. To this end, the weapons on assault shuttles are always deactivated, and the troops within are prohibited from carrying guns or armaments in a ready state.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 260; DV 8 (-8 size, +6 agility); DR 14; Spd -; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +3; Stealth 17;

Cargo 70,000 lb. (10,000 lb. in assault configuration); 3 Officers, 36 Pilots, 3 Sensor Operators, 31 Crewmen, 250 troops and 8 ground vehicles or aircraft (in assault configuration)

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2185-2220): Blast cannons, particle beams, prototype interceptors.

Beta Model (2216-present): Improved interceptors.

Beta Model Weapons:

Two Medium Blast Cannons; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 8+2d6 (ignores DR); Critical 19-20; Range 3; Ammunition 20; No Reloads; Rapid Fire

Four Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2

Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

12 Delta-V or Starfox fighters (external links), 12 medium/light fighters or assault shuttles (internal bay), 2 shuttles

Defender Close Escort

One of the primary missions of the Belt Alliance was the convoy escort role. While fighters were generally sufficient to chase off raiders, they were not always capable of carrying out this duty. Raiders frequently engaged in running battles with convoys, sometimes pulling captured freighters out of the chain and taking them off to be looted. Fighters rarely had the range



to keep up, and the Belt Alliance could not afford to release carriers from guard duty just to hunt down a single freighter.

The close escort was eventually created to close this gap in the force structure. Ships of the Defender class are among the fastest in the Belt Alliance - and in the Earth Alliance for that matter. Their weapons are optimised for anti-fighter work, especially the more recent Beta model and its suite of light pulse cannons.

Close escorts do not carry fighters of their own, but have a significant internal cargo space capable of holding goods recovered from captured or damaged freighters. Sometimes, when convoys are scarce, these ships operate as priority transports - the Belt Alliance equivalent of the Hermes. A few close escorts are owned or operated by private individuals outside the Belt Alliance, but these are rare.

Statistics:

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 200; DV 12 (-8 size, +10 agility); DR 10; Spd -; Acc 6; Dec 4; Han +5; Sensor +2 (targeting computer); Stealth 19; Cargo 100,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 3 Pilots, 2 Sensor Operators, 8 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2226-present): Particle beams, standard interceptors.

Beta Model (2155-present): Light pulse cannons replace particle beams. This model is quickly replacing the Alpha, which will be obsolete within a few years.

Alpha Model Weapons:

Five Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left/Right, 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Beta Model Weapons:

Five Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front/Left/Right, 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right, 1 Rear/Left, 1 Rear/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
Two Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

1 Shuttle

Salvager Tender

The end of the Dilgar War saw literally hundreds of wrecked starships scattered throughout dozens of systems. In addition to the obvious potential technological boon these salvage opportunities presented, a scattered cloud of debris presented a significant menace to navigation. The Earth Alliance initially employed roving groups of Cotten tenders and standard freighters to recover critical wrecks, but during their departure from League space they left hundreds of charted but uncollected

ships behind - all from races other than the Earth Alliance, of course.

Some of these were Belt Alliance ships destroyed by Dilgar raids. Unwilling to leave their dead comrades behind, the beltters cobbled together a few salvage-capable craft and took up the mission employed by the now-absent Cotten task forces. In the process, they found many wrecks too large to recover with the ships they had, so a new class, the Salvager, was commissioned. This new vessel was large enough to recover small ships or the cut-apart pieces of larger ones. Some of the collected material eventually wound up in the hands of the Earth Alliance, resulting in several technological advances that would not have occurred otherwise. As usual, EarthForce did not give any credit to the Belt Alliance for these discoveries, but the beltters rested easy knowing that they cleared a tidy profit on the sale of recovered equipment to their rivals.

After the salvage operations concluded, Salvagers were put to use as armed freighters, where they continue to serve today. In the wake of combat, they can usually be found recovering wrecks on behalf of the victorious side, keeping their fair share of any loot they collect.

Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 350; DV 2 (-10 size, +2 agility); DR 14; Spd -; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +1; Sensor +2; Stealth 11; Cargo 400,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 6 Pilots, 2 Sensor Operators, 14 Crewmen

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2232-present): Standard version.

Alpha Model Weapons:

Two Particle Beams; 1 Front, 1 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+3d8; Critical 20; Range 1
Four Mk I Interceptors; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

4 shuttles

Starfox Fighter

One of the early results of the Starfury program was the Flying Fox, the last of the Starfury designs that lacked a split wing. The Flying Fox was relatively small, and could operate on the same sort of external links that Delta-Vs used. The Belt Alliance employed quite a few Flying Foxes on their own ships of the era, since the Starfury was a much more capable craft in combat.

When the Starfury Tiger appeared, EarthForce announced plans to stop building and supporting the Flying Fox, which actually meant the Belt Alliance fighter program took an immediate step backwards. As part of the shift to split-wing designs and internal hangars, EarthForce made no attempt to ensure the new Tiger would function on external links. When Belt Alliance attempts to modify linkages failed, they suddenly found

themselves with a fleet of vessels capable of carrying only Delta-Vs and nothing else, without even the promise of future support from Earth Alliance designers.

Long-term programs to create better carriers with internal hangars were undertaken, but the Belt Alliance also took a few Flying Foxes and reverse-engineered them, producing a hybrid Fox/Delta craft with some of the capabilities of both. Upon discovering that belter factories were putting out a heavier fighter than the Delta class, EarthForce declared this a violation of the original Belt Alliance charter and tried to put a halt to production. For many years, while the debate raged, Starfoxes existed only as test platforms and 'prototypes.' However, the deployment of the larger Double-V fighter by certain raiders and pirate bands finally gave the Belt Alliance a good reason to have a heavier fighter in service, and EarthForce eventually relented.

Today, Starfoxes occupy external linkages alongside Double-Vs without restriction. To avoid giving raiders - or alien races - a reason to copy this superior fighter, the Belt Alliance produced it around the matter gun, a fighter-sized blast cannon. Replacing that weapon would require a complete redesign of the hull, something not worthwhile for the raiders to waste their time with. The need to keep such a weapon constantly resupplied also made it useless to pirates, whereas the Belt Alliance had no trouble with such logistical matters.

The original version did not use missiles, but a more recent improvement has added two external hardpoints capable of holding special dogfight-quality missiles. These can be launched individually or together, but if fired simultaneously, they must attack the same target. If used on fighters or shuttles, dogfight missiles receive a significant bonus to hit, and since the damage they score is rather low, they are rarely used upon any other sort of target. Note that the fighter has no navigator position, so if it launches dogfight missiles during a combat round, it may not simultaneously fire its main guns.

Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 20; DV 13 (-2 size, +5 agility); DR 5; Spd -; Acc 8; Dec 4; Han +5; Sensor +2; Stealth 14; SQ Afterburners, Ejector Seat, Grapple, Pivotal Thrusters; Cargo 10 lb.; 1 Pilot

Historical Summary:

Alpha Model (2208-2244): Matter gun.

Beta Model (2240-present): Adds dogfight missile hardpoints.

Beta Model Weapons:

Two Linked Matter Guns; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 3+1d6 (ignores DR); Critical 20; Range 1; Ammunition 6; No Reloads

Two Dogfight Missile Racks; Boresight; Guidance 4; Damage 15+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 6; Fuel 3; Reloads 0

Spacecraft

Item	Cost
Hermes Priority Transport	120,000,000 cr.
Explorer Deep Survey Ship	1,200,000,000 cr.
Light Shuttle	6,500,000 cr.
Standard Transport Shuttle	9,500,000 cr.
Lifeboat	350,000 cr.
Salvager Tender	135,000,000 cr.

Civilian Space Units

Although most of the other races in the galaxy operate their own civilian freighters and similar craft, the Earth Alliance takes this idea to a new extreme. Except for the Vree and a couple of other nations with a mercantile bent, most races have space travel under strict control, either by their military or their government - or both. The Earth Alliance, in contrast, allows virtually anyone with the money and the wherewithal to travel where they like, work for a space-based company, or even start their own business that operates between the stars. This has led to the creation of a vast fleet of merchant ships so huge that it likely dwarfs all other known races in sheer starship tonnage.

No one is really sure how many freighters, tankers, barges, transports, shuttles, and other civilian vessels are really out there. This has the effect of making Earth commercial traffic somewhat ubiquitous among the stars. Terran merchants are active in nearly every corner of the known Galaxy, and many of their ships wind up in the hands of raiders or other powers.

Because of the sheer quantity of different hulls in existence, a complete list of every single civilian ship type in operation is simply not possible to present in this limited space. What follows are some of the more common vessels in service.

Naval Auxiliaries: In times of war, many freighters can be converted to a variety of military missions. In this role, they are referred to as 'naval auxiliaries,' and the collective armada of such craft is known by the somewhat outdated term of 'merchant marine.' While these conversions are rarely armed, and almost never see direct combat except by accident or enemy design, they perform many vital missions that free up combat ships and crews for more pressing matters.

Most wars do not start immediately, but forecast their arrival for some time. Such was the case with most of the early fights of the late 22nd and early 23rd centuries, as well as the Dilgar Invasion. In these cases, freighters will be pulled off their routes and their owners generously compensated for lost profits during this time. If war appears suddenly, or is going poorly - both of which occurred during the Earth/Minbari War - EarthForce has been known to simply commandeer freighters as necessary for whatever mission is needed. Few auxiliaries survived the Minbari advance, as they were too slow to escape pursuit, and most freighters were eventually used specifically for refugee transport missions.

The process of converting a freighter to an auxiliary can be long or short, depending on the time available. If the need is critical, the ship is simply thrown into service as is, with its new crew working day and night to make what conversions it can. In the case of longer periods, the vessel will be taken to a dock and modified by the same engineering personnel who normally repair military ships. Thrusters are usually improved to military standards, and additional armour plating is added to protect against fighter strikes. The cargo bays or pods are cleared and filled with the requisite structures - barracks in the case of an auxiliary troop transport, fighter bays for auxiliary carriers, and so forth. Thereafter, the ship begins its new mission, sometimes (but not always) employing members of the original civilian crew. In the case of vessels converted to Q-ship designs, cargo handlers might remain, but the pilots and gunners will be members of EarthForce.

At the conclusion of the mission, or of hostilities themselves, all military equipment is stripped from the hull, and the ship is returned to its owner. Any damage sustained is usually repaired or compensated for. EarthForce is well aware of the importance of good military-civilian relations, and does not wish to antagonize freighter owners to the point where they refuse to permit the use of auxiliaries when the needs of the Alliance clearly require it. A captain who knows his ship will be returned in good shape and with damage repaired will be much more likely to hand over the controls than one who suspects his vessel will be ruined without any attempt at compensation!

Cargo Pod

Several classes of commercial spacecraft in both the Earth Alliance and League of Non-Aligned Worlds are able to utilise standard configuration cargo pods which facilitate the ease of transference in space stations and spaceports. Cargo pods themselves come in a variety of configurations to allow for the transport of hazardous, liquid, temperature-sensitive or other specialised cargoes. Spacecraft able to carry cargo pods are so designated in their own descriptions.

Cargo pods are unarmed. During times of war, some pods can be converted into a military format and loaded onto specially modified auxiliaries. Statistics for these are noted below. An auxiliary can carry several different types of pods - they do not all have to be of the same type. Auxiliary pods cannot be detected as such by an enemy without docking, although the auxiliary freighter itself can be identified if it does something in excess of its normal capacity, e.g., accelerate more quickly or launch a fighter from one of its pods.

Basic Pod Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 25; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 5; Spd -; Acc 0; Dec 0; Han +0; Sensor NA; Stealth 2; Cargo 50,000 lb.

Tanker Pod Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 20; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 8; Spd -; Acc 0; Dec 0; Han +0; Sensor NA; Stealth 2; Cargo 50,000 lb. (liquid or gaseous); Tanker only

Fighter Pod Statistics:

As basic pod, except instead of cargo it carries one fighter ready for flight. The fighter can be deployed by opening up the bay, an action that requires an entire round and reveals the pod's special status. Fighters may not launch or land on the round the doors are opening or closing. The pod is large enough to carry any type of fighter in use by the Earth Alliance or its allies, including shuttles, Starfoxes, Thunderbolts, and foreign fighters as well, as long as they do not exceed Huge size. Freighters hauling this type of pod usually do so only to bring replacement fighters to distant bases - they do not engage in combat directly.

Troop Pod Statistics:

As basic pod, except instead of cargo it carries 100 troops, or 4 ground vehicles/aircraft in an inactive state. These barracks are highly uncomfortable and do not have access to the rest of the ship, so GROPOS do not appreciate being delivered this way. Since the freighter itself has no assault shuttles, and most freighters cannot land, troops cannot be deployed directly into combat from this pod. Usually, an auxiliary troop pod is used strictly as a conveyance.

Missile Pod Statistics:

As basic pod, except instead of cargo, it possesses a single small missile rack, allowing a standard freighter to act as an impromptu bombardment ship. As with the fighter pod, opening up the rack doors requires a full round and reveals the pod's presence. Usually, auxiliary missile freighters are used as convoy escorts only when normal Q-ships are unavailable. Sometimes, these rare pods are used for missile resupply purposes. Freighters with these pods are never sent directly into combat except in times of desperation, as with the Battle of the Line.

One Small Missile Rack; Left or Right (depending on which side of the ship the pod is on); Guidance 4; Damage 15+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 2

Corporate Escort

These light combat vessels are the civilian equivalent of the Myrmidon or Liberator. They are used by certain companies to protect important shipments or personnel when naval or Belt Alliance support is either impractical or unavailable. While a lone escort is rarely able to fend off a determined raider attack, they can drive off a smaller band or delay them long enough for their objective to escape. Sometimes Corporate Escorts operate in groups, permitting them to fight off a larger force. However, even in numbers they are incapable of fighting a true warship.

Escorts are also sometimes used as transports for important corporate officers. A few are employed as private yachts by company presidents or vice presidents.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 60; DV 12 (-4 size, +6 agility); DR 5; Spd 26; Acc 5; Dec 3; Han +4; Sensor +1; Stealth 5; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 3,000 lb.; 1 Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 2 Crewmen, 6 Passengers

Weapons:

Two Light Pulse Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d6; Critical 20; Range 3; Rapid Fire
Two Particle Beams; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2
One Mk I Interceptor; Turret; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

Craft:

1 Light Shuttle

Small Logistics Base

Bases of this type are operated in dozens of systems, including many not explicitly controlled by the Earth Alliance. They are the corporate equivalent of the Dionysus mid-range base employed by EarthForce, and possess the same basic shape but not the size. The Belt Alliance, as well as many large corporations, build small bases wherever a logistics centre makes more sense than a continual flow of freighters and the inevitable support ships. Some systems have more than one, operated by different companies.

These stations are armed only for defence against attacks by small bands of raiders, but could never stand up to a determined assault. They have a single flight of fighters available to fend off pirates, although Starfuries are rarely used on civilian outposts. Instead, the base will usually employ Delta-Vs or Double-Vs. In the case of stations with ties to the Belt Alliance, Starfoxes will be used instead. In order to handle the wide variety of possibilities, the internal bay is large enough to hold virtually any fighter type. Though this class of vessel is immobile and considered a starbase, its small size causes it to be considered a starship for combat and damage purposes.

Statistics:

Colossal Starbase; hp 250; DV 2 (-8 size, +0 agility); DR 15; Spd N/A; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +2; Stealth 2; SQ Immobile, Artificial Gravity (Rotating), Long-Ranged; Cargo 200,000 lb.; 5 Officers, 6 Sensor Operators, 12 Pilots, 60 Crewmen

Weapons:

Four Medium Plasma Cannons; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 15+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 6
Four Particle Beams; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 5+2d10; Critical 20; Range 3

Craft:

6 Fighters (central bay), 4 Shuttles (one in each of four small side bays)

Double-V Fighter

The Double-V is a comparatively recent modification of the Delta-V. Originally developed by raiders as a means of increasing their firepower, it has since spread into occasional civilian service as a defence against those same pirates.

The Double-V is basically two standard Delta-Vs with their hulls sliced open and welded together into a single frame. The 'stacked' fighter is not twice the size of its lighter cousin, but about 50% larger, with improved weaponry and armour and the ability to employ fighter-quality missiles. Double-Vs also possess larger cockpits with a navigator's seat for maximum missile efficiency. Raiders rarely use a navigator, however, as they lack personnel to spare.

If employed on a ship with launch rails, the enlarged size of this fighter requires two rail spaces instead of one. The Double-V is, however, perfectly capable of landing on a standard hangar deck, where it uses only a standard fighter slot. For this reason they are normally used only by wealthy raiders with larger carrier hulls and internal bays.

Statistics:

Huge Spacecraft; hp 30; DV 11 (-2 size, +3 agility), or 13 (+5 agility) if Navigator present; DR 6; Spd 30; Acc 9; Dec 4; Han +5 (+7 if Navigator present); Sensor +2; Stealth 4; SQ Atmospheric Capable, Afterburners, Ejector Seat, Grapple; Cargo 12 lb.; 1 Pilot, 1 Navigator (optional)

Historical Data:

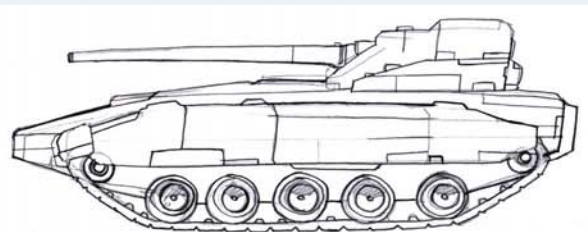
Double-V (2236-present): Current design.

Weapons:

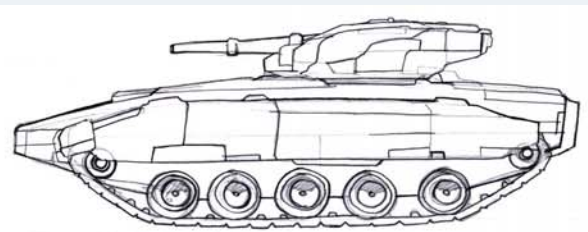
Twin-linked Light Particle Gun; Boresight; Attack +1; Damage 2d8+2; Critical 20; Range 1
One Fighter Missile Rack; Boresight; Guidance 4; Damage 15+2d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 2

Spacecraft

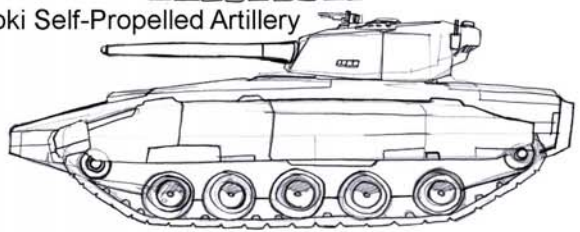
Item	Cost
Cargo or Tanker Pod	275,000 cr.
* Fighter Pod	350,000 cr.
* Missile Pod	420,000 cr.
* Troop Pod	280,000 cr.
Corporate Escort	39,000,000 cr.
Small Logistics Base	210,000,000 cr.
Double-V Fighter	17,000,000 cr.



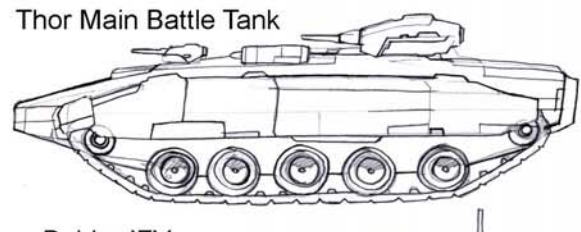
Loki Self-Propelled Artillery



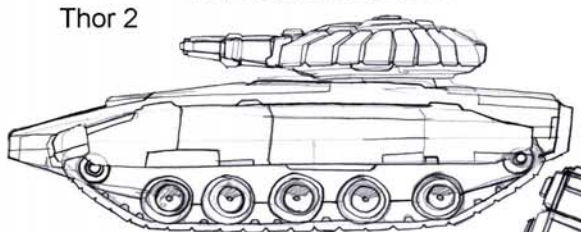
Thor Main Battle Tank



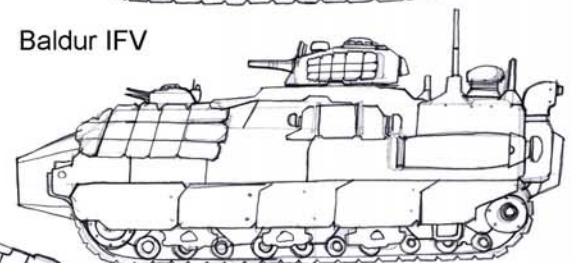
Thor 2



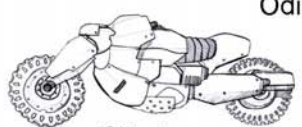
Baldur IFV



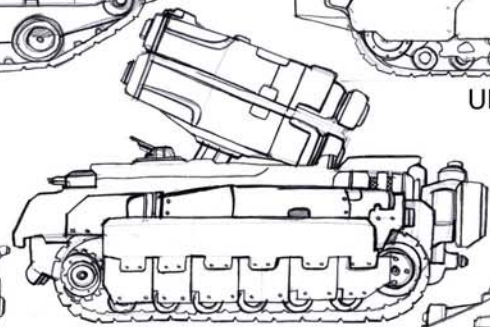
Odin



Uller ADA



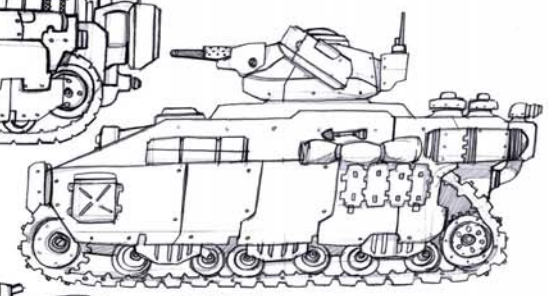
Skirnir



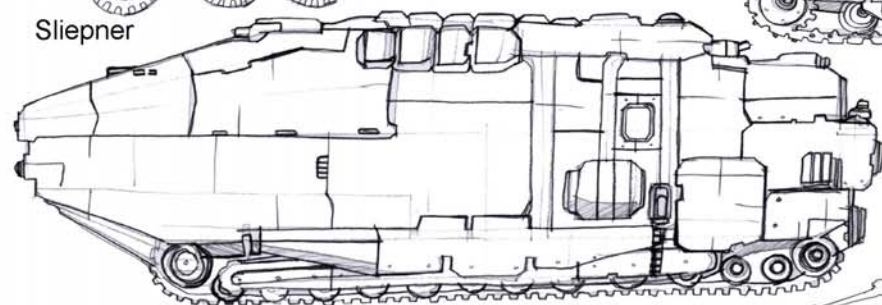
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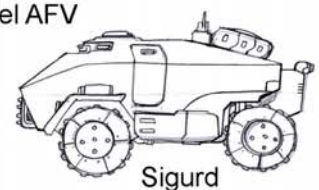
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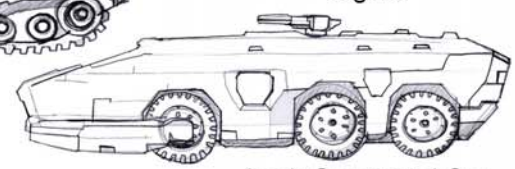
Hel AFV



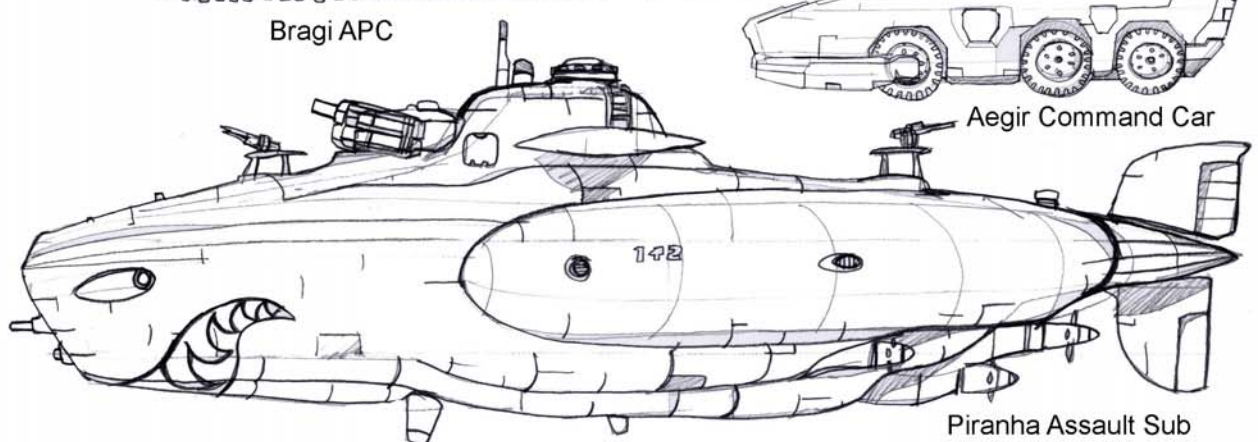
Bragi APC



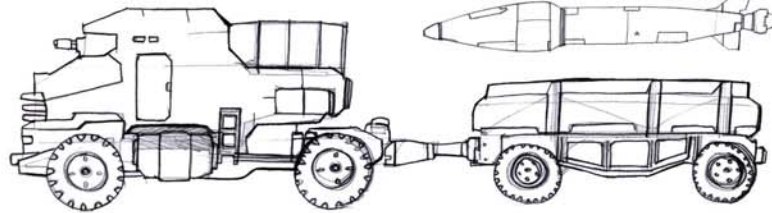
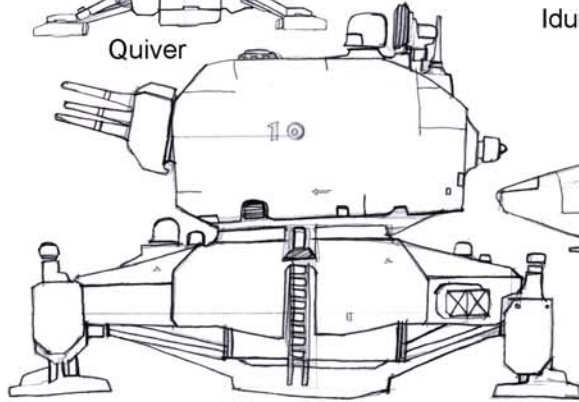
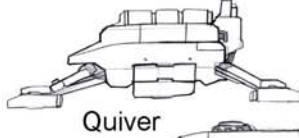
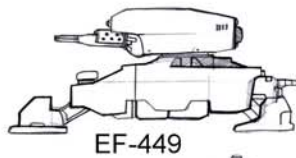
Sigurd



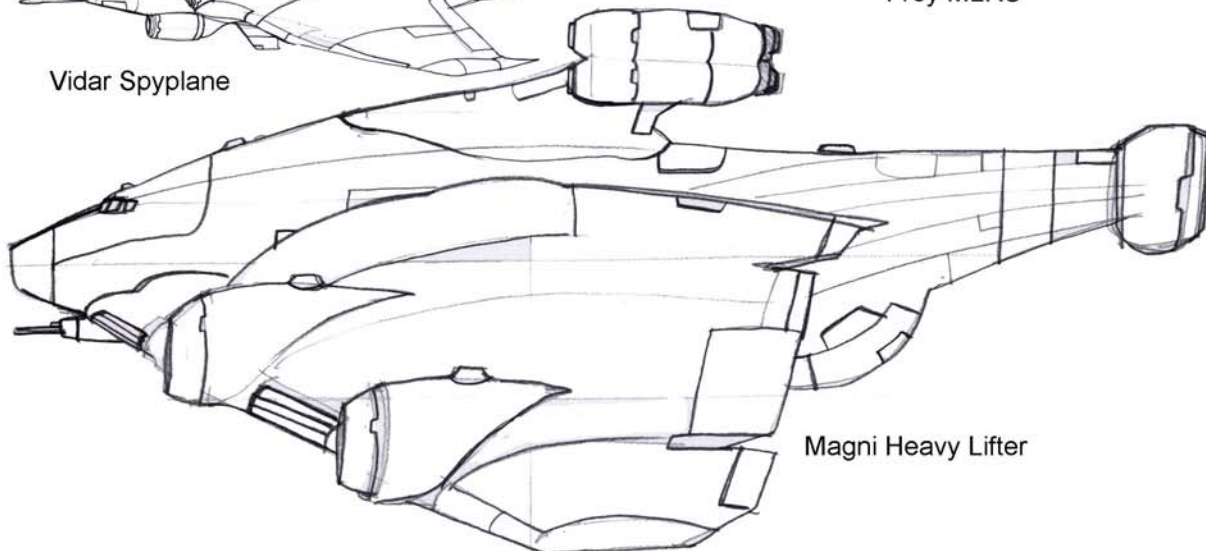
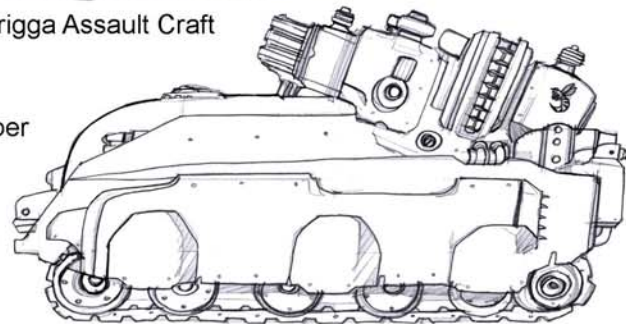
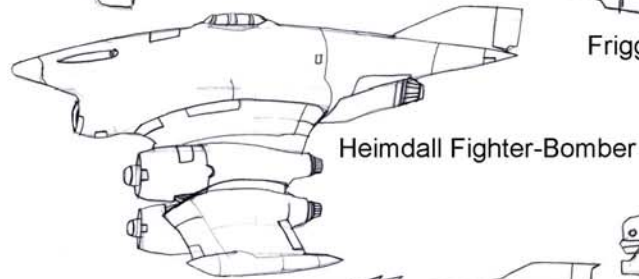
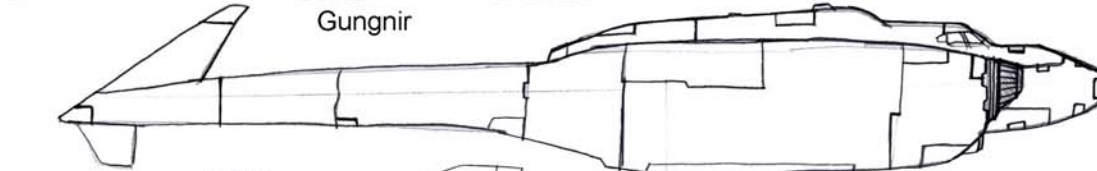
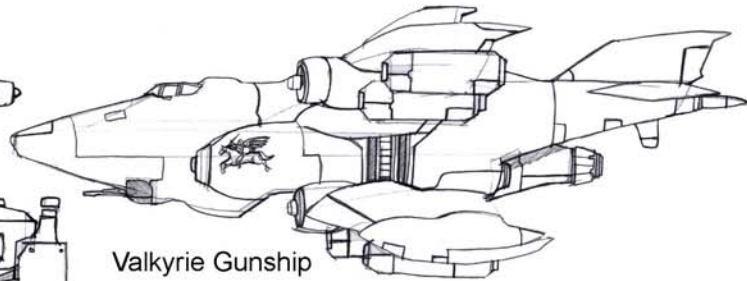
Aegir Command Car



Piranha Assault Sub



Mjolnir Cruise Missile



Earth Alliance Ground Forces

In comparison with the modern space navy, Earth's ground forces consistently lag behind in technological development. Army units are in many ways little more than advanced versions of craft employed since the world wars of the 20th and 21st Centuries. The promises of vast and sweeping breakthroughs suggested by Centauri arrival have simply not come to pass. There are no giant walking robots armed with long-ranged death rays, or anti-gravity floating hovercraft protected by force-shields and invisibility screens, or individual troopers in armoured jump-jet suits capable of achieving low orbit with a standing high-jump. The Army still employs the same devices it always has - aircraft, tanks, and infantry. The weapons and equipment have improved with the years, but the basic structure has remained the same.

Naming Conventions: Whereas the Navy names many of its ships using the Greek style, ground units have adopted a Norse standardization. This was done not because of any particular contractor, as was the case with Lockheed-Hyatake, but simply as a way to differentiate the Army from its Navy rivals. The Navy, naturally, claims this is little more than a pale shadow of their own well-established strategy, which they adopted decades earlier. (There is actually a great deal of good-natured rivalry between the two services, but when push comes to shove, both know they are on the same side.)

The names of Norse deities and heroes are applied to tanks, ground vehicles, and aircraft employed by EarthForce, but not to non-military craft. Some civilian vehicles are given different brand names by their builders, but these will not be mentioned here. A ground car is still just a car, regardless of whether it is a Metro or El Dorado, or made by Ford or Lamborghini.

The main weapon employed on Earth's ground vehicles is the Binary Liquid Propellant Cannon, often abbreviated 'BiPro.' While this is a fairly old technology, it is still highly effective in battle. In simplest terms, these devices operate by mixing two inert liquids in a firing chamber milliseconds before an attack. The resulting mixture, while highly unstable, possesses tremendous explosive potential. Fire control computers calculate the amount of propellant necessary to deliver the mixture and inject the required amount an instant before firing. Once the target lock is confirmed, the propellant is electrically ignited and the round is fired at the target. The entire process takes less than 500 milliseconds. Should some emergency arise, such as a propellant tank breach, the entire mixture can be flushed into a standby tank, virtually eliminating any chance of accidental detonation. The resulting weapons system has been refined and perfected over the years to a point where virtually no battlefield accidents ever occur.

Ground vehicles also employ missiles, although these devices are much smaller than those found on starships. Despite the obvious logistical difficulties, these 'fire and forget' weapons are greatly prized for their long range and saturation capabilities. Missiles can be used for anti-tank, anti-infantry, and artillery

missions. Their primary disadvantage is their relatively slow speed and poor stealth ratings, enabling an opponent to escape, intercept, or employ countermeasures against the incoming volley.

The most recent, and for the Army the most exciting, development in ground combat capabilities has been the new gauss cannons that began appearing after the Earth/Minbari War. Gauss weapons are similar to very small railguns - they consist of long barrels surrounded by a series of super-conducting electromagnets. When fired in rapid sequence, these magnets propel a round of ammunition at incredible velocities, giving it excellent range and penetrating power. These guns have just recently begun appearing on front-line tanks following the development of energy systems sufficient to operate gauss weapons on much smaller units. Although a gauss-equipped vehicle can probably still not stand up to a Minbari Shriek-class tank, the technological gap is at least beginning to close.

In addition to these guns, the Earth Alliance still employs plasma, particle and similar devices on their vehicles. These are generally limited to smaller calibre weapons, however. Troops and infantry generally employ PPG rifles and similar energy devices, although they do occasionally carry larger weapons like mortars, rifles, turrets, and demolitions gear.

Army Organisation

For the most part, the arrangement of Earth Alliance ground armies has changed little since the 20th Century. Although the actual size of each element can vary from post to post, or depending on the size and type of vehicles, the basic concepts are the same.

Platoons are the smallest unit of organisation within EarthForce. Each platoon consists of up to 4 vehicles or 12 individual infantry, although the actual number is usually lower than this. Most infantry platoons are typically 8-10 members plus at most one or two mobile turrets. Platoons of vehicles are usually organised around what fits best within a single Hades-class assault shuttle. A given Hades can transport one typical vehicle platoon or up to four infantry platoons.

Companies usually consist of three platoons of similar units, rarely mixing types between them. Thus, a company of main battle tanks will usually include only Thor and Odin class vehicles. Infantry companies do mix in a few specialists on occasion, but still tend to undertake only a specific mission. Some armoured cavalry companies possess a fourth platoon, while some infantry companies consist of only two platoons. Other exceptions also exist depending on the unit and the mission requirements at hand.

Companies also frequently operate smaller individual units as support elements and command staff. When these reach platoon size, they are referred to as Command Groups (CGs).

Battalions are usually made up of four companies, although as you might expect, this can vary greatly depending on circumstances. Overstrength battalions operate as many as five companies, although they usually simply attach any extra platoons to their existing companies as necessary.

Understrength battalions tend to keep the number of companies stable while accepting losses to platoons within their formations, in order to not break up existing units. Only when individual platoons are of half size or smaller will a battalion commander start thinking about merging elements together.

Battalions almost always operate at least one detached platoon as a Command Group. Sometimes the CG consists of two or more platoons, and in particularly important battalions it can even reach company size.

Divisions are the largest formally designated groups within EarthForce and are usually made up of three separate battalions. As usual, this can vary widely, though it usually tends towards a smaller size rather than larger, for ease of transport.

Divisions are always organized in such a way that they can easily be transported en masse within a single assault ship. When Earth created its first troop transport, the Galahad class, only two battalions would fit inside, so the size of a division was only two-thirds of what it is today. The Gamma model of the Hyperion, capable of ferrying up to 400 troops or an equivalent number of ground vehicles, can hold three battalions. The Condor, optimised for hauling GROPOS, can field two complete divisions.

Regiments are not formal organisations but refer to a given division plus any temporarily or permanently assigned auxiliary or support elements, such as reconnaissance units, special forces, visiting or cross-training personnel, engineering teams, and the like. If asked which unit he is a part of, a typical soldier will begin at the division level without ever mentioning the word 'regiment.' However, naval units transferring an army group will refer to it as a 'regiment' to mean not just the division, but everything that could be reasonably associated with it as well.

Finally, the term '**army**' refers to any collected ground force located on a planetary surface. An army can be as small as a battalion, if that is all that is needed to conduct the mission at hand. Large armies consist of several divisions, although it is rare to see a group of that size being used on enemy soil. When referring to the whole of Earth's ground forces in their entirety, the word 'Army' is always capitalised.

Army History

The Earth Alliance Army was officially formed in 2087, the same day the Unified Earth Alliance was created in Geneva. Of course, at that time the various national forces remained in existence and operated under the Unified Alliance banner (later renamed the Earth Alliance, of course). For many years, Army troops wore the uniform of their own nation, but used special blue-and-gold berets as their lone piece of standardised clothing. This did not begin to change until 2091, when the first multinational forces were created.

The Army saw its first action in 2100, when China invaded Russia to prevent its rival from joining the Alliance. Most of the fighting took the form of long-range and satellite-based weaponry, but some ground troops were involved. Although China ultimately backed down and the war ended after only

five days, the lessons learned from the few engagements that took place were invaluable. The primary one, as any student of warfare can probably imagine, was that Alliance forces lacked the proper communications skills and training to operate as a truly integrated force. In fact, most historians believe that had the war continued, Alliance armies would have been cut to pieces by better trained and unified Chinese elements.

After this, the Army decided the best manner to proceed was to drop all remaining nationalist tendencies and create a truly unified force. Training centres throughout the world were opened to all recruits, regardless of country of origin. English was taught as the standard language, and all nationalistic fervour was stripped from trainees as a matter of policy. Whether an Army officer or enlisted man was American, European, British, Russian, or anything else no longer mattered. All were one under the unifying flag of the Earth Army.

Of course, such changes did not happen overnight. Existing officers and troops continued to cling to their outdated ideals until the new generation gradually supplanted them. By the time of the Middle East Quarantine, the higher-grade officer and enlisted corps were still from the old school, while younger ones had few inherent problems to drag them down. Some of Earth's officers believed a harder stance should be taken with the terrorists - that instead of bottling them up, they should be invaded and excised like a cancer. This led to a number of disagreements and several incidents along the borders, but in the end those officers who refused to accept their orders were assigned elsewhere. The Middle Eastern policy eventually deteriorated to the point where invasions did, in fact, occur, but the commanders of these operations were much more level-headed. Looting and criminal activity during the attacks was kept to a minimum, and in the end, the recalcitrant nations were accepted into the Alliance with relatively little bloodshed.

After this, the Army had no more enemies to fight. Although the organisation remained in place, it became little more than a global police force intended to keep control over terrorism and the occasional rogue individual or nation. The various states making up the Earth Alliance, seeing the world in a state of peace, continually lowered Army spending in favour of space defences, particularly satellites and the emerging EarthForce Navy.

This short-sighted attitude was to have potentially disastrous consequences. The lessons of history, which taught that lowering one's defences only strengthens one's foes, were conveniently forgotten. Individual nations began to rearm, slowly at first but with growing speed. China, Russia, and several others soon had armies larger than EarthForce's and, thanks to technology sharing programs with member states, on an equal footing militarily. Advantages EarthForce once held, such as control of the skies through the EarthShield network, were whittled away and lost. Meanwhile, incredibly, funding for the Army continued to decline, with entire divisions forced to disband and bases shut down for lack of sufficient resources. Only the sudden and fortuitous appearance of the Centauri in Earth orbit prevented a complete collapse of the fragile peace sustained by the Alliance.

Beginning in the 2160s, technological acquisitions began to filter their way down from space to the once-again solidly unified Earth army. This time, however, EarthForce kept its new devices in its own hands rather than handing it directly to the nation-states themselves. Thus, it became impossible for, say, Russian scientists to build a new device for several years, and then only after the consumption of vital resources for espionage and duplicate research and development programs. Additionally, once stolen technology began to appear, EarthForce tracked down the scientific leak and punished those responsible, incidentally levying sanctions on those who broke the rules. Eventually, most nations ceased this sort of spying, lacking the resources or wherewithal to continue, although some did proceed undeterred, accepting each slap on the wrist as a natural consequence of their activities.

During the latter decades of the 22nd Century, Earth vehicles received the vast majority of the improvements still in use today. Propulsion systems, armour, and miniaturization technology advancements were developed and the first 'modern' tanks and aircraft appeared. The original Thor, Aegir, Baldur, Frigga, Valkyrie, and Frey classes saw their first incarnations during this era.

Originally, Earth tanks employed vastly different chassis. This was due not only to a variety of different mission requirements, but also by the need to offer contracts to many different providers scattered across the Alliance. Unfortunately, no one specific tank body proved superior to the other, so each began to appear in a wide variety of variants, causing no end of confusion and logistical difficulties. By the mid-2220s, there were so many different tank types in operation that no one could keep track of them all.

The Dilgar War immediately showed the folly of this arrangement. Transportation of the wide variety of different ground vehicle types proved difficult if not impossible, and most production companies were simply not up to the challenge of wartime production. In the end, rather than try to keep managing so many different chassis, the Alliance selected a single version and converted all existing factories to producing that design. Literally thousands of 'Asgard Chassis' were completed during the war, and while they did not necessarily feature the best of all possible worlds, they did serve with uncommon distinction in liberating dozens of worlds from dug-in Dilgar resistance.

After the Dilgar War, the Asgard Chassis became the de facto standard for the entire Alliance. All existing older tank types were quickly phased out, although many remained in the service of national armies for decades thereafter. The Thor, Baldur, Frey, Loki, Hel, and other tanks became, in effect, simply variants on the Asgard frame, employing a different turret on the standardised body. Some modifications were needed to the Asgard for a few different tanks, but for the most part it was possible to change a Thor into a Loki or any other type with a minimum of difficulty.

Naturally, this change to the force structure had huge benefits in the twin areas of logistics and repairs. Spare parts were as standardised as the tanks themselves, and the interiors of transport craft were quickly optimised for the new designs.

Although many detractors of the Asgard design point out that different chassis might be better for a good number of applications, the advantages in transportation and repair efforts are too great to be ignored.

Nowhere was this better seen than in the Earth/Minbari War. As the Minbari advanced across Earth space, smashing naval elements without the slightest bit of difficulty, ground-based factories were quickly put to work constructing new Asgard style tanks. The Minbari destroyed most of Earth's defences from orbit, but upon landing to subdue ground resistance, they encountered a much more determined foe. Terran vehicles were nowhere near as advanced or capable as the gravitic craft employed by the Federation, but they knew the terrain and fought with tenacity. Although the Minbari could seize footholds at will, actually eradicating human presence proved a difficult and time-consuming task. By the time the Minbari surrendered at Earth, most of the major colonies and some of the minor ones were still fighting a strong guerrilla action on the ground, earning the grudging respect of their foes.

Today, the Army continues to be treated as the secondary military force of the Alliance. Technological advancements, while increasing, still come far too slowly for Army commanders to accept lightly. The difficulties involved in transporting large ground forces to distant planets remain high, and since actually conquering an alien world would be difficult if not impossible, few policymakers seem willing to invest the finances involved in improving the Army to such levels. The main mission of Earth's ground forces remains primarily internal, either in suppressing revolts or recapturing installations taken by enemies in battle. This fact does not seem likely to change in the near future.

Ranks in the EarthForce Army

- **Enlisted**
 - o Private
 - o Specialist (Special Rank given to civilians with a field of expertise required in the field)
 - o Corporal
 - o Sergeant
 - o Master Sergeant
 - o Sergeant Major
 - o Command Sergeant Major
- **Commissioned Officer**
 - o Second Lieutenant
 - o First Lieutenant
 - o Major
 - o Colonel
 - o Brigadier General (1 star)
 - o Major General (2 stars)
 - o General (3 stars, highest rank still serving in the field)
 - o General of the EarthForce Army (4 stars)

Special Operations Units

Earth Alliance Special Forces Units, also known as SpecOps, are among the finest in known space, comparing favourably to the elite forces of the Centauri Republic and the Narn Regime. Their renown is still high from their successes in the Earth/Minbari War, where they were one of the only EF capabilities to be superior to their Minbari foes. The men and women of SpecOps are highly trained and superbly equipped goal-oriented specialists with a fierce sense of pride and duty.

The following units are the operational and non-classified special operations units in EarthForce. This list includes suspected units such as the Psi Corps Alpha Team, that organisation's counterpart to the Special Assault Service. Allegations of a mysterious Bureau 13 that may include non-registered telepaths corresponds with rumours of several small EarthForce units that may include telepaths outside of Psi Corps control. There are also persistent rumours of Special Action Teams (SATs) working for the Civilian Intelligence Directorate, but these have yet to be confirmed.

Note: Names of these units reflect the rather painful consolidation process of many national special operations groups during the formation of EarthForce. In many cases, different regiments inside each overall command maintain traditions that date back to the 21st Century. As an example, the 5th Combat Swimmers Flotilla operating out of North America still retains traditions of the US Navy SEALs, while the 12th Flotilla still refers to itself as 'Delfin.'

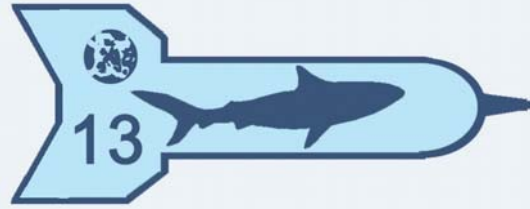
Special Assault Service (SAS)

The various SAS regiments make up the largest numbers of EarthForce special operations personnel, with regiments and teams based on every major colony and world of the Earth Alliance. When the average civilian thinks of Special Operations, he is thinking of the Special Assault Service. SAS operators are primarily ground troops, operating for months in enemy territory performing reconnaissance, sabotage, ambushes, and covert training of indigenous peoples. Typical squads consist of one officer and 12 enlisted operators. Usually these 12 consist of one combat medic, two snipers, two turret operators, and a mix of assault and recon specialists. However, this line is quite blurry due both to the high-degree of cross training as well as the tailoring of squads to perform different missions.

Special Assault Service operators also have access to many of the advanced technologies that the average GROPOS can only dream about. Stealthy ablative pods can be dropped by transports from the various Special Air Wings for re-entry onto hostile worlds, breaking apart to deploy powered paragliders for precise insertion. Black light camouflage suits and changeling



nets are available for special needs. Highly expensive sniper rifles and accurate PPG carbine rifles are standard equipment, along with archaic-seeming but extremely advanced liquid-propellant (BilPro) weaponry.



Combat Swimmer Flotillas

Nicknamed the 'Killer Whales,' these are the nautical versions of the Special Assault Service. Designed to operate in planetary oceans, they are tasked with commando and reconnaissance operations on the water (or other liquid), on the coastlines, and along rivers and lakes. They work closely with their SAS counterparts and often form combined teams for various missions. It would be a mistake to assume that they are simply Special Assault Services operators who like to swim! Combat swimmers typically are tasked with shorter duration missions than their SAS counterparts. They also have a greater tendency to be tasked with quick direct action missions, emerging from the water to destroy a military target, ambush an enemy unit, or capture high-ranking enemy personnel.

Flotilla 13 is the exception. Long enjoying a relationship with the Abbai and cross training with that race's famed Bas'har units, they have become adept at patrols of up to several months operating on or below the sea in their Piranha-class assault submarines. It was Flotilla 13 that operated on several captured EA worlds during the Earth/Minbari War, hiding in the oceans and lakes on those planets to emerge and harass the Minbari occupiers before melting back into the surf. Their success has led to the creation of specialized platoons in several other flotillas that are trained to operate from the water for long periods.

Combat Swimmers are equipped with similar equipment to their SAS brothers and sisters, although they typically prefer highly advanced slug throwers to PPGs. The primary advantage of a slug thrower is that it functions almost as well under the waters as above them, whereas PPG shots and other energy weapons are blunted and ineffective. The Combat Swimmer's Mk-7 insulated wetsuit is a marvel of efficiency, providing total coverage of the body to protect them from water-borne toxins, while the battery can continue to crack oxygen from the water for up to 2 weeks before needing a recharge. Combat Swimmer platoons are also equipped with several models of submersibles, from the three-man Minnow dive vehicle to the 60-metre-long Piranha used for multi-week submerged operations and attack missions. The typical Killer Whale team consists of 12 operators - one officer and 11 enlisted men and women organized into swim pairs. The composition is similar to that of the Special Assault Service squads.

Razvedchiks

The Ravedchik regiments are EarthForce's elite reconnaissance patrols. Shunning direct action, they are the eyes and ears of Special Operations Command. If detected, they are perfectly capable of fighting their way

to a combat pick-up. However, a smooth mission means that they go in, get the intelligence that they require, and slip away with the enemy never knowing that they were there. In one of the most notable intelligence successes of recent days, a Raz platoon spent 3 weeks in a twelve-foot square stand of trees right in the middle of a Minbari headquarters company during the occupation of Proxima 3. The information they overheard allowed a sweeping counter-attack that produced one of the few ground victories of the war. The Rav platoon slipped away during the night, and the Minbari never had a clue that anything was amiss.

As can be expected, Razvedchiks are heavily equipped with personal stealth gear. Black light camouflage suits are standard equipment, and the 9 operator platoons travel light, typically carrying food and water, a PPG carbine, and some grenades. Platoons consist of 1 officer and 8 enlisted personnel, typically one combat medic and the rest scouts or assault specialists. Often, a heavy weapons specialist is included to provide covering fire in the event of detection.

Assault Rangers

Created largely from the North American Combat Rangers and the Russian Federation's Spetsnaz battalions, these are the hammer of EarthForce Special

Operations. A comparatively large force, the Ranger regiments are seldom used in numbers less than a full company of approximately 152 men and women. They excel at seizing landing ports, ammo dumps, and headquarters facilities. Their intent is to be a highly mobile strike force, and they take great pride in the fact that there is not a world or colony in the whole Earth Alliance that cannot have 3 to 4 companies of Rangers on the ground within 18 hours.

The Rangers are unique among the Special Forces in that a Ranger battalion has its own Condor-class assault ships that they share with EarthForce Marines. A typical Ranger operation consists of the massing of a small fleet of Condor assault ships, Hyperion cruisers, and perhaps a Nova in hyperspace. The Ranger companies sit in their transports while the Fleet jumps



into real space, swiftly taking control of the target zone. The Condors then swoop into the atmosphere and Rangers pour out of their rear ramps in their paragliders. Vehicles are released in low altitude paradrops, crashing to the ground with retro-rocket assist if necessary, the crews rattled but unharmed. If defences are light, the Condors will often simply land about the target, as LAP drops can by nature be quite dangerous.

Ranger companies are comparatively lightly armed and depend on surprise and lightning-fast aggression to take their objectives. With luck, they will capture and hold their target for several hours until they either pull out or are reinforced by GROPOS or Marine units. Rangers not receiving reinforcements after 12 hours or so are probably in trouble.

A typical Ranger company consists of three assault platoons of 36 men and women, a heavy weapons platoon of 30 men and women, and a headquarters platoon of 14 individuals.



Combat Search and Rescue Regiments (CSR)

Starfury pilots are a highly trained and difficult to replace resource. CSR (pronounced *Caesar*) operators are tasked with finding them when they are shot down and bringing them home in one piece. This task places the rescue regiment on land, at sea, or even in space. Combat Search and Rescue teams are all trained as combat medics but are much more than that - they are evasion and hit-and-run specialists, often racing through enemy forces to find the Fury pilot, then carry him back through those same enemy lines. During the Earth/Minbari War, they began performing this mission for other Special Operations units, so much so that other units call them the 'Mothers.' More than one Special Assault Service patrol, shot to pieces on an alien world, has had a CSR team fight through the enemy to patch them up and lead them to safety. A Combat Search and Rescue operator with a Special Operations Command rescue ribbon will never have to pay for a drink at a SpecOps watering hole!

A typical CSR team consists of seven operators - one officer and six enlisted personnel. These six enlisted are all trained combat medics, although usually one is trained as a combat rescue surgeon. The rest are a mix of scouts, assaulters, and one to two heavy weapons specialists.

Forward Air and Space Combat Control Regiments (FASCC)

FASCCs are atypical of the Special Operations units as they rarely operate as a distinct team. Rather, many if not most



teams from the other units have one or two Forward Air and Space Combat Control regiments attached to them for a mission or even a long-term assignment. The reason is simple: Special Operations units are small - *very* small. Hence, when the spoo hits the fan, calling in a flight of Thunderbolts often means the difference between life and death. That's what FASCCs do. They are not the troops popping out of the bushes firing their PPG rifles, but instead are the ones hidden in those same bushes calling a strafing run down upon the enemy.



Prior to the Earth Minbari war, FASCCs were often ridiculed and looked down upon. That changed when, as a result of some spectacularly unsuccessful fire missions, they started being attached to other units. For some reason, having a flight of Starfuries coming out of nowhere to smash the teeming enemy units encircling your position changed some minds. Now it is a rare unit that goes into the field without requesting a FASCC. The Rangers in particular have come to depend on them to get the relieving troops into their position before they are overrun.

Special Air Wings (SAWs)

Being a commando is great. Excitement, adventure, and combat pay abound. Of course, you also risk certain death on missions that no sane being would contemplate. You also walk. A lot.

That's where the Special Air Wings come into play. These are the highly trained pilots that laugh at ordinary Fury jocks. A typical SAW response might go like this: 'You want us to fly through thick Centauri air defences to deposit a squad of Special Assault Service personnel, then come back through that area an hour later to land on the Emperor's palace courtyard? Sure, no problem! Which flagstone do you want us to land on?'



Simply put, the SAWs pride themselves on delivering Special Operations personnel anywhere at any time, no matter the danger. They can also get them out at the end, and support them during their actions. Flying in Valkyrie gunships and Frigga transports, they will go nearly anywhere if the mission calls for it.

Alpha Unit

Rumours abound of this unit, which is the Psi Corps equivalent to the Special Assault Service. Before the Earth/Minbari War, Alpha Unit didn't exist. Telepaths were assigned to SpecOps units as needed. They proved invaluable for recon teams, and several close personal relationships developed

between Razvedchiks and P5 to P10 level telepaths. Some say that this is what caused the eventual problems. Telepaths working closely with mundanes and forming friendships was not in the best interests of Psi Corps, after all. So, at the conclusion of the conflict, teeps were pulled from Special Forces units and rarely assigned there again. However, telepathic special operatives are still too valuable to ignore, so something must come into play to replace them. References surface from time to time of an 'Alpha Unit' that seems to fit the bill. Organisation is sketchy, but it seems reasonable to assume that they are primarily reconnaissance since Psi Corps is unlikely to risk highly trained telepaths in direct action. They are often linked with the 'Black Omega' fighter squadrons occasionally rumoured to be in Psi Corps service.



Blue Berets

The Blue Berets are another suspected unit. Supposedly modelled closely after the Special Assault Service, no one is quite sure whom the Blue Berets report to. However, they are rumoured to have a large number of unregistered telepaths in their ranks. It seems unlikely, but there must be a need for telepaths outside of Psi Corps control. Whether Psi Corps is aware of Blue Beret actions or if the telepaths are rogues who have found a home elsewhere in EarthForce remains to be seen.



Special Action Teams (SATs)

Civilian intelligence services occasionally have need of more direct action. Generally, members of the Special Operations Command are temporarily assigned to an *ad hoc* unit to perform a mission and then head back home. However, there is also apparently a need for a small cadre of experienced operators, and the Special Action Teams fulfil this role. Made up mostly of former Special Operations Command members, they are structured similarly to the Special Assault Service. Beyond that, little is known of these mysterious organisations.

Counter-Terrorism/Hostage Rescue Regiment (CTHR)

Terrorism has been a part of the Earth Alliance since its founding. CTHR (pronounced *cother*) is the oldest of the EarthForce special operations units, and the cooperation required for its founding led to the formation of the Earth Alliance Special Operations Command.

A Counter-Terrorism/Hostage Rescue team is a tight unit of nine operators. Somewhat atypically, there is one specific commanding officer, but often several members of the team

are officers as well. This is because most members are already experienced operators from other Special Operations Command units. It is very rare for someone to make the team without having served in another Special Operations unit.

CTHR operators have only two jobs - capturing or killing known terrorists and rescuing hostages. They often work with other units who support them with intelligence or extra muscle. However, CTHR regiments are the unit that actually comes flowing into the room. These men and women are a cut above even the elite Special Operations Command operator, with better marksmanship, higher strength, but lower endurance. Their missions take days or weeks to plan and minutes to execute. A typical CTHR regiment has six teams, four of which are skilled in ground operations, one in water-borne, and one which combines elements of both types. The latter is the command squad, and is to the rest of the regiment as those teams are to Special Operations Command.

Counter Terrorism squads are extremely important to the Earth Alliance and have the highest level of support in every walk of life. Whatever these teams want, they get. They are the most highly trained of all the SpecOps organisations, since running into a room filled with terrorists clutching hostages to themselves demand the best operators in existence.



Cav: Cavalry, usually as part of 'Air Cav' or 'Armoured Cav.'

CG: Command Group. A platoon employed strictly as a command element.

CPPG: Close range Phased Plasma Gun (PPG).

Demo: Demolitions.

FO: Forward Observer. A unit that can spot and paint enemy targets for long-range attacks.

GROPOS: Ground Pounders. Used to refer to the typical 'grunt,' or army infantryman.

IFV: Infantry Fighting Vehicle.

LFO: Limited Forward Observer. Any unit capable of spotting hidden enemy targets, but not painting them for long-ranged fire.

LZ: Landing Zone. The location where aircraft or shuttles are deploying troops or vehicles.

MBT: Main Battle Tank.

MI: Mechanised Infantry.

MLRS: Multiple Launch Rocket System.

mm: Millimetre. Usually refers to the diameter of a heavy weapon's barrel, e.g., 45mm when referring to the smallest BilPro cannon.

OB: Order of Battle. This refers to the whole of all forces available for use in battle.

Ops: Operations. For example, 'Special Ops.'

PLT: Platoon.

PPG: Phased Plasma Gun.

RoF: Rate of Fire.

VTOL: Vertical Take-Off and Landing, a type of aircraft that can take off or land in nearly any open area.

EarthForce's ground armies operate three basic types of vehicles:

Tanks: These are heavily armoured, highly mobile units designed to operate over nearly any terrain they might reasonably expect to encounter. Tanks can function in temperatures ranging from -50 degrees to 200 degrees Centigrade, and can travel over snow, ice, desert, forest, rough, and many other ground features. Modern tanks can be fitted with inflation pods permitting them to swiftly cross swamps, slow-flowing rivers, small lakes, and the like, although they will capsize in rough water or stormy conditions. A properly maintained tank is airtight, permitting it to operate in thin or toxic atmospheres or even under water for short distances, although the bottom must be rocky so the vehicle does not become bogged down in mud. A tank cannot operate in a vacuum or in extremely low-G conditions. In heavy gravity, tanks tend to sink into the earth, and will only work on sturdy surfaces.

All tanks in the Earth Alliance Army use a standardised chassis referred to as the Asgard class, which can mount most turret types with only a minimum of modifications. The Asgard is one of the flattest tanks in existence, made so in order to keep a low profile, especially when silhouetted on the horizon. As the weapon arming process is generally automated, the two-man tank crew drives and manoeuvres from a reclining position, looking up at monitors on the ceiling.

When a shipment of tanks is shipped as cargo, the turrets are usually removed for safety and configured at the receiving end. This process takes several days to complete and test. Tanks

Army and Special Operations Vehicles

Acronyms

While all branches of nearly every military in existence have used acronyms since the dawn of recorded history, the Army seems to be the most prone to this kind of shorthand. Although abbreviations have been kept to a minimum within this book, a few will necessarily creep in to the discussion hereafter - this is a simple matter of realism. If you want to think like a true Army grunt, you need to be able to understand a few simple acronyms, like those in this sentence: 'We fired 135mm BilPros against their MBTs, CPPGs against their GROPOS, ATFFMs and MLRSs for saturation, and repeating ASLSs in an AA role.' Here are some explanations of the abbreviations you might expect to see in common usage within the Earth Alliance:

AA: Anti-Aircraft.

AFV: Armoured Fighting Vehicle.

AP: Anti-Personnel.

APC: Armoured Personnel Carrier.

Arty: Artillery.

ASLS: Air Suppressor Laser System.

ATFFM: Anti-Tank Fire and Forget Missile.

BilPro: Binary Liquid Propellant, a weapon that mixes two inert liquids to form a highly volatile explosive.

ready for combat must have the turrets in place upon delivery, but even then require approximately a half hour to prepare and arm before they can jump into battle. For this reason, tanks are rarely transported directly into the fight, but are usually deployed behind the lines, where they are then activated by their crews and maintenance personnel.

Cars: The army employs armoured cars for the purpose of high-speed infantry transport and for reconnaissance. Cars are long, flat vehicles with three heavy-duty wheels on either side. These self-sealing wheels are protected by a reinforcement bar and are very difficult to damage. Only two per side are really needed, the third being included strictly for redundancy.

Armoured cars are much faster than tanks and are also much lighter. They can handle much softer surfaces and are naturally amphibious, so they can cross rivers and lakes without modification. The worst danger a car faces is being flipped over in a heavy current. Cars can be deployed directly into combat in a ready state, and are frequently delivered from Hades assault shuttles for purposes of ground reconnaissance. Since most cars lack heavy gun turrets, they have an even smaller profile than a tank and are therefore much stealthier.

Aircraft: Combat aircraft are used for a variety of roles and take many different forms. Some are long-range strike vehicles intended for pinpoint strikes on mobile targets, which are very difficult to track from orbit. Others are gunships intended to disrupt enemy infantry and light vehicle formations with close-range rapid-fire weapons. Still others are employed as troop or vehicle transports, hauling ground-bound units over terrain too rough or dangerous to traverse. There are as many different missions for aircraft as there are different types of aircraft themselves.

Because of the wide variety of different planetary surface types out there, many EarthForce aircraft are classed as VTOLs. VTOL stands for 'vertical take-off and landing,' which basically means that the unit can lift off from a standing position without the need for an airfield. This gives Earth's air forces a tremendous level of flexibility, but also makes their aircraft somewhat fragile and expensive to replace. In addition, the wide wingspan requires that each such unit be stored in a collapsed state during transit. Preparing one for combat after delivery takes approximately an hour, which includes fuelling time.

Ground Vehicle Weapons

Most modern EarthForce army weapons are of the BilPro (binary liquid propellant) type or use plasma in some way or another. Short-ranged anti-personnel and anti-aircraft guns are usually phased plasma guns. Artillery systems employ missiles or rockets. The various weapon systems in common use are as follows:

165mm BilPro Cannon: This highly specialised device was developed specifically for the Loki self-propelled artillery vehicle. With rocket-assisted rounds, this gun has an incredible range enabling it to shoot at targets not even located on the current battlefield. Unfortunately, the targeting systems are

optimised for long-range indirect fire, so it is not particularly effective at engaging lone close-range targets.

135mm BilPro Cannon: Among the largest of the standard binary liquid propellant guns, this device is seen only on the Thor main battle tank. Although it has excellent range and penetration power, it is virtually useless against infantry.

90mm BilPro Cannon: The medium-sized BilPro weapon is utilised on several craft, including the Hel armoured fighting vehicle. It is less effective against main battle tanks, but can blow most other types of units apart in a single volley.

45mm BilPro Cannon: The light BilPro is employed as a secondary gun on many EarthForce armoured vehicles. Although its damage level is too low to penetrate the hull of a standard main battle tank, it can still damage most other vehicles. The firing system is also optimised for use against infantry, giving it a greater all-around flexibility than other BilPro weapons.

Close-Range Phased Plasma Gun (CPPG): This is the larger cousin to the ubiquitous hand-held PPG weapons employed by infantry and security forces across all of EarthForce. Just about every vehicle in the inventory equips one of these devices for use against enemy infantry. In a pinch, it can also be employed against aircraft, although the short range makes it ineffective unless the opposition chooses to get perilously close to the unit in question.

EF-449 Heavy PPG Platform (EPPG): This is not a gun found on any specific vehicle, but a man-portable turret carried by infantry and set up in a fixed position. The crew can operate it remotely, allowing it to fire from a hidden location without exposing the troops to direct fire. Since the EF-449 is more effective than the CPPG, there have been rumours circulating that the EPPG will soon replace the older device as the standard anti-personnel weapon on vehicles, but as yet the high cost and higher silhouette of the EF-449 has prevented this from happening. An EF-449 takes up the same amount of space on any vehicle as a standard infantry unit.

Hammer Anti-Tank Fire and Forget Missile (ATFFM): The Hammer is the single most common missile system in use by the Army. As a 'fire-and-forget' device, the Hammer can launch its ordnance towards a target and turn over guidance to the missile itself, permitting the launching platform to immediately move to avoid counter-battery fire. A Hammer can also be fired from a remote location without being able to see its own target, picking up plotting information from spotters on the ground. This is referred to as 'remotely painting' an enemy, and allows the launching unit to fire from a safe position with little fear of retaliation.

Yellow Jacket Missile System: The Yellow Jacket is a direct-fire missile system designed to provide heavy, long-ranged fired support for front-line troops. Either a specific unit or an area can be targeted by this device. In order to make room for more fuel - and thus a longer range - the guidance system is necessarily more primitive, requiring direct control by a gunner aboard the firing unit. Thus, these missiles are less accurate than the more advanced Hammer.

Hornet Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS): Hornets are extremely long-ranged missile saturation systems designed to carpet a very large target area with a multitude of small explosives. This makes them highly effective against massed troops or immobile buildings, but less than useful versus highly armoured targets. Their fire is highly inaccurate, but they make up for this with the tremendous area of effect, which will hopefully hit at least *something*. In addition, Hornet systems cannot fire inside a certain range, referred to as the 'myopic zone,' as noted in their statistics.

Quiver Remote Platform: The Quiver is another man-portable turret similar in basic nature to the EF-449 Heavy PPG. Instead of firing plasma, the Quiver launches missiles at a greater range and with much higher effectiveness against aircraft. Unfortunately, they have only a limited amount of ammunition available. An EF-449 takes up the same amount of space on any vehicle as a standard infantry unit.

Cyclone Pulse Cannon: Developed after the same advances that resulted in naval pulse cannon technologies, the Cyclone is a devastating rapid-fire weapon with a relatively short range. The high rate of fire makes it particularly effective against infantry, although the individual shots are not particularly useful against highly armoured vehicles.

TS-105 Gauss Cannon: The latest in EarthForce ground weapons, the TS-105 has a longer range and higher damage potential than any other weapon in the Army's inventory. Like matter weapons and railguns found on naval craft, the Gauss Cannon also ignores some, but not all, of the damage resistance of the target. The TS-105 is a huge device that can be employed only on the largest Earth Alliance units, and its tremendous power and cooling systems drastically increase the profile of any tank it is mounted on.

TS-85 Light Gauss Cannon: A smaller version of the TS-105, this 'light railgun' can be mounted on standard tanks with far fewer modifications. Although the profile of the tank in question is still increased, most army commanders prefer the longer range and better damage to the slightly increased vulnerability produced by these advanced guns.

Air Suppressor Laser System (ASLS): To alleviate logistical problems encountered in supplying too many missile-based weapons, EarthForce utilises lasers in an anti-aircraft role as much as possible. When coupled with the Mark T-55 guidance system, the ASLS is a highly effective and long-ranged anti-air device. Their range is so long that enemy aircraft have difficulty getting close enough to attack them, making vehicles employing this weapon priority targets for long-distance bombardment and missile strikes.

Thor Main Battle Tank

The Thor was one of several competing main battle tank designs in existence shortly before the Dilgar War. Of those tanks, the Thor was the only one using the Asgard chassis, and quickly became the standard among Earth's armies. Several weapon improvements have been made over the years, resulting in the current design.

The Thor is extremely fast for a main battle tank, which is normally thought of as little more than a lumbering gun platform. Compared to the tanks of other races, it also possesses decent armour. The binary liquid propellant (BilPro) cannon gives it a long reach and penetrating capability respected by virtually every race that has ever seen these units in action. Even the Minbari had difficulty standing up to this tank if facing it in close combat. To protect the Thor from infantry, a secondary close-range phased plasma gun is employed on a rotating turret, although this device is different in some Thor models.

Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 35; DV 9 (-2 size, +1 agility); DR 15; Spd 21; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 7; Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

135mm BilPro Cannon; Turret; Attack +3 (+0 against infantry); Damage 2d10+8; Critical 20; Range 12; SQ Ground Targets Only; Ammunition 32, No Reloads



CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

One half platoon of infantry can ride on the exterior, but the turret is restricted to a single direction until they dismount

Odin Main Battle Tank

The Odin is one of the newest tanks in the Earth Alliance inventory. It is the first to mount the TS-105 Gauss Cannon, perhaps the single most powerful ground weapon EarthForce possesses. This huge device requires a great deal of space on the superstructure, taking up space normally used by armour and greatly increasing the tank's profile. While unit commanders appreciate the increased firepower provided by the TS-105, the tank crews themselves are not nearly as happy about being easier to spot and kill.

Odin tanks are still somewhat rare. Generally, no more than one platoon of them will be seen in any battalion. Sometimes, one Odin will replace a Thor in a single platoon, or two might appear mixed within an armoured company.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 36; DV 7 (-4 size, +1 agility); DR 11; Spd 21; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 5; Cargo 250 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

TS-150 Gauss Cannon; Turret; Attack +4; Damage 2d10+10 (ignores half of target's DR); Critical 20; Range 15; SQ Ground Targets Only; Ammunition 20, No Reloads
CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

One half platoon of infantry can ride on the exterior, but the turret is restricted to a single direction until they dismount

Modi Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV)

The Modi is essentially a mobile missile launch facility. Instead of a turret, the tank employs a series of Yellow Jacket missile racks attached to the back end of the chassis. The racks face forward only, and because they do not have fire-and-forget capability, the Modi must be motionless in order to fire. On any round in which it launches, it must be completely stopped and may not benefit from its agility bonus.

The primary problem with the Modi is its dependence upon ammunition-oriented weapons, which put a drain on company logistics. A typical Modi will move to an appropriate spot, fire off its guns over the course of several rounds, and then retreat to a supply station for additional ammunition. If the firing zone is relatively safe, the Modi might remain in place while resupply

vehicles come to the scene, but this is only done when the front line is highly stable.

In addition to the Yellow Jacket system, the Modi also has a single 45mm binary liquid propellant weapon for use against targets that approach within the missile system's myopic zone. The ubiquitous close-range PPG is used to fend off infantry assaults, which are especially problematic because the Modi must stop in order to fire.

Saturation Fire

Some ground weapons, particularly missile devices, are capable of saturation fire. In this mode, ordnance is not fired at any specific target, but at a specific location. This allows the weapon system to hit larger numbers of targets, including those it may not even know are present, at a significant decrease in damage capability.

A weapon capable of saturation fire will be so noted in its description. Saturation weapons roll to-hit against a single point on the battlefield, and if they miss, strike a different location nearby using the usual scatter rules. They can never 'miss' if fired in saturation mode, but will always carpet an area somewhere in play, even if it is not the chosen area. Care must be taken to ensure a miss does not rain down on friendly units!

Saturation weapons affect all targets within a radius shown in their statistics. Damage scored is usually half that for a direct shot, although this varies. Saturation fire is not particularly effective against armoured units, but can be devastating against infantry and light structures.

Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 32; DV 9 (-2 size, +1 agility); DR 10; Spd 20; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 6; Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners

Weapons:

Yellow Jacket Missile Rack; Boresight; Guidance 2; Damage 4d10; Critical 19-20; Speed 6; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot engage targets within 2

45mm BilPro Cannon; Front; Attack +1; Damage 2d6+6; Critical 20; Range 6; SQ Ground Targets Only; Ammunition 36, No Reloads

CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Front; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Transport Capability:

One half platoon of infantry can ride on the exterior, but until they dismount, the Yellow Jacket may not fire

Loki Self-Propelled Artillery

The Loki is the newest unit in the Army's inventory and adds a tremendous ranged damage capability to Earth's ground forces. The huge 165mm BilPro Cannon can fire at virtually

any spot anywhere in the playing field, but cannot engage units at close range. A given round cannot be fired at a specific unit, only at a location using the saturation rules. Damage scored depends entirely on the type of round, as noted in the weapon description.

The immense BilPro Cannon has a tremendous recoil so powerful that it can literally flip the tank onto its back if precautions are not taken. The tank possesses retractable 'feet' that must be deployed before the gun can shoot. These extend off the back of the hull and require a full round to affix into place before any firing can occur. Needless to say, the Loki cannot move when shooting. The tank can accelerate on the same round the feet are retracted, but cannot leave them in place once it begins moving. On any round in which the gun does not fire, the tank can shift its facing without moving or retracting the feet.

A Loki must fire from solid ground. Attempting to shoot from a soft surface, such as mud, swamp, or light sand will result in the tank flipping over or damaging itself. In desert conditions, care must be taken that the surface will stand up to the recoil. Sand dunes are not appropriate, although rocky areas will suffice.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 38; DV 6 (-4 size, +0 agility); DR 7; Spd 17; Acc 3; Dec 3; Han +1; Sensor +2; Stealth 5; Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

165mm BilPro Cannon; Boresight; Attack +3 (saturation fire only); Damage varies; Critical 20; Range 100; SQ Saturation Radius 1/Damage 3d10+10, Radius 2/Damage 2d10+8, Radius 4/Damage 1d10+4, Requires Speed 0 and Deployed 'Feet' to fire; Ammunition 16, No Reloads
CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Transport Capability:

One half platoon of infantry can ride on the exterior, but until they dismount, the BilPro Cannon may not fire

Baldur Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV)

The Baldur is a turretless tank fitted with special handholds and safety fittings for infantry transport. Up to two platoons of GROPOS, plus two remote turrets, can be carried on the exterior of this vehicle. The tank may not fire while troops are mounted, nor may any turrets unless the Baldur is stopped. One-quarter of any troops mounted on the tank can fire their weapons in any given direction (front, left, right, or rear) at any time, but suffer a -1 penalty to-hit for every two points of speed the IFV is travelling. However, infantry is rarely used in this way, because any units mounted atop it will also suffer the effects of any hit to the tank.

Once a Baldur has deployed its troops, it is perfectly capable of staying in the fight. In addition to the standard CPPG, the Baldur also mounts a light 45mm BilPro cannon for use against light armour units. In the event the Baldur is engaged by enemy main battle tanks, it also sports a small number of Hammer ATFM missiles slung alongside the chassis. These weapons cannot be employed if the IFV is moving faster than speed 6.

Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 32; DV 9 (-2 size, +1 agility); DR 8; Spd 24; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 7; Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

Hammer Anti-Tank Fire and Forget Missile; Boresight; Guidance 2; Damage 10+1d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot be fired at aerial targets.

45mm BilPro Cannon; Front; Attack +1; Damage 2d6+6; Critical 20; Range 6; SQ Ground Targets Only; Ammunition 36, No Reloads
CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

Two full platoons of infantry and their equipment can ride on the exterior, but the BilPro Cannon and Hammer ATFFMs cannot fire until they dismount

Bragi Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC)

The Bragi is a large troop carrier designed primarily to move infantry companies from one point to another over long distances away from the front. Bragis are not intended for combat and possess only a single close-range PPG for use in the event of ambush.

Bragi APCs carry troops and other equipment in an enclosed, armoured interior specifically intended to protect against artillery fire. The vehicle will not stand up to a direct attack by enemy tanks, and depends on friendly armour to protect it from such things. For every two hit points of damage suffered by a Bragi, each unit within takes one point (ignoring all DR). If the Bragi is destroyed, everything inside is also destroyed, regardless of its own armour value. The only exception would be in the case of certain alien technologies that might permit survival - for example, a device that could not be destroyed by physical force could not be taken out by putting it aboard a Bragi and blowing up the transport!

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 40; DV 6 (-4 size, +0 agility); DR 8; Spd 16; Acc 2; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +1; Stealth 4; Cargo 5,000 lb. (if no troops carried); 1 Driver, 1 Gunner, 2 Passengers (in front compartment)

Weapons:

Two CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; 1 Front, 1 Rear;
Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

Four full platoons of infantry and their equipment in an interior compartment

Hel Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV)

Built to support the lightly armed Baldur, the Hel carries less troops but is better armed. A single Hel can carry one full infantry unit, but no remote turrets. Once the infantry is delivered, the Hel employs its 90mm BilPro cannon against mobile enemy units. Its primary role is to suppress light armour, a job for which it excels. If attacked by main battle tanks, it employs its quartet of Hammer ATFFV missiles before retreating.

The Hammer system on the Hel can fire either one shot or two in any round. If fired in dual mode, both missiles must be employed against the same target.

Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 33; DV 9 (-2 size, +1 agility); DR 8; Spd 22; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 7; Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

Hammer Anti-Tank Fire and Forget Missile; Boresight; Guidance 2; Damage 10+1d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot be fired at aerial targets.

90mm BilPro Cannon; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 2d8+8; Critical 20; Range 9; SQ Ground Targets Only; Ammunition 30, No Reloads
CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

One full platoon of infantry can ride on the exterior, but the BilPro Cannon and Hammer ATFFMs cannot fire until they dismount

Frey Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)

The Frey is an older vehicle type employed for long-range saturation fire against a wide area. While it cannot achieve as tight a barrage radius as the Loki, the Frey more than makes up for its lack of precision with an immense zone of effect.

Like the Loki, the Frey cannot fire while in motion. However, this vehicle does not need to deploy special stabilising 'feet' in order to shoot. Its primary disadvantage is the sheer speed at which it goes through its missile ammunition. Platoons of Freys

are often trailed by a small supply train of Idun trucks packed with reloads. Otherwise, they must spend a significant amount of time shuttling back and forth between the battle and the nearest supply point.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 36; DV 7 (-4 size, +1 agility); DR 6; Spd 17; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +1; Stealth 5; Cargo 200 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners

Weapons:

Hornet Multiple Launch Rocket System; Boresight; Guidance 4; Damage varies; Critical 19-20; Speed 8; Fuel 8; Cannot attack aerial targets, Damage is Saturation Radius 3, Damage 2d10+4 or Radius 5, Damage 2d8+2; Reloads 8
CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Transport Capability:

None

Uller Air Defense Artillery (ADA)

Like nearly all Earth tanks, the Uller (pronounced YOU-ler) operates on the Asgard chassis, but anyone looking at it could barely tell at first glance. The surface is covered with sensor equipment and laser cannons designed to track and destroy enemy aircraft. Although its effective range is not terribly significant, owing to the difficulty in locking onto swift-moving targets from a mobile position, the Uller is still perfectly capable of protecting a company of vehicles from close-range air strikes.

The Uller is also capable of engaging ground forces with its lasers, although it does not do well in this role. The main problem is one of cover - the Uller cannot simply fire a shot into the air and let gravity pull it down to the target. Lasers fire in straight lines only. Thus, if a Uller wishes to engage an opponent, it must have perfect visibility and the advantage of higher ground. Friendly spotting efforts will not aid a Uller's shot.

Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 28; DV 8 (-2 size, +0 agility); DR 7; Spd 17; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +1; Sensor +3; Stealth 4; Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Sensor Operator, 2 Gunners

Weapons:

Air Suppressor Laser System; Front/Left/Right; Attack +4; Damage 2d10+8; Critical 20; Range 15; Rapid Fire
CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 6

Transport Capability:

None

Gungnir Mobile Defence Turret

Named after Odin's spear, these largely immobile defensive guns are designed for ease of deployment. Delivered to the ground by Hades assault shuttles and moved by Magni heavy lifters, the Gungnir offers excellent long-range firepower against anyone or anything attempting to get too close to a command post, airstrip, or logistical depot.

There are several types of Gungnir turrets, each designed for a different type of work. Small bases usually possess no more than a few of these, while larger stations could have multiple units of each type. Since moving these around is a difficult operation requiring hours of shutdown on both ends and considerable risk to the air units involved, Gungnirs are deployed only in locations where EarthForce intends to stay for a while.

In preparation for movement, a Gungnir retracts its ground stability pylons and deploys a series of balancing posts to keep it from falling over in the interim. A Magni then affixes a crane attachment, lifts the Gungnir off the ground, and slowly manoeuvres it to the new site. Once it finds the right spot, the turret drills its way into the surface, a process taking up to an hour depending on the terrain. The total time required for this is two hours plus any travel time.

If a Magni is not present or unavailable, a Gungnir can be equipped with a set of crawler wheels enabling it to slowly meander to another site in close proximity to its current location. Its speed in such cases is virtually negligible. Needless to say, the gun cannot fire while the turret is in motion.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 50; DV 6 (-4 size, +0 agility); DR 10; Spd 1/4; Acc 1/8; Dec 1/8; Han +0; Sensor +3; Stealth 6; Cargo 0 lb.; 1 Commander, 1 Sensor Operator, 3 Gunners

Anti-Armour Turret Weapons:

Three 135mm BilPro Cannons; Turret; Attack +3 (+0 against infantry); Damage 2d10+8; Critical 20; Range 24; SQ Ground Targets Only; Ammunition 32, Two Reload Sets

Anti-Personnel Turret Weapons:

Two Yellow Jacket Missile Racks; Turret; Guidance 2; Damage 4d10; Critical 19-20; Speed 6; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot engage targets within 2

Anti-Aircraft Turret Weapons:

Two Air Suppressor Laser Systems; Turret; Attack +4; Damage 2d10+8; Critical 20; Range 30; Rapid Fire

Transport Capability:

None

Sliepner Scout Vehicle

The Sliepner's purpose is strictly for reconnaissance. This vehicle's small size and low profile makes it ideal for this role. Slipping quietly into contested territory, a Sliepner parks in a quiet, secluded location where it deploys a small team of recon infantry to further survey the area. The individual troops can reach locations a vehicle cannot, such as the tops of small peaks or tall trees where they can see any movement in a wide area. A typical platoon of four Sliepnors carries two recon infantry platoons along for the ride, often deploying them in forward areas before retreating to avoid attracting further attention to themselves. Properly positioned, a Sliepner can act as a limited forward observer for artillery guidance purposes, while its troops move into full forward observer positions.

Sliepnors are amphibious and can travel over shallow, relatively calm water nearly as well as land. They are only lightly armed for defence against infantry that might discover them. Any damage to the scout car that penetrates armour affects infantry inside on a two-for-one basis. If the Sliepner is destroyed, any infantrymen inside suffer 3d6 damage from the explosion. A Reflex save (DC 12) results in only half damage.

Statistics:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 20; DV 11 (-1 size, +2 agility); DR 5; Spd 26; Acc 4; Dec 5; Han +3; Sensor +2; Stealth 8; Cargo 500 lb. if no troops carried; 1 Driver, 2 Passengers, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

One half platoon in an internal bay

Aegir Command Car

These highly specialised variants of the Sliepner are the primary vehicles of any company or battalion command group. All infantry transport capabilities have been replaced with an extensive command and control suite, enabling an Aegir to oversee virtually all battle activities from a speedy, stealthy platform. At the battalion level, Aegirs are almost always escorted by at least one Thor, Hel, or Baldur to distract any enemy unit that gets too close. Although the Aegir is protected by a CPPG, it almost always retreats at high speed if it comes under fire.

Aegirs are always considered forward observers unless external forces prevent this for some reason - for example, a heavy storm or some other form of obscurement. A typical use of this unit is to run it along the edge of the front, looking for

enemy units trying to slip past the defences. Alternately, an Aegir in command of a recon company will sneak ahead alone, attempting to spot enemy artillery units to facilitate a counter-battery strike.

Statistics:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 21; DV 12 (-1 size, +3 agility); DR 6; Spd 26; Acc 4; Dec 5; Han +3; Sensor +4; Stealth 10; Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Driver, 3 Sensor Operators, 1 Gunner

Weapons:

CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Turret; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

None

Sigurd Special Ops Vehicle

The Sigurd is a fairly new vehicle employing the latest in ground stealth technologies. The surface of this vehicle possesses a light-scattering coat that makes it extremely difficult to spot, and electronic output is kept to a minimum. The car's four wheels are completely covered by armoured panels protecting them from incoming fire or explosion damage. Once emplaced within vegetation or rocky areas, a Sigurd is almost impossible to see.

Sigurds are too small to carry troops, but the driver and gunner are usually highly trained Special Operations operatives. When a Sigurd is not being employed as a forward observer, its typical role is information gathering behind the lines or sneaking close to enemy bases. From here, the special ops crew sneaks out to deploy demolitions packs or spy cameras before the Sigurd itself hurries away. The vehicle possesses no weapons, and if seen and followed can be quickly destroyed by nearly any kind of enemy fire.

Statistics:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 18; DV 13 (-1 size, +4 agility); DR 3; Spd 26; Acc 4; Dec 6; Han +3; Sensor +0; Stealth 13 (16 if immobile); Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Special Ops Infantry

Weapons:

None

Transport Capability:

None

Skirnir Recon Bike

The modern-day equivalent of military motorcycles, these wheeled vehicles are the fastest ground craft available to the Earth Alliance. They can travel over a variety of terrain types, although they cannot move over water like armoured cars or flotation-equipped tanks.

Skirnirs normally do not have their own weapon systems, although the driver himself can use a hand weapon while the vehicle is in motion. A penalty of -1 to hit is applied for every 2 points of speed the vehicle is travelling (dropping fractions). A weapon may not be fired on the same round any manoeuvres requiring a skill check are attempted.

A sidecar attachment is available for the Skirnir that permits a passenger to accompany the vehicle. The passenger may fire a weapon with a -1 to hit penalty per 4 points of speed (dropping fractions). Since the sidecar is mounted on the left, the gunner may not fire out the right side of the vehicle without hitting the driver.

The sidecar may also be equipped with a single Quiver or EF-449 Heavy PPG remote platform for portable fire support. Either type of turret can be fired directly from the bike, but not while it is in motion. In fact, the driver must dismount to avoid being caught in the missile exhaust or heat backfire. A combat infantry company sometimes employs a small fleet of Skirnirs, using the sidecar to carry its remote turret, in order to quickly reach the combat zone.

If the bike takes damage during combat, the driver and any passengers or turrets suffer 1 point of damage for every 2 points the vehicle absorbs. If the Skirnir is destroyed, the sidecar is also destroyed; anyone aboard must make a Reflex save (DC 12) to avoid taking 2d6 additional damage. A turret is not entitled to a saving throw in this situation.

Statistics (items after the slash assume sidecar present):

Medium Surface Vehicle; hp 15; DV 15/14 (+0 size, +5/+4 agility); DR 2; Spd 30/28; Acc 6/5; Dec 6/5; Han +4/+3; Sensor +0; Stealth 14/12; Cargo 100/600 lb.; 1 Driver (plus 1 passenger with sidecar)

Weapons:

Normally none, but the driver can use a hand weapon, and any passenger can use an infantry weapon. The sidecar can also be equipped with a Quiver or EF-449 Turret.

Transport Capability:

1 Passenger or Turret in sidecar

Quiver Remote Missile Platform

The Quiver is not technically a vehicle, but a mobile missile turret designed to be carried and deployed by infantry. It is listed here only because it can be positioned and targeted separately from other units during combat. Quivers are unmanned devices that can be aimed and triggered by gunners located up to hundreds of metres away, their primary advantage in battle.

The Quiver cannot move on its own. When it must change location, the turret's legs fold up underneath the box-shaped device, which can then be moved by two GROPOS acting in concert. Deploying or stowing the turret requires two full round actions by two troops, after which it can be moved or fired, respectively.

For greater deployment flexibility, the Quiver is often delivered to the general target area by a Skirnir bike, or during a drop from a Magni heavy lifter. Quivers can be carried by other vehicles only if specifically noted in their descriptions.

Statistics:

Medium Surface Vehicle; hp 10; DV 10 (+0 size, +0 agility); DR 4; Spd 0; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +2; Stealth 6; Cargo 0 lb.; SQ Remote Operation

Weapons:

Remote Missile Platform: Turret; Guidance 2; Damage 3d10; Critical 19-20; Speed 6; Fuel 3; Reloads 6

EF-449 Heavy PPG Platform

Like the Quiver, the EF-449 is a remote turret capable of independent targeting and fire. It is frequently used as a kind of huge anti-personnel mine, or to guard a mobile facility, staging area, or infantry company. Sometimes, EF-449s are placed in choke points amidst terrain, or along roads to prevent enemy access. GROPOS involved in peacekeeping missions use these turrets at roadblocks and guard stations for use against anyone trying to break through the gate.

The EF-449 uses the same movement and deployment rules as the Quiver. Although it does not have nearly the same range, it has the advantage of not requiring ammunition. An EF-449 can fire up to 200 shots before needing to recharge its power pack at a base.

Statistics:

Medium Surface Vehicle; hp 10; DV 10 (+0 size, +0 agility); DR 4; Spd 0; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +2; Stealth 6; Cargo 0 lb.; SQ Remote Operation

Weapons:

Remote Heavy PPG Platform: Turret; Attack +2; Damage 2d10+3; Critical 19-20; Range 5; SQ Fires only when properly deployed; Ammunition 200; No Reloads

Idun Resupply Truck

Since virtually every Earth Alliance ground vehicle requires ammunition of some type or other - either missiles, rockets, or binary liquid propellant - logistics are of considerable importance. Without some ability to resupply forces directly

at the front line, any assault will be slowed, and a critical breakthrough could easily flounder.

The primary combat resupply unit is the Idun-class truck, a low profile armoured wheeled vehicle that can pull up to four pallets behind it. Since ordnance in the pallets is frequently explosives - missile warheads and the like - the cab features a quick-release system for safety purposes. If the vehicle comes under fire, the driver can break free and escape before catastrophe strikes. Separating the cab is a partial action; the cab begins operating under its modified statistics immediately, and will typically accelerate away from the pallets. The pallets themselves decelerate by half speed or 4, whichever is higher, each round thereafter until they stop.

The Idun cab is armed with a single close-range PPG for its own defence. However, this gun can fire only directly ahead of the vehicle if any pallets are attached. Once the pallets are detached, the weapon can swivel to either side, but only if a gunner is available to aim it. If there is no gunner, the CPPG can fire only straight ahead.

Each Idun pallet occupies one inch on the game map, trailing directly behind the cab like the segments of a centipede. Each segment is attacked and damaged separately. Any damage to a pallet is scored equally on any cargo it carries. If the pallet contains anything explosive, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 plus 1 per point of damage scored) or a catastrophic chain reaction results. The size of the resulting blast depends entirely upon the nature of the cargo, but automatically affects the pallet on either side in the chain, plus half damage to any pallet two spaces away. For this reason, pallets containing fuel or warheads usually trail at the end of the line, not near the front. Note that the liquids used in BilPro cannons are naturally inert unless mixed, so they are usually carried by separate trucks or on opposite ends of a pallet train.

Idun Cab Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 38; DV 7 (-4 size, +1 agility); DR 4; Spd 18; Acc 3; Dec 5; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 6; Cargo 200 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Passenger/Gunner

Pallet Statistics (Manoeuvre Stats are applied to the cab):

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 16; DV 8 (-2 size, +0 agility); DR 5; Spd -2; Acc -1/2; Dec -1/2; Han -1/2; Sensor +0; Stealth 4; Cargo 1,000 lb.; no crew or passengers

Cab Weapons:

CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Gun; Front/Left/Right (Front only if pallets attached or no gunner available); Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

Up to 4 pallets

Frigga Assault Craft

The Frigga is a lightly armed VTOL craft designed specifically to transport infantry quickly from one location to another, over any sort of terrain. Friggas are reasonably well armoured and can stand up to light antiaircraft fire, but is no match for a direct attack by AA missiles or laser cannons. Typically, the Frigga is used in a non-combat role, or to bypass large concentrations of forces. A battalion with a couple of Frigga platoons has incredible flexibility and manoeuvrability.

Like most vertical take-off and landing vehicles, the Frigga has two flight modes: fixed-wing and flex-wing. In fixed-wing mode, the craft is incredibly fast, with speeds rivalling that of a fighter, but cannot stay close to the ground or deploy/recover troops. When the wings are flexed, the Frigga's maximum speed is reduced, but it can hover in place or land in any flat space to carry out its primary mission. Switching modes requires a single round full action, but can only be accomplished if the vehicle is moving at a speed within 4 of the listed threshold. Thus, changing from flex-wing to fixed-wing requires a speed from 20 to 24, while shifting to flex-wing mode requires a deceleration to speed 28 or less. The Frigga cannot fly slower than speed 24 in fixed-wing mode.

Statistics listed below show the fixed wing numbers first, followed by flex-wing stats after the slash. If no slash is present, the numbers are the same for both mode.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Aircraft; hp 25; DV 10 (-4 size, +4 agility); DR 6; Spd 38/24; Acc 4/3; Dec 3; Han +3/+4; Sensor +2; Stealth 5/6; Cargo 2,000 lb. (if not carrying troops); 1 Pilot, 1 Navigator/Gunner

Weapons:

Three CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Guns; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Transport Capability:

Up to two platoons of infantry, but no vehicles or turrets

Valkyrie Gunship

Where the Frigga excels at the troop transport mission but lacks effective armament for any other role, the Valkyrie is exactly the opposite. It has no ability to carry troops, but instead concentrates specifically on combat. Armed with both the Yellow Jacket missile system and Hammer anti-tank missiles, it is a terrifying opponent for enemy vehicles to face. Even infantry must fear the Valkyrie's rapid-fire cyclone pulse cannon, which can lay waste to entire platoons of enemy troops. While it can engage nearly any type of target, the Valkyrie is

nonetheless vulnerable to enemy aircraft attacking from beyond its effective range.

Like the Frigga, the Valkyrie is a VTOL craft with dual statistics for either fixed or flex-wing modes, shown before and after the slash. The Valkyrie can fire the Yellow Jacket system only while hovering, and can use the Hammer only at very slow speeds. The Cyclone can fire at any time, even in an anti-aircraft role, although this vehicle is rarely used for that mission. None of these weapons may be employed if the vehicle is on the ground.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Aircraft; hp 35; DV 11 (-4 size, +5 agility); DR 9; Spd 40/20; Acc 5/4; Dec 4; Han +3/+4; Sensor +2; Stealth 4/6; Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Pilot, 1 Navigator/Gunner

Weapons:

Yellow Jacket Missile Rack; Boresight; Guidance 2; Damage 4d10; Critical 19-20; Speed 6; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot engage targets within 2

Hammer Anti-Tank Fire and Forget Missile; Boresight; Guidance 2; Damage 10+1d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot be fired at aerial targets.

Cyclone Pulse Cannon; Front; Attack +4; Damage 1d10+10; Critical 18-20; Range 3; Rapid Fire

Transport Capability:

None

Magni Heavy Lifter

The Magni is a very large VTOL aircraft designed to airlift up to two heavy tanks, or the equivalent in infantry, from one place to another. The lifter is not particularly fast, but when vehicles need to be moved across harsh terrain or to specific points on the battlefield, no other unit but the Magni can perform this mission. Magnis have been known to carry artillery pieces into highly fortified mountain or rocky areas they could never reach on their own, giving those weapons the look-down ability to rain down death for miles.

The Magni is unarmed, and is not particularly well armoured. Its manoeuvring abilities are limited, especially when loaded, so when it flies near a combat zone, a Magni is usually escorted by one or more Valkyrie gunships. The primary combat advantage of a Magni is its high level of armour and ability to soak up comparatively large amounts of damage before retiring.

All units are carried in an underside compartment and protected by the vehicle's hull. Any damage penetrating the Magni's armour has a 1 in 4 chance of also striking one unit at random within the aircraft's belly. The unit so struck benefits from DR normally.

The Magni can open its doors and deploy troops or vehicles in a single round using a manoeuvre referred to as a 'Low Altitude Paradrop (LAP drop).' An absolutely clear landing

zone is required. The Magni approaches and slows, descends to a low altitude, and opens the doors, letting anything inside fall the final distance. Parachutes are used as necessary to slow the descent. Depending on how heavy the incoming fire is, the actual distance of the drop can range from as little as a few metres to as many as several hundred. Because the risk of damage to vehicles can be considerable, and infantry involved can wind up injured if the manoeuvre goes poorly, this is normally done only in an emergency. The primary advantage is that the Magni only has to be in one place for a short period before retreating, hopefully surviving to drop again another day. Also, the troops or vehicles can begin to fight immediately after dropping, without any need for extensive deployment delays.

A Magni is too large to fit into a Hades assault shuttle, even with the wings detached. The only vehicle capable of delivering the heavy lifter to another world is the Condor, where it takes up as much room as two standard aircraft.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Aircraft; hp 60; DV 7 (-4 size, +1 agility); DR 8; Spd 26/16; Acc 4/3; Dec 3/2; Han +2/+3; Sensor +1; Stealth 3; Cargo 8,000 lb. (if not carrying troops or vehicles); 2 Pilots, 1 Navigator

Weapons:

None

Transport Capability:

- A Magni can carry any one of the following:
- 2 tanks of any type listed herein (ready for combat)
 - 4 platoons of infantry and all their equipment (one turret per platoon, ready for combat)
 - 1 Idun truck cab and four pallets, two cabs and two pallets, or 6 pallets (all loaded)
 - 3 armoured cars of any type
 - 6 Skirnir recon bikes or sidecars, along with drivers/passengers/turrets as needed
 - 1 Valkyrie in a non-combat-ready state
 - Standard cargo as listed in the vehicle's description

Vidar Spyplane

This fixed-wing craft is designed for stealthy high-altitude flight. While in place over a clear battlefield, it provides a clear view of the action to the field commander. In addition to reconnaissance photography and real-time visual and infrared data, the Vidar can also act as a limited forward observer versus up to four specific enemy targets, all of which must be within a 100-metre radius of each other. Note that a Vidar's spy capability is restricted to infrared (heat signature) views if the battlefield is obscured by weather or smoke clouds.

Like most fixed-wing aircraft, the Vidar requires a runway to take off and land. This runway must be at least 50 metres long, but it need not be paved. Clearing vegetation or simple terrain to make a landing strip requires a company of infantry four full

hours of uninterrupted work. Runways cannot be prepared in severely rocky conditions, swamps, or similar areas.

The Vidar can be carried in a Hades with wings folded.

Typically, ground transport units do not bother deploying fixed-wing aircraft until a beachhead is secured and combat is well under way. Spacecraft in orbit can perform some of a Vidar's duties, but do not produce nearly as good intelligence, nor do they have the ability to duck under cloud cover to spy on the target area. Entire battles have been won or lost because of a Vidar's presence, or lack thereof.

Statistics:

Huge Aircraft; hp 20; DV 11 (-2 size, +3 agility); DR 4; Spd 48; Acc 8; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 12; SQ Ejector Seat; Cargo 10 lb.; 1 Pilot, 1 Navigator

Weapons:

None

Transport Capability:

None

Heimdall Fighter-Bomber

Because the Earth Alliance has until recently operated strictly non-atmospheric fighters in space, fixed-wing aircraft are still needed in support of ground actions. Over the years, these have evolved into two standard forms, the fighter-bomber and dedicated bomber. The Heimdall takes on the former role, and is perfectly capable of either achieving air superiority or delivering its considerable firepower directly against ground targets.

Heimdalls require airfields equal to those needed by the aforementioned Vidar spyplanes, and are transported in a similar manner. Their maximum altitude is somewhat less than the Vidar and they are not nearly as fast, but their combat capabilities are almost on par with the Thunderbolt. The appearance of that atmospheric-capable fighter may signal the end of the Heimdall class, as the T-bolt can accomplish both a space and ground combat role without a need for special transport limitations. Of course, the Heimdall is still considerably cheaper, which will likely leave it the defensive vehicle of choice for colonial use.

When flying over a battlefield, the Heimdall typically comes into play at high speed, strafing the target with its uni-pulse cannons as it passes over the precise spot and zipping far out of reach of ground units before they can move or react. Making a strafing run provokes an attack of opportunity for all units with anti-aircraft firing capability within range of the firing unit. The Heimdall's missiles can be launched from much farther away, and provoke no opportunity fire. Up to two missiles can be deployed at once, but not in the same round as a strafing run. Both missiles must be fired at the same target.

There are several types of missiles available to the Heimdall, as shown in the statistics below. The standard missile is the same as that found on the Thunderbolt, only optimised for atmospheric use. Other types are available for special purposes.

Statistics:

Huge Aircraft; hp 25; DV 14 (-2 size, +6 agility); DR 6; Spd 42; Acc 7; Dec 4; Han +4; Sensor +2; Stealth 5; SQ Afterburners, Ejector Seat; Cargo 10 lb.; 1 Pilot

Weapons:

Twin-linked Uni-Pulse Cannon; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 4d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1
Two Fighter Missile Racks; Boresight; Guidance 2; Damage 15+1d10; Critical 20; Speed 5; Fuel 3; Reloads 3 (each)

Alternate Missile Types:

Anti-Aircraft Missile: +2 to hit aircraft; cannot be used against targets on the ground

BilPro Saturation Missile: No direct fire capability; Saturation Radius 3/Damage 2d10+5; if two missiles are fired, each can be targeted up to 5 away from the other to ensure a wide field of effect

Seeker Warhead: Fires at any anti-aircraft vehicle automatically, even during a strafing run; bonus to hit is equal to the Sensor Rating of the AA unit

Penetration Warhead: Damage 10+1d10 (ignores up to 5 points of DR); Critical 19-20; targets ground vehicles or buildings only; penalty to hit mobile units equal to their speed

Transport Capability:

None

Mjolnir Cruise Missile

These large, unmanned devices can be deployed by Tyr bombers or from special launching facilities located within Earth Alliance buildings. The Mjolnir is only rarely deployed against vehicles unless they are immobile for some reason or other. Normally, it is used as a precision long-range strike device against buildings, particularly defensive ones.

With its high speed, stealth, and self-guidance ability, this vehicle is extremely difficult to shoot down. By the time it is spotted, it is usually too late to target it with anti-aircraft weapons. If the defences have not been caught flat-footed, they may make an attack of opportunity during the round the Mjolnir makes its final suicide run, but any attacks are at -5 due to the vehicle's high speed and stealthy approach.

The Mjolnir can be equipped with a nuclear payload, but this would be done only in extreme circumstances. See the description of the Tyr (above) for more details.

Statistics:

Medium Aircraft; hp 12; DV 12 (+0 size, +2 agility); DR 2; Spd 50; Acc 10; Dec N/A; Han +0; Sensor +4; Stealth 10; Cargo 0 lb.; Unmanned; SQ Explodes for 30+6d10 damage on target

Piranha Assault Sub

Designed for use on contested worlds with a significant quantity of surface water, the Piranha is capable of launching missile strikes from underwater and retreating quickly into the depths. The sub is used only infrequently, and since it has no amphibious capability, it is useful only against targets located close to a coast or large river. Because of its limited scope, many in EarthForce feel the vehicle should be discontinued, but it will likely continue to remain a part of the Special Forces inventory for some time.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Watercraft; hp 85; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 9; Spd 30; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +1; Sensor +3; Stealth 15; Cargo 4,000 lbs.; 12 crewmen

Weapons:

Yellow Jacket Missile Rack; Turret (surface launch only); Guidance 2; Damage 4d10; Critical 19-20; Speed 6; Fuel 3; Reloads 4; Cannot engage targets within 2

Four Mjolnir Cruise Missiles; Turret (can be launched while submerged); see individual item description for special rules
Two CPPG Antipersonnel/Antiaircraft Guns; 1 Front, 1 Rear (surface use only); Attack +2; Damage 1d10+6; Critical 19-20; Range 3

Four Torpedo Launchers; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +2; Guidance 2; Damage 3d10; Critical 19-20; Speed 6; Fuel 6; Reloads 24; Water Targets Only

Transport Capacity:

Each 200 lbs. of cargo space can be replaced with a passenger, typically a Special Operations unit member

Civilian Vehicles

Civilian vehicles come in many forms, from the classic, simple bicycle up to huge aerial cranes capable of lifting incredibly heavy loads. This section describes some of the craft a visitor to Earth or any of the colonies might expect to see.

Bicycle

The simple bicycle has been referred to as one of the greatest inventions in the history of the world. Able to propel a human being at high speed for extremely long periods of time, it revolutionised personal transportation after it first appeared in the 19th Century. During the early years of the Third Millennium, as the price of oil rose and air pollution became more and more troublesome, bicycles grew in popularity, replacing cars in many places of the world as the standard mode of transport. Even today, their low cost and ease of use make them a popular choice in many areas.

Modern bicycles are made of high-tech, extremely light materials and include a variety of features built directly into the frame. A system of simple gears automatically adjusts to changes in altitude. Braking is accomplished by hand triggers that smoothly slow the wheels without skidding. Despite advancements in technology, however, a bike's basic design remains the same as it was three hundred years ago - two wheels, a seat, handlebars, and a set of pedals that provide power to the drivetrain. While some bicycles are self-propelled, true cycling purists use their own muscles.

Bicycles come in many styles, but most have shock-absorbing frames and heavy tires enabling them to cross a variety of terrains. They are much more common on roads, but can also be found in the countryside and on trails. Bikes are particularly useful in low-G environments.

Statistics (numbers after the slash are for motorised versions):

Medium Surface Vehicle; hp 6; DV 15 (+0 size, +5 agility); DR 0; Spd 10/12; Acc 3/4; Dec 5; Han +5; Sensor n/a; Stealth 12/10; Cargo 10 lb.; 1 Rider. Note: The movement statistics shown here are for typical

bicycles with normal riders. Racing bikes with skilled riders can achieve much greater speeds.

Transport Capability:

Bikes can be equipped with panniers capable of holding up to 30 lbs. Properly fitted bikes can haul trailers capable of supporting up to 100 lbs. Speed and acceleration should be reduced appropriately for cycles carrying such loads.

Motorcycle

Like the bicycle, motorcycles have not changed their basic designs over the years. They are still two wheels with a seat, handlebars, and engine capable of propelling the vehicle to speeds equalling or exceeding those of ground cars. Modern motorbikes are constructed of high-tech materials and use non-polluting, high-output engines. They can be equipped with sidecars that permit a single passenger to come along for the ride, or for additional cargo storage. The primary advantage of motorcycles, as far as the consumer is concerned, is a lower cost and easier storage.

Statistics (items after the slash assume sidecar present):

Medium Surface Vehicle; hp 12; DV 14/13 (+0 size, +4/+3 agility); DR 1; Spd 28/26; Acc 6/5; Dec 6/5; Han +4/+3; Sensor n/a; Stealth 10/8; Cargo 100/600 lb.; 1 Driver (plus 1 passenger with sidecar)

Transport Capability:

1 Passenger or 500 lbs. of cargo in sidecar

Ground Car

Usually referred to as simply 'cars,' these vehicles are found throughout the Earth Alliance and come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. For many people, the car is much more than simply a means to get around. It represents independence, freedom, and a sense of individuality. Cars are infinitely customisable, with a wide variety of options allowing the owner to create a vehicle that fits him like a glove. A ground car might be fully enclosed or convertible. It could be a single colour, or a rainbow of shifting patterns or designs. It could be fully electrical or powered by alcohol, natural gas, or hydrogen fuel cells. Some are even solar powered, if the owner lives in a region that gets a lot of sunlight year-round. The possibilities are endless.

Most ground cars are equipped with automatic driving systems enabling an onboard computer to take over control of the vehicle in an emergency or in areas where the volume of traffic is extremely high. Sensors in the bumpers and along the sidewalls permit the car to avoid sudden lane changes or impacts with other vehicles, actually overriding the driver if he makes a mistake or does something dangerous. On highly congested highways, the car's computer takes over automatically and slots into traffic at such close ranges that manual driving would be foolhardy.

The statistics shown hereafter are for several types of common ground cars. Of course, these can be adjusted up or down as needed, since each car tends to be slightly different from other makes and models.

Standard Mid-Size Car:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 15; DV 9 (-1 size); DR 4; Spd 22; Acc 2; Dec 4; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 200 lb.; 1 Driver, 4 passengers

Limousine:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 18; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 4; Spd 20; Acc 2; Dec 4; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 400 lb.; 1 Driver, 12 passengers

Sports Car/Racecar:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 14; DV 9 (-1 size); DR 3; Spd 28; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor n/a; Stealth 5; Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 passengers

Pickup Truck/Utility Vehicle:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 16; DV 9 (-1 size); DR 4; Spd 18; Acc 2; Dec 3; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 1,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 passenger (plus up to 6 more in place of cargo)

Cargo Van:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 20; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 4; Spd 17; Acc 2; Dec 3; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 passenger (plus up to 8 more in place of cargo)

Transport Capability:

See individual listings. Many cars or vans are optimised for the transport of cargo or passengers. For example, vans are frequently modified with three or more rows of seats, which are themselves often removable. Some cars have copious amounts of trunk space or roof racks

permitting additional cargo to be carried. Some very small cars, particularly those built to travel the narrow streets of Europe, cannot transport as much as listed above.

Ground Bus

Buses are designed for the efficient transportation of large numbers of passengers from one location to another. Because aircraft are generally better at this for long distances, ground buses are normally seen only within a city's borders. The vast majority of them are fully automated, and are sometimes referred to as 'autobuses.' Passengers wishing to board enter their destination on a panel at the stop, and are picked up by the next compatible bus that comes by. The vehicle navigates the streets using entirely automated systems, sending out signals that tell cars and other vehicles when to expect lane changes and stops. Some cities have entire lanes that only buses may use. Taking an autobus is usually a very inexpensive method of travel, and is the means of choice for those living in congested areas where ground cars are inefficient and travel by bicycle is too dangerous.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 30; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 4; Spd 12; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor n/a; Stealth 3; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Driver (optional), 40 passengers

Transport Capability:

Buses can carry cargo in place of passengers at the rate of 100 lbs. of materials per person replaced, but this is rarely done as the seats in typical buses are not designed for easy replacement. Luggage is generally carried in overhead bins or in a special compartment underneath the seats. It is possible for up to 8 individuals to travel uncomfortably in the undercarriage, but this is not standard and would attract attention unless the individuals boarded in secrecy.

Ground Lorry (Truck)

Like ground cars, lorries - referred to as 'trucks' throughout most of the Alliance - come in a variety of different shapes and sizes, from small delivery vehicles to huge monstrosities capable of carrying an entire houseful of goods from one location to another. Unlike cars, which use a variety of different fuels and propulsion systems, most trucks utilise either fuel cells or natural gas engines. Lorries rarely travel extremely long distances, as air and shuttle transport is almost always cheaper and faster. The typical truck operates only within the city limits or between towns that are relatively close together,

where deliveries can be made in less than a day for a lower cost than an airlift.

Statistics for several common types of lorries are listed below. These statistics assume the vehicle in question is designed for use within an atmosphere. On planets such as Mars, lorries designed for cross-country use are fully enclosed and pressurised. Increase the DR by 1 for such vehicles. Also, the trucks listed here are designed for use on already established roads. Those employed in less developed areas use advanced suspension systems or tracks to traverse the rougher terrain. Reduce the speed by 2 for these types, which are also noticeably more expensive.

Medium-Sized Lorry Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 25; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 5; Spd 16; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 3; Cargo 4,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 passengers

Recycler (Garbage Truck):

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 26; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 5; Spd 14; Acc 1; Dec 2; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 3; Cargo 6,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 passenger (internal), 2 passengers (external). Note: These vehicles collect recyclables from homes and businesses, sort this 'trash' in internal bins, and compact them into cubes for later conversion. In most modern cities, there is very little unusable garbage produced, as consumer goods are designed with recycling in mind.

Cargo Lorry:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 38; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 5; Spd 18; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 3; Cargo 12,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 passengers

Moving Van:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 52; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 4; Spd 16; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 3; Cargo 24,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 passenger

Transport Capability:

See individual entries. These vehicles are usually several metres tall, with moving vans among the largest on the roads. They can carry passengers in place of cargo, but this is rarely done as it is much less efficient than a bus.

Fixed-Wing Aircraft

Most worlds still employ a variety of fixed-wing craft for the purpose of extremely long-distance transfer of personnel or cargo. While a shuttle is capable of ferrying people or equipment into space, aircraft are optimised for

high-speed transit and can achieve incredible velocities, particularly the most advanced high altitude low orbit (HALO) vehicles, which can literally travel halfway around the world in the space of an hour. Fixed-wing aircraft are relatively safe and offer the most economical means of long-distance transportation across planetary surfaces. They do, however, require a landing strip at both the start and end of their journey.

Small Cargo Plane Statistics:

Gargantuan Aircraft; hp 30; DV 8 (-4 size, +2 agility); DR 4; Spd 34; Acc 2; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +1; Stealth 5; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 10 passengers

Heavy Aero Transport Statistics:

Colossal Aircraft; hp 110; DV 5 (-6 size, +1 agility); DR 4; Spd 28; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor +1; Stealth 4; Cargo 200,000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 4 Crewmen

High Altitude Low Orbit (HALO) Statistics:

Gargantuan Aircraft; hp 56; DV 10 (-4 size, +4 agility); DR 5; Spd 120; Acc 8; Dec 12; Han +4; Sensor +2; Stealth 6; Cargo 10,000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 8 Crew, 120 passengers

Transport Capability:

Generally as listed. Aircraft provide specific seats for passengers and do not generally convert passenger space to cargo or vice versa.

Crawler

Favoured on desolate planets such as Mars, crawlers are large sealed vehicles capable of traversing any rough terrain, whether by virtue of over-sized wheels or tracks. They tend to be very slow but can carry a substantial cargo or passenger load for their size and are relatively inexpensive. A crawler's internal air supply will typically support all crew and passengers for up to twelve hours, though modified crawlers can sometimes be found with greater atmospheric capacities. A small airlock allows passengers to ride in comfort while still being able to disembark into hostile conditions in a pressure suit. Crawlers are rarely found in civilised areas, but normally appear only in undeveloped locations or places where the atmosphere is too thin for normal travel.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 50; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 7; Spd 9; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +1; Stealth 4; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 12 passengers



Transport Capability:

Each passenger can be replaced by up to 200 lbs. of cargo.

Expedition Rover

The expedition rover is the vehicle of choice for many Earth-funded exploration missions to other worlds. Fully sealed against alien atmospheres, the rover is an articulated vehicle supported by four over-sized all-terrain wheels that allow it to traverse the roughest of landscapes. The front cabin, which holds three crewmen, is connected by umbilical to the rear compartment which can be configured for any number of missions, including cargo, scientific research, sensor analysis or even troop transport.

Statistics:

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 30; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 6; Spd 8; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +1; Sensor +0; Stealth 5; Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 passengers

Transport Capability:

The statistics above assume scientific research is being performed, but the rear compartment can be reconfigured within an hour to either increase cargo to 3,000 lb. or passengers to 8.

Maglev Transport

Most modern cities, either on Earth or the colonies, include some type of maglev transport capability for public transportation. Put simply, maglevs utilise the principle of magnetism to levitate a vehicle slightly above or around a pre-established rail. The vehicle can then be accelerated to a high speed and decelerated as it reaches its destination. The basic concept is not unlike that used by railgun weapons, except the speeds are not nearly as great and the vehicle is capable of deceleration at any given station.

Maglevs are an extremely safe and reliable means of travel. There are few moving parts and no friction to promote wear and tear on the vehicle itself. The biggest danger is a loss of power to the system, but the only effect in such a case would be a temporary travel delay. Collisions are all but impossible as maglev lines do not

intersect, and it is physically impossible for two maglev cars to travel in opposite directions on the same rail. The only potential danger is from a sundering of the line through some natural disaster or terrorist act.

Maglev vehicles exist in several sizes, from small personal pods up to large cargo transports employed between production centres. Maglev rails are employed within cities for individual use, between towns for commuting purposes, and across long distances for rapid, safe transport. Maglev vehicles can be sent in either of two directions without reconfiguration, and can operate within close proximity to each other with little trouble. All vehicles on the same section of rail will be moving the same speed at the same time. Maglev pods used for passenger transport are enclosed and sealed while in motion. Those in use on planets with low-pressure atmospheres are enclosed within pressurised tubes designed to survive most disasters, even the explosion of one or more pods.

All maglev vehicles operate using automatic controls. There are no pilots or drivers, nor is there any means to take control of such a craft while it is in motion, unless you happen to be located in the control centre.

Personal Maglev Pod Statistics:

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 20; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 4; Spd 20; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 1; Cargo 500 lb.; 4 Passengers

Large Transport Pod Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 40; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 4; Spd 12; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 1; Cargo 1,000 lb.; 16 Passengers. Note: This is functionally identical to the core shuttle used to get around in the interior of Babylon 5.

High-Speed Interstate Transport Pod Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 60; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 4; Spd 32; Acc 5; Dec 5; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 1; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 60 Passengers

Maglev Cargo Pod Statistics:

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 90; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 4; Spd 16; Acc 3; Dec 3; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 1; Cargo 20,000 lb.; 4 Passengers

Transport Capacity:

As listed above. Larger pods can also carry vehicles of the same or smaller size, including motorcycles and ground cars.

Speedboat

These are the modern-day equivalent of motorboats. Made of advanced ultralight composite materials and equipped with self-correcting stabilisers, these pleasure craft can achieve incredible speeds on the water. Because modern aircraft are still much faster and can carry heavier loads, speedboats are rarely used for any purpose except recreation.

To avoid accidents at high speed, computers are normally used to control the vehicle, automatically slowing for rough seas and avoiding other boats in the area. If a speedboat is handled manually, use the Drive skill, as the controls are basically the same. However, the DCs for manoeuvres at high speeds will tend to be higher, as speedboats are less tolerant of errors.

Statistics:

Large Watercraft; hp 16; DV 9 (-1 size); DR 4; Spd 25; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver, 5 passengers

Transport Capacity:

Some modern-day pirates employ gun turrets in speedboats for use against yachts in international waters. A speedboat can mount a single EF-449 Heavy PPG Platform or a similar sized weapon, although the passengers must take care to stand clear. There are no military speedboats in operation today, as their role can be easily filled by faster and more flexible VTOL craft.

Yacht

Modern yachts are essentially small cruise ships, with every possible convenience you can imagine. Within its armoured walls, a person might have no idea they were on a boat at all. Wave suppressors virtually eliminate turbulence, even on stormy seas, and advanced navigation equipment safely pilots the vessel from one port to another. Yachts are favourite getaway cruisers for the wealthy and their families, and their food and water storage capabilities can support a large number of passengers for several weeks.

Statistics:

Huge Watercraft; hp 55; DV 8 (-2 size); DR 6; Spd 18; Acc 3; Dec 3; Han +1; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Driver (optional), 20 passengers

Transport Capacity:

If no passengers are carried and the yacht is stripped of luxury items, it could carry up to 16,000 lbs. of cargo, although there is little reason to do so.

Cargo Ship

Very few countries continue to use ocean surface shipping. In today's modern times, it is simply too slow and expensive compared to any of the other methods available. However, in relatively low-tech areas where there are plenty of islands, cargo ships sometimes take on the same role as ground trucks, hauling very large loads at a relatively low price from one port to another. Cargo ships are seen most frequently around archipelagos, such as Indonesia, Greece, and many of the island chains that dot the Pacific Ocean. They are less common around long, jagged coastlines or in narrow bays with cities on either side, where they operate in a ferrying role. In any mode, they are enclosed craft with their cargo securely protected against weather and other exterior forces.

Statistics:

Colossal Watercraft; hp 110; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 5; Spd 15; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 4; Cargo 250,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 3 passengers

Transport Capacity:

Stripped of cargo, one of these ships could carry as many as 500 people for short distances. In a ferry role, they can haul up to 30 large vehicles or the equivalent in other size categories.

Submarine

With the state of the world today, submarines have almost no direct military applications. Advanced tracking systems makes finding them relatively easy once they emerge from hiding on the ocean floor. Very few nations still operate surface ships now that aircraft have basically an unlimited range and striking power, and any true threat would come from offworld. The primary use for a sub today is for Special Operations work, but a few standard military submarines are still employed as listening platforms or as a defence against pirates, while others are used as private undersea yachts by the wealthy. One of these, located in Greece and equipped with transparent walls, is a floating restaurant that cruises past ancient Mediterranean wrecks while delivering a five-star meal to its affluent patrons.

On other planets, submarines are sometimes used to explore the oceans of newly discovered worlds. They are employed not just to search for resources, but to identify life forms, survey the ocean floor, and perform valuable scientific work. They also operate as underwater shuttles to deepwater research stations.

Statistics:

Gargantuan Watercraft; hp 75; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 8; Spd 24; Acc 3; Dec 3; Han +0; Sensor n/a; Stealth 12; Cargo 2,000 lbs.; 8 crewmen, 24 passengers

Transport Capacity:

Submarines are not particularly spacious, but if they have no passengers and a minimum crew, they can carry another 4,000 lbs. of cargo.

Vehicles

Item	Cost
Bicycle	500 cr.
Motorcycle	1,300 cr.
Ground Car	7,000 cr.
Mid-Sized	12,000 cr.
Limousine	40,000 cr.
Sports Car/Racecar	56,000 cr.
Pickup Truck/Utility Vehicle	23,000 cr.
Ground Bus	19,000 cr.
Ground Lorry	15,000 cr.
Small Cargo Plane	45,000 cr.
Heavy Aero Transport	160,000 cr.
High Altitude Low Orbit Aero	420,000 cr.
Crawler	68,000 cr.
Expedition Rover	37,000 cr.
Maglev Transports	115,000 cr.
Speedboat	23,000 cr.
Yacht	35,000 cr.
Cargo Ship	230,000 cr.
Submarine	72,000 cr.

Weapons and Equipment

The people of the Earth Alliance employ a wide variety of different types of equipment and weaponry. This chapter lists some of the more common items a player might expect to discover. Items available only on the black market or through other sources are so noted in their descriptions.

General Equipment

Auto-Translator: These sophisticated computers are programmed to automatically translate speech from their owner into another language, and perform the reverse translation from anyone it hears speaking in the immediate vicinity. Each auto-translator must be programmed in advance with a language module for both tongues - it is not capable of learning languages on the fly! Using an auto-translator requires a short delay between each sentence or phrase in order to ensure the proper intent of the message has been analysed. Auto-translators also attempt to infer emotions or emphasis when they can, but are not infallible. A player monitoring auto-translation can pick up the occasional error on a Technical (electronics) check against DC 21, but must be at least reasonably familiar with both languages to have any chance of rolling.

Binoculars: These high-tech devices automatically focus on distant targets and zoom in with a magnification level of ten times for standard models and 20 times for the really expensive types. Range finders are included in the design, showing approximate distance to whoever or whatever is in the centre of the display. As this ability requires an active signal, it can be deactivated in order to avoid detection by scanning equipment.

Brainwiper: These large machines are employed to erase the personality and memory of anyone unfortunate enough to be placed inside. There are very few of these in existence and they are used only for legitimate legal purposes - most often to carry out a 'death of personality' sentence. The victim is then retrained to be a productive, functional member of society. Anyone placed inside one of these terrible devices must make a Will save (DC 25) to avoid having their mind and personality completely and permanently wiped away. Even if the victim is successful, telepaths are usually employed to ensure the mind is truly gone. If not, the procedure is simply repeated. The secret of building these machines is closely guarded, and none are known to exist outside the hands of EarthForce.

Bug Sweeper: These handy devices detect active microphones, cameras, and transmitters within a two-metre radius. The user makes a contested Technician (electronics) check against the skill of whoever installed the bug, and if the sweeper wins, the bug is detected - note that a bug built by a much more advanced society will receive bonuses to resist detection. If desired, a bug sweeper can project 'white noise' over the signal to make anyone watching or listening think there is just some sort of problem on the line. Bug sweepers cannot detect listening devices that are not presently operating, so they are of little

use against bugs that operate on timers or delayed activation switches. Bug sweepers cannot penetrate solid walls, so they cannot detect or block transmitters on the other side of a bulkhead, for example. A sweeper can operate for up to two hours of continuous use without requiring recharging.

C-15 Explosive: The result of centuries of demolitions research, C-15 is the latest in the 'C' series of plastic explosives. A block of this material is totally inert unless activated by a special chemical combined with an electrical charge. Soft and malleable, a block can be rolled like dough and wrapped around any object that needs to be destroyed, producing a shaped charge for virtually any purpose. C-15 can be detonated by standard trigger, deadman switch (i.e., the release of a given lever or button), or timing device. A single block explodes for 3d6+6 damage to whatever it is attached to, plus the equivalent of a standard concussion grenade - 1d10 concussion damage - to anyone standing up to 20 feet away. Multiple blocks, each of which is approximately two square inches in size, add 3d6 to the damage scored, plus 1d6 and 10 feet of range to the concussion effect. Enough C-15 can blow a hole in just about anything!

Camouflage Microphone: These devices are designed to look like innocuous objects like plant leaves, writing implements, and the like, but are actually sophisticated microphones that can transmit to a receiver anywhere up to 100 metres away. The range can be significantly reduced by heavy bulkheads or machinery, however. Planting bugs is highly illegal and is normally done only by legal authorities who possess authorisation in the form of a monitoring warrant. Even possession of one of these devices is a misdemeanour.

Cauteriser: This is a small handheld device that generates an almost instantaneous burst of heat. These pen-like medical tools are used to quickly cauterise and close wounds that are bleeding uncontrollably, but in the process they also score 1 hit point in burn damage. They can also be used as a weapon, although they function only against exposed flesh. Cauterisers have also been employed by interrogators to produce the modern equivalent of cigarette burns on the victim.

Diamond Drill: These power drills include a synthetic diamond tip capable of cutting through most materials - eventually. The high-speed motor drives the bit for up to an hour without recharging. A diamond drill can cut through 20 hit points of material per minute, subtracting DR as usual, but must be held steady to function properly. If used as a weapon, it scores only 1d4 damage on a hit as long as the target is capable of moving. A drill bit will last for approximately 200 hit points of cutting before it must be replaced.

Electronic Lockpick: These illegal devices are essentially advanced toolkits optimised for breaking into places protected by electronic locks. They provide a +2 bonus to any Technical (electronics) check used to crack such locks. Mere possession of one of these devices is a misdemeanour on Babylon 5 and in most other parts of the Earth Alliance.

GPS Locator: All colonies in the Earth Alliance possess an orbiting fleet of satellites that, among other things, provide constant access to Global Positioning System data. Anyone with a GPS locator - a small device that resembles an eyeglass

case - can determine their precise location on the planet with a simple Technical (electronics) check against DC 10. Portable computers can then use this information to determine travel directions and times to any desired location stored in the computer's database. GPS locators are standard equipment on nearly all vehicles in use on Earth Alliance worlds.

Grapple Gun: This large pistol comes with a triple-tipped grappling hook and a firing tank filled with compressed air. The hook can be launched up to 100 feet and can pierce wood, concrete, and other soft materials to plant itself firmly in place. Alternately, a reverse hook arrangement can be used to attempt to wrap around any exposed object such as a railing or ladder step. Once affixed, the grappling hook can support up to 500 pounds of weight. Grapple guns do not require ammunition replacements, as they have a built-in air compressor, but they do need to be periodically recharged with any available power source. A typical gun can make approximately 25 launches before requiring a recharge.

Holo-Projector: These large machines are capable of producing lifelike three-dimensional images anywhere within their 10-metre range. They are chiefly used for entertainment, but can also replay activities or locations for careful review. An attached computer can also be made to show people or objects in motion, enabling a crime to be reproduced in simulation, for example. The image produced by a holo-projector wavers slightly and is somewhat translucent, so it will be mistaken for reality only if a Spot check (DC 8) is failed. Holo-projectors are normally immobile items that occupy the centre of a room or other fixed location.

Infrared (IR) Goggles: These sunglass-like devices give the wearer the ability to see in terms of variances in heat levels. The ability to pick out details - such as a person's face - is lost while these goggles are worn, as is the ability to distinguish normal colours. Areas of heat appear red, yellow, or white, while cooler regions look blue, violet or black. Using these goggles gives a +2 to all Search and Spot checks related to objects that put off heat, such as machines or most living things, but make it all but impossible to find anything else. A user can also track a fleeing person by following the heat left by his footprints! Note: A sudden increase in heat in the local area, such as an explosion, will blind the wearer of these goggles for one round plus 1d6 rounds if a Fortitude save (DC 15) is not made. The goggles must also be removed as the wearer's next action.

Insta-Heat: These are pre-prepared meals that come in a specially treated package. When the packet is torn open, the contents are immediately heated until they are ready to eat. While not a gourmet dinner by any means, meals in an insta-heat packet are still much tastier than the cheaper and less appetizing meal bars used as cheap nourishment by long-distance travellers.

Listening Device: These 'bugs' come in a variety of types, but their primary purpose is the same - monitoring what happens in a given room or area and transmitting that information back to whoever planted the device. Most of these portable microphones are very small and operate on their own internal power source, but some are able to tap into whatever machine

they are attached to. A very few of the most advanced types are mobile, and can shift their location to avoid detection or recharge their power cells. The cheaper types, however, last for about 72 hours of continuous use. Placing a bug is highly illegal, and if done without consent, any evidence gained is not admissible in court.

Meal Bar: These sticks of dried food come in packages approximately fifteen centimetres long. Although each one provides the nutritional value of a standard daily meal, they are extremely dry and unsatisfying. Most people consider them unpalatable, even if mixed with water or some other beverage. 'Sand bars' is common slang for these low-class rations.

Night Goggles: These resemble sunglasses, but cover the entire face above the nose. In poorly lit areas (a dark corridor or night environment, for example), the wearer can see as if in daylight, except the range is halved and no colours can be distinguished. They function by intensifying the existing light levels, so in areas of total darkness - such as the depths of an underground cavern - these goggles are useless. If light is suddenly restored to the area, the wearer is automatically blinded for one round and must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid a further 1d6 rounds of blindness. The goggles must also be immediately removed as the character's next action.

Paraglider: These advanced parachutes are self-contained backpack units that can be programmed for automatic deployment at any desired altitude. The user simply leaps out of the vehicle or aircraft and waits for the wings to deploy on their own. GROPOS and Special Operations units also use these devices during paratroops or for orbital insertions. Once the paraglider is deployed, simple motions of the arms and legs control the pitch, yaw, and direction of travel as the ultralight glider manoeuvres towards its destination. Controlling the flight requires a Pilot check with difficulty rating based heavily on the atmospheric conditions, lighting, wind, and any other situational modifiers. Making a successful landing requires a Pilot check (DC 10). After landing, the wings can be folded and reset in about a minute. The backpack can be shed as a single round action after landing.

Purification Canteen: Explorers and surveyors frequently use these containers when exploring distant worlds. After the canteen is filled, internal filters and heating elements process the water in order to remove virtually all impurities. Extremely small or hardy microbes, most radioactive elements, and some chemical toxins cannot be cleaned by these containers, but detectors on the interior pick out what they can and warn the user with a flashing red light.

Radiation Detector: A sophisticated, passive device normally worn on clothing, these are shaped like a pin or other common adornment. Depending on the type, they can light up or sound an alarm when the wearer enters an area with unsafe levels of radiation. Some of the more expensive types also have readouts displaying the amount (in 'rads') and approximate direction of the source.

Slapper: These small tabs are used to administer doses of any drug that comes in liquid form or requires injection. The slapper is attached to the skin by means of 'slapping' (hence the

name) and gradually applies any medication or drug directly into the bloodstream. Slappers are typically found on the back of the wrist, but can be used nearly anywhere on the body.

Survival Tent: These small tents include an internal power generator and atmosphere supply sufficient to support two people for up to three straight days without resupply. They are frequently used by explorers in low-pressure atmospheres and are common survival gear on Mars. The tent is designed for quick deployment; if the owner makes a Survival check (DC 15), they can get it up and running in two rounds. Otherwise, four full rounds are required.

Swiss Army Knife: Still the utility knife of choice for anyone with a remotely passable interest in machines, these useful devices include a variety of different types of blades that fold neatly into an enclosed package. Modern Swiss Army Knives are self-sharpening and can retract at the push of a single control stud. Note: Contrary to popular misconception, they are not used by the Swiss Army.

Tri-Video Projector: These devices are personal holo-projectors that display entertainment broadcasts, usually within a private residence. The holographic image can only be shown directly above the tri-vid player and are usually less than life-size. Tri-vids are fairly realistic but still flicker slightly and are translucent, so they can be mistaken as real only if the observer fails a Spot check (DC 8).

Utility Belt: A wide belt with a number of pouches, built-in containers, and retractable hooks capable of holding simple tools. These come in a variety of styles, some of which are designed to carry holsters for pistol-type weapons.

Vibe Shower: Used in areas where fresh water is at a premium, vibe showers clean the body using a combination of sonic waves and anti-bacterial lighting. Approximately one minute is required for complete cleansing, and the user must keep his eyes shut during the process. The sonic vibrations produce a very slight tickling, but no other sensations. Those who prefer the flow of running water as a way to wake up in the morning find these high-tech showers very unsatisfying.

Vidcamera: The modern equivalent of a camcorder. These small devices can be carried in one's hand or affixed to clothing or headgear, where they make simple two-dimensional recordings of everything they are pointed towards. Standard vidcams can record for two hours directly onto a data crystal, while larger and more sophisticated models can last much longer and even record 3-D video. Most commercially available vidcams use ambient light only, although military and intelligence operatives employ versions that can see in lower light conditions or into the infrared spectrum. Note that recording a person's actions without their knowledge and consent is illegal in the Earth Alliance and is not admissible evidence in court.

Watch: Also called a chronometer, these are simple devices chiefly used to tell time. Some include advanced chips that can perform simple calculations and store limited amounts of information, most of it accessible by voice command. Some of the more expensive watches can hook into computers and

General Equipment List

Item	Cost	Weight
Auto-Translator	700 cr.	3 lb.
Binoculars, simple	250 cr.	3 lb.
Binoculars, advanced	1,000 cr.	4 lb.
Brainwiper	2M cr.	1,000 lb.
Bug Sweeper	500 cr.	5 lb.
C-15 Explosive (per square)	300 cr.	1 lb.
Camouflage Microphone	600 cr.	1 lb.
Cauteriser	400 cr.	2 lb.
Diamond Drill	300 cr.	5 lb.
Diamond Drill Bit	100 cr.	1 lb.
Electronic Lockpick	500 cr.	2 lb.
GPS Locator	150 cr.	1 lb.
Grapple Gun	250 cr.	8 lb.
Holo-Projector	1,250 cr.	60 lb.
Infrared Goggles	200 cr.	1 lb.
Insta-Heat	10 cr.	2 lb.
Listening Device, standard	300 cr.	1 lb.
Listening Device, mobile	800 cr.	1 lb.
Meal Bar	5 cr.	1 lb.
Night Goggles	300 cr.	1 lb.
Paraglider	1,500 cr.	20 lb.
Purification Canteen	100 cr.	4 lb.
Radiation Detector, simple	100 cr.	1 lb.
Radiation Detector, complex	250 cr.	1 lb.
Slapper	50 cr.	1 lb.
Survival Tent	500 cr.	25 lb.
Swiss Army Knife	75 cr.	1 lb.
Tri-Video Projector	400 cr.	30 lb.
Utility Belt	60 cr.	2 lb.
Utility Belt with holster	80 cr.	3 lb.
Vibe Shower	300 cr.	80 lb.
Vidcamera, simple 2-D	350 cr.	3 lb.
Vidcamera, triple duration	550 cr.	4 lb.
Vidcamera, standard 3-D	600 cr.	5 lb.
Vidcamera, advanced 3-D, triple duration	900 cr.	7 lb.
Watch	20 cr.	1 lb.
Zero-G Thruster	50 cr.	3 lb.

transfer data back and forth, allowing a businessman to receive regular stock updates, for example.

Zero-G Thruster: These devices resemble fire extinguishers with built-in clamps for attachment to pressure suits. With one of these, a person can propel themselves through space or across open spaces in zero gravity environments. Using a zero-G thruster is a standard action and moves the individual 30 feet in a direction opposite to the nozzle's orientation. In a normal situation, the player must make a Balance check (DC 10) to avoid moving the wrong direction or spinning out of control. This DC can be modified depending on the character's current speed or if they are under attack, as determined by the Games Master.

Armour and Clothing

Ablative Armour: This expensive suit is designed specifically to shunt aside the plasma bursts of a PPG. The outfit has a DR of 5 against PPG or other energy weapon blasts, but is useless (DR 0) against any other sort of attack. These suits are quite heavy and are very restrictive for movement, reducing the wearer's Dexterity by 2 while worn. They are normally used only by security teams and antiterrorist forces who expect to encounter PPG-armed foes. They are restricted items and cannot be employed by civilians without a special license.

Chemical/Radiation Suit: These full-body outfits are made of thick fibres designed to keep out harmful chemicals, atmospheres, and other toxins. The top includes a cover that wraps around a standard gas mask, ensuring nothing slips by to reach the skin. A chemsuit or radsuit includes its own four-hour air supply and various sensors that constantly check the air for dangerous elements. Standard chemsuits are not effective against radiation, but the more advanced radsuits will block low-intensity radiation as well. Chemsuits and radsuits are designed only for short-term exposure and will eventually break down if used in a continuously saturated environment. For maximum protection in highly toxic conditions, a chemsuit or radsuit can be worn underneath a pressure suit.

Cold Weather Insulation Suit: A well-Insulated and internally heated set of gear including thermal underwear made of special moisture-wicking materials, a thick internal layer, and a heavy, wind-resistant outer layer complete with parka-style hood. A must in any icy environment, where it eliminates any need to save against cold effects under normal circumstances. If the power pack (sufficient for two hours of constant use) runs dry, the insulation suit reverts to the protection provided by standard cold weather gear. The suit is not designed for underwater use and will short out if immersed. The suit's weight counts as triple the listed amount if the wearer is plunged into water.

Gas Mask: These simple devices cover the head and ensure that no harmful chemical agents reach the wearer's eyes, mouth, nose or ears, but they do not keep toxins from touching the skin. They are military grade equivalents of the standard breather masks available to civilians and will last for up to half an hour without a filter replacement. If hooked up to a protective chemical suit with its own air supply, they are much more effective.

Hot Weather Cooling Suit: An outfit made up of special fibres interwoven with thin cooling elements powered by a small generator attached to the belt. Each power pack provides enough energy to permit a player to operate in very hot or desert conditions for two hours without any ill effects from heat. The suit covers the body entirely, from head to toe. If the power is lost, the suit must be removed quickly, for it is quite stifling without its cooling elements active.

Riot Shield: Modern riot shields initially appear to be small rectangular objects strapped to the arm, but with the touch of a button they expand into a full-body hemisphere of highly dense armoured plastic capable of deflecting most physical attacks. They are not particularly effective against PPG shots or other energy weapons, but serve well in their intended role - the dispersion of armed civilians. The DR shown before the slash is effective against bludgeoning or slashing weapons or fire attacks, but the value after the slash is used for other types of damage. These shields are clear, so they do not provide protection from flash-bang grenades.

Scuba Gear: The name 'Scuba' is actually a long-forgotten acronym for Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus. This set of gear is an all-in-one wetsuit, fins, face mask, and air supply permits virtually anyone to operate underwater for up to four hours without fear of drowning. Advanced models include nitrogen pressure relief equipment that allows deeper descents without risk of the dreaded 'bends.' A character wearing modern scuba gear receives a +4 to underwater Swim checks. If the mask is dislodged or the air supply cut, however, they must hasten to the surface or receive aid at once.

Scuba Gear, Special Ops Mk-7: This highly advanced full-body suit includes its own propulsion, along with an advanced water electrolysis unit that can draw oxygen directly from the surrounding sea for up to two weeks without a recharge. Compartments embedded in the hydrodynamic arms, legs, and back pouches provide storage for weapons, food, and fresh water. Special Operations units regularly train in these suits for weeks at a time, and although a non-military person might find them restrictive and difficult to work with, they are comfortable enough for long-term use.

Sensory Suit: These full-body outfits are worn directly over the skin. They have a variety of tactile and sensory devices that cover the user's body, providing sensations of virtually any kind - hot, cold, rough, smooth, irritating, pleasurable, and so on. The suit is generally used for entertainment, particularly in concert with holo-videos or virtual reality simulations, giving the wearer the illusion that they are actually experiencing whatever is happening. These outfits can also be used for training purposes - e.g., to prepare the wearer for a specific environment, or to practice military or intelligence operations. Sometimes they are also used for less savoury purposes - hooking a victim into one of these suits and using it for torture purposes produces a +2 to any Interrogation rolls. Sensory suits are not self-contained and must be hooked up to a computer that provides the necessary tactile sensations. The wearer is tethered to the machine and may wander perhaps ten metres from it, but no further.

Armour & Clothing List

Item	Cost	Weight	DR
Ablative Armour	1,000 cr.	20 lb.	5/0
Chemical/Radiation Suit	400 cr.	5 lb.	0
Cold Weather Insulation Suit	750 cr.	20 lb.	0
Gas Mask	125 cr.	4 lb.	0
Hot Weather Cooling Suit	650 cr.	15 lb.	0
Riot Shield	350 cr.	8 lb.	4/1
Scuba Gear, simple	400 cr.	12 lb.	0
Scuba Gear, deepwater	900 cr.	14 lb.	1
Scuba Gear, Special Ops Mk-7	2,500 cr.	26 lb.	2
Sensory Suit	1,250 cr.	16 lb.	0

Weapons

Several different types of weapons are presented hereafter. Many of these are low-tech, primitive, or ceremonial weapons that the average individual does not know how to use by default. For example, an Agent might be familiar with 'all melee, grenade, and pistol' weapons, but that generalisation applies only to *modern* weapons in those categories. Just because you know how to fight with a knife does not mean you can pick up a fencing sabre and undertake a duel. Similarly, the ability to throw an object effectively does not allow you to fling a boomerang so that it returns to your hand.

For weapons that require special training, you must put ranks into Exotic Weapon skill for each specific item. Exotic Weapon is not a skill that is automatically known by any standard Babylon 5 class, but anyone with access to the appropriate weapon type (melee, grenade, or pistol) and a trainer can purchase ranks in it as a class skill. Some prestige classes provide one or more exotic weapons, as do certain feats. Since most exotic weapons are not taught in normal society, a character's background will need to provide a good reason for such a skill to be part of one's repertoire.

Blowgun: Blowguns are short, relatively simple devices that can be fitted with darts coated with a variety of poisons or, more likely, a dose of tranquilliser. They are not particularly accurate, but are almost completely silent - a Listen check (DC 25) is required to hear one from any sort of distance, so even a miss will not give the wielder away. Loading a new dart requires a full round action. Blowguns look like simple rods that will not be recognised as weapons by most security teams. They can also be disguised to appear as pipes or musical instruments, particularly long, thin ones like a flute or piccolo. These are Exotic Ranged Weapons normally seen only in Africa.

Boomerang: A primitive weapon used mostly by the natives of Australia, this hooked wooden slab can be thrown in such a way that if it misses the target, it flies back in the general direction of its wielder, who can catch it on a successful Dexterity check

(DC 12) after moving, as part of the original attack action. A boomerang that hits does not return, as it is no longer spinning properly. The throw-and-catch manoeuvre requires a relatively standard atmosphere and no particularly strong winds, of course. High-tech boomerangs are made of ultra-light metals and have a sharp leading edge for maximum damage potential - catching one of these requires special gloves, or fingers might be lost! Boomerangs are Exotic Ranged Weapons.

Claymore: A largely ceremonial two-handed sword generally found in Scotland. Such weapons are not normally seen in public except during special events, such as a costume ball. Anyone carrying a sword around Babylon 5, or any other civilised part of the Earth Alliance, will be looked at very strangely. They are technically illegal as well, so unless the player has a good reason for using one, he is likely to be arrested. Claymores are Exotic Melee Weapons.

Fencing Weapon: Foils, rapiers, and sabres are still used in the sport of fencing in various parts of the Earth Alliance. Most of these weapons are 'pacified,' with blunt ends and rounded blades, but some adventurous types possess more effective versions. See the description of the Claymore for restrictions on use. Fencing weapons are each slightly different - foils are only used for piercing attacks, rapiers have a double edge with a point, and sabres possess a single edge with a heavy hand guard.

Flamethrower: These fearsome weapons spew a jet of chemical flame from the tip, setting fire to anything in the target area. They are typically used to remove foliage or sweep areas clear of mines and other passive devices. The military occasionally employs them to clean out fortified positions without exposing troops to close-range attacks or booby traps. They are not the sort of thing that a normal person would possess or have any means of getting their hands on! A flamethrower operates by mixing two inert materials into a flammable liquid, in much the same way as BilPro cannons function. Thus, if one tank is damaged in combat, the wearer has a better chance of escaping a devastating explosion. Flamethrower gear takes three rounds to properly don, but is designed for quick removal, requiring only a single round action to discard.

Flash-Bang: This is a special type of grenade designed to disorient and distract, but not to actually cause harm. It is frequently used as the opening salvo in a surprise military operation, such as an assault on a guard position. Security teams also use them to create a diversion during an attempt to free hostages. When thrown, the flash-bang bursts into a flare of light and sound. Everyone looking in its general direction must make a Reflex save (DC 15) to avoid being blinded for 1d6+1 rounds. The save is at a -4 penalty if night vision or infrared goggles are being worn, but sunglasses or other protection give a +4 bonus. Similarly, anyone within 30 feet must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid being deafened for 1d6+1 rounds. Ear protection such as earplugs provide a +4 bonus on this roll. Even if all saves are made, anyone in the effective radius must make a Concentration check (DC 15) or involuntarily turn their attention towards the exploding grenade for a single round. If flash-bang grenades have already been

employed in previous rounds, there is a +5 bonus to this roll. The person throwing the grenade, and any allies who expect one to be employed in the battle, are immune to this effect. A flash-bang scores no damage unless it explodes in the same square as someone, in which case it does one point of damage only.

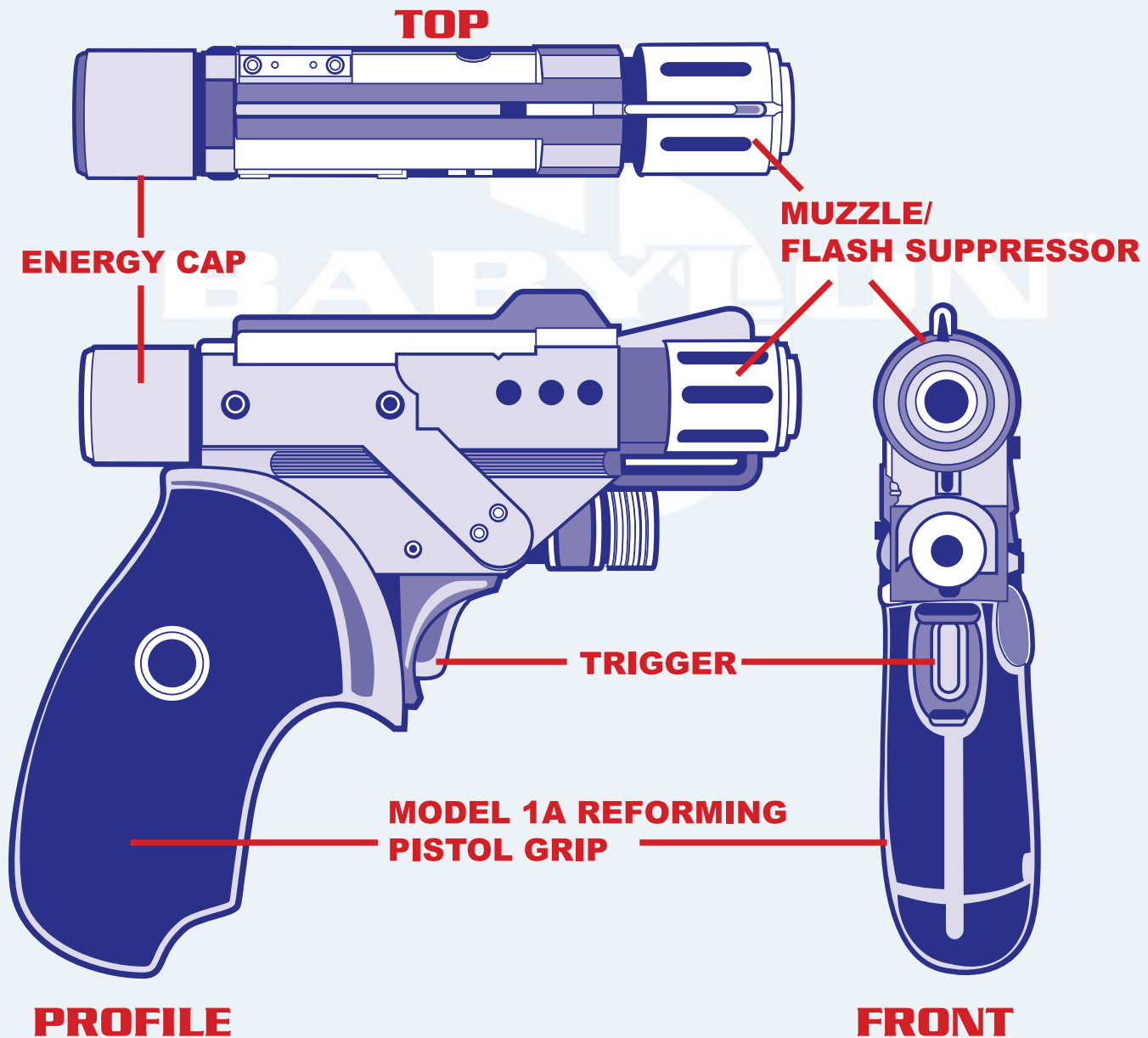
Katana: A ceremonial sword used in Japan and a few other parts of the Orient. See the description of the Claymore for restrictions on use. Katanas are high-quality, heavy, curved swords usually carried in a scabbard on one's back. They are Exotic Melee Weapons.

Rifle, Auricon EF-749/AC Heavy PPG: Normally used only by the military, particularly Special Forces teams, this rifle is a lightweight, highly accurate long-range PPG with a folding stock. Equipped with laser sights and silencers, the heavy PPG is a favourite of snipers and troops that depend on stealth. It is generally deemed too expensive for standard GROPOS elements and is not a part of a typical military force. Although higher

powered and with a greater range than the EF-PR, it has no rapid fire ability.

Rifle, Edgars EF-TC4 Web Caster: These unusual devices launch a thick glob of webbing at a target, wrapping it up in a swarm of sticky strands that quickly constrict and harden. Anyone entrapped by a web caster must roll a Strength check (DC 15) to break their arms free, and a second check on the following round to clear their legs away from the sticky material. Web casters are fairly short-ranged and the ammunition moves slowly enough that anyone who sees the weapon discharge can make a Reflex save (DC 15) to leap out of the path of the shot. Web casters have enough ammunition for eight shots.

Rifle, LuminTech EF-17G Laser: Another weapon generally found only in the hands of the military, the laser rifle is an expensive and heavy piece of equipment. Although it does not have a tremendous ability to cause damage - it lacks the



concussive power of an impacting bullet or plasma charge - the EF-17G's ability to fire at great distances with a high degree of precision makes it highly in demand. The laser beam produced by the EF-17G is unaffected by such factors as wind resistance and the like, although it can be blunted by smoke and dust. When firing in such conditions, it receives a -1 or greater penalty to any damage scored, depending on the thickness of the haze.

Rifle, Smith and Wesson EF-40A Ballistic: Not all modern weapons utilise energy or plasma rounds. For some missions, old-style slugthrowers are still employed. Depending on the circumstances, these weapons can have a greater range and might be more difficult to detect. PPG rounds produce a significant energy discharge, for example, while a bullet does not. Ballistic rifles also tend to be more accurate and cause

less collateral damage in some circumstances. When a bullet is better than an energy shot, most snipers and military teams choose the Smith and Wesson EF-40A. Guns of this type are rarely seen outside the military and special forces. Rifles of this type receive +1 to hit at long and extreme ranges.

Shotgun, Westlake EF-36V BilPro: Rarely seen outside the military, these man-portable binary liquid propellant weapons literally spray a target area with explosive chemicals. Any target within the zone can be hit, but the range drops off considerably at a distance - all range penalties beyond close range are doubled. The weapon employs two small containers of normally inert liquids that are mixed in the firing chamber, increasing the reload time to two actions. BilPro shotguns are normally used against massed troops, not at a single individual target.

Weapon List

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Area of Effect	Critical	Ammo	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Type
Melee Weapons									
Claymore	500 cr.	2d6	-	19-20/x2	-	-	Medium	10 lb.	Slashing (2-hand)
Foil	50 cr.	1d4	-	17-20/x2	-	-	Medium	2 lb.	Piercing
Rapier	100 cr.	1d6	-	18-20/x2	-	-	Medium	3 lb.	Piercing
Sabre	100 cr.	1d6	-	18-20/x2	-	-	Medium	4 lb.	Slashing
Katana	200 cr.	1d8	-	19-20/x2	-	-	Medium	4 lb.	Slashing
Whip	25 cr.	1d2*	-	x2	-	15 ft.	Small	2 lb.	Slashing
Grenade Weapons									
Flash-Bang	60 cr.	Special	30 ft.	-	-	20 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	Projectile
Ranged Weapons									
Blowgun	250 cr.	1+poison	-	-	1	20 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Projectile
Boomerang, standard	50 cr.	1d4	-	x2	-	20 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Bludgeoning
Boomerang, high-tech	250 cr.	1d6	-	19-20/x2	-	20 ft.	Small	2 lb.	Slashing
Flamethrower	1,000 cr.	1d6 Fire	10 ft.	-	30	30 ft.	Large	12 lb.	Immolation
Rifle, Laser	2,000 cr.	2d6	-	17-20/x2	6	500 ft.	Large	8 lb.	Piercing
Rifle, Heavy PPG	1,300 cr.	2d8+2	-	19-20/x2	24	200 ft.	Large	5 lb.	Energy
Rifle, Ballistic	1,200 cr.	2d6+1	-	20/x3	18	150 ft.	Large	4 lb.	Projectile
Rifle, Web Caster	500 cr.	Entrapment	5 ft.	-	8	30 ft.	Medium	6 lb.	Entrapment
Shotgun, BilPro	800 cr.	2d4	10 ft.	20	4	20 ft.	Medium	3 lb.	Energy
Submachine Gun	1,000 cr.	2d6	-	20/x3	30	50 ft.	Medium	6 lb.	Projectile, Rapid Fire

Submachine Gun, Wesson EF-76 Rattler: This is a rapid-fire slugthrower employed primarily for the suppression of small groups. Terribly inaccurate, it nevertheless has a fearsome ability to cut people down at close range. Weapons of this type are frequently used by front-line infantry, but occasionally fall into the hands of terrorist forces or criminal organisations. Rattlers have a short stock and are so inaccurate as to apply a -1 penalty to all attack rolls. However, when employed in rapid-fire mode, they receive 5 shots per round, not 3.

Whip: Normally used only as instruments of torture or discipline, whips are occasionally used as weapons. They are Exotic Melee Weapons with a significant reach, but they are only useful against exposed flesh. Only a small amount of subdual damage is scored on a hit, but whips are not normally employed for that purpose. Whips are also efficient at disarming, with a +2 bonus on any such attempt. Used properly, a whip can grapple a victim's body or an extremity, allowing them to be tripped or pulled closer with an opposed Strength check. However, care must be taken when using this manoeuvre, as the target can turn the tables by winning the check and attempt the same actions against the whip wielder! A whip can also be used as an impromptu rope, anchoring itself to any exposed protrusion on a successful attack. Shaking the end loose requires a partial action. Whips can be severed and rendered useless by a single point of damage from a sword or other blade, but both ends must be fixed to do this - swinging at the loose whip will not harm it.

Ammunition

Ammunition Type	Cost	Weight
Ballistic Rifle Rounds (18 shots)	75 cr.	-
BilPro Liquid Dual Pack (4 shots)	50 cr.	1 lb.
Flamethrower Liquid Fuel Pack (30 shots)	200 cr.	2 lb.
Laser Rifle Power Pack (6 shots)	100 cr.	-
PPG Rifle Cap (24 shots)	90 cr.	-
Shotgun Ammo Clip (30 shots)	80 cr.	1 lb.
Web Caster Chemical Pack (8 shots)	150 cr.	1 lb.

Drugs and Medication

A variety of different types of drugs, both legal and otherwise, are in use within the Earth Alliance. Some of these are listed below. Items described as illegal can only be acquired on the black market and will result in an arrest if they are found on one's person. Note that drugs employed to temporarily increase the user's statistics do not stack with each other or with repeated doses.

Addiction: Drugs are normally intended for only occasional use. Even the best healing medications can be addictive if employed repeatedly. The body tends to build up a tolerance to them, and reacts poorly when they are taken away. Each time a given drug is employed more than once in a single day or more than three times in a given week, the character must make a Fortitude save (DC 12 plus 1 for each additional dose

beyond the listed amounts). Failure indicates the potential of an addiction. After the present dose wears off, the player must make a Will save (DC 12) or take another dose if they can - doing so behind the backs of their friends and colleagues if they must. After each dose wears off, they must make a new Will check at a DC 1 point higher than the last until they reach a point where even a 20 would fail, after which the addiction can be broken only with medical help. Each success lowers the next Will save, made on the following day, by 1. Should the character save once the DC returns to 12, the addiction is ended.

One of the difficulties with being addicted is that the body builds up a gradual tolerance to a drug's effects. Once a character has been taking the same substance for over two weeks, they must roll a Fortitude save (DC 15) or the amount of dosage they need is increased by 10%. A similar check is made on a weekly basis. There is no theoretical upper limit to the amount of tolerance a person might build up to a given substance.

If an addicted character fails a Will check but cannot find a dose of the drug they need, their body begins to go into withdrawal. For each day they continue to fail Will checks and cannot get a dose, their Constitution, Strength, and Dexterity are lowered by 2. They become weak and may experience the 'shakes.' As stats drop, they find they can no longer stand and can feel severe, wracking pains. Untreated, withdrawal will lead to severe consequences or even death. Medical attention, along with small, carefully administered doses of the addictive substance, will gradually return the stats at a rate of 2 points each per day. If the character remains in treatment, Will saves are automatic and the addiction will gradually fade. However, anyone who has been addicted to a substance in the past always suffers a -3 penalty on all Fortitude and Will saves when they encounter that same drug in the future.

Alcohol: The most common drug in the Alliance, alcohol comes in many forms, from brandy and vodka to dangerous moonshines derived from secret stills hidden in the dark corners of starships and bases. Alcohol tends to increase strength and stamina at the expense of mental faculties. A character can drink one or two glasses of liquor without trouble, but anything more requires a Fortitude save (DC 12). Success indicates a temporary +1 to Strength and Constitution, but a -1 Intelligence and -1 Wisdom is suffered regardless of the saving throw's success. If more is imbibed, a second Fortitude save (DC 15) is permitted in order to achieve another +1 Str and Con, which stacks with the first pair if that save was successful. However, Int and Wis are now at -2. Further drinking only increases the penalties to Intelligence and Wisdom as the character steadily becomes drunk. Continue to make Fortitude saves (DC 15), with failure indicating a loss of consciousness. Strength and Constitution bonuses last for four hours, while Intelligence and Wisdom penalties persist for 12 hours and often cause headaches and nausea the following morning, a state referred to as a 'hangover.'

Antibiotics: A wide variety of antibiotics are in use throughout the Earth Alliance. These range from simple penicillin and its derivatives up through complicated custom drugs designed to fight off tough diseases like AIDS and Stafford's Plague. Antibiotics generally require only a few doses and are non-

addictive. They can be expensive, however, and are so numerous that field medics rarely have the right one for every circumstance. A well-stocked Medlab or hospital should have at least a few of the more common types, and the World Disease Centre in South Africa has huge stockpiles for use in the event of outbreaks or biological warfare.

Anti-G: This drug is used primarily to offset the effects of high-G environments. It operates by temporarily increasing strength and dexterity slightly and relaxing the lungs, permitting better breathing capability in thicker atmospheres. A dose of anti-G cuts Strength and Dexterity penalties in half for high-G environments, but does not alter any other effects, nor does it have any appreciable use in a low-G situation. Each dose of anti-G takes effect within five minutes and lasts six hours.

Dust: Dust is a relatively new drug with extremely dangerous potential. When taken in the proper amount, it activates previously latent telepathic abilities and enables the user to invade the mind of another, experiencing parts of their life at the speed of thought. If employed as a means to extract a specific piece of information, the user must first make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to ensure their body reacted to the dosage properly, and then a Concentration check (DC 20) to locate the desired memories. If the target is a telepath, they can resist as if being scanned. Even if the Concentration check fails, the character receives a few basic recollections of the target's true personality. If the Fortitude save fails, however, the user goes temporarily insane, usually with violence directed towards the intended subject of the scan. For this reason, a Dust user is normally restrained before taking the drug. Dust is not normally used for recreational purposes like many illicit substances, but is quickly becoming a favourite of criminals and interrogators. It is highly addictive, requiring Fortitude checks for addiction for every use attempted within a 7-day period, and with a -2 penalty to all related Will saves. A person who fails five consecutive Will saves, including those for which they had no chance of success, goes permanently insane beyond all hope of recovery. Dust is extremely illegal, and possession of it carries a mandatory minimum 60-day period of incarceration, with penalties much worse for repeat offenders or dealers.

Jump: 'Jump' is the slang term for a drug employed to increase the user's speed and reaction time. This substance is an outgrowth of a formula developed by the military to improve a soldier's abilities in combat. Taking a dose of Jump (also known as 'Speed,' 'Nimble' or 'Nim') raises the user's Dexterity by 1d4+1 for two hours, after which the statistic is reduced by the same amount for four hours. As with other similar substances, Jump can be used repeatedly to increase the duration, at a risk of addiction. Jump is taken orally and results in a slight, visible trembling in the user's extremities. An addicted person shakes more and more severely as their problem persists until they become almost unable to function. Each week addiction persists, they must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or lose one point of Dexterity permanently through some accident or mistake brought on by their condition. This drug is extremely illegal and is generally found only on the black market.

Memory: Also called 'Mem' or 'Smarts,' this drug is generally applied through eye drops (or 'IQ drops'), where the chemical

quickly makes its way to the brain. Memory adds 1d4+1 points of Intelligence for two hours, after which the user's Int score is temporarily reduced by a similar amount. Applying more IQ drops before the duration ends will extend the effect, with the usual risks of addiction. Users of Memory typically have wide, bloodshot eyes that blink frequently, giving them a somewhat frightening countenance. For this reason, most people who use this drug wear sunglasses or some other means of hiding their eyes. Memory is a highly illegal drug normally available only on the black market. Addicts gradually destroy their brain over time, losing one point of Intelligence permanently if they fail a required weekly Will save (DC 15). Naturally, this only encourages them to take more and more of the drug in an attempt to restore their failing intellect.

Muscle: This drug, normally absorbed through the skin using bands of coated tape, gives a temporary boost of strength. The effects begin after about a minute and last for two hours, giving the user 1d4+1 points to their Strength score. However, after the effects wear off, Strength is reduced by a like amount for four hours. Additional doses can be applied prior to the end of the boost period to extend the duration, at the usual risks of addiction. Muscle addicts can be recognised by the red marks made by the tape being constantly applied and removed from their skin. Addicts of this drug gradually lose their body's true strength over time due to permanent damage resulting from abuse of their body's musculature. For each week a person has been addicted, a Fortitude save (DC 15) must be made or they lose one point of Strength permanently. Muscle, like most attribute-enhancing drugs, is a controlled substance available only on the black market. It is frequently referred to as 'Power,' 'Kick,' or 'Bicep.'

Nullrad: This drug introduces special elements into the user's bloodstream, which act to soak up radiation and keep it from harming the body's living cells. This drug must be administered prior to contact with radioactive substances and stays in the blood for approximately 24 hours, after which it is flushed through natural excretory processes. Great care must be taken to ensure the particles are all eliminated, or else the absorbed radiation will linger in the bladder and kidneys, potentially causing cancer later on. Removing these stubborn particles requires a simple procedure in any Medlab, but cannot be accomplished in the field. While nullrad is present in the body, the character receives +4 on all Fortitude saves against radiation effects.

Oxy Pill: These drugs are commonly used to shake off the effects of difficult or strenuous activity. A single dose takes effect within minutes and erases up to two points of subdual damage caused by fatigue. Any restored points return eight hours later and persist until a good night's sleep can be had. Repeated doses of oxy pills are cumulative for up to ten points of subdual damage, but keep in mind the risk of addiction! Oxy pills are commonly used by law enforcement agencies to instantly (within 1d6 minutes) negate the effects of alcohol in subjects they wish to question.

Pain Nullifier (Metazine): These pills enable the wearer to essentially ignore pain for short periods of time. The effects

take ten minutes to begin, and last a full hour. Adjust the duration by ten minutes for each point of Constitution bonus (e.g., a +3 bonus lets the effects persist for an hour and a half, while a -2 penalty gives only 40 minutes of protection). While protected from pain, the individual suffers no ill effects from damage (other than the loss of hit points, of course) and is immune to any pain-induced intimidation or torture. For the purposes of any endurance or Constitution-based skills, the character is at a +4 for the duration of the effects, as he can simply ignore protesting muscles and other difficulties. However, when the drug wears off, all damage taken during the interim is doubled, with all extra points of damage treated as subdual only - they cannot actually kill.

Pseudodeath: This rare substance temporarily lowers the body's metabolism to a rate so slow that biological time passes only about a tenth as fast as it does for everyone else. The subject is incapable of acting while in this state and appears to be in a coma, or possibly even dead. The primary use of this drug is to keep a subject alive long enough to reach a Medlab for treatment of serious injury, radiation, disease, poison, or severe burns. However, it does not function well as an anaesthetic, because the body's inability to react to surgery can result in serious damage being done before the effects of an error are detected. Thus, a doctor must revive the patient from the pseudodeath state before operating. Revival can be performed on a Medical check (DC 15), with a +2 bonus in a properly equipped hospital and a +3 bonus if the drug's antidote is on hand. Failure indicates the subject's body was unable to recover, and they perish. If a revival attempt is not made within 24 hours of the drug's administration, it can be extended, but each additional dose adds a -1 cumulative penalty to the revival check. After revival, the patient requires 1d4+1 days of bed rest (in addition to any other medical problems they must get past) before returning to normal. For obvious reasons, pseudodeath is a very dangerous drug and is normally used only in emergencies. It can only be administered by injection directly into the brain or spine. An unwilling recipient is permitted a Fortitude save (DC 12) to resist the effects.

Sleepers: This is a Psi Corps drug administered to telepaths who refuse to be a part of their highly regimented organisation. Injected weekly, the sleeper drug suppresses all telepathic ability. Latent telepaths who are known to exist are required to take this drug on a regular basis. Psi Corps officials insist it is safe and non-addictive, and for the most part this is true - as long as it is employed on a regular schedule, it is not habit-forming and can be halted at any time without harming the individual's telepathic abilities. However, over long periods of time, it can cause mental problems such as depression and even schizophrenia. After one year of continuous use, an individual must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) each week or suffer from bouts of depression, during which they lose interest in normal activities and suffer a -3 to all Will saves. The Fortitude save's DC is increased by 1 for every additional year the sleeper drug

Drugs and Medication List

Item	Cost (per dose)	Type	Weight	DR
Alcohol, light (beer, wine)	5 cr.	Liquid	1 lb.	0
Alcohol, heavy (moonshine)	15 cr.	Liquid	1 lb.	0
Antibiotics, common	25 cr.	Injected	1 lb.	0
Antibiotics, rare	200 cr.	Injected	1 lb.	0
Anti-G	50 cr.	Injected	1 lb.	0
Dust*	500 cr.	Breathed	1 lb.	0
Jump*	150 cr.	Pill	1 lb.	0
Memory*	200 cr.	Eye drops	1 lb.	0
Muscle*	175 cr.	Skin	1 lb.	0
Nullrad	75 cr.	Pill	1 lb.	0
Oxy Pill	50 cr.	Pill	1 lb.	0
Pain Nullifier*	100 cr.	Pill	1 lb.	0
Sleepers	200 cr.**	Injected	1 lb.	0
Smelling Salts	10 cr.	Breathed	1 lb.	0
Stim	50 cr.	Pill	1 lb.	0
Tetrazyn	145 cr.	Injected	1 lb.	0
Tranq*	135 cr.	Injected	1 lb.	0
Truth Serum*	150 cr.	Injected	1 lb.	0

Items marked with a * are illegal for use outside the medical profession and are usually available on the black market only. **Sleepers are free when administered properly by the Psi Corps. The cost given here is for doses acquired illegally.

is employed without a break of at least two months' time. If this save is ever failed by more than 15, additional mental problems such as schizophrenia or other problems may set in at the option of the Games Master. Note that Psi Corps continues to insist the sleeper drug is completely safe despite long-term evidence to the contrary. Victims who become insane are usually taken to mental institutions where they conveniently perish, disappear, or commit suicide in a fit of depression.

Smelling Salts: Although no salts are involved in today's version of the low-tech ammonia nitrate solution used to revive unconscious people, this drug is used for the same function. When inserted into the nostrils or mouth of someone who has blacked out, smelling salts permit an immediate Fortitude save (DC 10) to snap into consciousness immediately. This will not work if the victim is unconscious because of a drug or anaesthetic, or if their brain functions are deactivated by some device or other condition. Typically, smelling salts are employed only for those who have fainted, been knocked out by gas that is no longer present, or were taken to zero hit points through injury in combat. Smelling salts work instantaneously and do not prevent someone from being knocked out again, perhaps only moments later, by some other attack or effect.

Stims: Stimulants, or ‘stims,’ permit a character to act for long periods without sleep and shrug off the effects of subdual damage. Each dose takes effect within minutes. A single shot eliminates the need for sleep and heals up to four points of subdual damage, but after the drug wears off 24 hours later, four points of subdual damage are scored and Constitution is reduced by 1d4+1 points until 10 hours of continuous rest can be acquired. A second stim can be taken to extend the deadline another 24 hours, but this has terrible risks. Stims are extremely addictive, so the Fortitude save for addiction potential must be made with each dose, not each one after the first. One of the warning signs of stim addiction is a sense of indestructibility, and a desire to try to accomplish far more than would normally be possible. Stim addicts sleep only rarely.

Tetrazyne: A drug used to cause temporary weakness, tetrazyne’s primary advantage is that it evaporates slowly, allowing it to be employed on darts and other weapons. Tetrazyne darts are commonly used in needlers. Anyone hit with a dose of tetrazyne must make a Fortitude check (DC 12) or lose 1d6 temporary Strength, followed by a further 2d6 as secondary damage. Tetrazyne can also be injected directly, and if this is done, the save DC is increased by 3.

Tranq: This drug is used to safely and temporarily knock out an individual for a short period of time. It is typically injected, requiring a touch attack with a hypodermic gun, but can also be applied with a special handgun. Tranquillisers must be used against exposed skin, and will not penetrate any kind of armour. The victim is permitted a Fortitude save (DC 15); failure causes unconsciousness one combat round later. A stim applied immediately after a tranq will cancel out both drugs, but still counts towards addiction rolls for purposes of the stim. Anyone knocked out by a tranquilliser remains unconscious for 1d4+1 hours less 10 minutes for every point of Constitution bonus they possess. Tranquillisers are not addictive, but each repeated dose lasts half an hour less than the previous one, so repeated doses will not keep someone unconscious for long. Tranquillisers are not generally available and are normally maintained only in a Medlab or other hospital-type facility, although they may also be available on the black market.

Truth Serum: A high-tech version of sodium pentathol, Truth Serum places its recipient into a kind of trance state where they feel as if they are dreaming. Speech is slow and slurred, and what is said can often be jumbled or indistinct. The person is not prevented from lying, but often is simply not certain what is really happening or what they are actually saying. If a person comes under the effects of this drug, they have a –4 penalty to all Bluff and Sense Motive checks. These penalties are halved if they have experienced Truth Serum before and they have reason to suspect they are under its effects now. In such cases, they know enough about what is happening to at least put up a limited amount of resistance. Truth Serum requires fifteen minutes to take effect and lasts for an hour. It is not addictive and has no physical effects on the body.

Bionic Prosthetics

Bionics are mechanical implants or replacement body parts that completely replace a limb or organ damaged or destroyed in combat or through disease or mishap. Bionic parts can be significantly more powerful than the ones a person is born with, but require constant maintenance and do not heal like the body will. Mechanical appendages can also affect the way others see and react to you. Some secure locations do not permit those with bionic parts to pass, for fear that the limb might contain a hidden weapon or explosive. Finally, electromagnetic disturbances and power surges can render bionics inoperative.

With the advantage a bionic part offers, it may seem surprising that more people do not choose to replace their existing, inferior biological limbs with technologically advanced devices. One reason this is not done is the immense expense required to install a significantly improved prosthetic over a simple, unenhanced one. Another is that very few doctors will voluntarily amputate or remove perfectly good tissue in favour of a mechanical replacement. Finally, such activities are illegal throughout the Earth Alliance. Advanced prosthetics are almost always employed only in highly unusual circumstances, and are usually seen only on the wealthy or privileged.

The operation to install a bionic limb or other part requires a specialist in this sort of medicine, with a DC of at least 25, or higher for very small and delicate pieces such as eye and ear implants. Failure destroys the cybernetic limb and can cause other injuries at the Games Master’s discretion, particularly if the operation is being performed in a ‘back alley’ black market hospital. Alternately, a failed attempt can result in an apparent success, but with some flaw in the limb such as an occasional twitch or loss of power that comes into play on random occasions.

Eye: Bionic eyes are designed to operate in concert with another, standard eye. The mechanical one does not employ any special abilities unless the wearer specifically wills it, which requires a Concentration check (DC 15) and is a full round action. The eye may telescopically expand the wearer’s view to up to four times normal magnification, convert to low-light or infrared vision (as per the goggles that perform those same abilities), or focus on very small objects as if it were a four-power microscope. The eye can take on only one of these functions per round. Note that a single eye used in this fashion requires the user to close his other, normal eye, thereby resulting in a –1 Spot check penalty for lack of depth perception. If a person has two bionic eyes, both can be used simultaneously for the same purpose, avoiding the penalty, but cannot be used in two modes at the same time.

If struck by bright light, as if from a sun’s glare or a sudden explosion, the bionic eye’s delicate circuits can become damaged. Anything that requires the person himself to roll to avoid temporary blindness also requires a Fortitude save (DC 10) from the eye. If this fails, the eye blacks out and can no longer be used until repaired. Repairing it requires a one-hour Medlab procedure wherein the optics are removed and replaced. This cannot be done in the field.

Eyes have DR 0 and 3 hit points if struck by physical damage. A single point of damage eliminates all their special abilities, while a second point blinds them. Fully destroyed eyes require a total replacement.

Bionic eyes have their own power source that must be replaced once every six months. Again, this is a very simple operation requiring a Medlab or other hospital.

Ear: Bionic ears are normally tuned to hear with the same level of acuity as the other, biological ear. On a Concentration check (DC 15) that requires a full round action, they can be increased in strength to provide a +4 bonus to all Listen checks from a specific direction. If both ears are bionic, this bonus applies to any direction, but the character must stand totally still to gain the bonus. Utilising the listening abilities of a bionic ear can only be attempted once in any ten-minute period due to the power requirements of these very tiny implants.

Any condition that results in the owner making a check to avoid deafness can also damage these sensitive instruments. Roll a Fortitude save (DC 10) to avoid permanent damage to the bionic ear. Repairing these requires a difficult bit of surgery (Medical check, DC 20) due to the depth of the implant and its proximity to the brain. Replacing the power cell, which lasts six months, is less troublesome since the battery is located on the exterior and can be reached through the ear canal.

Ear implants are extremely small and cannot be targeted by direct damage. They have DR 0 and 1 hit point. Only a direct weapon shot that penetrates the ear can physically destroy them, which will likely have far worse consequences on the owner than just the loss of a bionic implant!

Hand: Bionic hands are among the most common mechanical prosthetics and are the easiest to conceal, usually with a glove or synthetic skin covering. The latter can still be detected with a Spot check (DC 15), however. Bionic hands have -2 Dexterity and +2 Strength for all actions undertaken by that limb, such as manipulating fine machinery or gripping a railing. For actions requiring both hands, the bonuses and penalties cancel out. Unarmed attacks made with a bionic hand score +1 damage so long as the hand has not been injured in battle.

Bionic hands have power cells that last up to a year and are easily replaced, even by their owner. The hand has DR 2 and can absorb 5 points of damage before being destroyed, but any points of damage must be repaired by a qualified mechanic.

Arm: Arms are usually designed to appear as human-like as possible, but the specialised joints in the shoulders, elbows and wrists are usually dead giveaways - a Spot check (DC 10) will notice their true nature immediately. A person could still conceal them with heavy clothing, such as a long-sleeved jacket and gloves over the hand. Bionic arms have -2 Dexterity for fine manipulations with the hand (also bionic, of course), but otherwise suffer no Dex penalties. They also have +4 Strength for purposes of skill checks, but they cannot be used to lift more than the character's normal Strength score without damaging muscles in the torso. Bionic arms score +1 damage in unarmed combat as long as they have lost no more than half their hit points.

Bionic arms have DR 2 and can absorb 16 points of damage before being destroyed. Each full 4 points of damage lowers the Strength bonus by 1 point. The arm's power source lasts for up to a year and can be replaced easily by the owner.

Foot: A mechanical foot is shaped differently than a human foot, but not so much so that it cannot fit into standard shoes or boots, where it is indistinguishable from a normal limb. Bionic feet do not modify a character's statistics, but add +2 to Balance checks that involve standing only on a single foot. In addition, the soles can be magnetised on command, allowing them to act as magnetic boots in low-gravity conditions. If only one foot is bionic, this does not fully eliminate the need for Balance rolls, but still provides the bonus. If both are bionic, they act as built-in magnetic boots for all purposes, but can only do this for one hour per day without overstressing the power cell. A bionic foot scores +1 damage in unarmed combat so long as it has not been itself damaged.

Bionic feet have a small energy pack that lasts for up to six months, less any time used for magnetisation. These power packs cannot be replaced by the wearer due to their location, but anyone else can take care of it with a minimum of training. A foot has DR 2 and 6 hit points, and loses its magnetic abilities after taking 3 points of damage (after armour).

Leg: A bionic leg is impossible to conceal due to its heavier nature and the obvious effect it has on the owner's walk. Having a bionic leg reduces the owner's speed to 20 feet, but increases that limb's Strength by +2 and adds +2 to any Jump checks made where the owner can 'kick away' with that leg. In addition, the bionic leg has all the abilities of a bionic foot. If both legs are bionic, Jump checks are at +4, but other bonuses do not stack. A bionic leg scores +1 damage in unarmed combat, in addition to the Strength bonus, so long as it has taken no more than half its hits in damage.

Bionic legs can operate for up to 18 months on the same power pack, which can be easily replaced by its owner. The leg has DR 2 and 20 hit points. It loses half its bonuses after suffering 10 points of damage, and loses the magnetic soles after 15 points are scored.

Brain: On very rare occasions, individuals who have suffered significant brain damage through injury or disease can benefit from the addition of computerised prosthetics. Unfortunately, these devices are bulky and require constant maintenance and tuning to avoid damaging the existing brain, which must remain exposed underneath a protective heavy plastic shield. For this reason, most recipients of artificial brain parts keep their heads covered by hats or hoods. The sight of an exposed brain can be quite disturbing to most people, after all!

One advantage of the bionic addition is an ability to store large amounts of information and access it through data crystal attachments. In effect, the character has his own computer interface built right into his head. He cannot connect directly to other machines, but can transfer information using any crystal. Scanning for specific information still requires a Computer Use check, as does breaking any protections and the like, but all of these acts happen twice as fast as someone who must interface using a terminal or keyboard.

Some bionic brain recipients are capable of recording nearly anything they see, hear, or experience. They process whatever information they sense through their existing brain and transfer it onto data crystals as needed. A crystal stores up to an hour of experiences, which includes visual, auditory, and telepathic information received by the observer. All of this is raw data as perceived by the bionic brain - not filtered or altered in any way. Individuals with bionic implants that possess this capability are extremely rare. They are referred to as 'vicars' or 'VCRs,' a name that derives from Old Earth slang for a device once known as a 'video recorder.' Despite their abilities, they tend to possess severe psychological problems, such as phobias or obsessions.

The exposed, modified bionic brain requires regular weekly maintenance at a qualified Medlab or other properly equipped facility. Failure to make a weekly check-up requires a daily Fortitude save (DC 10, plus 1 for each day that passes without maintenance). If the save fails, the individual loses one point of Intelligence permanently. Damage to the head also results in damage to the bionic implant on a point-for-point basis, but keep in mind that the bionic device is protected by a built-in DR of 4. Should the sensitive equipment suffer damage, each point temporarily reduces the character's Intelligence by one point until the device can be repaired. If the implant is completely destroyed, the individual drops into a catatonic trance until the bionic system can be replaced.

Although these bionics are extremely expensive, vicars are generally employed and sponsored by specific companies or governments for the purpose of making perfect recordings of anything they encounter. The race or corporation in question usually picks up the tab for all repairs and maintenance in exchange for these services.

Heart: Artificial hearts are consistent organs that continue to pump blood despite any physical shocks to the body that might normally cause a person to collapse. Thus, anyone equipped with one of these bionic devices receives +2 hit points. However, bionic hearts are only designed to operate through the normal range of human exertion, and do not work well at the very distant extremes. A heart cannot slow down below the level experienced during ordinary sleep, so a person could not benefit from Pseudodeath medication while equipped with one of these organs. Similarly, a bionic heart can only sustain someone through periods of exertion for a few minutes. After five minutes of constant exertion - e.g., running at full speed, melee combat, or other high-stress activities - roll a Fortitude save (DC 10) every minute. Failure results in one point of subdual damage.

Artificial hearts cannot normally be directly attacked, and are shielded against electronic surges that could cause them to short out. A severe electrical shock or electromagnetic pulse (EMP) could still deactivate them, however. Any electrical surge that scores more than five points of damage, or an EMP blast capable of shorting out a computer, requires a Fortitude save (DC 10). Failure damages the artificial heart, requiring immediate medical attention - roll a similar Fortitude save every day the character is not taken to a Medlab for surgery. Failure of any of these saves results in irreversible shutdown and the individual's death.

Artificial hearts operate using the body's own electrical impulses and do not need recharging. They do, however, periodically require maintenance about once a year. The operation to do this takes the owner out of commission for a period of 1d4+1 days.

Lung: Bionic lungs are normally fairly simple organs that draw air into the body and release it on a steady basis. They are programmed to increase the flow of air in response to heightened blood flow and a faster heartbeat, permitting the owner to engage in whatever activities he needs to do. Bionic lungs also automatically filter out impurities in the air, acting as the equivalent of built-in breather masks. However, they are vulnerable to caustic and toxic chemicals. If the owner breathes anything of this nature that would normally require him to make a saving throw, the artificial lungs must make a Fortitude save at the DC appropriate to the chemical toxin. On a failed roll, the lungs begin to falter, reducing the character's Strength and Constitution by two points each until they can be repaired. Repairs require a Medlab and an operation that takes the character out of commission for 1d4+1 days.

The operation to replace the batteries in each lung is accomplished easily. A simple fluoroscope with a manipulator at the end is inserted into the throat. Each power cell is easily removed and withdrawn, while replacements are quickly replaced. The whole procedure takes less than an hour, but does require a qualified medic and a hospital. Each lung battery lasts approximately six months of normal use.

Stomach: Artificial stomachs are usually implanted only in people who have suffered extreme abdominal injuries. They are efficient at their job, but require constant replacement of the acids and other chemicals used to break down food. In addition, they work only at a constant speed, and cannot expand or contract like a human stomach can. The owner is required to eat regular meals at specific times during the day, and cannot overeat or undereat. After consuming a meal, the required chemicals are inserted through a tube in the abdomen. The owner must then remain idle for an hour while the bionic stomach does its job - any stressful activities require a Fortitude save (DC 15) or the meal will be involuntarily regurgitated. If a meal is not consumed at the correct time, the timetable for later meals in the day must be pushed forward by a like amount. Individuals with artificial stomachs often carry a few liquid meals that can be injected intravenously in the event of trouble.

The primary advantage of a bionic stomach is that the owner is almost impossible to poison. Internal systems locate and trap most toxins, storing them for later recovery when the power cell is replaced. Virtually anything that could harm the body will be trapped in this manner, giving the person a +6 to all Fortitude saves against drugs, poisons, and the like that are taken orally. The stomach is programmed to permit certain well-known drugs and medications to pass without collection, such as stims, oxy pills, and alcohol. Unfortunately, if the stomach is destroyed due to damage, anything trapped in the interior will be released into the body, with potentially catastrophic results. Of course,

damage that is strong enough to destroy a bionic stomach has probably already done irreparable harm to the body itself anyway, rendering this problem moot.

Bionic stomachs have DR 3 and take 5 hit points to destroy. They lose their ability to detect poisons after taking two points of damage. Annual replacement of the battery pack requires a surgical procedure that leaves the owner unavailable for one day while they recover. The toxin collection filter is always removed and replaced at the same time. Should the filter become full early, the stomach signals its owner with a series of small, harmless shocks.

Gills: Artificial gills are mechanical implants installed in the throat and lungs. When activated, they allow water to flow through the open mouth and out via slots in the sides of the neck. Oxygen is then drawn directly from the water and injected into the lungs in lieu of breathing. Employing bionic gills permits an individual to breathe underwater without air tanks or other equipment, so long as enough oxygen exists in the liquid to permit breathing - generally, if a fish can survive in the same environment, the gills will function well enough. Artificial gills do not otherwise aid in swimming efforts and do not produce any bonuses to Swim checks.

Unfortunately, because the flow of air cannot be increased through heavy breathing, the person must avoid stress or heavy exercise or they will begin suffocating. Any time a person spends more than one consecutive round swimming as a full move action or undertaking other difficult underwater work, they risk swallowing too much water and beginning to drown. Treat this under the standard drowning rules until the high-stress conditions are removed. Because of this limitation, artificial gills are generally avoided by the military and are strictly reserved for civilian use.

Activating the gills is a partial action. Once the user exits the water, they must spend a full round coughing and emptying their throat to permit normal breathing once again. The gills operate on a single power cell that provides up to eight hours of continuous oxygen supply. These cells may be replaced while underwater.

Artificial gills are quite noticeable in public, as they cause the neck and throat to appear constantly swollen. Once installed, they are permanent unless removed by a very difficult operation. When switched off, they do not interfere with normal breathing. They do not help in any environment other than underwater - i.e., they will not take the place of breather masks in thin atmospheres.

Other: Other mechanical organs exist, such as artificial livers, kidneys, and the like. As these provide no significant game bonuses, they are not listed here. The Games Master is encouraged to use these if he wishes, perhaps as a special feature of a non-player character, or if a player needs one of their organs replaced following a particularly vicious fight.

Hidden Compartment: Bionic arms, legs, hands, and feet can be equipped with secret compartments where items can be secretly stored. A hand or foot can only hold very small items such as lockpicks or identicards, while an arm or leg could conceal a pistol, knife, or other short weapon. Discovering a hidden bionic compartment requires a Spot check (DC 20) during the midst of a careful search - never by simply glancing at the limb in question. Most doctors will not install such things, so a player will need to either purchase their limb from an unsavoury merchant or visit a black market repair shop to have the appropriate modifications made. Once a character's secret compartment has been discovered, its presence becomes part of his permanent record.

Bionic Prosthetics List

Item	Installation Cost	Repair Cost (per hp)	Battery Cost	Weight	DR	HP
Eye	100,000 cr.	15,000 cr.	5,000 cr.	1 lb.	0	3
Ear	50,000 cr.	n/a	2,000 cr.	0 lb.	0	1
Hand	15,000 cr.	1,000 cr.	500 cr.	2 lb.	2	5
Arm (includes hand)	35,000 cr.	1,000 cr.	750 cr.	15 lb.	2	16
Foot	12,500 cr.	1,500 cr.	1,000 cr.	4 lb.	2	6
Leg (includes foot)	45,000 cr.	1,500 cr.	1,500 cr.	24 lb.	2	20
Brain (partial)	200,000 cr.	50,000 cr.	25,000 cr.	6 lb.	4	8
Heart	250,000 cr.	30,000 cr.	10,000 cr.	3 lb.	3	4
Stomach	100,000 cr.	10,000 cr.	3,000 cr.	5 lb.	3	5
Lung	75,000 cr.	10,000 cr.	2,500 cr.	5 lb.	2	5
Gills	25,000 cr.	2,000 cr.	500 cr.	1 lb.	2	3

Appendix 1:

Nationality Feats

The following feats are available for human characters born in various nations and colonies. A human may take these feats only if he has spent a significant portion of his life in one of the listed locales, which are described in better detail elsewhere in this book. A character need not necessarily be born in one of these places, but must have grown up there or spent a large amount of time in that location - enough to consider it his 'native' land. A character may not hail from more than one nation-state or colony at a time. Some of these feats are also available to various prestige classes. If a prestige class lists a regional or colonial feat as available to that class, then this supersedes the usual region/colony restriction. Members of other races or classes may also make these feats available, but these exceptions will be described in more detail in future products.

The main benefit of a Nationality feat is that human characters get to select one of them for free at character creation. This is an additional bonus feat, but can only be used to select an appropriate Nationality feat. If a human Player's nation of origin has more than one feat associated with it, the character only gets to select one of them for free. Other Nationality feats from a Player's home region must be purchased normally.

All of these feats have the following basics in common:

Prerequisites: Human, native or long term (more than fifteen years) in one of the feat's applicable nationalities or one or more levels in one of the feat's permitted prestige classes.

Adaptable

Available Nationalities: American, Argentinean, Australian

Benefit: You adapt quickly to changing situations and are rarely fazed by new environments or unexpected stresses. You receive a +1 bonus to your Will save, +1 to your Survival skill, and a +1 bonus on any die roll or check involving morale or fear (this does not stack with the Will save bonus in situations where that saving throw is used to shake off such effects).

Agricultural

Available Nationalities: Argentinean, Ukrainian, Denebian

Benefit: You are from a society where farming, hydroponics, or other agricultural industries are of prime importance. You have a basic knowledge of agriculture, botany, and livestock biology that comes from time spent on farms and ranches. You receive a +3 bonus to Appraise checks where they relate to food products or livestock grown on farms, either by hand or through automation. In addition, you have a +2 bonus to any Knowledge check involving botany or biology that relates to

commercially grown products you could reasonably be expected to be familiar with. For example, if you are evaluating damage to the hydroponics section of Babylon 5, you could use this feat to help determine the health of plants you've seen before, but identifying a new type of alien fungus infesting the crops would not be subject to the bonus.

Born Pilot

Available Nationalities: Welsh

Benefit: You grew up in a society where flying vehicles was taught at an early age. In addition to constant practice with such craft, you are also uncommonly talented with them. You receive a +2 bonus with all Pilot checks, and in addition, you may select a specific type of craft in which to specialise, receiving a further +1 with that vehicle. Some classes you may select from include civilian transit vehicles (aircars and airbuses), fixed-wing aircraft, VTOL craft, fighters, shuttles, small starships, large starships, cargo spacecraft and the like.

Charming

Available Nationalities: French

Benefit: You have a natural charm that makes others see you as interesting and attractive. This has little to do with physical appearance - it's the way you carry yourself, how you make eye contact, your self-confidence, and many other little things that add up into a singularly charming whole. You receive a +1 skill bonus to Diplomacy, Bluff and Intimidate checks. These bonuses are doubled when dealing with a human member of the opposite sex, or any reasonably humanoid alien who might consider a human attractive in some way (for example, a Minbari or Centauri might be susceptible to a human's charms, but probably not a Narn or Drazi). However, if that individual has reason to dislike you, perhaps through some negative action you performed in the past, or a bad reputation, these doubled bonuses are treated as penalties instead!

Cold Tolerance

Available Nationalities: Swiss, Scandinavian, Canadian, Russian

Benefit: You come from an area where cold weather and conditions are far more common than hot ones. You receive a +3 skill bonus to all Survival or Medical checks directly related to cold weather, such as hypothermia. In addition, you receive a +1 to any related sporting events or winter-specific activities such as skiing or ice skating. Also, fatigue that relates to cold weather affects you at only half the normal rate as a normal person, so if a rule states that players must roll once every hour for fatigue effects, you roll only once every other hour.

Unfortunately, you are not very used to hot weather, and do not stand up to warm conditions. All Survival or Medical checks related to warm weather are at a -2, and fatigue in similar situations affects you twice as much as a normal person. You can still participate in warm-weather sports without any other penalties, however.

You may not have this feat and Heat Tolerance simultaneously.

Connoisseur

Available Nationalities: French

Benefit: You have spent a good deal of your life appreciating the finer things, so your senses are more acute than others. Where a typical person might sip a glass of wine and think, 'that's pretty good,' you can taste it and immediately recognise it as a fine twenty-year-old Chardonnay from Bourgogne.

You receive a +3 bonus to all Appraise checks relating to anything that can be judged directly by your senses of sight, taste, and smell. Thus, you could appreciate a fine wine, sample a gourmet meal, view a piece of art, or touch a foreign substance to your tongue to determine its nature, but anything that requires a scientific analysis would not receive this bonus. Similarly, an item of value by weight, such as a lump of gold, would not fall under this feat. The object in question must be 'artistic' in nature, either through cooking, drawing, sculpture, and so on.

Criminal Connection

Available Nationalities: Duranian

Benefit: You are from a location where criminal activities are so common that you could not help but be drawn into them at some point in your life. You might have done so intentionally as a way to make money or improve your status. Alternately, you could have been drawn into a life of crime against your will, perhaps through no fault of your own. Regardless of how it happened, you have a criminal record and connections to the underworld, whether you want them or not.

The Games Master will determine the actual nature of your connection and how it affects a scenario or campaign, but in general, you have the ability to call upon your contacts in the underworld for help on occasion. You might just need a little information, or you might require specific item normally available only on the black market. Getting these will not be free, of course, and in fact the price might be quite high. The important thing is you have access to these resources whereas an ordinary character might not.

The disadvantage of this feat is that your criminal record is likely known to the authorities, or at least suspected. You must constantly be on guard against discovery, as this could lead to an arrest, depending on the nature of your connection and past activities. Also, anyone who learns of your record will likely view you with contempt, or at least with very little trust. In addition to the above, you receive +2 to your Diplomacy, Interrogation, Sense Motive, and Bluff skills when they have to do with criminals who know you and are aware of your connections. For example, if you wished to squeeze information from a lowlife in Downbelow, you might drop a hint that you know Guido and he owes you a favour.

Desert Dweller

Available Nationalities: Mexican, United Islamic Nations

Benefit: Your home is in or near a region that can be classified as desert - arid land with little rainfall, usually rocky or sandy with little vegetation. You are highly familiar with this terrain and know how to survive and travel in it without much

difficulty. You receive +2 on the following skill checks when you are in a desert area: Hide, Search, Spot, and Survival. You also receive +1 on any rolls to avoid heat-related injury, such as sunstroke or dehydration, that result from hot conditions. These bonuses do not stack with those provided with the Heat Tolerance feat.

Disease Tolerant

Available Nationalities: South African

Benefit: You are from a country where rampaging diseases have left the survivors better able to shrug off infection. Your frequent association with disease victims has also given you a natural ability to diagnose and treat various fevers and plagues. You receive a +2 on all Fortitude saves having to do with disease - either to avoid infection, limit the duration, or recover from the effects. In addition, you have a +2 bonus to all Medical checks involving disease diagnosis and treatment, either for yourself or others of your race. These bonuses do not apply to other medical conditions such as injury, radiation, hypothermia, and so on.

Distrustful

Available Nationalities: Greek, Balkan

Benefit: Simply put, you don't trust anyone or anything. Even when someone tells you an obvious truth, you are doubtful and suspicious. This can make you difficult to get along with, but your sceptical eye makes it much easier for you to detect mistruths and deceptions. You receive a bonus of +3 on all Sense Motive checks, and making the evaluation takes only half as long as usual. You can even attempt this roll when dealing with person not physically present, such as on the other end of a communications device or in a written work. The Games Master may also permit you an automatic check during a very quick encounter, depending upon the circumstances, although the DC for this should be fairly high - at least 20, and more likely 25. However, because your suspicious nature makes you somewhat caustic around others, especially in social situations, you receive a -2 to all Diplomacy checks.

You may not have this feat and Open-Minded at the same time.

Efficient

Available Nationalities: Indian

Benefit: You are adept at finding the optimal solution to any problem. Faced with a number of possible routes to a destination, all of which will get you there eventually, you inevitably locate the most efficient path. If you succeed in a Computer Use, Forgery, Gather Information, Medical, Profession, or Technical check, you may make a second roll, and if successful, you reduce the time required by 25% due to your phenomenal optimisation abilities. Failure in this second check has no effect on the attempt or time requirement, but if you roll a 1, the required time factor is increased by 25% while you needlessly debate the possible routes you can take to achieve success. You may also attempt this roll when you take 10 or take 20, but you may not take 10 or 20 on the optimisation roll itself!

Electrical Tolerance

Available Nationalities: Ionian

Benefit: You are from a location that experience constant electrical surges or lightning storms in the atmosphere. Your constant exposure to these effects has made your body naturally resistant to electrical damage. You receive a +2 to all saving throws related to electricity, such as power surges, shocks, lightning bolts, and the like, and you receive a +2 bonus to all Listen checks when attempting to detect the type or location of an electrical disturbance, such as a shorted wire or electric fence.

Entertainer

Available Nationalities: Proximan

Benefit: You are from a society that enjoys and appreciates good entertainment, and you are now taking up the craft for yourself. You receive a +2 bonus to all Perform skill checks. In addition, select one of the following specialties: Singing, Dancing, Acting, Filmmaking, or News Reporting. You receive a further +2 bonus to any Perform check related to this field.

Explorer

Available Nationalities: Scottish, Canadian, Australian

Benefit: You like to travel and see new things. Blazing new trails is your favourite hobby, and you know many things about various places and terrains that the average person just doesn't realise. You receive a +1 to each of the following skills: Survival, Climb, and Spot. If you take this as a starting feat, you know the nation-state or colony in which you live like the back of your hand, receiving a further +3 bonus to Knowledge (state/colony).

You may also select a favoured type of place you like to visit. If you do this, your Survival bonus in that area is +2, but you receive no bonus in any of the other types. Select one from the following list: Mountain, Forest, Desert, Sea, or Exotic, the latter referring to airless, dangerous or toxic environments that are generally hard to get to (on Earth, the only such locations would be deep underwater or on Antarctica).

Fierce Competitor

Available Nationalities: Russian, Denebian

Benefit: You love a challenge, be it a physical, mental, or some combination of the two. You thrive best when you are under a time constraint or deadline, and especially when racing others to the finish line. When conducting any action that has a known time limit or must be completed in a limited period, roll normally for success. If the roll succeeds, but not quite well enough to beat the time required - or if the roll just barely fails - you may make a Will save at DC 15, plus any additional modifiers the Games Master applies for the difficulty of the task. Success indicates you were able to put forth a last-second surge of adrenaline that just manages to beat the buzzer.

This feat cannot be used in combat for any purpose, although it could be employed if you are fleeing a battle and racing to leap through a rapidly closing bulkhead, for example. This feat may

also not be used in concert with group activities - it is purely a personal ability.

Forester

Available Nationalities: Canadian

Benefit: You are at home in forests, either because you have spent a great deal of time exploring them or because your job takes place in woodland areas. Perhaps you are a lumberjack or trapper, or you might simply enjoy camping and hunting in your native woods. You receive +2 to each of the following skills whenever they are attempted within or while travelling through forests: Climb, Hide, Search, Spot, and Survival.

Forward Thinking

Available Nationalities: Scandinavian, South African

Benefit: You are adept at coming up with long-term plans and solutions. When a task requires a significant period of time to complete, such as designing a complicated computer program or preparing a detailed analytical report, you can collect all your thoughts at once in your head - even if the project is extremely complicated - and prepare a detailed plan to achieve the objective. Because of this, you receive a +1 to +3 bonus on any skill roll required to carry out a long-term project. The actual size of the bonus depends on several factors:

Relatively simple project involving only yourself and things you are familiar with, and that will require only a short amount of time (several hours to a day or two): +1

Moderately complex task requiring quite a bit of research and planning, possibly including a few other participants, and taking a reasonable amount of time (no more than a week): +2

Complicated job involving a team of individuals working together, more than a week of time, and comprehensive planning efforts: +3

If a task requires multiple rolls, such as a project with several steps, the total overall bonus for the entire job should not exceed +3. The Games Master can alter the bonuses as he sees fit depending on the various factors involved in the project. For example, an extremely complex but short-term job could receive a +1, +2, or +3 bonus depending upon how much knowledge and preparation time the Games Master feels is available to the player.

Historian

Available Nationalities: Egyptian, Vatican City

Benefit: You have a knack for history, and the education to go with it. You know a lot of things about Earth's past and quite a bit about the rest of the explored galaxy. In addition, you tend to pick up new historical data very easily. When you receive this feat, select both a primary specialty and a secondary group. The primary specialty must be an Alliance colony or one of the Earth national organisations (e.g., European Union or United Islamic Nations). The secondary group may be any other organisation, such as the Belt Alliance, Raiders, Minbari Warrior Caste, Narn Kha'Ri, and so on. A single race cannot be counted as the secondary group. You receive a +4 to your Knowledge (History) checks for your primary specialty, a +3

to checks within your secondary group, and a +2 to all other Knowledge (History) checks provided you have at least some knowledge of the subject. If you encounter a new race for the first time, you could not make a History check about them, but after studying their historical texts for a few days, you would learn enough to benefit from a bonus on future rolls.

Gambler

Available Nationalities: Italian

Benefit: You enjoy taking chances and betting on the outcome. Faced with a situation where two or more events have approximately identical chances of occurring, you will inevitably speculate or gamble on the result. When probabilities come up, you almost automatically calculate the odds, and as often as not quote them, even if your companions are not in the slightest bit interested. Your calculations are not always correct, but you are nevertheless quite confident in your ‘educated guess.’

Each time you arrive at a situation where more than one possibility of success exists, and you can be reasonably expected to have a good idea of the probabilities involved, you can attempt to calculate the odds. The Games Master rolls an Appraise check against a DC based upon the chart below. If the result indicates a success, he gives you an approximate percentage chance for each potential possibility to occur. If the result is a failure by more than 5, the Games Master gives you a set of odds that are somewhat skewed - wrongly, of course - in favour of one possibility or the other. If the failure is greater than 10, the odds quoted are highly inaccurate due to some miscalculation on your part. Any lesser failure is simply reported as an inability to determine the odds with any clarity.

DC	Example
10	Fairly commonplace activity requiring little in the way of specific knowledge; e.g., the chance that the next person to enter a room will be a man or woman
15	Reasonably simple activity involving the knowledge of some important details; e.g., the likelihood that a given well-known starship class can defeat another in a space battle
20	Moderately complex activity that requires fairly detailed knowledge or experience; e.g., the chance that any given ground car racer will win the next Rome-Florence Grand Prix
25	Complex activity requiring a detailed study of the environment and all factors and participants involved; e.g., the likelihood of stocks rising or falling on the European Market
30	Highly complicated calculations requiring intimate knowledge and experience in the arena in question; e.g., the chance that any given Senator will win election to the post of Earth Alliance President at the next election four years from now

A player may take 10 or take 20 on these activities, but each level of difficulty requires greater amounts of time depending upon the event being studied. A complete analysis of Earth’s political arena could take weeks, if not months, and involve interviews with dozens of experts!

Note that this is not an ‘augury’ that can be used by players to receive hints about which way they should proceed during a mission or what might lie down the next corridor. The player may only make calculations based on things he knows, or thinks he knows. If the player asks for an odds calculation based on faulty data, the Games Master should take that into account when preparing the answer. For example, a detective who found a PPG with a murder suspect’s fingerprints on it will likely establish a high level of probability that the suspect in question was the killer, even if he was unaware that a different person planted those fingerprints as part of a frame-up. Blindly trusting probabilities can be dangerous!

Glib Tongue

Available Nationalities: Spanish

Benefit: You can speak confidently with anyone about anything, even allowing you to go so far as to make up wild stories and make them sound perfectly reasonable. You receive a +2 bonus to Bluff checks and a +1 bonus to Intimidate checks.

Good Listener

Available Nationalities: Vatican City

Benefit: You are trained in the art of listening to others, paying attention, and providing feedback about what you heard. Whenever you are talking to anyone one-on-one, you have a remarkable ability to pick up on underlying feelings and collecting insight about their true motives. You can also do this to a limited extent when observing someone speaking from a distance or on a video record. You have a +2 bonus to Listen, Sense Motive, and Diplomacy checks when speaking directly to an individual, and a +1 bonus to Sense Motive checks when watching them from afar. In addition, you are so good at listening that you can do so while being distracted by other events, giving you a +2 bonus on Concentration checks while undertaking another activity in secret (such as planting a listening device under a chair while carrying on a conversation with your host).

Gregarious

Available Nationalities: Irish, Brazilian

Benefit: You prefer the company of others and are comfortable in large groups. Public speaking causes you no fear, and you have no trouble with stage fright. You receive a +2 bonus to Diplomacy, Perform, and Speak Language checks when they have to do with group activities, such as giving a speech or putting on a show before a large audience.

Guerrilla Fighter

Available Nationalities: Pan-American, Proximan

Benefit: You are from a culture that teaches methods of fighting and resisting oppression by avoiding direct combat, instead striking from hiding and retreating into your native land. You are very good at stealth and quick, precision attacks, but prefer to avoid long, drawn-out actions. You receive a +1 on your Hide and Move Silently checks, doubled to +2 if you are involved in a military action such as scouting a base or acting as a sniper

against a specific target. All bonuses are lost if you engage in a general melee and then try to flee - you are only good at this if you strike quickly and then retreat, like a true guerrilla.

Heat Tolerance

Available Nationalities: Turkish, Mexican

Benefit: You come from an area where hot weather and arid conditions are far more common than cold ones. You receive a +3 skill bonus to all Survival or Medical checks directly related to hot weather, such as heat stroke or sun poisoning. In addition, you receive a +1 to any related sporting events or summer-specific activities such as football or baseball. Also, fatigue that relates to hot weather affects you at only half the normal rate as a normal person, so if a rule states that players must roll once every hour for fatigue effects, you roll only once every other hour.

Unfortunately, you are not very used to cold weather, and do not stand up to cool conditions. All Survival or Medical checks related to cold weather are at a -2, and fatigue in similar situations affects you twice as much as a normal person. You can still participate in cold-weather sports without any other penalties, however.

You may not have this feat and Cold Tolerance simultaneously.

High-G Tolerance

Available Nationalities: Orion 7

Benefit: You come from a world where the gravity is significantly higher than Earth normal. Prolonged exposure has made you better able to operate in higher gravity situations, but lower gravities can be a significant problem. Characters with this feat ignore the first two points of Dexterity penalty for high-gravity situations, so they would suffer no reduction in high G, -2 in very high G, and -6 in extreme environments. Jump distances and lifting capacities are increased by 1 fractional point, so a 1/2 would become a 1/3, 1/4 would become 1/5, and so on. Additionally, the character receives a +2 bonus on all Balance checks related to high-G conditions.

Lower gravities present a bigger problem, however. All dexterity and strength modifiers are increased by two, so low G penalties are -4, very low are -6, and microgravity is -10. Jump distances and lifting capacities are increased by one multiplier point, so x2 becomes x3, x4 becomes x5, and x8 becomes x9. This represents the inability of the body to adapt to lower gravity, which is much more extreme to you than a normal human.

Industrious

Available Nationalities: German, Venezuelan

Benefit: Your people come from a nation where hard work and dedication are highly prized, and you have brought yourself up to follow those beliefs. You do not shy away from hard labour or difficult challenges. When called upon to undertake a backbreaking task, such as digging yourself out of a cave-in or moving large pieces of equipment, you generate fatigue only half as quickly as others. In addition, you receive a +2

competence bonus to Concentration, Profession, Survival, and Swim checks when they relate to matters of sheer endurance - e.g., you would not receive the bonus if attempting to avoid drowning, but would if determining how long you could stay afloat or how far you can actually travel without becoming exhausted.

Insulated Skin

Available Nationalities: Antarctic

Benefit: You have a thick layer of skin with a considerable amount of sub-dermal fat and other natural insulation that keeps you warm in extremely cold conditions. You receive a +2 to all of the following skills where they relate to cold weather: Climb, Hide, Jump, Medical, Survival, and Swim. In addition, cold-related medical conditions such as hypothermia only affect you half as quickly as they would a normal person. For example, if a hypothermia check in an icy environment is called for once per hour, you would roll only once every other hour. Your recovery time for such conditions is halved regardless of the success of Medical or Survival checks.

The bonuses and penalties from this feat stack with Cold Tolerance, so if you had both feats, you would roll hypothermia checks (for example) only one-fourth as often as a standard character.

Jack-of-All-Trades

Available Nationalities: American, Welsh

Benefit: You do not specialise in anything, but spread your interests out over many areas of expertise. You also enjoy a number of different hobbies in which you have extra skill. You gain a +1 bonus in three different skills, as long as those could be reasonably assumed to be hobbies for someone of your class. For example, a Lurker or Agent could consider forgery a kind of hobby, but a Worker or Scientist would not. Similarly, climbing could be a hobby for nearly anyone - you might have an affinity for rock climbing as a personal sport - but telepathy would not be acceptable as a hobby (although Knowledge in telepathy could). If you take this feat multiple times, all additional bonuses must be applied to different skills.

Jeweller

Available Nationalities: Colombian, Vegan

Benefit: You have a background in working with valuable gemstones and fine jewellery, as well as an appreciation for such things. In addition to your ability to recognise the value of various rocks and minerals you might encounter, you also have a natural ability to pick them out of a crowd. You receive a +2 bonus to Appraise, Forgery, and Spot checks where they relate to gemstones and jewels, and a +1 bonus to those same skills when working with less valuable metals and ores such as iron, copper, and the like.

If your character initially begins with this feat, you own a piece of jewellery that holds special interest for you. Perhaps it is a family heirloom, or a gift from a relative, or just something from your own personal collection. It might be a gem-encrusted ring, a valuable necklace, or even a functional device such as a watch

or belt buckle made of gold or other semi-precious metal. The item has a value of 1d6+500 credits, but is not something you will willingly part with except in the direst of circumstances. You might, for example, pawn your valuables to buy a ticket off Babylon 5 in order to avoid pursuit by bloodthirsty criminals, but you would not simply sell it in order to purchase some more equipment for your next mission. You might, however, use it as collateral for a loan.

Jungle Dweller

Available Nationalities: Pan-American, Venezuelan, Indonesian Consortium

Benefit: Your home is in or near a region of heavy, thick forests, particularly of a tropical rainforest nature. You are highly familiar with this terrain and know how to survive and travel in it without much difficulty. You receive +2 on the following skill checks when you are in a jungle area: Climb, Hide, Search, Spot, and Survival.

Level-Headed

Available Nationalities: Russian, Japanese

Benefit: Very little fazes you. You are a rock of stability in the midst of chaos. You receive a +2 bonus to your Will save and a +2 bonus to Concentration checks whenever they involve stressful situations, morale, and similar conditions.

Light Sleeper

Available Nationalities: Japanese

Benefit: You have become used to getting less sleep than normal people. You need one hour less sleep per day than a typical person of your race. Humans generally require seven hours of sleep per day, but you would need only six without suffering any fatigue or other penalties. In addition, you can sustain yourself for longer periods without sleep, doubling the amount a normal person can last before any negatives begin to apply. Finally, in any situation where you are asleep and need to be awakened suddenly, you receive a +2 bonus to Listen or other appropriate checks.

Low-G Tolerance

Available Nationalities: Ionian, Martian

Benefit: You come from a world where the gravity is significantly less than Earth normal. Prolonged exposure has made you better able to operate in zero-G or low-G situations, but higher gravities can be a significant problem. Characters with this feat ignore the first two points of Dexterity penalty for low-gravity situations, so they would suffer no reduction in low G, -2 in very low G, and -6 in microgravity. Jump distances and lifting capacities are increased by 1 multiplier, so a x2 would become a x3, x4 would become x5, and so on. Additionally, the character receives a +2 bonus on all Balance checks related to low or zero-G conditions.

Higher gravities present a bigger problem, however. All dexterity and strength modifiers are increased by two, so high G penalties are -4, very high are -6, and extreme are -10. Jump

distances and lifting capacities are increased by one fractional point, so 1/2 becomes 1/3, 1/4 becomes 1/5, and 1/8 becomes 1/9. This represents the effects of atrophy on the muscles and skeletal structure that come with living in such an environment for so long.

Militaristic

Available Nationalities: German, Israeli

Benefit: You hail from a nation-state with a high level of military history. Throughout your time there, you studied and practiced military theory, battle tactics, and individual combat. You receive a +1 to your attack bonus with any single weapon type of your choice, representing specific training in that particular weapon. In addition, you receive a +1 competence bonus to any skill check directly related to military leadership or battlefield tactics, including those dealing with the morale of troops under your command. If used in concert with the Stirring Speech used by officers, all those hearing someone with this feat receive a +1 circumstance bonus to the resulting Will save.

Miner

Available Nationalities: Colombian, Martian, Orion 7

Benefit: You have a background in mining and underground exploration. In addition to a general knowledge about mine construction and mineral extraction, you also enjoy being below the surface, especially in natural caves and tunnels. One side effect of this is that you are not bothered by darkness, even the total black of an underground setting. You also have no problem with claustrophobia (the fear of being trapped in an enclosed area), and if anything would be subject to the opposite fear, agoraphobia (open spaces).

You have a +1 bonus to each of the following skills when they relate to underground tunnels or caves: Balance, Climb, Hide, Knowledge, Move Silently, Search, Spot, and Survival. You also earn a +1 bonus to Will saves when faced with stressful situations or fears in underground settings.

Mountaineer

Available Nationalities: Swiss, Chilean

Benefit: You are from a mountainous area and are used to travel in and around such terrain. You receive a +2 skill bonus to Climbing checks in natural mountains, e.g., for scaling cliff walls or descending into a ravine, whether you have the proper equipment or not. You also receive a +1 bonus to the following skills when they directly relate to mountainous areas: Move Silently, Spot, Search, Jump, and Survival.

These bonuses do not stack with any other benefits given by feats in this section - for example, a person with both Mountaineering and Cold Tolerance would not receive both bonuses to his Survival check while surveying an icy mountain.

Open-Minded

Available Nationalities: Spanish, Turkish

Benefit: You tend to be unusually tolerant of others, including alien viewpoints that differ widely from your own. In general, you tend to accept things at face value, rather than with any sort of preconceived notions. 'To each his own' is probably one of your favourite sayings. Because of this, others react well to you in social situations, giving you a +3 bonus to Diplomacy checks. You also treat any other relevant skill as two points higher in any situation where, in the Games Master's opinion, a clear head will help you see the forest for the trees. For example, if you are questioning witnesses about who they might have seen hanging around a seedy tavern, you might receive a +2 bonus on your Gather Information check if the data you receive is widely varied or contradictory. After all, people tend to perceive things in different ways - they might all be correct, from their point of view.

Unfortunately, your willingness to believe what you hear makes you somewhat gullible on occasion. You receive -1 on Sense Motive checks and a similar penalty to resist telepathic scans or suggestions. From a roleplaying point of view, you tend to accept anything you are told at face value initially, although you will be just as quick to dismiss it once the truth is discovered. You cannot have both this feat and Distrustful at the same time.

Primitive

Available Nationalities: Australian Aborigine, Regular, or any other primitive culture

Benefit: You are from an extremely primitive culture and are unfamiliar with technology, but are better equipped to physical skills. Although you are used to a low-tech society, that does not mean you are uneducated. In fact, you have probably learned a great deal about the rest of the world, and the Earth Alliance as a whole. You are just not experienced with it. Because of your physical upbringing, you receive a +1 to all of the following skills: Balance, Climb, Hide, Jump, Listen, Search, Spot, Survival, and Swim. These apply even in high-tech settings - you can transfer your climbing abilities to scale a large cargo pallet just as easily as you can a cliff face, for example. In addition, you also know how to use certain primitive weapons not used in modern society, such as boomerangs and blowguns, as appropriate to your culture. You receive one free rank in a single exotic weapon common to your people, and can purchase ranks in any such weapon your kind normally has access to.

However, your inexperience with technology gives you a -2 penalty to each of the following skills: Computer Use, Drive, Forgery, Pilot, Profession, and Technical. You also cannot begin with any ranks in Knowledge or Speak Language for anything not directly related to your culture - you could speak English and your native tongue, but that is all. In order to put any ranks in these skills, you must engage in training or education during play.

You can only take this feat during character creation.

Professional Sportsman

Available Nationalities: Italian, Greek, Denebian

Benefit: You are not only good at a particular sport, you are actually paid to perform it as your profession. You may select a single sport (see list below) and treat it as a Profession skill, but with a different base attribute. You begin with 4 ranks in this skill as long as you take this feat when your character is initially created; otherwise, you earn only the right to take a sport as a profession. If circumstances permit, you can take a job or earn money using your chosen sport in place of a trade skill. Note that jobs for professional sportsmen are not particularly common, especially on Babylon 5 - you could, however, make money selling autographs or photos, or as a coach or teacher.

In addition to the bonus above, you automatically earn a special synergy bonus on one or more other skills or abilities related to your chosen sport. A possible list of these appears below. More sports definitely exist and can be used at the Games Master's option.

Football/Soccer (Con)	+1 with any kick attack (unarmed strike)
Baseball or Cricket (Dex)	+1 with any thrown weapon attack, such as a grenade
Basketball (Dex)	+2 reflex bonus to AC when avoiding attacks of opportunity
Wrestling (Str)	+1 to any grappling or related checks involving unarmed subdual
Track & Field (Dex)	+1 Jump, +1 Climb, +1 Balance
Swimming (Con)	+3 Swimming for purposes of endurance; e.g., for purposes of distance or fatigue, but not to resist drowning or avoid being pulled under by heavy weights
Vehicle Racing (Dex)	+2 Drive or +2 Pilot, depending on the type of vehicle being raced
Gymnastics (Dex)	+2 Escape Artist
Hockey (Con)	+1 AC (dodge bonus)
Shooting (Dex)	+1 Attack with one ranged weapon of your choice
Gravball (Dex)	This sport is played in zero-G conditions; applying this feat to this skill eliminates 1 point of any penalty performed in zero-G

This feat can be taken only once. Synergy bonuses listed above stack with other feats that provide similar abilities.

Radiation Tolerant

Available Nationalities: Indian, Pakistani, Regular

Benefit: You are from a country or area that has been the target of nuclear attacks or radioactive accidents in the distant past. As a result, your body has built up certain chemicals that make you naturally resistant to radiation. You receive a +3 on Fortitude saves versus radiation effects. In addition, even if you fail your initial save, you do not automatically fail ensuing Fortitude saves, but may attempt them at a -3 penalty. You also subtract 1 from the Constitution loss - i.e., you roll 1d6-1 instead of 1d6 - but the minimum roll is always 1.

Religious Influence

Available Nationalities: United Islamic Nations, Indian, Israeli, Vatican City

Benefit: You are a religious leader of some note. You might be a priest, rabbi, or some other sort of ordained minister, or you might have been appointed to lead religious services in your area. You might also be a missionary, depending on your background. Whatever the case, you have certain powers and responsibilities that stem from your position. You receive +4 to any Knowledge (Religion) checks related to your religion, and a +2 to any religion-based Knowledge checks for any faith similar to yours. For example, a Catholic priest would know something about Judaism or Islam, both of which are basically Christian, but not of Buddhism or Taoism.

On a regular basis, you are expected to lead a religious service. This might be done daily, weekly, or on some other schedule. In some religions, such as Islam, this occurs at a specific time, while others allow greater flexibility. If you are not available, you can appoint someone else to do this duty for short periods. Some religions, such as Catholicism, have specific holy days that occur irregularly. Others have special practices that take place at various times of year - Hanukah for Jews, Ramadan for Moslems, and so on. You are expected to take part in these celebrations and festivities and cannot simply miss them without good reason.

The primary benefit of this feat is the use of your church as a patron. The church generally provides a place for its own to live, for example. Although you do not draw a paycheck for personal use, you receive simple meals at no cost. The church might also be able to draw upon other resources you lack, primarily knowledge about obscure subjects. On rare occasions, you might also receive aid from other sources, such as other priests or followers - but they will need a good reason for assisting you. The Games Master will be the final arbiter of your church's abilities in this regard.

Repetitious

Available Nationalities: Polish

Benefit: Your life revolves around repetition and redundancy, possibly even to the point of obsession. When you brush your teeth, you always make the same number of up-and-down strokes. You prefer each day to be as close as possible to the previous one. Work is a series of repetitions of the same basic procedure over and over. You would be quite at home on an assembly line, where each action is identical and quality is exactly the same with everything you do.

You may choose any single skill or ability you possess as your favoured action. This may not be a combat activity, but can be literally anything else you have the capability of doing. You practice with this constantly and repeatedly, until you can do it in your sleep. You receive a +1 per level bonus with this skill or action in any circumstance where you could reasonably expect to benefit from your consistently repeated practice. For example, if you have spent your life endlessly creating forged identification cards, producing a similar one earns the bonus, as would determining whether a given card of that same type was,

in fact, a forgery. However, creating a different sort of forged document, such as a certificate or license, would not earn the bonus.

There is no upper limit to this bonus. Levels only count if the skill or activity is a class skill or otherwise appropriate to the class. Forged identicards, as in the example above, would benefit from Lurker or Agent levels, but not Officer or Scientist because Forgery is not a class skill for those classes.

Savoir-Faire

Available Nationalities: English

Benefit: You are at home in high society. High-class soirees are a walk in the park, and important personages do not faze you in the least. You could carry on a pleasant conversation with a member of the Royal Family or the President's staff as easily as if they were your next-door neighbour. You receive a +2 bonus to your Bluff, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Gather Information, and Intimidate checks whenever they take place in a high society setting. For example, you cannot use this bonus when trying to determine whether a high-ranking military officer is lying during a briefing. However, if you met him later at a party or state function, you could question him in a more comfortable setting that might make him reveal a little bit more information that he otherwise would.

Seagoing

Available Nationalities: Indonesian Consortium, Orion 3

Benefit: You are from a culture where boats are still in use as more than just pleasure craft. You might be a fisherman, or sail cargo ships, or perhaps even live on a houseboat, or you have been trained in the use of these vehicles for military purposes. Whatever the reason, you are perfectly at home on the water. You receive a +2 bonus to your Drive or Pilot skills where they relate to seagoing craft - be they sailboats, motorboats, hydrofoils, yachts, submarines, or even an aircraft as it takes off or lands on the water. You also earn a +1 bonus to all Swim checks.

Specialist

Available Nationalities: Irish, Brazilian

Benefit: Your education and training has focused primarily on a specific technical aptitude, with which you excel above all others, to the detriment of other skills. Select one specialist area from the list below. You gain a +3 competence bonus to skill checks made in this activity.

Computer Use Specialties:

Operations – use and understanding of various systems
Programming – designing and implementing new programs
Hacking – breaking into computers and networks, or stopping others from doing so

Knowledge:

Any of the specialties listed in the *Babylon 5 Main Rulebook*:
Alien Language, Alien Life, Astrophysics, Structural Engineering, History, Law, Military, Telepathy, Sector, Star

Systems, or any others created or approved by the Games Master

Technical Specialties (Engineering, Electronic, Mechanical, or Space Travel):

Design – coming up with ideas, creating new innovations and improvements, and planning the creation of new devices

Construction – physically building or creating an object, system, or device

Repair – fixing and maintaining already existing devices

Medical Specialties:

Paramedic – immediate first aid and urgent care; stabilisation; dealing with short-term poisons

Doctor – long-term care of injured, diseased, or poisoned victims

Surgeon – complicated medical procedures

Veterinarian – animal medicine

Spelunker

Available Nationalities: Vegan

Benefit: You are familiar with natural underground passages and enjoy visiting large systems of caves. You have an automatic +3 to your Knowledge skill relating to cave exploration and the caverns near your home, if applicable. You are also extremely comfortable moving through the rough, wet, dark areas of a natural cavern. Any penalties to your movement or combat abilities are halved when you are in a cave environment. For example, if the Games Master determines that the wet and rough underground passage you are exploring results in a –3 to your melee attack roll and –50% to your speed, you would only receive a –2 attack penalty, and your speed would only be reduced by –25%.

In addition to this, you receive a +2 to all Climb, Hide, Jump, and Survival checks in a natural cave environment.

Streetwise

Available Nationalities: Balkan, Indonesian Consortium, Martian, Duranian

Benefit: You come from a city or municipality where life was unusually difficult. In order to survive, you were forced to adapt to living in a low-class level of society. Although you are not necessarily a criminal by nature, you are no stranger to stealing in order to survive. You have little concept of saving money or long-term planning, so even if you do get a job, it is only for a very specific purpose and does not last. Your life is an endless series of struggles.

This feat may only be taken at character creation time. You receive only half the normal amount of starting money available to your class, and may not begin the game with any ranks of Profession, Medical, Pilot, Speak Language (except for those appropriate to your starting region), or Technical. These skills are always considered cross-class skills for you, regardless of your actual class. However, you receive +1 to each of the following skills: Bluff, Escape Artist, Hide, Pick Pocket, and Search. These skills are always considered class skills for you, no matter what class you take.

Strong Swimmer

Available Nationalities: Orion 3

You come from an island or other area where swimming is not just a pastime but a simple necessity of life. Because of your years of practice and study, you can swim, dive, and work underwater better than most. You receive a +2 bonus to all Swim checks. In addition, if you make your Swim check during any given round, you can move one-third of your speed as a move-equivalent action and two-thirds of your speed as a full round action. Because you can hold your breath better than most, you do not begin accumulating –1 cumulative penalties to your Swim check while underwater until two rounds after you become submerged. Finally, your Swim check penalty for weight is –1 per 6 pounds of gear, not –1 per 5 pounds of gear.

Stubborn

Available Nationalities: Scottish

Benefit: You do not give up easily. When you fail at any die roll and have an opportunity to make the same attempt again, you do so at a +1 bonus on each retry. This is not a cumulative bonus, but applies only once. You do not earn this bonus if you take 10 or take 20 on any of the attempts. This feat does not give you the ability to make a second attempt on skill checks that normally do not permit one.

Surgeon's Touch

Available Nationalities: Baltic

Benefit: You have an uncanny ability to learn complicated medical procedures and put them into practice. You receive a +3 to your Medical skill when performing operations with the assistance of at least two other doctors in a properly outfitted hospital or Medlab, provided you have the appropriate level of training to accomplish the task. You also receive a +2 bonus to Medical checks involving long-term care and a +1 to all other Medical checks, provided they deal with the care of a member of the race you are most familiar with.

Team Player

Available Nationalities: Polish

Benefit: You work well with others, especially those with whom you are familiar. You may or may not be a leader, but your follower skills are outstanding. You receive a +2 competence bonus to any of the following skills whenever they involve team efforts in some way: Computer Use, Gather Information, Medical, Perform, Profession, Survival, and Technical.

To qualify for the benefit, at least two others must be assisting or working with you, and all must have at least one rank in the appropriate skill. The Team Player bonus stacks with any other group assistance benefits, but cannot be combined with a similar bonus from another player with the same feat.

Trader

Available Nationalities: Chilean

Benefit: You have a natural affinity for trading, and given the proper motivation, you can negotiate the sale of iceboxes to Eskimos. You receive a +2 bonus to your Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks where they relate to buying, selling, or haggling over prices. In addition, you suffer only half the normal effects of a botched roll or critical failure in such circumstances.

Ultraviolet Tolerant

Available Nationalities: Duranian

Benefit: You come from a world where ultraviolet radiation is so common and intense that genetic adaptations have altered your body chemistry somewhat. You are either born with this alteration or you aren't, so obviously, you may only take this feat at character creation. In any situation where blue light predominates, thereby making colours difficult to judge, you can subtly shift your perception towards the violet spectrum. This allows you to see colours normally. This ability can be used as a free action.

In addition to this, your eyes and skin are resistant to the effects of ultraviolet radiation. In any conditions where the sun can cause damage to your skin, such as sunburn or skin poisoning, you receive a +2 to any related Fortitude saving throws. Your eyes are also capable of standing up to bright light better than a normal human's, so you receive a +2 bonus on any save to avoid being blinded or dazed.

Unflappable

Available Nationalities: English

Benefit: You are very difficult to surprise, shock, or faze. You receive a +2 to all Concentration checks. In addition, when you fail any Concentration check, you can roll again at a -4 penalty. However, if you choose to utilise this ability, you must live with the consequences of the second attempt.

Vehicular Engineer

Available Nationalities: Ukrainian

Benefit: You are a natural when working with vehicles, either modern versions or classics. Glancing at the broken engine of a 2216 Honda Influx ground car, you can tell within minutes that the fuel cell power coupling needs realigning, and given the proper tools you can fix it without access to a shop. You receive a +2 bonus on any Technician, Knowledge, or Professional skill checks that relate to vehicle evaluation, diagnostics, or repairs.

Your skills only apply to vehicles you have seen before or received the proper training for. If you don't know a thing about Narn shuttles, you cannot use your exceptional abilities until you've at least had time to study one. You are, however, a quick learner, picking up such training in only half the time a normal person would.

Wealthy

Available Nationalities: American, Chinese

Benefit: You come from a particularly affluent family or social group and have access to sources of income that others lack. Exactly how much wealth you have and its effect on your character is up to the Games Master. This is a highly dangerous and potentially game-unbalancing feat that the Games Master might choose to disallow in some campaigns.

In general, you have a source of income equal to a typical middle- or high-class job that you receive on a regular basis without having to work. This amount could be fixed or might vary widely, and can come from whatever source is appropriate for someone in your situation. You may also work to earn more money, if you wish, but you could also be a member of the 'idle rich.' You are not a philanthropist, however, and cannot simply give your wealth away without a good reason. With wealth comes responsibility, at least under most circumstances. You may be a highly paid employee of a corporation, for example, sent to Babylon 5 on a long-term mission that requires all expenses to be properly logged. You could also be the wealthy son or daughter of a government official, receiving a weekly allowance that must be used for a purpose your parents approve of. The exact source of your wealth, and the restrictions on its use, will be determined by your background.

You must take this feat at character creation, except under special circumstances. In addition to the above advantages, you begin play with three times as many credits as a standard character of your class. Even a Lurker can begin with this feat - perhaps you are extremely bad with your money, or so lazy you don't care about a real job. You might even be an undercover reporter learning what life is like on the seedy side of town - the hard way!

In rare situations, you might be permitted to select this feat during an ongoing campaign. This could be the result of a reward for excellent service, acquisition of some sort of title, royalties from the sale of an archaeological discovery, or some other circumstances. The Games Master will let you know if this opportunity becomes available.

Xenobiologist

Available Nationalities: Baltic

Benefit: You have received a great deal of training involving alien races and their physiology. You are comfortable around aliens and have no problems dealing with them. During your studies, you have had plenty of opportunities to meet and talk with experts from other races, and frequently know a smattering of their languages and cultures.

When you take this feat, you receive one free Speak Language rank in any one alien language that you could reasonably expect to have encountered during your studies - e.g., a human could easily expect to have met a Narn or Centauri, but not a Vorlon or Dilgar. You also receive +1 to each of the following skills when dealing with any alien species your race is familiar with: Diplomacy, Knowledge, Medical, and any Telepathic skill.



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