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The Minbari Federation Fact Book



**Written By
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*When all the stars are falling down
Into the sea and on the ground,
And angry voices carry on the wind,
A beam of light will fill your head
And you'll remember what's been said
By all the good men this world's ever known.
Another man is what you'll see,
Who looks like you and looks like me,
And yet somehow he will not feel the same,
His life caught up in misery, he doesn't think
like you and me,
'Cause he can't see what you and I can see.*

--- Mike Pinder

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Fact Book

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Foreword

Of all the races in the universe of Babylon 5, none save perhaps the Vorlons are more enigmatic and mysterious than the Minbari. Possessing a culture steeped in tradition and dogma, the Minbari closely resemble humans but are very evidently not human. They are stronger, faster, and possess acute senses that humanity can only begin to understand. They are deeply spiritual but feel no need to share or even explain their beliefs to others. They gave great respect for their elders and accept the rule of a single council even on worlds far from their own territory. Their ways are unfathomable, even to some of their own kind, yet none dare question their motives. At least, none dare question them openly.

Never was this more evident than at the Battle of the Line in the year 2247. Earth's last defenders held out a thin line of hope and starships against the encroachment of an overwhelming Minbari battle fleet. The Earth/Minbari War had begun with a misunderstanding and seemed destined to end with the complete destruction of the human race. As one determined but hopelessly outnumbered Earth ship after another fell to the Minbari's technologically superior firepower, all seemed lost. Then, for no explainable reason, the Minbari surrendered and withdrew. There were to be no terms, no reparations for the losses of the war, but the Minbari pulled back just short of wiping out humanity. They ceased fire and stopped the advance on the very eve of their victory.

This kind of behaviour, strong actions without any sort of explanation or excuses, is very typically Minbari. Holding themselves to be quietly superior to all other races, they are known to be the most advanced race in the galaxy, again not counting the Vorlons. While the latter race shrouds itself in secrecy and is never visible for long, the Minbari do not bother to hide from prying eyes. They are adept at hiding in plain sight, with far more to their culture and traditions than could ever be seen by outsiders without invitation. For those few with the ability to learn more about the Minbari, the race has many secrets.

What little is known to other races about the Minbari is a tantalising assortment of minor facts that hint at something deeper but reveal very little of it. The Minbari are physically strong and quite languid in their movements. They have no hair on their heads or bodies, though facial hair sometimes occurs in older males. The back part of their skulls extends through their epidermis into a bone crest that adorns and protects the back of their heads. Patterns of colour, generally a pale blue, cover the scalp and usually run from the brow all the way back to this skeletal ridge. As with human fingerprints, no two skull

crests or scalp patterns are exactly alike and seem to be as identifying a mark among Minbari as their own faces.

From what the Minbari will tell openly about their culture, they are separated racially into three castes. These divisions are the Warrior, Worker, and Religious Castes, and all Minbari belong to one of them as far as outsiders can tell. Most contact between the Minbari and other races occurs through the most open of these castes, the Religious. The Worker Caste is primarily concerned with building and maintaining the planets of the Minbari Federation, while the Warrior Caste is unapproachable in their role as the race's elite soldiers and guardians.

It is through the Religious Caste that other races in the galaxy get their sporadic knowledge of the Minbari, most of which centres around the most sacred of their beliefs and the centre of their cultural identity- Valen. It is through this single entity that most of the Minbari way of life apparently exists. It was he that formed the castes, he that put forth their beliefs in the universe around them, and it was Valen that set them on the path they have taken through the last thousand years. Little is known of Valen, but he is the most sacred member of their religious belief system and revered by their entire race.

He is worshipped by the Minbari on all of their colonies and in the crystal cities on their homeworld of Minbar. Few have seen the majesty of these scintillating works of civic art, but when the normally reserved Minbari speak of these edifices, even they are moved to awe. The marvels of engineering that the race must be capable of to make habitable dwellings out of crystalline formations can only be imagined, but it is well known that their mastery of every kind of science exceeds the accomplishments of other races. To live in such marvellous structures, surrounded by the beauty of their achievements, there can be little wonder why the Minbari consider themselves so far evolved from others.

There are those among the Minbari that do not hold the belief that they are superior to every other form of life in the galaxy. These Minbari, again mostly of the Religious Caste, have great curiosity about the galaxy and what else it might offer to those who would seek contact outside their own people. It is through them that other races know these things about the Minbari and it is in their memory that this document is dedicated. May those who would have understanding of the Minbari find what they seek in these pages.

There is a Vorlon saying; Understanding is a three edged sword. There can perhaps be no better foreword to this document than the Minbari corollary to that phrase. Understanding may be a three edged sword, but its blade can cut only ignorance.

Minbari in the Babylon 5 d20 Roleplaying Game

All Minbari characters share the following racial traits unless otherwise noted in the sub-races section of this sourcebook. These traits are explored in greater detail in the relevant sections of this text, but they are summarised below.

Minbari Racial Traits

- ☞ +2 Strength, -2 Charisma: Minbari seem almost supernaturally strong for their light build, but have little regard or compassion for other races.
- ☞ All Minbari are of medium size.
- ☞ Minbari have a base speed of 30 feet.
- ☞ Minbari are extremely quick and can react faster than most other races. They gain a +2 bonus to all Initiative checks.
- ☞ Extremely resilient – it takes a lot to kill a Minbari and so long as they still draw breath, they will carry on with their assigned tasks no matter what befalls them. Minbari gain Great Fortitude as a bonus feat.

- ☞ All Minbari belong to one of the three castes that form their society. Players must choose to belong to either the worker, warrior or religious caste. A Minbari character's choice of caste determines which additional racial trait he or she possesses.
- ☞ Religious Caste: Members of the religious caste are extremely knowledgeable, having spent much of their infancy and adolescence learning from the collected wisdom of their entire race. They gain a +2 racial bonus to all Knowledge checks.
- ☞ Warrior Caste: The Minbari warrior caste is trained to fight – all members are proficient with all non-exotic weapons and may pick one as a favoured weapon. Whenever using their favoured weapon, the Minbari gain a +1 racial bonus to their attack rolls.
- ☞ Worker Caste: Members of the worker caste have many diverse skills and trades. They gain a +2 racial bonus to all Craft and Profession checks.
- ☞ Automatic languages: Dark, grey and light Minbari, and English.
- ☞ Favoured Class: Diplomat (religious caste), Officer (warrior caste), Scientist (worker caste). A multiclass Minbari's favoured class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

Ambassador Sinclair,

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towards that end. There is much you need to know, and tragically little time to teach it all to you.

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humanity's only hope is to stand beside the Minbari and the Vorlons against the darkness. If this union does not take place, each will be swept aside by a horror you do not dare imagine. Yes, even the Vorlons are at risk, but I cannot tell you much about them you do not already know. The Minbari, well... I can tell you a lot more about them.

Day a□

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one expects you to face the gathering shadows in ignorance, Jeffrey Sinclair. Just remember what the Vorlons say about truth and that swords can cut very deeply.

Sincerely,

A friend

Minbari

Biology

In many ways, the Minbari share major characteristics with most of the known sentient races in the galaxy. They are bipedal, have lateral symmetry, and possess the typical five senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. They are capable of independent reasoning, sexual reproduction, and emotive as well as logical communication. Minbari have cultural development and a genetic predisposition towards higher learning. They have a capacity for violence when provoked and possess instinctual drives with regards to food, shelter, and expansion of territory.

Minbari are also quite different from other races. Their quiet introspection sets them apart socially, but their physical differences are also quite striking. Of all the known races in the galaxy, only the Brakiri and the Dilgar resemble humans as closely, yet the Minbari are markedly not human. They possess great strength and endurance, with a measurably longer lifespan and a distinctly 'alien' cast to their features. They have smaller ears set much farther down on their heads and a slight ridge under the skin along their brows. Their most notable difference, their skull crest, is what immediately distinguishes them from other sentient species.

To understand the Minbari, it is important to start with the most basic information about them; any study of the race should begin with a look at their biology. By learning about the anatomy, genetic structure, biological factors, and physical characteristics, one can discover a great deal about how the Minbari became the race they are at

present. Senses, life cycle, and even basic diet all provide information about the people of Minbar, information that can prove valuable to anyone seeking greater understanding of the Minbari and their way of life.

Minbari Anatomy

From the records of Doctor Stephen Franklin, Bethesda Dome; October 27, 2046.

It has not been an easy feat, but we have finally received a Minbari corpse from the front lines of the war. EarthForce seems to think a detailed autopsy will provide some clues to more efficient ways to deal with these powerful enemies, but there are no guarantees. The Minbari seem determined to wipe us out of the galaxy and all of us need to do our part to ensure the survival of humanity, but I have some reservations about this work. I became a doctor to save lives, not find more efficient ways to terminate them.

Still, anatomy is not inherently a destructive science and the information we learn from a dissection may prove valuable for medical reasons as well. I have heard of other projects here at Bethesda, ones concerning the study of viral and toxic agents against living Minbari, but I have not found any evidence of these experiments yet. I do not want to think that we have become so desperate in our efforts to save our existence that we would abandon everything that makes us human. Until I see proof of this for myself, I am going to continue my work as a doctor and proceed with the ordered autopsy. I can only pray that this conflict ends before the things we learn can be put to ill use.

Ambassador Sinclair,

This is your first lesson and in many ways, the most important. Only by understanding the Minbari through the bodies they experience the universe through can you hope to know them. The information you hold comes from many different places, including some sources that do not even know they have provided it. I do not suggest you advertise what you will soon know to your superiors back on Earth. While some of these details are known by them, EarthGov would not appreciate knowing that some of their own guarded data has found its way into your hands.

As you might be starting to suspect, your position on Minbar is not for Earth's benefit, not directly at least. You have an obligation to a much higher calling and in pursuit of that end, no source of information will be left untapped. Any reservations you may have about these methods will disappear soon enough. Just accept that you have resources you do not know yet; everything you need will be provided. Besides, some of it comes from a very reliable source, one you are sure to recognize and will have no reason to doubt.

Sincerely,
A Friend

Surface Anatomy

The Minbari have a racially pale complexion that rarely bears any kind of marks or pigmentation save for the pattern of color that extends from their skull ridge over their scalps. Minbari skin does not tan or burn when exposed to ultraviolet radiation. Scars do not form easily in Minbari flesh which, while no more resilient to injury or resistant to penetration than other soft-skinned races, almost always repairs damage without warping, permanent ligature marks, or overt bruising. Contusions created by blunt trauma rarely last more than a few hours on Minbari skin, with all but the most severe blood deposits in the subdermal layer disappearing in less than 24 hours.

The bone ridge is one of the Minbari race's most prominent features and forms a distinctive shape that bears subtle variations for each specimen. This ridge is a permanent part of the Minbari's occipital skull plate and its growth continues throughout his or her lifespan. As it forms, the ridge extends through the flesh of the scalp and fuses the skull's parietal plates together along its growth axis. The ridge breaks the surface of the scalp during a Minbari's late infancy period and becomes visible as a crest of new bone formation. By the time the crest reaches its typical size of 12 to 18 horizontal centimeters by 40 to 45 orbital centimeters across the back of the skull, it often possesses a single spire that extends forward far enough to connect with the coronal suture of the frontal plate.

Numerous pockets and calcium formations can exist within a single skull crest, with their shape, general health, and size serving as indicators of the Minbari's prior growth conditions and current medical status. Malnutrition, previous fractures and head trauma, and congenital traits can all be derived from a detailed examination of a Minbari's head crest. Maintaining its healthy appearance and limited sculpting and polishing are all part of a Minbari's daily grooming regimen.

The scalp pattern of skin pigmentation that extends from the skull ridge is similarly unique among different members of the race. Most often a pale blue, these markings occur as a result of excess cerebral fluids exuding to the surface of the scalp during the shifting of parietal lobes as the skull crest forms. Slight variations in color and shape are common, with the most extreme cases of these resulting in patterns of purple or indigo or a spreading of the marks across a much wider area of the scalp. Careful maintenance during the formation of these scalp patterns can provide a slight modification to their natural progress, but this is not often performed. Most Minbari are content to allow their scalp patterns to develop in whatever shapes they naturally form. Generally, altering scalp patterns only occurs in those rare instances when their development would become unsightly or hazardous to the Minbari's health.

Minbari gender is fairly standard for mammalian humanoids. The race is split into two distinct gender types- male and female. Males are demarcated by a slightly heavier musculature, a denser bone structure, and the possession of an external set of genitalia. Females are consequently lighter of build in both muscle and bone structure, have a lower overall body mass, and possess both mammary glands and internal genitalia. The female of the Minbari species has a slightly larger capacity for brain size and weight, while the male can generate larger muscle and nervous system gland secretions.

Minbari have a variable height and weight range that stems from numerous factors. Genetic predisposition plays a major role in final body shape and mass, but diet, physical exercise, and environment can also contribute. The exact ranges are roughly the same as for humans raised in an Earth-type atmosphere with exposure to one standard G of gravity, though there is some numerical dissimilitude. See the attached chart for a current chart of height and weight ratios for the male and female of the Minbari species.

Minbari Characters – Height and Weight

Minbari characters can have any chosen height or weight within the guidelines of this chart, though exceptions may exist. Regardless of the height and weight of a given character, all Minbari are considered Medium sized characters. If a random height and weight are desired for a given character, roll the indicated dice and add the resulting height modifier directly to the listed base height value. The Weight modifier is multiplied by the height modifier and the resulting number added to the base weight for the character's final mass.

Race	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Minbari, male	5', 4'	+2d6	130 lb.	x (2d4) lb.
Minbari, female	4', 10'	+2d6	110 lb.	x (2d4) lb.



Internal Anatomy

Continuing the examination of the Minbari inward, the epidermis gives way to the musculature layer of the body. Minbari muscles account for fully half of their total body weight and come in the same three types common to mammalian humanoid physiology- voluntary skeletal muscles, involuntary smooth muscles, and involuntary cardiac muscles. Compared to humans, there are larger ratios of each of these three groups in a Minbari body, though the lighter internal weight and volume of these structures makes up for their greater numbers.

The voluntary muscles of the Minbari skeleton have extraordinary resiliency and tensile strength. The nerve stimulus that causes contraction and relaxation of the voluntary muscles occurs faster and with greater compression than human muscles, explaining in part the strength difference between the two species. This level of variation between Minbari and humans is slight but measurable, with the same volume of muscle in the former capable of exerting 2.25% greater overall force against a static object than the latter. The drastic level of difference observed during field studies is not completely based on

muscle variations, but the source of the Minbari's great strength begins with their musculature.

Voluntary skeletal muscles in the Minbari are a form of braided cord as opposed to the straight cord structure of human muscles. When one of these 630 braided cord muscles receives a nerve impulse signal to contract, the structure constricts both in length and around itself, causing a quicker, stronger response to the command. Conversely, the cessation of the signal causes the muscle to relax faster as the contraction essentially happens in half the time a human muscle takes. This also explains a great deal about the Minbari's improved reaction time, though other anatomical differences also factor into this.

Soft muscle tissues in the Minbari are also stronger, as even smooth muscle groups such as the intestines, stomach, and other digestive organs have a braided structure that responds faster and with greater efficiency than comparable human muscles. This affects Minbari digestion, assimilation of nutrients, and blood flow. Muscles responsible for the size and function of arteries throughout the Minbari body and the chambers of the heart control and regulate the circulatory and respiratory systems with exacting precision.



All Minbari have the capacity to control their autonomic functions at an in-depth level. Minbari nervous systems are nearly twice as well developed as human nerves and have formative clusters through their bodies that cover half again the same physical distance. These longer nerve fibres have numerous 'accelerator' nodes that boost signals travelling along them to up to 720 feet per second, much faster than the 390 feet per second that muscle position impulses travel in the human body. Minbari accelerator nerve nodes are the other major factor in their improved response time and reaction speed.

Minbari bones are more complex than the human skeletal structure. Where as human bones develop as a series of layers during the formative years of their lives, Minbari bones benefit from an asymmetrical formation rate that creates multiple growth sections overlapping each other like layers of interwoven bark around a central solid core tree. This structure allows for conduits of marrow to serve their typical function without causing the cylindrical channels that can weaken human bones against impact and other trauma. In the long bone, the main length of the bone column is a patchwork of these multiple sections that join in fused calcium collars to the epiphysis ends. In more specialised bone structures, the multiple layers form into the needed shapes without addition structural supports.

Minbari musculature is joined to their skeletons and internally with itself in the normal fashion of tendons and ligaments. These filament bundles are both supra-dense and lighter than comparable structures in the human body and are more deeply anchored because of the special formation patterns of Minbari muscles and bones. These deeper anchoring points and stronger lateral resistance provide the other half of the equation that explains a Minbari's great strength.

The Minbari Brain

In many ways, the brain of a Minbari is very similar to that of a human. Both are made of the same neuron and neuralgia cells. Both have the same ratios and patterns of astrocytes, oligodendroglia and ependymal cells performing the same transmissive and protective functions. Both are housed in a specialised bone structure called the cranium and both are protected in a multiple layer section of meninges membranes. Both connect to the rest of the body through a spinal cord that carries data to

the body's nervous system and both require cerebrospinal fluid created by multiple choroid plexus glands to function properly.

Here, the similarity ends. While the majority of the Minbari brain mass is set aside for the same functions as the human brain, there are numerous differences in efficiency and divisions of synaptic labour. Minbari brain tissue is divided into five types of lobes, one more than the human brain. In addition to occipital, temporal, frontal, and parietal lobes, the Minbari brain possesses three peristaltic lobes that act as a form in internal monitor for brain health and serve as valves for synaptic and cerebrospinal fluids. The peristaltic lobes ensure that blockages are dealt with through increased flow pressure and that areas of the brain that require healing are provided with the chemicals they need.

This is another key difference between Minbari and human brains; Minbari brain cells, regardless of their type, have a specialised ability to heal themselves given time and nutritive energy. Even severe head trauma can be overcome with enough time and recovery attention. Pressure cannot build up for long inside a Minbari cranium as the peristaltic lobes sense and shunt fluid build-ups away from vital areas. Damaged cells are held in place through fluid dynamics and given attention until they resume their normal function.

The other four lobes, the sensory lobes that provide numerous sensory data from external and internal stimulus, have a level of interconnectivity not found in any other sentient race, suggesting that each of a Minbari's senses are inextricably linked in a network of combined

signals. While this matter is discussed in greater detail in the Senses section below, that data has its source in the study of these lobes and their multiple parallel synapse pathways. Unlike many other races, the fact that Minbari brain cells rarely degrade and do not become less viable over time explains the largely unimpaired sensory acuity of even advanced age Minbari near the end of their life cycles.

An area of special note in the Minbari brain is the altered state of their limbic systems compared with a human brain model. Instead of being unilaterally better developed, only certain parts of the limbic mass of the Minbari brain are more efficient while others have less efficient formation resulting in an inferior level of ability in those structures. The more developed parts of the Minbari limbic system are the amygdala and the hippocampus. As these are the centres for aggressive behaviour and the processing of new information into the brain, neither of these are surprising in their greater efficiency.

The hypothalamus and thalamus are also part of the limbic system with the latter being shared by other areas of the brain. In the Minbari, these are slightly less advanced in a structural sense, possibly indicating a reduced capacity for emotion or a hindered ability to swiftly change emotional states. There is a less controlled method of generating the chemical signals that link memory to emotion occurring in this area of the brain, suggesting that the Minbari may have a harder time divorcing long term memory retrieval from emotional contexts.

Minbari Lore - Emotions

As this text indicates, Minbari are not as adept as humans at separating their emotions from their memories. This can lead to their becoming extremely emotional about events that happened months or years in the past. While more logical Minbari practice meditations that allow them to soothe this tendency in their race, others thrive on the emotional sensations of their remembered history. This is especially common among the Minbari of the Warrior Caste, particularly those who have served on the front lines in their race's few but brutal conflicts. More than ten years have passed since the Earth/Minbari War, but many of the soldiers who lived through that struggle can still feel the flush of life or death combat and the sheer hatred that gripped their hearts back then.

It is said among the Minbari that when one of the loves, they love forever. When they hate, their hatred is eternal. When they grieve, their sorrow will never ease. While this level of intensity can be a great strength, it can also be a terrible burden. Some Minbari, such as the previously

mentioned soldiers of the Warrior Caste, can never left go of a powerful emotion once they experience it. For them, the shadow of that overwhelming emotional state will forever guide their actions and may even provoke them to try and relive it whenever they can.

General Biology

The Minbari have a fairly controlled range of biological and environmental factors on their homeworld and they strive to duplicate these conditions in their colonies and on their vessels. In many ways, the bodies of the Minbari have been shaped by these preferences and their ability to control exactly how their surroundings interact with them. From temperature ranges to gravity tolerances, the physiology of the Minbari is just as dependent on these facets of their existence as they are on the need for sustenance and respiration. No study of Minbari anatomy would be complete without a look at the factors that define how it develops and the conditions in which it thrives.

The Minbari body presumably operates at its most efficient when exposed to the atmospheric and environmental conditions of the Minbar homeworld. This is not surprising, considering the race was fully developed to their present stage of evolution before they ventured from it to other planets in their system and beyond. Still, having these values as a logical benchmark, it is possible to reconstruct these facts about Minbar by reverse engineering from the tolerances and preferences of the Minbari people.

Minbari physiology shows perfect biological homeostasis at 19 degrees Celsius. Skin lividity and proper respiration occur at 730 torr or .96 of one atmosphere. Humidity is not a primary concern, as the epidermis retains normal resistance and temperature mitigation at extremes between .005 grams per cubic meter and 85 grams per cubic meter. Minbari body temperature is 96.8 degrees Celsius, a thermal point they can regulate and hold apparently at will through their improved ability to control autonomic functions. Minbari body temperatures are less prone to variations from exothermic reactions within their survivable limits of -20 and +47 degrees Celsius, maintaining their 96.8 degree standard until exposure to the upper and lower 5% of these extremes.

Minbari require consumable energy and gaseous resources in the same manner as humans, but their ranges of tolerance are different. A Minbari can survive with a minimum of 750 calories of fuel each day, with death by starvation setting in after 27 standard days as opposed to the 22 standard days a human can last without food. Water is also less of an issue for the Minbari, though not as drastically. A Minbari can endure 9 days without fluid

intake compared with the human average of 7.5 days. In both of these cases, the increases time duration seems to be mostly an endurance limit as irreparable damage sets in roughly the same amount of time. Minbari do however recover through rehydration and/or reintroduction of nutrients faster than a human in a comparable state of deprivation.

The optimum mix of gases for Minbari respiration is 77% nitrogen, 22% oxygen, and a 1% mix of trace elements. While they are not essential to sustain Minbari life, these trace gases are found in the atmosphere of Minbar and have ingrained themselves as part of the respiration cycle. One gas in specific, xenon, seems to be in a higher abundance than the others and its status as a neuro-protector may explain the Minbari's self-repairing cerebral structure. Xenon deprivation will not retard this facility in the Minbari, but long term removal of xenon from their breathing medium might have detrimental neurological effects.

Gravitational tolerances for the Minbari are also slightly different than those of humans. While humans prefer exposure to 1 G and their biology has developed to work most efficiently at that level, the Minbari perform at their circulatory and digestive best under a .97 G exposure. This



holds with the .96 atmosphere of pressure noted above. There is an anomaly between the stronger muscle and bone structures of the Minbari body and the supposition that they evolved in a .97 G environment.

Sensory Capacity

A careful study of the sensory organs of the Minbari has revealed a great deal about the way they experience the world around them. In almost every case, the acuity of Minbari senses is slightly higher than the average capability of comparable human abilities without exhibiting any drastic differences. Vision, hearing, smell, touch, and taste capacities are somewhat shifted in their ranges, but the width of that range is not significantly greater save in the avenues mentioned below.

Minbari sight depends on a paired ocular system with self focusing and biangulation capabilities. Depth perception is on par with human ability, while motion sensitivity is slightly greater. The major difference between Minbari and human sight lies in the range of visible colours. Minbari eyes have the capability to see in the visible light electromagnetic spectrum between 275 nanometres (slightly into ultraviolet) and 725 nanometres (slightly into infrared). This occurs as a tinge of both extremes around material objects and a very slight trail that follows motion from the edges of the Minbari's peripheral vision. While humans might find this corona effect distracting, Minbari get used to the effect over time and by the point of sentient maturity, they are no longer impaired by it.

Minbari hearing is extremely acute, likely an evolutionary compensation for their small external auditory structures and narrow ear canals. The range of Minbari hearing is a slight improvement over human hearing in both frequency and intensity, though the latter could be considered a vulnerability. Minbari can hear sounds ranging between 5 and 21,500 hertz within a dynamic span of 130 decibels. While a human can only hear between 20 to 20,000 hertz in a 120 decibel range, damage to the human inner ear structure occurs at 90 hertz. In the Minbari ear, damage begins at 80 hertz.

The Minbari olfactory sense occurs through a network of 120 million receptor cells along the walls of the nasal cavity, with several specialised areas dedicated to different types of scent triggers. This is a volume improvement over the 100 million cells in the human nose, but the specialised nature of the Minbari cells makes the actual perception range much closer to human olfactory capability than the raw numbers would indicate. Minbari mitral cell production is much greater than human production,

allowing for a much longer period of exposure to a single odour before the artificial ‘scent blinding’ reflex occurs.

Minbari tactile responses are a complex interaction of nerve clusters and filia layers in the epidermis and deep tissues, much the same as the same sense in the human body. The difference between the two comes in both sensitivity and tolerance. Five types of transducers generate Minbari touch impulses. They possess the same four humans do-mechanoreceptors, nociceptors, visceral receptors, and thermoreceptors. These allow Minbari to feel pressure, pain, internal changes, and temperature within a wider spectrum of sensation, but the major difference between Minbari and human tactical senses rests with the fifth type of transducer, a cell structure unique to the Minbari-mnmoreceptors.

Mnmoreceptors are a specialised form of cell that connects thin nerve fibres between the major parts of the Minbari’s body, including the skin and other sensory organs, to the memory centres of the brain. Here, a chemical process allows the Minbari to mitigate repeated sensory effects, permitting them to resist the effects of overwhelming pain or disorientation resulting from sources that the Minbari has been exposed to on previous occasions. Mnmoreceptors also allow Minbari to remember a past experience through both mental imagery and tactile sensation, resulting in the ability to essentially relive prior events.

In many ways, the one sense both Minbari and humans have the most in common with is taste. Human and Minbari tongues are nearly identical, with virtually the same construction of taste buds as collections of taste sense receptors in bundles of fifty to one hundred cells each. These cells run the same gamut of sensations, from salty to umami impulses. As with some predatory animals, the umami cells in a Minbari’s taste buds comprise the only difference in their taste sensory range; Minbari experience a taste sensation when their bodies secrete adrenaline or other excitatory chemicals.

The neurological centres in the Minbari brain that control touch, taste, and smell are as interlinked as a human’s latter two senses, resulting in their attributing experiences in each of the three as a minor relation to the other two. In humans, this phenomenon exhibits itself as taste being dependent on smell, but the similar effect is more complicated for Minbari. To them, taste is a product of smell and texture, with two comestibles of the same chemical makeup having considerably different tastes depending on their consistency and shape.

Minbari Lore – Senses

Minbari experience the world around them in an expanded way compared to humans, with every colour slightly brighter and every sound subtly more intense. While this gives them a perceptual range greater than most other races, it does not provide as great an advantage as one might think. The first drawback is that with increased sensitivity comes increased vulnerability. Bright lights are more blinding, loud sounds are more deafening, and rancid smells are more nauseating. The second drawback is that over time, the Minbari learn instinctively to overcome their own sensory superiority for self-protection, partially becoming immune to their own potential.

Even though Minbari do not receive the wide range of benefits their senses could offer, they do exist in a world of perception all to themselves. Everything they see is surrounded by a dim halo of ultraviolet and infrared energy too faint to make out clearly but certainly visible. Sounds resonate with a unique clarity and scents are considerably more elaborate to experience. Their skin is sensitive to the slightest touch and every taste is a banquet of complex nuances. Most Minbari deal with this overstimulation by wearing simple, sheer clothes and avoiding an overabundance of bright colours and loud noises.

Optional Rule: Minbari characters suffer a -1 inherent penalty to saving throws against sensory effects that would disorient or overwhelm them and attacks forms that directly target their sensory organs. Anything that successfully affects them in this manner has its duration increased by one round, two rounds if the saving throw fails. Effects that qualify for this vulnerability include but are not limited to flash grenades, tear gas, high frequency sound weapons, or nauseating odours.

Life Cycle

The Minbari have a complex life cycle that mirrors in many ways the development model of humans. From reproduction and infancy to early growth patterns, adolescence, adult homeostasis, and the effects of advanced age, Minbari undergo many of the same biological factors and respond to them similarly. There are several minor differences, but on the whole, the Minbari may have the most in common with human development than any other sentient race in the galaxy.

The beginning of the Minbari life cycle is a typical example of mammalian conception and gestation. Fetal Minbari are carried by the female of the species with a gestation time of ten months. During this time, which is divided into three trimesters of roughly 100 days in length, the fetus undergoes developmental growth that proceeds

from multi-celled cluster to base humanoid form to mature infant. Sexual characteristics become evident in fetal Minbari at twelve weeks and physical viability can occur as early as thirty weeks but is not commonly developed until thirty five weeks. Induced labour is rarely performed even in cases of full viability because of a prevailing cultural belief in natural child birth.

Once born, Minbari infants are in possession of their senses but are otherwise helpless and without all but the crudest motor functions. Digestion is simple at this stage, with a complete dependency on liquid foods and a preference for breast milk. As with humans, the infant's immune system is specialised to interact with chemicals found in breast milk and resistance to disease and infection rises sharply as long as it is available for consumption.

Minbari infant develop at a slightly lower rate during early stages than humans, though there is a notable acceleration after a certain point. The complexity of Minbari senses and brain functions takes longer for an infant to integrate, resulting in a larger period of time between developmental milestones. Minbari infants take four to five months to learn to roll from stomach to back and as many as eight months to begin exhibiting grasping and awareness behaviours. Most Minbari infants reach the one year development milestone set by humans in fourteen to fifteen months.

At this point, the growth cycle begins to swing towards acceleration. Cognitive functions develop in a Minbari infant faster than in a human one, with voice recognition and limited mimicry by sixteen weeks. An important facet of Minbari psychology is linked to the fact that they do not instinctively have an abandonment reflex. Objects and people that leave a Minbari infant's line of sight are not assumed automatically to be gone permanently, though the loss can be disorienting. As such, Minbari can develop self-sufficiency at a young age and simultaneously consider these things around them to be permanent even when they cannot be immediately perceived. This leads to both a strong sense of self motivation and a desire to become part of a perceptual community.

Language skills do not take as long to develop in Minbari infants. Basic character recognition and auditory connections between sounds and concepts begins within the first two years of life, with most Minbari children gaining basic fluency in their first language by the end of their third year. Spoken skills occur first, but written ability comes quickly thereafter. Most four year old Minbari can write complete, if basic, sentences and form their own linguistic concepts without exterior stimulus.

The first ten years of a Minbari's life are the most directly formative in terms of early bone structure, muscle mass, and distribution of growth hormones. By the time puberty occurs in a Minbari, most of the ground work for it has



Minbari Characters - Ageing Effects

Use the following tables to determine the age and ageing effects of Minbari characters. Roll the variable values listed in each table and add it to either the base character age of an adult Minbari or the venerable age listed (185) to determine the character's maximum lifespan. Games Masters may wish to make this second roll privately, keeping the final result secret.

Race and Gender	Base Age*	Warrior Caste	Religious Caste	Worker Caste
Minbari Female	18	+3d10	+6d10	+2d10
Minbari Male	16	+5d6	+5d12	+5d4

* Casteless characters (see the Psychology and Sociology chapter for information on the Casteless) use the Worker Caste age variable but begin with a base age of 14.

Race	Adulthood	Middle Age*	Old**	Venerable#	Maximum Age
Minbari	19	60	120	150	+3d10

* -1 to Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity; +1 to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma.

** -1 to Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity; +1 to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma.

-1 to Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity; +1 to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma.

All of these effects are cumulative, though no ability score can be reduced below 3. If a loss from these adjustments would reduce Strength or Dexterity to 2 or less, the character becomes immobile and must receive external assistance to move. If an ageing modification would reduce Constitution to 2 or less, the character dies of natural causes 1d12 months into the current year.

been laid by the end of the ninth year for females and the tenth for males. The secretion of growth hormones at the onset of puberty occurs at a slow rate after six to eight years of life, with a sharp increase around the thirteen to fourteenth year. Females enter this period of rapid physical advancement slightly sooner than men, but not as markedly faster as with human females.

Puberty is a less than three-year process for the Minbari, as opposed to the six to eight year span of time human puberty can take. This rapid puberty is a biological mystery as it rests at odds with the other facets of their physiological development. It is possible that the faster rate of puberty may be an evolutionary marker left over from a time when the Minbari had a more violent environment and required sexual maturity in a shorter amount of time. The practical effects of this quicker puberty are a more violent set of behaviour changes and sometimes-drastic physical changes. Minbari children usually adopt their fully mature adult appearance and internal functionality by the age of nineteen.

Sexual reproduction is possible with Minbari by as early as the twelfth year of life, but societal and other factors keep this from occurring in all but extreme circumstances. Fetal and infant mortality rates for the Minbari are extremely low, with biological imperatives in the female anatomy carrying an infant to successful term with almost atavistic efficiency. Minbari have a fetal mortality rate of 1.1-1.2 per 1000 at the twentieth week of gestation and less than .5

per 1000 after the thirtieth week. Infant mortality rates are higher, though still far below human normal. Fewer than two infants die from physiological failure or other natural causes in every 1000 live births. Some of this advantage may be attributable to the superior medical technology of the Minbari.

Minbari biology is compatible with other mammalian lifeforms on a limited level, but conception is not possible beyond a range of similarities shared with only three other species. It is theoretically possible that the Minbari could breed with humans, the Brakiri, and the Dilgar, though a mating of this kind is not at all likely. Fetal mortality would also be quite high, with the chances of a viable offspring begin highest with a human as one parent. Even so, the possibility of a crossbreeding is remote and given the current isolationist policies of the Minbari towards other species, borders on negligible.

Aging effects do not begin to show in the Minbari until the ninetieth year of life, with females exhibiting a resistance to these effects until their reach 95 to 100 years of age. Biological resiliency and their brain's ability to heal its own damage results in the Minbari not reaching a point of death by old age until 200 to 225 years. This longevity, roughly twice the lifespan of humans, is not entirely without flaws and most Minbari are no longer fully coherent of physically self-transportive after they reach 185 years of age. Irreparable muscle degradation sets in after 150 years and cognitive functions experience

loss after 170 years of age. Minbari stay sexually mature for 100 to 120 years, with males approaching the end of that range more often than females.

Minbari beginning to suffer the effects of ageing show it in their skin and skeletal structure, though not to the same degree as humans. Minbari do not experience the 'hunch' phenomenon of ageing, nor does their epidermis lose more than 15% of its elasticity during the ageing process. One notable sign of advanced age for the Minbari is a change in the pigmentation of their skin. Minbari skin becomes vaguely translucent as they age, with specimens approaching the end of their lifespan showing a significant amount of their upper circulatory system as indistinct patterns in their considerably paler flesh.

The most significant sign of ageing appears over the scalp of a Minbari and in their skull crest. The crest becomes more brittle at its extremities and continues to grow as a Minbari ages. In truly advanced cases of Minbari ageing, the crest can cover the entire upper half of a Minbari's head and interfere with the auditory canals through internal pressure. Changes in cerebral chemistry also cause a shift in the colour of an ageing Minbari's scalp pattern. This can cause the pattern to turn grey or interrupt its even pigmentation with 'splotches' of darker colour.

Diet

The palette, digestion, and sense of taste possessed by the Minbari are similar enough to humans that their diet is mostly compatible. As noted previously, Minbari need to consume at least 750 kilocalories each day to avoid physical degeneration due to internal digestion. A diet of 1800 kilocalories for males and 1500 kilocalories for females is optimal.

Along with a basic need for energy, Minbari physiology needs a certain basic level of nutrition to maintain essential life functions. Minbari possess the basic mammalian ability to store soluble vitamins and minerals in their physical structures, namely body fat and other soft matter. In addition, Minbari bones can be accessed to leech vital calcium during times of deprivation, another physical trait they share with humans. Minbari bones also incorporate soft tissue centres as part of their multiple layer construction that allows them to catabolize stored nutrients without initially weakening existing biological structures.

The essential daily dietary requirements for continued quality of life in an adult Minbari male are:

- 5 1800 kilocalories. Because of the *dureen*, a specialized digestive organ that augments the small

intestine, the Minbari metabolize polyunsaturated fats and single chain sugars more efficiently than other sources of digestible energy.

- 5 1250 micrograms of Vitamin A. The need for constant maintenance of Minbari bones and skin draws on larger reserves of Vitamin A than humans require.
- 5 20 milligrams of Vitamin E. As with Vitamin A, Minbari require a greater amount of this nutrient than humans to maintain their stronger immune systems.
- 5 20 micrograms of Vitamin K. Minbari do not generate a great deal of green plant life, possibly explaining why the Minbari do not require as much Vitamin K as other races. Their blood does not require prothrombin to generate clotting agents, which further reduces their need for Vitamin K. Minbari only need Vitamin K for protein biosynthesis in the liver and kidneys.
- 5 75 milligrams of Vitamin C. The primary source of Vitamin C on Minbari comes in the form of leaves and berries from the same plant, the fen'la tree. Consumption of these berries and of tea made from the leaves fulfills their need for this nutrient.
- 5 4.25 milligrams of Thiamin. The extremely complex and efficient nervous system of the Minbari consumes almost three times the Thiamin requirement of a human of comparable physical development. Most major Minbari food sources contain Thiamin for this reason.
- 5 1 milligram of Riboflavin. Minbari do not need quite as much Riboflavin as humans as their Riboflavin dependent structures (eyes, skin, and metabolism) are maintained by other elements.
- 5 15 milligrams of Niacin. A balance between the greater capabilities and improved efficiency of the Minbari body over a human's results in an identical need for Niacin as part of a daily diet. Niacin is found almost exclusively on Minbar in bird eggs, a common meal item for the Minbari.
- 5 6 milligrams of Vitamin B6. Minbari have a massive B6 requirement because of its importance in maintaining the biological equilibrium of their brain chemistry and its role in the generation of tryptophan. A severely limited amount of Vitamin B6 during infancy and adolescence can lead to poor mental development and severely curtailed cognitive functions.
- 5 200 micrograms of Folic Acid. Folic acid is important for a Minbari's blood production, but not nearly as vital as its similar role for humans. Folic acid deficiency is not severe for Minbari, even if it is not present in the diet at all.

- ⑤ 2 micrograms of Vitamin B12. Minbari only require B12 for its importance in nervous system maintenance. Vitamin B12 is most commonly found in bird eggs and shellfish on Minbar.
- ⑤ 5 milligrams of Iron. Minbari blood does not have as great a requirement for Iron, but it is still essential for their immune system and for oxygen transfer in their circulatory systems. Minbari blood derives its red color from both Iron and soluble trace elements found in their atmosphere.
- ⑤ 18 milligrams of Zinc. Between increased enzyme and skeletal generation, Minbari need more zinc in their diet than humans. The typical sign of zinc deficiency, decreased healing rate, is far more severe in the Minbari and open wounds can become septic very quickly if a Minbari is suffering from drastically reduced levels of zinc *and* Vitamin E.
- ⑤ 120 micrograms of Iodine. The Minbari do not consume as much salt in their diet, nor do they have as great a need for it as humans. As such, they do not typically add Iodine to their salt. Minbari get their required level of iodine from seafood.
- ⑤ 60 micrograms of Selenium. Minbari use selenium to regulate both heart and immune system functions. Selenium deficiency is markedly more severe in Minbari, resulting in serious fatigue and a decreased efficiency of the digestive system.
- ⑤ Vitamin D is a special case with the Minbari. Their physiology does not require it at all nor does their

skin manufacture it through solar exposure. The presence of Vitamin D is virtually absent from foods on Minbar, with a tiny amount present in the milk of the planet's primary herd animal, the voorn. Voorn milk is rarely drunk in great quantities, as it is generally used in cooking only.

- ⑤ 1650 milligrams of Calcium. The special bone structures of the Minbari require greater amounts of calcium to maintain. Minbari digestion is considerably more efficient at metabolizing calcium, enabling them to derive a great deal more from the sources they consume.
- ⑤ 750 milligrams of Phosphorus. Glucose absorption is the single most efficient form of energy transfer in the Minbari body and it requires slightly elevated levels of phosphorus to achieve.
- ⑤ 400 milligrams of Magnesium. The bone structures of a Minbari requires more maintenance than a human skeletal system. Due to increased efficiency in this process, the Minbari only require the same amount of Magnesium to accomplish this.

Female Minbari have similar needs within a small amount of variance. They do not require quite as much zinc and Vitamin A to maintain their skin, but they have an elevated need for Iron to provide the proper balance of oxidation in their blood. This has polarized the dietary structures of the Minbari, creating classes of food and drink that are considered gender specific. Minbari also save certain kinds of food preparation for specific genders. One



example of this latter concept is the cooking of green leaf vegetables. As cooking these items breaks down several of the nutrients found in them, this is generally done only for items served to male Minbari. Females usually eat such vegetables steamed or raw, depending on the vegetable in question, as they have a greater need for the lost vitamins and minerals.

Minbari Lore – Food and Drink

Minbari have a specialised diet as a result of their unique biological needs and their dependence on ritual. This latter element ensures that new menu items do not appear often, as each meal is the focus of prayer and meditation to some degree. Important meals among the Minbari also include a place set aside at an empty chair as a sign of respect for Valen. As such, most menu items are made in small portions that can be easily separated out so that the customary plate can be made for the memory of Valen.

Some examples of typical Minbari foods and beverages are:

- ⑤ Flarn – A main meal item often used in other recipes, basic flarn is a form of congealed curd usually cooked in vegetable oils and mild spices. There are forty eight standard recipes for flarn; no two of which are typically used by the same preparer. Flarn is an essential part of the Minbari diet, providing protein, phosphorous, and folic acid.
- ⑤ Se n'kai – A fleshy fruit favoured by members of the Warrior Caste for its rich taste and blood coloured juice. A Warrior Caste superstition has it that a Minbari eating this rare fruit is consuming the courage of Valen and cannot fail to overcome his enemies that day.
- ⑤ Sha'neyat – This drink's name translated to 'Death Destroyer' and is extremely toxic to humans in all but the smallest dose. Its chemical makeup acts much like alcohol for humans because of the interaction it has with Minbari digestion. Also poisonous in large doses to the Minbari, Sha'neyat is only consumed in small quantities under normal circumstances.
- ⑤ Alcohol – Not actually a Minbari indulgence, but important enough to list here. Alcohol does not metabolise well for the Minbari. Consumption of more than a small amount causes the adrenaline centres of the Minbari body to begin production at a drastic rate and engenders hostile behaviour to an extreme degree.
- ⑤ Jeshta – A mix of vegetables from the southern hemisphere of Minbar tossed with flarn and sprigs of zeth, a green leaf vegetable resembling wide

blades of Bermuda grass. Jeshta is eaten as a complete meal almost exclusively by the Worker Caste. Other Minbari tend to disdain Jeshta, but it does form the basis for more complicated dishes eaten by the race in general.

Disease

Centuries ahead of human medical technology, the Minbari do not suffer overly much from common ailments and infections. Between their slightly more advanced immune systems and their careful maintenance of their colonies and homeworld, the possibility of a Minbari falling ill to anything short of a virulent infection are minuscule. This said, the Minbari are by no means immune to disease. Their specialised metabolisms are resistant to the effects of microbes, viral strains, and numerous phenotypes of bacteria, but there are certain strains that can affect them just as easily as a human catches a strain of influenza.

EarthForce Internal System Alert
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EarthForce Internal System Alert

As can be expected, the different pathogenic health risks to Minbari vary depending on subject location, age, critical factors, and length of exposure to other races. Little information is available on alien diseases that might pose a hazard for the Minbari, but it is known that they do not associate with certain races not out of cultural differences but for health concerns. The Pak'ma'ra are foremost among these 'shunned' races, leading one to conclude that carrion and refuse organisms might cause a problem for the Minbari in a close proximity environment.

The following ailments are known to afflict Minbari to a greater or lesser degree. It should be remembered that unless noted otherwise, the excellent medical conditions enjoyed by the race mitigates any true risk or discomfort associated with these health problems. Where available or appropriate, incubation time or average length of infliction has been noted. The list has been broken up into three main categories – parasites, communicable diseases, and congenital ailments.

Parasites

Minbari immune systems may be more effective than those of humans, but they still suffer from the some conditions that plague any lifeform with skin. While the Minbari's lack of body hair prevents certain types of organisms from taking hold or having a proper breeding ground for continued irritation, other types have flourished in the cool, dry air of their preferred environment. Parasitic infections occur frequently with the Minbari, especially with those that for one reason or another are prevented from following a proper grooming regimen.

Parasites and other skin ailments are the major factors behind the Minbari's major cleansing ritual - Le'en ka dur set, 'anointment of the new dawn'. This grooming method involves the application of a mild acid either by hand and cloth or a dilute mixture in a warm tub of purified water. At a basic level, Le'en ka dur set is performed to remove oils and dead skin cells accumulated during the day, but it has a secondary practical benefit as the acid completely destroys most microbes and other infectious agents it comes into contact with. Dissolving these organisms does not entirely negate their threat, but it is a remarkably effective way to limit their spread and growth.

- ⑤ **Bone Mites.** The most common surface infection Minbari suffer from does not affect their skin but instead rests in the one area their Le'en ka dur set ritual cannot efficiently cleanse – their skull crests. While young Minbari normally have solid, impermeable crests, once the major growth cycle of the bone spar stops, it slowly develops natural cracks and gaps. These opening provide a place for a specific family of mites to take root and flourish. *Oligonicyus Brachea* have a one week life cycle and can breed for six to seven generations before they run their course. Minbari use a cytostatic gas to exterminate these parasites, but the availability of the gas varies. Minbari on remote colonies or in deep space with no ready supply must usually endure the symptoms of bone mite infestation (itching scalp, mild headache, and an ashen appearance to the ridges of the bone crest) for its typical four week duration.
- ⑤ **Shen ka.** Shen ka, 'red fire', is an inflammation of the scalp caused by a microbe that penetrates the outer epidermis and thrives on the trace cerebral fluids found in the Minbari's scalp patterning. This microorganism is resistant to the acid used during Le'en ka dur set and can endure multiple instances of exposure without noticeable degradation. Shen ka gets its name from the dark red discolouration that a Minbari's scalp pattern undergoes while

the microbes continue to multiply just under the first layer of skin. Treating shen ka is a matter of antibiotics generally applied as a topical ointment, though severe cases require injection of a catalyst into the meninges. This catalyst essentially poisons the Minbari's cerebral fluids and kills the infection at its source. This treatment is slightly dangerous for the Minbari undergoing it, though death is extremely rare.

- ⑤ **Valnaris Rash.** This rash is caused by a virulent microorganism that thrives on the vegetation found around Minbar's equatorial climate band. Virtually unheard of away from the Homeworld, it can occur if fresh produce is taken from Minbar and transported under conditions conducive to the microbe's growth. As a result, most plant life leaving the Minbar homeworld is irradiated with a low strength ultraviolet exposure lamp. Minbari suffering from Valnaris rash exhibit sections of pebbled, irritated skin around the hands and face; the latter occurring because of an infected Minbari touching his face and eating contaminated plants. Topical medicated analgesics usually deal with the rash in a few days. If allowed to run its course, Valnaris rash lasts an indefinite amount of time and can become a permanent ailment inflicting serious damage to affected skin.

Communicable Diseases

Minbari do not have a long history of dealing with communicable diseases. Early in their cultural development, their enlightened policies regarding personal maintenance and clean environments have kept epidemics to a remarkable minimum. This does not mean that they have never had serious disease problems in the past, but their culture and natural physical gifts have spared them the biological legacy of disease that has troubled and devastated other races.

In many ways, this is a medical mystery. The Minbari are a hardy, enduring race, yet they have not evolved in an environment that should have adapted them in that way. Their meticulous natures and cautious but effective culture would suggest that from an evolutionary standpoint, their physical development should be weaker for the lack of exposure. As this is clearly not the case, one must assume that either their early planetary conditions were far harsher or that some kind of interference has occurred with their physiology. Given the Minbari's possible association with ancient cultures of an even more advanced nature, this second option is not unlikely.

- 5 **Vashak Nuret** – Spread through intimate contact, this disease has a viral agent as its causative factor. Vashak nuret is keyed to the Minbari genotype and is not deadly outside their race, but it can be fatal if left untreated. This sexually transmitted disease causes inflammation and respiratory dysfunction during periods of heightened activity. Vashak nuret has an incubation period of up to one full year before symptoms develop; this abnormally long formative period only exacerbates the possibility of a Minbari carrier spreading the disease. It is possible that vashak nuret, a viral malady that has existed for over a thousand years, is partially responsible for the Minbari culture's preference for monogamy and lengthy courting periods.
- 5 **Hurath Syndrome** – An airborne pathogen communicable through the breath and pore respiration of those infected by it, Hurath syndrome is named for the early Minbari colony completely wiped out by its first outbreak. Once a Minbari has contracted Hurath syndrome and remained untreated through its five day incubation period, he is a lifetime carrier and will require constant injections of an antimicrobial agent to keep from being contagious.
- 5 **Culdael** – Called the 'weeping illness', culdael is a waterborne contagion that builds up in a carrier's body fluids and stimulates production of them as an increasingly prodigious rate. Minbari infected with culdael appear bloated and ruddy. Along with digestive difficulties arising from increased bile and stomach acid levels, Minbari with culdael weep constantly due to overactive tear ducts. All of the fluids produced in this time are contagious, including saliva, urine, and blood. Contact with any fluid produced by a Minbari with this disease runs a serious risk of infection. Combined with its 18 hour incubation time, this ease of communication can cause a single culdael incident to become an outbreak very quickly.
- 5 **The Grey Wasting** – Minbar's only true plague in the last two thousand years, the Grey Wasting occasional resurfaces on their homeworld and on colonies that date to that period of their history. According to the Minbari legend, the Grey Wasting is not a natural pathogen but a manufactured disease inflicted upon the race by some ancient enemy. Regardless of its source, the original occurrence of the Grey Wasting, so named because of the pale grey colour the skin of its victims turns within six hours of the disease becoming terminal, wiped out half the planetary population of Minbar and devastated at least three remote settlements on other worlds. Current outbreaks of the Grey Wasting are not

common or serious, as the Minbari possess a cure that can alleviate the condition at any time before death.

Congenital Ailments

A broad terminology including gender-linked illnesses, birth defects, and conditions that can arise due to prenatal factors and parentage, congenital ailments are one of the few types of malady that Minbari suffer from as commonly as humans. Even this is a generalisation; while Minbari are just as prone to this form of dysfunction, they have found a cultural way to limit its effect within their own population. By limiting breeding through ritual and screening prospective mates for genetic anomalies and compatibilities, the Minbari have found a societal pre-emptive solution to congenital ailments.

These are not entirely effective, but the caste system of Minbari culture provides an excellent initial marker for other measures taken by the race. Inter-caste marriages are not common but when they do take place, it is usually done through a screening process that ensures that only advantageous genetic traits are inherited by the offspring. Children produced by these matings are often placed in a specific caste because of their genetic profile and the benefits they can bring to the future viability of that group. This screening procedure is not an absolute, but it is an important factor for consideration in any Minbari union.

- 5 **Pallic Crest** – One of the most common deformities that occurs among Minbari is an underdeveloped skull crest. This is usually a genetic sex-linked trait passed down from the father's side, but it can also occur from poor fetal nutrition during the first trimester. A pallic crest is not a life-threatening ailment, but it is often a source of personal embarrassment. As a side note, a pallic crest does leave certain parts of the Minbari brain most commonly associated with telepathic with more room to develop. Many powerful Minbari telepaths in their history have been born with this 'defect'.
- 5 **Mol Shenet Va** – Literally translated as 'flower petal bones', this disorder breaks down the binding agents that hold a Minbari's bone structure together. Aside from being excruciatingly painful in severe cases, this congenital defect can be fatal if the condition can not be treated through gene therapy before important skeletal systems give way and the Minbari literally collapses internally. Mol shenet va diagnosed at a young age can be kept in remission, but those with the disorder face a lifetime of mild pain and drug dependence.

5 Inbreeding – The Minbari have a very effective method of discouraging inbreeding; Minbari become sterile after a certain period of genetic cross-pairing with close genotype matches. This process is not a congenital ailment so much as a biological method of limiting the same. An atavistic way of maintain genetic purity, this mechanism is extremely efficient, lending further credence to the belief of manipulation at some point in the biological development of the Minbari.

Babylon 5 Rules Supplement – Minbari Diseases

A Minbari contracts bone mites on a failed Fortitude saving throw, DC 12, if he or she is unable to maintain normal grooming for five days or more in a row. Every three days of additional deprivation, another save must be made at a +1 cumulative penalty to the DC. Once a Minbari contracts bone mites, all Concentration checks suffer a -2 circumstance penalty due to the irritation involved. Curing bone mites requires one hour and a Medical check at a DC of 10 (DC 18 if the proper chemicals are not on hand).

Shen ka is more embarrassing than painful, but it can be inconveniencing. Contracting it can occur any time a Minbari character is exposed to refuse, filth, or rotting carrion; the Fortitude save to avoid catching shen ka is 18, though this drops to 12 if the characters is wearing a helmet or other head covering. Shen ka’s damage is 1 point of Wisdom ability damage for every four days the Minbari fails to make a DC 15 Fortitude save, to a maximum loss of 4 points. The topical cure provides an immediate DC 15 Fortitude saving throw to overcome shen ka, but failure indicates that the disease requires an injection. This treatment automatically destroys the disease microbe, but at the cost of 1d6 points of Constitution ability damage. These points return at a rate of 1 point per day, 2 with proper medical care.

Valnaris rash has a 5% chance of occurring whenever a Minbari character handles produce or other plants from Minbar or a Minbari colony world. Catching a Valnaris rash is not truly debilitating, but it does reduce a Minbari’s Dexterity score by 2 points while it persists due to constant itching and slight loss of sensitivity. The topical solution



clears up the ailment automatically within 4d20 hours of application.

Contracting vashak nuret is automatic if a character has unprotected intimate relations with someone who has the disease and once infected, a Minbari is a vashak nuret carrier for life. Incubation time for this disease is 1d12 months and after this time, a Minbari character suffers 1d3 Strength and 1d4 Constitution permanent ability damage each month unless given special medical attention. After three months of this level of care, the disease enters remission and can be controlled through medicine. The disease has no known cure and is not talked of openly among the Minbari.

Hurath syndrome takes five days to incubate, and a Minbari character can only contract it if exposed to an area containing active carriers of the disease. The Fortitude saving throw to avoid Hurath syndrome is 16; this DC is also used to avoid its incubation effects once the five days are over. If a Minbari character does not receive medical attention during the incubation time, a failed saving throw after five days results in unconsciousness. Once a Minbari has been unconscious in this way for 24 hours with care, a second DC 16 save must be made to avoid death. If this disease incubates successfully, the Minbari character becomes a permanent carrier and must take a medication weekly to avoid spreading Hurath syndrome actively.

Culdael is not a harmful disease unless it is allowed to run its course without its victims seeking bed rest and a clean environment. Contracting Culdael can be avoided with a DC 12 Fortitude save from Minbari who come within

5 feet of a source of infection. This raises to a DC 18 if the Minbari makes uncovered physical contact. Culdael incubates in eighteen hours and inflicts 1d2 points of Strength ability damage immediately upon incubating and 1 point of permanent Constitution damage every two full days thereafter until the character seeks medical aid or becomes entirely sedentary. The latter allows a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw every day to overcome the disease completely and regain the lost Strength points.

The Grey Wasting is a lethal disease that causes death if its incubation time of four days is not interrupted with medical attention and the introduction of a specific cure (Medical skill check, DC 18, to identify the cure required and another of DC 20 to synthesize the chemical itself; Minbari may not need to make either of these rolls if the proper facilities are on hand). The Grey Wasting is completely contagious and always incubates; Minbari characters get no saving throw to resist catching or carrying the disease. Full physical containment such as an environmental suit will prevent exposure and/or contain a carrier.

The trait of a Pallic Crest is a mixed blessing, as those Minbari born with one almost universally become effective telepaths because of the side effects of its malformation. Minbari characters can select the Pallic Crest feat at 1st level only; see the Characters chapter for more information and a complete description of this new Minbari racial feat.

A Minbari suffering from mol shenet va lives with a low level, constant agony and suffers a -2 inherent penalty to all Concentration, Dexterity based skills, and Reflex saves. Genetic therapy can further levels of severity, but mol shenet va cannot be reversed past this base penalty. Mol shenet va does have the side effect of strengthening a Minbari against virtually any other kind of pain or stress; most other afflictions pale by comparison. See the Mol Shenet Va 'feat' in the Characters chapter.



Ambassador Sinclair,

The following information is not given to you lightly, but if you are to help these people and help their great cause, you must know every part of them. This includes the parts of their race they do not often discuss or, in one case, even know themselves. You are being given access to some of the greatest secrets of the Minbari in this next file; guard what you learn from it wisely. There are those on Minbar who would not appreciate you knowing these things. Keep this information quiet. It is enough for you to be aware of the existence of these Minbari. You will need to keep them in mind during the long days ahead.

I am asking you to take a lot on faith, but as Garibaldi would say, 'Faith, and a flat bed full of matter bombs, can move mountains.' The bombs come later, I promise.

Sincerely,
A Friend

Minbari Subraces

The Minbari are an ancient people and were starfaring long before humanity developed bronze. This long history of travel and exploration brings with it the potential to develop unique sub-species due to exposure to other worlds and civilisations. The strong sense of unity and cultural identity shared by the Minbari people has kept this phenomenon to a minimum, but society differences have occurred between distant colonies of the Minbari. Subraces require considerably more diversification than simple ideological differences and spatial distance, but these activities are the basis for the creation of three sub-species of the Minbari race.

Each new race is quite different and bears its Minbari forebears little resemblance in one or more facets of its existence. One subrace comes from the Minbari's early spacefaring history and represents their first attempts at genetic manipulation to better adapt their kind to outer space. The other two subraces are the legacy of the Minbari's encounter with two powerful races; each is the result of physical and mental augmentation by the Vorlons and the Shadows respectively. Neither of these two subraces are very common; only a handful of the former exist while the exact number of the latter is unknown

because they remain hidden in the darkest corners of the galaxy.

The Star Born

When the Minbari first took to the stars, their initial vessels were just as primitive as those of most other newly starfaring races. These venerable ships were comprised mostly of superdense crystal and contained all of the amenities of life save one; Minbari ships during their early exploration period did not have gravity. What the Minbari lacked in special technology, they made up for in genetic engineering and medical technologies. These advances allowed them to specifically tailor the first Minbari starfarers to better survive their journey. In this, Minbari introspection served them well. The first astronauts of their race were far more adapted to the rigors of transatmospheric flight than the initial pilots of most other races.

These Minbari lived out decades in weightless environments, charting nearby systems and exploring the near reaches of their own. Minbari visited the other planets in their solar system in this manner and stretched forth their explorations to stars in the immediate vicinity. As the race did not have faster than light travel during this first two century period of space flight, such journeys took a great deal of time. To ensure the survival of their astronauts during these voyages between the stars, the Minbari performed even more radical procedures to optimize them for the environment of deep space.

While these experiments were mostly successful, they did leave the Minbari starfarers with a limited ability to function inside of a gravity plane or within non-regulated atmospheres. For the most part, this was not a true detriment as the majority of their lives were spent in transit between destinations. Once the Minbari made contact with



advanced races and learned how to incorporate advanced technologies into their ships, those of their race modified for long term, weightless travel were no longer vital to space exploration. In the wake of gravity generation and hyperspace access, these once necessary astronauts became little more than curiosities of history.

The new advances in technology required entirely new ship designs to accommodate them. In recognition for their long service to the Minbari, the augmented space travellers were allowed to retain their vessels and chart their own course with autonomy. This was not entirely a selfless act on the Minbari's part; the experimental procedures had utilised genetic alteration to their astronauts, changes that were being passed down to their offspring as well. As they were now ill-suited to exist on Minbar or on a gravity equipped vessel, they no longer functioned as part of the greater civilisation. These 'star born' were effectively casualties of advancing technology and setting them free to make their own way was more a matter of logical course than any gesture of recognition.

The Star Born have spent nearly two millennia among the stars, breeding and adapting even further to life in the weightless void. They have long since learned the secrets of faster than light travel and their ancient ships are updated with most of the amenities of high technology except gravity generation. Knowing that their adaptations are also a weakness for those rare times when they must interact with gravity-bound cultures, they have reverse engineered gravitic technology and can operate for short periods of time wearing suspension suits of their own design. These suits internally negate gravity for their wearer while being heavy enough to keep a Star Born's feet on the ground while aboard a capitol ship or when they must go planetside.

The Star Born are not common and their tendency towards isolation among their own kind makes the rest of the reclusive Minbari race seem outgoing by comparison. The genetic manipulation done two thousand years in the past is beginning to catch up with them and each successive generation has been smaller than the last. There are less than a thousand Star Born in existence, with the extinction of the race as a whole being a distinct possibility in the next millennia unless a cure is found for their flagging genetic viability. The latest generation of Star Born is understandably curious about the galaxy around them and they are the most likely ones of their kind to seek answers among the stars and away from the aged relics of their proud space faring heritage.

Appearance: In most ways, the Star Born look like their forebear race. More angular and thin, the Star Born move

with an ethereal grace that can be almost hypnotic to watch. They tend to be paler than most Minbari and their bone crests are more pronounced. The modifications that enable them to withstand the calcium loss inherent in a Zero Gravity environment also cause rapid growth of the crest, causing it to spire and widen more prodigiously. In a few extreme cases, the crest actually covers the entire back and top of the skull, with a few peaks touching the ridge of bone just over the Star Born's eyes. Crests this advanced are considered signs of favour by 'the stars' and afford those who have it great respect among their peers.

Star Born (Minbari Sub Race) Racial Traits

- ⑤ +4 Dexterity, -2 Charisma, -2 Strength: Star Born Minbari have the same slight regard or compassion for other races and their adaptations have left them weak in comparison with their original race, but their grace is unparalleled in the galaxy.
- ⑤ All Star Born Minbari are of medium size.
- ⑤ Minbari have a base speed of 30 feet and can maintain this speed in Zero Gravity without difficulty. When subject to a 1G environment, their base speed is drastically reduced to 10 feet.
- ⑤ Star Born Minbari are extremely quick and can react faster than most other races. They gain a +2 bonus to all Initiative checks. This advantage is lost in a 1G or more environment.
- ⑤ While Star Born Minbari are very resilient, they do not gain the free Great Fortitude bonus feat that others of their base racial type receive. Instead, they simply receive a +1 racial bonus to Fortitude saves. As with most of their other advantages, this is lost if the Star Born is exposed to a 1G environment.
- ⑤ Star Born have a great deal of control over their biological processes and can place themselves in a comatose slumber for any length of time they wish. This sleeping state is called 'dreaming between the stars' and reduces the Minbari's life signs to nearly imperceptible levels (A Medical check, DC 15, is required to detect life signs without electronic equipment or to awaken a Star Born using this ability). Aging slows to 1/10th of normal and the Minbari requires virtually no food, water, or air while he sleeps in this way. Dreaming between the stars can performed for up to one year's duration at a time, with a period of 1/12th the time spent asleep in normal consumption of sustenance and respiration before it can be attempted again. This special ability is how the Star Born survived their long voyages and it remains an important way for them to conserve resources during hard times.
- ⑤ Star Born Minbari do not belong to one of the three castes that form their original society. All

Star Born Minbari essentially belong to their own special group – the Explorer Caste, and consider their entire population part of this group, even those living on other isolated vessels. Star Born players may not select any Minbari racial feats with a Warrior, Religious, or Worker Caste membership prerequisites.

- 5 Explorer Caste: This caste is only open to Star Born Minbari and represents being raised in their culture with constant exposure to Zero Gravity and the combined educations of dozens of experienced space pilots, scientists, and technicians. All Star Born Minbari are part of this caste and gain Spacecraft Proficiency and Veteran Spacehand as bonus feats.
- 5 Automatic languages: Dark, grey and light Minbari. Star Born players also start with English, but it is not automatic knowledge for Star Born still living in their own shipborne colonies.
- 5 Favoured Class: A Star Born Minbari's Officer class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

The Kira Zhe

When the Vorlons first made contact with the Minbari, the latter race was a primitive culture still learning to develop the first tools of civilization on a harsh world fraught with dangers. The Vorlons guided the Minbari through millennia of evolution in a few decades, advancing far beyond what they could have accomplished on their own. One of the reasons the enigmatic race did this was to develop the Minbari to the point where they would be able to biologically and culturally support a very special project of the Vorlons. This experiment would forever change the course of Minbari history and bring about one of the greatest disasters of their race.

The Vorlon project was an attempt to create soldiers for the next great conflict they would have to fight against their sibling race, the Shadows. In their last struggle, the Vorlons had noticed a weakness in the mindset of their rivals; the Shadows were vulnerable to direct mental projection and their technologies were fundamentally unable to process such information. While the Vorlons could generate these projections themselves through their own technology, an ancient agreement kept them from doing this directly. Instead, they chose to try breeding the ability to create mental wavelengths of energy into indigenous populations under their sphere of influence.

The Minbari were the Vorlon's first choice for an attempt at breeding telepaths. The process was a remarkable success, with the first Minbari mentalists created living

openly among their race and eventually given positions of authority as befitted their great gifts. For several thousand years, the effectively immortal Kira Zhe formed the ruling class for a large group of religious Minbari, benefiting from Vorlon wisdom and their own incredibly powerful abilities as they dominated every aspect of their combined northern kingdom. This was a violent, turbulent period for the Minbari and their culture both flourished and then sharply declined under the ever more potent attentions of the Kira Zhe.

When the Kira Zhe telepaths began to tighten their reins of control in an attempt to restore order, the Minbari rose against them and ended their tyranny in a bloody war that touched every corner of their world. Horrified at both this conflict and their own part in perpetuating it, the Vorlon pulled back and sharply reduced their contact with the Minbari. The Kira Zhe were dead, but their legacy lived on in the few offspring that managed to elude the fanatical purges that followed.

It is from these offspring that all Minbari telepaths can trace their heritage and the inheritance of their powers. Knowledge of the Kira Zhe is all but lost to the Minbari people, with only a few pieces of lost lore surviving the scourging fires of that brutal time. The Grey Council knows of the Kira Zhe, where they came from, and how their reign finally ended, but it is considered nothing more than a black chapter in their race's history. No one among the Minbari knows that while all telepaths of their race have the Kira Zhe as ancestors, a few are more direct inheritors than others.

In order to ensure that the telepathic gifts they bestowed upon the Minbari would still be potent enough to use as a weapon when the next great conflict arose, the Vorlons made their genetics extremely dominant. In time, it was assumed that a large enough percentage of the Minbari would be telepathic enough to serve as a major bulwark against the forces of the Shadows. While the destruction of the Kira Zhe ensured that this did not occur, every few generations experiences a resurgence of the original genotype. For this to occur, two Minbari telepaths must mate and even then, the result is not always telepathic. When the child does inherit the ability, there is a roughly 50% chance that the potency of the ancient Kira Zhe flows through its mind.

Minbari with the gift of the Kira Zhe do not necessarily know they have been touched by their blood. In fact, very few Minbari even know the Kira Zhe ever existed, and telepaths of this potency are usually just considered to be highly talented. Those few who do know tend to keep their heritage a secret. While the hatred and rage that brought

down the hallowed halls of the Kira Zhe may be long gone, the Minbari have a history of reliving the emotions of the past. The Grey Council does not have a specific policy for dealing with the Kira Zhe's descendants, but when they are identified, those with the genetic legacy of the first Minbari telepaths are watched carefully. Any sign of their ancestor's megalomania is dealt with quickly and quietly, but as long as they do not act out of the ordinary, they are left alone to nurture their unique gift.

Appearance: On the surface, the Kira Zhe do not look in any way different from other Minbari. They tend to have smaller than average bone crests, but otherwise they are identical to the rest of the Minbari race. An internal examination reveals nothing out of the ordinary except for a decreased immune system and a reduced ability to cope with fatigue and illness. The primary difference between Kira Zhe and other Minbari is in their cerebral cortex, where chemicals directly related to telepathic ability can be found in abundance. Brain structures in the Kira Zhe are enlarged as well, resulting in their extraordinary abilities.

Kira Zhe (Minbari Sub-Race) Racial Traits

- ⑤ +2 Strength, -2 Charisma: Minbari seem almost supernaturally strong for their light build, but have little regard or compassion for other races. This is no different for the Kira Zhe.
- ⑤ All Minbari are of medium size.
- ⑤ Minbari have a base speed of 30 feet.
- ⑤ The Kira Zhe are even faster in action than other Minbari. The ancient Vorlon experiments have gifted them with extraordinary reaction speed. They gain the Improved Initiative feat as a bonus, granting them a +4 bonus to all Initiative checks.
- ⑤ The Kira Zhe were given great strength of mind at the cost of some of their physical resiliency. They do not gain the Great Fortitude feat as other member of their race, but they do benefit from Iron Will as a bonus feat.
- ⑤ Kira Zhe can belong to any of the three castes that form their society, but identified members are always moved to the Religious Caste by the Grey Council. This can happen at any point in their lives and constitutes one of the few ways a Minbari can change castes after childhood.
- ⑤ Religious Caste: Kira Zhe members of the religious caste are extremely knowledgeable, having spent much of their infancy and adolescence learning from the collected wisdom of their entire race with an emphasis on telepathic lore. They gain a +2 racial bonus to all Knowledge checks; when

researching matters concerning telepathy, telepaths, or other forms of psychic phenomena.

- ⑤ Warrior Caste: Kira Zhe warrior caste characters are trained to fight, though their gifts are both a distraction and a curse while they develop their skills. They are proficient with all non-exotic weaponry but do not get to pick a favoured weapon.
- ⑤ Worker Caste: Kira Zhe members of the worker caste augment their skills and trades with subtle, sometimes unconscious uses of their innate telepathic gifts. They gain a +1 racial bonus to all Craft and Profession checks and all items made by them are elaborate enough to be worth 10% more than their normal value.
- ⑤ Kira Zhe must still take levels of the Telepath class to develop their natural abilities, but they gain a +2 inherent bonus on all Telepathy skill checks. In addition, their powers operate as if they were 2 points higher than their actual P-rating. This is a natural bonus for the Kira Zhe and does not require concentration or effort to achieve but while their powers are active, their eyes turn black and featureless. Most Kira Zhe instinctively try to hide this feature.
- ⑤ Automatic languages: Dark, grey; and light Minbari, and English.
- ⑤ Favoured Class: Kira Zhe are natural telepaths; Telepath is their favoured class regardless of which caste they belong to. A multiclass Kira Zhe's favoured class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

The Shadowsouled

When the last Great War gripped the galaxy one thousand years before the time of the Earth Alliance, the tide was only turned by a union between the Minbari, a few other races caught in the conflict, and the Old Ones, including the Vorlons. The battle was hard fought and victory was never certain from the opening volley to the last assault that drove the Shadows from their places of power and into the darkness between stars. Those who fought until the end were united in their faith and their determination that the light of the Vorlons and the Way of Valen was the right path to follow.

Though most Minbari felt this way and turned their strength to the task of defeating the Shadows, there were a few who felt that Valen, who was Minbari not born of Minbari, had no right to lead them in what seemed like a suicidal war against a clearly superior force. These Minbari saw the Shadows not as the enemy but as the greatest example of what they believed in themselves; might makes right was

the whole of their law. Mostly members of the Warrior Caste, these Minbari numbered among them an entire clan, the Dark Knives, when they gathered together and fled their homeworld to go in search of the Shadows in the hopes of pledging themselves to the race's terrible cause.

Dedicated to conflict and the ideal of survival of the fittest, these Minbari were found by the Shadows and forced to undergo trials of the most strenuous sort. Intended to push these would be servitors to the limit and then beyond, the trials cost half the Minbari their lives. Those that emerged from the hideous ordeal were only pale shadows of their former selves, harrowed by the truth of the Shadows and their true purpose in the universe. These Minbari foreswore their previous names and racial heritage, embracing instead eternal service to their new masters.

Before these new servants could prove themselves to the Shadows, their side was defeated and had to retreat before the Vorlon/Minbari alliance. The Shadow-changed Minbari went with them, vowing revenge on their former race and everything that had mattered to them in their previous lives. If the Shadows could not rule the galaxy, then it would all burn. While the Shadows fell back to recover and await the next Great War, they released the altered Minbari to seek whatever vengeance they wished.

A thousand years have passed since that day of defeat, but for the Shadowsouled, it has shaped every minute of their lives thereafter. The current generations of Shadowsouled are the descendants of those who directly served the Shadows, but their loyalty is no less complete for the distance of time. They have accumulated a massive fleet of ships drawn from the many races they raid for their survival. In every battle, they have used the stealth techniques given to them by the Shadows to fade in, strike hard, and then disappear back into the darkness of space. As a result, virtually nothing is known of the Shadowsouled outside the lore circles of the Minbari. Even those learned scholars believe the Shadowsouled to have become extinct during the Great War.

The Shadowsouled are few, but they certainly still exist. Members of

this subrace have been altered at the deepest levels; their very bodies are canvases upon which the Shadows painted their ideal of what the Minbari would have become if they have found them in their infancy instead of the Vorlons. Greatest among their abilities may be their power of deception. The Shadowsouled can go among other races for long periods of time undetected as one of their own number. This power has kept them alive for centuries, granting them the time to build their forces and await the day of their revenge.

At least, that was the truth for over nine hundred years. When the humans encountered the Minbari and the Earth/Minbari War began, the Shadowsouled watched from their hidden places with great interest. As the War pressed on, the Shadowsouled debated the merits of striking Minbar while their attention was elsewhere, but before they could agree to do so, the Battle of the Line ended the conflict. They were weakened, but the Shadowsouled knew their old relatives were still seething and that any action they took would be met with a fury that matched their own.

Losing this opportunity has also introduced an element of doubt in some of the Shadowsouled. If they were not ready to attack when their traditional enemy was at its weakest, perhaps it was time to turn from the road of vengeance altogether and make their own way in the galaxy. Fully half of the Shadowsouled are still bent on revenge, but the rest have begun to seek other motivations. All of the Shadowsouled still believe in 'might makes right', but not all are convinced that wholesale slaughter is the way to achieve it.



As such, many Shadowsouled, especially the youngest among them, are leaving the Dark Fleet and searching for something else to do with their lives. The Shadowsouled have the same tradition of not killing their own that the Minbari do, so these members of the race are allowed to leave without harm. In order to protect the Dark Fleet, each must submit to a process that erases the details of the Fleet's location and numbers. This effectively exiles those Shadowsouled who choose to leave, but it is the price these 'Enlightened' members of the race must pay for their freedom.

Appearance: Tainted by the Shadows during the crucible of their trials, the Shadowsouled show their allegiance on their skin and in their minds. The Shadowsouled have the same impossibly black colouration of their Shadow masters, with ashen grey bone crests and teeth. Intended to become predators by nature, the Shadowsouled have slightly pointed teeth and nails that naturally form claws if they are not kept meticulously trimmed. Shadowsouled rarely appear like this, however, as they have innate stealth abilities and possess incomparable hologram technology. Most creatures encountering a Shadowsouled never know they have done so.

Shadowsouled (Minbari Sub-race) Racial Traits

- ⑤ +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, +2 Dexterity, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma: The Shadowsouled have been modified greatly by their masters and exhibit extraordinary physical capabilities. Life in isolation and a cultural superiority complex limit their wisdom and ability to empathize with others.
- ⑤ All Shadowsouled are of medium size.
- ⑤ The Shadowsouled have a base speed of 30 feet.
- ⑤ Shadowsouled are extremely quick and can react faster than most other races. They gain a +2 bonus to all Initiative checks.
- ⑤ The Shadowsouled are trained in the deceptive arts. Hide, Move Silently, and Disguise are all considered class skills for them no matter what character class the Shadowsouled advance in.
- ⑤ Extremely enduring, it takes a great deal to kill a Shadowsouled. As long as they are not instantly slain by an attack, they exhibit an incredible ability to recover from injury. The Shadowsouled regain one hit point immediately after taking damage from any physical or energy attack. In addition, they recover one hit point an hour as long as they are not suffering continuous damage from either poison, disease, or exposure to a hazardous environment.
- ⑤ Shadowsouled belong to a variation of the warrior caste of the Minbari and all trace their heritage to

the same clan, the Dark Knives. Players are likely Enlightened, but their past has been spent among their own people and they still bear the marks of membership in both.

- ⑤ **Warrior Caste:** The Minbari warrior caste is trained to fight and the Shadowsouled are no exception – all members are proficient with all non-exotic weapons. The Shadowsouled have a specific favoured weapon, the black blade. Whenever using this traditional weapon, the Minbari gain a +1 racial bonus to their attack rolls.
- ⑤ The Shadowsouled know their ancient forebears well. Shadowsouled receive a +1 inherent bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, and Heal skill checks when a Minbari is the subject. This bonus also applies to melee and ranged weapons attack and damage rolls.
- ⑤ Telepathy is a bane to the Shadowsouled. When within 15 feet of a telepath, regardless of whether the telepath is actively using his abilities, a Shadowsouled suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to Concentration checks and Initiative scores. Furthermore, any melee attacks a Shadowsouled tries to target a telepath with suffer a -4 penalty to hit and damage. The Shadowsouled find the close presence of a telepath to be both painful and incredibly distracting.
- ⑤ **Automatic languages:** Dark Minbari, and English.
- ⑤ **Favoured Class:** Soldier. A multiclass Shadowsouled's favoured class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

I cannot emphasize enough how rare an encounter with any of these three sub-races can be. Most Minbari, most beings of any kind for that matter, will go through their entire lives and never come into contact with one. It is only in the interests of completeness that they appear in this file. Of them all, it is the last that should concern you most. With the gathering darkness in the near future, they may decide it is finally time to move against Minbar and their enemies. Or they may not; they missed their chance during the Earth/Minbari War, so now their actions are impossible to predict. Be cautious, but do not worry about them too much. Some things will attend to themselves.

Psychology and Sociology

While the Minbari have a similar yet different physiology, their minds vary greatly from humanity. They have different perceptions, different emotions, and different responses to the same stimulus. In many ways, this resembles a cultural difference as one might find between physically separated countries on Earth or any other inhabited planet, but the shift in behaviour and mindset goes beyond such a simple analogy. There is the alien biology factor to consider as well as the radically different history. Since the Minbari people have a completely separate historical referent to base their culture off of, it is not surprising that they would have a social and mental development in some ways incomparable to those of humanity.

The biological factor is a baseline one, with altered senses and brain chemistry as its foundation. Because the Minbari see and think about their environment in a different way, it makes sense that they would react to it in a manner that differs from our own. Brighter colours lead logically to muted architecture and fashions as a way to avoid over-stimulation, while more sensitive hearing provides the basis for a culture that values silent introspection. Because the Minbari tend to have better long term recall, their tradition of keeping lore as a matter of verbal record more often than in permanent literary works becomes completely understandable.

History for the Minbari is another major psychological key. The Minbari value lessons of the past to a degree

that most humans could never understand. Introspection leads to closer examination of the lessons history teaches, which in turn leads to a race more willing to act upon those lessons. The Minbari's natural tendency to conform to the greater will of its people has its formation in the nomadic tribe societal structure their race had to adopt to survive its early developmental stages. By studying the history of the Minbari, it is possible to see quite clearly the building blocks of their culture, their racial psychology, and the primary elements of their individual behaviour.

Social Customs

One of the best ways to learn a new culture is study its social customs and examine the reasons why they came about. One of the most notable where the Minbari and Earth are concerned is the former race's tendency to approach enemies with their weapons visible. This will be discussed in more detail to follow, but needless to say a little understanding of the Minbari culture would have gone a long way towards avoiding the unfortunate incident that arose from that culture clash. As with any galactic culture, the Minbari way of life is a complex series of morays and behaviours. The following examples help illustrate some of its more important or basic customs.

Minbari Lore – Customs and Rituals

The everyday life of a Minbari is filled with ritual and solemn observance of tradition. From a minute's prayer for the blessings of Valen upon waking each day to a five minute observance every time certain meals are eaten or drinks are consumed, a Minbari is as much bound by his rituals as he is strengthened by them. The following of

Ambassador Sinclair,

I urge you to pay close attention to this next lesson. The Minbari are no doubt a complete mystery to you right now. They have worked for centuries to keep a number of questions about their race unanswered to maintain some sense of control over what others know and what they must speculate. Ultimately, this is less about power and more about fear. As you will soon learn, the Minbari have not always been in control of their own culture or even their own physical forms. They have been subjected to the will of another, and no matter how consensual that may have been, it has left its mark on their behaviour where other races are concerned. They do not like others gaining too much knowledge about them, mostly because it reminds them at a deep subconscious level of what has happened in the past.

This will become clearer to you soon. For now, learn about the mind of the Minbari and use that knowledge in the days to come. I assure you these lessons have a point; right now, they are designed to keep you alive. Knowing how these people think will help you deal with those among them that do not like you very much. You know the ones I am talking about. Trust me. You are not the only one they resent right now. You should see the poor bastard Earth gave your old job to.

Sincerely,
A Friend

daily dogmas does grant a Minbari a certain surety of his place in the universe and the guidance of the spiritual world around him. In performing his rituals, a Minbari is tied to rote and repetition but he is also affirming that nothing happens in his life without his approval and guidance.

Social customs are similarly combined with ritual for a common ground that all Minbari can feel comfortable travelling. Instead of awkward silences and impromptu greetings, the Minbari know exactly what to say and how to say it when they encounter another of their race. This provides a framework for interaction that the Minbari never need to leave unless they mutually agree to do so, a very important social buffer that few other races so efficiently take advantage of.

Childhood

Minbari children are rarely raised directly by their parents. Shortly after birth, they are taken into their family's shared domicile and kept there for six months to one year to form a familial bond. After this period is over, the infants are removed and placed in a crèche maintained by their parent's clan. In rare instances when there are two clans involved, it is generally the mother's clan that is chosen though this can vary due to status or family desire. The crèche provided physical care and early social interactions with other members of what will become the infant's clan identity. Upon acceptance into a crèche, the infant is given a single syllable name. This name is used in any address to the newborn infant and stays with him for fifteen years or more.

The first crèche is a collective of twenty to fifty children, all of roughly the same age. Full term attendants of the worker caste provide constant care for the infants and see to their primary biological functions. Religious caste Minbari provide the first instances of education, stimulating the children's mental growth while the crèche personnel handle their physical needs. Scheduled visits by the parents ensure that the bonds of family are reinforced simultaneously for them as well as for their clan. The infants learn at a young age that family is a multi-layered concept and that no one type of parental figure is more important than any other.

After three to five years, depending on development, a Minbari child is moved to a second crèche and the age range of their peers is extended dramatically. The second crèche is a more complex experience with children ranging from 4 to 15 and instruction occurring on a constant basis. Minbari children are educated in this way with classes ranging from history and physics to the basics of caste behaviour. Most children are automatically moved to the

caste of their parents, with rare exceptions made for mixed parentage or obvious aptitude.

Physical and mental examinations are frequent during a child's education within the second crèche. It is here that early telepathic screening occurs, with children showing any active talent being moved to the religious caste automatically. A few children elude this process, mostly through late development or simple errors in the system. Early telepathic emergence can be easily overlooked, especially in children taught at an early age not to be a bother to their instructors. Once a Minbari graduates from the second crèche and is formally inducted into a caste, very little can change that status; even the late development of telepathic abilities is insufficient under normal circumstances.

It is in the second crèche that Minbari children learn to interact with others of their clan and caste. From this isolated microcosm of behaviour, the majority of a Minbari's social skills take shape. To encourage a broader range of experience, Minbari children in the second crèche are given periods of vacation from its confines to spend with their parents or with fosterage families chosen for their ability to help enlighten young minds. It is considered a great honour in any clan to be chosen for this role in society.

The second crèche ends with a graduation ceremony in when the young Minbari are fully accepted as adults into their society. They are given their clan name for the first time and may use it during introductions. Divisions of the second crèches occur within these clan names and those educated within a certain crèche are given a number to denote which cycle of the clan's heritage they were brought up in. Cycle names are based on famous members of the clans and their own honour is afforded to members of the crèche. These cycle numbers are reused after eleven generations are raised within them. Along with a second syllable added to their childhood moniker to denote adulthood, these define the full extent of a given Minbari's formal name.

On Naming of Minbari

By tradition, the names of Minbari are determined by the parents and the clan in different but equal parts. The first syllable is chosen by the parents or by a clan leader in the absence of them, while the second is provided by the presiding members of the Minbari's second crèche. It is a common, but not absolute, crèche tradition that the top student in each graduating group is given the honour of choosing their own last syllable, a rare moment of self-determinism in their rigid and ordered society.

There are a few exceptions to the two syllable rule of Minbari names, most dating back to the time before the coming of Valen and the reordering of the castes. Individuals before this period might have three or more syllables in their names, as there was not much societal control in those days. More currently, a few honorifics are in place that might provide a Minbari character with an atypical name. Foremost among these are the suffixes 'z' and 'iri'. Z is normally chosen for special reasons pertaining to the training of Minbari telepaths and is most likely to occur in their names. Iri is a religious affectation meaning 'enlightened' and is considered a great honour in that clan. Some religious crèches hold competitions with only one victor earning the right to its appellation.

In addition to this complication, the second crèches of the three castes have a different appellation. Warrior caste crèches are called sheres, the religious caste has fanes, and the worker caste's crèches are called gales. It is possible for one Minbari to have multiple crèches as part of their honorific, though this usually only occurs if the Minbari in question has been educated to suit a wide array of abilities. This can even happen after a Minbari has graduated from a crèche and been taken into a clan, though it is rare. When it does occur, the additional crèche is often of the religious caste as they are the most open to educating members outside their own clans. In any case where a Minbari has more than one crèche in his honor name, it is traditional to only list their initial graduation during anything but a full address to the Grey Council or other Minbari official.

An example of this process would be an infant of the Warrior caste. She lives for eight months with her biological parents and then given over to a first crèche for further nurturing. As their last directly familial act, the parents name their child Kel. She spends the next four years living with eighteen other infants of different Warrior caste clans learning the basics of life and Minbari language. By the time she graduates to her second crèche, she can walk, talk, and respond to direct questions with precise answers and allied reason. The second crèche teaches her about the Fire Wings clan and her eventual place among them. She begins to get headaches when too many other Minbari are around, but she fears being taken from what has become her home and so she hides them from the examiners when they test her.

When Kel graduates from the second crèche, she is eighteen, having spent three years also studying in a religious caste crèche to hone her scholastic talents. She remains a member of the warrior caste and upon her graduation, she is given the second syllable San by her clan elders. When she is presented to the Grey Council on her Day of Acceptance, she introduces herself as Kelsan of the

Second Shere of Maldura and the Fourth Fane of Tudan, newly of the Fire Wings Clan. Her membership in the warrior caste is understood from her Fire Wings heritage and her listing of the Second Shere of Maldura first.

Schooling

Minbari learn most of what they need to know in their crèches, but as they grow through the ranks of their chosen profession, a certain amount of vocational training is required. For these, there are academies set up to provide the right amount of education for a given set of roles in society. These are not widely based schools, as the Minbari culture favors focus over versatility. When a Minbari student attends one of these academies, they are trained in exactly what they need to know to perform their tasks and little more. A broad education in the human sense of the term does not exist for most Minbari after they leave their second crèche.

That said, the kinds of tasks a Minbari might be called upon to serve can be very complex, resulting in a need for a focused but expanded curriculum. This varies from job to job, but the Minbari do not usually task themselves with very narrow roles. Minbari are not trained to become bricklayers; they are trained to be construction specialists. They are not expected to just man particle beam weapons, they are educated in every type of shipboard tactical system. This wide vision combined with pinpoint education results in a people who tend to be extremely learned in a single field of expertise.

This is not to say that Minbari are never given a comprehensive schooling. The lessons they learn in their crèches are very comprehensive. Minbari children graduate knowing at least three languages and likely four. They are currently taught the Earth language of English because of their history with the human race and because of its growing importance in galactic commerce. Mathematics, science, and astronomy are all basics that must be mastered before a Minbari child leaves the crèche and joins their society as an adult.

One of the greatest honours a Minbari can receive from their superiors is the choice of continuing their education in a way of their choosing once they are given a role in society. This usually comes about as a reward for obvious aptitude in a field not directly related to their current position or as recognition for special service to their race in some way. In this way, a Minbari can gain a broad base of knowledge without having to concern themselves with how they are going to apply it. Some of the greatest artists of the Minbari began in this way, with members of the

castes given the freedom to pursue their inner visions and license to exercise their gifts as they saw fit.

Minbari Characters – Skills

When a Minbari Player picks skills, some thought should be given to how he learned these things and to what ends they have been put. There are no limitations for skill choices aside from what is already defined in the Babylon 5 rulebook for specific character classes, but some care should be given to deciding just how and when a given skill was gained. A wildly unrelated skill to the Minbari's caste or class role is perfectly acceptable, but it should also be part of the character's background in some way. A worker caste Minbari scientist with ranks in Perform should be given a reason for having it, such as a period of education in the singing arts as a reward for some great invention in his past or an innate talent that has never been given the freedom to grow.

Love and Marriage

Minbari have biological drives like any other race and one of these is the need to mate and procreate. Beyond this basic drive is the sentient capacity for emotion and the personal desire for someone to love and to be loved in return. Minbari have a very stratified society, but one of the few things that can easily jump over these carefully defined lanes is the emotional reactions one member of the race can have for another. While love as an abstract is considered a precious and wonderful thing by the contemplative Minbari, its practical application can be considerably more complicated.

Love between the castes has been a problem for the Minbari since the caste system was developed shortly after the last Great War one thousand years ago. Minbari are encouraged to be truthful in all things, but the admission of love between members of different castes is often an exception to this rule. Castes are by their nature exclusionist, and a romance between members of different castes is a direct violation of that structure. Minbari exhibiting signs of feeling this way are discouraged from pursuing their emotions.

This does not mean that marriages between the castes are impossible or even forbidden; they are just considered inconvenient and slightly scandalous. On a purely logical level, a Minbari seeking a mate outside his caste is effectively saying to his peers that there is no one in his caste he finds appealing or suitable as a companion. It also mixes the traits a given caste considers a representation of their ideal way of life with those of another caste, potentially resulting in an offspring that is lessened by the cultural 'contamination' of another philosophy.

There are two legal ways for two Minbari in love to deal with this issue other than giving in to societal pressure and abandoning their emotional bond. The first is to petition the elders of their respective clans to examine their heritage and compatibility to determine if they would be an acceptable pairing were their clans the same. If the answer is no, the decision can be appealed to the leaders of their castes and from there to the Grey Council itself, but this last ruling is final. Because this opens their entire lives and personal histories up to close and sometimes embarrassing scrutiny, most would be Minbari couples choose this option as a last resort.

The other possibility is for one of the Minbari to ask for emancipation from his or her clan and caste and then seek acceptance into the clan and caste of their intended mate. This is usually the first avenue attempted and the hardest one to attain. Not only are these societal groups loathe to give up any of their members, but those seeking admittance have rarely undergone any crèche or supplemental training in their ways. Such a member would likely bring shame on their family through some unwitting act that, had they been properly trained, would never have occurred. In practice, this is rarely done successfully, with most candidates rejected out of hand. Truly exceptional cases exist, but they usually involve extremely notable members of the race whose admittance to their desired clan would bring great status or honour to their newfound relatives.

A third option is for the Minbari to adopt a secret tryst and not inform either clan of their decision to wed in their hearts. This is not seen as the romantic ideal that it is in human and certain other cultures. Instead, it is a betrayal of the caste system and the honour of the Minbari lovers' clans. If they are caught, which almost always happens if a child results from their union, they face the most severe punishment the Minbari can inflict on their own kind; they join the ranks of the Casteless along with any offspring they might have. There is no appeal for this punishment; once it is done, it cannot be undone. That severity alone dissuades all but the most desperate from following their emotions this far.

When a marriage is condoned, it is only after a lengthy courtship process that involves nights of questioning both between the prospective mates and between each one and their clan elders. In the case of a mixed clan or caste wedding, this gets even more complicated as each Minbari must endure a session with their own elders and those of their intended spouse. A notable part of the courtship ritual is the 'three days of vigil'. During this time, the female of the pairing watches the male sleep in an attempt to see his true self reflected in his somnolent behaviour. If



she is pleased with what she sees, the courtship continues. If she is not, the courtship ends without recriminations.

The marriage itself is a sombre but elegant affair with a lengthy ritual and a service that brings the families of the two Minbari together to bear witness to their new union. In accordance with the fact that any marriage brings with it great change, the ceremony used to wed the Minbari couple is the same one used to herald any great upheaval, the Nafak'cha. The wedding variant of this is called the Shan'faal, but it is essentially performed the same way.

Instead of a religious leader intoning the steps of the Shan'faal as he would for a Nafak'cha, the words are intoned traditionally by the Minbari most responsible for the marriage taking place. If one Minbari was the dominant one in their relationship, he or she would typically take this role. This is not required, and some Minbari find it romantic to bestow the right of speaking the Shan'faal upon their more passive mate.

The Shan'faal is performed between two Minbari in a consecrated circle with a member of the religious caste standing at each cardinal compass direction to signify the event's blessed nature. The speaker looks deep into the eyes of his or her loved one as say, 'Will you follow me into fire, into storm, into darkness, into death?' After an affirmative answer, sometimes given through a simple nod and silence, the speaker continues. 'Then do it in testimony to the one who will follow, who will bring death, couched in the promise of new life, and renewal, disguised as defeat.' A red fruit, the berry of the Valana tree, is shared between them. The ceremony is then concluded with, 'From birth, through death and renewal, you must put aside old things, old fears, old lives. This is your death, the death of flesh, the death of pain, the death of yesterday.

Taste of it, and be not afraid, for I am with you to the end of time. Taste of it. And so it begins.'

A final note about Minbari marriages; divorce is not a concept among the Minbari. A single marriage is considered the norm for their people. Their strong belief in an afterlife usually keeps them from taking a second mate after the premature death of the first but even if they do, they cannot legally marry. When Minbari couples drift apart, as they often do, the couples separate and each becomes more involved with their roles in their clan and in

their caste. Reconciliations do occur, but they are also rare. Minbari do not enter into any arrangement easily and they just as rarely leave them.

The Elderly

Elders are greatly respected among the Minbari. As they are not a race prone to serious degradation in their bodies until very late in life, usually not until their 150th year of life if not later, even the elderly of the Minbari are usually fit enough to maintain themselves and continue serving a vital role in their society. This ability to remain active reduces the percentage of indigent Minbari compared to many other races, which can be misinterpreted as a lack of compassion for the old among them. In truth, the Minbari do not often care for their elders because their elders seldom need it.

Increased cognitive abilities and an ever more impressive base of experience to draw upon makes the aged among the Minbari veritable fonts of knowledge for those who would hear them speak. This only increased the value of these elderly members of their race, prompting the Minbari to ensure that their older generations are kept close at hand. In any large organization or gathering, places are reserved specifically for an elder to attend. Their words are always carefully considered and while they do not always have command, they are universally respected for their wisdom, their long years of service to their caste, and their insight into the past and its application in the present.

In return, the elderly are expected to keep themselves functional and useful. When a Minbari begins to feel that his effectiveness is soon to end as a member of Minbari society, he usually asks the leaders of his caste (assuming he is not one himself) for permission to be released to find his

own path into the future. This is essentially a euphemism for a Minbari taking the burden of his care away from his clan and family and departing to find somewhere quiet and out of the way to pass on. There are some who see it in the way it was originally intended- a chance to explore life outside the strictures of Minbari society before age renders them unable to do so. Regardless of the Minbari's motives, this last request is seldom refused and when it is, the elder tends to go about his own way regardless of the caste's wishes and without persecution for their defiance. At their age, they are entitled to be a little rebellious.

Death

Death holds little fear for the Minbari, at least on the surface of their society. In practical terms, most Minbari would rather choose life over death if the opportunity presented itself and they share the usual sentient instinct of self-preservation. On the other hand, their philosophy teaches a certain acceptance of mortality and the hope of a better life after this one in an afterlife that goes beyond petty concerns and the pains of the world.

Especially among the religious caste, these teachings are taken very seriously. All Minbari are raised to believe that life is a precious gift that can be given in service to a greater ideal and that to do so is a true honour for one's self and one's clan. In many ways, this resembles the concept of *giri* in the Japanese culture of Earth, though it is both wider and simpler in its application. Because the Minbari are taught to believe in a 'better world' in the afterlife, the typical fear of death is ameliorated. Because the Minbari are assured of their place in it, dying for a cause or a belief is not as frightening for them as it might be for other races.

The euphemism for this afterlife is 'the place where no shadows fall'. It is both a comment about the Shadows, the Vorlon's ancient rival and a constant concern of those Minbari people with reason to know of their existence, and a reference to the Minbari image of death as a great shadow that takes the light from the eyes of the living. In the Minbari view of spiritual matters, all living beings have a light within them that can be seen in their eyes. This light is invisible but can be seen with the vision of the soul, as the light comes from the soul itself. When a being dies, a shadow covers them and takes the light away. In the place where no shadows fall, this cannot happen and all who come there live forever.

Minbari burials are a complex affair as with more important events in their culture. The rocky nature of their own world makes it difficult to bury their dead, which has led to the twin customs of funeral pyres and crypts to

contain the ashes. The pyres usually take place in specially designated temples with crystal apertures in the ceiling used to focus solar light into an intensely hot coherent beam. This 'eyes of light' consume the dead and leave fine ash behind. These ashes are then collected in blessed flasks of crystal mined from the lands of the deceased's clan and placed in a family vault in remembrance of them and their contributions of the Minbari people.

In a few cases, there is another step to this process. Certain Minbari are so honoured among their people that upon their deaths, they receive the Rite of Den'zanor, translated from the Adrenato language of the religious caste as 'the viewing of lost sorrow'. During the ritual observance of Den'zanor, the body of a fallen leader or important figure among the Minbari people is preserved with a mixture of chemicals and herbal ingredients (including petals from the rare Nethai flower) and moved from colony to colony on its way to Minbar for final burial. If the person dies on Minbar, the journey takes it to every colony, while a death abroad only concerns those colonies that lie on a more or less straight line back to Minbar. If anything happens to the body during the Rite of Den'zanor, it is considered a grave omen and a deeply personal insult to the fallen Minbari's caste and clan.

Minbari Characters – Death and Mortality

The galaxy can be a dangerous place, and bad things sometimes happen to good people. If a Minbari dies during a Babylon 5 roleplaying campaign, the Rite of Den'zanor can be a good way for the Player to continue the Minbari in spirit and for other players in the game to become involved in his fate after death. The journey that a Minbari's body undergoes during Den'zanor is a natural avenue for game plots and intrigue, especially if the Minbari had any enemies while he was alive or was involved in events that would follow him even past the veil of death.

At the Game's Master's option, the Minbari player might be allowed to create another character involved with the performance of the Den'zanor, perhaps a religious caste priest or warrior caste honour guard. In these ways, the game can progress in new directions while staying true to the tenets of the setting. Death should be rare, but when it occurs, it should have a real impact on those who lives the fallen touches and those he cared about while he was still alive.

Perceptions Outside the Minbari Race

The Minbari are a well travelled and learned people with a great deal of experience dealing with other cultures, though this interaction is generally at arm's length. This enforced

separation colours their perceptions and understanding of races other than their own, but they try to base their opinions of the facts they have available from their limited perspective. When the Minbari consider a race important enough to trade with or engage in a cultural exchange, they take their time and examine them in as much detail as possible before initiating contact.

When these examinations are either complete or contact is forced before the Minbari are ready, the viewpoint established by those directly involved in the exchange tends to become the prevailing opinion of the Minbari people in general. The Minbari tend to feel, think, and act as one in most matters of import to their world, which leaves them prone to establishing and perpetuating stereotypes about other cultures. While most races are guilty of this behaviour, it can be especially dominant in the Minbari people and very difficult for a race cast in a bad light to overcome. In recent history, only humans have been notably successful in changing the Minbari's opinion of their race and even this effort is far from complete.

In general, the following cultural stereotypes are shared by any Minbari with a reason to have an opinion of the race in question. The Worker caste and the religious caste are the most likely to think as proscribed in this section, with the former deriving its views from direct contact during trading missions and the latter taking their cues from Minbari who have returned to Minbar or one of her colonies with information to share about the other sentient species in the galaxy.

- ⑤ Centauri. The Minbari have been trading partners in the past with the Centauri, but their excesses and other 'inappropriate' behaviour prompted them to sever ties and close their territorial borders to the Lions of the Galaxy. While there are few records of why the Minbari broke off cultural exchange efforts with the Centauri, most assume it was because they recognised the expansionistic tendencies of the Republic and had no desire to become involved in their conquests. The Centauri are considered hedonistic, irrational, and untrustworthy by most Minbari, an opinion that only tends to be reinforced whenever they actually meet one.
- ⑤ Narn. The Narn people are not well known to the Minbari and the Minbari Federation would prefer to keep things that way. While many in the religious caste sympathise with the plight of the Narn against their Centauri oppressors, they have no intention of getting involved in what seems to be an endless cycle of blood and violence. If there is a peaceful way for the Narn to resolve their differences with

their former conquerors, few Minbari have any faith they will find it.

- ⑤ Humans. The human race has only been known to the Minbari for a little over a decade and already they have fought a war against them, nearly exterminated their entire species, and surrendered to them without explanation or apology. Few Minbari even know the reason for their cessation of hostilities, but the majority are content to follow the commands of the Grey Council and end their persecution of the people of Earth. This does not mean their resentment has disappeared and a human can expect a cool reception at best from most Minbari they meet. A notable exception is the ambassador of Minbar to the diplomatic space station Babylon 5. As friendly as one of their race usually ever gets, she seems eager to learn all she can about humanity and shows great patience in this endeavour. Most other Minbari would just as soon leave a room rather than stay with a human in it.
- ⑤ Vorlons. The Minbari are the closest race the Vorlons have to an ally. It is well known that while the Minbari do not fly missions into Vorlon space, their own borders are completely open to the mysterious aliens and they view them with a sort of pseudo-religious awe. Minbari respect, fear, and admire the powerful, secretive Vorlons and treat them with quiet respect whenever their paths infrequently cross.
- ⑤ The League of Non-Aligned Worlds. When the Minbari have to deal with any member of these 'lesser' races, that description seems to colour everything they do or say. The Minbari consider themselves superior to each of the races of the League, an attitude not helped by the twin facts that they clearly are and that the races know it all too well. While each race has at one time or another attempted to curry favour with the Minbari and failed, they are not seen in a bad light because of it. Indeed, the Minbari hardly pay the League any attention, a fact that might come to haunt them when they require allies in the future.
- ⑤ The First Ones. The First Ones are a collection of ancient races that predate even the earliest instances of Minbari history. While the Vorlons count among their number, the other Old Ones are far more isolationist and rarely if ever reveal themselves to others. The Minbari have only sparse records of the First Ones and consider them a dangerous mystery of the galaxy and a puzzle to be solved at a great distance if at all. Few Minbari who encounter a First One live to tell of the experience, though their

lives are lost more often to negligent accident than from any kind of willing hostility.

The Minbari Languages; Vik, Lennan, and Adrenato

The three main languages of the Minbari have their roots in the planet Minbar's divergent history before the coming of Valen at the time of their last Great War. Before he united the Minbari people and brought the warring castes together, there were a number of subcultures with little central motivation and several autonomous leaders. The planet's three primary continents were home to more or less self contained 'countries', with multiple villages and city-states united only by a single caste and their use of a single language. The reformation of the castes dissolved these minor administrations, keeping only their languages as a form of unity the people inhabiting these areas could recognise as familiar.

The divisive nature of these countries before unification still exists in the form of dialects within the three languages. Each village and city-state had its own unique way of speaking and writing whichever language was prevalent in its area; these became accepted dialects when the Minbari became organized into the castes and each main language was assigned to them. For the most part, people living in a given area at the time of Valen became part of the same caste, but in some instances Minbari were moved either physically or philosophically into another caste and given reason to learn a new language. By doing this, their own linguistic concepts form new dialects in their additional tongue.

By the time of Babylon 5, the Minbari have three languages and ninety-seven dialects and subtongues. The main languages are Vik of the warrior caste, Lennan from the worker caste, and Adrenato of the religious caste. The dialects are somewhat evenly divided among them, with Vik having twenty, Lennan split into twenty four, and Adrenato with twenty seven. The majority of these dialects are effectively clan tongues, with a few simply conforming to the speech of remote locations such as distant Minbari colonies and villages in physically isolated locations.

Subtongues are another matter. Each one is based off a dialect, but is the sole creation of a specific family with the intent of creating words not found in other languages. Created long before the unification of the clans, these subtongues were made to provide family members within a clan with a way to communicate among themselves as

a form of solidarity. Once the castes were united and the crèche system was introduced, the need for subtongues diminished and most were relegated to history. A few persist as clan tradition, but for the most part subtongues are considered a curiosity of Minbari culture and studied only by scholars. It is interesting to note that subtongues did not always create their own words but rather assigned new meaning to existing ones. For instance, the word n'kai exists in all 97 variations of Minbari languages without ever meaning the same thing twice.

Vik, the language of the warrior caste, is a harsh sounding tongue compared to the other two main languages. With a heavy emphasis on consonant sounds in its words and numerous parenthetical and hyphenated forms of speech, Vik sounds as it is intended to be spoken; sentences in Vik are short, clipped, and extremely abbreviated. There are few adjectives in Vik, with the focus of the language being verbs and nouns almost exclusively. This makes it a very effective form of combat communication, with two fluent Vik speakers being able to perfectly co-ordinate their efforts on the battlefield with a minimum of word exchange. Vik is also known as the 'dark' Minbari language, a reference to the warrior caste's own acknowledgement that death and combat are dark arts best done in darkness.

Lennan is a simple language that has multiple complications of a technical nature. Of the three languages, it has the largest number of jargon words and phrases incorporated into its base form. These satisfy the many worker caste divisions and their need for a way to communicate complex scientific and engineering concepts to their peers. A fluent speaker of Lennan can describe algorithms and architecture in the same sentence using only basic words of the language. Unlike Vik, Lennan has a massive number of adjectives and a word count exceeding 680,000 words. Of these, half are descriptors of some kind, with most of these being technical in origin. When a Minbari wishes to explain a physical concept or give a description of a person, place, or thing, he is most likely to use Lennan for precision's sake. Lennan is the 'light' Minbari language, so called because of the racial belief that creation is the bright counterpoint to destruction.

Adrenato is the 'grey' language and the tongue of the religious caste. Called grey because of its use as the official language of the Grey Council of Minbar and the concept of grey being the balance of light and dark, Adrenato is a melding of the other two languages along with concepts of its own. While not as detailed as Lennan or as precise as Vik, Adrenato is the only language of the Minbari to deal with emotions, spiritual concepts, and other metaphysical matters. Minbari consider Adrenato the language of the soul and most can speak it quite effectively. With only a

few exceptions held as private to the other two castes, all Minbari rituals are conducted in Adrenato. Members of the religious caste tend to speak Adrenato at all times, even using it in preference during situations when one of the other two languages would be more efficient.

Linguistically, the three languages of the Minbari are interchangeable and it is not uncommon for a conversation between two Minbari to switch between them several times. It is considered bad form to change languages within a single sentence, though this can be used for emphasis when making a point relevant to one clan or another. Dialects and subtongues are generally either completely dominant or left unused during speech intentionally. These rarely come into use at only certain points in a conversation unless the speaker is also trying to emphasise something.

For provide an extended example of Minbari language concepts in action, here is an excerpt from a briefing given by a worker caste Minbari to the warrior caste captain of a Sharlin cruiser regarding a malfunctioning engine array. As shown, when the conversation begins, the captain is speaking Vik and the technician using it in deference to the other's rank.

Technician: <speaking Vik because of the captain's caste and superior rank> *A'shal Jurdeer, tes a'doro'gale a'Hiramo. Mel mata'ago?* (I am Jurdeer, of the Fourth Gale of Hiram. How am I to serve you?)

Captain: <speaking Vik because he is warrior caste on a military vessel> *D'shaal fan'ek ia tor'daramo veshenek gorai.* (You will explain the important problem with the engines.) The 'important' affectation is included here because through it, the captain is expressing his desire to only hear what is keeping them from functioning.

Technician: <the first sentence is in Vik, the second is in Lennan> *A'shana'hir pesh'tala kor veshenek mor'alatao. Mej matalamej he'ano feden a haraj kin'kolobet a gunara ton teai'he-ajo.* (I do not know why the engines will not respond. We are replacing the power feeds in an attempt to clear any disconnects that may be impairing them.)

Captain: <the first two sentences are in Lennan, showing that he has been educated in some technical arts, the second switches back to Vik, and the last is in Adrenato> *Mej'a kultano ha'ano fel'fedan pur gura adanet. Tur kultania ha'mani Jalthamo rega ana se'ama. D'sha mega ve'ta'a.* [quietly, to himself] *Ka lashok ino to'pari.* (You all have replaced the power feeds twice. Try reinstalling the jump matrix at the same time. You are dismissed from me. I think the engine is possessed.) The second sentence

is actually spoken in a dialect of Vik, done so to indicate that the captain is irritated enough to lapse out of proper protocol. The third sentence is sardonic musing on the captain's part, done in Adrenato because it is the only one of the three languages with a linguistic concept of 'possession'.

Minbari Lore – Language, Society, and Diplomacy

The Minbari put a great deal of stock into their language, its uses, and how they communicate with others. It is considered polite to use the caste language of the person you are speaking with, to answer a question in the same language as it was given, and to use a dialect only when speaking with someone who also has a familial or personal connection to it. At the same time, it is customary to use the language of a superior's caste, to use Adrenato for all spiritual situations, Vik for all conflict oriented issues, and Lennan for anything regarding engineering or technical.

This can make for complicated conversation, with the rules of etiquette constantly changing depending on the topic and speakers of the moment. Maintaining an effective social presence while speaking with a Minbari requires a basic grounding in all three of their languages, which is why diplomats from other races have been less than effective at establishing meaningful dialogues with Minbari in an official capacity. Anyone only speaking one Minbari language is essentially only speaking to one third of their culture at a time, resulting in conversation that seems pedantic and juvenile to a Minbari speaker.

Roleplaying Note: As an optional rule, Games Masters may wish to impose a -4 penalty to any Diplomacy checks made with a Minbari as the subject if the character making the check only knows one Minbari language. This penalty is reduced to -2 if two languages are known and disappears completely if the character knows all three.

Minbari Arts

As mentioned, the Minbari are more sensitive to bright colours and loud sounds than humans. This shows in their artistic styles and their musical tastes. The Minbari prefer muted textures and colour patterns in painting and architecture; most of their buildings and decorations are either complex shades of grey, white and black, or pale hues that transition evenly across an entire surface. Their art tends to be mostly simple collections of shapes and colours arranged in manners that are pleasing to their delicate sensibilities. There is little variation that can be ascribed to specific clans, though it is true that the warrior

caste tends toward blacks and darker arrangements in fashion, art, and building styles.

- ⑤ Pashal. The Pashal style of art is a common one on Minbar, though its influence is lessened the farther out one goes from the homeworld. Some colonies do not appreciate this type of painting, which involved broad brush strokes of one color over a corresponding one of a single shade lighter or darker in hue. Usually the province of religious caste aficionados, pieces by Pashal himself are always about spiritual dogmas and enlightenment, but latter adherents widened the style's scope to incorporate other subject matters.
- ⑤ D'vost. A word in Vik meaning death, the D'vost style encompasses a technique of sculpture using metal to create anthropomorphic shapes and incorporates blades and other violent imagery. D'vost is not well accepted outside the warrior caste, but many of the clans within that caste have pieces by the style's founder and his six apprentices in their high halls. D'vost's style is so admired by the warrior caste that the founder, Kaname, was given his own clan name upon his death. Members of that worker caste clan are afforded special treatment and the right to serve in the military with the same rank privileges as if they were warrior caste.
- ⑤ Vapar'shan. The Vapar'shan style is an architectural one and many of the buildings of Minbar and its immediate colonies are constructed according to its design. By using laser cutting tools to angle and polish natural crystal formation, the Vapar'shan school teaches that beauty is inherent in all things. According to this artistic philosophy, building design is not so much construction as it is the removal of obstacles in the way of an edifice's achievement of that beauty.
- ⑤ Dongal. A rival of Pashal while they served together in the religious caste, Dongal appreciated the idea of multiple colours of complimentary colours over a background of a clashing hue. This style has been both appreciated by younger generations and despised by older, more established ones since it was founded. Dongal painting experiences a revival every three hundred years or so, with new pieces submitted to galleries and created for private individuals by young students of the form. These students usually get their start in the art by performing what gave Dongal himself his fame-artistic terrorism. When an ancient building or other respected structure is used as a canvas for a sweeping and often massive piece of art in this

style, it symbolises another aspirant of Dongal coming into his talents.

Music is as varied for the Minbari people as art, but there are some limitations that are common to all its accepted forms. Very little Minbari music would ever be described by members of any other race as 'loud'. The Minbari's sensitive hearing would not bear such noises for very long and they certainly would not be considered an art form. This sensitivity of hearing allows for some unique kinds of music, including waveform reverberation too slight for other races to hear and subsonic melodies that only Minbari and some base forms of animal life can even perceive.

Another thing about Minbari music that is unusual from a human perspective is the apparent lack of it. The Minbari value silence for its value as a meditative tool. Often, they prefer the eloquent nature of their own thoughts to remain unaltered by background noises. Music has its own place and role in Minbari society, a role that does not have as wide a scope as it does for humans or many other races in the galaxy. A Minbari tends to appreciate soft, sibilant music when it accompanies a ritual or when the musical performance is the central cause of a social engagement such as a concert or musically-accompanied stage play.

- ⑤ Jor'vala. A simple form of music played on a wooden frame strung with thin lines covered in tiny bells. Jor'vala is played in compositions ranging from a single note-gesture to entire songs of up to ten minutes in length. Musicians schooled in Jor'vala learn to manipulate the sound of their bells by holding the frame in various places, different gestures for shaking the instrument, and by passing their hands over the bells as they ring. A trained Jor'vala player can create an entire symphony from their single instrument.
- ⑤ The Many and the One. The phrase used to describe vocal choirs of the Minbari. One Minbari singing is considered somewhat pretentious by their culture as it singles the vocalist out for attention while performing what many would see as a meaningless task. Choirs of Minbari, on the other hand, are appreciated for their harmonious blending of sounds. When brought together in this way, The Many and the One sign ancient tales and historical events. The 'One' part of their name indicates that when done as part of a choir, a soloist is acceptable as he is accentuating what many are doing together, a valuable part of the Minbari caste ideal.

5 The Turs Andayr. The legendary ‘Dance of Crimson’, the Turs Andayr is an all but forbidden musical combat art practiced among the Wind Swords, Dark Knives, and Night Walker clans. A few Minbari trained in the performance of the Turs Andayr have taught the skill to other warrior caste members, but these instances are rare and usually only done for warriors with great potential. The Dance of Crimson is played by two or more dancers wielding incredibly sharp crystal daggers in each hand. When these blades strike another, they ring with a piercing chime. When blood touches them, thin grooves fill with the vital fluid and change the pitch of the ringing. A trained cadre of dancers usually serve together as a special infantry group and kept together as much for their musical ability as their fighting prowess. (See the Turs Andayr feat for more information on this style of music/combat.)

Performance arts such as dance, acting, and other physical displays are a rich part of Minbari society. For the most part, these arts are dedicated to the teaching of history, the re-enactment of important events, or lessons on spiritual enlightenment. Exposure to other cultures has expanded the performance arts somewhat, but most Minbari still prefer the classics of their own race. The farther away from Minbar a give colony is, the more likely that nearby races have introduced them to cultural arts the Minbari living there appreciate.

Despite their goal oriented society and serious nature, the Minbari do appreciate a little frivolity and humour in their leisure time. In fact, the very thought of someone willingly wasting time doing something frivolous is so against their cultural norm that most Minbari find examples of this behaviour extremely humorous. The same can be said for dramatisations of situations where Minbari or members of any other race are presented with enlightenment and fail to grasp it. When this happens to fellow Minbari, it is amusing, but they find it occurring with members of other races hilarious.

- 5 Kalak’dral. A stage performance art showcasing the Minbari’s superior reaction speeds through the use of slight of hand, juggling, and precision tumbling. An exception to the rule that few Minbari performs do anything without an underlying moral or message, Kalak’dral performers are purely abstract and entertain through spectacle only. Despite this, they are very popular with most Minbari, though less so with the religious caste than others.
- 5 Shadow Plays. Entire stage plays performs behind a thin sheet of milky translucent crystal, these performances teach an overall lesson that appearance are misleading and that function is greater in value than form. Each play has its own moral as well, ranging from Vesh a’kan’a Esh, a story of greed and corruption of purpose, to Halnur’I, a classic tale of heroism and the nobility

to be found in sacrificing one’s honour to save another. Full shadow plays use coloured lighting to suggest mood, but all traditional performances are done with actors and costumes only. Physical props are considered a detraction from the art form.

- 5 Ial o’Kalos. This stage art is almost entirely performed by members of the religious caste and has an appeal that transcends cultural divisions. The name is Adrenato for ‘Parade of Fools’, a appropriate title for the production style. Ial o’Kalos plays have hundreds of variations, but the message is always the same. A single character is introduced and places in a situation where most Minbari would gain wisdom from the encounter. The character does not and somehow suffers for his blindness. Though Ial o’Kalos characters are never physically harmed in these plays, they do often endure loss of station or honour as a result of their lack of enlightenment.

Minbari Characters – Racial Perform Skills

Any of the performance arts listed here are suitable for specialisation ranks of the Perform skill for Minbari players, though few other races have the time, abilities, or inclination to learn these techniques. A few, such as the Turs Andayr, would be dishonourable to teach outside the caste or clan that created it. This does not mean that a Minbari could not do so, but it would be a black mark against him and his clan. As such, few of any of these skills are ever performed by non-Minbari. The Ial o’Kalos is an exception, and many Minbari get an odd sense of amusement at watching humans or other races play the main characters in the Parade of Fools.

Many of the Minbari focus on a single art form to the exclusion of all others. As an optional rule regarding competitions in the various skills presented here, Minbari players can designate the same skill multiple times for different ranks in Perform. Doing this has two effects. One, any tie rolled in an opposed role between performers is won by the players with the most ranks in the subject art. Two, every four full ranks in the same art form grants a synergy bonus of +1 to rolls when performing it. This bonus has an upper limit, becoming +5 at 20 ranks.

At the Games Master’s discretion, this rule could be applied to the Perform skill in general, regardless of the race of the Player using it. If this is done, the synergy bonus should be altered to +1 for every five full ranks in the skill to simulate the ability of the Minbari to focus so intensely on a single artform.

Castes of the Minbari

The fact that Minbari are divided into three castes is an easy enough concept to grasp, but their devotion to this societal system is an extremely complex topic, especially when viewed as a racial whole. One planet's population obeying a social mandate is an incredible phenomenon, but factoring in multiple colony worlds and external facilities makes it an ideal with little historical precedent. As if this were not impressive enough, an outside observer must all consider that the three-caste concept has been in more or less successful operation for a full one thousand years. This, combined with its integrally linked Grey Council leadership, makes it one of the longest lasting planetary governments in galactic history.

Of course, the castes are not without their own internal tensions. It cannot be denied that the worker caste is the least of the three castes in political influence and respect from its religious and warrior peers. The warrior caste is often domineering and while it follows the edicts of the Grey Council, it does not often do so without protests and sometimes more drastic actions. The suicide of the Wind Sword leader at his reception of the order to surrender following the Battle of the Line is a prime example of this. The religious caste wields considerable power, but its distance from mundane affairs often leaves it in a state of disconnect with the other two castes.

Regardless of its problems, the castes are a dynamic and functioning social framework with a deeply rooted origin in the history of Minbar. It is strictly adhered to by the Minbari people even on its most isolated colony worlds and every other aspect of the race's sociological order is inextricably linked to its continued existence. It is both independent and interdependent of the Minbari people, providing guidance and authority while simultaneously existing only as long as the Minbari allow it to continue.

The Castes in Detail: Religious

In many ways, the religious caste of the Minbari is their leadership caste and has been since the reformation of the castes and the creation of the Grey Council. While the council is ruled by three from each caste, Valen's own leanings and the philosophical style of his lessons have left a predisposition for most Minbari to follow the lead of the religious caste in all matters not specifically pertaining to their own caste's sphere of influence. As such, most of the race looks to the religious caste for leadership and respects

its authority even when their own conscience or guidance tells them otherwise.

To pose an example of this invisible authority, the Grey Council voted to end the Earth/Minbari war despite the fact that the vote was deadlocked between the warrior and religious castes. The worker caste, with no true opinion on either side, upheld the religious leaders' proposal to end the battle more because it was from the religious caste rather than their motives behind the request. For their own part, the religious caste is well aware of this reaction in their people and have been silently exercising this unwritten power since the inception of the Grey Council one thousand years ago.

The Philosophies

The primary duty of the religious caste is to serve as guidance for their people and to administer the lessons of history as they pertain to the culture and society of the Minbari. This is done mostly through philosophy and religion in the form of a mostly abstract theological model of ideals and concepts. There are a few icons for this religion, with Valen as its guidance figure and several 'divinities' that appear in their history before the formation of the Grey Council or the horrors of the last Great War.

Valen himself would be said in human terms to have been an agnostic, with a belief in the divine that transcend specific forms and focused more on concepts of morality and spiritual absolutes. This shows in the establishment of the Kal'alysh'a, the 'High Philosophies'. Created by Valen and the Minbari religious leaders of a millennia past, its loose structure and overriding principles may explain its mostly intact survival as a religion in current times. By focusing more on the rights and obligations of the individual, the Kal'alysh'a ministers to the conscience of the worshipper rather than espouse a need to believe in external authority figures.

This last aspect of the Minbari's guiding principles has not always been popular with the members of the religious caste, especially those taking advantage of their assumed authority. Without greater emphasis on the bringers of the message, those Minbari have been unable to rally the support needed to make changes to the caste or bolster their authority into something more tangible. This fact alone has kept the possibility of caste schism to a minimum, though the situation has dangerously close. In recent times, the order to surrender at the Battle of the Line has driven a wedge between the religious and warrior castes that may someday erupt into open hostilities. It is hoped that wiser minds will prevail before that occurs.



The other mitigating factor keeping peace between the castes and within the religious caste specifically is the establishment of the tenets of the Kal'alysh'a. These guiding philosophies are universal to all Minbari, though individuals members of the race may follow them to differing degrees if at all. It is rare for a Minbari to not pay at least lip service to the Eight Paths; those who openly flaunt the principles are socially outcast and generally have to leave the presence of their fellow Minbari as a pariah for doing so. Following the tenets leaves a Minbari morally unable to justify actions against his people or his culture, thus helping to ensure the peace that has lasted for the race for the last thousand years.

To understand the philosophy of the religious caste and the Minbari as a race through their teachings, the Eight Paths of Light and Darkness must be reviewed in detail. It is not enough to know what they are; one has to understand why they originated and how they are applied to daily Minbari life. Some, such as Unity and Obedience are simple to grasp in principle but have wide reaching effects for the Minbari that go beyond their basic definitions.

The Eight Paths of Light and Darkness are:

- ⑤ Unity. All are one, and none shall act against another.
- ⑤ Honour. Each deed must be true or all deeds become false.
- ⑤ Strength. Only from strength can unity be achieved.
- ⑤ Action. Deeds carry honour, words carry only the promise of deeds.
- ⑤ Obedience. For anything to function, each part must know and accept its place.
- ⑤ Faith. Those who believe in something can achieve anything.
- ⑤ Responsibility. Only through trust can obedience be expected.
- ⑤ Enlightenment. Faith is built upon understanding and experience.

Unity

Unity is the guiding principle as put forth by Valen and as such is afforded the greatest deference by the Minbari people. It is an accepted fact of life among most that the common corollary to this tenet, Minbari shall not kill Minbari, be followed without question. The idea of one of their kind killing another is unthinkable to the race as a whole, though exceptions exist. The act of murder is considered the most deplorable thing a Minbari can do to another of his race and is met by the greatest punishment

they can imagine- exile from the Federation. To be stripped of one's caste and clan to be abandoned to the other races of the galaxy is a fate worse than death in the minds of most Minbari.

Unity is not just a deterrent concept; it is also a philosophy of harmony and existence in unison with others. For a Minbari to fulfill the many duties of Unity, he need only work within his given task to the betterment of his people. Whether this means manning a weapons console on a Tigara attack cruiser or building endless stretches of roadway across a new colony world, a Minbari is acting towards Unity simply by keeping the larger scheme of his people's well being in mind.

It has been postulated by Minbari religious scholars that Valen chose Unity as the highest of the Kal'alysh'a because of its galvanising effect on their race. By setting it above the similar philosophies of Obedience and Responsibility, he was also ensuring that the race's society did not become one of mindless adherence to dogma or overly focused on authority and position. Unity is a higher ideal, one that can have different meanings to different Minbari. Its place as the High Principle of the Kal'alysh'a maintains that while toil and leadership have their place, it is the greater goal of unity that should drive the Minbari.

Honour

Though Unity is the High Principle of the Kal'alysh'a, Honour is the one that guides most Minbari in their day to day lives and has a great impact on every aspect of their mindsets. Considered the more important of the twin Ideals, Honour and Faith, by the warrior caste, it is followed by them through a stratified system of behaviours and consequences that arose long after the time of Valen himself. Originally, Honour was a simple concept amounting to little more than its basic form – each deed must be true or all deeds become false – but as the Minbari evolved as a culture in the wake of the formation of the Grey Council, it evolved as a principle as well.

To the religious caste, Honour has an equal importance compared to Faith, though it does form the basis for their lives within Minbari society as well. While they do not have the same rigid behavioural model as the warrior caste, they ascribe to many of the complications that caste has introduced to the idea. Foremost among these is the modification made to Honour's primary corollary, Minbari do not lie. It has become an accepted practice among the Minbari as a whole that one can retain honour by lying for another as long as it is to keep them from losing honour.

This act, called Den'par by the warrior caste, sometimes calls for the sacrifice of one's own life if conditions call for it, and can involve dishonourable actions as well as falsehoods. In any case, this practice has sufficiently muddied the question of Minbari honesty to make it unpredictable at best. Valen's teachings did not help this situation, as his placement of unity above honour opened the door to allow self-sacrifice in the name of Unity. Ultimately, it is best to examine the motivations of any speaker to determine truth for one's self, whether the words come from a Minbari or not.

Strength

When Valen put forth the Eight Paths, he was ministering to a predominantly warrior culture with centuries of inner conflict to overcome. To completely discount the importance of their warlike inclinations would keep the philosophy he intended to impart from ever being fully accepted. The best way to maintain that tradition of power among the Minbari while showing them a better way to exercise it was to establish the philosophy of Strength. This principle provided a channel for Minbari aggression and validated it as an undeniable part of their psychology.

Not surprisingly, the warrior caste has adopted the message of Truth as one of their guiding tenets. Theirs is, they rightly feel, the greatest claim on the concept of Strength and it is through their actions of guardianship and military action that they carry out what they have defined as the obligations of this Path. Because the tenets all apply to each caste, they have never been able to justify keeping the religious and worker castes from forming their own military structures, but they do insist that theirs be the largest and most supported by the Grey Council as is befitting the warrior caste. This places with the warrior caste the greatest balance of Strength and the heaviest burden of ensuring that it is used responsibly.

By making Strength a tenet, Valen provided the most hostile of the Minbari a shelter to practice their tendencies in without violating the guidelines of the new Grey Council or the formative beliefs of the new Minbari religion. With no need to move against the establishment, the possibility of a military coup against the fragile authority of the reformed castes was reduced drastically. As they no longer had a reason to fight their own kind because of the suddenly accessible resources of their historical rivals, the warrior caste fell into line and became the strong left hand Valen needed to fight the Great War and to protect the Minbari people. In Strength, the Minbari have truly found unity.

Action

Action is the least regarded tenet, not because the Minbari disrespect it but because it becomes a given when the others are practiced properly. The basic idea behind Action is to act in accordance with one's station and beliefs, something that most Minbari do without question and therefore without need of a tenet to provide impetus. Those few Minbari that do focus on action as their guiding principle tend to strive harder, do more, and accomplish things that others never even reach for.

In this way, those few Minbari manage to capture the true intent behind the formation of Action as a Path of Light and Darkness. Valen knew that the Minbari had a tendency to achieve something that suited their needs and then never strive to better it even if doing so was something they could potentially achieve. This held the danger of stagnancy for the Minbari if they were not prompted to strive for more than they had, more than was just enough to accomplish their needs. The principle of Action was intended to spur the Minbari people into seeking more for themselves, something their caste structure had never allowed them the luxury of developing on their own.

Unfortunately, of all the Paths of Light and Darkness, Action is the most misunderstood. Most Minbari see it only as an admonishment that they should perform their duties without fail. This concept is more properly the tenet of Obedience, but as with most messages that must stand the test of time, some things have become lost over the years. Those few Minbari, mostly of the religious caste, who comprehend Action's original purpose consider it the Failed Path. Instead of trying to explain its truth to the other Minbari, they embody its spirit by acting proactively against many of the factors that contribute to their race's lethargy. It is through their subtle but incessant actions that Minbari have accomplished most of their advancements since the time of the last Great War.

Obedience

A philosophy that defines and exemplifies the Minbari's adherence to their roles in society, their castes, and their clans, Obedience is sometimes called the Invisible Discipline. This echoes its place in Minbari society as the tenet expected of all and taught by example alone. Obedience rarely has any active proponents because it is considered integral to all of the others. Because of its unique position within the scheme of the Paths of Light and Darkness, Obedience cannot be adhered to actively without falling into the province of one of the other principles.

When someone tries to administer Obedience to others, that becomes an application of Responsibility. When one organises Obedience during a given task, Unity has been achieved instead. Obedience followed to fulfill the obligations of one's duty is Honour. Trying to achieve Obedience by finding new ways to perform in the role expected of a Minbari is adhering to Action. Fulfilling the tenet of Obedience to serve the greater good of one's caste or clan provides both with Strength. Obedience in the face of adversity is an act of Faith, and understanding all of these truths brings Enlightenment. As such, Obedience exists both simultaneously as one of the philosophies of the Kal'alysh'a and also as the shadow of the other seven.

Whether fairly or not, Obedience has become synonymous with the worker caste. The efforts of the caste are guided by their duty to the Minbari people, a truth that they other two castes see as the physical expression of Obedience. Some in the worker caste take pride in this opinion, while others see it as one more example of how the rest of the Minbari see the religious and warrior castes as dominant over theirs. The fact that this opinion has never led the worker caste to act against the others is an ironic proof of their adherence to Obedience after all.

Faith

One of the two key philosophies of the religious caste, with the other being Enlightenment, Faith is a vital part of the social fabric of all Minbari. The Grey Council rules through the power given them by the Minbari race and their faith in their authority and wisdom. The warrior clans are given access to dangerous weapons and allowed to police the many territories of the Minbari Federation because of the race's faith in their skills and devotion to duty. This illustrates Valen's original insistence that Faith be about more than religion. In his opinion, the greatest faith a Minbari could have was in himself.

This part of the original message tenet is not as recognised as the religious aspects, but this is more due to the nature of sentient beings to need a higher ideal to hold as separate from itself than any failing in the teaching. Minbari understand the need to believe in their own attributes but they choose to consider Faith a tenet mostly focused on the spiritual side of their beings. As such, they manage to achieve the spirit of Valen's teachings – coming together in a common cause they define themselves – even if they step outside the letter of it. In fact, this kind of interpretation of his philosophical teachings was something Valen encouraged in the Minbari.

The original meaning of the Faith is still adhered to by the Minbari, though not as much in the name of this tenet than

in their actions as a race. This Faith can sometimes lead to pride and arrogance, as those convinced of their own importance and abilities have a tendency to see themselves as superior to others. This does not usually hinder inter-Minbari relationships, but it does show in their dealings with others. The Minbari are well aware of their own strengths and rich traditions, something they do not always see in other races. In this way, Faith can come into conflict with the unity Valen hoped the Minbari would achieve with the rest of the galaxy.

Responsibility

It was only because Valen did not wish to move too quickly or apply his ideas of society too heavy handed that Responsibility was not ranked higher on the Eight Paths. In addition to its stated link with Obedience, Responsibility is a key factor in the establishment of Unity according to the ideals of the Kal'alysh'a. It is through Responsibility that proper interaction between peers and equals is accomplished. This philosophy is central to one of the primary messages Valen sought to teach when he unified the Minbari; all are equals, none are higher than any other. The responsibility of those in charge for those they lead was integral in his lessons of this equality.

Philosophy and evolution do not always agree, nor does one always lead to the possibility of the other. While the all are one policy is a fine and noble one, in the face of leadership and the power a government or a rank structure must wield over those in it, equality becomes less tangible until it is little more than a hopeful concept lost in the minutiae of daily life in a functioning society. It was for this reason that Valen did not make equality itself one of the Eight Paths, instead trusting that emphasising Responsibility would ensure that some of this ideal would continue to exist once his philosophy weathered the centuries.

Responsibility is also the most important tenet to consider in the face of the coming Great War. While some Minbari have forgotten the lesson of history that taught them the value of allies, others are guided by the corollary often quoted by religious caste members trying to work with warrior caste Minbari on matters that concern them both. 'All have a duty to each other, and in the fulfillment of that duty all become stronger.' The last Great War was won through an alliance of forces and it is in that spirit that the next must be fought or all is lost.



Enlightenment

Enlightenment was called the least of the Paths by Valen himself, though he was also quoted as saying that nothing lasting can come from a foundation built without it. When asked to explain this apparent paradox, the spiritual leader of the Minbari would only say that when someone understood this on their own, only then could they truly say to have achieved enlightenment at all. For most Minbari, this is seen as an example of the unachievable summits of metaphysical perfection to which the religious caste aspires. Others see Enlightenment both as a concept and as a tenet in a different light.

For these Minbari, Enlightenment is not about inner truths or spiritual harmony. Instead, Enlightenment is a state of mind that one should be in when performing any task or making any decision. An enlightened state of mind is one that sees only the pure motives behind a course of action or pattern of thought, allowing the Minbari in question to do what is right solely because it is right. Rather than seek Enlightenment actively, these Minbari actively strive to perform everything they do without external concerns or influences. By doing as their own consciences demand instead of adhering to another's authority or opinion, these Minbari embody the intentions of this Path more often than any others.

Not surprisingly, the warrior caste does not adhere much to the teachings of this path as a general rule. Those who seek Enlightenment are all too often contemplatives with little direction or motivation for anything other than its pursuit. This causes members of the warrior caste to treat Enlightenment with quiet disdain and also explains why it is not often a popular focus for those in the worker caste. Worker caste Minbari are usually too busy performing their vital maintenance and building tasks to concern themselves with something as intangible as Enlightenment. Ironically, these Minbari are the most likely to find Enlightenment, mostly because they have never looked for it.

Structure of the Religious Caste

Before Valen, the religious caste was a dysfunctional, loosely associated collective of communities worshipping icons individual to different geographical locations or family histories. These group warred with each other as often they did with warrior or worker caste collectives over their meager resources. With no effective leadership and dozens of splinter faiths at odds with each over hundreds of clashing dogmatic matters, the religious caste was more in danger of implosion than it was of being defeated in battle by any outside force.

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Minbari Lore – The Eight Paths of Light and Darkness

It is important to remember that aside from members of the religious caste specifically involved in the study or applications of the Eight Paths, very few Minbari ever directly refer to them. An appropriate comparison would be the number of people on Earth who specifically quote chapter and verse names from the Bible as opposed to the number that simply live (or try to live) by its tenets. The question, 'Which Path do you walk?' is likely to receive a blank stare from any given Minbari. Most have heard the terms, but few study them closely enough to give them a great deal of thought.

There are exceptions to every rules. Just as Earth has its evangelists, Minbari have their religious purists who could not only answer that question but quote entire passages from any one of the many books written by Minbari scholars on the topic of their given Path and its many forms. The Eight Paths of Light and Darkness is a central religious tenet and as such, is only as complicated as a Minbari wishes it to be. For most, that would be 'not at all'. Minbari do not kill Minbari and Minbari do not lie are all most citizens of the Minbari Federation need to keep in mind.

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In this time, each cabal of religious caste Minbari were generally organised along the following lines. One Minbari would act as the Le'daan, or High Speaker. It was assumed that each community's Le'daan was guided by the voices of the ancient ones and that he knew the will of those holy beings. To serve him, a Le'daan would appoint a group of Drasha. These minions were anointed by him through a variety of rituals that were as varied as the communities that founded them. In one notable anointing ritual, a Le'naan would literally cut open his own palm and place it on the forehead of a prospective Drasha. If the blood ran down the right side of the aspirant's nose, he was judged worthy and entered his service. If it ran down the left hand side, the Drasha was slain for his insolence and lack of purity.

The Drasha, an Adrenato word meaning 'hand', were responsible for all the lower level administration of a religious caste group. They would organise raids against other villages, maintain food and water supplies, and provide services for the laity of the community. It was also among their duties to weed out the weak and unworthy from the collective and ensure that they were given final rites and disposed of. This occurred with more or less frequency depending on the community, but it is a fact of

their previous existence that the present religious caste is not proud of or willing to discuss openly.

Once Valen reorganised the castes, the positions of Le'daan and Drasha were completely erased and replaced with a hierarchy that elevated leadership qualified religious caste members into an ecclesiarchy that transcended community limitations. By removing the overall administration from the majority of other caste members, Valen effectively removed the corruption that could occur when Minbari with too much power and authority were allowed to exercise it directly on a community that answered to them alone. This distanced group of administrators for the religious caste is called the Valan'asha and they are stationed on Minbar with a membership that encompasses the entire Federation.

The Valan'asha are a council of equals, with only three members standing above the rest in matters of authority. These three members are traditionally the same three religious caste officials who serve on the Grey Council, but this has not always been true. A member of the Three within the Valan'asha can appoint a proxy to his or her role on the Grey Council. In practice, this is usually done when the Minbari either feels his services are better used by the Valan'asha or that another under his authority would serve the Grey Council more effectively.

The membership of the Valan'asha is a representational base with at least one religious leader from each district, country, or city on Minbari and a delegate from each of the Federation's colonies. The ministerial needs of the Minbari are the primary concern of the Valan'asha, though in recent times encroachment upon their authority by warrior caste leaders and their forces have become more common topics of debate. Most Minbari of the religious caste hold the Valan'asha in even higher esteem than the Grey Council itself, a fact that is not lost on either ruling body.

Below the Valan'asha are the orders of the Fanear, religious community leaders held in place by popular vote and appointed to the task by unanimous approval of the Three That Serve, the common title of the three religious caste Minbari on the Grey Council. There are well over a hundred Fanear, one or two for each defined community of Minbari on their homeworld on one each colony world. Fanear are rarely assigned to non-permanent settlements of Minbari, such as the small community that exists on Babylon 5, but these Minbari could request one through the Valan'asha if they desired to.

Unlike the Drasha, Fanear have no real power save the respect they should be afforded by the community for the position they have been given. The Fanear are

answerable directly to the Valan'asha and also to their own communities. Fanear can be replaced at any time by a petition forwarded to the Valan'asha by ten Minbari of the religious caste; no more than five of these petitioners can be of the same clan. This also limits the amount of corruption that can spread through the office of the Fanear as they are directly beholden to those that the Drasha once abused so badly.

There are also smaller groups set up within the auspices of the religious caste, organisations dedicated to one of the ancient divinities or other theological ideal. These groups are official parts of the caste, occupying the role of a sub-caste essentially. Among these are the Librites of La'thenato, scribes and scholars dedicated to the accumulation and protection of information of virtually every topic, and the Sisters of Valeria, a cloistered order of female religious caste members that serves among other purposes as a shelter for Minbari in need of escape from their normal caste duties or family responsibilities.

Minbari Characters – Religious Offices

The Minbari take their leaders very seriously and a position of leadership often carries with it a lifetime of commitment. Once given the reins of power, a Minbari is rarely able to set them aside again. As such, any character concept involving a Minbari having once been or continuing to serve as a Valan'asha member or one of the Fanear will need to be seriously considered by the Games Master before it can be approved. Even a former Fanear has held enough rank among his people that non-religious caste Minbari will have to afford him some modicum of respect.

If this is a desirable outcome for both the Minbari Player and the Games Master, the concept should be carried to its logical conclusion. A former member of these leadership groups must have a plausible story why they are no longer with them if such is the case. Continuing service with these organisations can make some story concepts difficult, but if the Games Master is willing to work within these limits, this service can provide a rich background for any Minbari character.

Another possibility is the idea of a disgraced religious leader dismissed from service because of some real or unfair accusation of misconduct. These Minbari would still be known to their peers, but instead of respect, they would garner contempt, disdain, or possibly even fear depending on the circumstances of their disgrace. This might not be a desirable way for a character to begin a new game, but stories in Babylon 5 are not always about

shining heroes with spotless paths. The road to redemption often starts in a ditch.

Communities of Minbari are often large enough that the Fanear cannot administer to every member directly. Though not a direct creation of Valen, the office of the Speaker has been established to provide each gathering of Minbari with a single, authoritative voice to recount the prophecies of Valen and answer religious questions that cannot be quickly brought to the attention of a community's Fanear. It is a great honour to be selected as a Speaker and communities can have more than one if its Fanear sees fit to empower additional ones.

The title of Speaker is mostly an honorary one and brings with it no more administrative or religious authority than the Minbari of a given community wish to grant. Many Speakers are simply religious caste Minbari with a gift for remembering passages of prophecy or an excellent speaking voice and a willingness to serve the community in a visible role. While members of the religious caste are always educated to know the names of the Fanear of their community and the Minbari serving in the Valan'asha, most are more likely to readily recognise their local Speaker in any given encounter. This visibility can provide a Speaker with great temporal power, but Speakers with appeal that wide are usually elevated to Fanear status before it can become an issue.

The other position of note in the Minbari religious caste is the Kiari. Kiari are not strictly members of the ruling body of the Valan'asha nor are they given the tacit authority granted to Fanear or through them to Speakers. The Kiari are a form of missionary appointed by the Three Who Serve to spread Valen's prophecies and the message of the Kal'alysh'a among those who would not otherwise have the exposure or time to study these works. Kiari live among worker and warrior caste members in their communities, acting as a spiritual advisor and assistant in any role their peers wish them to provide.

Kiari receive a wide range of treatment, from the quiet tolerance of many worker caste settlements to outright indignation whenever they co-exist with warrior caste members. For those few communities that openly accept the presence of their Kiari, the well trained religious caste envoys can prove to be valuable, productive, and eager citizens willing to perform any task assigned to them.

Not every group has the services of a Kiari, but those who do usually consider themselves either blessed or cursed. Kiari tend to be the most worldly of the religious caste, having been exposed for months or years to the way of life of one or both of the other Minbari castes. This

experience is invaluable both to the Kiari themselves and the religious caste once their wayward adherents return to report on what they have learned. Few Minbari realise how effective a network of information the Kiari represent or truly appreciate how many of their caste secrets have come into the possession of the religious caste through their efforts.

Religious Caste Holidays

The single most important holiday for the religious caste is undoubtedly the Day of Valen's Ascension. A dual purpose holiday, it occurs on the same day every three years and ceremonially marks both the appearance of Valen during the last Great War and the day of his 'disappearance' from the Minbari many years later. This holiday is set in the only day of the Minbari year outside their normal monthly structure, much akin to the Gregorian calendar's leap day every four years. The Day of Valen's Ascension is a time of reflection and meditation on the principles of the Kal'alysh'a as well as a time to promote renewed awareness of the prophecies handed down by Valen himself.

As the Day of Valen's Ascension comes only once every three years, there are a host of other holidays that occur



yearly as remembrances of the other important holy figures in the Minbari belief system. Knowing that the Minbari would never fully abandon their old beliefs in the wake of a new philosophy, Valen ensured that each of the 'old gods' were given a place in his new reorganisation of the religious caste by purposefully leaving spiritual details vague. This left the Minbari themselves to define the roles of their divinities as they fit into the spiritual awareness put forth by their new leader.

One of these new roles was the association of the eight most prevalent divine beings with one of the Eight Paths of Light and Darkness. To commemorate these new roles, a day of the year was set aside for each one. In commemoration of the Eight Paths and their importance to the Minbari people regardless of their location in the galaxy, each figure was also given a shrine on one of the major colony worlds at the time. Minbar does not host one of these shrines, though the city of Tuzanor on Minbar is often considered a shrine in its own right to Valen himself.

- ⑤ **The Day of Jonalla.** Jonalla represents death and renewal, a life spent in pursuit of pure goals and the deserved rest of the afterlife before returning to begin the cycle anew. Jonalla is alternately male or female, depending on the aspect of the moon orbiting her chosen colony world, Tavalan. Jonalla's shrine is an open air temple with cultured trees for walls and living sculptures of hedge for furniture. Climate equipment maintains spring-like conditions within the shrine area year round, a symbol of the perfection that awaits all Minbari in the Place Where No Shadows Fall.
- ⑤ **The Day of Io'shan.** In the beliefs of the Minbari, Io'shan is the bringing of joy and harmony, a figure that transcends caste and clan in his appeal to all Minbari for the brighter half of their souls. Io'shan is not universally accepted and there are several clans that do not recognise him at all, ignoring his holiday completely. For those that do follow his traditions, the festival that occurs in his crystal temple on the colony moon around the dead planet Thessin is an unforgettable celebration of laughter and the Minbari spirit.
- ⑤ **The Day of Nadiir.** Nadiir is to Io'shan what night is to day. Nadiir is the embodiment of sorrow and grief, an important element of the Minbari cycle of emotions. Without grief, there is no impetus to correct mistakes of the past. Nadiir's holiday is a call for all Minbari to spend the day in quiet contemplation of the things in their past that have given them reason to be sorrowful. In recent years, the solemn stone temple of Nadiir on Solta Gan has set up a series of data terminals penitents can use to scribe their grief for others to share. This 'Roll of Tears' can be found there and is open for any Minbari to read and reflect upon.
- ⑤ **The Day of Valeria.** The Quiet Protector of Life, Valeria is a shepherd figure that dispensed wisdom along with guidance in Minbari mythology. As one of the oldest divinities of the Minbari, it is only fitting that his/her holiday be focused around the pillars and ruins of his/her temple on Tarellen, Minbar's first major colony settled very early in its starfaring history. Adherents of Valeria still claim that he/she will someday appear in the Minbari's darkest hour to save them from a tragic and undeserved fate.
- ⑤ **The Day of La'thanato.** The keeper of wisdom, La'thanato is almost as old as Valerian and just as revered in some circles. La'thanato is said to know every thought ever had by a Minbari since the day they became a sentient species and legend has it that somewhere in Minbari space rests his hidden sanctuary, a crystal cave where the minds of past generations can be heard singing in its very walls. It is a time-honoured tradition for visitors to his university-temple on Sorpignal to spend his holy day studying a topic they have never researched before.
- ⑤ **The Day of Deshnar.** Not commonly celebrated by any but the strictest adherents of the religious caste, Deshnar's holiday has been lost along with its colony world of Genara. In the final days of the last Great War, the Shadows inflicted grievous wounds against the Minbari even as they were losing the war elsewhere. One of these retaliatory strikes was the planet Genara, a lush fertile world with a Minbari population of more than one million. In the course of one black day, its surface was razed and turned into a barren husk unable to support any form of life. As Deshnar was the divine messenger of hope and peace, her holiday is too painful for most to honour.
- ⑤ **The Day of Yeshain.** A popular festival for the warrior caste, Yeshain is the embodiment of power, vitality, and physical prowess. Yeshain's festival is usually a series of tournaments and competitions, conducted on military vessels and coordinated with the Great Games that take place in the dome-covered amphitheatre that serves as Yeshain's shrine on the colony world of Drala Toth. Victories gained at the Great Game or in any of the lesser shipboard games is seen as a portent of future martial greatness.
- ⑤ **The Day of Ralafa.** The colony world of Ralafa is named for this ancient divine being, considered to be old with the universe was young. Enigmatic and

mysterious, no two accountings of Ralafa's form ever match. This befits the Harbinger of Change perfectly. In honour of his message of constant change, Rafala has the only mobile temple of the Eight. Each year, a few days before Rafala's festival, the keepers of his temple pack it up and travel at random until they find a new spot to erect it and hold his festival. There it remains for a full year until it moves again.

There are a number of minor religious holidays, but these nine are the ones recognised without fail by all members of the caste. All told, a religious caste member is expected to observe these in preference to all others and a host of smaller festivals on the order of forty to fifty days out of each year. Most of these additional days are set aside for fasting or prayer, though a few have special significance only to specific clans within the caste. Violating the tenets of any of these minor holidays can bring dishonour upon the negligent Minbari, which ensures that each is treated with respect and observed with the utmost care.

The Clan in Conclusion

If taken as an analogy, the religious caste is both shepherd and flock. They administer to religious ideals and spiritual beliefs that hold the greatest significance only to their own membership. The other clans obey their tenets out of respect for the Grey Council and the teachings of Valen, but it comes begrudgingly in some and barely at all from others. Respect is the currency of the religious caste, but its economy waxes and wanes through its involvement with the day to day lives of other Minbari. Each caste has its own leaders, making the perceived authority of the religious caste cumbersome at times.

When the religious caste works as it was intended, it can be a powerful force for the unification of its race. Though many Minbari try to deny it through ignorance and dismissal, they are a deeply spiritual people and virtually all of them can be touched by a powerful enough plea to their souls. As it has been said, when the Minbari move, they move as one. When they grieve, they grieve as one. When they hate, they hate as one. This emotional unity has, in the past, always come first from the religious caste, a potent testimony to the power it wields over the entire race.

The Castes in Detail: Warrior

In many ways the strongest of the castes, the warrior caste is a collection of clans and extended families with a long tradition of military service. The warrior caste is

the protector and enforcement group of the Minbari, held responsible for ensuring that the entire race remains safe from threats both internal and external. The few wars the race has fought with other races is a testimony both to the wisdom of separating the authority to begin a war into a decision only the Grey Council can make and the swift strength of the caste's forces. Often, the threat of warrior caste Minbari involvement is enough to quell a situation both abroad in within the Federation itself.

Peacekeepers rather than peacemakers, the obvious focus of the warrior caste is combat and conflict. Even so, the traditions of the caste are rich and varied, with its duties going far beyond the simple ideals of its enforcement mandate. The warrior caste is an expansive military organisation and every member holds some rank from the moment they are inducted fully into the caste until they either meet their end in honourable combat or die of other causes while an officer in good standing. There are no non-combat personnel in the warrior caste; all are trained to fight, and all are expected to kill or die for the glory of the Federation.

In this respect, the warrior caste is the one least changed by the influence of Valen. Though it has been greatly stratified and given a number of new ways to focus its efforts, the caste as it exists now is virtually the same in spirit as it was before the last Great War when it strove for domination of Minbar and the many resources held by the other castes. While it is not officially in competition for these things any longer, the warrior caste are still a dominating force and tend towards greater authority as a matter of habit than they actually possess.

The Warrior's Code

Before Valen, the warrior caste was a deeply tradition based group of fighting men and women united only in their ultimate cause of rulership over all of Minbar and its colony worlds. The seven great clans of the warrior caste held the twelve lesser clans in check through sheer strength of will, forming a massive military with the power and numbers needed to fulfill this tyrannical goal. Only the emergence of the Great Enemy, the race that nearly covered the galaxy in a neverending darkness, dissuaded this end by providing another target to fight.

When Valen united the castes for the purpose of fighting the Great War, the battle spirit of the warrior caste was something he could not afford to lose or lessen if he was to have any chance of victory. Rather than try to force a new command structure upon the warrior caste, he choose to leave them arranged essentially as they were but provide them with a greater focus for their traditions and rites. This

focus become codified into what is referred to in modern times as the Jen-aot'la, the 'Warrior's Code'.

The Warrior's Code was originally a series of guidelines for what Valen called 'honourable war', the way of the soldier. These simple principles were taken by the warrior caste leaders of the time, considered carefully, and returned to him as incomplete. The Code was not enough, they told him; it left too much room for interpretation by individuals. Valen, against his will but done because he knew the warrior caste was vital to the Great War, rewrote the Code into a full volume of text covering every situation imaginable in combat along with the proper procedures for dealing with each one from a morally sound and honourable standpoint.

This text was also reviewed and rejected, this time the caste leaders claimed that honour had no place in battle. They also said that the Code as written was too restrictive and did not allow for the flexibility required of a soldier in the chaos of war. Valen agreed with this sentiment, but knew that this entire process was merely a ploy by the warrior caste to delay their acceptance of his authority. The leaders of the seven great clans suggested that he try

to find a compromise between the two and present that to them when he was finished. Such a revision would take weeks; he knew that and so did they.

Valen provided his reply in just one night. He took his original Warrior's Code, made it even simpler and shorter, and posted it on the doors of the seven leaders along with a note saying, 'Let he who is the greatest of you come fight me in a duel. The victor's Code will prevail and none shall deny him this right.' Valen then went to Tuzanor on Minbar and awaited whoever would arrive to duel with him in the Endless Ring, a dueling circle laid out in a spiral inscribed with the names of all who have fought there over the ages.

As he expected, a single Minbari, Nershan of the Dark Knives clan, entered the ring and brandished his fighting knives in a gesture of acceptance to his duel. Nershan was battered, bruised, and was barely able to defend himself from Valen's attacks. The duel was a difficult one due to the caste leader's great skill, but Valen defeated him. As he had suspected, his challenge had initiated a night long contest between the caste authorities with the victor emerging too weakened to be much of a threat. Valen's



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The Warrior's Code

- ᠑ A warrior's actions are his words, his thoughts, and his soul.
- ᠑ Weapons are made to kill; warriors are made to wield them.
- ᠑ When warriors fight among themselves, only the enemy can win.
- ᠑ Every side in a war believes it is doing what is right.
- ᠑ Death is a warrior's gift, a warrior's price, and a warrior's curse.
- ᠑ A warrior fights for life, his own and those of his people.

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Code was then accepted among the warrior caste leaders (all except Nershan himself, who later seceded with his entire clan from the Federation) without any further argument.

The Warrior's Code is a very simple document on the surface, but as with most Minbari relics of Valen's age, it has a greater depth that a thousand years of reflection and examination have not entirely explored. The warrior caste follows the Code directly, with minor variations evident among its five surviving clans. It is not considered a dishonourable act to interpret the Code in a personal manner; Valen encouraged the Minbari to do so from the first day of its inception.

Ironically, the Warrior's Code went from simple document to lengthy treatise to an even simpler document and then finally has become the subject of many books and data files that are required reading during the education of young warriors. The six great clans were united with the twelve lesser ones, the latter being absorbed into their number, and then given the code to study and follow during the dark times of the Great War. Along the way, Valen invited their members to learn from the code and build upon it with their own ideas and experiences. From this expansion, many works of the warrior clan on the subject of honour in combat have arisen.

Each of the simple ideas of the Warrior's Code became a much greater accumulation during that difficult struggle, becoming something greater by the time the Great Enemy was driven off and the War ended. Though it came at the cost of an entire clan and the deaths of millions, the

Minbari and its allies emerged victorious. This, more than anything, proved to the warrior caste that the Code was valid and that Valen's legacy was worth preserving through remembrance.

In time, Code became memory and in that spirit, the Code and its many extrapolations were collected in a series of tomes called the Traditions of War. This set of books became the core curriculum for all members of the warrior caste and remains an untainted remnant of the past in crèche classes during modern times. Each clan within the warrior caste still places some variation of its own on the teaching, leaving even the spirit of the Warrior's Code changed substantially through the passage of centuries.

Reflections of the Traditions of War

It is enlightening to study how each of the warrior caste clans views the Warrior's Code and interprets its meaning to either suit their own style of warfare or have adapted their own tactics to better reflect the Code itself. The five clans approach war and battle very differently, and it shows in how they view the wisdom to be found in the Warrior's Code.

A warrior's actions are his words, his thoughts, and his soul.

- ᠑ **The Wind Swords:** As the clan most associated with the caste's aggressive traditions, it is not surprising that the Wind Swords generally have the most radical interpretations of the Code. The Traditions of War has entire chapters dedicated to the Wind Sword version of the Warrior's Code, and none are longer than their take on the first principle. To the Wind Swords, this tenet means that battle and conflict define every part of a warrior's being. What a warrior does while he is not in combat is meaningless and does not reflect on the true Minbari that only arises when weapons clash on the battlefield.
- ᠑ **The Moon Shields:** In contrast, the Moon Shields are traditionally one of Valen's strongest supporters in his opinion that the warrior caste's first and most sacred duty is the protection of all Minbari. The Moon Shields have always adopted a very defence oriented approach to combat, relying on unyielding resolve to carry their forces to victory. To the Moon Shields, this tenet defines their clan's view of truth being found not in action but reaction. A warrior's actions are mirrored by thought and soul by Moon Shield philosophy, meaning that those who wish to act should do so only after contemplation and in accordance with solid strategy.

- 5 **The Fire Wings:** The Fire Wings have always been associated with flight and flying, with their name literally reflecting their predominance with combat aircraft of all kinds. In Minbari history, it was the Fire Wings who first took to the skies during war and they continue this tradition through their service as elite fighter pilots. Operating such complex vehicles requires great precision of thought and focus, echoing their view on this code. To the Fire Wings, this tenet illustrates that a warrior's actions reflect his will and that the only pure actions come from unshakable mental control.
- 5 **The Night Walkers:** The elite foot soldiers of Minbar, the Night Walkers are trained in the many uses of weaponry and martial disciplines to achieve victory in battle. This first line of the Code is an important one to them, and their interpretation is held by impartial scholars of the Traditions of War to be very close to Valen's original intention. To the Night Walkers, this tenet symbolises that every action echoes the Minbari taking that action. If he strikes in anger, his strike will be angry and uncontrolled. If he fights with confidence, his skills will be confident and assured.
- 5 **The Star Riders:** For the Star Riders, everything in life and death revolves around the unshakable principles of honour and duty. This shows in their strict interpretations of the Warrior's Code as with everything else in their history. To the Wind Swords, this tenet is a statement about personal responsibility. It is said that a Wind Sword never promises anything or gives his word because to do so would belie the fact that is something was not true, he would not say it and if an action was not justified, he would not take it.

Weapons are made to kill; warriors are made to wield them.

- 5 **The Wind Swords:** In a hard line opinion that should not be surprising to anyone, the Wind Swords interpret this message very straight forwardly. In their eyes, this passage is a mandate to limit or eliminate any mercy in combat. As the Code says, weapons are meant for killing. This line of the Warrior's Code is often quoted by the Wind Swords when they refuse to accept an enemy's surrender.
- 5 **The Moon Shields:** The Moon Shields do not have a problem with what they view as the central message of this tenet, though it might be assumed that a clan dedicated to defence and guardianship would have trouble incorporating this part of the Code. To them, this is a admonishment that if a

weapon is going to be used, it must be used for its true purpose. This belief has given rise to the Moon Shield's tradition of never drawing a weapon until the moment they intend to attack with it.

- 5 **The Fire Wings:** Of all the many technological advancements made by the Minbari, artificial intelligence and combat automation are not among them. One of the causative reasons for this is the Fire Wing's interpretation of this part of the code. To them, the purest truth of combat is that Minbari must fight it themselves. Without a pilot, a Nial heavy fighter is an empty shell waiting to be given meaning.
- 5 **The Night Walkers:** The Night Walkers take a simple view of this tenet; they have a straightforward approach to personal combat in any form and their ideal of this part of the Code follows suit. In the eyes of the Night Walkers, weapons are only an extension of a warrior and it is his responsibility what they are used for. Again, most battle scholars of the Minbari find this interpretation to be very close to Valen's own opinions on the subject.
- 5 **The Star Riders:** By bringing honour and duty into every equation, the Star Riders create a tradition in every aspect of their training and their philosophy. This tenet of the Warrior's Code provides the Star Riders with the dogmatic basis for one of their clan's most common sayings, 'One knife, one hand, one heart – united in truth and divided only by death.'

When warriors fight among themselves, only the enemy can win.

- 5 **The Wind Swords:** This facet of the Code is a tactical advisement for the Wind Swords, who believe that Valen intended the warrior caste to ensure that every battle be fought through unified fronts. While this is certainly a laudable interpretation, the clan rarely defines unity as something beyond the membership of the Wind Swords, leading to more than a few literal transgressions of this tenet.
- 5 **The Moon Shields:** The Moon Shields are, in the opinion of the Minbari battle scholars, the closest to capturing Valen's true meaning of this line in the Code through their policy of never allowing combat of any kind, even duels, between members of its own clan and discouraging them in others. In their interpretation, combat should be reserved only for true opponents.
- 5 **The Fire Wings:** Because of the expensive nature of the Fire Wing's primary tools of war, they have a very practical view of this tenet. To them, the loss of a single fighter or starship is too great a price

to pay for pride or as the resolution of any petty disagreement. Unfortunately, this has led to them forsaking the spirit of the tenet by organising often fatal Zero Gravity blade duels to deal with internal disputes.

- ⑤ **The Night Walkers:** The infantry traditions of the Night Walkers provide them with a unique perspective on this tenet. As they are often called upon to operate under cover of darkness, the idea of disharmony among the rank and file is detrimental to their effectiveness. In the combat schools of the Night Walkers, this tenet is taught to mean that soldiers must follow orders at all times and obey their commanders without question even under the most chaotic of conditions.
- ⑤ **The Star Riders:** The hierarchy of the Star Riders clan takes this tenet to its most extreme degree, once again tying personal honour into its application. In their definition of this line of the Warrior's Code, Minbari must never conflict with other Minbari on any matter. The only acceptable protest is one that does not harm any Minbari but the one making the protest. This viewpoint explains much of the logic behind commanders like Sinavel, the Minbari captain who chose suicide rather than disobeying the order to surrender at the Battle of the Line.

Every side in a war believes what it is doing is right.

- ⑤ **The Wind Swords:** This passage is a warning for the Wind Swords that every enemy may have the power of the fanatic lending strength to their assaults and that each battle should be fought as if this were true. It is telling of the psychology of the Wind Swords that this logic is rarely if ever turned inward to examine their own motivations.
- ⑤ **The Moon Shields:** Also possibly missing the point Valen was trying to make with this tenet, the Moon Shields take this part of the Code as a mandate to remain true to their appointed tasks as the guardians of the Minbari people. While a noble goal, it fails to take into account the implication that those attacking Minbari will also feel righteous and will likely be just as committed.
- ⑤ **The Fire Wings:** The Fire Wings take much the same viewpoint on this tenet as the Wind Swords, with an added emphasis in the possibilities of a fanatic's greater power during ship-to-ship combat. On the battlefield, one determined soldier can do little more than any other, but a determined soldier at the controls of a fighter can inflict massive damage if he is willing to sacrifice his life in the process. Even powerful Minbari cruisers are vulnerable to ramming.

- ⑤ **The Night Walkers:** From their viewpoint on the battlefield, the Night Walkers have a greater level of exposure to the warriors of other races. This experience gives them a better understanding of Valen's message with this tenet. They understand all too well that soldiers on all sides of a battle believe in their cause and are willing to fight and die for that cause. To them, quite rightly, this tenet is both warning and reminder of that universal soldier's truth.

- ⑤ **The Star Riders:** This tenet is seen by the Star Rider's clan as validation for their adherence to the strict definitions of honour and tradition. They see this tenet as being far simpler than its wording would suggest; 'The Minbari side of any war is right,' would be a more appropriate rephrasing of their interpretation.

Death is a warrior's gift, a warrior's price, and a warrior's curse.

- ⑤ **The Wind Swords:** As befits their warrior's pride, this tenet of the Code is as exclusively a reference to the death of their enemies and the last part of the verse is mostly ignored. Because none of the warrior clans wished to change the original wording of the Code, the 'curse' was interpreted by the Wind Swords as a reminder that any warrior can be slain and that death comes quickly to soldiers who approach battle carelessly.

- ⑤ **The Moon Shields:** The Moon Shields see this line of the Code as their reason to be and their primary inspiration. To them, this part of the Code is about sacrifice. It is in their nature to give their lives as a gift to those they protect, to pay for victory with their sacrifices, and see it as a curse that they can only have one life each to give for the Minbari.

- ⑤ **The Fire Wings:** From their vantage point at the controls of a star fighter, this passage is plainly about the risks of battle and the glory of combat. The 'curse' as they see it is that eventually, all warriors must take their place in the hallowed halls of the fallen. Indeed, this phrase is engraved upon the cockpit crystal of a Fire Wings star fighter when its pilot is prepared to make his Phoenix Run (see Traditions of the Warrior Caste for more information on this rite.).

- ⑤ **The Night Walkers:** The Night Walkers live with death as a constant companion. In infantry battles, heavy weapons measure their damage in lives, not wounds, and a Minbari foot soldier knows that in many combats, it is luck rather than skill that sees him through to the next sunrise. This passage is a reminder of mortality, but it also gives them hope

legacy of the tribal wars that used to plague Minbari and its colony worlds before the time of Valen. The definitions of the categories have shifted to reflect the changing times, such as cavalry now extending to vehicular and starfighter combat, but they remain a vital part of the Minbari vision of war. Specific rank structures, including ranks set aside for each of the three styles of combat, can be found in the Minbari Military section elsewhere.

Infantry Techniques

The Minbari still have a tradition of using their superior strength in combat even when more effective styles or weapons exist. Crystal and metal weapons are preferred, with the former still very much in use after millennia of combat development because of its ability to remain deadly even after breaking. Strength of arm and reaction speeds are valued above all other talents as a matter of course given the race's natural gifts. Martial arts among the Minbari tend to be swift and brutal, with great emphasis on killing blows and strikes that disorient or damage even if blocked.

Infantry soldiers among the warrior caste of the Minbari are trained in at least one combat style traditional to their clan and possibly others as their personal aptitudes allow. Weapon skills are a basic part of any soldier's education, with the techniques of blade and fist often standing side by side in rank of importance. A Minbari soldier disarmed of his weapon is still very deadly in hand to hand, with some units specifically trained to be more so.

Most Minbari infantry soldiers are equipped with a hand melee weapon and a pistol or other light ranged weapons, though this equipment varies by division. Once a Minbari is trained and given his or her first combat assignment, their choice of weapons rarely changed even if they are moved to another regiment. In this way, it is possible to get the Minbari equivalent of an 'irregulars' unit, though such should be greatly feared on the battlefield as each and every soldier in it will by default have field experience in employing their chosen weapons.

Minbari Characters – Infantry Soldiers

Players of warrior caste Minbari have a number of traditions and styles of combat to choose from with deciding how they engage in battle. This chapter provides the basic knowledge and suggestion for how to properly design a Minbari soldier. Specific rules options can be found in the Characters section elsewhere in this sourcebook. There, players will find feats, skill suggestions, and martial combat styles that will more fully round out a warrior caste Minbari in keeping with their race's long tradition of excellence.

Cavalry Techniques

The tradition of mounted Minbari in combat dates back to the early days of their racial wars when soldiers would enter battle astride maeryn, four legged animals much like Earth horses but carnivorous and without manes. Maeryn riders were a powerful force in early combat, combining the great strength of their race with the speed and leverage available to a mounted attack. As the maeryn are a nocturnal breed of animal, they were most effective at night, leading to the name of their chief clan becoming the Star Riders in recognition of their devastating starlight raids.

Even in the modern age, maeryn riding is a popular sport for the Minbari and an important part of their martial tradition. The first commissioned starfighter to enter combat alongside the Minbari fleet was dubbed the Maeryn class for this reason. The Dor'maeryn, one of the Sharlin flagships of the Star Rider clan, bears its name proudly in honour of the cavalry tradition and their many legends about these powerful riding beasts.

It is a mark of pride that modern Minbari soldiers carry a blade into combat even when piloting a fighter or crewing one of the military's powerful ground vehicles. Although the weapon is woefully inadequate in any combat on a vehicular scale, it harkens back to the crystal swords wielded by the race's first cavalry soldiers. Often, this blade has never seen use and is passed down from one clansman to another as part of the vehicle's compliment. It is considered an ill omen by warrior caste cavalry soldiers to remove the blade unless it is to do battle with it and vehicular pilots traditionally train privately to hone their melee skills in preparation for the day when they may have to bear that weapon in combat.

The tradition of the rider's blade aside, Minbari vehicle pilots have a great focus of will where the controls of their chosen vehicle are concerned. They spend years attuning to every facet of a tank or fighter's capabilities, reviewing how and why each system works in unison with the others during combat. Maneuvers are a very important part of warrior caste training for vehicle operators and when not actively engaged in combat, it is not unusual for a cavalry soldier to spend an hour or more each day driving his vehicle through obstacles courses just to test his own personal best time.

Minbari Characters – Cavalry Soldiers

The most important part of this book for players of Minbari dedicated to vehicle combat will be the Technology section. There, players will find several new military vehicles for

land, air, and space battles. There are also several feats and combat options for vehicular combat. From the operation of a Minbari Shrek main battle tank to the piloting of a Tishat interceptor on deep space patrol, these options will greatly enhance any game in which cavalry warfare plays a part.

Ranged Techniques

Technically speaking, the Minbari warrior caste is universally trained in ranged combat. Despite their traditions of martial prowess in melee, The Minbari are also practical in military matters and modern combat demands a ballistic response to threats and the ability to threaten potential targets ballistically. Whether this is through projectile, energy, or other ranged methods is irrelevant, but ranged combat is a fact of battle and has been since the Minbari learned to hurl rocks at enemies across a dusty field in its distant prehistory.

Ranged combat is a complicated matter for the warrior caste, divided into three main categories. The first, rifles and heavy weapons, is the philosophy of individual soldiers using portable weapons against individual scale enemies and light targets. Several weapons exist for this purpose, made by the Minbari in response to the lessons taught over centuries of violent war waged among their own kind and with other races in the time before Valen. The second category is support weapons, guns heavier than can be easily carried by one Minbari and requiring a crew to operate. The last is shipboard weaponry, the province of trained crews tasked to aim and operate the deadly array of energy weapons mounted about the Minbari fleet's great war vessels.

Minbari trained in the principles of ranged combat are not often called upon to fight in any other manner. Heavy weapon crews often refrain from carrying smaller weapons as a sign of their faith in their fellow soldiers and in their own skills. Ship tactical personnel are generally issued a sidearm and given minimal training in its use, the greater balance of their skills devoted to the lethal accuracy that Minbari spacecraft are feared for. This level of devotion makes for a highly elite, if inflexible, military force.

Minbari Characters – Ranged Soldiers

Players of Minbari warrior caste with an interest in heavy weapons of any kind or service aboard one of the race's mighty starships will find the information in both the Vehicle and Character sections very helpful for fleshing out their backgrounds and equipment lists. While a Games Master's input and approval are essential when dealing with military assets on this scale, a campaign based aboard a Minbari Sharlin cruiser or centered around one of the

race's past, present, or future wars will benefit greatly from those passages as well. Just because a Minbari Player will probably not be allowed to claim a heavy shard launcher as personal equipment does not mean he has not been trained to fire one as part of his Night Walker military education.

Warrior Caste Traditions and Holidays

The Minbari are a people bound in many ways by their traditions and rituals. While this is most evident to an outsider observer when watching the religious caste, the warrior caste has several important personal and clan-wide rites as well. There are also several holidays, though few in the traditional sense of the word, that the caste celebrates either as a whole or within individual clans. Members of each clan are expected to know these rites and holidays before they graduate from their second crèche and claim their place alongside their fellow soldiers.

Traditions

There are many rites a Minbari warrior caste follows during the course of his career. Some of these are simple, such as the Rite of Acceptance that occurs when a second crèche graduate joins his clan mates for the first time. Others are very complex like the Rite of Divergence, an arduous series of trials by combat that must occur before any soldier is allowed to leave the warrior caste. These rites are a vital part of the warrior heritage; many have their roots in the centuries or millennia of combat the Minbari endured before Valen united the castes and put an end to their internecine conflicts.

For a Minbari soldier to step outside the bounds of honourable combat and the Traditions of War is acceptable behaviour when the circumstances demand it, but very few ever deny the rituals of their clan and caste. To do so is seen as an affront to the memory of Valen and the ancient divinities of the Minbari people and brings misfortune upon the transgressor. A warrior caste Minbari is more likely to stab an opponent in the back than he is to neglect the Rite of Anointing that he performs on his knife each month.

There are hundreds of individual rituals, but some of the more colourful or important ones are listed here as examples of the kind of rites the warrior caste values. This is certainly not an exhaustive list, nor could there be any single list that encompassed the rites one clan practices, but less the entire warrior caste as a whole. The rituals change too often from crèche to crèche and between generations of the clans for any list that could be compiled to remain accurate for very long.

- ⑤ The Rite of Tor'val-eth. Warrior caste Minbari pray for guidance whenever battle circumstances allow time for reflection before an engagement. This prayer, the Tor'val-eth, is a lengthy invocation that names the ancient leaders of the clans at the time of Valen and asks them to guide both weapon and warrior in the combat ahead. At the conclusion of the Tor'val-eth, each military unit chooses a hero from the caste's past and entreats him to act as a protector for the duration of the conflict. It is said that before the first battle of the Earth/Minbari War, the caste held a single massive Tor'val-eth prayer and chose Valen as their spiritual sentinel.
- ⑤ Korvala. Invoking Korvala is never done lightly among members of the warrior caste as it calls for a circle of the Minbari involved's peers to bear witness to a trial by combat. Done in response to charges of neglect or incompetence, Korvala is a legacy of the way the leadership of the caste settled such issues before Valen's reformation. Korvala is fought between the accused and his immediate superior with Minbari fighting knives and is always to first blood.
- ⑤ Denn'sha. A ritual duel to the death fought only rarely by members of the military caste, the Denn'sha is only invoked when absolutely no other means of resolution in a disagreement is possible. Denn'sha is a word in the Vik Minbari language meaning 'denial', symbolising the fact that for the period of the duel, both combatants deny their Minbari existence, leaving the victor free of the onus that Minbari do not kill Minbari. Denn'sha has not been declared openly between two Minbari since it was outlawed by Valen, but they may have been private duels that were never made open knowledge.
- ⑤ Shel'an. Mentioned here because of its importance to all warrior caste members, the Shel'an is the ritual of anointing through fire that all soldiers of the race are taught before leaving their second crèche. Performed over a candle imbedded with crystals from Tuzanor, the 'City of Sorrows' on Minbar, the Shel'an involves a short prayer and the passing of a weapon through the candle flame.
- ⑤ The Phoenix Run. An excellent example of a clan-specific warrior ritual, the Phoenix Run is a Fire Wings rite performed by Minbari pilots when they have finally become too old to perform their caste duties. The next time the pilot is given the opportunity to fly during battle, he spends the entire day beforehand fasting and praying. After a ceremony with full honours, he is given leave by his superiors for his Phoenix Run, an intentional

ramming attack in which the pilot attempts to end his life as gloriously as he lived it.

Minbari Characters – Rituals of War

Minbari warrior caste players should take every opportunity to observe rituals during game, as it adds depth to their character and shows others that they are more than mere soldiers. The warrior caste is proud and noble tradition of the Minbari people, a truth that should become evident through roleplaying during a campaign. Minbari players should also be encouraged by their Games Masters to create new rituals during game play and record them for future use. These may in turn become a tradition for others of their caste to follow. While everything created in this way is subject to Games Master approval, creativity is an essential part of character development.

Holidays

While the warrior caste do not celebrate nearly as many festivals and holidays as the religious caste, they do hold several remembrances each year in honour of those who have come before them and in the hallowed memory of those who epitomise all that they stand for. Reflection and meditation are not a large part of the warrior caste mindset, though a certain amount of reflection on the individual honoured by a given holiday is expected of each member. In one case in particular, the Day of Valen's Ascension, all warrior caste are expected to take at least an hour to attend one of the religious caste's observances to give praise for the founder of their present order.

Warrior caste holidays are not holidays in the sense that work ceases or that members are released of their duties for the duration. Instead, these holidays incorporate their observance into the work schedule at a certain time during the day on a rotating schedule, allowing every soldier to participate in some way without disrupting wither readiness status or discipline. Special meals are usually served during these holidays and occasionally important decorations are placed around appropriate places on military outposts or aboard cruisers and other vessels. For example, the holiday honouring Halshan, the leader of the Fire Wings at the time of Valen, places a piece of his flight gear in every hanger on board all of the Minbari fleet's Morshin fighter carriers.

In addition to the founders and important leaders' holidays, the warrior caste does set aside three special days for the observance of particular events in their history. These unique holidays are not celebrated outside the caste, nor are members of any other caste welcome during their ceremonies, but all warrior caste regardless of clan are expected to acknowledge their passing no matter where they happen to be in the galaxy. In many ways, these are

the three most sacred events, for one reason or another, in the warrior caste's long and glorious past.

- ⑤ **The Day of Sacrifice.** Before Valen rallied the Minbari people and brought new allies to them, the race fought the Shadows alone in the last Great War. They were losing, though each victory by the Shadows was a costly one for both sides. One of the worst losses of this time was the destruction of the Inatrii, the 'Star of Hope'. This station was the rallying point for the Minbari in their war. When it became clear that it would be destroyed by the shadows, one entire clan of the Minbari, down to the last child old enough to man a ship's gun, held the line against their implacable foes long enough for everyone else to flee. Though the Blood Song clan was completely destroyed in this act, it bought the survival of the Minbari people through its final, noble act. All warrior caste Minbari participate in a full minute's cessation of duties and communication to face Valusha, the planet that Inatrii was set to orbit, and remember that for the greater good of their people, they must all be willing to 'sing the Blood Song'.
- ⑤ **Shar'liira.** The Sharlin cruiser, the standard vessel of the current Minbari navy, has a long and illustrious story behind its name. In the time before Valen, the warrior caste's many clans were only brought together once under a single leader. This warlord, a female Minbari named Sharlin, was reputedly the greatest warrior of her time and master strategist. It was Sharlin who formed the five great clans out of the caste's greatest warriors, Sharlin who instituted many of the military structures that still guide the caste in modern times, and Sharlin who conquered half of Minbar before her time came to an end. Shar'liira is the caste's only true festival; the clans each hold special celebrations of her memory and at the end of the long day, a grand feast is held in her honour that transcends clan boundaries.
- ⑤ **The Long Dark.** This 'holiday' is in remembrance of the darkest day in the recent history of the warrior caste – the secession of the Dark Knives clan to the side of the Shadows during the last Great War. During the Long Dark, the warrior caste takes time to remind themselves of the Dark Knives' betrayal and to rededicate themselves to their clan and caste ideals. (It should be noted that the Dark Knives also celebrate the Long Dark, but from an entirely different viewpoint. Their version of this holiday consists of a celebration to the weakness of their Minbari forebears and assuring themselves that the next Great Wars will end in their assured victory.)

The Caste in Conclusion

The best analogy for the warrior caste is that of a soldier charged with the defence of an entire nation who always looks to the horizon, longing for a greater destiny. While the warrior caste has served with distinction since their received their sacred duties from Valen, a part of them has always yearned for the days of conquest and glory they left in their fractious past. This is showcased perfectly by the holiday of Shar'liira and in the caste's actions during the Earth/Minbari War when they were given permission to hunt their enemies to the ends of the galaxy.

Despite this analogy, the warrior caste should not be seen as a group of warmongering soldiers waiting impatiently for another war to begin. Many are deeply spiritual fighters with nothing but the best interests of the Minbari race at heart. The Minbari people have the warrior caste to thank for the thousand years of relative peace they have enjoyed since the time of Valen, a debt they acknowledge gratefully. The warrior caste is an inseparable part of the Minbari people, one the race as a whole would be greatly diminished without.

The Castes in Detail: Worker

In a universe where it is an established truth that destruction is easier and faster than creation, those who build would logically garner more honour for their actions. This unfortunately is not nor has ever been the case for the worker caste of Minbari. The race's scientists, technicians, and labour force, the worker caste is the true force behind the scenes of everything their race does and every glory they accomplish. When the religious caste consecrates a new temple, the worker caste designed it. When the warrior caste inaugurates a new cruiser into one of its clan fleets, the worker caste built it. For a caste that toils so diligently to be treated so completely as a fixture of society rather than as an equal part of it would seem to be a cause of great stress for any race.

In the case of the Minbari, this is not entirely true. The Minbari are an enigmatic people and they do not conform to the standards or mindsets of any other races, even the humans they resemble so greatly. While there has undoubtedly been friction because of the callous attitude most Minbari take towards the worker caste, these patient builders and shapers have endured such tacit abuse for far longer than any other race would have the tolerance to endure. When human workers would protect, the Minbari worker caste silently continues. When Centauri engineers would throw down their tools in disgust, the worker caste redoubles their efforts.

The source of this boundless patience can be found in both the origins of the worker caste and in their own doctrines, a body of work as voluminous in its way as the religious caste's theologies. During the early years of Minbar's history, they were not so much a born caste as a result of the race's ceaseless wars. When one tribe of Minbari would conquer or achieve some victory over another, the survivors of the defeated side would enter the tribe of the victor as captive labourers. These slaves were generally treated poorly and as increasing numbers of them fell to this neglect, the work they did deteriorated.

While many tribes, those that would eventually form the core of the warrior caste, sought to answer this increasingly serious problem with the acquisition of more slaves, a few realised the short term solution that option offered. A small group of tribal leaders came together to discuss the issue and came away from their fateful meeting with an unheard of idea. Instead of treating captives as slaves, they proposed the formation of a special class of tribesman. These Velshir, 'workers' in the precursor to the Adrenado tongue, would be made up of captive enemies yet retain some of the rights they possessed before the defeat of their tribes.

In return for this status, they would be expected to work and contribute to the tribe they now belonged to. The important difference to this system was that the slaves were

no longer called slaves but rather held the unique position of an indentured servant. They received pay for their efforts in the form of food, shelter, and some modicum of status. This level of respect bolstered the slave populations of these tribes and their greater capacity for work ensured victory in the wars that followed against tribes that did not accept the proposed 'worker class'.

Once enough of the dominant tribes of Minbar possessed Velshir, the class became a fixture of their society and pressure to conform or be conquered forced all of the race's tribes to institute the change. These Velshir considered themselves part of their tribes but also forged a strong bond of kinship with the workers of other allied groups. As nations of Minbari began to form among the tribes, the Velshir class became synonymous with the concept of a labour force. From this understanding eventually came the next step, the concept of a societal group composed of all the workers of Minbar. The first Minbari caste came into being with the unification of the Velshir.

It is this privileged position, their being the first caste, that has helped to keep the worker caste loyal throughout their existence. The worker caste treats their tasks with a reverence that borders on a religion of its own. The work they do is a monument to their skills, their heritage, and their devotion to honing their abilities to the best that any sentient race has to offer. When a new temple is dedicated



or a new starship leaves space dock, they can watch it go with silent pride.

The Three Laws

When Valen began the unenviable task of uniting the castes and bringing a new social order to the Minbari, there was very little for him to do with the worker caste. They already possessed a unity unheard of in the other two castes and their hierarchies were as efficient as their work ethics. Valen studied the worker caste as a model of how the religious and warrior caste could be better organised, a fact that the warrior caste looks upon with pride. It was only fitting, after all, that the worker caste be the anvil upon which the rest of Minbar would be shaped.

The one thing Valen did find fault with in the worker caste was a legacy of their previous existence as separate groups belonging to sometimes very remote tribes. The caste lacked any real structure when it came to their primary focus, work. There were hundreds of small gatherings of worker caste Minbari, each with their own traditions on tools, preparation, work procedures, and quality standards. This led to a serious disparity in quality sometimes within the same clan and across the caste as a whole.

In order to bring a more even level of efficiency to the caste and thereby benefit the Minbari people as a whole, Valen took cues from the best worker groups in each science and labour discipline. These were brought together into a coda of work effort for the entire caste to aspire toward. As these goals and guidelines came from others within the worker caste, its members did not as hard a time accepting this new standard. Though Valen was not of the worker caste, his words reached them and within months, every previous group within the caste was working together to uphold what has become their guiding principles, the Three Laws.

Valen, always preferring to keep things simple when he could, knew that the highly technical efforts of the worker caste could never be covered by a single collection of instructions. Rather than try to get the caste to conform to his ideals, he worked their own policies into an ethic each discipline could accept and then took the basic truths common to all of them to form the coda that would serve as their single inspiration. This document, the Three Laws, is the shortest of the caste doctrines but in many ways the most telling for the Minbari people in general. Many Minbari from the other two castes try to follow the wisdom of the Three Laws as well as their own, seeing in it a wisdom that transcends their societal differences.

The plaque of the Three Laws, its original form as engraved by the great metalsmith Kashon, still hangs over

the archway into the Hall of Wonders, the worker caste shrine in the city of Tennor on Minbar. The words are simple, but they have provided guidance for generations of skilled craftsmanship since they were first set down one thousand years ago.

- ⑤ A race is judged by its creations alone.
- ⑤ Work worthy of praise does not require any.
- ⑤ Anything broken can be remade. Anything remade was never truly broken.

A Race Is Judged By Its Creations Alone.

As the worker caste has always upheld, it is the works of a civilisation that endure long after its guns and prayers fall silent. Valen knew of this belief and decided to embody it in the First Law. The worker caste's clans, far more unified than the warrior clans or even the many churches of the religious caste, do not often disagree about the semantics of doctrine. Given that as a caste, worker members are far more concerned with the tangible laws of circuit and crystal than any intangible concepts, they are content to leave this law as stated without indulging in over-complicated interpretation.

One of the few disagreements that exist in the caste has to do with one of the few truly spiritual beliefs held by workers. In their idea of the Place Where No Shadows Fall, many of the worker caste members believe that they will literally be judged by the spirits of their ancestors before they can earn their final reward. If their works are found wanting, they will be consigned to the ranks of the Kur'fa, 'those who toil'. Even in the afterlife, it would seem, there is a working class.

Those who knew Valen and studied his work do not believe this was the intention of the First Law, but it has become an increasingly more prevalent belief among the worker caste. At the time of the Earth/Minbari War, more than half of the caste ascribed to the Last Judgment, a superstition the warrior caste was grateful for when it spurred the worker caste on to create warships at one third their own projected construction time. Faith may move an entire mountain, but faith mixed with fear can drive a lot of power tools.

Work Worthy of Praise Does Not Require Any.

Those who knew Valen have their own thoughts on the Second Law, but they understood its necessity as a political move. The stress of the Great War has driven wedges between all of the castes and the Minbari race stood on the brink of defeat, collapse, and probably genocide. Even

if the warrior clans were brought together to serve as a fighting force, they would need a support structure and the guidance to aim their power towards the greater good. The latter was accomplished through the formation of the Grey Council, but the former proved to be much more complicated.

The worker caste was on the brink of revolt. Used to working without credit or respect under normal circumstances, the additional strain of the Great War had pushed them farther than they had ever been and a possible insurrection was beginning to brew within the caste. When Valen first arrived and brought the hope of victory over the Great Enemy with him, he realised that before the Minbari could hope to defeat its foes, the race would have to achieve peace with itself.

Most Minbari attribute Valen's efforts in this respect to the conflicts between the religious and scattered warrior castes, but one of the most important wars he stopped was the one concerning the worker caste. Few of the Minbari realise the danger they were in or the pain that Valen spared them by seeking to pacify the worker caste. Rather than make a public show of the unrest in the caste, something that could backfire if the other castes did not react accordingly, Valen met with the clan leaders of the worker caste privately. After hearing their grievances, Valen saw that the stress was too deeply set in the caste to ever be neutralised in the brief time that he had.

Instead, he set forth the coda of work and ensured their acceptance by effectively allowing each clan to write the texts themselves. Knowing that a great deal of the caste's anger was the result of long-wounded pride, he had to find a way to bolster the worker caste without making too open a statement about the mistreatment they had endured by the other castes. Ultimately, he chose to put forth the Second Law as an effort to give the worker caste back the pride they once had. It worked, and the worker caste fell in line with the new order in time to support its efforts against the Shadows.

**Anything Broken Can Be Remade.
Anything Remade Was Never Truly Broken.**

If it could be said that the Second Law was written with ulterior motives, the Third would have to be considered entirely a political statement. Knowing that the rules he set down for each caste would be examined by the other two, Valen knew that his laws would need to hold equally true for them all. Most of the worker caste finds the surface meaning of the Third Law to be quite fitting for what they do, but the other castes can also find wisdom in

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Minbari Lore – The Three Laws

The Three Laws both benefit and suffer from their brevity and the fact that they were handed down to the worker caste. If Valen had intended them as a message for the clans in general, he would have been better served making them a Minbari wide proclamation. As it stands, the fact that they were given to guide the worker caste has ensured that only the most inquisitive of the religious and warrior caste Minbari ever have a reason to hear them, much less reflect upon their meaning. Of course, this may have been in Valen's plan all along; if only the most flexible and open minded of the Minbari hear his words and prosper by them, the next generation will be correspondingly better off.

Regardless of the father of the modern Minbari culture's inscrutable intentions, the Three Laws have not been as widely distributed as he might have wished. The worker caste has heard his words and lives by them without fail, though few see the depths that might exist within their meaning. It is certainly true that life is not much better for members of the worker caste than it was before the reformation of the castes, but there has been some improvement. Life by the Three Laws and an equal, if sometimes ineffectual, voice in the Grey Council have provided the peace and tranquility these scientists and engineers require to work.

If there is anything else to be said about the impact of the Three Words on the Minbari people, it is best noted in their own words. Twice have members of other clans with great prestige quoted one of the Three Laws in recent Minbari history. One of the only responses made to EarthGov when they inquired as to the conditions of the Minbari was from Shi Alyt Jheron of the Fire Wings clan. When asked what the Minbari would do about the ruins of the many colonies and bases they destroyed, Jheron simply replied, 'Anything broken can be remade.'

The second quote comes from the Grey Council itself in its acceptance decree of the plans to build a fifth Babylon station in the wake of the fourth's disappearance. Though EarthGov did not expect any race to help cover the cost of another station in a line of seemingly doomed constructions, the Minbari signed on the same day the new project was announced. In the letter of approval sent to EarthDome, religious caste Speaker for the Grey Council Lanaan signed off with the line, 'A race is judged by its creations alone.'

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its words. When Valen began writing the Three Laws, this was actually the first one he came up with, but he initially rejected it because he did not feel it was specific enough to one caste. Once the Three Laws and the codas of work began to take shape, he realised how fitting the passage was and chose to keep it as the Third Law.

There are those in the worker caste who take a spiritual approach to this Law, just as those in the religious caste do. Metaphorically, this Law is not just talking about ships or buildings, it refers to anything that can be broken such as trust, pride, or even the society of the Minbari itself. In a wide but appropriate interpretation, many scholars among the Minbari (some of whom are worker caste and labour as researchers for the other two castes) believe that the Third Law is a direct commentary on the state of the Minbari culture before the arrival of Valen and the hope he offered them of unity and peace.

The second half of the Law is a little more mystifying. To the majority of the worker caste, it is just more emphasis on the Law's message that with enough diligence, anything can be repaired or rebuilt. A deeper examination leads other Minbari to believe that it stresses the message of hope in hopeless situations, another commentary on Valen's part. This comment, they propose, was an indirect way of convincing the Minbari that the Great War was not only winnable, but that all of the losses the Minbari had suffered could be overcome with time and effort.

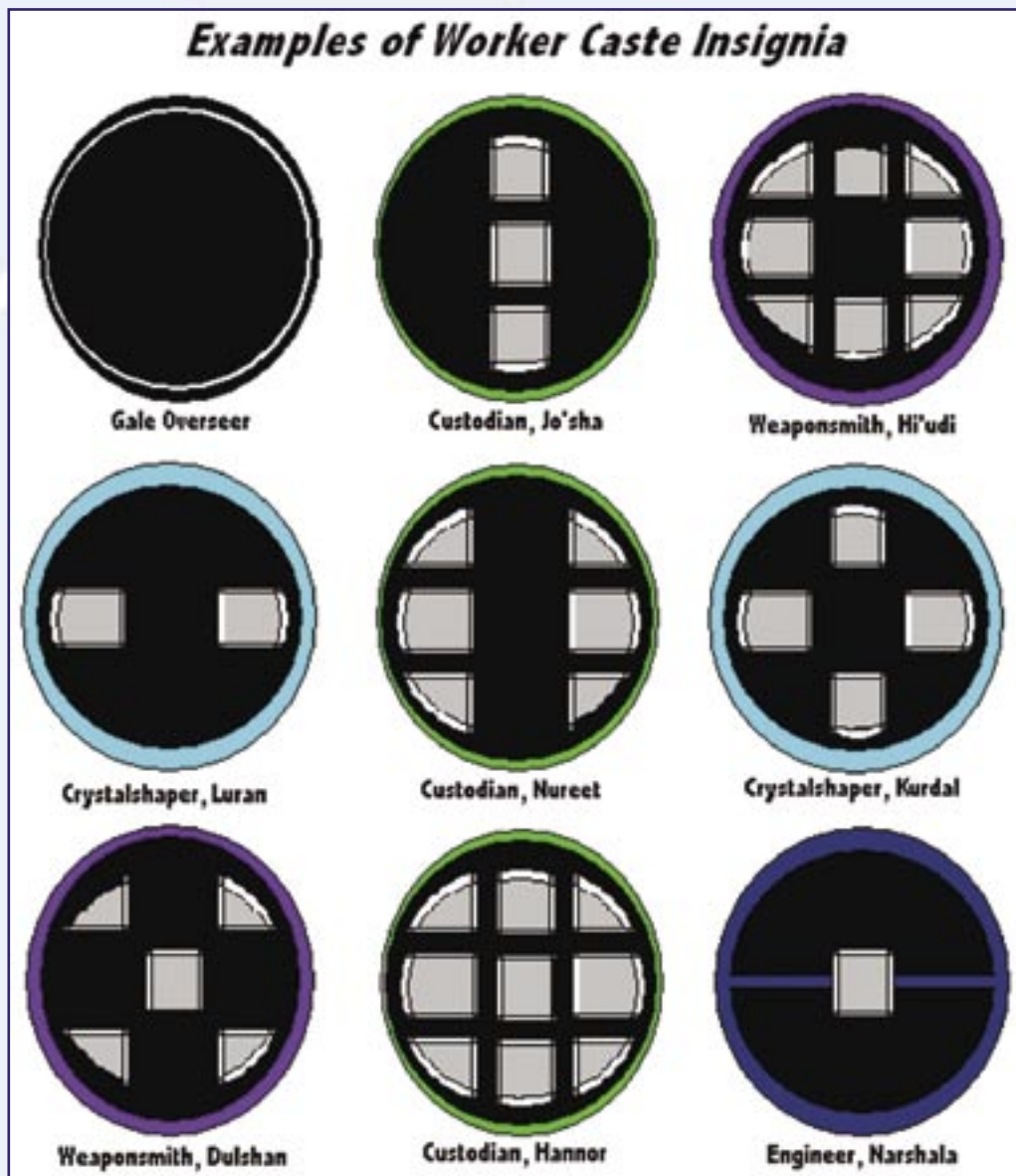
Structure of the Worker Caste

As befits the underlying superstructure of the entire Minbari race, the

worker caste is extremely well organised and stratified. Every layer of the worker caste is laid out as best fits its specific function, only answering to higher layers when it best suits their tasks. Everything about the structure of the worker caste is designed with efficiency of function in mind, ensuring that the chain of command never becomes too binding. While Valen is responsible for some of this superlative design, most of it was in place in the individual groups of the caste and merely needed to be made uniform throughout the caste.

Not surprisingly, a caste this varied in scope requires a special form of organisation linked to its various disciplines. The levels of the caste are well defined and leave little room for ambiguity in its members. Every worker caste Minbari knows his or her place in the scheme of the organisation appropriate to the science or physical

Examples of Worker Caste Insignia



labour type involved. Advancement also depends greatly on the discipline a Minbari is in, with larger groups being easier to advance in than smaller ones due to the closed nature of each group. Once a Minbari becomes part of a worker caste echelon, it is difficult for them to leave without an extremely good reason for the defection.

Gales (30% of the caste)

The practical nature of the worker caste allows, and effectively demands, it to make efficient use of its personnel. While religious and warrior matters are sometimes occasional and allow for their completion by only a percentage of the respective caste at a time, the worker caste is always required and tend to have more projects than they have manpower to complete them. To compensate for this, the worker caste is the only one that assigned full duties commensurate with training to young Minbari still being educated in their second crèche.

These students belong to a gale, the worker caste equivalent of the warrior caste's sheres and the religious caste's fanes. Gale Minbari that have not yet graduated from their second crèche make up the lowest level of the worker caste's echelons of authority and hold a unique place among their fellows. Gale Minbari do not specifically have an assigned technical specialty and often serve as a labourer or assistant in several traditions before escalating to the next level in the caste. This wide scale service educates the young caste member in a number of basic work principles and also serves as a continual test of the student's aptitudes. When Minbari youths of the worker caste graduate from the second crèche, the discipline awaiting them is usually one they have served in during their training and showed a special talent for.

Gales, as these young workers are called by their peers and superiors, rarely carry any responsibility on their untried shoulders but rather serve in simple, basic roles until they demonstrate an ability to do more. It is not uncommon to see a Gale near their time of graduation in a minor leadership role, but for the most part they function as the lowest common denominator in any work crew. A significant percentage of the entire worker caste exist as Gales, a fact that is borne out in their presence in any given project.

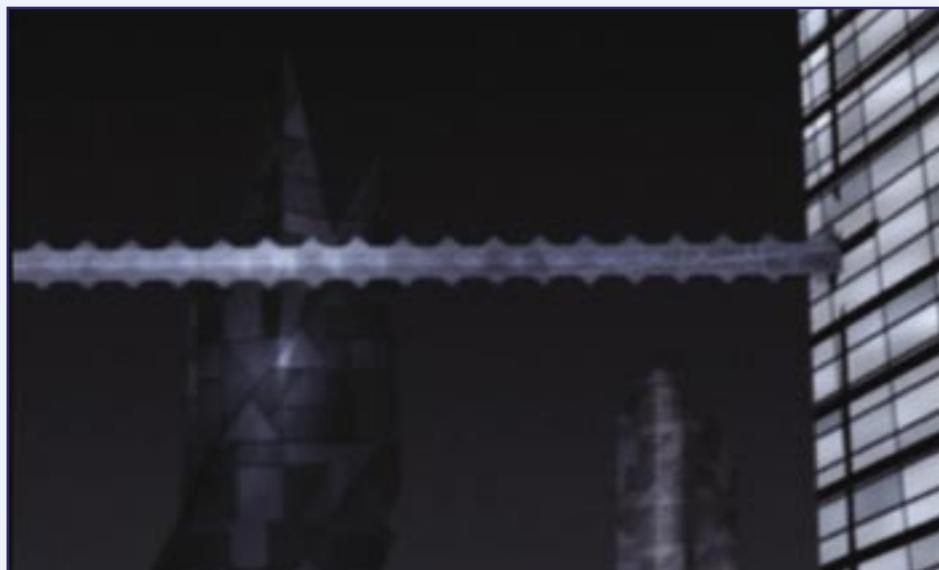
Because overseers on a project need to be able to see the relative

dependability and rank of a team's members, all worker caste Minbari wear an obvious insignia on their uniforms. Gales are distinctive in that they are given worker caste uniforms while on a project site but given no rank insignia, symbolising their recent admittance to the workforce and yet unproven abilities. Gales given authority over his peers on a work site wear a large, unadorned black circle on each shoulder. These are called Gale Primes and represent the only leadership role a Gale can hold.

Craftsmen (65% of the caste)

The largest single echelon in the worker caste is the Craftsmen, Minbari trained to perform within a single discipline (construction, chemistry, mechanical engineering, etc.). A Minbari is likely to graduate from a worker caste gale and become a Craftsman, the role he will perform in for the rest of his life. Craftsmen are trained and qualified to fill any work role from basic labour to genetic engineer with equal competency. Unless a given Minbari shows the potential for leadership, he will continue to serve the caste in the ranks of the Craftsmen indefinitely.

Even Gales who took on a leadership role among his peers must spend at least five years as Craftsman before moving to a higher echelon. This is partially to keep the ranks of the Craftsmen filled for as long as possible, but mostly it matches the practical mindset of the worker caste. In the opinion of the ancient leaders of the caste, only Minbari who have served as workers can make effective leaders. This attitude was echoed by Valen and the current policy of five years service was instituted. After a thousand years under this system, it has simply become the way things are done in the caste. Now, members of the worker caste do not even look towards promotion into a higher echelon



until their time in service is up. This has the secondary effect of curtailing ambition in the caste.

Each discipline has its own corps of Craftsmen, each conforming to its own internal hierarchy. Some simple disciplines, such as custodial work, only have a few levels, with the equivalencies of junior, standard, and senior Craftsmen, while disciplines involving multiple skills sets, such as heavy construction or starship assembly, have a number of interlinked yet separate levels of responsibility and rank. At the Craftsmen level, no Minbari is truly considered to have any authority; that is reserved for higher echelons.

The rank insignia of a worker caste Craftsman is a series of up to nine shapes collected inside a dark circle. The colour of the circle represents the discipline of the Minbari, but the geometrical shapes are always silver. The juxtaposition of shapes and circles can tell a member of the worker caste how he or she should react to a given Craftsman on sight. This method of insignia can be confusing to members of other castes, but all worker caste Minbari are raised to recognise the symbols and their meanings with little more than a precursory glance. A trained administrator of the caste can rapidly disseminate what a worker caste Minbari should be doing on any given project just by the insignia on his shoulders, back, and/or chest; the location of the insignia is dependent on the clan and discipline involved.

The worker caste has ten basic ranks, though not every discipline uses all ten. The first has already been discussed, the Gale. These are noted by their no insignia or, in the case of their internally assigned leaders, a black circle around an empty black field. As ranks increase, a correspondingly larger number of symbols are included inside the field. The pattern of the field symbols differs between disciplines somewhat, but this is a matter of clan tradition. On the whole, the same patterns are used to denote rank. The order of rank is as follows:

- ⑤ Gale (0 rank, sometimes considered craftsmen depending on service)
- ⑤ Narshala (1st rank, often considered a trainee until a higher rank is gained)
- ⑤ Luran (2nd rank, usually an automatic promotion after one year of full service in a discipline)
- ⑤ Jo'sha (3rd rank, the first rank in most simple disciplines and rarely used by more complex ones)
- ⑤ Kurdal (4th rank, a median rank held by experienced craftsmen. Few kurdal are ever promoted higher than this, as kurdal is normally awarded to those with great skill but little leadership potential.)

- ⑤ Dulshan (5th rank, an advanced rank showing fifteen years or more as a craftsman)
- ⑤ Nureet (6th rank, a median rank used in simple disciplines only)
- ⑤ Shordal (7th rank, a rarely used rank showing more than fifty years in the same discipline as well as a commendation for extraordinary service. Only the current High Taskmaster of the worker caste can award the rank of Shordal.)
- ⑤ Hi'udi (8th rank, a master craftsman rank and the highest rank normally attainable in complex fields of work. Only Shordal outrank Hi'udi, and then only on a prestige level.)
- ⑤ Hannor (9th rank, this rank is the simple discipline equivalent of a Hu'ida and afforded the same level of respect.)

In addition to field symbols, a worker caste insignia may also feature a band across the field in the same colour as its outer circle. This is the sign of a Craftsman overseer, an ambiguous echelon that lies somewhere between Craftsmen and Administrata. The Administrata select one Craftsman from each work force on a project to act as an overseer. These chosen workers are given slightly greater authority than others of their rank and are expected to keep the Administrata informed of any occurrences during work shifts. Craftsmen overseers are usually the interim step between the two echelons; the Taskmasters usually promote Craftsmen overseers into the Administrata before others on their work teams.

Administrata (5% of the caste)

Most of the work done by the caste is attended to by the Craftsmen and Gale echelons, but someone has to maintain the rigorous organisation required to keep things running smoothly. This task is left to a small (percentage-wise) handful of Minbari known as the Administrata. These worker caste leaders are generally assigned in small clusters to different areas of Minbar and its colony worlds to keep order flowing through all the disciplines under their command. At any given time, there are several thousand Administrata on any given planet, watching over the entire caste's operations.

The worker caste has a very practical approach to their projects and this shows in the qualifications needed to become an Administrata and serve as the head of a particular work force. In addition to five years service in any one discipline as mentioned before, an Administrata must have at least one year of service with any given discipline before he can act as its supervisor. This is one of the few times that worker caste Minbari intentionally train in multiple disciplines, with some of the most

Insignia of the Worker Caste Administrata



Crystalshaper Administrata
20 years of service



Engineer Administrata
Sixty years of Service



Custodian Administrata
Newly Appointed

accomplished Administrata members educated in seven or eight entirely different fields. Without the requisite time in service, an Administrata cannot accept a position over a group of workers on a project.

This insistence by the caste's leaders on its management level being qualified to act as a Craftsman in a given field of work ensures a quality of administration that yields impressive efficiency. The absolute nature of this worker caste law keeps dissatisfaction in the lower ranks to a minimum. Since anyone putting in the time and exhibiting the right qualities can gain a leadership role, and since only those who have served their time as a Craftsman can qualify in the first place, there is only a small chance of an Administrata being appointed without the needed skills to both work and lead other workers.

Though it is not an official policy of the Taskmasters, it is traditional that every rank of Craftsmen can be considered for promotion to the ranks of the Administrata. The ability to serve as a craftsman and the ability to lead others are two different skill sets, something the Taskmasters are quite aware of. As such, even a 1st rank Narshala can become an administrata if his abilities lie in that direction. Few Narshala actually qualify for the Administrata however, mostly because by the time most Minbari have served the five years necessary to gain promotion, they have already advanced a rank or two in their discipline.

The Administrata have the ability to request rank promotions and demotions, requisition materials for their projects, assign new Gales into their work force, and approve changes to their projects made by higher echelons or members of other castes. This last power is unusual in that it allows a member of a lower rank to deny the

orders of a superior. This ability is given to Administrata because the leaders of the worker caste appreciate that a lower rank is closer to a project than those of a higher one and can better see how a particular change might affect it. The High Taskmaster of the worker caste can override an Administrata's disapproval, but no other worker caste member can do so.

A project, which may consist of something as basic as the janitorial maintenance of a building or as complex as the construction of a new Leshath heavy scout ship, will have at least one Administrata as its principle authority. Related groups of projects such as the reconstruction efforts of a badly damaged colony, will have a higher layer of Administrata organising and coordinating members of their echelon in charge of the tasks that comprise that group. Higher layer Administrata need only have a year in service in one of the disciplines under his authority, which keeps the ranks from requiring progressively difficult qualifications.

It should be noted that Administrata form their own peer circle and that those functioning over a simple discipline are not shown markedly less respect than those serving to coordinate something more complicated. A construction Administrata of any rank is treated the same in most regards as an Administrata trained in higher order mathematics. Administrata do not have an internal ranking structure, keeping the same rank they had as Craftsmen when they were promoted. For issues involving grades of rank, such as determining which Administrata will serve as the leader on a multiple layer project, time in service is the primary milestone. In certain cases, Taskmasters may choose to step outside that gradient, but this is very rarely

done. The longer a Minbari serves as an Administrata, the more authority he accumulates.

An Administrata uses the same rank insignia he possessed before his promotion to this echelon, but the black field is divided by a special gradation of lines. Each discipline has its own pattern, but they all tend to be angled lines either radiating from the central symbol or drawn between the edges of the outer circle in some like of opposed array. Regardless of the discipline, an Administrata is permitted to add a line to his pattern every twenty years he serves in this echelon.

Taskmasters (Less than 1% of the caste)

Taskmasters are Minbari worker caste members promoted up out of the Administrata by the circle of Taskmasters themselves. Divided into three levels, the Taskmasters are responsible for maintaining the productivity and quality of service of the entire worker caste, a massive responsibility and an incredibly difficult task to maintain over the entire Minbari Federation. This complexity led to the formation of the third circle of Taskmasters; before the Federation grew to its current size, there were only two. Unlike the previous echelons, Taskmasters do not need to have served in the disciplines of those they supervise.

The circles of Taskmasters form a pyramid of authority under the leader of the caste, the High Taskmaster. Directly under this individual are the Konshar, a group of three worker caste members who serve as the caste's representatives to the Grey Council and as advisors to the High Taskmaster. The Jhelshar serve these three

as a group of twenty four, one for each of the Minbari Federation's core planets and the worlds of the Minbari Protective. Under each of these is a somewhat fluid number of Taskmasters appointed to oversee entire regions of these worlds. These are known as the Danshar and their membership tend to fluctuate around fifty to sixty.

The Konshar are responsible for collating all of the information passed up through the other ranks of the Taskmasters and presenting it in a useful fashion to the High Taskmaster. It is through their eyes that the leader of the caste perceives the work done by them and the projects that yet need to be completed. The Konshar exercise the will of the High Taskmaster, though usually only indirectly. For most of the time, they are too occupied by Grey Council matters to act directly. Duties the Konshar cannot perform by themselves are given to the next level down.

The next level down is populated by the twenty four Jhelshar and it is their role to make certain that everything accomplished by the caste on their worlds of authority becomes known to the Konshar and the High Taskmaster. Occasionally, they are directed by the High Taskmaster without the need for the Konshar, but this is a rare instance and has not happened since the Earth/Minbari War. For the most part, the Jhelshar act as the hand of the Konshar on a specific planet, ensuring that some task or another is accomplished efficiently and in the proper time.

The Danshar are to the Jhelshar what they are to the Konshar; the hand that turns the wheel when commanded by the greater arm above them. Danshar are always

Insignia of the Worker Caste Taskmasters



Crystalshaper Taskmaster
Danshar



Engineer Taskmaster
Jhelshar



Custodian Taskmaster
Konshar

elevated Administrata with at least ten years in service in that capacity chosen for promotion and given a region to oversee. This level is the entrance point for Administrata coming into the Taskmaster echelon. All Administrata must become Danshar before they can escalate to a higher level, though there is not minimum length of service required before a Danshar can become a Jhalshar or Konshar. It is even technically possible for an Administrata to join the ranks of the Danshar and become the High Taskmaster within the same year, though this has never occurred in the history of the caste.

None of the Taskmasters have a specific insignia when interacting with each other, as the circles are small enough not to require them. When these worker caste leaders must interact with members of lower echelons, they wear specific patterns of symbols and lines on fields of black. The circles are variable and as a matter of tradition are changed to match the group the Taskmaster is addressing. The lines usually remain as they were then the Minbari last served as an Administrata. Unlike Craftsmen and Administrata, their black fields are decorated with star fields to symbolise the wide spread nature of their authority. Silver symbols are worn by the Danshar. Gold symbols signify Jhelshar status, while a mixture of gold and silver are the province of the Konshar.

Taskmasters have a special rank in the caste, owing to their generally long service and usually wide fields of expertise. A Taskmaster present on any work site has no authority over the administration of that project but may set into the role of any caste member except for the Craftsman Overseer (if any) or Administrata in charge. If a Taskmaster wishes to work on a site within his territory, he may do so regardless of the wishes of any member of the caste, including the High Taskmaster himself.

High Taskmaster (One Minbari worker caste member)

Unlike the leaders of the other two castes, the High Taskmaster does not reign for life. Instead, the practicality of the worker caste ensures that a High Taskmaster rules only as long as his capacity to do so effectively lasts. To facilitate this, the Konshar Taskmasters hold a private vote among themselves every five years. This vote determines whether or not the current High Taskmaster continues to serve or must step down for another. The placement of the Konshar as the caste representatives to the Grey Council make them his peers, which usually keeps them from desiring his position. As such, the vote is typically a fair one, considering only his ability to function as the leader of the worker caste.

The High Taskmaster does not use any insignia, nor does he require any. The High Taskmaster's position is such that he rarely if ever interacts with caste members in a way that would need any marks of station to be worn. When these rare instances do occur, he is usually accompanied by the Jhelshar or Danshar in charge of the place he is visiting. This alone tends to mark the High Taskmaster for who he is, which serves to get his the respect his station demands. As most of the High Taskmaster's duties are either ceremonial or top-level administration, these trips seldom occur.

The Hall of Hallowed Craft in the city of Tuzanor on Minbar has served as the seat of the worker caste's leadership since before the time of Valen, making it the only caste center of power to remain unmoved during the reformation of Minbari culture. The High Taskmaster spends most of his time in the Hall, surrounded by Gales devoted to the clerical needs of his office and advisors from the other two castes who keep him informed of their respective needs and projects. It is the High Taskmaster that approves all new projects of any major scope and supervises significant changes in leadership in the lower echelons.

A High Taskmaster who steps down from his role is afforded any other position in any work group, echelon, or place of authority that has an opening or can justifiably create one. This keeps a functional, experienced member of the worker caste in a position where he can be effective and provides a reward for the hard service done in their name. High Taskmasters have, in the past, taken roles after their tenure as varied as menial labour in simple disciplines or as complex and a single step down into the ranks of the Konshar. After the Streibs Invasion, the High Taskmaster stepped down to join the electronics discipline as a researcher to help insure that no such creatures ever threatened to enter Minbari space undetected again. His contributions in that regard have guarded the borders of the Federation for decades.

Worker Caste Traditions and Holidays

As one might expect, the worker caste does not celebrate as many holidays as they others. Even the warrior caste is comparatively frivolous with their number of holidays as opposed to the worker caste, mostly due to their pragmatic nature and the constant presence of projects requiring completion. The worker caste simply does not have the luxury of taking large sections of time off for celebrations and remembrances, though there are a few occasions the caste and its clans set aside for special note. These days are few and far between, but they do exist.

What the caste lacks in holidays, it more than makes up for in traditions. The worker caste is involved in matters of such basic importance and wide reaching complexity that the spiritual nature of all Minbari has had ample time and fertile ground to form several hundred traditions, many of which are superstitious in nature. Few worker caste Minbari would ever work with unconsecrated tools and a prayer over a broken mechanism or faulty electronic device is considered the most important part of any technician's maintenance procedures. These traditions are a vital part of the caste, considered as indispensable as a worker's tools.

The traditions of a worker caste Minbari can take many shapes and do not even stay the same from day to day. Unlike the religious caste with their rigid dogma and the warrior caste with their time-honoured battle prayers, the worker caste's rites and ceremonies have become as fluid as their working environment. With changing technology and an almost infinite number of variations on working conditions and possible problems, the caste has adopted a very freeform approach to most of its traditions.

- ⑤ **Ondara.** The rite of Ondara has as many forms as there are tools and pieces of diagnostic equipment in the hands of the worker caste. Ondara is a consecration performed to ensure that the spirits of ill fortune do not taint the work performed with the instrument in question. It is considered bad luck to work with either an unconsecrated tool or one consecrated to another living member of the caste.
- ⑤ **Attunement.** A ritual that takes an unspecified length of time to perform, attunement is a prayer in which a worker caste Minbari touches and attempts to commune with a damaged system to discern the best way to repair it. Attunement has debatable benefits, but it is a significant ritual of the worker caste. Most attunements take at least one minute to perform; some last as long as an hour.
- ⑤ **Lon'kar.** The Lon'kar is an admission of surrender on the part of the worker caste Minbari holding the service. This is done when a system or project is beyond saving and cannot be completed. In a symbolic act, the device or worksite is scavenged of as many useful components as possible, then set ablaze to carry its noble essence back into the universe.
- ⑤ **The Eye of Clarity.** A ritual reserved for Craftsmen Overseers and higher ranks, the Eye of Clarity is both the name of a crystal inlaid amulet constructed for a specific ritual and the ritual itself. Whenever a new undertaking is proposed, a ranking member of the caste uses the Eye of Clarity to go over every detail of the plan and meditate on its worth.

If the project is considered acceptable, the ritual concludes successfully and the amulet is hung in an appropriate part of the work place to ensure good fortune. If not, the Eye usually accompanies the proposal documents in the fires of the Lon'kar.

- ⑤ **Work Vigil.** It is a tradition of the Minbari worker caste that a member of the working team always be present on any project site engaged in some part of the project. This is called a work vigil and if it is interrupted for more than a few minutes or by anything short of extreme circumstances, the project is normally scrapped and restarted.
- ⑤ **Hannar-leth.** Also known as the Carrying of the Flame, the Hannar-leth is a tradition that dates to the time with the worker caste was divided into units of slave technicians in the hands of other castes. When a machine or complex of any importance, such as a starship or an major city building, is completed, it is customary for one of the worker caste Minbari involved in its construction to be accepted as a permanent part of its crew. This caste member is thought to be the keeper of the machine or building's soul, its 'flame', and is afforded respect by others accordingly, even members of the other two castes.

Holidays

While the worker caste does not have many holidays, they do have a few. For example, there are two days each Minbari year in which the caste is given a surcease from their labours. As the Minbari civilisation would literally cease if the entire worker caste took time off at once, each discipline has its own two days which do not coincide with the easement holiday of any other. Related disciplines have their holidays placed a considerable distance apart on the calendar to ensure that their decreed rest does not cause any unforeseen complications.

In addition, there are the clan founder holidays common to all Minbari, though the worker caste do not take these days as rest from their tasks. Instead, it is traditional for the members of a clan to double their efforts in an attempt to appease the memory of their ancestor through a sacrifice of perfect toil. Efficiency, work speed, and quality all increase dramatically on a clan founder's holiday, something that those in charge of areas where the worker caste have a great impact keep in mind. It is not uncommon for a military commander or religious leader to plan expositions of their units or temples around days in which their worker caste personnel will be celebrating their founder's day.

- 5 Day of Freedom. This holiday is celebrated by all of the worker caste clans in memory of the day the other clans permitted the official recognition of the unified Velshir as its own caste. On that day, worker Minbari ceased their existence as slaves. The worker caste does not stop work on this day but instead perform much as they do on the individual caste founder's days.
- 5 The Jhontal'liat. Lennan for 'grand meeting of minds', the Jhontal'liat is a once a year showcase for the finest work each discipline has done in their field. Several different projects are entered for each discipline and a panel of presiding Administrata (or rarely, a group of judges drawn from higher echelons) decides which one in each category deserves to be given the Blessing of Valen. These awards take the form of full funding by the worker caste, enabling Minbari without the means to finish their work a chance to realise their vision. The Jhontal'liat is held simultaneously on Minbar and each of the Minbari colony worlds with a large enough worker caste presence to support it. The entire Minbari Protective holds a single Jhontal'liat on the world of Zendamor.

The Caste in Conclusion

Carrying the idea of a caste analogy to the workers, they are the multitude of insects that support the hive by repeatedly doing all of the work needed to sustain its existence. They are worker ants, gathering food and digging tunnels. They are drone bees, constantly exploring and serving without reward or recognition. They are the ones that shoulder the majority of everyday burdens, all in the name of the race as a whole. Without the worker caste, it is not likely that

Minbari civilisation would survive very long at all. The other castes have become too specialised to act in their stead, leaving the worker caste with both the blessing and curse of being indispensable.

As for the attitudes of the worker caste itself, theirs has always been a life of service in silence. While they have the potential to bring down the other castes merely by ceasing their efforts, their lives have been spent performing those tasks until they are not only rote but the greatest definition of who and what they are as Minbari. For a worker to stop working would be like a sun refusing to shine or a planet to stop revolving. It might happen, but the results would be catastrophic for everything concerned.

The Castes in Detail: The Casteless

With sentience comes the ability to make choices, even irrational ones. Even the Minbari realise this, as one of their laws of sentient life decrees. It is in the nature of sentient beings to both conform and rebel, to behave and to misbehave, with no greater pattern to their actions than the random representation of choosing from every option available. This psychological choice is shown in the Minbari through the fact that even though the castes are rigidly defined and assumed to be binding, there are still mechanisms for their race to choose to change castes if they wish to, although such mechanisms are prohibitively complicated to prevent their common use.

To represent every choice available to a race, one must also accept that some will choose to dissent, to choose not to choose or to remove themselves from the equation of choice entirely. Though they are extremely rare, the Minbari have these individuals as well; members of the Minbari race have willingly stepped outside their castes rather than live within the societal walls that enclose the rest of their people. This is not an easy life and the pressure to conform is massive, but there are still those who would prefer a life free from the limitations of the caste system.



In response to the casteless, the Minbari have adopted an 'invisible' policy that ensures that anyone choosing this lifestyle has to do so knowing that they will have no place at all among their race. Most Minbari will not admit the existence of the casteless and certainly never do so to other races. The numbers of the casteless are kept small through the difficulty of existing as one and because few Minbari ever choose to become one; this small size makes it easy to conceal the casteless from the prying eyes of others.

As the name suggests, these Minbari have rejected the caste system and all that it stands for, but they have not necessarily turned their backs on Valen's teachings. The casteless are not a warlike people, nor are they social anarchists bent on destroying the castes and returning the Minbari Federation to its former tumultuous state. Most are simply Minbari who wish to live free and make their own choices, no matter what the cost. They exist at the fringes of Minbari culture and scratch out a living in the wild or inhospitable places that others of their race will not go.

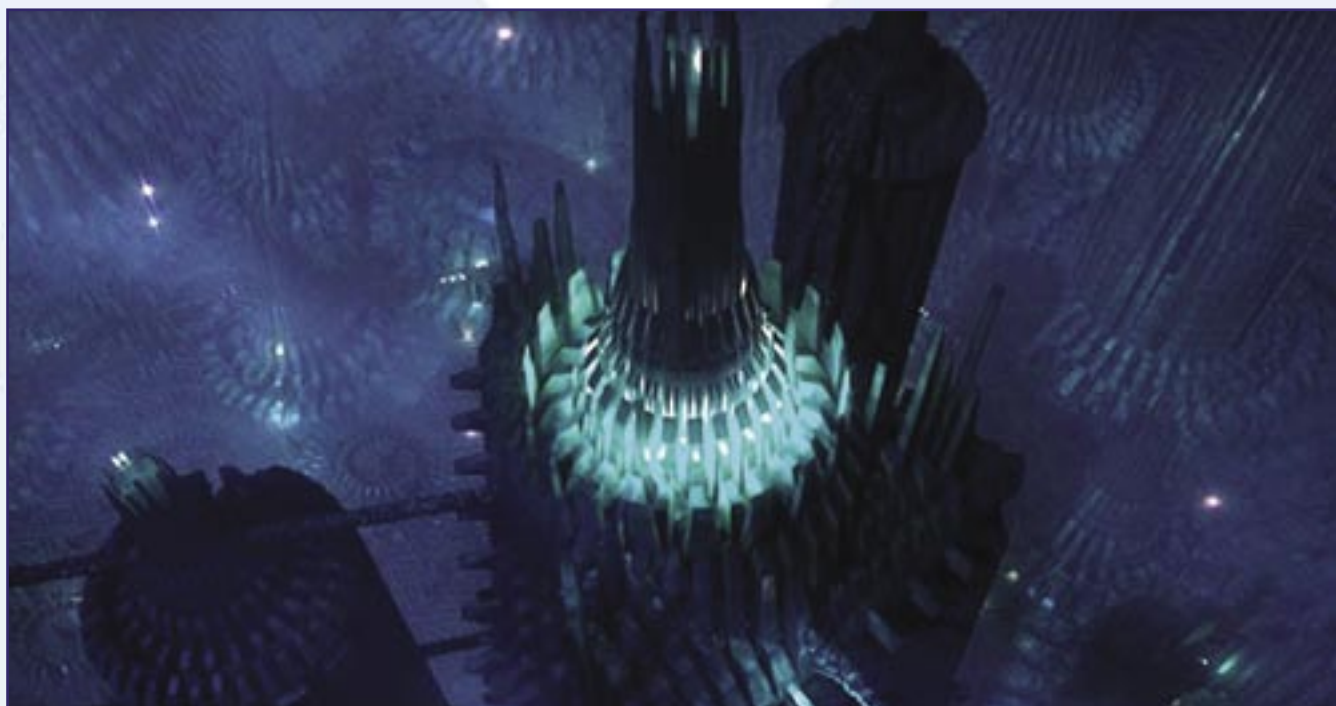
Many of the casteless choose to leave their homeworld or colony altogether and find a life among the stars outside the Federation. These Minbari sneak aboard worker caste transports or warrior caste starships and ride as stowaways until they reach another port of call outside the control of their race, then slip away to find a better life for themselves. Sometimes they find, sometimes they do not. The castes do not encourage this behavior and work against it when they can, primarily because the casteless are harder to hide once they leave Minbari space. As such,

fleeing the Federation can be a dangerous prospect for the casteless. When found, they are usually just deposited on the nearest Minbari world without comment but a few disappear, never to be seen again. The warrior caste denies taking action against these casteless, but the ones that vanish almost always are those who tried to stowaway on military vessels.

Structure of the Casteless

The casteless, in their attempt to divest themselves from the caste system, have kept away from the establishment of rules, traditions, or other trappings of the culture they left behind. Most casteless do work together, however, as their continued existence has come to depend on it. They have retained a great deal of their freedom while doing so, but in the attempt to step outside societal restrictions, they have succumbed to the need for a society.

This society has a very simple form and a basic hierarchy. The Minbari racially have a respect for their elders and this translates directly to the casteless. The oldest members of any casteless group, which tend to number from ten to a hundred or more Minbari at any given time, lead while those of correspondingly younger ages take their place below him or her. The casteless usually have a hard enough time keeping their people fed, clothed, and in possession of even rudimentary shelter, so the system rarely gets more complicated than this. Occasionally a group of casteless will be led by a younger adult instead of its oldest member, but this is normally the case only when the Minbari is a proven provider and the elder assents to his authority.



Casteless Minbari groups rarely come together with others because the resources of the castes are hard enough to steal or divert without having to feed an even larger number. There is also the fact that the castes tend to ignore small groups of casteless but larger gatherings make the established Minbari nervous and often move them to break them up in case the casteless are organising for something more serious than a few stolen food crates or a handful of clothes.

Groups of casteless tend towards nomadic lifestyles. The 'invisible' policy of the castes only extends so far and when other Minbari stop ignoring them, life becomes more difficult for the casteless. Once a city tires of their casteless populace, it is safer for them to move on rather than risk the backlash that might result. Minbari do not kill Minbari, but there is an increasing number of caste members who are taking the view that if one of their race steps outside the castes, they cease to be Minbari at all. This line of reasoning can only end poorly for the casteless, so they stay on the move whenever they can.

Casteless Traditions and Holidays

As mentioned above, the casteless by definition do not often observe any holidays and since they lack the grounding of a true society, they have given rise to few traditions. The casteless are more concerned with survival and the sacrifices they make for their freedom to waste a day in what most of them would consider an empty observance of some event that matters to the society they have fled. They also undergo such privation at times that few wish to celebrate even the coming of Valen, whom they see as the source of the castes they despise so greatly.

Even so, the casteless are Minbari and spiritualism is a part of their very being. Most casteless are either born into the lifestyle or come at it from their second crèche. The latter leaves them ingrained with a few traditions from their old life, some of which are difficult to turn away from. While the casteless as a whole have very few holidays or traditions, individuals among their number may very well have some personal beliefs and celebrations that they observe.

- 5 Shano'ei. The Festival of the Sundering is an important day in the life of most casteless, especially those who willingly left their caste to become one of them. On this night, groups of casteless come together to tell stories of why they left their caste and of their experiences since becoming a casteless. Shano'ei is a bonding experience more

than anything else, with groups becoming closer knit because of the tales.

- 5 The Bleeding. A tradition that centers around the remembered words of Faelan, one of the first Minbari casteless and the leader of the largest single group of them to ever exist on Minbar, the Bleeding is a literal translation of his comment, 'Those who wish to leave the castes must be willing to bleed for that freedom.' When a casteless first joins a community, they are often asked to perform the Bleeding. This involves the new member cutting both palms open with a special knife and letting the wounds bleed while he recites a renunciation of his past life. As might be expected, this tradition is most common among casteless communities with one or more former warrior caste members.
- 5 Dol'anar. The Dol'anar is a holiday of life, a rare excuse for a casteless community to come together and celebrate the birth of a new Minbari. While infants make things harder for the casteless in many ways, most of them have enough devotion to the ideals of their way of life to consider a Minbari born free of the caste to be something worth the trouble. At the Dor'anar, the parents are given the rare privilege of choosing their child's entire name rather than just the first syllable; this symbolises the fact that the laws of the castes and clans have no hold over them.

The Casteless in Conclusion

It takes a great deal of sacrifice, resolve, and endurance to become a casteless Minbari, but it takes even more to survive as one. A fitting analogy for the casteless is that of the omega wolf, the one cast out of the pack but permitted to live on its outskirts. Like the omega, a casteless Minbari is forever in the shadow of the society that once held it, but is no longer bound or supported by it. The only difference between the casteless and omega wolves is that the former generally chose to be what they are. Few Minbari are ever outcast directly; becoming casteless is a choice they must make for themselves.

Living on the edge of Minbari culture is a difficult thing to endure, but those who survive it have managed to attain a level of freedom that none of their fellows in the castes can even appreciate. Some casteless thrive in this lack of restriction, while others wither and must rejoin the castes if they will have them or perish from deprivation of the body and spirit. As for the Minbari race's opinion of these rebellious individuals, their word for them, Hal'gir, sums it up nicely. In Adrenato, Hal'gir means 'alone'.

Minbari

Organisations

'Among Minbari, one individual leads, but we move as one. We are at our best when we move together, and we are at our worst when we move together. When our leader was killed by your people, we went mad together. We stayed mad for a very long time -- a madness that almost consumed your world. Until finally, before it was too late, we woke up together.'

-Oelenn, Religious Caste

While the three castes are the most visible division of the Minbari, these spiritual and social beings have divided themselves into many organisations and cultural groups. Some, such as the Grey Council, serve an important function for all Minbari, while others serve only their own agendas. Regardless of their purpose or structure, organisations within the Minbari usually occur because of a pressing need to gather support for an ideal, a cause, or a calling. As a deeply honour driven people, many of the Minbari come together in groups to further some matter of duty or obligation that cannot be addressed in their culture without the intervention of their organisation.

Some of these groups are political, though not as many of these form as one might think. For all intents and purposes, the Grey Council and its outlying arms within the three castes take care of all the political needs of the Minbari race. The lack of political groups can also be attributed to the Minbari cultural belief that political authority is a duty as opposed to a privilege. While the Minbari are no strangers to ambition, rank and title are not motivating factors for most of them. As such, Minbari do not usually aspire to positions of power as often as those of other races.

The Minbari military is also a form of special interest group in many ways. While the warrior caste is inextricably linked to the Minbari military, they are not the same thing and anyone who thinks that one necessarily means the other may have a rude awakening when they face a Minbari war cruiser manned by members of the religious caste. The formative agents of the current Minbari military felt it best to keep it open to all Minbari so as not to allow one caste to have a stranglehold on the physical might of the race. While this has been less effective than they would have liked, there are some formidable ships and units belonging to the worker and religious castes. Their non-warrior

trained strategies can make for some creative and diverse actions on the battlefield, enriching the performance of the Minbari military as a whole.

Of the several organisations existing as a splinter of the castes or clans, the most notable in current times would be the dangerously driven Storm Blades, a radical remnant of the Wind Swords clan. After the death of their comrades near Babylon 5, some of the survivors of the clan have split with those still living on Minbar and its colonies to form their own military. This force, unfettered by the will of the Grey Council, has not yet moved directly against their own kind, but the Storm Blades have been tentatively linked to a number of missing human transports along the borders of Minbari space.

Another important caste offshoot, though not nearly as militant or potentially violent as the Storm Blades, is a monastic sect that exists separate from the religious caste but as a part of their extended order. These Minbari are religious caste, but they do not serve within the same circles and functions as their fellows. These Minbari belong to the Followers of the First Ones, a group that believes the ancient races represent the primal forces of the universe and should be worshipped as gods. Revering them directly and denouncing the divinity of the accepted Minbari icons, the Followers are not a danger to Minbar but do make things uncomfortable for those who practice the dominant religion of their people.

All of these organisations, along with others, keep things socially dynamic for the Minbari. As a race, they tend towards stagnancy and do not exhibit a great deal of growth in anything resembling normal cultural change. Their longer life spans and physical and mental differences allow them to hold onto unchanging concepts much better than shorter lived races. These groups keep the social waters of the Minbari churning enough through their interactions to promote what little change the Minbari experience.

Minbari Characters – Organisations

Organisations are an excellent way for players to differentiate their Minbari from other. A campaign might have two members of the Fire Wings warrior caste, but if one of them is a secret Storm Blade supporter, they are likely to be very different characters. With the racial themes of honour and devotion to duty common among all Minbari, it is easy for them to seem very similar to each other. A Minbari can express some individuality by becoming part of an organisation like those below.

Games Masters are encouraged to work with their players to define other organisations among the Minbari. The ones given here are major facets of Minbari culture, but there is certainly room for others. The Grey Council, by its design, requires a number of smaller groups to carry out its wishes among the castes, and the clans have certainly created more splinter factions than just the Storm Blades. With a little creativity and Games Master approval, a Minbari character could become a major or minor part of virtually any kind of organisation among his people.

The Grey Council

Often called Valen's greatest legacy, the Grey Council have been ruling the Minbari people throughout the entire Federation for a thousand years with no interruptions or major political upheaval. This continuous government is a rarity in the galactic administrative scene. With dictatorships and republics being spawned and fading within decades, assuming they last that long, the idea of a millennia old government is an amazing achievement and one of the hallmarks of the Minbari people. It is certainly responsible at least in part for the advanced state of the race both socially and technologically.

When Valen came to the Minbari, they were culturally deadlocked. The race was under siege from an outside force and only a militant group of tribes under the shaky moniker of a caste was keeping them from being exterminated. The rest of the race was contributing to their defence more from desperation than co-operation, and they were not going to last much longer. The Minbari's primary asset in this conflict, the massive star base Inatrii, had been destroyed by the enemy and their hope was dwindling fast.

Valen brought the leaders of the tribes together, divided them into camps linked by their loose concept of castes, and formed from this arrangement three unique and functional groups. These were set to tasks immediately and from this tripartite alliance, the Minbari race as it is known now emerged as a force to be reckoned with. Along with the Vorlons and a few other minor races also caught in the conflict, the Great War of that time was won and the enemy dispersed back into the shadows from whence it came. Out of chaos, Valen brought order and from defeat, he forged victory.



This was not enough. The Minbari castes began to turn on each other within weeks of the Great War's end. Old habits were difficult to change and the Federation's resources had always been a major point of contention among the Minbari people. Valen's work was not done; to keep Minbar from consuming itself faster than any enemy could, something more would have to be done.

Thus was formed the Grey Council, based around the sacred number of three. Three had always held great significance to the Minbari people and it is likely the Grey Council was created in its given structure because of this belief. Valen placed the three wisest members of each caste as he viewed them into the Council as equals, resulting in a group of nine administrators who could oversee the Minbari people as a whole without any one of them holding greater power than any other. He was offered a position among the nine by each caste, but he declined each time. He agreed to provide advice and help moderate disagreements, but he did not wish to have an active hand in ruling the Minbari.

In this offer, his services were used heavily during the early years of the council. Some Minbari historians believe that Valen's disappearance from Minbari space before his supposed death was due in no small part to his desire for the race to take care of itself without constantly coming to him for advice. Many of the fragmentary reports of that time bear this theory out, especially one of Valen's own comments which, when taken as an allegory, all but proves that these historians are correct.

I have always been fascinated by the Shaoulo bird that lives on Nocalo. It shows great wisdom in that, unlike any other bird I know of, it builds a nest for its fledglings and when the time comes for them to learn to care for themselves, it does not push them out into the uncaring world. Instead, it leaves them the nest and all the food it can gather and departs to create another.'

In the case of this quotation, the caste system and the Grey Council can be seen as the 'nest', and Valen finally realised that it was time for him to fly away and leave them to what he had made. Reports differ on exactly what the last part of the quote might entail, the possibility of Valen's 'creating another', but while that may be lost to the mists of time, his legacy in the Grey Council and the people of Minbari has endured for a thousand years and seems solid enough to endure far into the future.

The Structure of the Grey Council and the Minbari Government

As mentioned, Valen gathered the three wisest members of each caste at the time of the Grey Council's founding and entrusted them with the rulership of the Minbari people. Nine people to govern an interplanetary federation with a population of billions would seem a daunting task, but the groundwork was also laid for the support network they would require to make it a possibility. Valen left it to the Council to decide many of the things a functioning government would require, such as delegation of authority and the eventual provisions needed to choose their own successors.

In many ways, looking back at that first generation of Satai leaders, it was the latter decision that would cause the most problems for them in later years, but the creation of a chain of command was at first greatly daunting. They turned, as they would many times before he left them, to Valen for help and reluctantly, he worked with them to shape the offices and positions that would spread their decrees among the many people of Minbar and beyond into the Federation. With the guiding principle that the fewer people involved in an executive decision the better, the governmental structure of the Minbari is a model of efficiency made possible only by the combined forces of faith and conformity that are unique to their race.

The governmental chain of command for the Minbari is as follows. A decision is made by the Grey Council through a vote in which a simple majority rules. This decision is then passed to three messengers, each one of a different caste. These messengers, known as Ven'sha'ir ('the voice of the circle'), are part of a small group of trained Minbari with the ability and authority to speak the will of the Council directly to the leaders of each caste. They deliver the decision in person, using whatever transport they need to requisition in order to do so. The caste leaders, which tend to be single individuals for each one, then see that the word is passed to the next level.

The caste leaders disseminate the decision of the Grey Council to the planetary governors of each world in the Federation. Essentially a microcosm view of the Council itself, the planetary governorship is a body of three, with one from each caste. These are chosen directly by the Grey Council and replaced upon the death or inability to continue in their role due to age, illness, or demonstrated incompetence. This group is also called the Hayn'sha'iri ('the hands of the circle'), and it is they who enact the direct will of the Grey Council on a planetary scale. They also act as advisors in planetary matters, as they are

often much closer to the social and temporal issues of the Minbari people than the cloistered Council.

From the Hayn'sha'iri, decrees are passed to territorial administrators. These are single Minbari who watch over entire sections of planets. As these districts are sometimes the province of one caste, it is typical for the administrator, also referred to as a 'shorlan', the Adrenato word for 'finger', to be of this same caste. Shorlans are given a staff of several Minbari to exercise the political agenda of the Grey Council and it is through their work that the government's influence filters down into the general populace of planets in the Minbari Federation.

Because of the timely nature of some matters, it is within the planetary governors' power to make decisions that directly concern their worlds, though they must communicate these judgment calls directly to the Grey Council as quickly as possible through the use of a Ven'sha'ir. The shorlans, their territorial assistants, do not have this level of authority officially, but over the centuries their position has grown to the point where they regularly make minor administrating decisions with the tacit approval of their Hayn'sha'iri. The Grey Council is aware of this stretch of their authority, but it is generally allowed as long as the results are acceptable. In every case, from the Hayn'sha'iri of Minbari down to the newest member of a shorlan's enforcement staff, everyone in the Minbari government is answerable directly to the Grey Council and may have their actions overridden and their position dissolved at any time by its majority vote.

Faces Shrouded in Grey; The Members of the Grey Council

Though the Grey Council has ruled continuously through the last thousand years of Minbari history, its performance has always been constant. The peaks and troughs of their performance have been chiefly due to the personalities of the Minbari occupying its caste-based positions. At times, the Council has ruled as a harmonious whole with mutual respect and agreement between all of its members. At other times, the Minbari Federation has been all but governed entirely by the Hayn'sha'iri and their lesser offices due to the inability of the Grey Council to agree on even the smallest matters.

This instability comes in part from the Grey Council's replacement protocol. In the beginning, the Grey Council adopted an heir policy, one in which the Council members chose replacements individually and groomed them for the role they would someday have. This method worked perfectly until, inevitably, a Council member died without having a fully trained successor. The

introduction of an inadequately prepared member of the Grey Council disrupted the harmony it needed to function. The replacement was voted out of his role and replaced with another member of his caste, but the flaw in their procedures had been revealed and needed to be corrected.

The alternative the Grey Council decided upon was similar to the original method but incorporated an approval vote before the replacement could join them as an equal. This vote had the potential of deadlocking, as there were only eight Council members voting on the matter. The solution for this eventuality was to dismiss any candidate that could not be agreed upon by at least five out of the eight members; the logic behind this decision was that if there was not a majority of support behind a new member, he would likely not have been conducive to the Grey Council in the first place.

As an after thought and as a nod to Valen and the growing mysticism surrounding all things concerning him, it was decreed that if the Triluminary, a device that only glowed in the presence of Valen or one favoured by him, glowed upon being presented to a candidate, they would be accepted without a vote. It is important to note that in the



entire history of the Grey Council, this has only happened three times. The first time was during the appointment of Dukhat, the second time was at the announcement of his successor Delenn, and the last time the Triluminary glowed in the halls of the Grey Council was at the interrogation of the human fighter pilot Jeffrey Sinclair at the end of the Earth/Minbari War.

Taken from a historic perspective, the current administration of the Grey Council has been essentially a harmonious one with only a few moments of indecision. The first was surrounding the death of Dukhat and a few others have followed, nearly all of which have been the result of that event and the accompanying war fought against Earth and the eventual surrender of the Minbari at the Battle of the Line. Though the personalities of the council members are not entirely compatible, the council does have the potential to act in unison when the will of its separate parts are brought together in common purpose.

It should be noted that although the members of the Grey Council are considered equals, they do tend to have one among their number put forth in the position of 'leader'. This position, which has no official title in an attempt to signify the honorary nature of the role, is usually filled by the most charismatic speaker among the Council members and is responsible for most of the group's interactions with other Minbari. In no official way does the speaker's vote carry any more power, though respect usually grants a Council member filling this role with more leverage over the others than he should technically have.

FOR THOSE WHO WILL COME AFTER ENCI'ZHA,

THIS BOOK IS INTENDED TO SERVE MANY PURPOSES. ITS ORIGINAL FORM WAS MEANT TO BRING ENCI'ZHA CURRENT WITH THE KNOWLEDGE HE REQUIRED FOR HIS DUTIES ON OUR BEHALF AND ON BEHALF OF YOUR WORLDS AS WELL. THAT PURPOSE NOW COMPLETE, ENCI'ZHA NOW WALKS BETWEEN THE STARS. YOU WHO COME AFTER HIM WILL FIND MUCH OF INTEREST HERE, THOUGH SOME OF ITS PASSAGES MAY SEEM DATED. MUCH HAS OCCURRED SINCE THEY WERE WRITTEN. GREAT CHANGES HAVE COME TO THE MINBARI AND TO THOSE WHOSE LIVES THEY TOUCH. INFORMATION WILL BE GIVEN IN SIDE PASSAGES LIKE THIS ONE TO PROVIDE MORE RELEVANT INFORMATION, THOUGH ALL THINGS LAPSE IN TIME. STUDY THIS TEXT WELL, BUT REMEMBER THAT THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR LIFETIME IS TO LIVE IT.

The current membership of the Grey Council in any time is a closely guarded secret known only to a select few. Even the majority of the Minbari populace has no idea exactly who their leaders are. This secrecy was intentional from

the beginning and was adopted at the suggestion of Valen. Anonymity provides the Grey Council with something Valen felt was extremely important, the ability to move unknown among other Minbari and see their lives for what they really were. While this freedom is not always exercised, it has been invaluable in the past for keeping the Grey Council in sync with their people.

Knowing the Grey Council directly is an important step in interacting with the Minbari effectively. While this is considered secret information, the knowledge can be a very valuable step towards understanding the race and its current political situation. Ultimately, the Minbari move as one, but they only start moving when the Grey Council shows them the way.

The Three Satai of the Religious Caste as of the end of 2257

- ☞ **Delenn.** Delenn is a female Minbari of high standing and great respect in the religious caste. Her father has passed away and her mother joined the renowned Sisters of Valeria before she was chosen by Dukhat as his successor to the Grey Council. This appointment brought with it a heavy burden of honour and expectation from the other members, who viewed Dukhat as their nominal leader until his death at the beginning of the Earth/Minbari War.
- ☞ **Dhaliri.** A cautious man who always tries to find a peaceful solution to every problem, Dhaliri was one of the four Council members who voted against the military action that began the Minbari side of their war against Earth. Delenn's tie-breaking vote to proceed with the attack has been a wound in his sensibilities that has never fully healed. When disharmony occurs between the religious members of the Grey Council, this old dispute is usually the reason behind it.
- ☞ **Rathenn.** A gentle man and a true friend to Delenn and later to Jeffrey Sinclair, the human ambassador to Minbari, Rathenn holds the middle ground between the sometimes forceful and always opinionated Delenn and the pensive, sometimes over-careful Dhaliri. Delenn has been quoted outside Council chambers on more than one occasion as saying, 'Rathenn is the only reason we three ever agree on anything.'

The Three Satai of the Worker Caste as of the end of 2257

- ⑤ **Durlan.** A powerfully built Minbari male with the physical development that comes from decades of heavy labour before his appointment to the Grey Council, Durlan is a quiet, thoughtful individual whose primary concern in any vote of his peers is its effect on his caste. Durlan can always be swayed to vote for the side that assures him the worker caste will not be burdened overmuch by a given decision. Durlan has a long memory and no Council member has ever been able to fool him twice in this regard.
- ⑤ **Solnier.** Solnier is a rarity on the Council and in the worker caste in general, a telepath with the ability to read the history and events that surround a touched object. His gifts are not often utilised by the Council, but he is also renowned for his wisdom and insight. Whenever the worker caste's three members debate a decision, it is Solnier's word that usually swings the balance of their opinions.
- ⑤ **Alnenn.** Alnenn has been a Grey Council member for over eighty years and her age is finally beginning to catch up with her. A great beauty in her youth and still strikingly attractive in middle age for a Minbari, she had the weight of long experience and the unique 'bottom of the ladder' perspective of her caste to help guide her votes. Alnenn also voted for peace instead of war when Dukhat was killed, but she holds no resentment against those who voted otherwise.

The Three Satai of the Warrior Caste as of the end of 2257

- ⑤ **Coplann.** This warrior caste member has taken to his duties on the Grey Council as ardently as he served the military in his time before joining the ruling body of Minbar. The one member always willing to do 'hands on' work and get physically involved with any decision made, it was Coplann who discovered the link between the soul of Jeffrey Sinclair and Valen through an accidental exposure to the Triluminary. In part, it was Coplann's eventual acceptance of this link that convinced the other warrior caste members to accept the vote for surrender.



- ⑤ **Hedronn.** A forceful Minbari with a harsh personality and little patience for the doings of other castes, Hedronn is regarded suspiciously by many of the other members of the Grey Council as someone who lets ambition and pride cloud his judgment. Aware of this opinion, Hedronn keeps his worst habits in check, but he clearly wants both the position of leader of the Grey Council for himself and a dominance of some kind over the gathering for his caste.
- ⑤ **Shakat.** Shakat is a contemplative warrior and, surprisingly, one of the four members of the Grey Council who voted against attacking the humans in retaliation for the death of Dukhat. His rational was that this was a new race that, treacherously or not, had inflicted great damage on a Sharlin cruiser. He did not wish peace, but rather the chance to learn more about the enemy before attacking. This attitude marks all of Shakat's well thought out decisions.

The Changing Face of the Grey Council

Two major events, both occurring after 2257, would change the form and function of the Grey Council irrevocably. The structure that had stood the test of centuries would be rocked not once by two within a few short years, undergoing first change, then complete dissolution and rebirth in another form. For the Minbari, who as a race do not appreciate rapid change, these events would signal the end of an era and the coming of dark times and great uncertainty.

The first event occurred in 2259 with the unprecedented refusal of one of its members to become the new speaker of the Council. The first time in history that anyone had declined this appointment, the shock of Deleenn's decision

not to lead the Grey Council quickly became much greater than just dismay. Already in turmoil over Deleenn's decision to undergo a metamorphosis to become half-human and her extended absence to preside as the ambassador to Babylon 5, the Grey Council chose to perform another unheard of act in retaliation. Deleenn was voted off the Grey Council and stripped of her title as Satai.

In her place, a warrior caste Minbari named Neroon was appointed. This unbalanced the Council, but their rationale was that if a Great War was indeed coming as Deleenn had claimed, it was logical that the warrior caste have a greater stake in the decisions that would shape the future of their race in that war. Warning them that this imbalance of power would only lead to greater problems in the times ahead, Deleenn took up the staff bearing the triluminary and decreed that if the Council's balance had been broken, so too must the Council break in answer to it. She broke the ancient symbol of the Grey Council's authority and called for those who would follow her to leave the chamber, effectively destroying the Council as it had existed for a millennia.

This led to a war in the midst of other wars. While the galaxy tore itself apart in the wake of the Shadows and the Earth Alliance Civil War, the Minbari, leaderless after so long, turned on themselves. The warrior caste took military control of many of the Federation's worlds, with only the religious caste and the beleaguered worker caste to fight for their survival in the wake of such martial savagery. Only the sacrifice of one of their own, Neroon, in the name of peace brought the warrior caste to a halt before they destroyed everything on the altar of their aggression.

This event, the self-sacrifice of Neroon in 2261 at the Temple of Varenni, opens the door to the salvation of the Minbari. In this holy place, the gathering site for the castes to settle disagreements before the time of Valen, Neroon proclaimed himself religious caste in his heart while warrior by birth. By dying under the intense heat of the Starfire Wheel, the ritual method of ensuring that none can question the word of the one willing to do so, he healed the rift between the castes and bought Deleenn the chance to make right what she had cast asunder. In Neroon's memory, Deleenn refounded the Grey Council.



This newly formed council was structured differently than either the original layout of three groups of three or the warrior caste's ideal of four from their clan over three workers and only two religious. Instead, Deleenn saw that the time had come to heal the wounds between all the castes and decided to give the worker caste the recognition they had deserved for so long. As Minbar was in ruins and would need the dedication of the worker caste to rebuild, she founded a new Council with five from the worker caste and only two from both the religious and the warrior. In this way, she felt, the castes would truly serve towards Valen's true legacy – that which can be rebuilt is never truly broken.

The New Grey Council as it stands at the end of 2261

⑤ Satai Katz of the Worker Caste. Katz is a female telepath of the same training group as Solnier, and it was upon his recommendation that Katz be admitted into the reformed Grey Council. Katz prefers telepathic communication to speech, using the latter as seldom as possible.

⑤ Satai Barenn of the Worker Caste. A tall, elegant scientist and a woman of infinite patience, Barenn seems destined to serve as the council's guiding voice of reason in the coming years.

⑤ Satai Durlan of the Warrior Caste. Durlan has remained with the Grey Council to provide a point of

stability and to help guide its new, untested members through the inevitably rough decisions that lie ahead.

⑤ Satai Zaca of the Worker Caste. Zaca is an activist among his people and one of the first to welcome the change in leadership with open arms. A long-time advocate of worker caste dominance, his may prove to be a radical viewpoint and a wide departure from the typical stolid attitude of his caste.

⑤ Satai Nur of the Worker Caste. One of the few Minbari to gain the right to choose her own second syllable, Nur refrained from taking one in honour of her chosen task before coming to the Grey Council – teaching. A highly regarded crèche instructor, Nur cares deeply for the children of Minbar and always speaks with them in mind.

⑤ Satai Mazik of the Warrior Caste. The only member of his Fire Wings squadron to refuse to fire upon civilian homes during the early days of the Minbari Civil War, Mazik willingly crashed his fighter rather than take innocent lives. This dedication to peace will serve the Council well.

⑤ Satai Shakat of the Warrior Caste. One of only three holdovers from the previous incarnation of the Grey Council, Shakat's reason and wits were all Deleenn needed as recommendations to retain him as the wiser, older voice of the warrior caste in the New Council.

⑤ Satai Dahliri of the Religious Caste. Dahliri has finally put his animosity with Deleenn aside and is now fully in support of her reformation of the Grey Council. The third of the original members reinstated by Deleenn, he



was surprised to learn that it was his willingness to argue with her constantly that prompted her to do so.

5 Satai Burli of the Religious Caste. Chosen by Rathenn to replace him, Burli is the youngest member of the council at thirty eight years of age. Not truly ready for the responsibility given to him by Rathenn's sudden retirement, Burli is an intelligent young Minbari with wisdom far beyond his years.

The Minbari Military

The Minbari warrior caste is devoted to the protection of Minbar and the Federation, but they are not synonymous with the race's military forces. When Valen forged the Minbari into a weapon capable of driving back the Shadows in the last Great War, he foresaw the need to make certain that no one caste held all of that lethal power in case the ancient blood feuds of the past returned. To prevent this, all three castes were given equal custody of the military and charged with the sacred duty of maintaining one third of the total forces available to the race.

This covenant extends to all aspects of the military. When a new ship is built for the Minbari fleet, the caste it belongs to cannot have another vessel of its class until the other two castes induct one of their own. New classes of ship built by the Minbari tend to be built in groups of three to avoid delays in deployment brought about by this law. The mandate extends to ground vehicles, naval vessels, and units of infantry soldiers trained and given active status. The continuance of balance is a major concern in the Minbari military, so much so that an entire cadre of religious caste members is dedicated to keeping an exacting roster of forces for just that reason.

In practice, this balance is more numerical than effective. While the ships and guns may all tally out to one-third divisions, the superior training and combat inclinations of the warrior caste give their forces an advantage over those of the religious and worker castes. During exercises against their own, the warrior caste regularly emerges victorious with only a few exceptional units in the other two thirds of the military providing them any challenge at all. In the field, all three divisions are unmistakably deadly, and it could be argued that by pitting themselves against the superior force of the warrior caste, the religious and worker castes raise their own levels of ability and thus benefit from the disparity.

This internal division of the Minbari military is transparent to outside observation. While the crews of each ship and the members of each unit might be from a specific caste, there is no sign of this aside from a few minor hull decorations or an honour badge on a uniform. The

training, armament, and deployment of each facet of the military are identical and when the heavy lasers on a Shriek tank begin to cut across the battlefield, it does not much matter to the enemy whether they have been utterly eradicated by Night Walkers or crewmen from the sixth fane of Chudomo.

Minbari Lore – The Fire Wings Clan

There is one notable exception to the even division of the Minbari military. The warrior caste maintains virtually every starfighter in their fleet, with the Fire Wings clan dominant over all others. There are a few exceptional pilots in the other castes, but the Fire Wings provide the fleets of Minbar and its colony worlds with more than 80% of its total fighter crews. Even on large vessels maintained by religious or worker caste members, the fighters they carry are likely crewed by Fire Wings personnel on 'detached duty' from the warrior caste. This exception was allowed to the mandates of Valen on the grounds that it promoted inter-caste relations, an argument the One That Was apparently accepted.

Minbari Military Ranks

The links between the military and the warrior caste show the most in the fact that both groups use the same rank structure and title names. Whereas the religious caste has its Valan'asha and the worker caste follows the will of the High Taskmaster, the warrior caste has its Shai Alyt council and the rank of War Leader. The military follows suit, taking a cue from the warrior caste to implement the same rank structure on the grounds that any system of combat roles proven effective for centuries would likely bear out its worth in the larger scale of the race's military force.

The Minbari military has three branches and ten effective ranks. These are grouped into divisions of three, with several gradations of each to keep soldiers appraised at all times of their place in military affairs. The tenth rank, that of War Leader, is filled by only one person at any time. Traditionally, this role is filled by a leader of the warrior caste, but it can and has been held by a member of any caste. Every other rank is shared evenly, with specific units filled entirely by members of one caste in the commission of their duties.

The ranks of the Minbari military are as follows:

- 5 **War Leader** (Currently, the War Leader is Shakiri of the warrior caste. As a former Shai Alyt and the commander of the Shalyn'a fleet assigned to protect Minbar itself, he retains that rank at part of his title. Not every War Leader in Minbari history

has held the rank of Shai Alyt first, nor has every one that did have that rank chosen to retain it upon becoming War Leader.)

o Fleet Division

⑤ **Shai Alyt.** This is a command rank and the highest position that can be held in the Minbari fleet. A Shai Alyt is in command of an entire battle group, which is one cruiser and a flight of fighters at a minimum.

⑤ **Alyt.** The minimum officer rank to command a starship of any size equal to or greater than frigate in the Minbari fleet. Alyts have three levels of magnitude, with career military officers moving through the ranks in roughly twenty years of commendable service.

⑤ **Alyt'sa.** The highest sub-rank of Alyt, an Alyt'sa rarely uses the suffix as it is assumed by his given command, a Sharlin war cruiser. Only Alyt'sa are placed in command of a Sharlin and they are all considered detached members of the War Leader's greater fleet, to be called up when needed. This duty supercedes their own fleet commands and is rarely exercised as it can disrupt normal operations if done without excellent reason.

⑤ **Alyt'el.** The 'standard' rank of an Alyt, most members of the fleet promoted to the Alyt rank receive this one initially. Alyt'el are given command of assault cruisers or larger vessels to bolster their leadership abilities. The best are granted Alyt'sa status after a minimum of five years combat service, but fifteen to twenty years is more likely.

⑤ **Dur'Alyt.** An official rank usually used very unofficially, dur'Alyt are commissioned when a member of a lower rank must take command of a vessel in battle. A dur'Alyt is often not even an officer to begin with, and this rank is the most common way for rank level soldiers in the fleet to join the fleet leadership.

⑤ **Toran.** Toran make up the rank and file of the fleet, with four grades including the two non-Alyt officer ranks in the space military. Most Minbari serving with the fleet never progress past Kor, the second rank, but even that level of service is an honourable one and afford the Minbari doing so great respect.

⑤ **Hiai'sa.** The highest rank of Toran, Hiai'sa oversee all level of ship systems, tactical stations, and combat activities. An officer rank, the Hiai'sa is expected to provide leadership in battle, taking his orders directly from the Alyt of his ship or as the commander of his own heavy scout or smaller vessel.

⑤ **Hiai'i.** The lowest officer rank in the Minbari fleet, a Hiai'i serves as a liaison between a Hiai'sa and the vest of a ship's crew. Hiai'i are often given command of minor vessels, such as tugs, but otherwise must wait a minimum of three years in service as their present rank to get a command as a Hiai'sa. Hiai'i is also the traditional rank of a fighter pilot regardless of his years of experience.

⑤ **Kor.** The Kor are elite crewmen without officer status and provide a rank to promotion available to Galrin who excel in the performance of their duties. Kor are cross trained on many different ship's systems, a rarity in the Minbari military, and can usually adopt any role required on any vessel in the fleet.

⑤ **Galrin.** Personnel new to the fleet or those that serve without notable distinction are assigned this rank and given permission to crew the mighty vessels of the Minbari fleet. Aside from field promotion, which can happen at any time, a Galrin must wait four years between reviews of his performance to advance in rank.

o Infantry Division

⑤ **Shai Ilyr.** Effectively the same rank as the Shai Alyt, the infantry high commander has the potential to become War Leader, though historically this has only occurred twice since the reformation of the military. The Shai Ilyr is given command of his own Planetary Intervention Force (see Fleets, below) and is afforded the same authority as a Shai Alyt during scenarios concerning his ships.

⑤ **Ilyr.** The cadre of Ilyr is much larger than its analogue, the Alyt. The same communication and constant attention to detail that serves these battlefield coordinators in combat also provides a close union between them. The Ilyr know each other closely and work extremely cohesively with the Shenet and the Shai Ilyr to maintain eternal vigilance in times of both war and peace.

⑤ **Ilyr'no.** The regular Ilyr corps is made of Ilyr'no, whose use of the suffix indicates that all Ilyr are named for the warrior Ilyr who, at the final battle against the Shadows during the last Great War, single-handedly fought back a sentient of their dark race to save the lives of the assembled Minbari leaders commanding the engagement. Ilyr's sacrifice brought great honour to the Night Walker clan and his name was given to this command rank of the military's infantry forces.

⑤ **Dur'Ilyr.** In many ways the same rank as a dur'Alyt, dur'Ilyrs are given command of a unit after its

commander dies in battle with no clear successor to take his role. A dur'Ilyr can receive this rank posthumously, but surviving dur'Ilyr are given ten years to prove themselves with their own unit. If they do so to the satisfaction of the circle of Ilyr, he joins them as a full Ilyr'no.

⑤ **Shenet.** Shenet are the true soldiers of the Minbari military, trained fighting men and women trained to live and die on the battlefield with honour and deadly skill. The ranks of the Shenet are simple in keeping with Minbari philosophy. Only one officer rank exists and these are obeyed instantly. Insubordination is virtually unheard of, but when it occurs, Shenet are summarily dismissed back into civilian life. The loss of honour is usually enough to maintain discipline.

⑤ **Shen'i.** Shen'i are the officers in direct charge of Minbari infantry soldiers. Shen'i are specialised to the division of the infantry they command and few Shen'i can function beyond the level of a normal soldier in any other role.

⑤ **Hulrann.** Hulrann are infantry soldiers trained in small scale weapons combat of some kind. There are different units of Hulrann depending on the type of predominant weapon. Hulrann soldiers are denoted by a special rank insignia and a representative mark for their tactical use.

⑤ **Ahshon.** Ahshon are the military's vehicle crews and gunners. A given unit will be well versed in most vehicle types but specialised in the operation of one specific grade of vehicle, such as a Wind Sword tank.

⑤ **Tai'ral.** These soldiers are the least common of all the infantry soldier types because of their training with an uncommon weapon type – field artillery pieces. Their rarity affords them the time and opportunity to train incessantly, leading to skill sets so advanced that on the battlefield, some Tai'ral can hit an enemy soldier with a crystal mortar shell and leave the Minbari he was in hand to hand combat with completely unharmed.

o Naval Division

⑤ **Shai Ovar.** The Shai Ovar oversees the operation of every naval unit in the Minbari Military from his office on Solta Gan. This is the newest of the military branches, implemented after the coming of Valen. Before this time, there were not enough naval battles fought by the Minbari to warrant an entire branch of the military. With the Minbari's increased presence on other worlds and internal trouble on some of their predominantly aqueous worlds, the Naval division was created and a Shai

Ovar appointed to coordinate it with other military assets. No member of the Naval division has ever served as War Leader.

⑤ **Ovar.** The equivalent of an Alyt or an Ilyr, an Ovar is a top level officer in charge of at least one naval vessel and more likely an entire fleet of them stationed at a naval base or aboard an Ovalrin aquatic insertion carrier as part of one of the Minbari's space fleets. Unlike the other two officer ranks, this one has no divisions of authority. Ovar are used for many high profile officer roles without more than an insignia and a mission profile to distinguish between them.

⑤ **Kanuul.** Minbari naval crewmen of various types, this rank is subdivided into three parts as befits the personnel needs of a naval vessel. All Kanuul are cross trained to some extent in defiance of typical Minbari tradition, serving in whichever role best suits their skills. As such, a given Kanuul is likely to have seen action under multiple different classifications.

⑤ **Kanosh.** A dialect of the warrior language Vik marks Kanosh as meaning 'officer between', a fitting description for a Kanosh given his role as a ship's captain or administrator directly under the authority of an Ovar and answerable for the performance of an entire vessel.

⑤ **Kia'leth.** Kia'leth are lethal marine soldiers trained in all aspects of aquatic fighting from deckside combat to underwater operations. Kia'leth receive demolitions training and are fully qualified to operate heavy weapons in a variety of environments. Kia'leth can fight beaching actions, but longer term ground combat is normally left to Shenet soldiers, many of whom serve on detached duty aboard naval vessels in hostile areas.

⑤ **Oltanu.** Oltann are extremely skilled crewmen with a wide base of knowledge including vessel systems, navigation, mounted weaponry, and light combat. Oltann are trained to be able to fill any naval role required of them at any time and are regularly rotated to new duties to keep their abilities honed.

The Minbari Fleet

A catch-all term for anything in the arsenal of the Minbari race that flies, the Fleet is a vast organisation with thousands of craft divided into effective strike teams of identical or complimentary vessels. Unlike the militaries of some races, the Minbari fleet is not very flexible and once a small fleet or air strike unit is established, it tends to see service as a full group rather than be divided up into its individual components in response to changing combat

conditions. This can sometimes lead to a force that is not strictly optimal to a given scenario, but as the Minbari usually err on the side of caution and overpowering forces, this is seldom an issue for long.

The Minbari Fleet is composed of the following divisions. Each one is duplicated in the three castes, save for the fighter groups which are almost always Fire Wings warrior caste. A full roster of Minbari forces as they exist in the Federation will be provided at the end of this section. See the Technology section for more details on the ships listed here.

Minbari Fleet Starships

⑤ **Rapid Deployment Force** (This is the division used by the Minbari military on a constant basis. Effectively a single craft and fighter escort, it is capable of traveling anywhere and dealing with small scale threats before larger fleets could coordinate themselves and arrive.)

- ⑤ (1) *Sharlin Cruiser*
- ⑤ (12) *Nial Heavy Fighters* (Half complement)

⑤ **Standard Fleet** (The most common deployment of the Minbari fleet, Standard fleets are equipped for long term operations and sometimes travel for months or years without returning to an allied base for rearm or refit. Standard fleets are the 'workhorse' of the Minbari space military.)

- ⑤ (1) *Sharlin Cruiser*
- ⑤ (18) *Nial Fighters* (3/4 complement)
- ⑤ (3) *Flyers* (Diplomatic and surface to ship duty)
- ⑤ (2) *Tinashi Frigates*

⑤ **Assault Group** (The Minbari's heavy hitter in space combat, this force is capable of taking on an entire fleet from most of the other races in the galaxy. Assault groups are usually named by their commander and remain together unless broken up by the War Leader to fill other roles.)

- ⑤ (2) *Sharlin Cruisers*
- ⑤ (48) *Nial Heavy Fighters* (Full complement)
- ⑤ (3) *Tinashi Frigates*
- ⑤ (1) *Neshatan Gunship*

⑤ **Front Line Force** (This battle group is made up of decorated officers afforded the honour of service on the front line of any major battle. The largest conditional fleet of the Minbari military, a Front

Line force is usually the last thing an enemy of the race ever sees.)

- ⑤ (3) *Sharlin Cruisers*
- ⑤ (72) *Nial Heavy Fighters* (Full complement)
- ⑤ (6) *Tinashi Frigates*
- OR
- ⑤ (6) *Torotha Assault Frigates* (Alyt's choice of deployment)

⑤ **Planetary Intervention Force** (A rare deployment in the modern age, these fleets saw a great deal of action in centuries past. The sight of a Planetary Intervention force is usually enough to put down any revolt or resistance before battle even commences.)

- ⑤ (1-2) *Morshin Carrier(s)*
- ⑤ (12-24) *Nial Heavy Fighters* (1/4 complement)
- ⑤ (36-72) *Tishat Medium Fighters* (3/4 complement)

In addition to these standard fleet designs, there are numerous special deployments done at the behest of presiding Alyt commanders or the War Leader himself. Once a fleet is designed and implemented, its structure becomes a matter of Minbari military record and may be adopted by any other part of the fleet. There are also several variants on the basic models of Minbari spacecraft; some of these necessitate a different arrangement of support vessels. For instance, the Shargoti is a Sharlin variant. Its extensive array of fusion cannons makes it dangerous to its own support ships during heated combat, prompting most fleets deploying it to place it in a unit by itself with fighter escorts for close support.

Minbari Characters – Fleet

Minbari players in a military campaign or looking to create a military background should keep a few things in mind for the personality of anyone who has served with the fleets. Fleet experience is the most prestigious assignment a Minbari soldier can receive. It is the highest profile form of military service and it grants a disproportionate amount of respect to those who serve aboard the starships of the Minbari Federation. The size and power of Minbari fleets have left them all but untouchable for centuries, leading to an almost untouchable mystique that tends to surround Minbari space military.

This attitude can cut both ways. Minbari on average might respect a fleet Player more, but officers and soldiers in other divisions are likely to resent his position and 'undeserved' honour. This has been the cause of many conflicts between

the branches of the Minbari military in the past millennia. Fleet players tend to keep to themselves, becoming a very insular group centered around the twin glories of service to their ship and service to the Minbari space armada.

The Minbari Infantry

The sum of all the race's ground forces, this facet of the Minbari military is dedicated to the defence of their homeland and the swift destruction of their enemies. Tactics revolving around units of Minbari infantry bear out this dual nature, leading the army to develop techniques focused on hard defensive lines and lightning strikes against vulnerable opponent positions. From storming bunkers with loose formations of Minbari soldiers to setting up an uncrossable line of heavy tanks in the path of the opposition's advance, the Minbari infantry are known for, in the words of General Franklin of EarthForce, 'slight of hand with an iron fist'.

Infantry functions in an entirely different fashion from the Minbari fleet. The relative ease of recombining infantry units, even large ones consisting of tanks or scout groups, leaves this division of the military with the freedom to change its configuration constantly. Units of infantry tend to be organised on a mission-by-mission basis with a tactical mix appropriate for the battle in question. There are a few standard formation in the infantry, and these are given here for reference.

Minbari Infantry

Ground Troops

⑤ **Standard Platoon.** (The basic unit sent into ground combat, Standard platoons can be configured for a number of tactical needs and usually arrive on the field of battle in a heavily armoured gravitic tanks and dispersed to enter the engagement zone under their own power.)

⑤ (2-5) *Infantry Platoons*
 ⑤ (5) *Soldiers per platoon armed with laser rifles*

OR

⑤ (2-4) *Infantry Platoons*
 ⑤ (4) *Soldiers per platoon armed with heavy molecular rifles*

OR

⑤ (1-3) *Infantry Platoons*
 ⑤ (3) *Soldiers per platoon armed with laser pistols and one heavy gravitic cannon (requires three Minbari to operate after setting up)*

OR

⑤ (1-2) *Infantry Platoons*

⑤ (5) *Soldiers armed with heavy armour and strike lasers (limited accuracy with the rapid firing strike laser relegates these to defensive use, hence the heavy armour. This grade of unit is generally assigned to Headquarters or important locales in need of hardened but mobile defence.)*

⑤ **Dismounted Platoon.** (The term given to any group of Minbari soldiers who arrive at a combat zone and use armour support to maneuver to a defensible or tactically viable position before disembarking and entering battle.)

⑤ (1-3) *Infantry Platoons (dependent on vehicle capacity)*

⑤ (5) *Soldiers per platoon armed with laser rifles*

OR

⑤ (1-3) *Infantry Platoons*

⑤ (4) *Soldiers per platoon armed with heavy molecular rifles*

OR

⑤ (1-3) *Infantry Platoons*

⑤ (3) *Soldiers per platoon armed with laser pistols and one heavy gravitic cannon (requires three Minbari to operate after setting up)*

⑤ **Jump Platoon.** (These soldiers are equipped with Minbari wing packs, gravitic generators that allow for impressive leaps and limited flight. The expense of wing packs limits the availability of jump platoons, but the Star Riders clan of the warrior caste serves in these units enthusiastically and keeps the technology from becoming shelved due to cost.)

⑤ (1-3) *Jump Platoons*

⑤ (4) *Soldiers per platoon, armed with wing packs, laser rifles, and crystal grenades. (The grenades are usually used in a maneuver the Fire Wings call land-strafting. During the apex of the soldier's jump, the grenades are released like a fighter performing a bombing run on targets below.)*

Tank Battalions

⑤ **Assault Group.** (The basic formation used by vehicle units to break through enemy lines and take out ground targets, an assault group focuses

on firepower over finesse. Assault groups pull double duty as defence points because of their heavy armour and impressive repelling firepower.)

- ⑤ **'Hurricane'**
 - ⑤ (2) *Wind Sword heavy tanks*
- ⑤ **'Maelstrom'**
 - ⑤ (3) *Shrynech main battle tanks*
- ⑤ **'Firestorm'** (an irregular formation made popular during the Earth/Minbari War for its ability to deal with EarthForce infantry and their typical mixed unit types.)
 - ⑤ (1) *Wind Sword heavy tank*
 - ⑤ (2) *Tal'horcon air defence tanks*
 - ⑤ (6) *Foltia Armoured Vehicles*

⑤ **Support Group.** (Specialised tanks with specific roles in combat. Support groups rarely operate alone, as noted by the likely additional deployments noted below. Additional deployments are always used when battle conditions are optimal, but may be reduced or ignored when the resources are not available.)

- ⑤ **Mobile Troop Transport**
 - ⑤ (1-3) *Fire Sprite transports*
 - ⑤ *Platoons, up to 16 soldier-equivalents per Fire Sprite*
 - ⑤ [Additional – (1) *Shrynech Main Battle Tank*]
- OR
- ⑤ (1-2) *Talishin heavy infantry transports*
 - ⑤ *Platoons, up to 25 soldier-equivalents per Talishin*
 - ⑤ [Same Additional]
- ⑤ **Artillery Formation**
 - ⑤ (3) *Falshin Artillery vehicles*
 - ⑤ [Additional – (1-2) *Infantry Platoons*]
 - ⑤ (5) *Soldiers armed with heavy armour and strike lasers*
 - ⑤ [Additional – (2) *Shard fighting vehicles*]
- ⑤ **Fire Support**
 - ⑤ (2) *Shriek combat tanks*

In addition to these standard deployments, the Minbari infantry are flexible enough to reconfigure at any time, even in the middle of battle. There are several more classifications and variants of the vehicles listed here, many of which or used in specialised formations too uncommon

to be numbered among the standard formations. Though the Minbari tend to be rigid about military discipline and disapprove of fluid tactics under normal circumstances, the Infantry is a major exception.

Minbari Characters – Infantry

Infantry players will experience the opposite of the standard set for the star fleets in terms of prestige and respect. While no Minbari would disrespect a warrior or soldier of any kind, infantry service is regarded as a common task best suited to those officers and soldiers not suited for more intensive or technical work. As false a sentiment as that may be, the attitude has stuck and most Minbari in the infantry have to accept that they must work three times as hard to gain the same recognition for his skills.

By not gaining prestige externally, the infantry have developed a level of camaraderie within their own units that surpasses even the insular communities that occur about fleet ships. Infantry players should be sure to treat other infantry soldiers as family, even if they serve in different units or have never met as part of the same battle force before. This instant kinship is one of the infantry's greatest driving forces and a primary reason for its cohesive nature and ease of reconfiguration. Through greater effort, the Minbari infantry achieves greater results.

A special note should be made about two of the warrior caste clans, the Wind Swords and the Star Riders. In their infantry units, the Wind Swords are predominantly heavy armoured vehicle operators while the Star Riders train the most effective infantry platoons of their entire race. When enemies meet the Minbari military on a terrestrial battlefield, they will likely face one or both of these clans in combat first, shaping their (often short lived) opinions of the fighting capabilities of this ancient race.

The Minbari Navy

The meager aquatic resources of Minbar prevented the race from developing much in the way of naval tactics or technology for much of their history. Because the Minbari hardly tire, are light on their feet, and created overland vehicles early on, the importance of ships was never a serious issue, prompting them to perfect methods of terrestrial combat over nautical techniques. The Minbari had sailing and cargo vessels, but no period in their homeworld's history ever had piracy or naval conquest as a major theme. When the race took to the stars and created colony worlds, the establishment of a navy was a tertiary concern at best.

This changed when the water world of Solta Gan was settled. The starborn Minbari moved on to explore other worlds, leaving behind settlers of the warrior and religious castes to explore and chart the new world. For decades, peace was maintained in the interests of making the planet habitable and finding resources for use by their respective clans, but this came to an end when the richest deposits on Solta Gan were found under the waves themselves. Being a land oriented race, territorial lines had been drawn concerning the island land masses but not the oceans themselves. Only able to avoid each other for so long, the situation on the planet came to a head eventually when both castes attempted to mine a mineral and metals laden trench between their respective colonies.

It became quickly apparent that their vessels were ill-suited to the rigors of combat. After several lost survey ships and harvesters, the castes pulled back and, along with worker Velshir bound to the task, built up their naval forces to the point where they could take the resources they desired. Years of conflict drove their ingenuity and their technical advancements until the naval fleets were as effective as those of other races with centuries of experience beyond their own.

The Minbari Navy, which now operates on many planets in the Federation and Protective is unusual compared to the other two branches in that it is the only one not headquartered on Minbar. When Valen reformed the castes, the warring sides on Solta Gan united their fleets and created a single military force dedicated to the defence of Minbari oceans wherever they existed in the galaxy. Creating massive carriers capable of water landings, submergence, and space travel, the Minbari naval division is extremely versatile and can deploy to virtually any planet in the time it takes for these gigantic carriers to make the journey.

Minbari Navy

Naval Formations

⑤ **Interdiction Fleet** (This is the smallest fleet the Minbari Navy can consider deployable throughout their territory. Interdiction fleets are designed to land on a planet with sufficient water to support them, move out to a combat zone, and create a Minbari presence immediately.)

- ⑤ (1) *Ovalrin aquatic carrier*
- ⑤ (1) *Jashin destroyer*
- ⑤ (2) *Galrin cutters*
- ⑤ (2) *Solthar amphibious landers*
- ⑤ (2-4) *Infantry platoons (Kia'leth) armed with heavy armour and strike lasers (generally*

used for beach landings and harbour insurgency only)

⑤ (4) **Rannat Defender submarines**

⑤ **Naval Superiority Fleet** (The standard planetary fleet maintained by the Minbari. These can be carried in four Ovalrin carriers, but ships of that designation are not generally assigned to a superiority fleet except in times of war. Under normal circumstances, superiority fleets are left on their planet of operations indefinitely.)

- ⑤ (1-4) *Niath'val battleships*
- ⑤ (0-2) *Galneth fighter carriers*
- ⑤ (2-6) *Jashin destroyers*
- ⑤ (3-9) *Galrin cutters*
- ⑤ (16-56) *Rannat Defender submarines (Rannats are only deployed on aqueous worlds as part of a Jashin or Niath'val's defensive screen. Four are assigned to each destroyer, while eight are given as escorts for a battleship.)*

In addition to these deployments, the Minbari Navy still shows the flexibility inherent in its 'young' age comparative to the other two divisions of the military. Any ship of any type, even the Rannat Defender, may be assigned to a water system of any type from rivers to arctic oceans as the need demands. The military tacticians of the Navy are willing to try any logical combination of forces to deal with situations in battle as they have not been established long enough for many formations to have become rote. This system of loose organisation earns it mixed respect with the other branches; some officers in the star fleet and the infantry applaud their versatility while others disdain their lack of apparent discipline.

Minbari Characters - Navy

Minbari players serving in the Navy have a unique opportunity and a very unorthodox military background, both of which can have an impact on character backgrounds and campaign possibilities. In many ways, this division of the military has all the responsibilities and training requirements of both the Fleet and the Infantry with few of the benefits. The branch is new enough that it does not have a wealth of tradition and battle history to lend honour to its members. In fact, many members of the Navy are there because of clan history or obligation rather than by choice.

For those who thrive in this environment, the training can be very valuable. Naval combat requires a soldier to be well versed in both three-dimensional and two-

dimensional tactics, all manner of heavy and personal scale weapons, and the basic tactics of ship-to-ship and ground combat. Insightful military leaders among the Minbari are aware of this, so while the rank and file of the Minbari war machine may not respect naval personnel highly, some in the upper ranks of both other divisions certainly do. Naval players have the chance to become far more versatile than any other kind of Minbari character ever could.



Minbari Fleet Rank Insignia
Alyt with 19 years service

Minbari Naval Rank Insignia
Kia'leth with 3 years service

Minbari Infantry Rank Insignia
Shen'ai with 8 years service

Rank Insignia in the Military

Minbari soldiers wear their rank as full sized decorations on their shoulders and chest. Each branch of the service has its own field color; fleet is black, navy is blue, and the infantry favour a light purple. Over this are 'teeth', diamond shaped symbols that are turned on their sides to face one of two directions. The interspacing and orientation of these symbols as they are accumulated is clan specific, but patterns are generally alternating. Teeth are collected, one for each year of service in the same rank.

Variations in this rank field yield other information about the soldier or officer wearing it. Gold dots in the corners of the insignia indicated a command rank in the naval and infantry branches. Fleet does not use the gold dots, preferring a dark gold border for Alyts and a bright gold border for lower officer ranks. Several small variations can be traced to specific units or officer categories, such as the naval tradition of providing a gold tooth for every third year of service in special forces divisions of the Kia'leth.

The Storm Blades; Legacy of the Wind Sword

The decision to surrender at the Battle of the Line at the end of the Earth/Minbari war was a difficult one for the Minbari military to accept, especially those of the warrior caste. Among them, many leaders of each of the clans went

to extremes in their desire to defy the order conflicting with their nigh-unbreakable loyalty to the Grey Council. The laws of the Minbari did not preclude personal protest, and some officers such as Shai Alyt Sineval committed suicide in mute, violent outrage at the unexplained flinch of their leaders so close to the moment of their victory over the humans of Earth.

Others took their protests a step further, choosing the more severe social death of becoming outcasts from their own kind. Feeling betrayed from within, several ships left the Battle of the Line as ordered but never returned to Minbar. Among them were many vessels carrying the pride of the Wind Sword clan with them. These entered the cold dark between the stars and remained there for a decade in silence. Only the emergence of one of their ships, the Trigati, outside Babylon 5 in the year 2258 broke their silence and self-imposed exile. The subsequent destruction of that vessel to avert another war was a dark day for the Minbari military and the final echo of an agonised past.

Or so it was believed. In truth, the legacy of the Trigati goes far deeper than either the humans or the Minbari suspect. Several other ships left the Battle of the Line and only the Trigati emerged on that fateful day. Its death at the hands of another Sharlin cruiser, Minbari slain by Minbari, has sent a shockwave of recriminations and hostility through the other exiles. This Minbari, alone in the night, have come together under a new banner and in the cause of a new war. This time, no Grey Council decision will rob them of their victory and their aim has widened to encompass both the humans and their own race.

- 5 **Ambush Flight** (This is the typical combat group detached from the Storm Blades fleet to take out smaller targets and convoys. It is far more powerful than anything it gets directed at, but that is as the Storm Blades prefer it. Against more defensible targets, ambush flight deployment will not be used as the attack group is too small to guarantee 100% survival.)
- 5 (2-3) *Tinashi Frigates*
 - 5 (1) *Morshin Carrier*
 - 5 (12-24) *Nial Heavy Fighters*
- 5 **Assassin Hunter/Killer Squadron** (This small group are assigned to bait other ships into asteroid fields and take them out swiftly with massed, short range firepower. Though hunter/killer squadrons have fewer ships than ambush flights, they carry greater firepower and can do more damage against a single target in a shorter span of time.)
- 5 (1) *Neshatan Gunship*
 - 5 (1) *Tigara Attack Cruiser*
 - 5 (6) *Nial Heavy Fighters*
- 5 **Battle Fleet** (The leaders of the Storm Blades are aware that eventually, they will have to go on the offensive either to assault the humans with enough force to convince them of Minbari aggression or to defend themselves if they get caught in their current activities. As such, they have designated a battle fleet layout that utilises the entirety of their combat capable vessels into the most effective formation for either attacking major installations or defending themselves from a concerted siege.)
- o **Attack Formation** (These come in out of hyperspace, one wave after another in staggered deployment to catch a defender's flanks as it moves to engage the Storm Blade's initial attack. The last wave, a pair of Tigara attack cruisers, is indefinitely delayed until the most advantageous time to strike.)
 - 5 3 waves of (2) *Sharlin Cruisers* (6 cruisers with 36 Nial fighters in total)
 - 5 (6) *Nial Heavy Fighters per Cruiser*
 - 5 1 assault wave of (9) *Tinashi Frigates*
 - 5 2 waves of (1) *Morshin Carrier* (2 carriers with 20 Tishat fighters and 8 Nial fighters in total.)
 - 5 (10) *Tishat Medium Fighters per Carrier*
 - 5 (4) *Nial Heavy Fighters per Carrier*
 - 5 4 waves of (2) *Tigara Attack Cruisers*
 - 5 2 waves of (1) *Neshatan Gunship*
 - o **Defensive Formation** (If possible, this fleet will be positioned in the Storm Blade's current base of operations, the primary asteroid group in the Sinzar system. This gives each ship the benefit of concealment and cover in an environment they have been trained to navigate flawlessly.)
 - 5 **Outer ring**
 - 5 (8) *Tigara Attack Cruisers*
 - 5 (4) *Nial Heavy Fighters flying escort for each*
 - 5 (12) *Nial Heavy fighter in free-fly dispersed formation*
 - 5 **Middle ring**
 - 5 (6) *Sharlin Cruisers*
 - 5 (6) *Tinashi Frigates*
 - 5 **Inner Ring**
 - 5 (1) *Minbari Star Base* (this is the headquarters of the Storm Blades)
 - 5 (2) *Morshin Carriers*
 - 5 (20) *Tishat Medium Fighters*
 - 5 (2) *Neshatan Gunships*
 - 5 (3) *Tinashi Frigates*
 - 5 (12) *Minbari Attack Drones armed with twin light pulse arrays*

Even so, this new alliance of ships, calling itself the Storm Blades in memory of the Wind Sword clan, is not an group of assassins, nor are they truly dedicated to murder of their own kind just yet. For now, the Storm Blades are content to use their technological and surprise advantages for one of the oldest forms of terrorism in the book- harassment. Not large enough to oppose the rebuilt EarthForce fleet or powerful enough to tangle with Minbari fleets of the same technical base, this is all they have for now.

Tactics of the Storm Blades

The Storm Blades have a powerful, but small, fleet of ships and crews eager to give their lives in the commission of what for them has become an almost holy mission – the pursuit of revenge. To this end, the group will do anything in its power to strike against the humans that cost them their homes, their families, and their honour among the other Minbari. Once proud members of the Minbari military, the Storm Blades are reduced to whatever tactics will keep them alive and inflict damage of any humans they come into contact with.

For months, the Storm Blades have been striking along minor supply lines and picking off small convoys of merchants or lightly supported military flights. The cloaking ability of Minbari ships against tracking sensors makes this kind of hunting extremely easy for the Storm Blades, exposing them to a minimum of risk from effective counter attack. During assaults of this nature, Storm Blades forces make certain to erase all trace of their involvement. Eventually, the Storm Blades leadership wants to use their appearance to strike terror into the people of Earth, but they are too few to risk an open hunt against them.

Another tactic favoured by members of the Wind Sword among the Storm Blades is to emanate a false distress call in the middle of an asteroid field or other difficult to scan area. This lures in unsuspecting ships for them to ambush, which they do with lethal efficiency. This tactic has no honour, but it is deliciously ironic for the disenchanting Minbari crewing the Storm Blades. If it was good enough for the Star Killer, it is good enough for them to use against his entire hated race.

Storm Blades attack forces always flee in the face of any concerted counter attack unless the enemy has seen them clearly enough to identify their ships in any way. Secrecy is important, but so too is survival. The Storm Blades have incorporated hit and run tactics into their assault plan, intending to wear down relations between the humans and their own race until another war erupts. They believe this to only be a matter of time and when it comes, many

expect the Grey Council to welcome them back as warriors on the front lines of this renewed conflict.

Storm Blades Deployment

The entire Storm Blades fleet, counting support vessels and fighters, numbers less than one hundred. Without extended maintenance, a commodity the group is sorely lacking because of their isolation from the normal means of repair the Minbari fleet enjoys, their ships are all extremely precious and cannot be risked for anything other than a major offensive against a highly visible and important target. Since the destruction of the Trigati, many of the Storm Blades leaders feel this target is Babylon 5, but for the moment, the organisation is divided enough on that opinion that a strike has not yet been declared.

The Followers of the First Ones

In any group, there must be those who walk their own path. In any choir, there are those who sing their own tune. Even in a culture as harmonious and centred as the Minbari, there are some who cannot find it in their hearts to worship as their fellows do. For years, they go to the shrines on the many worlds of the Minbari and offer up their prayers, but they feel something missing. They try to have faith, but they cannot escape the feeling deep within them that something about the religion of their fathers and forefathers is wrong. Eventually, they fall away from the path of Valen and try to find the truth for themselves.

When they do, the Followers of the First Ones find them. After watching these restless souls long enough to make certain that they are not religious caste members trying to locate their secret temples, the Followers approach them and offer to show them the truth. This enlightenment is not at all what the errant Minbari might have expected, but it is often exactly what they need to hear.

The beliefs of the Followers of the First Ones are certainly unorthodox; some in the religious caste would go so far as to call them heretical. The Followers of the First Ones do not believe in the divinity of the great ones whose names are enshrined on colony worlds around the Federation or in the pre-eminence of Valen himself. Valen, they say, was just a Minbari. A wise Minbari who saved his race from a great darkness, this they do not deny, but he was no deity or prophet either. Instead of worshipping these false beings, the Followers give their faith to those who truly deserve it – the Old Gods who walked among the stars when the universe was young.

The Followers have names for these gods; words that none could pronounce written in languages that have been lost for centuries. Only the pantheon of these divine glories is known in ways the Followers can give voice to- the Ancients, the First Ones, the Races That Came Before. The Followers have icons of these beings, though their drawings are stylised and their relics are mysterious objects of questionable age and authenticity. Still, they believe and in that belief, they draw in others to believe as well.

There are still Ancients who walk the worlds of their galaxy, the Followers tell their new recruits. These Gods among Minbari are known to other races as the Vorlons, and they are not alone. There is another race, a sister race, which also lives between these same stars, though no one is given their name. It is when newcomers to the temples of the Followers hear that they believe the Vorlons to be gods that most begin to believe as well. Something in their hearts cannot deny the truth of that idea; the Vorlons are divine, and their divinity has touched Minbar before or so the Followers say.

The real power, and danger, behind the Followers is that they are not entirely wrong. While the divinity of any of the First Ones, the Vorlons included, is debatable, that enigmatic race has been involved with the Minbari since the time of Valen and long beforehand. Though all temporal knowledge of their interference with the race has been erased, the memories of the Minbari have retained some shadow of their presence. This fleeting glimpse, remembered through generations, has given rise to the Followers and their beliefs.



The Grey Council knows of the Followers of the First Ones and while there has been no sign of violence, there is reason to be concerned. The Followers number over 25,000 Minbari and their numbers are growing every year. Among their ranks are found hundreds of casteless, eager to find a home anywhere they can. This fact alone gives the Council cause for alarm, but there is another, deeper reason.

The Followers know of the Shadows, though they do not have that name for them. When they talk of the Vorlon's sister race, it is the Great Enemy of a millennia past they are speaking of. This connection between the Vorlons and the Shadows is not one that seems prudent to bandy about, nor is it wise to draw the attention of the Enemy this close to the appointed time of the next Great War as foretold by Valen. By themselves, the Followers are not a problem, but their words carry the weight of ages and the danger of what may come in the night if they speak too loudly.

Minbari Characters – The Followers of the First Ones

This group has been detailed here to give players and Games Masters alike an idea of the power that a simple truth, even a misunderstood one, can have on the Minbari culture. There are secrets, powerful ones, buried in the past of the Minbari and any one of them could rise up to consume the fragile peace that the race has enjoyed for centuries. Something as basic as religious freedom can be at the heart of a great calamity; this is just the kind of theme that a great Babylon 5 story arc and richly detailed characters can be based around.

On a less sinister note, the Followers are merely an example of the kinds of diverse groups that can exist on Minbar or in any other part of the Federation. players should be encouraged to come up with groups within their own castes and clans to further flesh out their backgrounds and motivations. The Minbari are very stratified but they are also sentient creatures with emotions and opinions. Whenever a race has opinions, there will be disagreements and whenever there are disagreements, there will be those who organise to validate their side. Players and Games Masters should keep that in mind when designing special interest groups for the Minbari; as the Tradition of War essentially states, 'every side believes it is right.'

The History of Minbari Civilisation

The Minbari Federation is the oldest known civilisation with diplomatic contacts to the rest of the galaxy, with the possible exception of the Vorlons. Their cultural and technical developments are centuries beyond any of the other races, and their superiority in warfare has ensured them a peaceful place among the stars. This privileged position did not come without a long and in some places violent history, not all of which is well documented. The most notable point in Minbari history is undeniably the coming of Valen and the formation of the Minbari people as they are known today, but long before this, incredible events served to shape their race.

Minbari Prehistory

The landscape of Minbar is primarily heavy mineral deposits and mountainous regions interspersed with wide plains and valleys. River canyons divide the major landmasses, but there is only one small ocean providing the planet's main surface water source. Shallow subterranean water deposits sustain the majority of the plant life, while near continual rainstorms in some areas keep the slightly impermeable ground moist enough for surface vegetation to thrive. These conditions have been the normal state of Minbar's ecology for millions of years, shaping the

evolution of the planet's races from pre-sentient life to the Minbari race.

Life on Minbar evolved at the beginning in the same way as most races, from single celled organisms in the planet's waters. Its lack of substantial planetary oceans prevented aquatic lifeforms from becoming much more complicated than the *podea* stage before room issues formed some of these early creatures to leave the water and develop land survival mechanisms. This started with increasingly complex marine and insect life, eventually becoming dominated simple reptilian life.

Complex environmental issues prevented reptiles from reaching large enough sizes to overwhelm other forms of developing life, allowing mammalian creates to evolve in cooler temperate zones where fur and warm blooded physiologies were better for sustaining life than scales and externally regulated body heat. The two types of creatures evolved side by side in different areas of Minbar until an undocumented event shifted the balance towards mammals. These creatures took increasing larger sections of territory, evolving predatory abilities to compete with the still extant reptiles. Over more than a million years, both species co-existed atavistically until the reptiles were overwhelmed by their rivals and slipped from dominance.

At this time, there were four major sub-species of mammal. Rodentia were prevalent in the planet's sprawling forests. Herbivores of a herd animal variety roamed the plains, defending themselves from reptiles and other mammals through large size and defensive adaptations. Canine predators became the dominant carnivores of Minbar, their

Ambassador Sinclair,

The things you will find in this section are, for the most part, sections of Minbar's past that even they do not know fully. If you knew where the majority of this information had been obtained, you would scarcely believe it. I can only assure you that it is all true and that some of it is more important than you can know. Study this section closely and keep its lessons in mind. The Minbari are a proud people, but they did not get where they are in the universe alone. Keep this in mind.

Culturally, the Minbari have always needed a strong hand to guide them through their future. In the distant past, that hand has belonged to the Vorlons. They have always been there for the Minbari, and not just during the time of the last Great War. They watch, they guide, and they teach. Not all of the lessons have been easy ones, ambassador, but change sometimes comes from pain and loss. You will see that in the pages ahead, but try to keep an open mind about some of the things you will read. The line between guardians and villainy can get very blurry at times.

I should note the way the Minbari keep track of time in an annual sense; much like time is still recorded in AD and BC terms on Earth, the Minbari track their calendar according to the coming of Valen. The time before him is called *durath* Valen while the current age, the time after his disappearance is called *annae* Valen. This leads to the same fallacy some perceive in the Earth calendar about the missing years while Valen was with the Minbari. These years exist as *caran* Valen, and are considered an era in themselves. These periods are respectively called d'V, a'V, and c'V.

-A Friend

hunger and ferocity the primary factor in the diminishing population of reptilian life. Lastly, a simian form of life competed with rodents and smaller reptiles in several different ecological zones on the planet.

Eventually, over a long period of planetary time, one of the simian races developed a defensive adaptation along the same lines as the herbivore herds- an antlered crest for protection against damage to the skull. This allowed them to dominate the other simians to the point of driving all but the smallest of the subspecies into extinction. Continuous evolutionary pressures involving the predatory canines and the few remaining breeds of carnivorous reptiles pushed this simian species to develop social adaptations and eventual tool-using skills.

The preponderance of antlers on creatures of Minbar is attributed to the heavy mineral content of every ecological niche on the planet. Dissolved forms of calcium and heavy elements are present in everything due to particulate erosion and suspension in the hydrosphere. It was impossible for living creatures to not become exposed to quantities far beyond what would normally be considered trace amounts of these elements, resulting in most forms of life developing external bone growth as a way of displacing what they were taking in on a daily basis. This

also explains adaptations like the crystalline scales of animals such as the Minbar *oolest*, a lizard still found in the warmest parts of equatorial Minbar.

With the development of tool-using behaviour and social units, this antlered simian species rose to eventual dominance as the pre-eminent race on the planet. All other forms of life on Minbar were subjugated into either animals to be domesticated or enemies to be driven off or avoided. The race's agility and adaptive use of their environment made this possible in every ecological zone on Minbar, leading to the race's spread to every corner of the planet. Over the course of hundreds of generations, the simian species gained complete control over their world.

As is the fate of dominant species with no real challenge to their growth rate, the only true enemy that remained to check their numbers was their own kind. At first, the environment was hostile enough and the amount of area the race had to spread in was large enough that the race did not clash very often, but this changed as their numbers grew. Omnivorous diet also led to conflicts as multiple social groups often found themselves in competition for all the same food sources.



Violent encounters with each other drove the many groups of these simians into isolated seclusion in whatever part of the planet they could find that would support them biologically. The need for more room beyond these needs led to the development of primitive shelter building skills, enabling the antlered simians to adapt to climates ill suited to their biology. In addition, some simian groups sought refuge in the many cavern systems created by water erosion of the lithosphere. These shelters, which could not provide food in large quantities but did offer excellent protection from the elements, also exerted evolutionary pressure on their antler crests to grow closer to the skull to permit them easier access to these caves.

As the resources of the surface dwindled with so many simians drawing from them as well as the remaining predator and herbivore species, subterranean dwelling became more common until the majority of the simian race went underground to survive. New caverns had been discovered and in some cases, the race used harder minerals to cut into softer ones, opening up additional tunnels. With the discovery of vast underground lakes filled with fish and other aquatic lifeforms, the food issues diminished rapidly and the simians began to multiply again.

This state of affairs lasted for more than 500,000 solar years, with surface dwelling simian giving way to the other races as they migrated below. The Minbari would likely still be a subterranean race were it not for a protracted period of geological instability that forced them back to the surface rather than face extinction due to earthquakes and magmic flooding of their living areas. In the space of a few generations, vast numbers of evolved simians escaped to the surface to find it much changed since their exodus.

The planet's surface, free from the predation of simians, had become overgrown with unchecked life. The canine species had all but destroyed the large, slower to breed reptiles, and were now hunting the herd animals across the open plains and the rodents of the forest. These predator animals were now quite large and initially posed a dire threat to the simians, especially as the latter had grown used to having no checks against their growth. The late development of these canine breeds and the tall, difficult to climb nature of the trees of Minbar provided the evolutionary impetus for avians to enjoy a period of undisturbed development, resulting in several species of rodentia-eating predator birds, many of which took on bright colours from the minerals of their environment.

For the first time, small groups of this race had a reason to band together –mutual protection. This next era was one of constant struggle. The simians became tribal and by necessity nomadic, never remaining in one place long

enough for their numbers to destroy their environment through over-consumption. The need to overcome the canine breeds of predator drove them from tool-using to weapon-using and spurred their physical development, which had suffered from their period underground. Those that could adapt survived while those that could not became food for the lupine breeds dominating the canine race. This period of hunt or be hunted, adapt or die existence did much to shape the simian race into the Minbari of present day.

Among the race's adaptations was a complex social order with those most capable of fighting becoming a separate group in each tribe charged with the survival of the whole. These warriors were afforded a large percentage of the food and tribal resources as needed to continue a strong defence while most of the rest were given to expectant mothers and the tribe's children. The development of true intelligence had begun in earnest during the race's seclusion below, but the struggle for survival on the surface honed the simian's simple but effective minds into something a great deal more sentient.

By the time the predator species were brought back under control, the simian race had for the most part evolved into what would be considered the base form of the Minbari race as it is known today. Weapons, agility, and tactics had won out over teeth, claws, and animal cunning. Intellect and strength both had a part to play in the continued survival of the species. Social and mental evolution would take a great deal more time, but physically, the Minbari had emerged as the dominant force on their planet.

Those animals that could not be domesticated for tribal use were culled back to acceptable levels and more permanent shelters were built in the most geographically effective places. Plants that could not be found in abundance in some places were moved closer to these areas and cultivated. The first steps towards the civilisation had been taken.

Early History and the First Encounter

(28,000 d'V to 8,000 d'V)

It was these initial struggles against the forces of evolution in the forms of other predators and other environmental factors on their planet that first brought the attention of a race far distant from the Minbari homeworld. This race watched in quiet fascination as the primitive Minbari fashioned weapons, defended themselves, and created homes in the solid rock of their somewhat inhospitable world. This level of determination and will to survive attracted the other race and as the Minbari grew, so too did this alien interest in their welfare.

It was the construction of Kanatai, the first Minbari city, that convinced this race that the people of Minbar were worth contacting. Kanatai, quite small by the standards of the Minbari today, was a marvel of civil engineering in that time, with multiple leveled buildings carved out of the softer rock around a vast field of mineral deposits and several shafts of geo-thermally heated crystals for heat. When Kanatai was first built, more than ten thousand Minbari lived there in relative peace and safety.

The outside race, known to the present galaxy as the Vorlons, approached the people of Minbar in Kanatai openly, showing a form that they thought would be pleasing and convince the Minbari to remain peaceful while they conversed. The Vorlons were interested in this crested humanoid race for reasons of their own, not the least of which was as a developing species with the obvious potential to someday achieve great things both on their world and in the universe. This and more were discussed by the Vorlons during that first encounter, an event that historical records claim took three days without rest or food for anyone involved. Every trace of this meeting has now been erased from Minbari history for reasons that will become evident in later passages, but initially, the Minbari accepted the Vorlons eagerly.

Indeed, the Minbari were respectful to the point of reverent to the Vorlons. From this dialogue came a tentative agreement between the races to remain open and accepting of each other, an agreement that still survives into modern time. The Vorlons also agreed to lend support when needed for the Minbari race to thrive on their world, especially within the city of Kanatai. With the Vorlon's aid, the city was expanded greatly, encompassing an entire valley and the mineral mountains bordering it on three sides. This larger city became the refuge of hundreds of

thousands of Minbari, all of whom began to worship the Vorlons as gods for their wisdom and great technology.

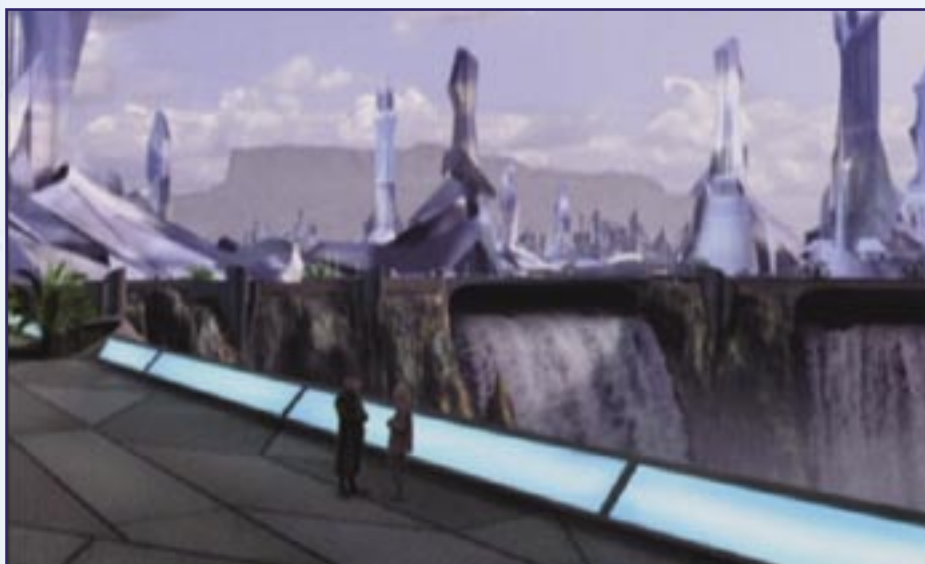
The Vorlons would have reason to regret their open exchange of information and offer of aid later, but for the first few hundred years, they existed harmoniously with the Minbari. Wise enough not to give the Minbari too much too soon, the Vorlons paced the lesser race, giving them only what they exhibited a readiness to accept and use. To the Vorlons, this was a grand experiment. To the Minbari, this interaction became the stuff of religious legend.

To protect the Minbari from learning the truth about them, the Vorlons played up this belief and gave it credence by ensuring that their forms matched the tiny, preconceived notions the Minbari had where their gods were concerned. In these guises, the Vorlons both took advantage of and helps to share the Minbari religion; their 'angelic' forms were considered the holiest of forms and the identities of the Vorlons in question became synonymous with the names of the Minbari's early gods.

This era lasted ten thousand years and resulted in the deep integration of the Minbari 'gods' with their culture. This enforcement of their beliefs formed lasting impressions in the Minbari concept of divinity, allowing the same theological beliefs to dominate their race throughout their cultural history. The Vorlons left their mark on the Minbari from the first moment they arrived on Minbar, a mark that would last for thirty millennia and guide the social development of their race through that entire time. Even while they walked among the Minbari, the Vorlons had a profound effect upon them.

The presence of these supposed divinities allowed the Minbari living in Kanatai to move swiftly past the normal stages of cultural and scientific development through the aide of the 'gods'. While the Vorlons were careful to keep from advancing them too quickly, they were new to this intimate level of contact with another race and mistakes were made. They had intended from the start to make their gifts to the Minbari as an entire race, but their concentration in the city of Kanatai precluded contact with other groups.

For their part, the Kanatai Minbari had little motivation to reach out to other tribes and offer their advantages. The Minbari were still



warlike and territorial, which made the idea of sharing the benefits of 'those beyond the stars' as alien to them as the Vorlons were. Over the generations that passed within the first three thousand years of this era, Kanatai's territory and sphere of influence grew disproportionately to their numbers because of this great strength. Other tribes were forced to either join with them or be considered enemies and driven from their lands. The Vorlons checked this behaviour when they could, but it was in their own interests to ensure that this warrior's spirit remain a part of the Minbari people.

Other tribes thrived in this time period, though none did so as drastically as the Kanatai people. A few received visits by one Vorlon or another as a separate contact from the main group Kanatai; these tribes centred their existence around these luminous beings and were given advantages as befit the Vorlon in question. This led to several tribes of Minbari scattered across the planet with wildly uneven development levels. Some had effective ranged weaponry, while others were blessed with primitive transports. The strength provided by these Vorlon mentors led to dangerously violent conflicts when opposing tribes came into contact, but some tribes were spared these long battles

through benefit of isolation or Vorlon interference keeping them safe while they grew into their advantages.

It was this latter behaviour that marked the beginning of the end for this era. By 8,000 d'V, the face of Minbar was dominated by several major tribes, each one specialised as befit its experiences in the past. Those tribes that were constantly at war developed a martial tradition and become predominantly warriors, while those kept apart were more contemplative and religious. Other tribes, caught in the middle of the endless conflicts raging across the planet, became a third class of Minbari, enslaved by one tribe after another as common labourers. From this era forward, the foundations of the three castes had been laid.

The Medieval Minbari Era and the Fall of Kanatai (8,000 d'V to 7'000 d'V)

The next thousand years began with the first major war to occur involving Minbari as a whole world. The tribe of Kanatai, no longer content to dominate the territory around its mountain range and valley nation, began to entertain thoughts of conquest. These Minbari had benefited the most from the intervention of their Vorlon 'gods' and had weapons and transports superior to anything the other tribes could hope to wield against them. Eventually,

BABYLON



population pressures and pride drove the Kanatai from their safe mountain homes to the battlefield in a bid to conquer 'the horizon' and subjugate the surrounding tribes into a single nation under their own dominance.

One of the driving forces of this war of expansion was the Vorlon presence itself. Because the Minbari had taken to worshipping them as divinities, and because other tribes had other patrons among the starfaring, ancient race, the war became one of religious indignation as well with the Kanatai Minbari seeking to bring truth and divine justice to the worshippers of false gods. Again, the Vorlons knew the truth in these matters, and again they did not move to stop what became a long and bloody war of conquest and oppression. The Kanatai Minbari swept forth from their valley like a crystal hand and crushed those they could not conquer.

This war was a protracted one due to lack of swift moving militaries and concerted resistance from all sides. While the tribe of Kanatai had superior weapons and the recent development of armour, they were drastically outnumbered by the combined tribes of their enemies. The battles raged for more than seven decades of expansion and contraction, with Kanatai taking territory and then losing it to determined tribes pushing in where they could not afford to defend what they had conquered.

These battles pushed the development of all sides at an even faster rate than before. Armour became common for every tribe, with Kanatai's crystal forges turning out newer, more effective suits and other tribes looting older pieces from the battlefield. Weapons quickly became

more advanced, with simple spears and thrown weapons giving rise to blades and bludgeons capable of defeating the hardened protection of warriors in heavy armour. By the end of the conflicts, the Minbari had truly entered a medieval period of swords and plate, albeit these were predominantly crystal in construction.

One of the reasons for this reliance on crystal was its availability. The mineral deposits of Minbar yielded all the crystal the Minbari could shape, a technology made easier through the use of rasps made of even harder but more brittle deposits found underground. Compared to the speed and advantages of crystal, metalsmithing became a secondary concern during the war. Metal weapons were used only in the latter periods of the war effort when weapons were needed even faster than crystal shaping allowed and to create blunt implements capable of shattering heavy crystal plate.

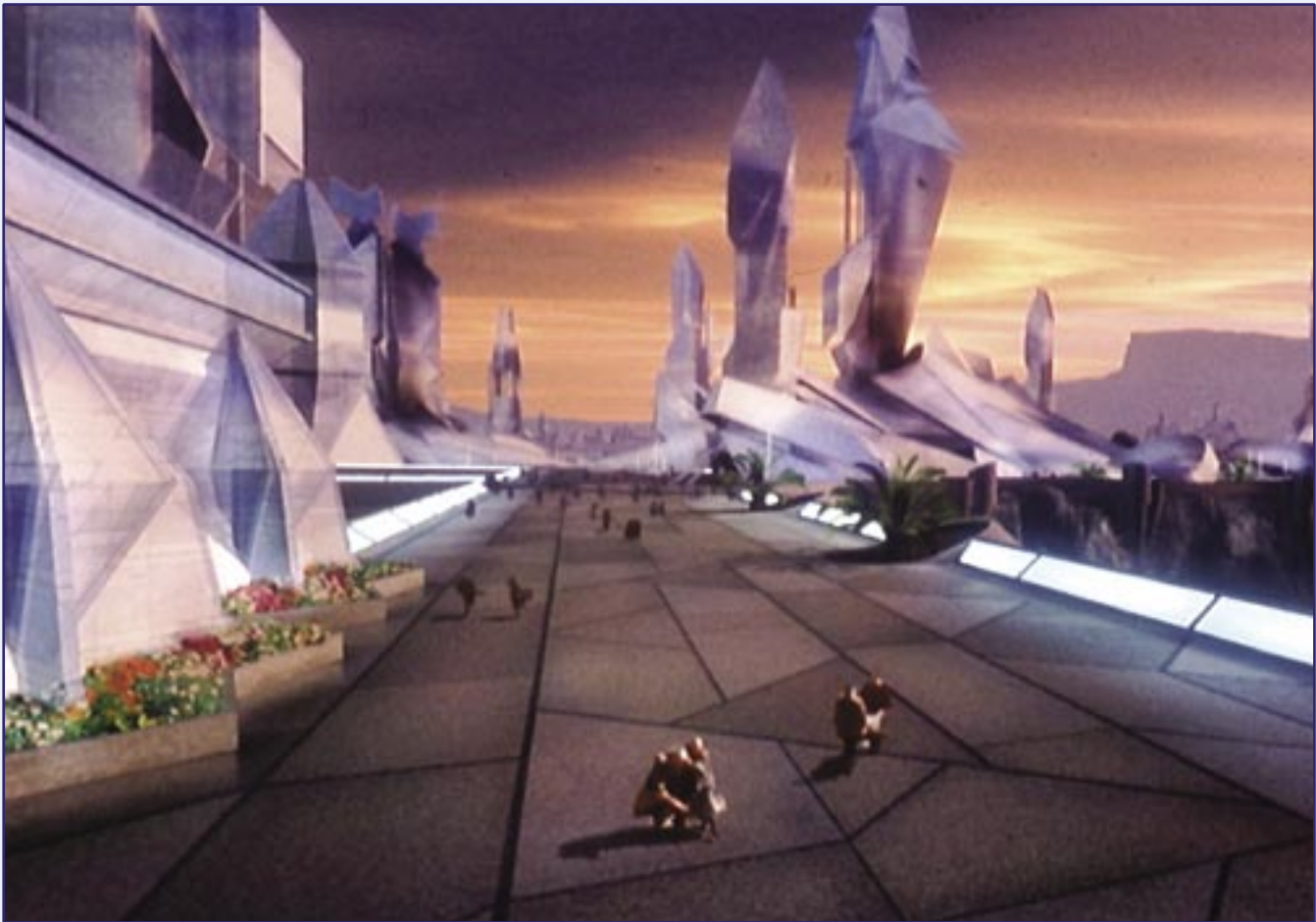
The territory wars of the Kanatai empire left the landscape around their valley desolate and barren; every plant or useful deposit of crystal or metal ore consumed by the city's expansion efforts. By the time the wars ended and the Kanatai tribe withdrew back into their grand city, their dreams of conquest broken, only their valley and the mountains surrounding it remained of their once grand empire. All else was in ruins.

This was not enough for the tribes subjugated for seventy years by the Kanatai. Not content to bring down their war machines and seize the land taken from them through wars that had lasted an entire generation, the tribes united and brought a force many times the size of the remaining

Kanatai army to bear against them as they retreated into the safety of their mountain shrouded city-state. For two years, they laid siege to the valley of the Kanatai, destroying defence after defence at a massive toll of life. The Kanatai were badly outnumbered, but they had the advantages of superior weapons and heavy fortification.

In the end, it was not the united tribal





forces that finally destroyed the Kanatai. The massive force was powerful enough to overcome the Kanatai defences but in the final push, it too would be devastated. The Vorlons has been content to watch the conflicts passively, observing how their gifts had benefited the Minbari and brought about their current age, but the threat of effectively mutual annihilation had never been part of their social experiment. The time had come to act.

Before the tribal army could come together for the final assault, a massive fissure opened up along the valley floor of the Kanatai and swallowed their entire city. Mountains crumbled, the land plummeted into the abyss, and when the tremors subsided, the Kanatai were gone. Using their influence as the gods of the united tribes, the Vorlons convinced the tribal leaders to dissolve their alliance and return to their ancestral lands. The Vorlons had learned from their mistake in letting the Minbari grow too numerous in one area. By separating the tribes into smaller groups, they hoped to return things to the way they were before the rise of the Kanatai.

Over time, the name of the Kanatai became a legend among the other Minbari, a story about a lost city filled with marvels beyond imagining where false gods walk and

death awaits any who seek it out. Other things faded as well, including the sense of co-operation that had drawn the tribes together. Without a common enemy, the Minbari were not moved to create any form of greater community. The unity of the tribes became a memory as well.

Some things did not fade, despite the Vorlon's initial efforts to suppress them. Many of the military innovations, such as swords and armour, had become common enough that the tribes retained the ability to make them and deploy them effectively. Tribal wars began to break out again, now more violent than anything in the race's history, but these were mitigated by the Vorlon's decision to isolate the tribes as best they could geographically. For several centuries, the Minbari existed in a sort of cultural stasis with little reason to advance their technology or social systems. Tribal order remained dominant and the worship of the Vorlons through their guises as divinities continued.

The Vorlons were absent for a great deal of this time, as they were suddenly plunged in the First Great War with another race of equal power and influence in the galaxy. This war took place many light years from Minbar, but keeping it from reaching the planet took considerable effort. In their silence, the Vorlon 'gods' were enshrined

in the hearts and minds of the Minbari people as divine memories. Entire religions, much more complex than the Vorlons had allowed while they were present among the Minbari, were created and prospered in the interim.

By the time the Vorlons returned from centuries of inconclusive battle with their rival sibling race, the Shadows, they found Minbar much changed yet very similar to how they had left it. The Minbari people were still tribal, they were active in their worship of the Vorlons, and they were still a conflict driven society capable of great ferocity in the protection of their territory against invaders.

In many ways, they had become that which the Vorlons needed most. The ancient race had not been able to best their rivals, but they had discovered a devastating weakness in them. The Shadows were vulnerable to a specific wavelength of mental energy. While it did not truly incapacitate them, it did have a detrimental effect on the race's ships and other tactical assets. The Minbari were not capable of fighting their enemy when the War came again, but they would be.

Industrialisation of the Minbari (7,000 d'V to 6'400 d'V)

The Vorlons abandoned their slow intervention policy in the wake of the First Great War between them and the Shadows. The power of their enemy convinced them that to emerge victorious the next time their forces met, they would need allies. Ironically, the Shadows had deduced the same thing on their end and were also moving to forge alliances of their own. Instead of moving subtly among the Minbari to support innovations of their own, the Vorlons took this period of time to bring the

society up from a medieval equivalent to the height of an industrial society.

This process changed the Minbari in some fundamental ways, but this was not the most profound alteration the Vorlons intended for their race. Through their influence with some of the more isolated tribes, the ones that through geographical isolation or inclination had not become involved in the fall of Kanatai, the Vorlons set aside the most mentally capable and genetically viable of these groups and took them from Minbar to a world deep in their own territory. This exodus, only barely remembered in the psyche of some northern Minbari clans to this day, is celebrated as an ascension of light. Its true inspiration was the arrival of the Vorlon living transport and the departure of the tribe's honoured members to join the 'gods' among the stars of the heavens.

What happened to these chosen Minbari in Vorlon space is best left to conjecture, but it is known that a change on a deep genetic level was introduced through a series of invasive and physically taxing experimentation. It is quite possible that not all of the Minbari subjects survived this procedure because when the Vorlons reintroduced them back into the tribes they were taken from, only half of the number taken originally ever set foot on Minbar



again. The whereabouts of the others, some thirty Minbari in total, is a mystery without answer.

As significant as this experiment would prove to be in later years, the major driving forces of this six century period were the rapid growth of industry in the more populous areas of Minbar and the rising level of technology found among the world's many tribes. In particular, due in no small part to the Vorlon's influence in this direction, martial developments became commonplace over this period of time.

Within a decade, it was common for Minbari warriors to carry refined metal or lathe turned crystal swords. These hardened, razor sharp weapons made a mockery of most of the armour of the period, leading to the creation of crystalmesh, a fine linking of shaped links over a suit of padded fibres designed to retard shattering from blunt impact. This in turn led to the invention of narrow bladed weapons used for thrusting, just as such an escalation of arms has been seen in many other sentient species. What makes the weapons development of the Minbari significant is its rapid time table and its sudden abbreviation.

While many of the tribes were entering a post-medieval stage with their weaponry and warfare, those directly influenced by the Vorlon had already surpassed it. Instead of a single Kanatai-like city, there were multiple tribal territories scattered across the face of Minbar with access to technology beyond the imagining of their rivals. By the time lesser tribes had invented the halneth, a weapon similar to the Earth crossbow, these advanced groups were testing the first kanet, a projectile weapon utilising mechanical gears to apply pressure to a crystal shell and directing the resulting shards towards a target.

Kanet changed the face of tribal wars on Minbar. Even the superior forms of crystalmesh armour were of little use against the onslaught of high-velocity shards propelled through the barrels of enemy weapons. Over the course of a century, the kanet was refined in both size directions; massive bombards capable of killing large groups of warriors and small h'kanet that a warrior could carry in multiples and fire with one hand. Survival in the industrial age of the Minbari quickly

became a matter of how many kanet a given tribe could build and maintain.

In retrospect, while this period of time was brutal and violent, it was an extremely formative era for the Minbari as they are known today. The invention of the kanet and its resulting offshoots prompted the scattered tribes to band together for survival. Small groups were easily picked off, regardless of how well armed they were, so larger gatherings and increasing the size of existing settlements became the most effective method of combating the advantages of other tribes.

Current Minbari architecture also has its origins in this period of history. The kanet were deadly to infantry or lightly armoured structures, but the shards had no ability to penetrate thick stone or crystal of any significant size. Instead of light structures easily moved by nomadic tribes, the Minbari sought the cover of massive buildings created from the abundant materials found on their world. By the end of the industrial age, seven major cities and numerous minor ones dotted the landscape of Minbar as testaments to the Minbari race's desire to survive. From within these thick walls, the collected tribes enjoyed some measure of safety and peace.

The nomadic tendency of the Minbari waned during these years, as the fate of any group found without the defence of massed kanet or defensive structures was made eminently clear through the slaughter of thousands. By the year 6,500 d'V, there were no tribes left outside the defence of city walls save for a few isolated groups protected directly by the Vorlons themselves. These tribes were considered holy by most Minbari, even the most violent of warrior settlements, and given a wide margin of fearful respect and isolation.



The reason for the defence of these tribes by the aliens became clear as generation after generation were born within them and propagated the genetic experimentation begun earlier in the age. Within three birth cycles, the results of the process began to emerge. The first telepaths in the galaxy emerged from these tribes, Minbari augmented on a mental and physiological level by Vorlon science. Born with the ability to generate and receive the mental frequencies of lower and higher order brain activity, these psychically gifted Minbari quickly rose to positions of great power, aided by their Vorlon overseers in the roles of advisors and divine inspiration. The grand design of the Vorlon's secret weapon against the Shadows was taking shape.

During this era of the Minbari, these telepaths were little more than rumour and legend. The rest of the race was more interested in survival and developing their technologies to the point of dominance over other cities and tribes. The first major geographical divide of Minbar took place through an alliance of warrior clans and the construction of a landmark that remains as a series of ruins on the face of the planet in current times- The Bright Barrier.

Built as a complex arrangement of fortresses and thick defensive walls from one mountain chain on Minbar's major continental landmass to another more than 16,000 kilometres away. Constructed along a geothermal series of subterranean fissures and designed to capture intense heat in its wall sections and channel solar radiance through massive blocks of cut crystal, the Bright Barrier was more than twice the length of Earth's Great Wall of China and three times the length of Centauri Prime's Distaviat. Through its use as a long line of garrison fortresses and through its impassability due to sheer size and blistering heat, the Bright Barrier effectively turned aside any attempt at invasion of the protected side for over three millennia.

The Bright Barrier's construction, which fifty years to build and incorporated the highest degree of engineering and industrial science available to the Minbari at that time, represents the height of the industrial age on Minbar. Along with its great achievement were other contemporary milestones such as mass production, primitive but effective automation in mines and refineries, and the development of high energy theories using light and basic gravitation theories. These latter complex innovations did not achieve anything beyond the theoretical stage during the industrial era, but they have their roots in this period.

It should be noted that historically speaking, six hundred years is a very short time to go from swords and animal

drawn carts to handguns and gravitic equations, but the Minbari were guided by their mysterious extraterrestrial benefactors. In truth, the planet might have developed much faster, but the Vorlons were still wary of introducing too much advancement in a shorter time span due to the psychological backlash that could have resulted. The Minbari, if they were to become effective weapons against the Shadows, had to not only possess great technology, they had to understand and accept its use.

Five Thousand Years of Isolation (6,400 *d'V* to 1,400 *d'V*)

The process of getting the Minbari to a state where they could begin to understand the truth of the universe around them and grasp the fundamentals of the great technologies the Vorlons could gift them with would take the next five thousand years. The Vorlons, a patient race that measures its own lifespan in millennia, felt this to be a safe estimate. The only constraint on their timetable was the reciprocal opportunities this length of time posed for their rival race, the Shadows. As the Shadows did not appear to have any intentions moving until its own chosen race was prepared for the coming war, it was deemed that the time was available and the experiment proceeded.

The five thousand years that followed did not go exactly as the Vorlons had intended them to, mostly through interference by the Shadows with their plans and the nature of sentient beings to make their own choices regardless of logical outcomes. While the Minbari developed both cerebrally and physically as the Vorlons had designed their environments to support, a basic level of illogical, emotional behaviour remained that could not be removed from their culture despite the aliens' best efforts.

This chaotic tendency was vexing to the Vorlons, but they did not take stronger measure towards controlling it in case doing so would limit the Minbari's effectiveness when the time came to fight on their behalf against the Great Enemy. A certain level of emotion was acceptable, even preferred, so that they would have enthusiasm and morale in combat, though the Minbari's inwardly aggressive tendencies were a worrying point. At the same time, the Vorlons did not want their chosen race to encounter other civilisations and potentially be destroyed or incorporate too many outside ideas into their carefully controlled experiment.

At the end of the industrial age of Minbar, the Vorlons chose to pull back for the most part and let the Minbari develop under close scrutiny but with limited interference. To insure that Minbar remained a closed system until the time came for them to be used as weapons against the Shadows, the Vorlons set up a defensive perimeter around

the planet and its nearby systems. No race venturing into the area was allowed to approach Minbar and if they showed any sign of noticing the hidden defences or the planet itself, they were dealt with quietly and completely.

This barricade against outside contact lasted for five thousand years and led to numerous incidents against other starfaring races in the Minbari area of space. Through each of these, the Vorlons remained as hidden but deadly sentinels, defending their experiment and closing any prying eyes that ventured too close. Whenever forces suspected to be working for the Shadows would come near, the Vorlons would subtly route them out of the system without revealing their presence. A concerted effort by their ancient rivals would certainly have destroyed Minbar before the Vorlons could stop them, so subterfuge provided better protection than force of arms could offer.

While a skirmish of shadows took place in the stars, the Minbari's drastic improvement rate of the past few centuries ground to a near halt without the constant aid of their mentors and divinities. The race was intelligent and adaptable, but their long lifespans provided little impetus to strive for greater achievements when the advancements they had served them ably. The Bright Barrier had reduced the number of inter-tribal war to the few that

raged between those caught outside it. Inside the wall, its builders had subjugated the cities around them and several clan lines were formed and thrived among the civilisations that prospered in that time of relative peace.

Far to the north of the mountains providing the upper end of the Bright Barrier, Minbari tribes ruled by telepaths coming into their full powers united under a single group of psychic leaders and formed clans of their own based on the bloodlines of these mentally gifted members of their race. This united city-state existed behind Vorlon technology left behind to keep their telepathic experiments viable and because of the safety these devices granted, they grew to a disproportionate size comparative with their martial skills.

Hunting and gathering became a task for those Minbari in this city-state without telepathy in their genetic heritage, forming a clan of their own with a disposition of labour and service to others. In time, this service came more out of duty and less out of fear and subjugation. In this way were many of the bloodlines of the worker caste of later years formed; the families of these servitors banded together for mutual protection, an echo of the later formation of the Velshir.



The telepath ruled cities of the north became a powerful group, protected behind their energy barriers of alien design, and began to reach south toward the tribal lands of others. On the far side of the wall, the tribe cities were not prepared for a renewed assault by a previously unknown group of Minbari, and swiftly fell. Their numbers were no match for the superior tactics of the mentally capable telepath-led forces and within a few decades, there were two major power groups on Minbar separated only by the Bright Barrier and ideologies.

During this time, the Vorlons watched their experiment take this unexpected turn. Most of their attention was turned elsewhere in the galaxy for reasons that may never been known. Only the Vorlons charged with the protection of Minbar were present when their precious telepaths began exerting their powers in the pursuit of war against their own kind. Rather than remove them from the risks posed by exposure to combat, the Vorlons chose to watch impassively and see if their talents had reached the point of effectiveness in battle. While their creations were certainly not up to combat with the Shadows, their abilities were not a disappointment.

The telepath tribes, led by their psychic leaders from behind the safety of their Vorlon defence, had conquered a large part of the lands to the east of the Bright Barrier. Tribes with something to offer were incorporated into their growing empire while others were either exterminated or driven south into the less hospitable parts of the planet. On the west side of the wall, the warrior nation watched the formation of a significant threat to their dominion with apprehension.

The Bright Barrier had served its purpose for millennia, but it was as much an imprisoning device for its builders as it was for their enemies. While the Barrier was constructed with heavily reinforced doors that could be operated on the controlling side, opening them meant breaching the defence against any opposing force prepared to invade. The telepath-led armies posted strike teams at each of the garrisons on the Bright Barrier, prepared to take advantage of any breach in the ancient wall. This stand-off endured for nearly a thousand years while forces built up on either side. The danger of invasion from east or west kept tensions high and prompted both nations to develop better technologies and tighter defences in preparation for the inevitable conflict.

It came in the summer season of 3352 d'V without warning. While generations had lived and died under the threat of war, watching for it to come when the telepath nation discovered a way to get past the Bright Barrier or the warrior empire built its forces to the point of repelling any force that came in through the opening doors, neither were prepared for the opening volley of the conflict to come from the planet itself.

The ancient bores of crystal driven down through the crust of Minbari to power the thermal defences of the Bright Barrier had introduced a geological instability in the tectonic plate below it. For centuries, this had existed without incident, but time and the additional stress of the heavy wall itself widened the small cracks until they joined in an irregular fault line just below the bedrock of the continental shelf between the two empires. In 3352 d'V, the fault line finally split completely open and shook the area with a massive earthquake beyond anything that had been experienced on Minbar before.



The aftermath of the quake and its resulting aftershocks left the barrier in ruins and the armies massed on both sides completely devastated. Even the Vorlons were caught off-guard by the violence of the planet's upheaval and were completely ineffective in containing the damage. The earthquake effectively ended the war between the two nations before it could begin, with both sides retreating back to safety beyond the epicentres of

destruction. The second War of Minbari was over in hours after generations of waiting.

The telepath nation considered this a sign from their gods, something the Vorlons neither confirmed nor denied. For the united warrior cities on the west side of the Sundered Barrier, it was an unexplainable disaster that set them back centuries of development. The best and brightest among them had been stationed against the wall with all of the greatest war machines and weapons of the age. The loss was not insurmountable, but it was devastating. The telepath forces pulled back north, abandoning the cities they had conquered while warriors lacked the resources to pursue them. In the aftermath of the war, the powers of Minbar returned to the state they had been in before the armies of the north began to invade.

The Vorlons studied this behaviour and the reasons for it. The Minbari had exhibited a racial tendency to fall back on old patterns and ways of thinking whenever faced with a crisis beyond their ability to explain. This could be a useful trait in the right circumstances, but it might cause a hesitance in the face of the Great Enemy, something the Vorlons could not allow in their chosen race. This setback would have to be overcome in some way, though the aliens were undecided about the best way to do so.

To settle the disagreement, each Vorlon involved in the Minbari experiment was given a territory on the planet and general guidelines they could all accept. The Minbari had to be coaxed past this tragedy and reforged into the warrior race the Vorlons would need to combat the Shadow when the Great War came again. Beyond this, each territory would be handled as its controller saw fit. The Vorlons separated and, aside from occasional contact to compare progress and setbacks, they continued their work with the Minbari in complete autonomy.

Outside the system, the galaxy continued to evolve in its own ways. Other races grew and prospered. Some fell to the Shadows and were eradicated or subsumed as pawns. Others found their own path between the great forces warring over their futures. Some, like the race living in the Epsilon system, developed powerful technology and remained neutral in the struggle, but these independent worlds were caught without allies in the midst of battles that scoured their worlds without hope of effective retribution. Entire solar systems fell silent between the skirmishes of greater galactic forces.

On Minbar, millennia passed. This period is marked by a number of border wars, skirmishes over resource or tactically important locations, and the breakdown of the warrior cities that had been united before the fall of

the Bright Barrier. The diversification of the Minbari into separate clans along hereditary bloodlines was reinforced as families move away from others to foster their own survival in the diminishing safe areas of the main planetary continent. The Minbari people effectively returned in great numbers to a nomadic lifestyle; only a few major cities and civilised areas remained as any form of permanent settlement.

Near the end of the 5,000 years of isolation, the telepath nation recovered from the debilitating losses of their god's perceived wrath and once again dared to reassert their mastery over the areas surrounding their northern territory. This slow return to expansionism was prompted by the intermittent failure of the Vorlon devices protecting their city-state and another facet of the original psychic experiment that brought telepaths to the Minbari race; the original bloodline of these mentally augmented leaders were effectively ageless and their ambitions could not be long denied.

The city-state had consolidated under the leadership of the original telepaths brought to Minbari, millennia-old Minbari kept alive by the genetic sorceries of the Vorlons who did not wish their efforts to be lost to the ravages of age before they could be completely studied. Of the original thirty to return from the stars, twelve had survived the harsh centuries since their augmentation. These incredibly powerful telepaths, collectively called the Kira Zhe, reached forth from their snow-capped mountain kingdoms and those who moved to their will followed suit.

This new empire, which began slowly and built up support on both sides of what little remained of the Bright Barrier, was built up more carefully than before. This caution served the telepath lords well; their religious dictatorship was more appealing to smaller tribes because of their initial approach as an empire that could be joined willingly for mutual benefit. This drew several clans into the empire's fold, though dissenters to the new order quickly learned that membership was not easily refused.

The remnants of the warrior cities were unwilling to join another empire, especially one that they blamed for the downfall of their own dreams of conquest. This hostility prevented the telepath nation from even extending an offer of allegiance. Once their territorial boundaries widened to the northern-most edge of the land claimed by the warrior cities, the telepath lord prepared their forces for the possibility of battle. In the cities of the south, the warriors once again banded together and braced for the struggle to come.

This time, disaster did not avert the shadow of war. The telepath nation of Kira'nal moved against its first major target, the city of Goran. For weeks, the fighting in around the city raged with no clear victor until one of the Kira Zhe entered the conflict directly. The incredible mental abilities given to these first Minbari telepaths were overwhelming, dwarfing even the greatest of the warrior tribe's weapons. With a band of progeny who possessed lesser, but still potent, telepathic and psychokinetic powers, these few shattered the defending army of Goran and laid waste to its bulwarks.

The ease of this victory came as a great shock to both sides. For the warrior tribes, it was the first time such power had ever been revealed to them and an utter denial of their martial strength. Their great weapons and machines of war were effectively useless against the abilities of the Kira'nal forces. Desperate to find some way to overcome the sheer might of the Kira Zhe, they bolstered their defences and prepared for the worst. For the Kira Zhe themselves, this victory was a surprise of a different sort.

Since the Dark Rift had claimed their armies some millennia earlier, the Kira Zhe and their people had been certain of the god's disapproval of their wars of conquest. As such, they had not exercised the full extent of their

abilities in so long, the memory of what they could do had been lost. Now, in the flush of such an effortless success, the Kira Zhe saw a divine mandate of their actions. Such power could only mean the approval of their gods. This world and all its riches was theirs for the taking. The call to arms sounded and each of the Kira Zhe girded for battle. The third War of Minbar had begun.

In this conflict, there were no uninvolved tribes. The Kira Zhe initially struck around the globe to secure their dominance of the north. The time this took to achieve gave the warrior cities an opportunity to prepare for the storm ahead, years they did not spend idly. Alliances were formed, new weapons invented, and while the Vorlons silently watched their chosen race mark the lines of battle, the Minbari crashed together in the most violent conflict to ever touch their world.

The army of Kira'nal consisted of every northern tribe brought into the struggle through diplomacy or sheer force and the twelve great generals of the Kira Zhe. Against them were arrayed the hastily combined alliance of warrior tribes and their servitors, holed up in their great cities and defended by their barriers of stone and brave soldiers on the ground. The warrior alliance did not have the strength of mind that the Kira'nal possessed, but they



did have numbers and superior weapons comparative to the infantry of the northern empire.

The war was a fierce one, with the Kira Zhe overwhelming any force they encountered and the armies of the alliance successfully repelling any advance that did not include one of their number. The leaders of Kira'nal were apparently unstoppable, but they were trying to conquer a world and they could not be on every offensive line at once. Battles in the war of domination quickly became a matter of the defending warrior alliance becoming mobile enough to evade the Kira Zhe while coherent enough to strike at their supply lines and garrisons.

This tactic was only partially successful as it meant the abandonment of their cities and the exodus of their people to safer lands farther south. The fact that Minbar has cities on the south side of its equatorial wastelands in modern times is a testament to how far the warrior and allied tribes had to run to escape the power of the Kira'nal assault.

The third Minbar war lasted decades, returning the entire northern hemisphere of the planet to a transitory nomadic life. The warrior alliance was forced to stay one step ahead of the immensely powerful Kira Zhe, and the forces of Kira'nal remained mobile to keep from being caught by reciprocal attacks. Neither side could win a decisive victory as the alliance was of a much larger size but the Kira Zhe were nearly invulnerable to counterattack. In fifty years of constant war, only one was slain in direct combat and that was the result of an explosive ambush and an unprecedented level of massed firepower. This victory was short lived as the psychic death throes of the Kira Zhe were enough to shatter the minds of every living creature within a mile of the battlefield.

Though it came at a bitter cost, the death of the first Kira Zhe offered hope to the struggling tribes of the Minbari. The telepathic lords of Kira'nal were not, as they professed to be, immortal. They could be killed, though doing so would take courage, incredible power, and the potential sacrifice of thousands. As the Kira'nal army redoubled its efforts to destroy their enemies, the allied tribes conceived of a desperate strategy. It was dangerous and possibly suicidal for all but the few left behind due to age or injury, but it was their only hope for survival. The Kira Zhe were no longer offering the option for surrender; it was now kill or be killed for every Minbari involved.

Through an intricate series of maneuvers over the course of the next year, the allied tribes moved their forces between the bulk of the Kira Zhe armies and their homeland of Kira'nal. Then, when they were in position, the tribes split their numbers and moved in a two pronged at the

moment of their greatest apparent weakness. Instead of moving out from between the hammer and anvil of the Kira Zhe and their nation, the allied tribes struck at both simultaneously.

The strategy was not without risk. The attacks were only at half the strength of the combined allied force, and they could not internally support themselves. This was an all or nothing battle and everyone on the field knew it. With desperate strength, the two halves of the alliance drove into the heart of their enemies, catching Kira'nal and their leaders completely off guard. This initial advantage became a wave of momentum that carried them through the long night ahead on both fronts.

The massed attack on the forces of the Kira Zhe was a complete slaughter, with a hard assault slaying two of the 'invincible' overlords in the first hour of the assault and the rest of the battle dragging on for days. Down to only a few units and faced with an overwhelming force by the Kira Zhe, the army massed for a final push. The Kira Zhe learned of their location and intentions and moved as one to crush them once and for all. Their entire force, including all of the surviving Kira Zhe except one, moved on the secret camp and walked right into an ambush. Knowing that the telepaths would not be fooled by anything but a genuine attacking force, most of the warriors had remained behind to lure the Kira Zhe close. When they were in striking distance, powerful explosives seeded around the camp detonated, killing everyone present. The psychic aftershocks could be felt across the entire planet.

Even as the dust was settling from their pyrrhic victory to the south, the other half of the alliance army was besieging Kira'nal. The sole survivor of the Kira Zhe was here, directing its defence and doing an admirable job of thwarting the unexpected, but also underpowered, attack on his homeland. Things were looking bleak for the attack until the telepathic screams of the dying Kira Zhe reached the central palace. The last Kira Zhe was driven mad with grief and mental trauma and ordered the gates opened immediately. Centuries of indoctrination led the denizens of Kira'nal to obey and, filled with a killing rage and the immense powers given to her by the Vorlons, the Kira Zhe empress threw herself against the allied forces.

History does not record the end of the last Kira Zhe, but the next dawn broke over the hills upon the ruins of Kira'nal and the uncountable bodies of everyone who had been there the night before. Only those who had fled during the battle before the gates were parted survived, most of them traumatised by the intense psychic energies of that epic conflict. As with the one before it, the third Minbar war ended in silence.

Once again, the designs of the Vorlons has come to ruin, though their experiment survived in several generations of progeny. Knowing that they could recreate the Kira Zhe if they had to, they watched without interference as the Minbari brought themselves back from this brink of ruin. The shattered tribes of the alliance returned to their gutted cities and began the long, slow road to rebuilding what they once had. Everything seemed to be back to normal and the Vorlons returned to their machinations.

Appearances were deceiving. The Vorlons, unused to dealing with races on anything but an overhead perspective, did not see the rage building in the survivors of the third Minbar war. While they rebuilt and the remaining Minbari of Kira'nal found places to live with outlying tribes and other settlements, a sentiment caught hold of the allied tribes and before the year was out, there was a new mandate among them. The horrors of the Kira Zhe could never be allowed to occur again. In waves that would not be denied their righteous cause, armies marched from the broken cities to seek out and eliminate the progeny of Kira'nal's dead warlords.

Though the Vorlons moved to prevent them, there were too many Minbari and too few of the powerful aliens. Unwilling to bring the majority of their powers to bear against the Minbari for fear of making the situation worse through genocide, the Vorlons were only able to save a few of the children of the Kira Zhe from the blades and guns of the outraged Minbari people. These few, the youngest children of the last generation, were set aside by the Vorlons and distributed them to Minbari families all over the planet. Telepathic alteration convinced the new parents of the children's legitimacy and in this way, the Vorlons saved what they could of their vital experiment.

A few other Kira Zhe, older ones with the ability to hide or flee, managed to survive the bloody purge, but most did not. These Kira Zhe separated to make it more difficult for them to be found. Cursed with the visible sign of their parentage, a smaller than average skull crest, these heirs to the lost kingdom of Kira'nal eventually found places to settle far away from the conflict. Most traveled south; those who survived the journey were welcomed for their valuable gifts and used their powers to make certain of such a reception. Not the psychic titans their forefathers were, these descendents bred with normal Minbari and in time, the existence of Kira'nal and the Kira Zhe became a memory and then, through Vorlon intervention, a legend.

The 5,000 years of isolation came to an end as the Vorlons, despairing of their repeated failures with the Minbari, tried to come openly to their wisest members once more and explain the truth as simply and as completely as they could. While certain details were likely omitted, the alien mentors took elders of the Minbari into their confidence and offered them an open alliance, an exchange of technology for obedience. The time for subtlety had ended. If the experiment was to be saved, the Vorlon had to take a direct hand in its guidance.

The Dark Century (1,400 d'V to 1,300 d'V approximate)

The open movement of the Vorlons among them had the initial effect the aliens were looking for; worship and devotion. For several years, the Vorlons saw a marked improvement in the behaviour of the tribes and they lived according to the proscribed rules set down by the ordered and enlightened ancient race. In return, the Vorlons provided many wonders of technology to the Minbari,

including the final technical secrets needed for mass-communication and flight. Tribes of the Minbari could now, for the first time, make peaceful contact over great distances and travel them as well.

In this, the Vorlons made a terrible mistake. Their hold over the Minbari was based on the limited groups of their chosen race and their individual beliefs in the ancient one's divinity. With cultural exchange, something the Vorlons insisted on to better foster



the race as a military force, came the understanding of some of the things that the Vorlons had done to them in their past. Questions were raised, but in private between tribal leaders and clan elders. Feelings of unrest began to foment, especially in clans that had lost a great deal in the conflicts of their people caused by the Vorlon's interference. Chief among these destabilizing factors was the news that the Vorlons had been responsible for the Kira Zhe.

Legend or not, there were many among the Minbari who were not at all accepting of their gods' part in the greatest tyranny their planet had ever known. They began to question what else had just been a Vorlon experiment in their past, though never openly. As the plans of the Vorlons continued to prosper, a growing number of Minbari saw their efforts not as aid but as the actions of keepers towards their slaves. Though centered firmly in the warrior clans, this unrest also found fertile ground in the disaffected young of the religious and worker sects.

The final mistake that led to the open revolt of the Minbari came when the Vorlons, intending to get past the blind reverence of the younger race, tried to explain to them that they were not divine. Suddenly, the hierarchies of the religious clans felt betrayed and deceived. If the Vorlons were not gods, then their lives had been a lie. Instead of bringing them closer together, the Vorlon's admission of mortality drove them immediately farther apart.

Mortality meant the Vorlons had been deceiving the Minbari since their earliest history, but it also meant, to the eyes of those heeding rebellion's call, that they could be killed like mortals as well. Over the next decade, the Minbari quietly took in everything the Vorlons wanted to teach them, but it became increasingly more because they were looking for weapons against their 'masters'.

Those weapons came in the introduction of molecular science, specifically gravitics and energy acceleration. The Minbari did not need to truly understand these devices to use them on the Vorlon's behalf, but the alien race was impressed with how intently their experimental subjects

seemed to consume any amount of knowledge gifted to them. Each time a new technology was given to them, the Minbari examined it intently and incorporated it as quickly as they possibly could. The Vorlons saw this as proof of the Minbari's worthiness as a warrior race. In this, they were correct, but they were about to receive a deadly correction on their assumed choice of their chosen race's target.

The opening volley of the rebellion came when many of the Vorlon overseers, figures that represented the ancient gods of the Minbari, gathered with some of their loyal Minbari subjects at one of the cities on the surface of Minbar. The purpose of the meeting was to show them the technology necessary to convert their new plying machines into vessels capable of travelling through outer space, a gift they had been promising for some time. A craft had been selected from the smallest of the ships in the Vorlon fleet and was waiting for them as the mixed delegation arrived. At the Vorlon's behest, all involved boarded the craft and at the appointed hour, the engines ignited.

The resulting explosion killed all of the Minbari aboard, martyrs who had sacrificed themselves to ensure the Vorlons would be inside the vessel when it detonated, and half of the assembled Vorlons. The survivors swept over the launch site looking for answers and were met by hundreds of Minbari carrying heavy weapons of a design they had learned from the aliens themselves. Weakened by the blast, all but two of the Vorlons were slain by the crude but effective energy weapons. Stunned and horrified, the Vorlons fled into space to tell the others of their chosen race's treachery. The Dark Century had truly begun.



All across Minbar, a feat of co-ordination made possible only by means of the mass communications equipment of the Vorlons, the Minbari answered the clarion call of rebellion. By morning, no Vorlon remained on the planet; all were either slain or fleeing to the Vorlon station in orbit where their pursuers could not follow. With no living Vorlons to take their frustration and rage out on, the Minbari turned their attention to their temples instead. Over the course of a few days, many irreplaceable works of architectural mastery fell to particle beams and the hammers of a people betrayed.

Betrayal was a universal theme in this conflict. Back on the station, the badly wounded survivors of the massed attack informed their homeworld and recalled their defence fleet from its scattered position in nearby space. The shock of the, in their eyes, unwarranted slaughter had faded, replaced now by a rage the likes of which the Vorlons had not felt in many millennia. This insignificant lesser race had dared to turn weapons of their own design against them after all they had done for them?

The Vorlon response was swift and decisive. Before the rest of the fleet could arrive, the station turned the attention of its weapons towards the planet. A trio of massive lightning cannons struck downwards, tore through the atmosphere, and bombarded the largest city of the Minbari at that time, killing thousands. To them, it was as if the heavens had opened up and rained down the wrath of their lost gods. The barrage continued long into the night and by the first light of morning, the city had been completely razed.

Thousands of refugees had fled the city, seeking shelter anywhere the terrain would shield them from the baleful eye of the Vorlons. They found some rest in the ancient caverns of their ancestors, but even these could not stave off the incredible power of the Vorlon weapons for long. The barrages continued, wiping out one city after another while the Vorlons waited for their fleet to amass for a final, terrible judgement against the Minbari. In space, they could fire at will, immune to counterattack.

Or at least, they believed they were immune to counterattack. The Vorlons had taught their chosen race to be obedient, a lesson they had obviously overcome, but they had also been trained to be adaptive. The Minbari looked for something on their world that could be used as a weapon against the Vorlons, anything that could reach into the stars. As the sky opened up with bolt after deadly bolt of the Vorlon's vengeance, the Minbari found what they needed in the ruins of a legend.

The Vorlon devices that once defended Kira'nal were unearthed and repaired with an eye towards their high

energy output. Instead of using them as a shield, their electromagnetic generators were set to transmit along a crystalline conduit hastily constructed by a desperate group of Minbari engineers. High above the planet, the Vorlons did not notice this work until a massive pulse of energy shot up from the planet's surface and collided with their station. When the fleet arrived at Minbar, they found only wreckage in orbit above it.

What followed was a long period of purges instigated by the Vorlon against their disloyal subjects. The Minbari fled their cities and gathered in underground shelters, some as vast as several kilometers in length and height. Here, they built new cities and waited out the war of extermination that caught others of their kind out in the open. Fear became their constant companion, and only the concerted efforts of all Minbari, regardless of caste or clan, insured that any of them survived.

The end of the Dark Century when the Vorlons wiped out the last of the surface dwelling Minbari and looked in silent horror on the destruction they had wrought. Scouts were dispatched to try and find any survivors, not to kill them but to bring back some word that they, the ancient and wise race of the Vorlons, had not just committed total genocide out of something as trivial as anger.

To Forgive and Forget – The Minbari Take to the Stars (1,300 d'V to 9 d'V)

Realising their mistakes with the Minbari at last, the Vorlons debated for a long while what to do now that they had found the surviving members of the race. Some wanted to take them back in and nurture them back to cultural health while others wanted nothing further to do with the Minbari. As is the way of the Vorlons, a third option was found and implemented. Through their great science, the Vorlons used telepathic augmentation to ease their existence out of the Minbari race's collective memory.

They left the idea of their overseers in as the gods the Minbari had once revered, knowing the importance of religious beliefs to any society, but they did not enforce worship. The scars left on Minbar by the Vorlon's great weapons were repaired as much as could be expected and the Minbari were led to believe that they were the result of their own countless inter-tribal conflicts. Subtly urging the Minbari to come back to the surface, they watched at a distance as the remains of a once populous race returned to their rightful place as masters of their own world.

Gone but not forgotten, the Vorlons left the seeds of technology necessary to rebuild Minbar and advance

their technology if the Minbari chose to use it. Then, like reticent parents, they left their chosen race to its own devices and returned to their own place in the galaxy. If the Minbari flourished or failed, it would be by their own merits or mistakes. The gods of the Minbari took one last look at the beautiful and terrible things they had made and vanished quietly into the stars.

It was not long before the Minbari tried to unknowingly follow them. Driven by a desire to return to a state of technology and advancement they had known briefly and then, as far as they remembered, lost due to their own conflicts, the Minbari reconstructed their surface cities and began designing ways to explore the vast reaches of space. Through genetic augmentation, a subrace of Minbari was designed to survive and flourish in the hostile environments that would be encountered during space flight. Vehicles were constructed and by the time the Minbari had recovered their numbers to a point near where the race was before the Dark Century, their first starships were ready to launch.

What followed was a handful of centuries spent in deep exploration, colonisation, and discovery. The Minbari starborn, as the specialised race came to be known, became obsolete through the invention of gravitational generation and hyperspace travel. This single innovation opened the galaxy to the rest of the Minbari race, allowing large numbers of their kind to journey through the stars without resorting to cumbersome physical equipment or hibernation chambers. The era of mass exploration in the galactic area around Minbar had truly begun.

Like all eras for the Minbari, this one was also marked with conflict. Several stars around Minbar were charted and explored, with colonies being built on suitable planets around many of them. For years, the Minbari did not encounter another sentient race and speculation began as to whether or not there was any one else among the stars with the power to move among them.

That question was answered definitively when the Minbari began travelling rimward and arrived at Norsa. As the pair of Minbari explorer frigates settled into orbit around the most habitation-likely planet in the system, they were met by hostile upper atmospheric craft and bombarded with light laser fire. The shots did not inflict significant damage, but it caught the Minbari off-guard. They had not expected to encounter any other life forms. A quick exchange of suppressive fire and use of the frigates' tractor beams brought the vessels aboard for examination. This was the Minbari's first experience with another life form, but it would not be their last.

The exploration of Norsa continued for some time, mostly due to the hostile nature of the system's natives, but after deliberations and enough of a show of force to convince the Norsis that war would be a futile gesture, negotiations led to the planet being added to Minbari space as a protected world in exchange for organic resources. Norsa opened up a major lane of hyperspace travel and within a few years, the further systems of Eudu, Moga, and Tychola were mapped and explored as well. On Moga and Tychola, other sentient races were encountered and similarly contacted. The Tycholans were initially very hostile to outside interaction, but after protracted discussions and information exchange, they welcomed the Minbari and declared them to be gods from the stars. Though they could not recall why, this behaviour struck the Minbari as oddly familiar, though the stance of worship did make negotiations easier with the otherwise xenophobic denizens of the jungle planet.

Things were not so peaceful when the Minbari entered the Iklath system using a minor hyperspace lane discovered leading away from their colony world on Zendamore. Iklath was the home of the Klathu, a territorial race that had explored and terraformed every viable planet in their system and fortified their worlds with the strength of numerous starships. While the Klathu could not venture far outside their own system, they had a strong hold on their worlds and no intention of allowing outsiders to gain any footholds in 'their space'. When the exploration ships arrived at the jump point off Iklath Minor, they were fired upon and destroyed. Only one ship escaped the barrage and returned to Zendamore.

Peaceful by nature but warriors by heritage, the Minbari returned force with force. Using a hyperspace technique called sun running, they took a fleet into hyperspace and used gravitational fluctuations in the Iklath star to force a jump point thousands of kilometres away from its normal location. The Minbari fleet came out through this juxtaposed point and caught the massed Klathu armada by surprise. Superior to the alien vessels in every way, the Minbari made short work of their fleet and turned their attentions to the planets themselves.

The only system in the Minbari Protective to truly be taken by force, Iklath remains an example of what happens to races that provoke the Minbari and an ironic lesson after the fate of humanity during the Earth/Minbari War. The Klathu remain a fiercely proud people, governed by the Minbari only through unwavering vigilance and the single saving grace of their race; the Klathu respect strength above all other character traits. The Minbari remain stronger than them; therefore, the Klathu remain loyal.

The era of space exploration expanded the boundaries of Minbari space to the current size of the Federation and took in the Protective worlds as a rimward buffer zone and area of interest. The Federation had plans to move farther coreward and would have encountered humanity during its own late medieval period had something not caused it to stop all further travel that direction. In hyperspace, during a simple hyperspace jump between Tarellan and the nearby star Nochtal, the Minbari encountered something dark, something that resembled nothing so much as a vicious, evil *shadow*.

The Great Darkness and the Legacy of Valen (8 d'V to 992 a'V)

The ship that encountered the Shadow cruiser in hyperspace never made it back to report on what it had found, but the enemy vessel followed its path and found Tarellan completely unaware of its existence. The cruiser went back into hyperspace and for a short time, the loss of the Minbari ship was considered merely a hyperspace accident. Fragments of the frigate were found by another ship and with no other explanation for its destruction, the Minbari assumed it to be a freak occurrence, nothing to worry about.

They could not have been more wrong. After a short set of scouting passes, the Shadows reappeared in space over the planet Valusha. They came out of the stars with their weapons burning and in a matter of moments, every vessel in orbit was sliced apart. Minutes later, the Shadows disappeared again, leaving behind the blazing remnants of a dead colony and no explanation for their loss.

The same incident occurred days later in the Tarellan system, but this time part of the defence fleet escaped to Minbar. Warned now, the Minbari moved against this unknown threat with the only level of force they considered logical given the circumstances; they mobilised every ship they had that was not directly needed for the defence of Minbar itself. A formidable armada arrived at Tarellan and caught the Shadow ships as they were systematically tearing apart the many colonies and orbital stations around the planet. The Shadows had been taking their time with this world, not considering the Minbari to be any threat, and that delay cost them dearly. The armada opened fire with weapons technology unheard of in any other race aside from the ones the Shadows had been supporting. Half their force cut down in the opening volley, the Shadows quickly retreated to assimilate this new development.

They did not stay gone for long. Several wary strikes at Federation border worlds taught the Shadows that the Minbari were strong enough to repel assaults that did not

utilize at least three full cruisers, something that meant that the Shadows would have to commit major attention to the Minbari if they wanted to defeat the race decisively. Unfortunately for the Minbari, the Shadows might have bypassed them had it not been for the distinctiveness of their technology.

The Shadows recognised the influence of the Vorlons when they saw it. Knowing that this race must be the one the Vorlons had spent so much time grooming to be their champion, the vicious aliens drew their battle lines and moved the bulk of their fleet into hyperspace near the edge of Minbari space. The battle line had been drawn and the Federation had been chosen as the site of the next Great War. The only thing that spared the Minbari the full force of the Shadow fleet, something that surely would have spelled disaster for them, was the race's continuing skirmishes elsewhere with other races and the Shadow's unwillingness to draw direct Vorlon attention.

Even without their entire fleet, the Shadows proved to be superior in every aspect of space combat. Minbari ships were excellent feats of engineering, but they could not compare to the power of Shadow cruisers and their devastating weaponry. Loss after loss plagued the Minbari's every engagement. Planets were lost, entire clans slain, and the possibility for survival dwindled with each doomed battle. The pinnacle of Minbari stellar engineering, the Inatrii, was the final death knell for their hopes of victory. Its destruction, along with the loss of the Blood Song warrior clan, seemed to herald the coming extinction of their entire race.

Then, from the darkness, came light. A new station, alien in design but perfect in function and larger than anything the Minbari had ever seen before, appeared right where it was needed most. The ship sent to investigate it found it well-armed and completely deserted save for three figures. Two were radiant beings and seemed divine in both power and countenance. The third was a Minbari who, after introducing himself as Valen, offered them the station as a sign of hope. It was a great gift given at a time when, without a place to rally their forces, the Minbari would have surely fallen.

The appearance of this new space station gave the Minbari renewed confidence. It also signalled the entry of the Vorlons into the war on the Minbari's side. They had turned a blind eye to the Minbari Federation since their failures in the past and as such, had not truly seen the devastation caused by the Shadows there. Now aware of the dire situation their former subjects were in, the Vorlons supported the Minbari fully. Facing a united front they could never have expected, the Shadows fell back in the

face of such concerted resistance. Only a fraction of their entire fleet survived to retreat back into the shadows.

Valen and the Vorlons had saved the Minbari from certain defeat, mostly because Valen had united the still disparate castes and clans into a functional whole and set them to the task of saving themselves. The Vorlons disappeared again, though they maintained secret liaisons with certain Minbari to keep an eye on the race and watch for signs of Shadow involvement. Valen remained for some time, mentoring the new culture he made for the Minbari and providing wisdom enough to chart their course through the next thousand years of history. When he left them to disappear among the stars, he left behind a legacy of tradition, strength of purpose, and a fierce determination to survive.

The Federation rebuilt itself while Valen was with them, expanding to its previous size. The Protective, which the Minbari had been able to shield from the predation of the Shadows, remained part of their sphere of influence, but no further expansion was sanctioned. The Minbari became a power to be reckoned with in their area of space and for a long time remained content to merely maintain that status. Nearly a thousand years of technological and cultural peace would pass before their next major crisis.

Sins of the Father – The Earth/Minbari War (992 a’V to 1008 a’V)

The Minbari enjoyed a period of relative peace for a thousand years after Valen left them to their own devices; only a few minor conflicts with alien races marring an otherwise flawless millennia. The most notable of these was their encounter with the Streibs, an alien race with advanced technology. The Streibs proved to be a minor incident, though it did cost the Minbari several ships and many lives before the aggressors were tracked to their home system and taught a violent lesson on the folly of angering the Minbari. The Minbari did not overly hunt the Streibs, sparing their homeworld out of mercy, but every ship sent against them was destroyed without question or exception.

This mercy would not be repeated with the next race that acted against them. The Minbari, a race that had suffered the terror of a powerful force bent on genocide after they had killed some of their number, became guilty of the same horrible act in the year 992 a’V. While travelling with the Grey Council to investigate the possibility of the ancient evils that their race had defeated a thousand years earlier moving once more on the distant world of Z’ha’dum, an incident arose that would spark a swift but brutal war of aggression against another race- humanity.

The Earth/Minbari war began as a misunderstanding. The first time a Terran ship encountered a Minbari starship, they studied each other closely. The Minbari ship made a move that they thought would be considered non-threatening. Approaching the Earth vessel with its gun ports open as a sign of respect, the gesture spooked the other vessel into firing out of fear. The Minbari ship was greater in power, but taken by surprise, was nearly destroyed, and the Earth ship limped back to base with news of a terrible new enemy. Minbari ships, arriving to investigate, were interpreted to be the first wing of an invasion force by the base commander, and ships were launched in response before receiving formal authorisation from Earth Central.

Things were only exacerbated by the death of one of the Minbari’s greatest leaders in that original barrage of fire. The speaker of the Grey Council, Dukhat, was killed by falling debris from the Earth ship’s opening volley. The Minbari, too damaged to retaliate immediately and too stunned by the loss of a man who was considered a legend among them, were able to send a message to every other ship of their fleet within range. The Grey Council had voted; the verdict was death. Wherever they were, humans were to be hunted until the last of them lay dying amid the burning ruins of their worlds.

The war put a great strain on the Minbari, who have always been strongly divided between the religious caste, and the military caste, who were now forced to work together as they had not done since the last Great War. The religious caste were quietly opposed to the war, but were generally vague about their reasons when asked. In truth, there was some half-remembered sections of old scriptures about a race of people like Minbari but not Minbari that would bear an important role in their own race’s survival. With nothing specific to point to, the religious caste had little option but aid in the genocide.

The war went badly for Earth, with one loss after another; the Minbari had an overwhelming technological advantage. During the entire course of the war, Earth scored only one major victory, when a young officer named John Sheridan destroyed the Minbari war cruiser Black Star and several accompanying vessels. It was all downhill from there.

After losing all of their colonies and stations between the edge of Minbar space and the Sol system, Earth was closed in on by hundreds of Minbari ships swooping for the kill. Eager to end this war, which had grown distasteful to all but the most violent of the warrior clans, the Minbari moved past all of the outposts farther out in the system and surrounded Earth for the final bombardment as swiftly as they could. In response, every fighter, freighter, or broken warship humanity could muster was set into orbit

for a final line of defence. It was an impossible goal; the Minbari knew that victory was assured.

This last battle, known to the Minbari as the Battle for Earth, began as they anticipated with everything in their path sliced from the stars by superior firepower and nothing larger than a Nial fighter taking any significant damage on their part. The Grey Council, present for this final assault, watched with mixed emotions and the future end of Earth played out before them. Curious to know why they would continue to fight when all was doomed, they took in a single human pilot as he tried to ram his injured fighter into their Sharlin cruiser.

Bringing him aboard, they interrogated him thoroughly. One of the Grey Council members was with him through this process and through blind accident brought the human too close to one of the Minbari's most sacred icons, the Triluminary. A gift from Valen, it glowed when in his presence or in the presence of those he favoured. The Council member, Coplann of the warrior caste, brought this news to the attention of the others immediately and the human was examined to find some reason for the Triluminary's reaction.

They found that while the pilot, Jeffrey Sinclair, was human, he had a Minbari soul. For many centuries, the Minbari had been experiencing smaller birth rates and each generation had seemed somehow less than the one before in terms of aptitudes and potential. In Sinclair, the Minbari found the answer to this riddle. The greatest of their souls were being reborn not as Minbari but as humans. Their war was, ultimately, with themselves. Minbari were killing Minbari, in violation of one of their most sacred laws.

Without explanation, the Minbari surrendered. It was unilateral, immediate, and without terms. The Minbari simply stopped fighting and retreated back to their own space. Once away from the Sol system, they disappeared into the night and did not contact Earth again until the proposal for the Babylon Project reached them through secret information channels. Then, they re-emerged.

For two years, they watched as one after another of the stations were built and failed. Between sabotage, structural collapse, and unexplained phenomena, four stations vanished and a fifth was built. This one, they knew would be the one to stand and sure enough, it did. They insisted that as their compensation for the investment they had placed in the project, they be allowed to choose its commanding officer. A long list of decorated military commanders were presented and rejected until finally they made their choice. In 2257, Jeffrey Sinclair took

command of Babylon 5, unknowingly placed there by the direct will of the Minbari.

For Those Who Follow,
This short section of historical text has been prepared and added to this chapter in the hopes of updating those of who may be unclear on current events. Historical data has been summarized here to a great extent because so many other source of information on these events are available to you in other formats. These passage appears here merely for completeness sake and should not be considered a definitive statement on any of the major galactic occurrences pertaining to the Minbari post 1010 aV. As always, the Tuzanor library remains at your disposal for further studies.

Echoes of the Great War (1008 aV+)

Babylon 5 served a great purpose, the promotion of peace in the galaxy by providing a place for alien races of all types to come together in neutral territory for diplomacy and legal trade. Even the Minbari benefited from this arrangement, slowly overcoming their isolationist tendencies to appreciate the advantages of open commerce and exchange of galactic information. Through the office of their ambassador and the efforts of worker caste merchants, the Minbari gleaned a great many positive side-effects from their role in the creation and maintenance of the massive space station.

These were all, however, in the background compared with their true reason for being involved with Babylon 5. From the beginning of the Babylon Project, the Grey Council knew the truth, though some of them did not wish to believe it. The Shadows were moving again, and the prophecies of Valen placed the Babylon station in the heart of the coming war. The reason for the Council's reluctance to admit the truth of the prophecy came from another of his forebodings, 'The Grey Council will be broken in the Great War to come.' Fear and, in some cases, a loss of faith that comes from a thousand years of distance between the message and the beloved messenger worked together to turn many among the leaders of the Minbari people away from the teachings of their founder.

This doubt was not sufficient to steer the Minbari entirely away from the truth. The actions of one of their number, Satai Delenn, kept her race in the growing conflict even after the fearful among her peers removed her from her position on the Council. Through strength of personality and belief in the commander of the Babylon 5 station and his people, she helped the Minbari stay the course and bent

all of her resources to the defeat of the Shadows when they finally appeared.

The battles of this era were arduous ones full of loss and pain. From the destruction of Narn worlds and the instigation by the Shadows of the War of Retribution between that race and the Centauri to the sacrifice of entire ships and crews to protect the vessel containing the only hope the galaxy had of survival at the Battle of Corina 6, the future for all was etched in fire and blood in the year 2261.

Minbar was not left in peace at the end of the Great War, which resulted in all of the Ancients leaving the galaxy along with the Vorlons, the Shadows, and their progenitor, Lorien. It had already gone through the prophesied breaking of the Council, its reformation in a different pattern of representation by Delenn of the religious caste, and a terrible civil war over the right of the warrior caste to rule over all. Homes were lost, planetary areas burned, and the best and worst of their species revealed to the galaxy for all to behold. It was truly an era of fire.

Out of these ashes arose the possibility of great providence. On Earth, a corrupt leader by the name of President Clark was driven from his office by the action of the same group of humans that had led the forces of light against the Shadows in the Great War. Through great effort and despite grave losses, the humans reformed their own world in much the same way Minbar had been reforged, though the costs were no less high. Removed of his station as a member of the Earth's military, the hero of the Great War, John Sheridan, was appointed President

of the newly-formed Interstellar Alliance instead, an organisation initiated by a collective of worlds, including Narn, Centauri Prime and Minbar.

Ceding authority for their overall governments to the auspices of the Interstellar Alliance to one degree or another, the worlds of the ISA banded together to solve societal, political, and military problems facing one or all of them. A coalition based on mutual trust and founded for mutual protection, the ISA quickly became the primary political force in the galaxy. Though this was not entirely appreciated by some governments, notably Earth and a few of the ISA worlds themselves, it nonetheless lived up to its mandate and brought peace to the galaxy for years before the next crisis revealed itself.

This came in the form of the Drakh. A race dedicated to the Shadows and left orphaned by their mentor's departure beyond the rim of the galaxy, the Drakh continued their master's agenda of war and aggression through subterfuge. While formidable but not unbeatable in open combat, the Drakh's primary strength rested in their mastery of nanotechnology and viral science. In retaliation for Earth's part in the Great War, the Drakh sent a planet-killing armada to destroy it. When Sheridan, Earth Force, and the Interstellar Alliance managed to turn aside this genocidal attack, the ships unleashed their last-ditch weapon of vengeance. A virulent plague scattered from their hulls, entered the atmosphere of Earth, and infected its surface with a deadly, incurable illness.

All of Minbar's resources, as well as those of the other ISA worlds, were turned towards the problem of finding a cure

before Earth became a doomed, ghost planet with a dead population. A special craft of combined technological design called the Excalibur left orbit from Earth on a crusade to seek a cure among the many uncharted worlds still remaining in the galaxy. Every available effort has been made to create, discover, or emulate some answer to the deadly riddle of the Drakh plague.



Worlds of the Minbari Federation

The current size of the Minbari Federation is an area of space approximately 120 light years across at its widest point from Norsa to Sorpigal and 138 light years from Moga to Sh'Lekk'tha moving spinward to anti-spinward. The degree of shift in the stellar arrangements makes the covered area of the Minbari Federation (including the territory of the Protective area) approximately 82,800 light years in size. Within this vast area, comparable or larger than the territories of any other galactic race with the sole exception of the Centauri Republic at the height of its expansionistic period, the Minbari have notable colonies on seventeen worlds. Four homeworlds belonging to other races lie in the Protective, and the Minbari have their own homeworld of Minbar on the coreward side of the Federation.

This section provides details on each of these worlds, with planetary images, colony locations, and other information as pertains to each planet. Each world has an information block associated with its map, giving relevant data about its climate, population, and geographical divisions. In addition, this section contains a map of a basic starbase colony layout, and two Minbari cities- Tuzanor and Yedor, both of which are on the homeworld of Minbar.

Travel in the Federation

The Minbari are not an internally restrictive society and anyone with a reason to travel from planet to planet is allowed to do so. This level of permissiveness comes from the nature of their society. No Minbari does anything without a good reason and very few act outside their appointed clan and caste ordained tasks. Thus, travel between the worlds of the Minbari Federation usually only occurs for a legitimate reason.

Within the religious caste, this generally involves pilgrimages from shrine to shrine or as a cycle of visitations involving the entirety of the Federation. These

journeys are considered blessed events and are supported as much as possible by the race. Religious caste members claiming to be on a pilgrimage are generally taken at their word and given free passage to any planet within the Federation itself. The worlds of the Protective do not have the same religious significance, making travel to them a rare occurrence for members of this caste.

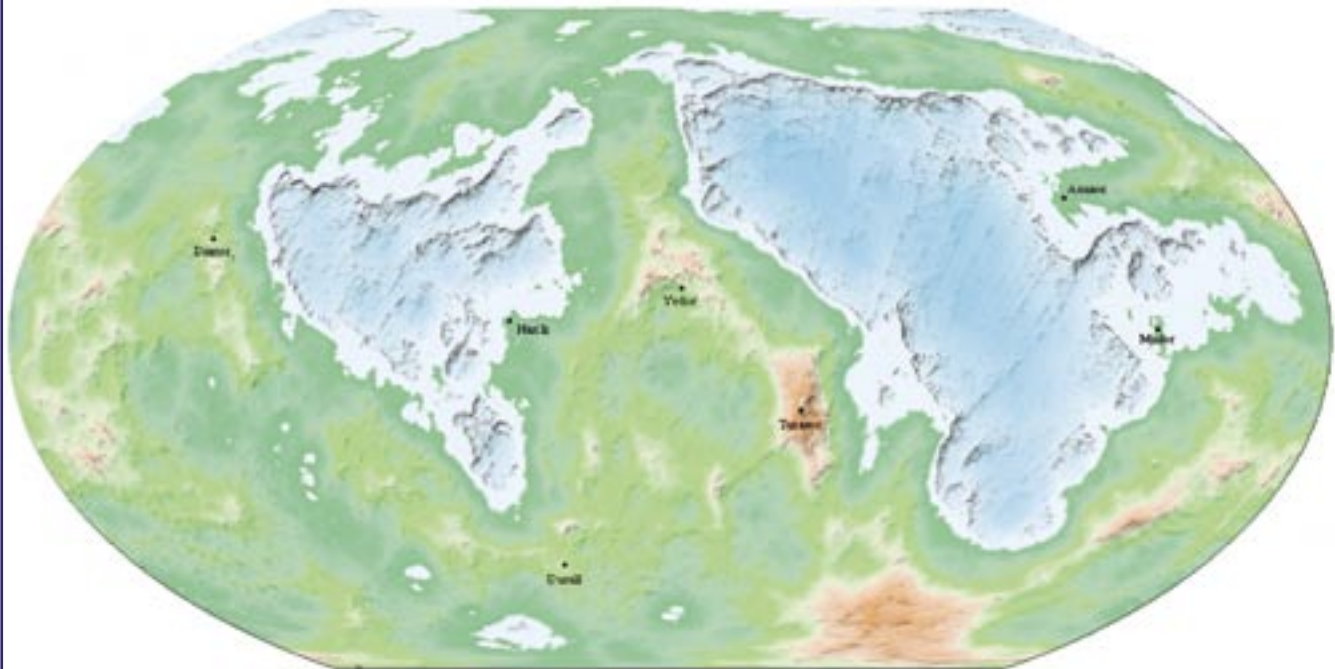
The warrior caste only journeys between planets on military manoeuvres or because of training requirements for their duties in the service of their people. Several worlds of the Federation and Protective have specialized training facilities, making them an important part in the education of Minbari soldiers. For example, the most effective air combat school in the Federation is located on Valusha. Travel there by members of the Fire Wings clan is a given at some point in their careers. Fleet rotations are also fairly common, making this caste one of the most widely travelled of their race.

Surprisingly, the worker caste is not as sedentary as an outside observer might think. Because the caste is so efficient at what they do, work does not always remain in one place for them. When they have finished every task in their speciality on a given world, they are often cycled to a different planet and assigned to a new work team. This puts them in new environments and under new management structures all the time, something that makes the worker caste very flexible in their ability to move from place to place without disorientation. What few merchants the Minbari have are also from this caste and they make their living by remaining mobile.

The Access of Other Races

The Minbari are as restricting to other races as they are open to their own. The Minbari Federation is very closely guarded against outside incursion and ships from other regions of space have very little chance of entering Minbari territory without being detected. Unless a ship has a legitimate reason for being in a given sector of Minbari space, they are either turned away or destroyed depending on the nature of their incursion and the temperament of the Minbari crew discovering them. After generations of losses and rejection, most races know better than to enter Minbari territory uninvited.

Minbar - Minbari Homeworld - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 24,200 miles Water Percentage: 23% Equatorial Mean Temperature: 70% degrees F.

Planet: Minbar

Climate: Temperate to Cold, Warmer near Equator

Weather average: Mild 80%, Light Storms (Winter) 11%, Light Storms (Rain) 5%, Severe Storms (Mixed) 4%

Technical level: Advanced, gravitic technology, hyperspace-capable, terraforming, genetic engineering
Native Sentient Race(s): Minbari

Dominant Government: Representational Democracy (Grey Council, 9 voting members, 3 from each caste)

Notable Cities: Yedor (capital), Tuzanor, Dianor, Han'li, Durall, Ananor, Mialor

Population: 2,300,000,000 82% of population is urban, 18% live in rural or isolated areas)

Cultural Information: Population is divided into three castes- worker, warrior, and religious. Each controls a section of the planet surface and is further subdivided into clans along family bloodlines.

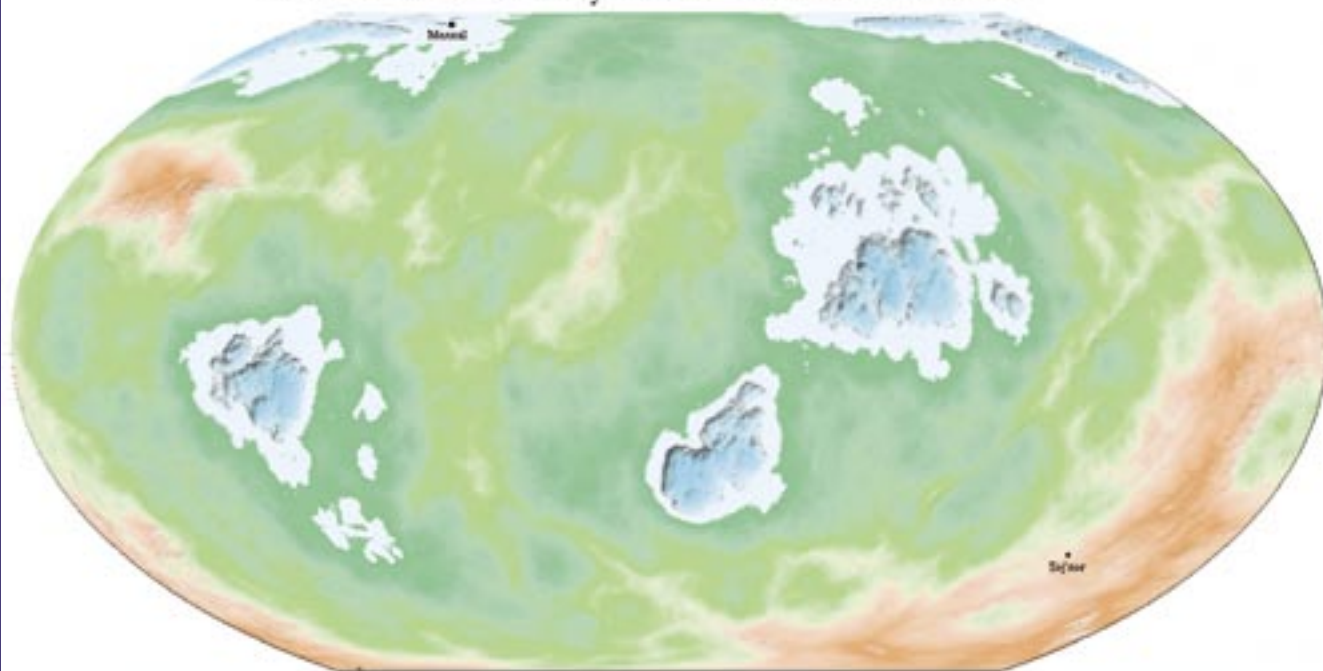
Planetary Notes: Minbar is the homeworld of the Minbari Federation. A heavy world with a crust composed predominantly of crystalline deposits, most of the architecture and building materials are gleaned directly from crystal via cutting lasers and industrial cutting equipment. Most Minbar cities are constructed of shaped crystal and benefit from gravitational and solar technology for heat, power, and transportation.

No planet in the Federation is more important to the Minbari people than Minbar. While many races have populated other worlds to the point of surviving or thriving after the loss of their homeworld, the Minbari would be shattered as a culture without Minbar. During the first Great War involving the Minbari, the Shadows did not push their attack on this world because of their philosophy of striking the edges of a culture before tearing out its heart. This may have cost them their victory, as without Minbar, the Minbari would likely have lost their will to fight and been easily routed.

'Our souls belong to Minbar. We sing within these crystal spires. If we are all to come together in the place where no shadows fall, the light that sanctifies that holy place must surely be the radiance that sweeps across the plains of our homeland when the sun crests each morning over the mountains of Alniu.'

-Henneir, First Speaker of the High Council and Friend to Valen

Davala Than - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 44,000 miles

Water Percentage: 9%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 8 degrees F.

Planet: Davala Than

Climate: Frigid, planet-wide arctic conditions

Weather average: Mild (40%), Light Storms (winter) 35%, Severe Storms (winter) 25%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No indigenous life

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Mannal (capital), Soj'nor

Population: 17,000 (8,800 in Mannal, 8,200 in Soj'nor)

Planetary Notes: The water resources of Davala Than are among the purest in the Federation and make up the chief export of the planet and the primary reason for its use as a colony world. Considered a major colony only because of the importance of its water to other colony worlds unable to produce their own, Davala Than is an inhospitable planet in every region except the sheltered valley of Soj'nor. Here, geothermal heat provides a tropical microcosm and allows colonists to maintain a productive agricultural center that grows food for many other Minbari worlds.

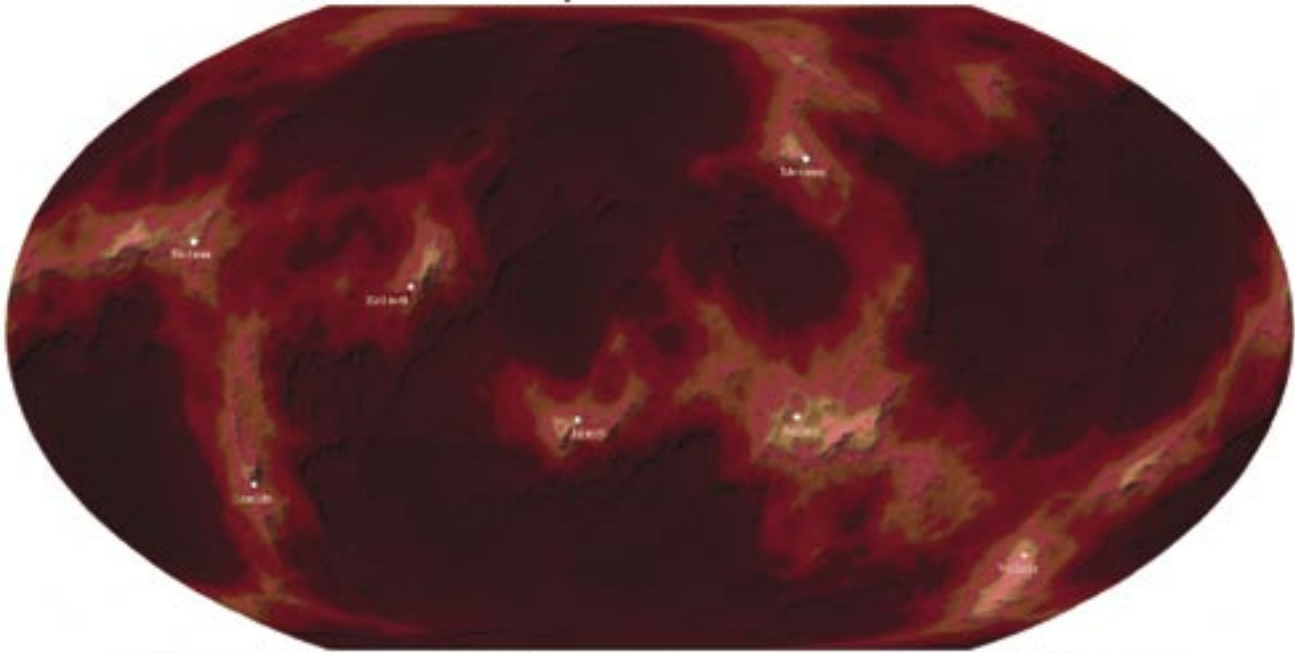
Davala Than was an answered prayer for the Minbari, as it was found at a time when fresh water supplies for the Federation were running low and the extended exploration

fleet was overreaching its resources to synthesize it during long journeys. The biological needs of the Minbari and the requirements of their ships are such that many of the impurities other races can tolerate in their diet and industrial consumption cannot be tolerated for long. The pure sources found on Davala Than effectively saved the exploration efforts of the Minbari and ensured that the Federation could prosper and grow to its current size.

'Ice mining is more dangerous that anyone realizes. Unlike stone, which tends to be one solid piece, ice can form in uneven sheets with divisions so fine that they cannot be seen on any sensor. Only when the lasers are cycling and the ice falls away into a sudden pit of razor edged plates do they reveal themselves and by them, it is far too late. For the want of water, we often pay its cost in blood.'

-Gelroon, worker caste Thermological Engineer

Drala Toth - Colony World- Minbari Federation



Circumference: 31,500 miles

Water Percentage: 13%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 50 degrees F.

Planet: Drala Toth

Climate: Stilled atmosphere

Weather average: Extremely rare storms (wind) <.5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No indigenous surface life, fungal subterranean ecosystem

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Kel'noth (capital), Nedaan, Ianolde, Ia'noth, Mezanor, Jaelnor, Velkeer (trading port)

Population: 150,000 (58,000 in Kel'noth, 40,000 in Velkeer, remainder are transient between other cities.)

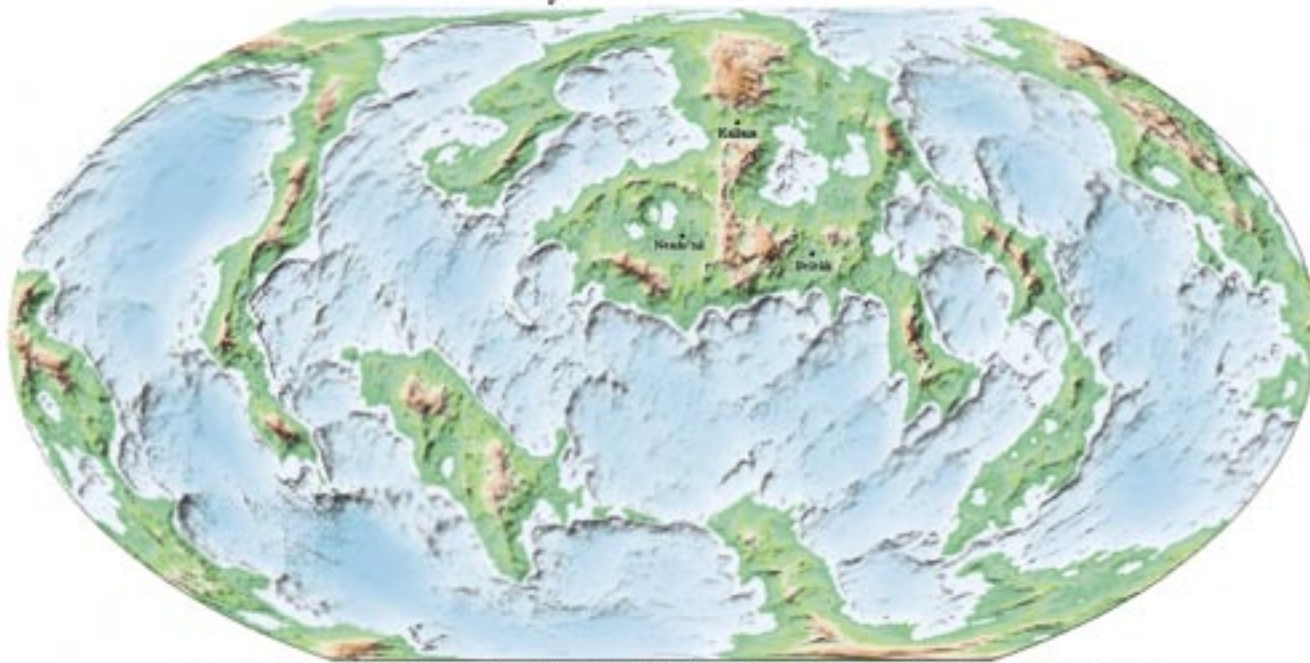
Planetary Notes: The red world of Drala Toth is a rarity for the Minbari, who normally only colonize standard terrestrial bodies with a resemblance to Minbar. Drala Toth's contribution to the Federation comes in three parts. One, it has a tactical significance as the gateway world to Trigati and must therefore be defended. Two, the high ferric compounds that give the world its vermilion colouration are in such abundance that mining them is extremely easy. The third benefit Drala Toth provides for the Minbari is found below the surface; many of the algae and other fungi that grow in the sprawling cavern complexes beneath the world's red deserts are surprisingly nutritious and can be harvested in great abundance.

Drala Toth does not look like it from the outside, but its value to the Minbari is expressed in the seven colony settlements that dot its unforgiving and bleak landscape. The atmosphere of Drala Toth is highly poisonous, requiring extensive habitation equipment to keep the Minbari presence on this world viable, but the expense is worth the mining and agricultural wealth this scarlet jewel in the rough represents. Even if the planet itself was of no importance, the system around it is the nearest point to Trigati, Minbar's most extensive and valuable shipyard world. An armada consisting of three full fleets orbit Drala Toth at all times, ready to respond to calls of intervention from any sector of nearby space.

'At night, when the suns set over Drala Toth, the cooling rocks overhead cause these caverns to sing. It unnerves new teams sent into the caves during a harvest, but for those of us who have been here a while, the sound can be oddly comforting. We do not bother with shift clocks any more. When the planet sings to us, we know it is time to change out work crews.'

-Olroon, worker caste Horticulturist

Eshar - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 18,900 miles Water Percentage: 68% Equatorial Mean Temperature: 88 degrees F.

Planet: Eshar

Climate: Temperate, slightly caustic

Weather average: Mild (10%), Light Storms (wind) 55%, Severe Storms (wind) 30%, Severe Storms (rain) 5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No indigenous life

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Kallain (capital), Nendo'tal, Bellek

Population: 430,000 (270,000 in Kallain, 120,000 in Nendo'tal, 40,000 in Bellek)

Planetary Notes: Eshar is a major colony world with three large domed cities dominated by a central space port. Used almost exclusively for mining of fuel and minerals, Eshar's harsh climate and acidic soil base leave it suitable for little else. All three colony cities are connected through a high-speed transit system built in the planet's extensive cavern network. Eshar supplies a major percentage of the Minbari Federation's Quantum-40 requirements.

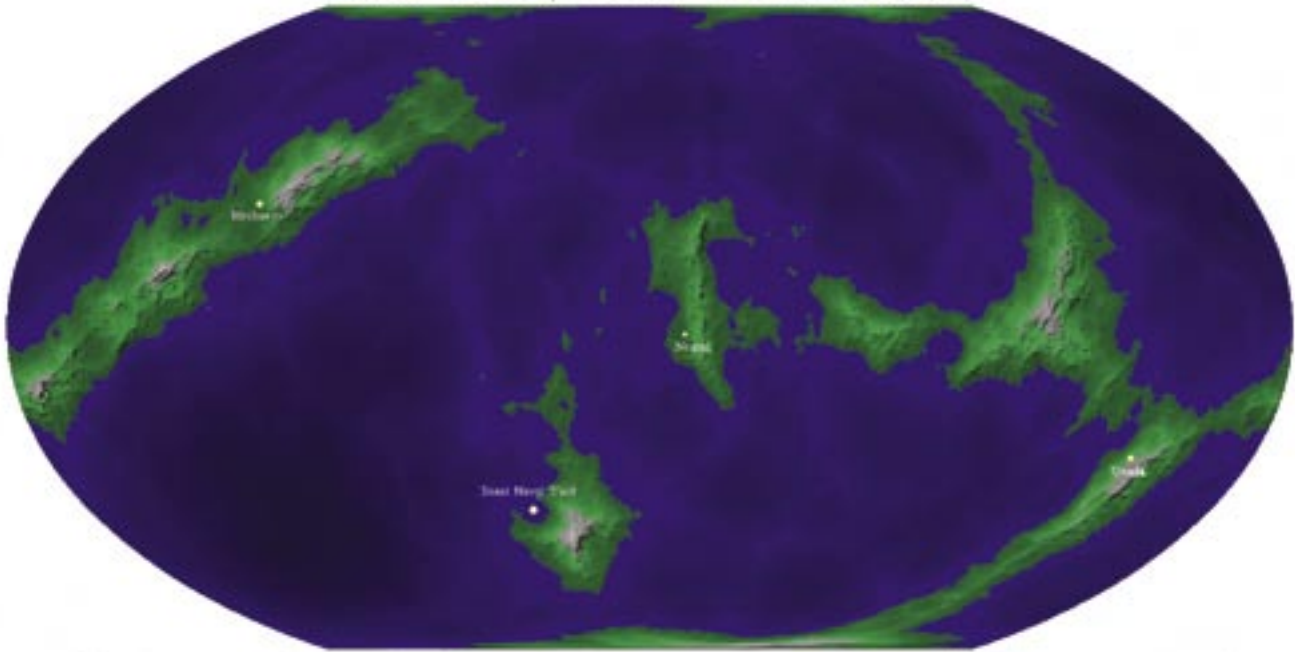
Eshar is to the Minbari's Quantum-40 production what Davala Than is to their supply of fresh water. While the Minbari mine the fuel on many other worlds, Eshar is their primary supplier and without it, they would have a difficult

time once their considerable stockpiles were depleted. As such, Eshar warrants considerable fleet attention and always has at least two planetary defence squadrons in orbit and a division or more of ground defenders around the production facilities themselves. The caverns of Eshar are also extremely valuable as their mineral and heavy ores are easily mined in these areas. Despite their worth to the Federation as a source of metal and supplemental crystal for starship construction, they are not as irreplaceable as the Quantum-40 refineries.

'Duty over Eshar is not as active as some might think. We have not seen combat in the heavens over this planet since the time of Valen, but that has not dulled the edge of our blades. We know that what we guard is the lifeblood of our fleet, and we remain accordingly vigilant. The stars must have mercy for any who try to strike at us here, because as the memory of Neroon be my witness, we will not!'

-Kelsan, Fire Wings clan Nial pilot, 2nd Dorfala Fleet

Nocalo - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 20,500 miles

Water Percentage: 82%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 79 degrees F.

Planet: Nocalo

Climate: Temperate, warmer towards equator, arctic at poles

Weather average: Mild (40%), Light Storms (mixed) 25%, Severe Storms (mixed) 20%, Severe Storms (wind) 15%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, numerous flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Nestai (capital), Meshan'ro, Onada

Notable Installations: Senat Naval Yards (naval vessel and aircraft construction centre)

Population: 325,000 (200,000 in Nestai, 90,000 in Meshan'ro, 20,000 in Onada)

Planetary Notes: The planet is extremely similar in climate and mineral composition to Earth in its pre-Jurassic period. Indigenous lifeforms can be extremely hostile at times, but the value of the world as an agricultural and construction base outweighs the risk of continued settlement. The Nocalo system orbits a minor pulsar, making hyperspace travel spinward towards Norsa very dangerous. Dense atmospheric layers buffer the surface of Nocalo from the radiation of its volatile sun.

Nocalo is predominantly settled by the worker caste, with a notable presence of the other castes in only two locations. The warrior caste owns and maintains the shipyard at Senat, though worker caste Minbari still provide the majority of the population there as its working personnel. The city of Onada is a religious caste community; the population of that colony operates a massive arboretum containing specimens of plant and animal life from a dozen other worlds. This arboretum is considered a sacred place, a shrine to the ideal of preserving life in all its myriad forms.

'Gazing upon the central column of the Onada gardens, one cannot help but see the many species of vine and flower growing around it, each a transplant from another world, and draw the obvious analogy between it and a project just as grand in scope – Babylon 5. Just as the Minbari have brought life from many planets to exist in peace here, it is our duty and our unique honour to do so there.'

-Ambassador Jeffrey Sinclair in his second report to EarthDome following his reassignment to Minbar

Pagatic - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 37,500 miles

Water Percentage: 72%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 83 degrees F.

Planet: Pagati

Climate: Temperate to tropical, warmer towards equator, mild arctic at poles

Weather average: Mild (30%), Light Storms (mixed) 35%, Severe Storms (mixed) 25%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, numerous flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Beshanor (capital), Tilnati Platform, Galshan Platform

Notable Installations: Haalnor Mining Complex (heavy ice/metals), Shalshin Preserve (genetic research)

Population: 425,000 (250,000 in Beshanor, 80,000 on each platform, 60,000 at Haalnor, remainder are transient personnel working terraforming projects or stationed at the Preserve.)

Planetary Notes: Pagati is an island world that at first glance would seem to be a major water resource for the Federation. Unfortunately, the planet's hydrosphere contains a harmful microbe that is difficult and costly to filter in sufficient quantities to make such a process cost-effective. As such, Pagati is primarily a colony world dedicated to scientific endeavors and mining. A major terraforming project has been initiated to introduce a retro microbe into the hydrosphere of the planet in the hope of

exterminating the one factor keeping this stormy planet from being a bountiful source of water.

Pagati has some of the worst storms seen on an inhabitable planet in the Minbari Federation. The colonies on this world are built either under shelter domes or within subterranean shelters to weather the harsh winds and pounding rain than can seemingly come from nowhere virtually anywhere on the planet. The source of these chaotic weather conditions can be found in the unusually strong magnetic fields that surround Pagati, some of which directly interfere with each other on an almost constant basis. This interaction can produce dazzling displays of energy in the night sky over certain parts of Pagati, but they can also play havoc with planetary sensors and ships that try to land during one of the planet's 'colour storms'.

'Nights on Pagati are either beautiful or terrifying, sometimes both. There is no sight in the universe to compare with a Pagati sunset rimmed in coruscating bands of green and violet while all around, lightning peals down like the wrath of angry gods.'

-Mashan, religious caste liaison to the Shalshin Preserve facility

Ralafa - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 52,400 miles Water Percentage: 26% Equatorial Mean Temperature: 77 degrees F

Planet: Ralafa

Climate: Temperate to tropical

Weather average: Mild (50%), Light Storms (mixed) 35%, Severe Storms (mixed) 10%, Severe Storms (aquatic) 5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, numerous flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Dinatri'el (capital), Elgath, Galdanor

Notable Installations: Shair'nal (deep ocean metallurgical refinery)

Population: 285,000 (200,000 in Dinatri'el, 50,000 in Elgath, 20,000 in Galdanor, 15,000 in Shair'nal)

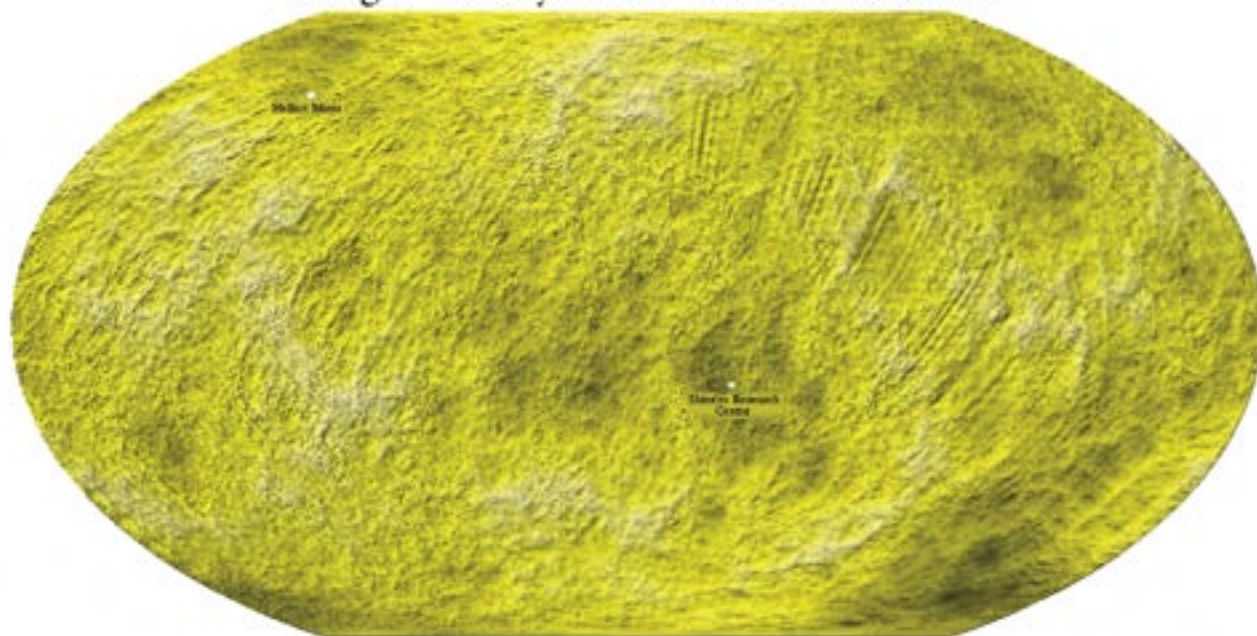
Planetary Notes: Ralafa is a massive planet with a correspondingly heavy gravity field and atmosphere. The oceanic crater that Shair'nal is constructed in is the deepest and largest such crater known in the Federation. The mountain peak that serves as the shell of the Dinatri'el colony city is 48,000 feet above sea level, making it the tallest mountain in Minbari space. The oceans and lakes of Ralafa are highly saline, making refinement of drinking water a constant concern and drain on the world's energy resources.

The primary reason for the Minbari habitation of Ralafa is the oceanic crater of Kaldoon. At the base of this incredibly deep area is the metal refinery of Shair'nal. The pressures that exist in Kaldoon are so vast, the metal produced there is harder than any other substance the Minbari can produce. This metal forms the basis of the Minbari's shipbuilding and construction industry, a vital link in the chain of technology that makes their vessels superior to any other common craft in the galaxy. Ralafan steel is also used for other high-pressure or tensile projects, such as the construction of fighting pikes and orbital platforms.

'One of the most challenging things about serving as an escort to the Hayn'sha'ir of Ralafa is the yearly pilgrimage we must make to find the shrine of Ralafa during his holy day. The gravity of the world, combined with the cleverness of Ralafa's penitents in hiding it from basic sensor sweeps, makes my job so much harder than it needs to be.'

-Yelneir, warrior caste Guardian to Malroon, the Hayn'sha'ir of Ralafa

Shengol - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 14,250 miles

Water Percentage: <1%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 4 degrees F.

Planet: Shengol

Climate: Frozen, no weather variations

Weather average: Calm (45%), Light Storms (magnetic) (40%), Severe Storms (magnetic) 15%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No indigenous life

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: None

Notable Installations: Helliot Mines (sulfur, minerals), Shien'ro Research Centre (chemistry/high energy)

Population: 2,000 (1,200 in Shien'ro, 800 in Helliot)

Planetary Notes: Shengol is the most inhospitable world the Minbari have ever colonized. From its highly chlorinated atmosphere to its near lack of any appreciable hydrosphere, the planet is a dusty, sulfur covered rock orbiting too far away from its white dwarf sun to ever support any form of life. Its high mineral content is perfect for mining and its barren landscape is ideal for high energy and chemical weapon testing.

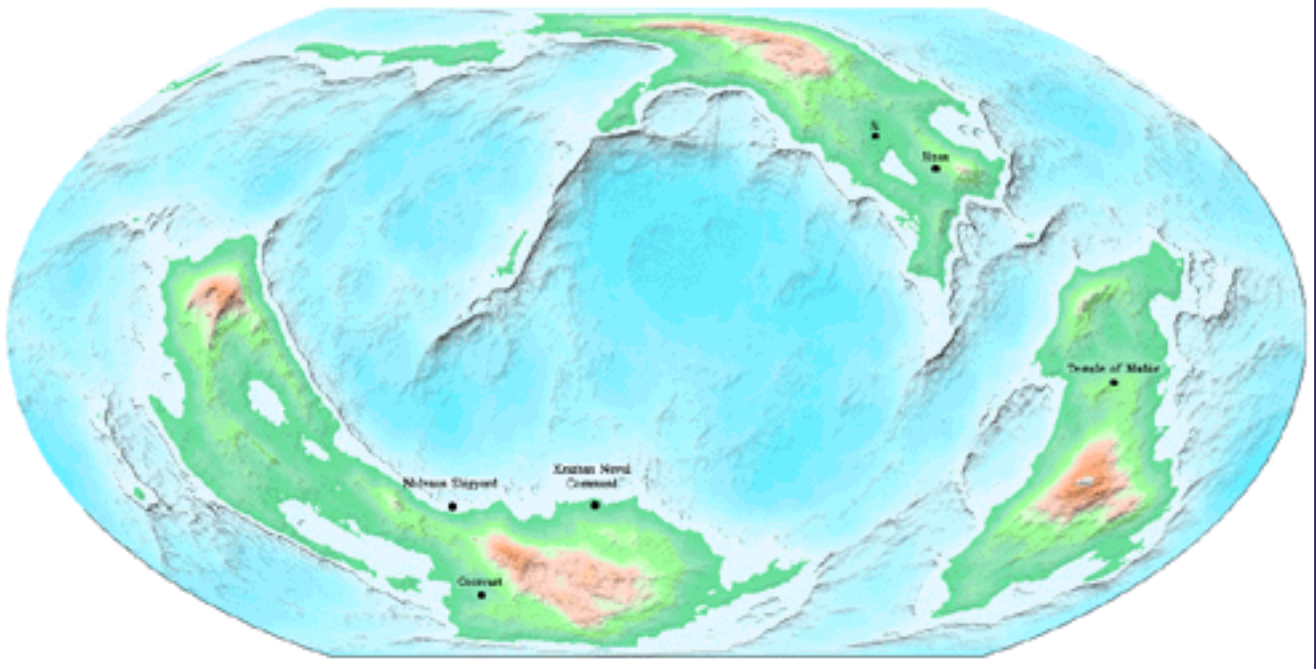
The warrior caste is in ostensible control of Shengol because of its use in weapons testing and its relative isolation from the rest of the Federation. Numerous areas

of Shengol have felt the power of Minbari orbital and ship-based planetary bombardment fire and have the massive craters and land scars to prove it. Members of the Worker caste staff both of the complexes on Shengol, turning out chemicals and new coherent energy technologies at a slow but steady rate. Because nothing unique is found on this planet and the research done here could be duplicated elsewhere, the true value of Shengol to the Minbari military remains its effectiveness as a target.

'Service to the military is an honour, though I do wish I could be reassigned to Minbar or another world in the Federation that does not get strafed by Sharlin cruisers every few days. The noise is one thing, but someday their weapons are going to punch through the dense crust of this dead world. We have numerous spectrographic and tectonic readings indicating this, but the Alyt in charge of the training fleet in our sector refuses to pay them any attention.'

-Lendaan, Engineer Administrata

Solta Gan - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 29,200 miles

Water Percentage: 80%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 78 degrees F.

Planet: Solta Gan

Climate: Temperate, warmer towards equator, arctic at poles

Weather average: Mild (60%), Light Storms (mixed) 20%, Severe Storms (mixed) 10%, Severe Storms (wind) 10%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, numerous flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Corroust (capital), Ji, Ji'san

Notable Installations: Nolvaan Shipyards (naval), Keishan Naval Command (military base, headquarters of the Minbari Navy), Temple of Nadiir

Population: 425,000 (180,000 in Corroust, 160,000 in Keishan and the Nolvaan Shipyards, 60,000 in Ji, 18,000 in Ji'san, 7,000 at the Temple of Nadiir)

Planetary Notes: Though Solta Gan has perfectly viable land masses, most of its resources and development have been in its hydrosphere. Though particulate levels keep the waters of Solta Gan from being optimal for water siphoning, they are more than suitable for the shipbuilding industry that had flourished here. Solta Gan's wide range of aquatic and sub aquatic environments make it the idea world for naval training. The planet's clear atmosphere is well suited for the constant transmissions that emanate

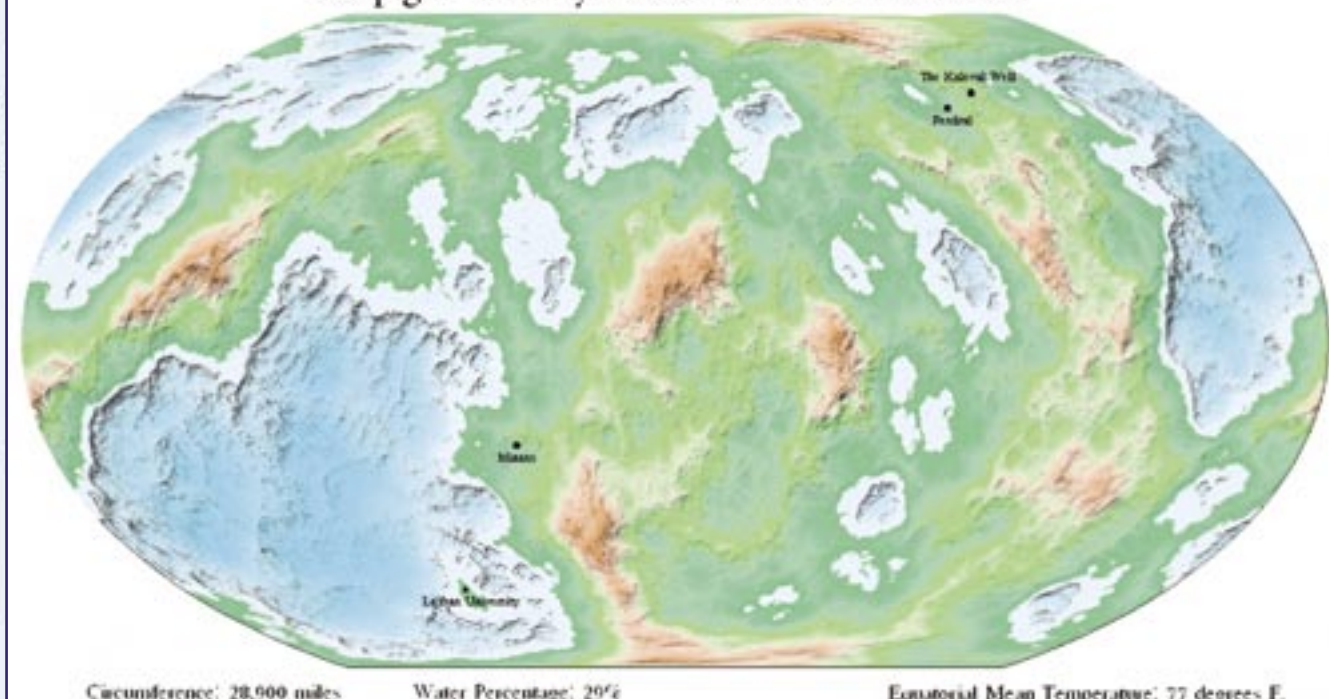
from the Keishan military base and the archives library in the temple of Nadiir.

Visitors to Solta Gan and newly arrived personnel that have never been off Minbar are usually amazed at the abundance of water on this world. Filtration makes this resource suitable for drinking, though most of the Federation gets its water from ice mining worlds in other sectors. The real value of Solta Gan is as a headquarters for the Minbari military's Naval branch, though many Minbari feel the most precious asset of the planet is the lonely temple of Nadiir on the continent of Elnan. The facilities here, notably the Roll of Tears, are a cultural treasure and the goal of countless Minbari pilgrimages over the centuries.

'As part of our training regimen, every student must spend a month with the naval officers at Keishan learning to swim and operate watercraft. We also spend three months in classes on emotional control taught by the acolytes at the temple of Nadiir. This just emphasizes the central truth in our education; the body is important, but the heart that drives it must be its master.'

-Gerrard Irons, Human Anla'shok trainee

Sorpigal - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 28,000 miles

Water Percentage: 20%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 77 degrees F

Planet: Sorpigal

Climate: Temperate, warmer towards equator, arctic at poles

Weather average: Mild (50%), Light Storms (mixed) 25%, Severe Storms (mixed) 15%, Severe Storms (wind) 10%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, numerous flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Minano (capital), Fendral

Notable Installations: The Kaloval Well (geothermal anomaly), Le'than University (shrine and education centre)

Population: 22,000 (12,000 in Minano, 8,000 in Fendral, 1,500 at the Le'than University, 500 personnel manning the Kaloval installation).

Planetary Notes: To all outward appearances, Sorpigal is the kind of world the Minbari would turn into a major colony planet. Unfortunately, the world suffers from a thinner than average crust and a volatile molten core of heavy metals and liquid silicates. This causes planetary instability and tectonic activity is a much wider area of Sorpigal's land mass and oceanic zones than is typical for a world of its size and geological class. The Kaloval Well is a natural shaft of hardened stone that penetrates the crust and mantle. Occasionally, geysers of molten minerals

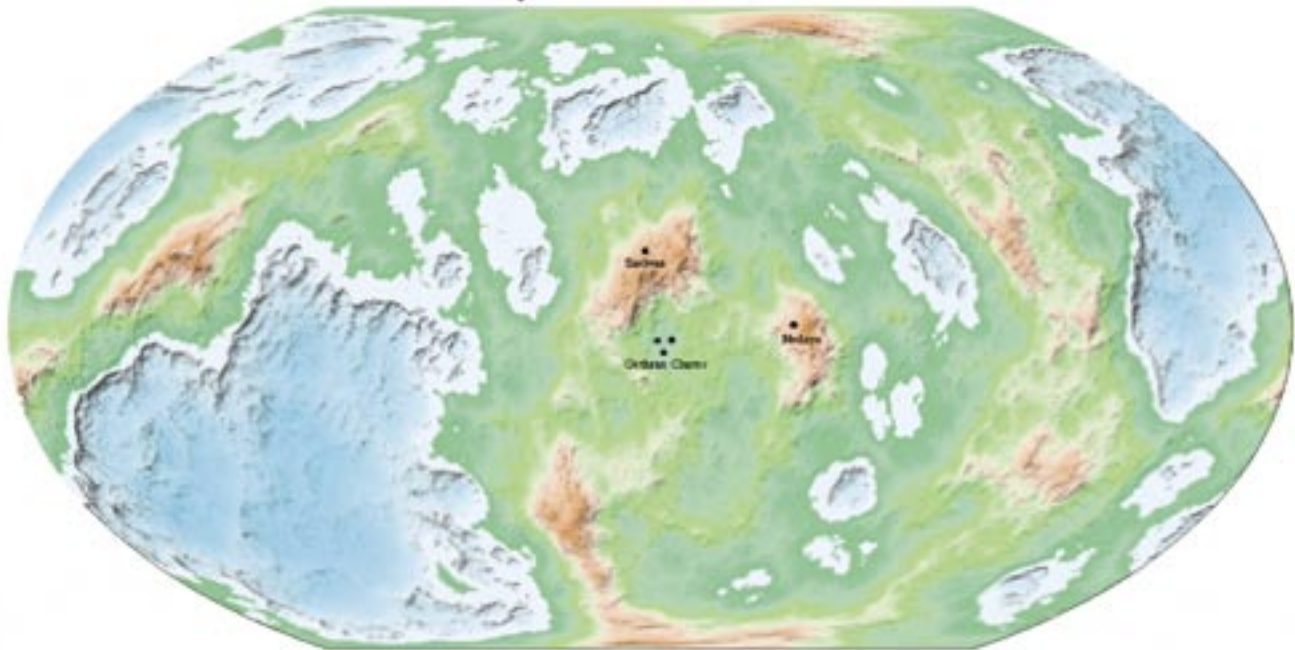
erupt through the well and are drained off into foundries for refinement into useful materials.

The world of Sorpigal is too unstable for the Minbari Federation to devote the time and resources required to set it up as a major colony. In all likelihood, Sorpigal would not be used as a colony planet at all if its flaws had been known before its initial settlement, but the university-temple of Le'than is far too important to abandon and too large a complex to move. As such, the occasional dangers of earthquakes and volcanic eruption are endured by those who live and work on Sorpigal out of a sense of fierce pride in the value of their efforts here.

'The halls of the university are quiet these days. In previous years, there were thousands of students here, but as the tremors grow worse, many of our pupils find themselves better served with correspondence courses through our galactic network. I understand their reluctance in coming here, but I cannot help thinking that something is lost when a student is not willing to risk themselves for the betterment of their minds.'

-Teghann, Instructor Prime of Le'than University

Tala - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 27,800 miles

Water Percentage: 35%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 82 degrees F.

Planet: Tala

Climate: Warm, high tropical towards equator, no appreciable arctic regions

Weather average: Mild (30%), Light Storms (mixed) 25%, Severe Storms (mixed) 25%, Severe Storms (wind) 20%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, numerous flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Saelvan, Nedayn, Gethran Cluster (separated capital)

Population: 85,000 (42,000 in the Gethran Cluster settlements, 28,000 in Saelvan, 15,000 in Nethran)

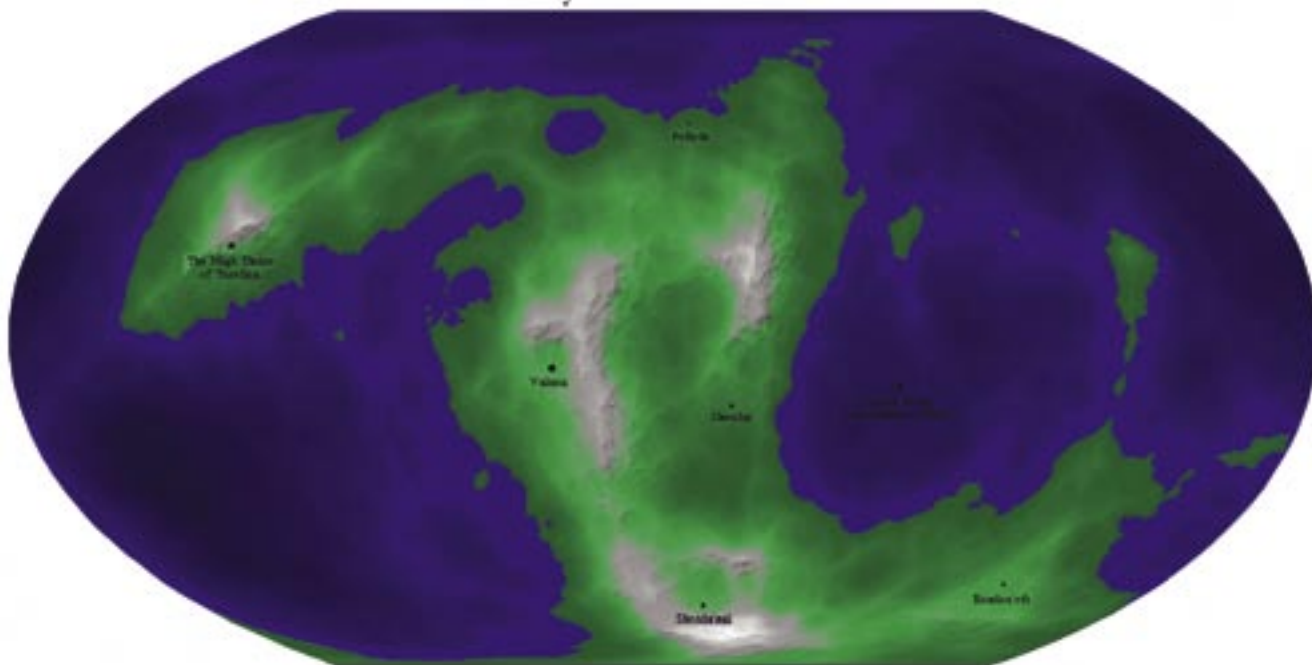
Planetary Notes: Tala is too warm to be built up as a major colony world, but its tactical position in the Federation ensures its place as a valued Minbari planet. Tala, one of the earliest settled worlds in the Federation, suffered a caste conflict shortly after the city Gethran was founded and while no one was killed, the settlement had to be divided to prevent further violence. After Valen restructured the castes, the Gethran cluster remained mostly because it was still a functional set of structures and the population of the settlement was not high enough to warrant additional construction.

A valuable source of radioactive minerals mined in two of the planet's prominent mountain ranges, Tala is simply too warm and humid to be considered anything more than a minor world of the Federation. Even so, Tala has a very large fleet presence mostly due to the temporary training camps set up by the Minbari military's infantry division. These camps, which have no set location so as to take advantage of the planet's uniquely predicable but often violent weather patterns, high temperatures, and varied geographical features, are one of the most effective ways the military has to prepare its troops for the conditions found on alien worlds.

'In many ways, I prefer the cluster style of Gethran. While there is no need for the castes to live apart, the isolation does allow for each caste to create a private environment based on its own traditions, history, and clan heritage. In our encampment, we get away from all of the trappings the religious caste seems so bent of surrounding themselves with and we maintain separation from constant warrior rhetoric. On Tala more than anywhere else, we can actually get some work done in peace.'

-Vedaan, Nureet Custodian

Tarellen - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 26,700 miles

Water Percentage: 52%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 73 degrees F

Planet: Tarellen

Climate: Temperate, warmer towards equator, minor arctic at poles

Weather average: Mild (70%), Light Storms (mixed) 15%, Severe Storms (mixed) 15%, Severe Storms (in northern and southern latitude extremes) 25% with Mild weather reduced to an average of 60%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, limited flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Valana (capital), Shendar, Shenda'nal, Rendon'eth, Pelloth

Notable Installations: Galath Water Reclamation Plant, High Shrine of Tarellen (dedicated to Valeria).

Population: 825,000 (420,000 in Valana, 230,000 in Shendar, 120,000 in Shenda'nal, 50,000 in Rendon'eth, 18,000 in Pelloth, 4,000 assigned to the High Shrine of Tarellen, remainder is a fluctuating value of work crews manning the Galath Water Reclamation Plant).

Planetary Notes: An extremely stable world and a model colony planet, Tarellen boasts the largest continuous population of any Federation world outside of Minbar. The five mountain ranges of Tarellen are all granite and marble based. While they do not bear minerals worth mining in any great quantity, these mountains provide an

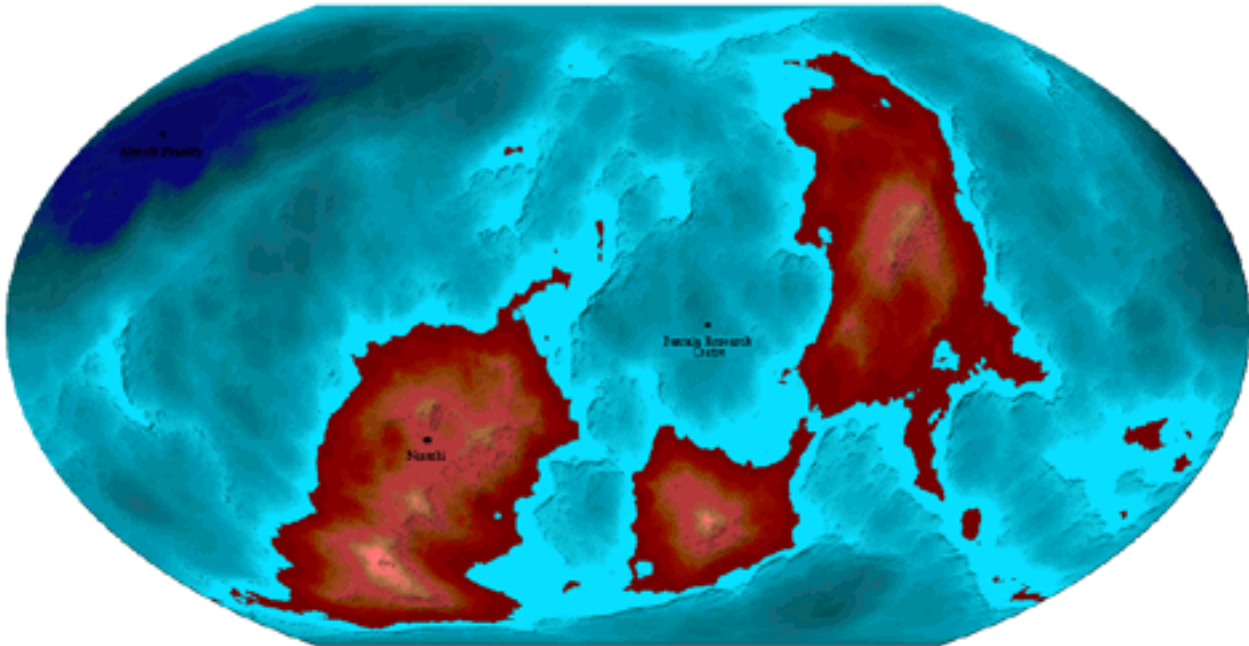
excellent source of building material for the few Minbari architectural styles that focus on stone. Suitable for detailed carving, this is illustrated most breathtakingly by the 7,000 metre tall statue of Valeria engraved in the face of Mount Daen, the mountain overlooking the High Shrine of Tarellen.

The first colony world settled by the Minbari, Tarellen is a verdant world that provides a number of natural resources used through the Federation. From the dense forests of Rendon'eth and the lumbering facilities there to the textiles factory that forms the heart of the Shendar community, Tarellen touches the lives and homes of virtually every Minbari in some way. By Grey Council decree, if something were to cause the greater population of Minbar to seek another world for residence, most would be transported to Tarellen.

'I have always held that the fit of an infantry uniform is never quite right unless it is made on Tarellen. The clothiers there have centuries of experience and the materials they use are second to none. Most do not have an opinion, but in a perfect unit, there can be no room for deviance.'

-Theneir, religious caste Infantry Shen'i

Tavalan - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 21,500 miles

Water Percentage: 82%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 74° F

Planet: Tavalan**Climate:** Temperate to cool, warmer towards equator**Weather average:** Mild (80%), Light Storms (mixed) 15%, Severe Storms (mixed) 5%**Technical level:** Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.**Native sentient race:** No sentient races, extremely limited flora and fauna**Dominant Government:** Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.**Notable Cities:** Ninashi (capital)**Notable Installations:** Alnesht Foundry (pressure metallurgy), Pantala Research Centre (genetic and biological)**Population:** 55,000 (44,000 in Ninashi (including the 5,000 devotees at the temple of Jonalla), 7,000 at the Alnesht Foundry, 4,000 serving as personnel at the Pantala Research Centre.

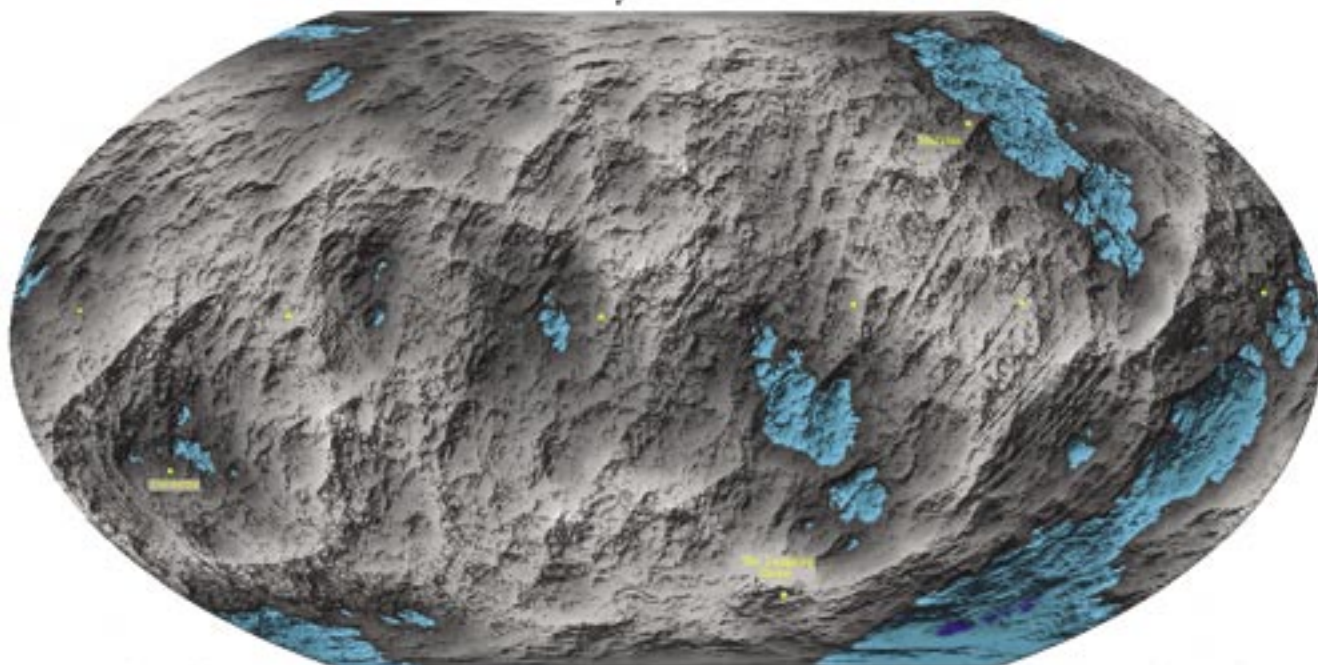
Planetary Notes: An oddity among terrestrial worlds with a high water percentage, Tavalan has an almost Mars-like tectonic composition without the extreme desert conditions normally found on ferric-rich worlds. The planet has responded extremely well to terraforming and represents one of the Minbari Federation's earliest successes with terraform experimentation. The shrine to Jonalla owes its lush gardens to these early scientific endeavors. The rest of the world has been prepared for further terraforming, but has not undergone it due to lack of interest in development of other areas of Tavalan for settlement.

Tavalan is strange to see from orbit. Its nearly clear atmosphere shows the gradations of red and blue clearly, leading many visitors to make the assumption that aside from the crimson sand of the planet's land masses, Tavalan is a hospitable world capable of sustaining life. This is only partially true. The atmosphere has been made breathable but was originally caustic and the waters are a morass of chemicals too complex to sustain Minbari life without severe filtration. Even so, Tavalan has many opportunities. The Sea of Yannal, an extremely deep region of the world's northern hemisphere ocean, offers enough pressure for a large high tensile steel facility and the complex chemical chains in the planet's hydrosphere are a wealth of research opportunities waiting to be explored.

'At Pantala, we have discovered something astounding. The basic building blocks of life are here, but they were never initiated for some reason. Our terraforming of this planet has somehow stimulated the growth of basic structures in the oceans in an amazingly short time. We have inadvertently begun the cycle of evolution on this world. A billion years from now, life may emerge from these oceans where none was before.'

-Shenneir, Narshala Geneticist

Thessin's Moon - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 8,000 miles Water Percentage: 10%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 45 degrees F.

Planet: Thessin's Moon

Climate: Cool to cold, with heat in a band around the equator

Weather average: None (95%), Light Storms (rain) >5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No indigenous life

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Dronatha (capital), Mal'shin

Notable Installations: The Laughing Shrine (dedicated to Io'shan)

Population: 35,000 (19,000 in Dronatha, >16,000 in Mal'shin, remainder are acolytes at the Laughing Shrine).

Planetary Notes: Thessin's Moon was of no importance to the planet Thessin, which held a colony of over 250,000 Minbari, until the war with the Shadows 1,000 years ago. Thessin was razed and the planet left unable to sustain life. Rather than abandon the sector, the Minbari enacted a bold and unprecedented experiment, taking sections of polar ice up to the surface of the world's moon and boring immense holes to its still molten core. The vents have provided enough heat to melt the ice and create a thin but viable atmosphere. Not well suited for a colony despite the unorthodox terraforming, Thessin's Moon remains in use primarily as a memorial for the dead planet beneath it.

Without the support of the priests of Io'shan in the Laughing Temple, Thessin's Moon might still be a lifeless rock orbiting a devastated world bereft of life. The effort to begin terraforming the planet's moon was immense and extremely costly, especially after the Great War and the drain it placed on the resources of the newly restructured Minbari. Between the petitions of the acolytes and a personal recommendation from Valen himself to begin to project, the creation of this minor colony world occurred purely out of the need of the Minbari people to create hope where there was only sorrow. In this way, Thessin's Moon remains as true a testament to the message of Io'shan as could ever exist.

'The thermal vents that provide our heat and power ring this moon with the shimmer of escaping thermal energy at all times. It is like a ghostly wall that separates its north and south hemispheres. During the day, the effect is breathtaking. Io'shan would be proud of what we have made here. Our entire world is a thing of joy and hope.'

-Valz, Telepath and Lesser Faenar of the Laughing Shrine

Trigati - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 29,900 miles Water Percentage: 80% Equatorial Mean Temperature: 80 degrees F.

Planet: Trigati

Climate: Temperate, warmer towards equator

Weather average: Mild (60%), Light Storms (mixed) 35%, Severe Storms (mixed) 5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, extremely prolific flora and fauna (reptilian)

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: None, though the Jhenzet Military Base serves as a capital

Notable Installations: Jhenzet Military Base (division coordination), Kilgatha Remote Fleet Command (fleet coordination), Hunting Zones Olan, Denat, and Methal (official unofficial training areas for fleet and infantry)

Population: 45,000 (28,000 at Jhenzet, 13,000 at Kilgatha, remainder is scattered among the hunting zones as guides, armourers, and medical personnel).

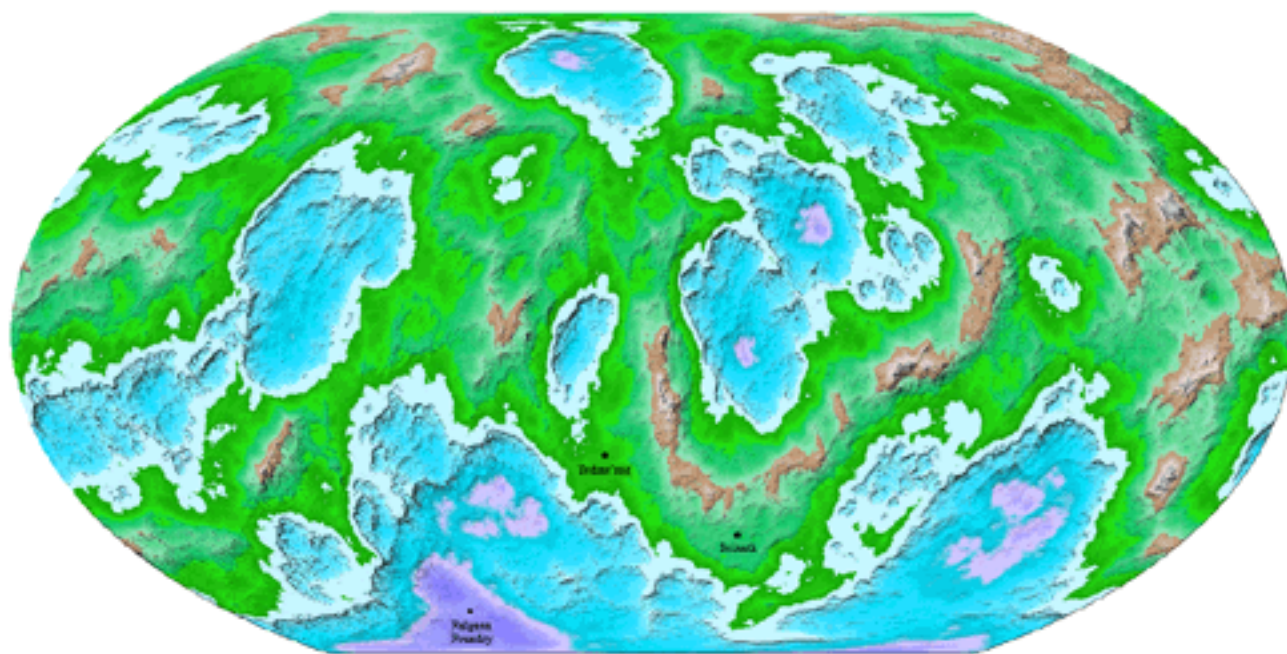
Planetary Notes: Aside from the land mass ratios and the primitive state of the flora on Trigati, this world is nearly identical in chemical and atmospheric composition to Centauri Prime as it was in its Jurassic era. Massive, predatory reptiles roam the main continents and swim in the oceans, unchecked in their evolution by any factor other than the repeated assaults placed upon them by warrior caste and military training rotations. Even so, these incursions have very little impact on the planet's almost atavistic growth rate.

Trigati is a primitive and feral world assigned directly to the warrior caste's sphere of influence. No other caste is allowed on the surface of Trigati unless they are in the service of one of the branches of the Minbari military. Considered an ideal world for combined arms practice and combat drills, the wilds of Trigati are often 'visited' large divisions of Minbari soldiers carrying heavy weapons or flying atmospheric capable fighters. These expeditions, which only occur in designated hunting zones for the safety of the troops involved, are not officially sanctioned by the Grey Council but are also not expressly forbidden. Similar attack runs are made on massive marine creatures living in Trigati's oceans by naval trainees.

'This arm? Oh, it was bitten off on Trigati. I would have bled to death, but our Shen'i made sure we were never far from a medical centre. I will never forget the beast that did it; the rest of my hulraan unit took it down for me while I was still in its mouth. The skull still sits in my cabin; it is a constant reminder to me to always watch my back.'

-Fendaal, Ilyr of the 48th Tinasht Battalion

Tro'Kact - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 31,856 miles

Water Percentage: 43%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 77 degrees F.

Planet: Tro'Kact

Climate: Temperate, warmer towards equator, no arctic regions

Weather average: Mild (70%), Light Storms (mixed) 25%, Severe Storms (mixed) 5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, abundant flora, limited fauna (predominantly insect life)

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: Tedine'nor (capital), Seinath

Notable Installations: Falgana Foundry (pressure metallurgy)

Population: 28,000 (13,000 in Tedine'nor, 8,000 in Seinath, 5,000 at the Falgana Foundry)

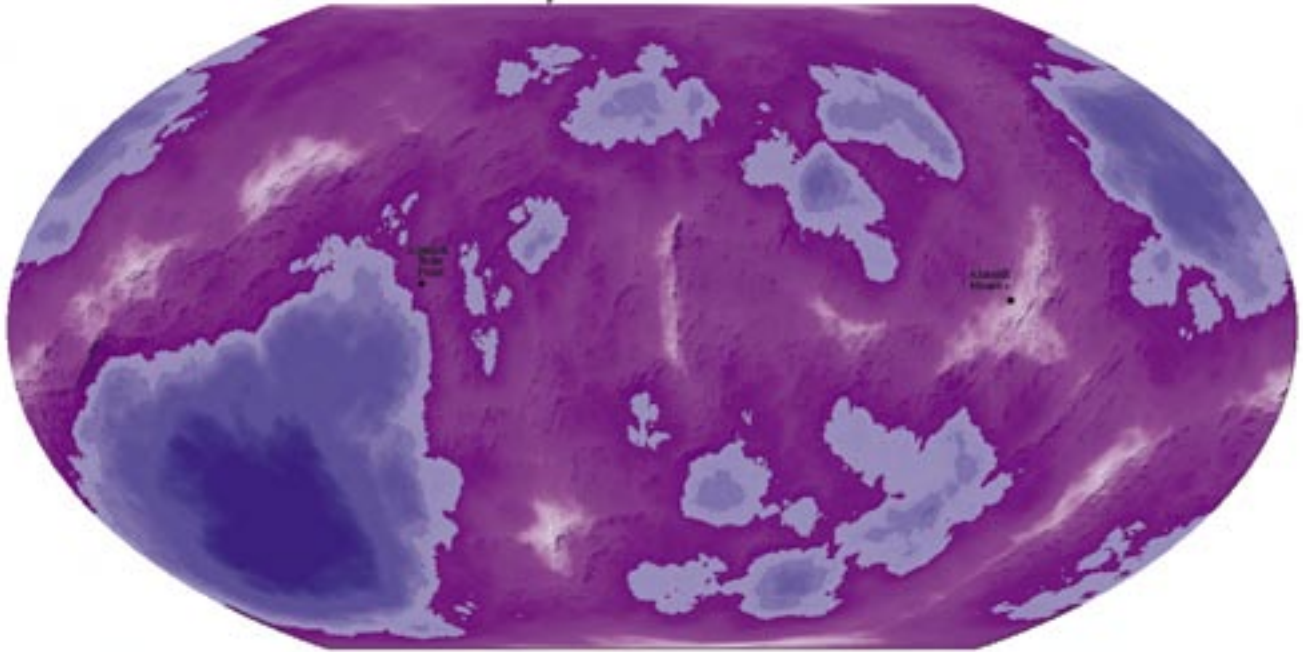
Planetary Notes: Tro'Kact is a rare planet, especially for a world that otherwise seems very habitable. It is virtually inert in a geological sense and has been since shifts in its orbit closed off the mantle and crust completely during its early developmental stages. The planet's mountain ranges and lower elevations are the result of innumerable meteor strikes during its youth, likely from the fragmentation of its moon (the probable source of its orbit shift). As such, there is little geothermal activity and the planet both enjoys and suffers from an essentially locked lithosphere.

Mining on Tro'Kact is extremely efficient as most of the minerals and elements the Minbari look for on a world are closer to the surface here than on any other planet in the Federation. Tro'Kact's stability would normally make it very attractive as a colony world, but its dense mantle and the risks inherent in attempting to bore through it into the geothermal areas the Minbari normally tap for power keep it from being financial viable as anything but a minor foundry world. This does not keep Tro'Kact from playing a major part in the overall economy of the Federation, due in no small part to its sizable orbital shipyard and the mining operations in its planetary asteroid belt that fuels its production. The Fire Swings have a very large interest in Tro'Kact as most of the Minbari fleet's fighter craft come from this world's forges.

'Though this world does not know it, it is dead. Do not let the verdant jungles and teeming insect life fool you. The planet itself cannot move, cannot grow, and without motion, it is doomed to live out the current geologic age and then wither. Unless we can break Tro'Kact's tectonic chains, it is doomed.'

Tethneir, Geologist Taskmaster and Danshar of Tro'Kact

Valusha - Colony World - Minbari Federation



Circumference: 16,800 miles

Water Percentage: 38%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 51 degrees F.

Planet: Valusha

Climate: Cool to arctic, warmer towards equator

Weather average: None (80%), Mild 15%, Light Storms (winter) 5%

Technical level: Advanced, based on developmental level of Minbar.

Native sentient race: No sentient races, extremely limited flora and fauna

Dominant Government: Ruled by Grey Council of Minbar.

Notable Cities: None

Notable Installations: Almiath stations, Monitor and Echo Point (Unique sensor grid)

Population: 700 (480 at Almiath Monitor station, 220 at Almiath Echo Point station).

Planetary Notes: Valusha has an extremely rare geological structure composed almost entirely of crystalline formations. Unlike Minbar, which has a great deal of crystal in its mantle and crust, the lithosphere of Valusha is almost entirely formed of contiguous plates of solid and weathered crystal. The harmonic sympathies created by these continental sections allow Valusha to be used as a massive crystal receiver, allowing the Monitor station and its geographically radial opposite Echo Point to interpret subtle vibrations and detect anomalies along a wide range of types for light years around the planet in all directions.

Valusha's value as a listening post without peer was the primary factor in the warrior caste's decision to place Inatrii, its greatest space station and technical achievement, in orbit on this world at the fringe of Minbari space. The 'gateway' world to the Federation, Valusha was also difficult to travel to without jump point generation technology, further adding to its tactical strengths. The destruction of Inatrii at the darkest point in the last Great War nearly ended Valusha's usefulness as a Federation world as well, but the geological damage done by the Shadows was repaired by the Vorlons as one of their gifts to the Minbari people upon the successful conclusion of the War. Most Alyt or equivalent ranking officers in the military are presented with a plaque carved of violet crystal from Valusha at their commission ceremony.

'The abilities of this planet never cease to astound me. The surface of Valusha can detect a ship's passage through normal space a parsec away, something that very few technological scanners could claim to do. Its only blind spot is hyperspace and even that reveals itself to the purple hills of this delightful world whenever jump points open.'

-Shevath, Luran Crystalshaper, Valusha Maintenance Work Force

The Worlds of the Minbari Protective

The structure of the three Minbari colony worlds of the area of space denoted as the Protective are similar enough in geological type and layout to summarize in this section. Eudu, Zendamor, and Tir are effectively military bases and are called colonies purely for diplomatic effect. Each one exists for the sole purpose of hosting a fleet of starships and watching over the four alien homeworlds in this part of space. While none of these homeworlds possess a technology level high enough to pose even a minor threat, there is always the possibility of an enemy force using them as a means of incursion into the Minbari Federation. Therefore, they also serve in a protective capacity, giving this region of space its name.

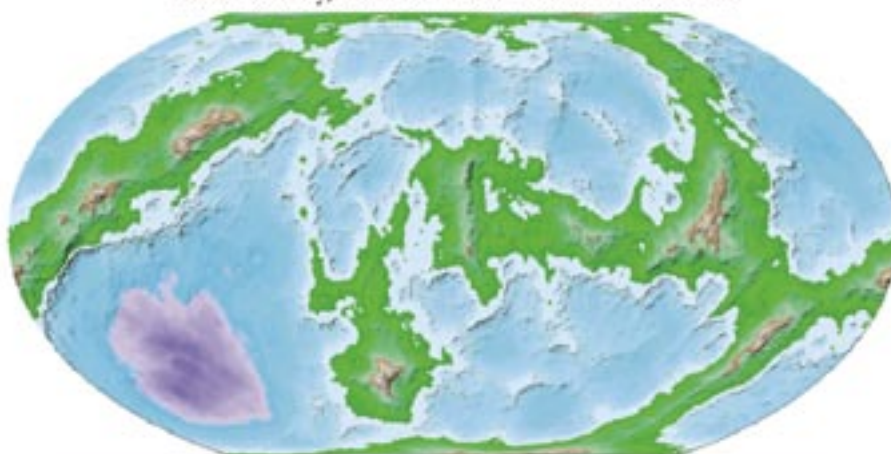
Eudu

Eudu is a pleasant, habitable planet with a mineral heavy water supply and several minable resources. Only its location in the Protective keeps Minbar from exploiting it further. Its position ensures that the Federation cannot invest too heavily in its development, as the Minbari may be forced to leave it or use it as a military outpost at any time.

Zendamor

The blood red seas of Zendamor make this planet a visceral sight from orbit. Called the Jewel Incarnadine of the Protective by the military fleets that patrol this region of space, some units go out of their way to 'get blooded' (that is, serve on or in orbit around Zendamor) as a mark of service within their division. Water from this planet is not poisonous, but it

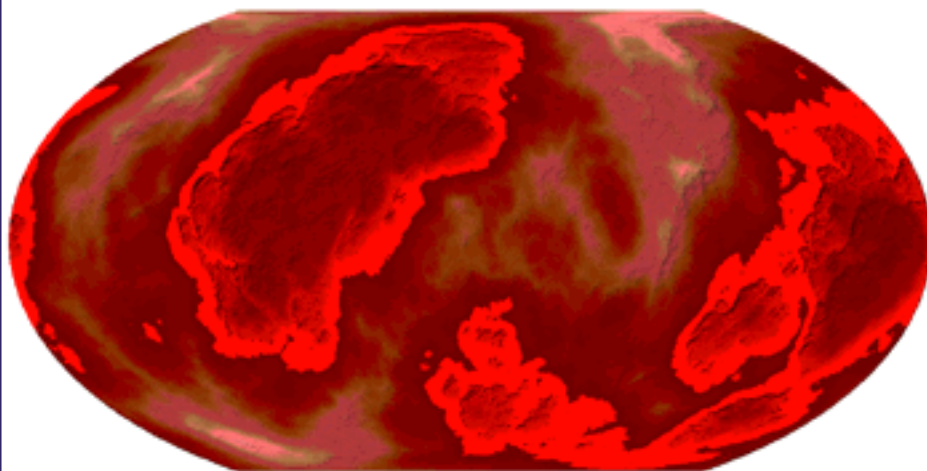
Eudu - Colony/Monitor World - Minbari Protective



Circumference: 26,500 miles Water Percentage: 76%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 78 degrees F.

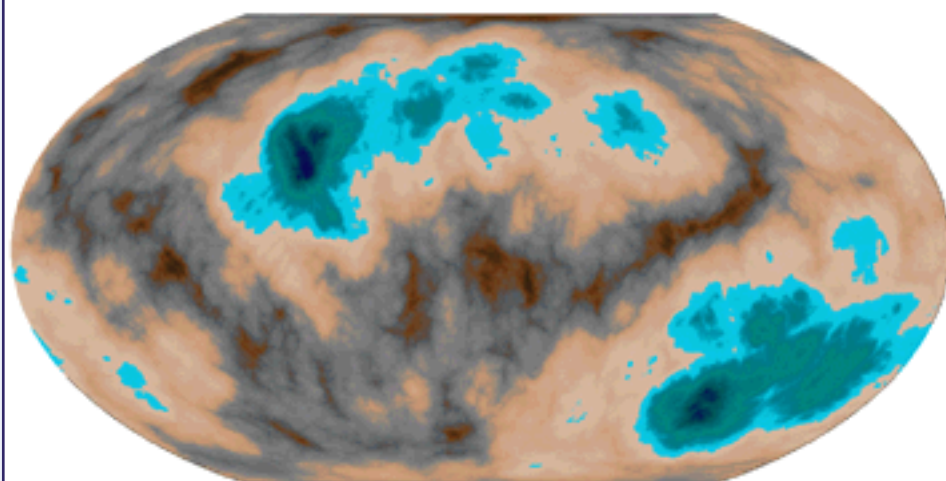
Zendamor - Colony/Monitor World - Minbari Protective



Circumference: 24,000 miles Water Percentage: 44%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 88 degrees F.

Tir - Colony/Monitor World - Minbari Protective



Circumference: 25,100 miles Water Percentage: 26%

Equatorial Mean Temperature: 68 degrees F.

is highly carbonic and can be refined into a bitter alcohol. This drink, Morwine, is favoured primarily by those who serve in this area of the Protective. Other Minbari find its taste acrid and unappealing.

Tir

The chilly world of Tir is oddly hospitable despite its thermal conditions and has a great deal of plant life to recommend it as a colony world. Suffering from the same location difficulty as Eudu, it is unlikely that Tir will ever host a major settlement of any size, but Tir's small colony does have the auspicious duty of serving as the rest and relaxation post for members of the military assigned to patrol the Protective.

'I do not mind the duty cycle that keeps me out here in the Protective. This place is the only frontier left in Minbari space that still promises the occasional battle or encounter with potentially hostile races. The Tycholans need constant surveillance and were it not for our strong presence in this quadrant, the Klathu would eventually grow too large for their system and strike out at the worlds around it.'

-Gellaan, Hiai'i aboard the Velnarth, a Neshatan gunship serving the 3rd Zendamor Fleet

Minbari Numbers in the Protective

The Minbari maintain a strong presence in the Protective mostly because of the homeworlds located there, the threat they could pose if provoked or recruited by foreign powers, and the buffer zone that this area of space represents. The other borders of Minbar space are well controlled and none of its neighbors in those directions possess sufficient firepower to threaten them or the inclination to do so. As such, the only border tactically viable for an invasion of Minbari space to enter through is directly past the Protective.

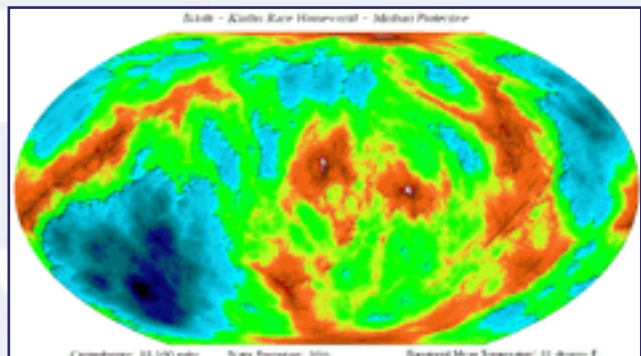
To combat this possible weakness in their defenses, the Minbari have stationed seven full fleets in the Protective. Three are stationed around Zendamor because of its position as the colony world closest to the Federation. The other four are divided evenly between Tir and Eudu. At any given time, one fleet from each base of operations in on patrol through their division of the Protective, providing a sensory and military presence in the hopes of combating

any incursion of Minbari space before an enemy can penetrate into the Federation itself.

Homeworlds in the Protective

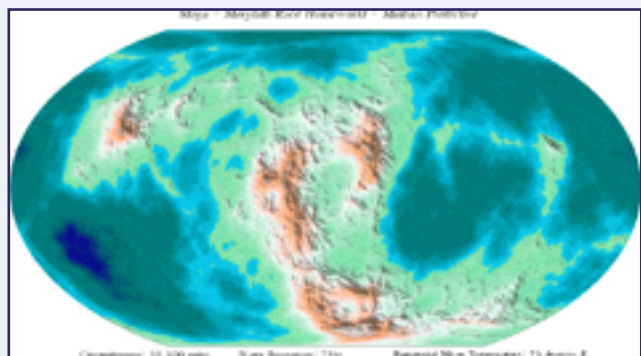
Each of the homeworlds in the Protective have a sentient species unrelated to the Minbari or each other as its dominant form of life. The technological and biological development level of each planet is widely varied, but none possess the capacity for interstellar flight or the genetic capability to create telepaths among their indigenous populations. One race, the Klathu, have the capacity to create in-system craft, but they have not discovered the secret of faster-than-light or hyperspace travel. These factors keep the races of the Protective from being a major concern to the Minbari.

Iklath



The radioactive wasteland that covers more than 50% of the surface of Iklath is a testament to the kind of mentality that dominates the Klathu. Willing to take any risk and suffer any discomfort for the improvement of their technology, the Klathu are a persevering race with great constitution, a resistance to mutation, and the moral development of hunting cats. While the Klathu are not innately evil, they are by nature callous and disaffected.

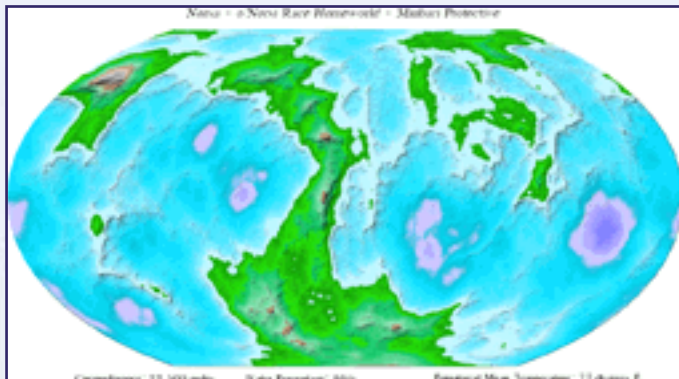
Moga



The Morglath race is a primitive, tree dwelling species only slightly evolved from the simians that share dominance of their world. Sentient by the strictest Minbari definition

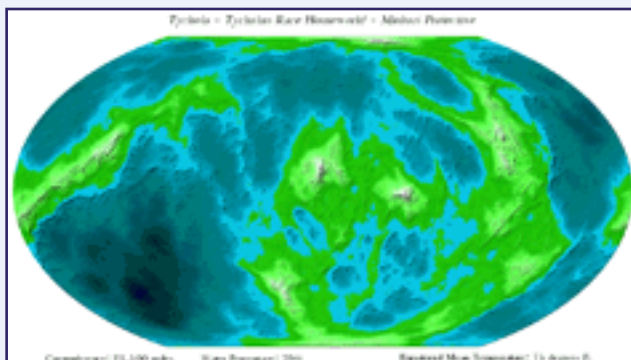
of the term, the Morglath are extremely numerous and have come a long way since making contact with their space-faring neighbors. The Morglath are extremely superstitious and view the Minbari as aspects of their world's 'spirit'.

Norsa



When the Minbari encountered the o’Norsi, they were unprepared for the violent reception they got from the race’s greatest technical achievement, long range coherent light projection and the energy sources to power it. Unwilling to enter outer space because of a cultural taboo, the o’Norsi are not poised to become a power within their own system, but the Minbari carefully watch this race’s society for any sign of this attitude changing among them. If the o’Norsi ever decide to leave their aquatic civilization and take their airships past the ionosphere, they might surpass the Klathu in system superiority within a single generation.

Tychola



The reptilian Tycholans are a sentient species with a deep, almost empathic connection to their environment and a generational tradition of mysticism involving ancestor worship and ritual consumption of various hallucinogens for the ‘visions’ they provide. The Minbari are considered gods from the stars and afforded great respect at all times from the majority of the race. A small faction of the Tycholans also considers the Minbari to be divine, but they also believe that if they can consume the physical forms of these deities, they will also ascend into the heavens.

Gamemastering in the Protective

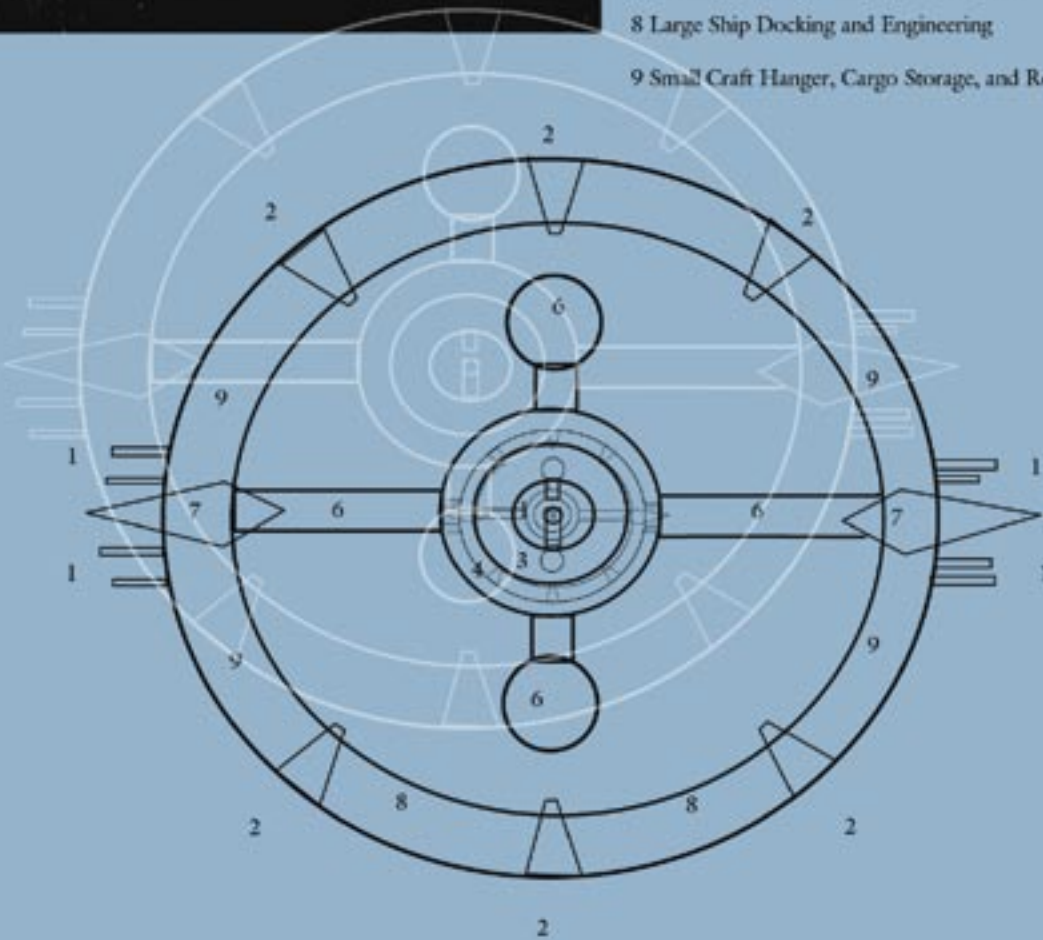
Games Masters looking for a ‘rough frontier’ feel to their games, especially those that already involve numerous Minbari characters or a story arc set in the Minbari Federation, might wish to consider an episode or series of episodes with the Protective as a backdrop. Just using the simple descriptions given here for the worlds of the Protective, plotlines could be developed for players to interact with the varied cultures and challenges that this area of space can provide. Specialized games using the people of these homeworlds as Player Character races are a possibility, but none of them are especially well-suited for a standard game in the Babylon 5 universe.





Shen'Tan Space Station Minbari Federation

- 1 : Neutron Laser Array
- 2 : Fusion Cannon
- 3: Station Command
- 4: Main Engineering and Sensor Arrays
- 5: Habitation Pods
- 6: Tram-Equipped Conduits
- 7 : Maneuvering Engines / Solar Collectors
- 8 Large Ship Docking and Engineering
- 9 Small Craft Hanger, Cargo Storage, and Repair Bays

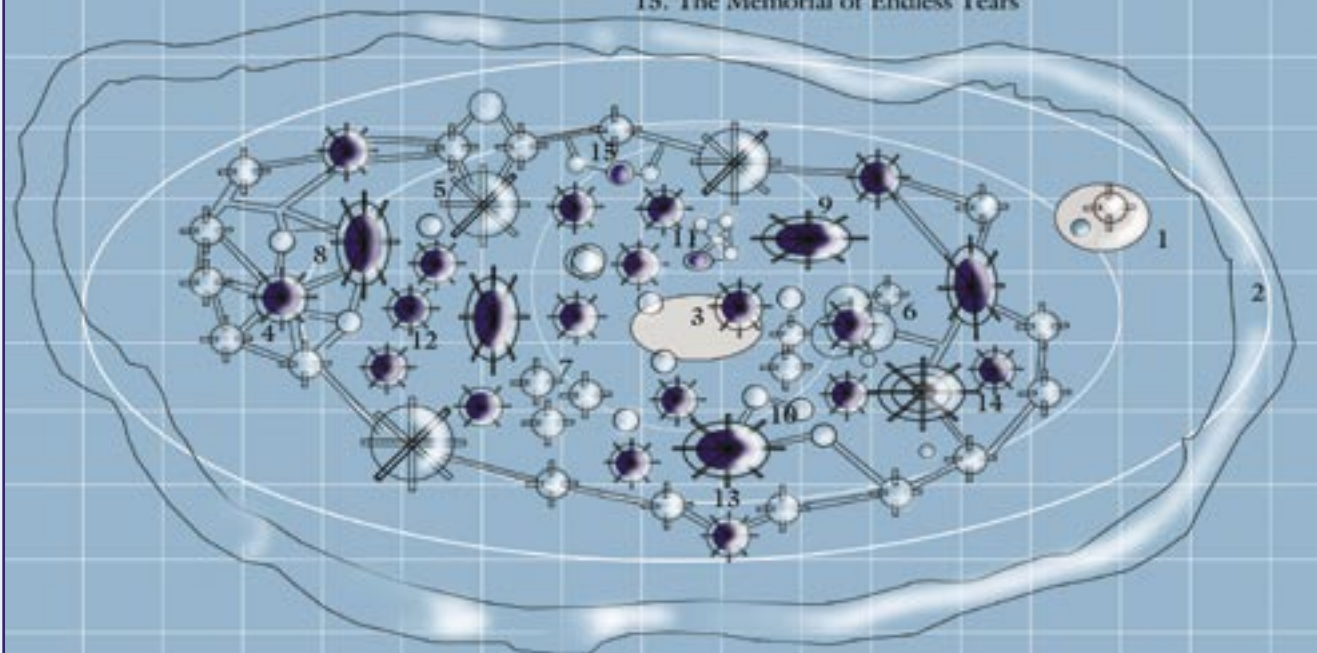


The Shen'Tan Space Station

Designed as an easily constructed, relocatable space superiority station with the firepower needed to defend an orbital arc against intrusion by enemy craft, the Shen'Tan station is also intended to provide a docking facility for small craft, a mobile base of operations, and a repair port for any ship in the Minbari fleet. Shen'tan also act as orbital colonies and are often deployed as such. Shen'Tan stations are in orbit around most Minbari Federation worlds and all three of the Protective planets maintained directly by the Minbari fleet. For more information on Shen'Tan space stations, see the Technology chapter elsewhere in this text.

Tuzanor- City of Sorrows

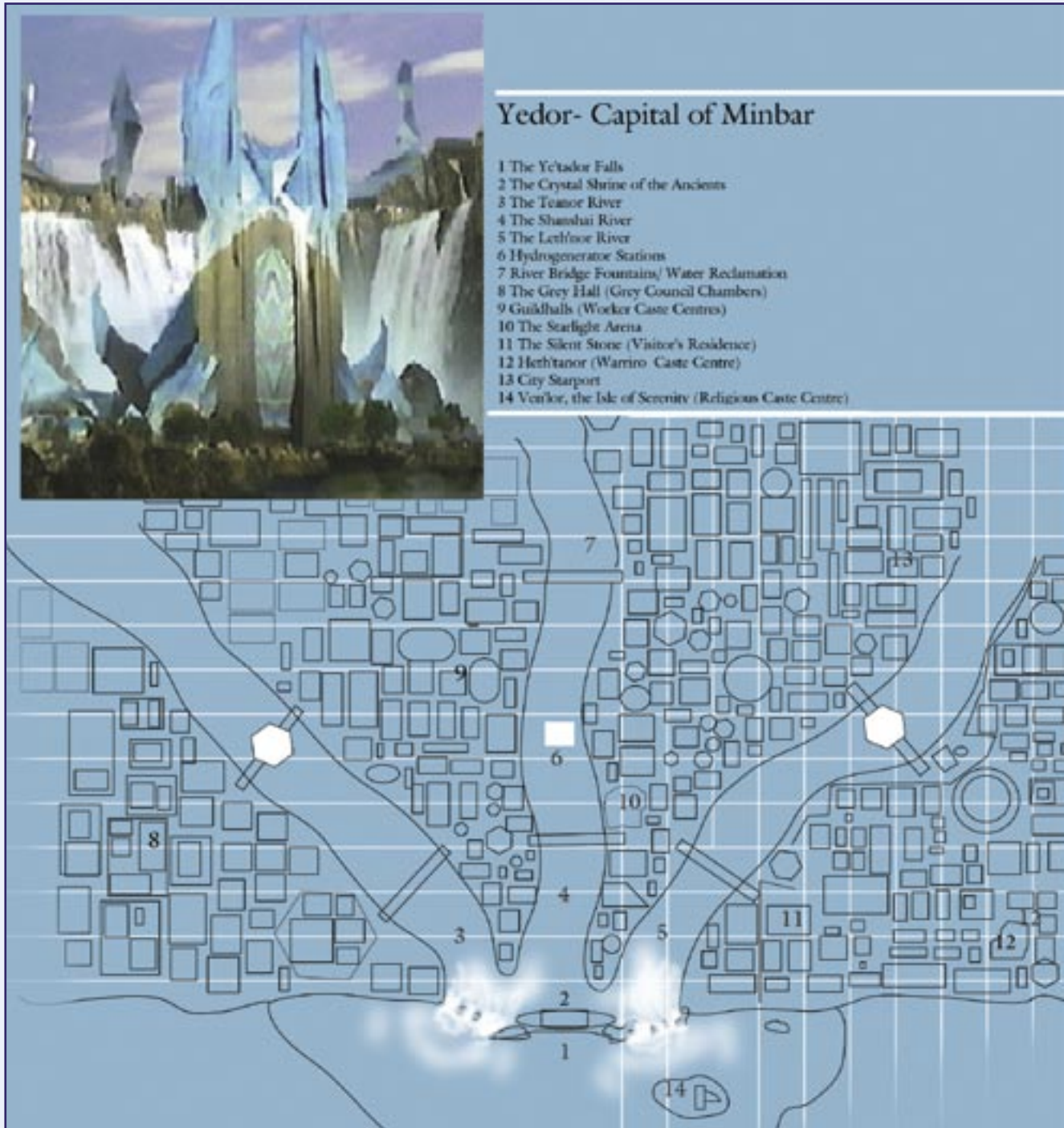
1. Minbari Monitoring Station
2. The Veil of Bright Dreams
3. Main Landing Platform
4. City Central Administration
5. Shrine of Valen (Headquarters of the Religious Caste)
6. Anla'shok Academy
7. Power Generation Towers
8. Chambers of the Grey Council
9. Military Logistics (Headquarters of the Warrior Caste)
10. Fleet Control Base
11. Water Distribution Centre
12. Residential Towers
13. Planetary Neutron Laser Battery
14. Civil Engineering (Headquarters of the Worker Caste)
15. The Memorial of Endless Tears



Tuzanor, Minbar

Widely known as Valen's favorite city on Minbar, Tuzanor is also called the 'City of Sorrows'. This epithet is remembered in the Minbari saying, 'To dream in the City of Sorrows is to dream of a better future' and comes originally from a terrible battle that raged here before the time of Valen in which millions of Minbari perished between the setting of the sun its rise again the next morning. Valen was said to love the architecture of this city because of its difference from the other constructions of the Minbari and the distinct sense of peace he always felt at giving over its crenellated minarets at night.

One of Tuzanor's most unique features is the Se'en Voltayn, the 'Veil of Bright Dreams', a crystal laden ridge that surrounds the city at a distance of over a kilometre and is illuminated at night through the naturally stored sunlight of the previous day. This ridge is the inner wall of a crater that was formed when the city settled into the planet's surface following the terrible battle that gave Tuzanor its name. The breathtaking formation of the glowing ridge wall is said to be the resting place of all those who were lost in that conflict. Legend has it that the light is the radiance of the dreams and hopes of the slain. It is in this crater of light that young Anla'shok students meditate each night while they attend the Ranger academy located here.



Yedor, Minbar

Far more typical in design and construction, Yedor shows the classic angles and lines considered aesthetically pleasing to the Minbari. Like most other cities on Minbar, Yedor is cut directly out of the crystalline deposits that dominate the lithosphere of Minbar. Because Yedor was built before the invention of cutting lasers and the advanced techniques those devices allow, the city has a very subtle hand-carved look that lends a certain warmth and smoothness to its major edges. Yedor is a marvel of engineering and one of the greatest representations of the race's technical achievements.

Those few visitors allowed to approach Minbar closely enough to see Yedor are usually dazzled by the sight of Minbar's sun blazing through the prismatic facets of the city's slanted buildings and crystal lined walkways. Even Minbari who have lived in Yedor their entire lives have a special reverence for the simple elegance of their home. Most spend the first few minutes of every day basking in the building glow of spectral light that floods through the city during each sunrise.

Minbari

Technology

As befits the most advanced race to have open dealings with the rest of the galaxy, the technology of the Minbari is second to none. In virtually every area, the devices, ships, and weapons used by the Minbari are superior in all respects to comparable items in use by other races, assuming other races have even invented such things. The Minbari have a number of unique technologies, only a few of which have been shared with their galactic neighbors. Only the Centauri and a few minor races can compete with the Minbari in the area of gravitics, and every other civilisation in the galaxy is at least decades if not centuries behind their advancements in applied high-energy dynamics.

The Minbari are well aware of their technological superiority and consider it their race's most jealously guarded secret. The Grey Council will go to great lengths to ensure that the advancements of their race do not fall into the hands of thieves, doing so as much to preserve Minbar's advantage than out of any worry that other races might turn their inventions against them. This intense concern for the retention of their intellectual property has led the races into clashes with other races before, with only their run-in with the enigmatic Technomages ending in anything but a complete victory for the Minbari.

This does not mean that Minbari made items cannot leave the Federation. Far from it, devices themselves are traded constantly by worker caste traders for high quality water and other supplies vital to their race's well being. While other races might reverse-engineer physical representations of Minbari technology, doing so usually requires more technical advancement than those who might attempt it are capable of. Those who can successfully recreate Minbari technology in this way wisely keep their accomplishments to themselves for fear of reprisals.

The aspect of their advancements that the Grey Council of Minbar is most interested in guarding is the theory and technical information needed to create such devices from initial design through to production. To this end, they will mobilise fleets, send entire units of their military, and use any means at their disposal to keep this from occurring. In their history, situations like this have only required military action twice. Every other occurrence has been dealt with subtly by the Anla'Shok before it could escalate.

Minbari Markets

The Minbari are a subtle people and do not generally congregate in marketplaces, even on their own world. People on Minbar and its colony worlds usually purchase very little, with their physical needs taken care of and money only becoming an issue for luxuries, little of which appeals to them. Jewellery is generally a mark of station, as is clothing, though some Minbari have a taste for accoutrements beyond their typical function. As such, there is a certain level of fiscal enterprise within the Minbari culture. In the Federation, Minbari normally shop by making personal contact with an artisan and either buying out of the stock kept in their domiciles or having items custom made. There are very few 'stores' in Minbari space.

In dealing with outsider races, the worker caste has become inured to the concept of markets and storefronts. While they seem inelegant, there is no denying that most other species prefer this kind of arrangement. Worker caste traders have adapted their methods to better appeal to these shopping methods, often renting space in marketplaces rather than establishing any of their own. Even in such areas, the Minbari prefer shopping by consultation and are often better inclined towards customers that deal with them in that sort of social setting.

Minbari keep their stock relatively unprotected in Minbari space, but years of experience outside of the Federation has taught them to adopt stricter loss prevention methods. To the Minbari, theft is virtually unheard of among their own kind; they consider it abhorrent when they see it done by others. More than one galactic marketplace has been severely disrupted when security forces have intervened between a burglar or shoplifter and a Minbari shopkeeper seeking to end his existence over the 'insult' of theft.

Technological Achievements of the Minbari

As mentioned previously, the Minbari have a wide array of accomplishments as a technically advanced race. They have mastered the concepts of coherent energy, alternate energy sources, gravitation, the electromagnetic spectrum, crystal construction, superdense metallurgy, hyperspace travel, and dozens of other scientific avenues of invention. Many of these were initially granted to the race by their mentors, the Vorlons, though the fact that these were gifts at all has largely been forgotten due to the latter race's augmentation of the Minbari's racial memory.

Gravity is perhaps the Minbari's more solid achievement, with gravitation generation devices becoming so small and powerful that a device capable of crushing a human-sized target under the force of multiple iterations of g-forces can be built into something as tiny as a ring. Very few ships in the Minbari fleet are constructed without artificial gravity on every deck; when this occurs, it is usually to facilitate high-speed transit such as the tram monorails of Shen'tan stations.

Minbari weapon technologies are also extremely impressive, with some of their more powerful devices capable of creating steady flows of disruptive neutrons. These weapons, the most potent in the race's history of technical development, destroy matter by impregnating atoms with forced additional neutrons, shattering their internal magnetic balance and generating uncontrolled fission in a controllable attack direction. The primary ship of their fleet, the Sharlin cruiser, is equipped with weapons of this sort, as are their largest terrestrial vehicle, the Wind Sword heavy assault tank.

Crystalshaping is the primary focus of Minbari construction, with artisans and engineers working side by side to create beautiful and functional edifices of pure, hard crystal. The material used most often, jenek, is mined on several worlds in the Federation and exhibits incredible hardness and damage resistance. One of the reasons for the Minbari's fascination and specialisation in crystal is its abundance on their homeworld, but jenek is also a remarkable base material for virtually any construction task the race carries out, from shipbuilding to architecture. Even personal weapons, clothing, and innocuous items such as flatware have a greater likelihood of being made of crystal than any other substance.

Metallurgy is not an ignored science in the face of crystalshaping. While crystal is a superior substance in many respects, it is not the only material the Minbari require for their grand architecture or vehicular sciences. Metal provides the structural supports, display and component casings, and smaller items that crystal cannot be adequately shaped for. Constructions large and small require metal; the Minbari have consequently developed a number of techniques for the forging and formulation of many speciality types.

Two of these are unique to the Minbari. One, superdense steel, is an alloy refined and forged inside automated facilities exposed to massive pressure. The resulting metal is virtually impervious to anything but the focused application of destructive energy forms. This is often used for supplemental plating on ships and for archaic but still functional forms of body armour. The other

type, mnemonic ferricite, is an almost motile metal with the ability to 'remember' a shape it has been forged into while under the application of an electric current. When the current ceases, the metal compresses in on itself; the resulting node of metal conforms to the shape of any container harder than itself and takes up less than a twelfth of its forced volume.

Space technologies are the centre of Minbari development and have been since the race began expanding into the stars as the Federation that they are known for in the modern era. Only the smallest of their ships must rely on external jump gate generators; all of the vessels in the Minbari fleet can create their own hyperspace jump points. Combined with their superior weapons, Minbari ships dominate any other common vessel in the entire galaxy.

From medical technologies that can bring a wounded individual back from the brink of death to chemical treatment devices that can turn even the most irradiated fluids into useful liquids such as potable water, Minbari innovations could be considered magical by cultures without the scientific development to understand how they function.

The Cutting Edge of Minbari Invention

The Minbari are very advanced, but they have not yet reached the pinnacle of their scientific potential. Their mastery of gravitics is just a stepping stone to the application of generated electromagnetic force, a feat the Vorlons and other ancient races are fully capable of. Other pending inventions that have not yet reached the completion stage abound in the many laboratories of worker caste scientists. All that stands between the Minbari and science as far beyond what they have now as they are beyond other races is time, innovation, and the focus necessary to grasp beyond what they already have.

The next major discovery of the Minbari will likely be the integration of telepaths into their other forms of technology. Their exposure to such devices during the Great War that led to the formation of the Interstellar Alliance may be all the direction they need to develop a system of their own to allow the powerful telepaths their race is capable of producing. Minbari fleets carrying their potent weapons and guided by telepaths trained in shipboard piloting and tactics would be a true force to be reckoned with.

Minbari holography is also due for an innovation in the near future. Its proliferation as viewscreens, three-dimensional constructs, and curtains of imagery in the chambers of the Grey Council and aboard the ships of

their fleet makes hologram technology very commonplace for the Minbari. As such, innovations will lead the race to design smaller and more powerful forms of holographic imaging, eventually resulting in greater refinement of their already lethal coherent light weapons and the ultimate achievement of light-based technologies- the application of light in continual environment based refraction, or invisibility.

Minbari Personal Equipment

The Minbari tend to be a very elitist race where weapons, armour, and personal equipment are concerned. Unless a device or armament is demonstrably better than something made by their own race, Minbari soldiers and workers prefer their own items. This is exacerbated by the fact that most Minbari do not really consider the possibility of improving their standard equipment for something else on their own. In the field, upgrades to weapons and gear are usually administered by a superior, so few Minbari seek out items unless they require replacements for what they already have.

This behaviour usually changes once a Minbari leaves the Federation and has to deal for any extended period of time outside its boundaries and the customs of his own people. Once a Minbari sees how others in the galaxy improve upon their equipment, they usually adopt the same if only to remain competitive. Generally, Minbari equipment is of a better quality than anything one might find in the rest of the galaxy, but exceptions do happen and members of this race are not above appropriating superior items then they encounter them.

Weapon Descriptions

Black Blade: Years of exile watching everything the Minbari have done has given the Shadowsouled many innovation, though few of them can be truly exploited while the sub—race is limited to the facilities of the Black Fleet. One that could be is the invention of the denn'bok. Unwilling to give up their traditional fighting knives but seeing the value of the weapon, the Shadowsouled have fused a slightly longer blade of black crystal to a stylised denn'bok handle, creating a double weapon that is as deadly as it is elegant. When a Shadowsouled warrior fights with this exotic weapon, it is a series of blinding slashes and brutal crushing blows that never stop moving until his opponent does.

Crystal Slivergun: A weapon designed to penetrate the superdense armour used in earlier wars against rival clans of Minbari, the crystal slivergun uses a pulse of gravitic energy to compress a slug of crystal until it shatters

and redirect the resulting shards towards the target. The damage from a crystal slivergun ignores the first 5 points of DR a target might possess.

Denn'bok: One of the traditional exotic weapons of the Minbari is the Minbari Fighting Pike, or denn'bok. The denn'bok is a collapsible quarterstaff composed of mnemonic ferricite that expands from a six-inch grip to over five feet. Anla'shok Instructor Durhan is considered the modern master of this weapon and is currently training both Minbari and deserving humans in the City of Sorrows on Minbar. Very few are produced yearly; most pikes are passed from one generation to the other. Fighting pikes rarely fall into the hands of non-Minbari. Some pikes do end up on the black market, often fetching 5,000 credits or more. The listed price in the chart below is what legitimate owners can expect to pay for a replacement.

Fist Spars: A set of cut crystal spikes with an inward edge that can cut on the bias, fist spars are mounted to a thick, reinforced gauntlet of leather and steel. Fist spars are normally worn and wielded only by the warrior caste of the Minbari, though they are a simple enough weapon that anyone wearing one can make unarmed attacked without penalty of need of an exotic weapon proficiency. Because the spikes curve to an attack position when the wearer makes a fist, this weapon does not interfere with a wielder's ability to hold or use items in the same hand.

Flicker Bomb: Flicker bombs are the Minbari's version of a smoke bomb. They follow all of the same rules for smoke bombs as listed in the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook except where noted in their description in the chart below. In addition, the smoke emitted from a flicker bomb is iridescent and sheds light in a further 10 foot radius due to the highly ionised crystal motes imbedded in its emission. These shards also have the effect of making the flicker bomb's smoke refractive to energy weapons, reducing any attack by an energy designator weapon to half damage if it passes through its area of effect.

Gralneir Launcher: The delivery device of choice for Minbari using grenades, the Gralneir uses a very simple magazine feed system and a sophisticated gravity generator to propel its ammunition. The Gralneir can accept any grenade type listed here or in the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook. The power of the Gralneir's gravity propulsion system is so strong, a wielder can attempt to shoot a grenade up to 15 range increments (1200 feet) away, though range penalties may make this a very difficult shot to fire accurately.

Jenflash Grenade: Jenek in its raw state sometimes has the optical property of holding and slowly releasing visible spectrum light. A jenflash grenade has a core of this crystal subtype and uses that property to generate a massive blast of harmless light when it detonates. Anyone in the area of effect must make a reflex save (DC 16) or be blinded for 1d4+1 rounds as their eyes compensate for

the sudden glare. Mechanically indirect vision (such as a monitor or security camera) is blinded for one round only but receives no saving throw to avoid the effect.

Minbari Fighting Knife: Exquisitely crafted, this twin-bladed weapon is attached to a sheath around the user's forearm that will prevent him ever being disarmed. Wickedly sharp, the fighting knife is capable of piercing almost any kind of armour and in the hands of a member of the warrior caste, it can be just as deadly a weapon as a PPG. The Minbari fighting knife is exceptionally well made and balanced, and grants a +1 circumstance bonus to all attack rolls made with it. To all races other than Minbari, the fighting knife is considered to be an exotic weapon.

Minbari Holdout Laser: This is an extremely small weapon usually seen only in the hands of the Minbari warrior caste. It contains a self-charging power source and is utterly undetectable to normal weapon scanners, making it the perfect form of self-defence to smuggle into any restricted colony or space station. Though packing a heavy punch for its size, the advanced Minbari power source is not sufficient to allow for continual firing and each successive shot will require it to spend a greater amount of time recharging, a serious drawback in any sustained firefight. After firing, the holdout laser will require one round to recharge before it may be fired again. If fired immediately after this, it will take two rounds to charge, then three rounds and so on. If not fired for one minute, the recharging cycle begins once more with the weapon requiring one round to recharge after a shot has been fired. As an emergency weapon, however, there are few that can match it.

Sha'an PPG: An elegant and expertly crafted version of a Phased Plasma Gun, the Sha'an is the standard side arm of warrior caste officers and other ranking Minbari in the various branches of their military. Sha'an follow essentially the same recharging rules as a Minbari Holdout Laser, getting three shots instead of one before needing to recharge for a round, and grant their wielder a +1 equipment bonus to hit with them due to their masterful construction.

Sha'nar Fusion Rifle: A high energy rifle capable of creating and sustaining a beam of coherent nuclear plasma for several seconds before requiring a new power cell, the Sha'nar is the standard heavy issue given to Minbari infantry soldiers in the field. The Sha'nar can break down into a carrying case included with the weapon; doing this or setting one back up is a 1 minute action for a proficient wielder.

Shard Grenade: Essentially a concussion grenade with a jacket of pressurised crystal, these grenades are incredibly deadly at close range, but their effectiveness is severely curtailed as the shards they emit travel through their area of effect. For every full 10 feet away from the detonation

a target is, they take half damage. This halving can occur up to four times for a target that is a full 40 feet from the grenade.

Venom Grenade: Another product of an earlier time when the Minbari were at war with themselves, the venom grenade is a wide-spectrum toxin powerful enough to kill anyone in the area effect if they get caught by enough of its liquid and vaporous emissions. Living targets of a venom grenade must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1d3 Constitution drain every ten minutes until the poison is neutralised by medical attention or the target reaches 0 Constitution, at which point it dies. Environmental shielding of any kind negates the effect of a venom grenade.

Ventar: A ventar is a specialised sword made of intricately cut jenek honed to a razor edge and fitted into a hilt framework of superdense steel. The ventar is a traditional weapon that harkens back to a more brutal age when the Minbari fought among themselves for the meager resources of their homeworld. As such, it is not often used in modern times. Most ventar wielders carry their blades out of a sense of clan honor; they are most commonly found in the hands of Night Walker infantry soldiers. The ventar is an exotic weapon, but any character proficient with melee weapons can use one in two hands without a penalty. Its size and balance requires the expenditure of an exotic weapon proficiency feat to be used in one hand without a -4 penalty.

General Equipment Descriptions

Air Capsule: A testament to the level of Minbari chemical science, air capsules are emergency items given to Minbari infantry soldiers and other personnel when their duties might take them into environments where normal respiration may not be an option. Air capsules are bitten by the user; this releases the liquid inside and allows it to coat the inside of his mouth and sinus passages. Any attempt to breath draws vapours emitted by this coating into the lungs, satisfying the user's need for oxygen for up to one hour before the coating dissolves completely. Air capsules can be formulated for virtually any breathing medium, assuming there was a reason to modify them in this way.

Crystalmesh Breather: A more permanent and long lasting solution than air capsules, a crystalmesh breather functions exactly as a breather mask as listed in the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook. The design of a crystalmesh breather is very light, with its weight being equivalent to a breather mask only because of its increased air supply. Crystalmesh breathers cover the entire face and last for 6 hours before depletion.

Energy Manipulation Rings: These incredibly advanced pieces of technology are very rare and seldom used

Weapons

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Area of Effect	Critical	Ammo	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Type
Melee Weapons									
Black Blade (double weapon)	***	1d8/1d6	-	19-20/x2	-	-	Special @	2 lb.	Slashing/Bludgeoning
Denn'bok (double weapon)	950 cr.	1d6/1d6		x2	-	-	Special #	1.5 lb	Bludgeoning
Fist Spars	450 cr.	1d4	-	x3	-	-	Tiny	-	Piercing
Minbari Fighting Knife	300 cr.	1d4		18-20/x2			Tiny	1 lb.	Piercing
Ventar	2,100 cr.	1d10	-	19-20/x2	-	-	Medium	4 lb.	Slashing
Grenade Weapons									
Jenflash Grenade	115 cr.	-	50 ft.	-	-	20 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	Projectile
Shard Grenade	90 cr.	4d4	40 ft.	-	-	20 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	Projectile
Venom Grenade	100 cr.	special	20 ft.	-	-	20 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	Projectile
Flicker Bomb	55 cr.	-	30 ft.	-	-	20 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	Projectile
Pistol Weapons									
Minbari Holdout Laser	1,950 cr.	3d6	-	18-20/x2	special	30 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Energy
Sha'an PPG	1,350 cr.	3d4	-	19-20/x2	special	60 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Energy
Crystal Slivergun	2,250 cr.	1d3*	-	x3	3	15 ft.	Small	1 lb.	Projectile
Rifle Weapons									
Sha'nar Fusion Rifle	2,750 cr.	3d6	-	19-20/x2	15	100 ft.	Large	7 lb.	Energy, Rapid Fire
Gralneir Launcher	2,500 cr.	**	-	-	12	80 ft.	Large	5 lb.	Projectile

* Ignores up to 5 points of DR, as detailed in the weapon's description.
 ** As grenade type
 *** Not normally for sale.
 @ Tiny but wieldable as a Minbari fighting knife when retracted, Large when extended for combat.
 # Tiny but unwieldable when retracted, Large when extended for combat.

because of the risks inherent in their operation. It is rare to have a complete set of them and even rarer for someone to be able to operate them correctly. An energy manipulation ring is a device shaped like a ring for a humanoid finger made of advanced crystalline materials with imbedded micro-generators and focusing elements tuned to a particular form of high energy. There are as many kinds of rings as there are types of electromagnetic, gravimetric, and high energy wavelength types, though some are more functional than others. The Games Master can create properties for different types of rings, as only one is detailed here- the gravity ring. Using the gravity ring requires an Intelligence check (DC 15), but once activated, it does not require further checks until its field is turned off. The ring creates a field of gravity no larger than 10 ft. x 10 ft. x 10 ft and can be tuned to affect only the area of space around a single target that fits within those dimensions. Affecting a living, mobile target requires a

touch attack, but if successful, the target is held fast by the g-forces inflicted and cannot move (Strength check DC 25 to break free). Each subsequent round the ring is used in the same area or on the same target, the gravitic force is increased substantially. A subject under the effects for longer than one round (if the user of the ring wishes to increase the gravities there; doing so is optional) suffers 1d6 bludgeoning damage and a cumulative +2 to the Strength check required to escape the field.

Environmental Habitat, Dome: These tents are woven of resilient polymer fibres and can block out virtually any airborne pathogen or gas; the cloth shell of the tent is impermeable to chemical or biological weapons of any kind. In addition to this property, the environmental habitat is buoyant, has an inflatable floor that can suspend 500 pounds in the water, sets up in a single round through the push of a single button, and has a 12 hour air supply (divided by the inhabitants).

Ferricite Shaping Glove: Ferricite is forged in a unique way. The metal has the consistency of clay when first created and can be shaped by hand. A ferricite shaping glove is an artisan's item, allowing for the extremely fine manipulation of ferricite because of special tools in the fingers and a low-grade electrical field that keeps the ferricite malleable while it is being worked. A single charge of high amperage is stored in the glove's capacitors, as this surge is what 'sets' the ferricite in its permanent shape. Ferricite shaping gloves can be used as a weapon; the tools can do 1d2 piercing damage in melee combat and the charge stored in the glove can inflict 1d8 energy damage through a touch attack.

Gravity Platform, Personal: A practical small-scale application of the Minbari's superior gravitational technology, a personal gravity platform is a bluish or silver metal dish about two feet wide. A retaining lip can be extended from the sides to hold small object in place if desired. A small gravitic engine on the underside of the disc can generate enough force to suspend up to 250 lbs anywhere from 1 to 8 feet above a solid surface. Gravity platforms are usually controlled through an oversized ring and can be moved around at a movement rate of 20 feet per round anywhere within 30 feet of the controller.

Holographic Display, Military: A massive piece of hologram equipment made of crystals and metal components, a military holographic display can be slaved to any form of sensory device or computer, allowing that device's normal display to be shown as a huge visual curtain or three-dimensional virtual object. The display size for a military holographic generator varies, but an average one creates an image up to 10 feet tall, 5 feet thick, and 20 feet wide. Holograms displayed in this way can either be translucent or opaque at the user's option. Opaque images may be mistaken for reality, the Games Master should adjudicate any attempt to fool observers with a device of this type (a Spot check at DC 17 is recommended).

Holographic Display, Personal: A handheld equivalent of the military holographic display, this item represents the smallest hologram unit the Minbari can create. Personal holographic displays are either worn as part of a headset, carried in the hand, or attached to armour as the upper corner of a chestplate or padded tunic, all at the user's option. Regardless of its form, personal units are used exactly like military ones, but the images they create can only be three feet in any dimension.

Medical Scanner: A tiny marvel of medical technology, a medical scanner built by the Minbari fits in one hand and can perform virtually any test on a patient that a full laboratory and radiology unit could, including x-rays, blood testing, cerebral scans, and other physical checks. In game terms, the ease of use and effectiveness of a Minbari medical scanner adds a +2 equipment bonus to all medical

checks. This drops to +1 when treating a xenotype the administering character is unfamiliar with.

Minbari Equipment Modification: This is not an item of equipment, but rather a catch-all category for any other item listed in the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook that might be of Minbari construction. The race uses virtually everything that others do, but their advanced production techniques often result in items that are superior to those produced elsewhere in the galaxy. At the Games Master's discretion, any item found in the Minbari Federation or used as equipment by an Minbari character has have the following modifications:

- ⑤ *Weight.* The Minbari are stronger than most races, but their technologies are often lighter. Any Minbari-constructed normal item weighing more than one pound has its weight reduced by 10%. Items weighing more than 50 pounds have their weight reduced by 25%.
- ⑤ *Materials.* Crystal and special metal alloys make up most of the manufacturing materials used by the Minbari, replacing wood, leather, and most other substances when appropriate. These improve the hardness of any Minbari-made item by 2. These items also add 1 hit point per pound of weight, calculated before the weight reduction noted above.
- ⑤ *Efficiency.* The exactness of detail that Minbari craftsmen exhibit when making items shows in their reliability and effectiveness. When appropriate for its function, any device manufactured by the Minbari adds a +1 equipment bonus to checks made while using it. This does not apply to weapons or armour, just general equipment as listed in the Main Rulebook.
- ⑤ *Cost.* The Minbari do not normally worry about the financial value of their equipment, but other races certainly do. A Minbari-made item tends to command 200%-300% of its usual price when it is available at all. Black market trade in Minbari items is a brisk, if dangerous, business.

Palmlight: A small disc of jenek crystal of the light bearing type, a palmlight has a small charging unit build around it and is activated by tactile contact. When held with the metal jacketed back of the device against the palm (even if thin cloth is in the way), a palmlight's crystal face generates a powerful beam of light that lasts for up to two hours of continuous or sporadic use before the unit must recharge for 24 hours. A palmlight illuminates a cone shaped area 50 feet long and 25 feet wide at its apex.

Restraints, Mnemonic: A useful device for keeping prisoner alive and immobile, a set of Minbari restraints appear to be two fist sized balls of silvery metal with a band of black polymer around the middle. When a button is pressed on the band, the mnemonic ferricite inside

expands out, taking the shape of a pair of thick rings about a foot in diameter, attached at one edge. A target's limbs are placed in the hoops and the button is released. The ferricite contracts immediately, pinning the limbs together at the black band in a solid block of compressed metal. This does not harm the target, but the pressure of the collapsed ferricite can be uncomfortable over long periods of time. One set of mnemonic restraints will handle the hands and feet of a subject of up to Huge size; they have a hardness of 12 and 40 hit points per unit.

Shadow Web: A specialised form of the changeling web, the shadow web actually came first and was the progenitor of the changeling web when one of these fell into alien hands for study. The shadow web functions exactly like a changeling net, but is a series of implants that actually take up space inside the host's body. A small receiver attached to the optic nerve of the user's right eye takes in the image and the harness normally associated with a changeling net is instead a number of small quarter inch crystalline studs that extend slightly out of the host's skin in various places. These generate the holographic image and operate from the user's own bioelectrical energy. There is no limit on the length of time a shadow web can be used and it runs no risk to the user. Shadow webs are useless to other races, though it would be possible for Shadowsouled scientists to modify the device for implantation in others, were they given a reason to do so.

Specialised Tools: Proven worker caste teams are provided with specialised tools for their projects. These items are a mark of station among the worker caste and as such, rarely leave the workshops of Minbar. When these special and exacting tools do become available elsewhere, it is very likely that a worker caste military unit has dispatched to do whatever they must to return them to Minbar. Each subset of the Craft and Profession skills has its own sets of these tools. In the hands of someone with at least 5 ranks in a Craft or Profession skill, an appropriate set of specialised tools provides a +2 equipment bonus to checks made with that skill.

Trioptic Visor: A popular device with spotters on the battlefield and scouts of the Minbari military, the trioptic visor locks around the bone crest of its wearer and in its retracted form looks like a high tech shell covering the Minbari wearer's forehead. By subvocal command, the visor lowers over the wearer's eyes and provides three vision modes, any or all of which can be used simultaneously. The complexity of trioptic visors limits the number of simultaneous modes of use to one per point of Intelligence bonus of the user (minimum of one).

⑤ *Electromagnetic Spectral Imaging.* This visual mode extends the sight of the user into both ends of the electromagnetic spectrum. In any situation where seeing body heat or ultraviolet radiation

might be of use, the visor grants a +1 circumstance bonus to Spot and/or Search checks.

⑤ *Motion Tracking.* The user can follow moving objects with great clarity and ease, making speed and motion less of an issue when determining his own actions. In addition to noting the precise location, distance, and speed of all objects in the visual field, a target's Defence Value is not modified by its Dexterity bonus if the wearer of a trioptic visor takes a full attack action to use this device and make a single ranged attack. Melee attacks cannot be enhanced in this way.

⑤ *Macroscopic Vision.* Much more than a simple zoom function, macroscopic vision allows the user to focus on a distant object, bring it up to ten times closer, and then continuously display that enhanced area as a sub window in his field of vision. In addition to greatly enhancing his ability to discern distant objects, macroscopic vision allows the wearer to ignore the penalty normally associated with the first three range increments of any ranged weapon he personally uses.

Universal Gravitic Weapon Mount: A universal gravitic weapon mount is also called a gravinal by the Minbari military. It allows up to two large weapons of the same type to be slaved together as one device for simultaneous fire by a gunner using a remote device for movement and targeting. A gravinal can move up to 30 feet per round, always stays at least two feet off the ground while in operation, and allows the operator to fire both weapons as a single attack, rolling once to hit and twice for damage if successful. For purposes of damage reduction, both sets of damage are applied separately. Regardless of the number of attack an operator normally has, a gravinal can only be used once per round as a full attack action and the device's +2 equipment bonus to hit replaces his Dexterity modifier to ranged attacks. Gravinals are often used in conjunction with personal holographic displays or trioptic visors.

Water Siphon: The Federation has found enough planets with drinkable water that the shortages that used to plague their population on Minbar are no longer a real concern. In the field on alien worlds, water can still become an issue, so water siphons are still issued when needed. These devices can accept up to one gallon of aqueous fluid, regardless of its source, and return 20-70% (1d6+1 x 10%, rolled for each use) of its volume as purified drinking water after five minutes of processing. The siphon is very effective, but its operation cooks off a good deal of the liquid involved, so even regular water is reduced in this way.

General Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight
Air Capsule	15 cr.	-
Crystalmesh Breather	125 cr.	1 lb.
Energy Manipulation Ring	*	-
Environmental Habitat, Dome	400 cr.	4 lb.
Ferricite Shaping Glove	550 cr.	1 lb.
Gravity Platform, Personal	400 cr.	5 lb.
Holographic Display, Military	45,000 cr.	120 lb.
Holographic Display, Personal	9,500 cr.	2 lb.
Medical Scanner	600 cr.	1 lb.
Minbari Equipment Modification	-	-
Palmlight	200 cr.	-
Restraints, Mnemonic	750 cr.	1 lb.
Shadow Web	*	-
Specialized Tools	*	1 lb.
Trioptic Visor	700 cr.	1 lb.
Universal Gravitic Weapon Mount	3,500 cr.	17 lb.
Water Siphon	500 cr.	3 lb.

* These are typically not for sale.

Armour and Clothing Descriptions

Crystalmesh Armour: An older form of armour that is still in use as a matter of family pride by some clans, crystalmesh armour is one of the only forms of armour that can be worn by worker caste without social stigma, primarily because of the tradition of crystalshapers being allowed to use their own creations. Crystalmesh armour is very light compared to other forms of armour, though its basic protection is not equal to that of a standard suit of Minbari Battle Armour. One special property of crystalmesh armour is its bonus of +2 DR against energy attack due to its construction of thousands of tiny refractive crystal links.

Darkshard Armour: Darkshard armour is never seen in the Federation in modern times because of the dishonour attached to its primary wearers, the Dark Knives clan. In a history the Minbari no longer remember, Darkshard armour was invented to give Minbari warriors a chance against the Vorlons and their agents during the Dark Century, the Minbari's period of rebellion against their former masters. Created through psionic imbueement of intense emotions into a crystalline matrix, Darkshard armour turns purest black as a result of the process. In addition to being

extremely potent armour in its own right due to the density and telekinetic enhancements of its construction, Darkshard armour imposes a -5 penalty to any Telepathy skill check made to affect the wearer with a telepathic power. Darkshard armour also comes in a lighter form with darkweave chain over the limbs. This light suit only weights 15 pounds, has a DR of 5, and imposes a -3 to Telepathy checks. Wearers of Darkshard armour cannot be telepathic; the interference from their armour inflicts 1 point of subdual damage every round on them until they pass out.

Fire Wings Flight Suit: A superior flight suit used by members of the Fire Wings warrior clan exclusively, these outfits are jealously guarded by them and a non-Minbari seen wearing one is often openly attacked for such an affront. In addition to the improved DR granted by its design and materials, a Fire Wings flight suit incorporates all of the advantages of a pressure suit with very little of the associated weight and carry a first aid and holdout laser as standard equipment.

Minbari Battle Armour: Utilising highly advanced polymers and energy reflection materials, it is generally agreed that the battle armour usually seen worn by members of the Minbari warrior caste is

the best personal protection credits can buy. Light and yet extremely durable, this armour is coveted by many agents throughout the galaxy but the dishonour it brings to the warrior caste to have an alien wear their prized possession is usually enough to convince others not to buy the rare few examples that surface on the black market. Any non-Minbari wearing battle armour will suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all Initiative checks, as it will not be completely suited to their physiology.

Religious Caste Clothing: More of a category than a specific suit of clothes, religious caste garb tends towards pastels and mild hues of many different colours as can be found pleasing to the Minbari eye. Small items of jewellery are often sewn directly into the outfits, creating complex yet oddly appealing landscapes of colour, texture, and patterns in their garb. Each outfit is subtly different, allowing a Minbari religious caste member to express his or her unique qualities of faith wordlessly through fashion.

Superdense Modification: By incorporating plates and structural supports of superdense steel over the vital areas covered by a suit of armour, Minbari protective gear can be significantly enhanced. This comes at a cost in weight and agility, culminating in an equipment penalty of -2 to

the wearer's Initiative checks. Superdense modification can only be done to armour with enough mass to support it; only armour with a base DR of 3 or better can accept this alteration.

Warrior Caste Clothing: Even when they are not on the front lines or sitting at the controls of a neutron laser, members of the warrior caste treat every day as it is could erupt into battle at any moment. This constant tension and readiness for action is reflected in their basic, usually black, clothing. Cut for freedom of movement and built heavy enough to incorporate some energy and impact resistant material, warrior caste clothes are as resilient as full suits of padded armour used by other races.

Worker Caste Clothing: The fashions most appealing to the Minbari worker caste are simple grey outfits made resilient enough to allow work around dangerous materials but thin enough to keep them from being encumbered. Worker caste clothes can be quite elaborate depending on the station of the Minbari involved, but they invariably bear the signs of work outfits- pockets, loops for tools, and reinforced limb protection.

Armour & Clothing

Item	Cost	Weight	DR
Crystalmesh Armour	2,800 cr.	7 lb.	3
Darkshard Armour	*	25 lb.	7
Fire Wings Flight Suit	7,000 cr.	10 lb.	3
Minbari Battle Armour	3,750 cr.	12 lb.	5
Religious Caste Clothing	600 cr.	5 lb.	-
Superdense Modification	+3,500 cr.	+30 lb.	+3
Warrior Caste Clothing	950 cr.	8 lb.	2
Worker Caste Clothing	150 cr.	4 lb.	1

* These are not typically for sale.

Heavy Weapons

On the battlefield, the Minbari are rightly feared because of their weapons technology. In virtually every aspect of normal infantry ground fighting, the Minbari are superior to other races. Even the elite units of other armies can rarely compete with the Minbari, either on foot or in vehicles. Between their faster tanks, self propelled artillery, lethal anti-aircraft fire, and superior man-portable weaponry, the Minbari can make short work of any force that does not outnumber them considerably.

Of all the Minbari's advantages, the one that is most significant to their successful military actions is the power of their weapons. Advanced energy principles and exacting production capability allow the race to field some of the most deadly heavy weapons in the galaxy. From the focused cutting power of neutron lasers to the crushing

force of externally directed gravity well explosions, the Minbari can inflict death and devastation many races have never imagined. Harnessed fusion beams and molecular cutting lasers are usually powerful enough to slice through anything that opposes them in battle.

Disrupter Cannons: Disrupter weapons are based on the cannons used by the Minbari fleet before the development of the Sharlin and its neutron armament. Disrupters work by agitating material targets through an applied beam of high energy. The beam disrupts the bonds holding the molecules of the target together and it ablates from the point of impact inward. Disrupter weapons are seldom used by the Minbari in space combat because its relatively poor range, but it excels in ground battles where ranges are measured in metres, not kilometres. Minbari disrupters are divided into light and heavy cannons.

Anti-Matter Weapons: The Minbari employ anti-matter as a weapon on in artillery form, with massive shells containing dozens of smaller charges. Each of these carry a small amount of anti-matter encased in a magnetic seal. When the shell is fired, it shatters these magnetic barriers on impact; this causes the antimatter to immediately react with the casing of the bomb and the target itself. The resulting explosion is incredibly powerful and only barely containable, which keeps this otherwise potent weapon from seeing more common use on the field. Anti-matter weapons are only fielded as the A-Mad (Anti-Matter Dispersal System) and only on the Falsin Artillery vehicle. Anti-matter weapons ignore Damage Reduction, as all matter is equally vulnerable to disruption by anti-matter equally.

Fusion Guns: Relying on the immense energy produced by fusion reactions in a magnetically contained chamber, fusion weapons emit a beam of excited electrons and protons at a target. The influx of energy has a detrimental effect on solid matter, melting it through energy induction. Fusion guns were some of the Minbari's oldest energy weapons, but they are still in use due to their low power consumption rates and high reliability. Fusion guns exist in the Minbari military as twin fusion guns, Sha'nar fusion rifles, and the Tal'Falni assault platform, a single operator remote turret.

Neutron Lasers: The science behind the neutron laser is only a century old, making it very contemporary by Minbari terms. While newer theoretical weapons based on tachyon streams and neutrino array are on the drawing boards of weaponsmiths on Minbar, neutron weapons are mounted on the Sharlin cruiser as a main gun and on a smaller scale as the primary cannon on the super heavy Wind Sword tank. The version of the neutron weapon mounted to ground weapons is the Neutron Assault Cannon.

Molecular Beam Technology: A concentrated pulse of high energy directed through a short barrel lined with enough magnetic flux to separate the blast into hundreds of tiny bursts, each one capable of cratering solid stone. This is still an experimental weapon, limited to pulse form because of material limitations. The energy cannot be contained long enough to direct unless broken up into 'burstlets' as done with this weapon. If it could be focused intact, the energy beam would be capable of destroying anything it came into contact with. Molecular weapons are limited to molecular pulse cannons at present. Each hit with a molecular pulse beam represents 1d6 significant bursts have made contact with the target. Each one does the weapon's base damage and reduces the target's DR by 1. Each reduction takes place before the next burst is applied, which can quickly chew through a target's armour. The scattered effect of these bursts also negates Agility and Dodge Defence Value bonuses.

Missiles: The Minbari do not rely solely on energy weapons. By their nature, energy beams are direct fire and some combat situations call for a weapon that can be fired in an indirect manner. To this end, the race has developed extremely nimble, gravity propelled missiles. These usually carry high energy warheads, mostly because the Minbari stick with what works and high energy definitely works. The varieties of missile used by the Minbari in large quantities:

- ⑤ *Seti.* An intelligent gravitic missile capable of receiving new telemetry data from its own sensors or from its operator during flight, the Seti is a short-to-long range weapon useful against any ground based or slower moving aerial target. Its speed is considerable, but it does not have the processor agility to deal with aerial targets if they can match its speed. Against aerial targets, the Seti missile suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to hit.
- ⑤ *Rha'vish.* The counterpart to the Seti, Rha'vish missiles are information locked once they fire, but they are nearly twice as manoeuvrable as Seti missiles and more than capable of taking out even the swiftest of aerial targets with ease. The Rha'vish cannot engage ground-based targets effectively due to their specialised programming, suffering a -4 circumstance penalty to hit when directed against them.
- ⑤ *VLS.* Vertical Launch System rockets fly in a ballistic arc towards their target, using their upwards flight time to acquire a target lock before swooping back down for the kill. Limitations on the manoeuvrability of a VLS rocket keep it from being fired at a target within 150 feet of the launcher itself, but they suffer no range penalties otherwise out to its maximum range of 2 miles. The VLS's target lock ability grants it an equipment bonus of

+2 to hit, but it does not actually strike until one full round after being fired.

- ⑤ *Gravitic Launch Mortars.* Mounted only on the Talishan heavy infantry transport, these weapons are much like VLS rockets. They only strike a full round after being fired and they cannot be fired at a target within 50 feet. The special advantage of Gravitic Launch Mortars is their ability to spread their hits. Only one attack roll is made. Once the location of that shot, hit or miss, is determined, the firer can place the remaining bursts of the other mortars, edge to edge, in any pattern he wishes. No burst may overlap, and they must all be connected.
- ⑤ *Vin'tael.* The torpedoes carried by submersible vessels, a vehicle converted with the submersible modification can convert other launch system into a Vin'tael at no additional cost. One drawback to torpedo launchers is the fact that loading and flooding the tubes is a slow process, taking a full round action. Any number of launchers can be reloaded with the same action. While multiple Vin'tael launchers can be carried for additional firepower, all such launchers have the same statistics:

Vin'tael Torpedo Launchers; One firing arc only (no turrets); Attack +* (bonus equals the Sensors bonus for the vehicle -1, to a minimum of +1); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 8 torpedoes each; Special Qualities: Reload Time (1 round).

Vehicles of the Minbari Federation

When other races think of the Minbari in vehicular terms, they invariably picture the mighty ships of their fleet, soaring untouchable and elegant among the stars. While these are undoubtedly the most impressive examples of Minbari vehicular technology, they are by no means the extent of it. Gravitic innovations and the kinds of special materials the race has access to have led to some of the most visually unique and functionally efficient vehicles in the galaxy. From lowly cargo haulers to transatmospheric starships capable of going from space to air to undersea, the Minbari have a wide variety of very special vessels.

One thing other races notice quickly about the designs of Minbari vehicles is the appearance of organic lines and curves to everything they build. This suggests a type of living vessel, something the Minbari do not directly possess but often allow other races to believe they do. In truth, this aesthetic comes from their dimly remembered

time of fosterage by the Vorlons and their admiration for that ancient race's cultivated as opposed to constructed ship technology. While the Minbari would adore the ability to make organic vessels, they cannot do so without outside aid.

Civilian Vehicle Descriptions

Cargo Transport, Minbari

Like any other race, the Minbari generate a great many things in the support of their population and their many colony worlds. These goods have to get from production to final disbursement somehow, and the Minbari Transport is their answer to this problem. A sleek, curved vessel resembling one side of a slightly blooming rose bud with the flat side down, a Minbari cargo transport uses magnetic induction for propulsion and gravitic drives to maintain altitude. While these ships can only operate in an atmosphere, they can fly to the very edge of the ionosphere and dock with low orbit frigates to deposit cargoes bound for other worlds.

Gargantuan Aircraft; hp 32; DV 9 (-4 size, +3 agility); DR 4; Spd 35; Acc 3; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +1; Stealth 15; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 10 passengers

Crawler, Minbari

A few of these vehicles remain in service with the Minbari, mostly on worlds with unstable magnetic fields or in areas where high winds make gravitic ground vehicles too dangerous to operate. Minbari crawlers are used for cargo hauling, expeditions, and as mobile headquarters in hostile areas. Their lack of a gravitic drive and the stability of six equally spaced wheels allows them to mount thicker armour and heavier components than similar hover-capable vehicles can. A Night Walker clan variant of the crawler, the Den'foor wheeled combat vehicle, is detailed elsewhere.

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 50; DV 6 (-4 size); DR 7; Spd 9; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +1; Stealth 14; Cargo 2,000 lb.; 1 Driver, 12 passengers

Deshen Ground Car

A typical form of ground conveyance used by the Minbari in most of the cities both on Minbar and their colony worlds, the Deshen is a curved teardrop of crystal with a pair of points in front. These act as focusing elements for the short range radar that is integral to the vehicle's self guidance system. As long as a city can freely broadcast on short band wavelengths, passengers in a Deshen can simply request any destination known to the city's control

grid and the vehicle will take them there in safety and comfort. Unknown destination and the advent of very infrequent interference with the car's link to the control grid necessitates that someone manually steer the vehicle, an arduous but possible task.

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 15; DV 9 (-1 size); DR 5; Spd 22; Acc 2; Dec 4; Han -1; Sensor +0; Stealth 14; Cargo 200 lb.; 1 Driver (optional), 6 passengers; Special Features: Self-drive capable (has a Drive skill bonus of +5).

Halan'vir Passenger Flyer

A longer and wider version of the typical flyer, the Halan'vir is capable of taking large groups of Minbari through their atmosphere and even into high orbit, though it is poorly suited to extended space flight due to its small hold size. Built to use the same docking facilities as regular flyers, one Halan'vir occupies the same space as two flyers in a hanger or on the ground. Halan'virs are not armed, which makes them an undesirable substitute for flyers on any vessel expecting to see combat.

Gargantuan Spacecraft; hp 50; DV 11 (-4 size, +5 agility); DR 7; Spd - (34 in atmosphere); Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 13; SQ: Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 1,000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 30 Passengers

Minnal Maintenance Pod

Equipped to perform the exacting and specialised maintenance that Minbari equipment requires, a Minnal maintenance pod is a special vehicle equipped with enough manoeuvrability and gravitic thrust to exert heavy pressure when needed, get in and out of dangerously tight areas, and haul massive loads through both atmosphere and space with equal ease. It is a common joke among the Fire Wings warrior clan that pilots who perform poorly in combat will be assigned to Minnal duty for the rest of their lives.

Large Spacecraft; hp 22; DV 11 (-1 size, +2 agility); DR 5; Spd - (20 in atmosphere); Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +3; Sensor +1; Stealth 12; SQ Atmospheric Capable, Grapple; Cargo 50 lb. + 1 cargo pod or 25,000 pounds of unsecured cargo in grapples arms (2,500 pounds in atmosphere); 1 Pilot

Noloshan Trade Frigate

A common sight in those few areas where the Minbari do business with other races, the Noloshan are exclusively owned and operated by the worker caste. These frigates are built on a similar but slightly smaller hull of the same type as the Tinashi frigate. Noloshan frigates are all but

unarmed, with only a pair of light fusion cannon clusters in the fore of the vessel and one in the aft to defend itself with. This is relative to the rest of the fleet; Noloshan still carry firepower equal to a squadron of three Nial heavy fighters and are therefore more than a match for most raiders in anything lighter than an assault gunboat. Duty aboard a Noloshan is the dream of many worker caste Minbari, who see it as the closest thing to full equality with the other castes as they will ever achieve.

Colossal Spacecraft; hp 200; DV 7 (-8 size, +5 agility); DR 8; Spd -; Acc 1/2; Dec 1/2; Han +3; Sensor +0; Stealth 15; Cargo 10,000 lb. + 6 cargo pods; 5 Officers/Pilots, 1 Sensor Operator, 6 Crewmen

Weapons:

3 Tri-linked Light Fusion Cannons; 2 Boresight, 1 Aft; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 3d8; Critical 18-20; Range 1

Craft (1):

2 flyers

Civilian Vehicles

Item	Cost
Cargo Transport, Minbari	45,000 cr.
Crawler, Minbari	68,000 cr.
Deshen Ground Car	28,000 cr.
Halan'vir Passenger Flyer	180,000 cr.
Minnal Maintenance Pod	1,900,000 cr.
Noloshan Trade Frigate	70,000,000 cr

Military Vehicle

Descriptions

Land

Special Quality: *Gravitic*

Gravitic vehicles hover over the ground at a set height through the use of self-generated gravitation force. While this lift is powerful enough to suspend several tonnes, very little pressure is applied against the ground under the vehicle, allowing it glide over weight sensitive defences such as land mines or deadfalls without falling victim to them. The speed and manoeuvrability granted by gravitic modification adds a +2 agility bonus to Defence Value, +4 bonus to speed, and a +1 bonus to Handling. Gravitic vehicles technically fly, but they are still treated as ground vehicles for purposes of targeting and other modifications. Only ground vehicles can accept gravitic modifications, which cost 25% of the vehicle's base price.

Crystalis Infantry Fighting Vehicle

The Crystalis fighting vehicle is roughly equivalent to similar vehicles used for the same purpose by other race's militaries, but its speed, resiliency, and heavy armament makes it more than a match for any other infantry transport with the possible exception of EarthForce heavy transit vehicles. Even then, the standard deployment of three Crystalis per platoon is usually more than enough to ensure the infantry they carry reach the battlefield intact.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 36; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 6; Spd 12; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 2000 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner, 12 infantry or 6 infantry and three Tal'Falni assault platforms.

Weapons:

Light Disruptor Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical x3; Range 6
Twin Fusion Gun; 1 Front/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
Two Seti Missile Launchers; 2 Boresight; Attack +0 (guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 6 missiles each

Falsin Self-Propelled Artillery

The Falsin is an unusual vehicle for the Minbari, who tend to think of warfare as a very direct affair. The Falsin carries an artillery gun, the A-Mad, and is usually parked a good distance from the battlefield. While most Minbari infantry units despise the Falsin as a cowardly weapon unfit for a true warrior, others have seen the vehicle take out enemies with exacting precision and appreciate its military value.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 30; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 5; Spd 10; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners.

Weapons:

Anti-Matter Delivery System; 1 Turret; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10d6; Area of Effect 100 ft.; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 20
Twin Fusion Gun; 1 Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Fire Sprite Scout Transport

Agile and very fast, even for its small size, the Fire Sprite is a missile-capable transport with scouting equipment that can serve as both an excellent forward observer, transportation for a reconnaissance team, and an ambush

platform ready to shower an enemy with Seti missiles from its own front lines.

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 24; DV 13 (-1 size, +4 agility); DR 5; Spd 19; Acc 3; Dec 3; Han +3; Sensor +5; Stealth 14; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 200 lb.; 1 Driver/Gunner, 3 Recon Infantry.

Weapons:

Seti Missile Launcher; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 10 missile capacity

Foltia Armoured Fighting Vehicle

The closest thing the Minbari have to a dedicated tank killer, the weapons on a Foltia can tear a hole straight through even the heaviest armour fielded by any other race in the galaxy. Between the Foltia's incredibly accurate targeting systems and the power of its heavy disruptor cannon, only its thin armour keeps it from being a main battle tank.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 35; DV 12 (-2 size, +4 agility); DR 5; Spd 12; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 600 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners.

Weapons:

Heavy Disruptor Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +6 (targeting computer); Damage 4d6; Critical x3; Range 7
Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Shard Infantry Fighting Vehicle

The Shard fighting vehicle is favoured by the Star Riders and the Night Walkers; both clans appreciate its deadly molecular pulse cannon, a dangerously effective weapon against light armour and infantry. This vehicle is often used when the military must pacify an area not believed to have serious large-scale defences but the terrain will not allow for the deployment of heavier tanks.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 36; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 6; Spd 14; Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner, 12 infantry or 6 infantry and three Tal'Falni assault platforms.

Weapons:

Molecular Pulse Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 1d4; Critical x2; Range 3
Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Shriek Main Battle Tank

The most common tank in service to the Minbari, the Shriek is a powerful main battle tank with the same weapons layout as a Foltia, combined with heavier armour. Its only flaw in design is the placement of its fusion armament. Because of the shaping of the heavier armour plates on the Shriek, the fusion guns it carries cannot be aimed at aerial targets.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 45; DV 12 (-2 size, +4 agility); DR 8; Spd 12; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 15; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 800 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners.

Weapons:

Heavy Disruptor Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 4d6; Critical x3; Range 7.
Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire; Special Qualities: Cannot fire at aerial targets.

Shyriech Main Battle Tank

A slightly lighter version of the Shriek with a more flexible array of weapons and an engine upgrade allowing for quicker movement, the Shyriech main battle tank is a more tactically valuable vehicle when the battlefield is not well known and tactical changes may have to be made during combat. For this reason, the Night Walkers are especially fond of this versatile tank.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 42; DV 13 (-2 size, +5 agility); DR 7; Spd 14; Acc 3; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 750 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners.

Weapons:

Light Disruptor Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 3d6; Critical x3; Range 5.
Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire
VLS Rocket Launcher; 1 Turret; Attack +3 (guidance software as per description); Damage 2d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 24 rocket capacity

Sprite Scout Tank

Sometimes called the 'invisible' by the Minbari military, this swift vehicle is outfitted with the finest stealth equipment available and can elude most sensors without so much as a flicker on enemy screens. Lightly armed and incapable of carrying infantry, the Sprite's purpose is pure high-speed reconnaissance and in that regard, no known vehicle in the galaxy is more effective.

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 24; DV 14 (-1 size, +5 agility); DR 4; Spd 20; Acc 5; Dec 4; Han +4; Sensor +6; Stealth 20; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 100 lb.; 1 Driver/Gunner, 1 Sensor Ops.

Weapons:

Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Star Rider Assault Transport Tank

A massive transport capable of bring in an unprecedented number of infantry soldiers in relative safety no matter how deadly the incoming fire on a battlefield, the Star Rider transport is capable of bringing weapons to bear against a wide variety of targets, including fusion guns, multiple molecular pulses, and air targeting missiles. Even the light nature of its individual weapons can be devastating to larger targets when fired simultaneously, which makes the Star Rider one of the most effective vehicles in the Minbari military arsenal.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 46; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 7; Spd 14; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners, 36 infantry or 18 infantry and nine Tal'Falni assault platforms.

Weapons:

Three Molecular Pulse Cannons; 1 Boresight, 1 Turret, 1 Aft; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 1d4; Critical x2; Range 3

Three Twin Fusion Guns; 2 Turret, 1 Aft; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Rha'Vish Missile Launcher; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 12 missile capacity

Talishan Heavy Infantry Transport

A compromise vehicle between the carrying capacity of a Star Rider and a lighter, more agile fighting tank, the Talishan carries the unique grav mortar weapon system, an armament especially suited to the clearing of drop zones. Infantry deployment for the Minbari military is often best served by transporting the bulk of a ground force in heavier vehicles and supplementing with Talishans.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 32; DV 11 (-2 size, +3 agility); DR 6; Spd 14; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +3; Sensor +1; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners, 18 infantry or 10 infantry and five Tal'Falni assault platforms.

Weapons:

Light Disruptor Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical x3; Range 6

Twin Fusion Gun; 1 Front/Left/Right; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Grav Mortar Launchers; 1 Universal; Attack +0; Damage 2d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 6; 15 missiles each (fires three shells per shot).

Tal'Horcon Air Defence Artillery

The Tal'Horcon is a very effective vehicle at carrying out its intended objective- dealing with air superiority fighters and aerial targets. Two Rha'vish launchers ensure that very few flight capable vehicles can ignore its presence for long, though its basic fusion armament does not make it much of a ground threat or allow it to successfully defend itself from a concentrated infantry attack.

Large Surface Vehicle; hp 25; DV 12 (-1 size, +3 agility); DR 5; Spd 14; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +5; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 300 lb.; 1 Driver, 1 Gunner.

Weapons:

Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Two Rha'Vish Missile Launchers; 2 Turret; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 30 missile capacity

Vision Command Tank

The Vision is not a powerful tank in its own right, but its main purpose is providing a command presence on the battlefield. As such, it is included as an assumed part of virtually every formation of vehicles fielded by the Minbari infantry. The sensors and communication gear on the Vision ensure that it can be the eyes and ears of an entire armoured company if need be.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 40; DV 12 (-2 size, +4 agility); DR 7; Spd 14; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 500 lb.; 1 Driver/Gunner, 2 Officers, 1 Commander (if needed).

Weapons:

Twin Fusion Gun; Turret; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Windsword Heavy Assault Tank

The most powerful tank fielded by the Minbari, the Windsword heavy assault tank is heavily armed and armoured, cutting a very imposing presence across the

battlefield as it demolishes virtually everything it hits with its main gun. Windsword tanks are never fielded in platoons but always considered a unique unit when it deploys. Windsword tanks, when they are present on the battlefield at all, are always considered a primary target by enemy forces.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 50; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 9; Spd 12; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +2; Stealth 15; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 3000 lb.; 2 Drivers, 2 Gunners.

Weapons:

Neutron Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 30+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 5

Two Light Disruptor Cannons; 1 Front/Left, 1 Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical x3; Range 5

Three Twin Fusion Guns; 2 Boresight, 1 Aft; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Rha'Vish Missile Launcher; 1 Turret; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 10 missile capacity

Aquatic

Special Movement Type: *Naval*

Vehicles with Naval movement travel over the surface of an aquatic body as if it were solid ground. Gravitic vehicles can move as naval vessels but only at ¼ normal speed safely. Attempting to pilot a gravitic vehicle faster than ¼ requires a Drive check at a DC equal to 15 plus the current speed in units. If the roll fails, the vehicle immediately sinks. This also occurs if the gravitic vessel moves faster than ½ its speed; no Drive is allowed to avoid sinking in this case. Submersible and amphibious vehicles may automatically move as naval vessels, though most of their chassis will be underwater as per their design.

Special Quality: *Submersible (Amphibious)*

Any vehicle can conceivably be modified to be submersible underwater. This is an extensive change, as the base vehicle has to be environmentally sealed, reinforced against pressure if necessary, and given some means of propelling itself and manoeuvring in an aquatic environment. A vehicle modified to be submersible can move underwater at half its base speed (space based vehicles with this modification gain an underwater movement rate of 1 using its own scale for its actual speed) and has its acceleration, deceleration, and Handling bonus reduced by 2 to a minimum of 1 each (+0 for Handling); this modification costs 10% of the vehicle's base price. An air supply good for 24 hours of continuous operation is

included in the basic modification, with each extra day's operation costs an additional 3,000 credits.

For an additional %10 of the base cost of a vehicle, it can retain its previous mode of transportation. Unless this extra is paid, the modification that made the vehicle submersible removes its ability to move in any other environment, replacing all important motive features with aquatic equivalents.

Jashin Destroyer

A sizeable naval vessel with multiple guns lining its sloping deck, the Jashin does not have a single exposed section of its hull that is not covered in resistant crystal shielding. When a Jashin arrives in a naval battle, it carries enough firepower to be considered an immediate threat. One of the Jashin's most useful qualities to a naval commander is its ability to launch missiles at a very long range, using the fact that the open ocean has no terrain to speak of to enhance its superior bombardment capabilities.

Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 90; DV 8 (-4 size, +2 agility); DR 6; Spd 8 Naval; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic, Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners, 36 infantry or 18 infantry and nine Tal'Falni assault platforms.

Weapons:

Two Molecular Pulse Cannons; 1 Boresight, 1 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 1d4; Critical x2; Range 3

Three Twin Fusion Guns; 2 Turret, 1 Aft; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Three Improved Seti Missile Launchers; 1 Boresight, 2 Turret; Attack +3 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 15; 30 missile capacity

Galneth Fighter Carrier

A massive vessel that dwarfs other naval ships, the Galneth is important to aquatic superiority because of the fighters it can carry and deploy, not because of its relatively weak firepower. Any ship venturing too close to a Galneth can get ripped apart by its massed light arms fire, but the Galneth is vulnerable if ships with better range can attack it as a distance.

Colossal II Surface Vehicle; hp 280; DV 2 (-10 size, +2 Agility); DR 10; Spd 8 Naval; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +4; Stealth 14; Cargo 10,000 lb.; 2 Pilots, 4 gunners, 6 Officers, 16 Crew, 32 troops, up to 6 pilots

Weapons:

Ten Twin Fusion Guns; 2 Turret, 2Aft, 2 Left, 2 Right, 2 Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Four Rha'Vish Missile Launcher; 4 Turret; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 40 missile capacity

Craft (4):

4 Tishat Fighters

Galrin Cutter

The Galrium Cutter is a familiar sight on most Minbari worlds with any sizeable bodies of water. Even planets with no dedicated naval presence by the Minbari are usually patrolled by at least two Galrin alternating along coastlines in a constant state of vigilance. Galrin crews take their duties very seriously and understand that often, their speed means they will arrive at a battle and must defend themselves before slower ships can provide support, assuming any reinforcements exist at all.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 60; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 8; Spd 12 Naval; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 16; Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Pilot, 2 Gunners, 1 Officer, 8 Crew, 12 troops.

Weapons:

Heavy Disruptor Cannon; 1 Front/Left/Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 4d6; Critical x3; Range 7

Two Twin Fusion Guns; 2 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire.

Rha'Vish Missile Launcher; 1 Turret; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 10 missile capacity

Vin'tael Torpedo Launcher; Boresight; Attack +3; Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 8 torpedoes; Special Qualities: Reload Time (1 round).

Naith'val Battleships

The undisputed master of the military sea lanes, there is very little the Naith'val cannot accomplish in combat. Naith'vals carry a large number of troops and have a pair of Solthar amphibious landers mounted to the outside of their hulls to deploy them on beaches or against other vessels. Between mass missile bombardment, direct fire attacks with its three twin neutron cannons, and a pair of molecular pulse cannons mounted up front for dealing with small vessels, a Naith'val is an engine of destruction that can even pose a threat to land targets if they venture too close to a coastline.

Colossal II Surface Vehicle; hp 190; DV 5 (-8 size, +3 Agility); DR 11; Spd 8 Naval; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +1; Sensor +5; Stealth 15; Cargo 10,000 lb.; 4 Pilots, 8 gunners, 6 Officers, 36 Crew, 120 troops, 2 Solthar Pilots

Three Twin-linked Neutron Cannons; 2 Turret, 1 Front/Left/Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 45+4d10; Critical 18-20; Range 5

Two Molecular Pulse Cannons; 2 Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 1d4; Critical x2; Range 3
Four Twin Fusion Guns; 1 Boresight, 1 Aft, 2 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire.

Two Rha'Vish Missile Launchers; 2 Turret; Attack +2 (plus guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 10 missile capacity

Two Vin'tael Torpedo Launchers; 2 Boresight; Attack +4; Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 16 torpedoes; Special Qualities: Reload Time (1 round).

Craft (2):

2 Solthar Landers

Ovalrin Aquatic Carrier

A bizarre naval vessel in that it is actually a starship with submersible capabilities, the Ovalrin is used by the Minbari Navy to transport fleets of naval vessel from planet to planet. This effective relocation solves the typical problem of large naval ships being stuck in the body of water they were constructed in, a limiting factor that has restricted the growth of other races as multi-planetary naval powers. The Ovalrin is underpowered as a Minbari starship, but its environmental adaptability is second to none.

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 600; DV 12 (-12 size, +14 agility); DR 18; Spd - (1 Naval or Aquatic); Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +2; Sensor +10; Stealth 30; SQ Artificial Gravity, Atmospheric Capable, Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer, Submersible (Amphibious); Cargo 95,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 12 Pilots, 10 Sensor Operators, 30 Crewmen + Crews for any ships being carried.

Weapons:

Four Light Disruptor Cannons; 1 Boresight, 2 Turret, 1 Aft; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical x3; Range 6

Eighteen Fusion Cannon; 4 Front, 4 Aft, 5 Left, 5 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2

Craft (3):

Varies, up to 20 naval craft, at least half of which must be Huge or smaller and no more than 2 of which may be Colossal II in size. See Minbari Organizations, Navy Fleets, for suggested fleet arrangements.

Solthar Amphibious Lander

Troops on a naval vessel are of little use in ground based combat unless they can get to where the fighting is. That is the function of a Solthar Amphibious Lander, the most versatile standard vehicle in the Minbari Navy. Solthar are used as supplemental cutters, boarding craft during nautical battles, submarine hunters, beach assault craft, and anything else a clever naval commander can turn its mixed capabilities toward.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 46; DV 10 (-2 size, +2 agility); DR 7; Spd 12 (6 Naval); Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +0; Stealth 16; Special Qualities: Gravitic (also modified for Submersible, which means it may move at half speed without Drive checks), Submersible (amphibious), Cargo 1000 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners, 36 infantry or 18 infantry and nine Tal'Falni assault platforms.

Weapons:

Two Molecular Pulse Cannons; 1 Boresight, 1 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 1d4; Critical x2; Range 3

Two Twin Fusion Guns; 2 Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d6; Critical 18-20; Range 4; Rapid Fire

Two Seti Missile Launchers; 2 Boresight; Attack +0 (guidance software as per description); Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 6 missiles each

Vin'tael Torpedo Launcher; Boresight; Attack +3; Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 8 torpedoes; Special Qualities: Reload Time (1 round)

Rannat Defender Submarines

These vehicles are almost as common in the waters of Minbar and its colony worlds as Galrin cutters. They are quickly manufactured by the worker caste and can be crewed by only a handful of naval soldiers, making them commonly the first vessels assigned to a new nautical command. Rannat Defenders are swift, deadly, and often invisible as they ply Minbari waters, watching out for naval intrusions and removing them from deep beneath the waves.

Huge Surface Vehicle; hp 35; DV 12 (-2 size, +4 agility); DR 5; Spd 12; Acc 2; Dec 1; Han +2; Sensor +4; Stealth 19; Special Qualities: Submersible, Cargo 600 lb.; 1 Driver, 2 Gunners.

Weapons:

Heavy Disruptor Cannon; 1 Boresight; Attack +6 (targeting computer); Damage 4d6; Critical x3; Range 7

Two Vin'tael Torpedo Launchers; Boresight; Attack +3; Damage 3d6; Critical 19-20/x2; Range 10; 16 torpedoes; Special Qualities: Reload Time (1 round)

Space

There is no denying the sheer power and elegance of the Minbari fleet in space. The airless void allows the many innovations of the Minbari to reign supreme. While Minbari vehicles of all kinds are excellent and in many ways surpass those of other races, the gap between Minbari starships and the spacefaring vessels of other powers in the galaxy is even greater. Like massive alien fish, they swim effortlessly through the stars, their bright beam weapons cleaving enemy ships apart as they sail untouchably through the heaviest fire. While Minbari ships are not indestructible, they are certainly the strongest of all the younger races; only the Ancients can stand against them in battle with any real chance of victory.

Special System: EM Shield

Currently only installed on the White Star, the EM shield is a defensive device that generates a field of coherent electromagnetic energy to make the defended ship both harder to hit and more resistant to damage. EM Shields are slightly disruptive to the targeting system of a ship bearing them, penalising attack rolls made when the shields are active by their rating. The EM shield on the White Star has a rating of 2, adding its value to the ship's DV and DR but penalising its attack rolls by -2 while functioning. Turning an EM shield on or off is a free action that must be declared at the beginning of the ship's turn.

Minbari Flyer

Perhaps the most common Minbari spacecraft seen outside of heavily travelled space lanes, the flyer is a small but extremely potent vessel. Armed with a single fusion cannon for defence, in the hands of a skilled pilot flyer can be a match for many of the front line fighters used by other races. It is designed primarily to ensure the safe passage of a single individual through space and its highly intelligent computer system allows most functions to be performed automatically, to the extent where a completely unskilled passenger can simply inform the flyer of where he wants to go and all navigational, docking procedures and even combat manoeuvres are performed without any further intervention.

Huge Spacecraft; hp 32; DV 14 (-2 size, +6 agility); DR 6; Spd 40; Acc 10; Dec 10; Han +6; Sensor +10; Stealth 34; SQ Artificial Gravity, Atmospheric Capable, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 400 lb.; 1 Pilot/Passenger

Weapons:

Light Fusion Cannon; Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 3d8; Critical 18-20; Range 1

Neshatan Gunship

At first glance, enemies of the Minbari are often taken aback by the appearance of a Neshatan gunship. Bereft of the fins that usually adorn Minbari vessels, the Neshatan is one of the oldest designs still in operation in their fleet. Larger than a Sharlin and carrying a vast array of weapons, the Neshatan is not necessarily superior in combat to the new flagship of the Minbari due to its slow speed and manoeuvrability. What it does possess, and the reason it is still used by the pragmatic race, is sheer endurance and the potential for mass destruction. It takes an incredible amount of damage to destroy a Neshatan; usually, this is a long process that costs the enemy far more than the loss of a single gunship.



Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 195,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 20 Pilots, 20 Sensor Operators, 48 Crewmen

Weapons:

Six Fusion Cannons; 4 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2
Five Electro-Pulse Guns; 3 Boresight, Two Rear; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage special; Range max. 1

Craft:

48 fighters (either Nial or Tishat)
2 Flyers

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 775; DV 8 (-12 size, +10 agility); DR 24; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +1; Sensor +12; Stealth 35; SQ Artificial Gravity, Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 175,000 lb.; 3 Officers, 20 Pilots, 18 Sensor Operators, 50 Crewmen

Weapons:

Ten Neutron Lasers; 4 Front, 4 Rear, 2 Left, 2 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 150+5d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8
Five Fusion Cannon; 3 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2
Electro-Pulse Gun; Boresight; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage special; Range max. 1

Morshin Carrier

The primary transport for the Minbari Empire, a Morshin carrier holds four dozen fighters and a pair of flyers, an immense fleet of small craft that can easily turn the tide of any battle they deploy into. At the Battle of the Line at Earth, it was the Nial heavy fighters brought to the battle by Morshin carriers that did more damage by far than any other kind of ship in the fleet, including the many Sharlin cruisers that were present. Morshin carriers are not as heavily armed as other Minbari vessels, but they possess enough firepower to deal with most vessels light enough to evade their fighter screens.

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 650; DV 10 (-12 size, +12 agility); DR 22; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 3; Han +1; Sensor +12; Stealth 40; SQ Artificial Gravity, Jump Point, Long-

Nial Heavy Fighter

The main front line fighter of the Minbari Federation, the Nial is an utterly lethal craft. Benefiting from the same stealth technology common to all Minbari vessels, the Nial is exceptionally manoeuvrable and is armed with three light fusion cannon, powerful enough to utterly destroy any craft of similar size and granting the ability to engage much larger ships. Though short-ranged, the Nial's advanced flight control system allows its pilot to complete many actions automatically, leaving him to concentrate on the most important tasks, a vital advantage in combat.

Large Spacecraft; hp 25; DV 18 (-1 size, +9 agility); DR 7; Spd 50; Acc 12; Dec 12; Han +8; Sensor +10; Stealth 36; SQ Atmospheric Capable, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 5 lb.; 1 Pilot

Weapons:

Tri-linked Light Fusion Cannon; Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 3d8; Critical 18-20; Range 1

Shargoti Heavy Battlecruiser

A Sharlin cruiser with most of its command superstructure refitted with additional weapons and armour plating, the Shargoti exists for one reason alone- the total destruction of anything that opposes the Minbari Federation. A Shargoti has more firepower than many other races' main battle fleets and in combat, it dominates the stellar frontier with scything beams of neutron light and crackling pulses of deadly electricity. Designed to force the Minbari line through any defence the Earth Alliance might have been able to place in their way during the Earth/Minbari War, the Shargoti vessels never got to see active service during that conflict, a fact the warrior caste deeply regrets.

Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 750; DV 12 (-12 size, +14 agility); DR 24; Spd -; Acc 5; Dec 5; Han +2; Sensor +14; Stealth 40; SQ Artificial Gravity, Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 195,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 30 Pilots, 22 Sensor Operators, 45 Crewmen

Weapons:

Six Neutron Lasers; 2 Front, 2 Rear, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 150+5d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8

Twenty Two Fusion Cannon; 6 Front, 6 Rear, 5 Left, 5 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2

2 Electro-Pulse Gun; Boresight; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage special; Range max. 1

Craft (12):

24 Nial, 4 Flyers

Sharlin War Cruiser

Often described as ugly by those veterans who had to face them in the Earth/Minbari War, the Sharlin warcruiser is a breathtaking sight with a blue graceful hull that radiates pure menace. This is the primary front line spacecraft of the Minbari Federation and it is generally agreed that they are the most powerful vessels ever designed, with the possible exception of Vorlon ships. Carrying two full squadrons of Nial heavy fighters and possessing the best stealth systems ever seen, a Sharlin is fully capable of defeating an entire fleet of ships from any other race without taking any appreciable damage. Indeed, during the Earth/Minbari War, many EarthForce officers quickly found that the only reasonable way to defeat a Sharlin was to ram it, a move that usually destroyed both spacecraft.





Colossal III Spacecraft; hp 725; DV 12 (-12 size, +14 agility); DR 22; Spd -; Acc 5; Dec 5; Han +2; Sensor +14; Stealth 40; SQ Artificial Gravity, Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 195,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 28 Pilots, 20 Sensor Operators, 42 Crewmen

Weapons:

Four Neutron Lasers; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 150+5d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8
Eighteen Fusion Cannon; 4 Front, 4 Rear, 5 Left, 5 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2

Electro-Pulse Gun; Boresight; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage special; Range max. 1

Craft (12):

24 Nial, 4 Flyers

Tigara Attack Cruiser

A variant of the Tinashi frigate built on a longer, narrower hull, the Tigara is a more focused vessel intended to achieve space superiority in situations that either do not require the presence of a flagship squadron or need only one as a co-ordination vessel. Tigara vessels are perfectly capable of maintaining control over an area of space, even carrying its own screen of six fighters for defence against a wide variety of possible enemies. Tigara cruisers are effect at planetary bombardment as well, with the sensor

acuity necessary to pinpoint ground targets and direct molecular beams against them.

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 525; DV 12 (-10 size, +12 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +10; Stealth 25; SQ Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 100,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 10 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators, 38 Crewmen

Weapons:

Six Molecular Disruptors; 2 Front, 2 Rear, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 60+4d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8

Ten Fusion Cannon; 4 Front, 4 Rear, 5 Left, 5 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2

Two Anti-matter Converters; 2 Boresight; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 2 x the DR of the Target + 10, DR does not reduce damage; Critical 18-20; Range 5

Craft (3):

6 Nial, 2 Flyers

Tinashi Frigate

The Federation's standard attack craft, a Tinashi frigate is a powerful vessel with speed, armour, and striking power that makes it the equal or superior to any other craft its size, regardless of the race of origin. Even small ships belonging to the Ancients are only an equal match for the combination of grace and power present in a

Tinashi. When constructing fleets for tactically variable missions, Tinashi frigates are a natural choice and many Alyts default to them when looking for a vessel capable of accomplishing any mission objective.

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 525; DV 12 (-10 size, +12 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +10; Stealth 25; SQ Jump Point, Jump Point, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 100,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 10 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators, 38 Crewmen

Weapons:

Three Neutron Lasers; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 150+5d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8

Six Fusion Cannon; 2 Front, 2 Rear, 1 Left, 1 Right; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2

Two Electro-Pulse Gun; 2 Front; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage special; Range max. 1

Craft (1):

2 Flyers

Tishat Medium Fighter

The Tishat fighter is a ship with a few adherents among the warrior clans but built with dated technology that makes it the clear inferior to the Nial Heavy Fighter. With only speed and manoeuvrability as advantages over its successor, most Tishat are going out of service, their parts cannibalised to repair and refit Nials damaged in the field. One facet of its design that is preventing the Tishat from being phased out completely is its ease of conversion, especially into an amphibious flyer. Galneth fighter naval carriers usually have these modified fighters as their compliment. Many Fire Wings pilots are especially reluctant to give up their Tishat fighters, continually upgrading them as time and resources allow.

Large Spacecraft; hp 21; DV 20 (-1 size, +11 agility); DR 6; Spd 55; Acc 12; Dec 12; Han +8; Sensor +10; Stealth 34; SQ Atmospheric Capable, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 5 lb.; 1 Pilot

Weapons:

Twin-linked Light Fusion Cannon; Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8; Critical 18-20; Range 1

Torotha Assault Frigate

The fastest large ship in the Minbari fleet, a Torotha assault frigate is a rapid attack craft with a lighter weapon load-out than the race's other warships. It makes up for these

lighter guns by moving quickly enough to evade a great deal of enemy fire while directing its weapons against one target at a time until it falls before the inexorable force of its fusion cannons and molecular disrupters. The armour of a Torotha assault frigate is much lighter than other Minbari ships, a weakness that can be very costly if opposing vessels can somehow pin this ship down long enough for one retaliatory volley.

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 525; DV 12 (-10 size, +12 agility); DR 18; Spd -; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +10; Stealth 25; SQ Jump Point, Atmospheric Capable, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer; Cargo 100,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 10 Pilots, 12 Sensor Operators, 38 Crewmen

Weapons:

Two Molecular Disruptors; 2 Front; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 60+4d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8

Four Fusion Cannon; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 10+3d10; Critical 18-20; Range 2
Electro-Pulse Gun; Front; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage special; Range max. 1

White Star

The result of a technological gestalt between Minbari and Vorlon science, the White Star is a powerful vessel with firepower and endurance far beyond what its small size would suggest. Combining all of the advantages of Minbari ship design with many of the benefits of Vorlon living materials, White Stars are agile, resilient, and capable of handling almost anything a hostile galaxy can throw at them. With enough speed to evade capital ships they cannot engage directly, a White Star is usually crewed by truly elite personnel, making them even more effective.

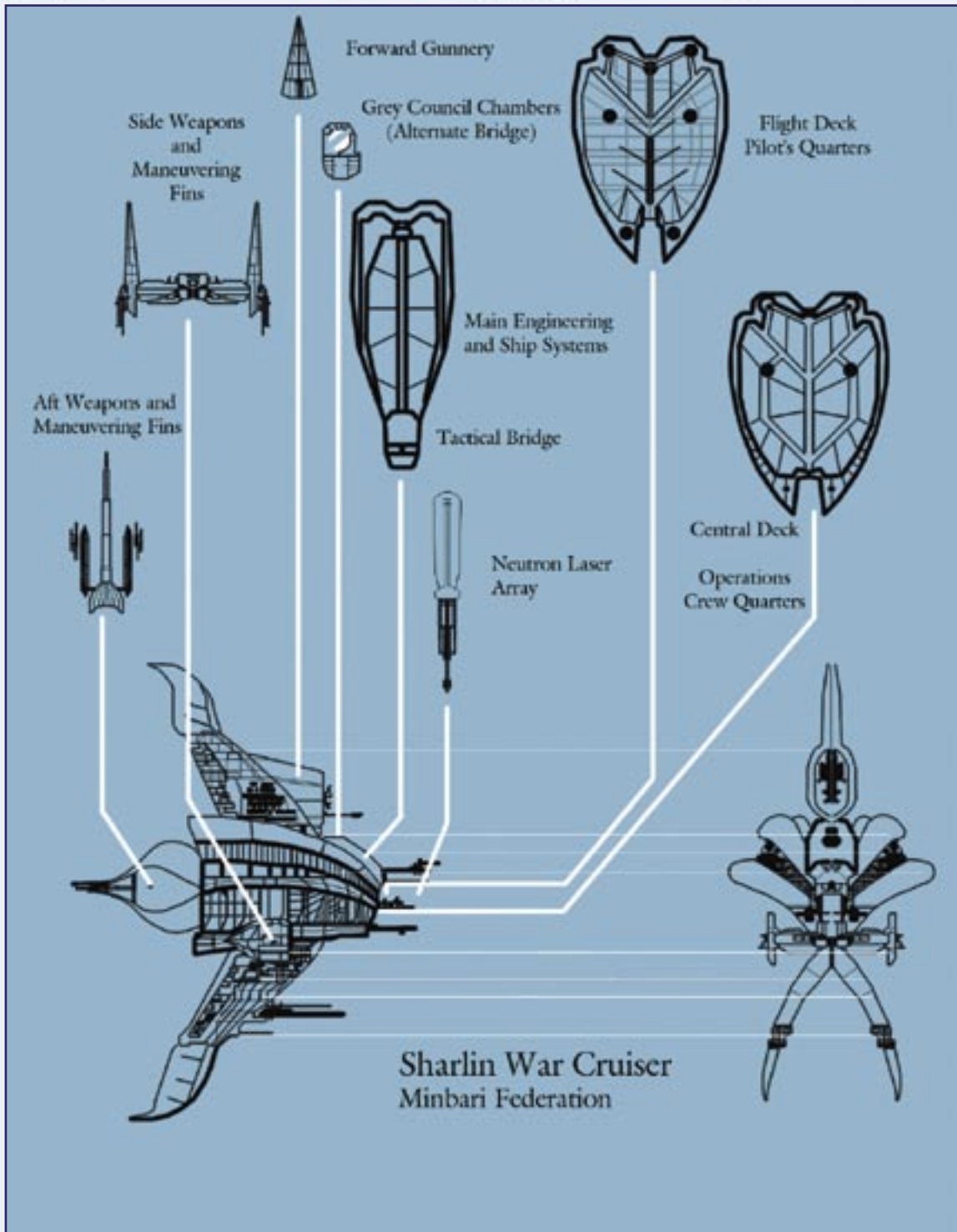
Colossal Spacecraft; hp 400; DV 20 (-8 size, +18 agility); DR 18 (20); Spd 60; Acc 4; Dec 4; Han +3; Sensor +10; Stealth 25; SQ Jump Point, Atmospheric Capable, Long-Ranged, Minbari Flight Computer, Living Ship (healing capacity only); Cargo 50,000 lb.; 2 Officers, 6 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 18 Crewmen

Weapons:

Improved Neutron Laser; 1 Boresight; Attack +6 (targeting computer); Damage 150+5d10; Critical 17-20; Range 8
Four Molecular Pulsars; 4 Front; Attack +5 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 18-20; Range 8; Rapid Fire

Craft (1):

2 Flyers



The graceful lines of a Minbari Sharlin cruiser represent every important aesthetic that guides the designs of the race. Form and function together in a deadly combination, the Sharlin is a familiar and feared sight among the other races that share the galaxy with the Minbari. Its quiet assurance of a swift death for any who cross its path ensures that the Minbari remain unchallenged by any other

species now that the last of the Ancients have departed beyond the rim. Whether this new dominance will lead to a new era of Minbari dominance or a silent continuance of the distance they have kept from others in the past will be a matter for the Interstellar Alliance and the newly reformed Grey Council to decide.

Minbari Characters

'We may sometimes look like you, but we are not ... you! Never forget that.'
-Lennier

For anyone simply looking for background information on the Minbari, the last 150+ pages have probably satisfied any needs they might have had. Even if a specific question was not answered, enough references have been given to help people find whatever they want to know. The Minbari have been analysed socially, physically, and historically. Their planets have been revealed, their military discussed, and the inner workings of their castes lined out at every level of their individual hierarchies. Names have been given, places explored, and people described in detail. For anyone just wanting to know more about the Minbari than what has been revealed in the Babylon 5 television show

and its related movies, that information should be more than enough.

But, if you are reading this section now, you probably want more. To you, Babylon 5 is more than a television phenomenon, a five season story with numerous spin-offs and media of all kinds. This book represents the Minbari aspect of its next iteration- the Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game. Now that the facts have been given and the background revealed, you want to know how you can put all of this together to make Minbari Player Characters and Non Player Characters that live and breathe beyond their statistics and racial abilities. You do not just want to know about the Minbari, you want to *be* Minbari.

This chapter and the Campaigns chapter that follows it will take care of that for you. In this section of the Minbari sourcebook, you will find rules for Minbari-specific skill uses, new feats that cover the wide and exotic range of Minbari talents and backgrounds, and prestige classes that Minbari players can take to better fit themselves into the mould of the long-standing traditions and roles

characters



of the castes, clans, and honoured divisions of this most venerated and ancient race.

Games Masters of the Babylon 5 roleplaying game will find this chapter just as useful. Minbari players are not alone in an often-hostile universe; fortunately, one of the Minbari's greatest strengths is their ability to function together as a society. For every one Minbari that others see, there are often two or three more not far away, ready to offer aid at a moment's notice. Any scenario with Minbari players will likely require Minbari Non Player Characters for them to interact with, something this chapter will help you accomplish in style. When the Minbari players in your group wish to contact a religious caste Singer-Poet for some piece of ancient lore vital to a current mission, you will have all the tools you need here to create one and breathe life into what otherwise might be a lifeless scene.

Even though many of the rules in this chapter are just that, new rules for use with Minbari characters, players and Games Masters alike should never forget the central tenet of any Babylon 5 scenario. The story and the characters are the central focus of the game, not numbers and dice. In a universe where combat is often too deadly to initiate without a very good reason, a Minbari's background and history may become far more important than the sum of his attack bonuses. The emphasis in the Babylon 5 roleplaying game is on interaction, not gunplay; while the rules here will enhance some numeric aspect of a Minbari character, it is often the background in the last 150+ pages that will prove more valuable during play.

*Ambassador Sinclair,
You have been on Minbar for some time now, and there have been as many adventures here as there were back on Babylon 5. You have seen the death of a Satai, the changing of an age, and the return of an ancient enemy thought long forgotten. There are many more challenges that lie ahead, but for you, the journey you will take from here on out will lead you not forwards, but back- back farther than you can imagine. You should go for a walk when you finish reading this. A friend has something for you, something that has been waiting a long, long time.*

Do not be afraid, Jeffrey. She will be waiting for you on the other end of your journey.

-A friend

Minbari and Skills

'From birth I was raised in the temple and studied the ways of the religious caste. Six months ago I came here. There is nothing else.'

-Lennair

The focus of the Minbari is incredible, a racial trait that allows them to spend so much time learning that their world becomes that study and nothing else exists for them. When the Minbari choose to adopt a new skill set, they often obsess on it to the point of achieving as much mastery as current time and attention constraints will allow. Very few Minbari dabble in any given skill, preferring to perform masterfully in it or not at all. This is reflected in their society when a given individual is trained for a single duty and works in that capacity indefinitely.

In a game sense, this means that Minbari players should try to ensure that their skill points are spent to achieve the maximum number of ranks in a few skills as their character classes allow rather than dividing them up into a few points here and a single point there, building up an eclectic array of barely learned talents rather than mastering a few. Of course, this is a suggestion, but deviating from this pattern should have some background story explanation as opposed to a Player simply trying to optimise his Minbari's effectiveness in game. A Minbari, by his nature and inclination, tends to focus on one task until it is mastered before moving on to another one.

This does not mean the Minbari only value single skills. One task to the Minbari could involve a number of skills, each of which must be developed separately but all originate from the need to perform the Minbari's societal role. A worker caste fleet engineer will certainly have his Technical (engineering) skill as high as he can manage, but there are also related Knowledge and Profession skills that he will want to be highly skilled in. A single job is rarely affected by one skill alone and the Minbari pride themselves on being as efficient as possible.

The racial tradition of Minbari being told only what they need to know and no more has led to many of its people having a very myopic view of the universe. While every Minbari knows of Space Travel and the existence of other races, very few would be able to name every species in the League of Non-Aligned Worlds or be able to point to Sol in the night sky unless their chosen roles somehow involved knowing these things. The training methods of the Minbari, while being very effective, are also narrow in focus and do not typically prepare their people to be very functional outside their society.

For Minbari players in campaigns that involve settings outside the Federation or characters from other races, this is not as much of a problem as it might sound. Players can approach this in several ways. The first is to simply accept that their Minbari is not well educated in the universe outside his small corner of it on Minbar. This can lead to some entertaining roleplaying as other, more worldly characters instruct them on the fine art of such esoteric things as shopping, lodging that has to be paid for, and the traditions and social morays of other races. A Minbari of this kind can easily offend members of other species without intending to simply because he does not understand them.

Another way to deal with the issue is to assume that the Minbari Player's background involved this kind of education and he has now become inured to the basic truths of space travel and other beings that share the stars with their race. This rationale can also explain any sporadic expenditure of skill points as once a Minbari leaves his culture, it may be difficult to arrange the intense conditions needed to learn the way the way he would back home.

Yet another possibility arises if the character is a diplomat, soldier, merchant, or trained in some other role that by its nature would bring him into contact with the galaxy outside of the Minbari Federation. Such individuals are trained directly to interact more skilfully with outside cultures, doing away with much, but not necessarily all, of the awkwardness inherent in such encounters. Minbari may be slightly insular and isolationist, but they are also very adaptive and capable of dealing with almost any situation they encounter. These character strengths can keep a Minbari Player from being awkward for long and can easily explain skill points spent in Diplomacy and Knowledge skills, even if they are unrelated to his character class.

Minbari-Specific Skill Uses

Their natural mastery of any skill the Minbari set their minds to learning provides them with a wide array of abilities. Any skill a Minbari Player wishes to learn is likely available, though caste and character class choice might leave some of them more out of reach than others. This does not mean a Minbari Player cannot choose cross-class skills, but they will not be as easily learned as things their given societal role makes readily accessible. The Minbari have virtually every skill imaginable represented among the many skilled members of their race.

This general mastery is also manifested as several forms of specific focus in some Minbari, with skills being turned to

avenues of research and accomplishment that are racially specific. The dedication a motivated Minbari can turn to a given task can be impressive, especially as the flexibility that is often missing in their mindset returns quickly in the guise of creative solutions to vexing problems.

The Minbari have developed several special uses for what are otherwise considered basic skills, modes of application that other races would either not have the patience to duplicate or rarely have an applicable situation come up when they would need to try. Two of these are listed here with others likely coming up in play as Minbari players discover effective ways to deal with racial issues or problems that occur in game. The 'how' does not matter as much; it is the creativity and focus that make these techniques distinctively Minbari.

That does not preclude players of other races from using the tricks listed here, but these special rules apply more often to the Minbari than any other species. No racial limits are placed on these skill applications, but non-Minbari players should either have a good reason for employing these tricks or at least be able to point to a Minbari player with them that showed them how such things are done.

New Skill Use: Sense Motive (Decipher Religious Text)

When a Minbari studies an ancient religious document, even one of a culture other than his own, long years of living within a religious society with prophecy being quoted on a constant basis lends a certain level of understanding into the mindset of those who recorded the text decades, centuries, or even millennia earlier. This insight can be invaluable to determining exact what is meant behind the level of hyperbole and parables common to such writing.

To use this skill technique, the Minbari Player must have some way to understand the passage he is reading (or in some exotic cases, listening to). This can be through painstaking translation or fluency in the language being used. Unless the Minbari can understand every word to some degree in a text fragment he wishes to analyze, there is no way he can grasp enough of the nuances to fully grasp what is being implied over what is actually being said. This understanding can come from any means that imparts the words of the text to the Minbari, including someone else's translation as long as it is correct. The Minbari studying the text must also have some way of understanding the culture and history of the piece, though this knowledge does not need to be exacting.

Deciphering the meaning of a religious passage also requires that the Minbari Player study it for at least ten minutes per sentence or key element. This can take hours of the text is a long one, but the Minbari have great patience, especially if the writing is an ancient one and the Minbari is religious caste in origin. The Sense Motive roll required and the level of insight gained after this time is determined below.

- ⑤ **DC 15.** The Minbari can ascertain whether the text is referring to an actual event or individual or merely speaking figuratively. (*'And the great lights shall wander their long arc for as long as there are seeds in the yava fruit before the ordeal of flames will end.'* A check resulting in 15 will determine that the great light and the ordeal of flames are likely figurative names for something else but that the yava fruit is probably a solid fact.)
- ⑤ **DC 20.** The Minbari can glean enough from what is written to determine a useful fact from the text itself, some key item that will help in the further analysis of the passage. This level of check can be continuously retried to get additional information at the Games Master's discretion. (A check of 20 would reveal in the above passage that a yava fruit was a common food item among the priesthood in the time of the prophecy's writing and that it typically had 120 seeds.)
- ⑤ **DC 25.** The Minbari can glean information about parables and hyperbole that provides useful information for deciphering the passage's true meaning. This level of check can also be retried for additional details. (Continuing with the above example, a Sense Motive check can determine that the great lights are likely the twin suns of the world the tablet was found on and that the ordeal of fire was probably the priest's way of interpreting a vision about a meteor shower.)
- ⑤ **DC 30.** The Minbari can either spot enough inconsistencies or find enough corroborating evidence in other texts or in the passage itself to determine the veracity of the document. (With a check at DC 30, the prophecy could be revealed as a fake, given the Minbari's insight into the character of the priests writing the document and the fact that they were prone to threaten heavenly retribution when they were not given a high level of respect by the nation's rulers.)

'For 1,000 years we have awaited the fulfillment of prophecy and now that it has come you scorn it, you reject it, for you no longer believe in it yourselves.'
-Oelenn

New Skill Use: Craft (Minbari Craftsmanship)

This skill related ability is very close to being limited to the Minbari of the worker caste only, but it could be applied in the appropriate circumstances to other races or individuals with the capacity to create exquisite and masterful versions of normal items through skill, focus, and the desire to render every detail of a project in the most perfect form possible. Minbari craftsmanship is nearly flawless, with very little they make anything less than a model of crafting perfection.

To accomplish this in a rules-based setting, a Minbari craftsman can use his Craft skill and extra time to improve an existing item or build a new one out of raw materials. This process is not an easy one and there is a great deal of room for error, but the results are often worth the investment and risk. Under normal circumstances, everything found on Minbar, its colonies, or on the fleet ships of the Federation have been built with this use of the Craft skill as noted in the Technology section. The worker caste performs exacting work, but they are not usually very quick to finish any given project.

A Minbari craftsman can attempt one of the two following techniques. Failure doing either ruins the original item or consumes half of the raw materials in the creation attempts, effectively costing the craftsman half its base completed price. Items built from scratch are always considered to have the basic traits of Minbari items, but only if the craftsman is Minbari (assuming this skill technique is being used for other Player races).

- ⑤ **Modification of Existing Equipment.** This cannot be done to equipment that is already of Minbari construction, but instead brings the benefits of that design to something made by another race. This modification costs 150% the price of the item in materials and one day of uninterrupted work for every fraction of 500 credits of the original item's cost. If successful, the item gains the Minbari Equipment Modification qualities listed in the Technology section.
- ⑤ **Build Superior Item.** This ability is best left to the discretion of the Games Master for what it can or cannot accomplish, but a simple guideline would be to assign a +1 to +3 bonus to the main function of the item as it pertains to skill checks, attack rolls, or damage rolls. Each attempt costs the item's base price in materials times the bonus desired +1. Multiple bonuses are considered entirely separate creations with their own cost added to the final materials price of the item. For

example, a Minbari fighting knife created as a superior item with a +1 to attack rolls and a +2 to damage would cost the base price of a fighting knife (300 cr.) times (1+1) for the attack bonus and 300 times (2+1) for the damage enhancement for a total of 1,500 cr. Each bonus must be rolled for as a separate craft check, with the DC of each check being 20 + 5 times the bonus amount. This places the higher bonuses in the province of the kind of work only master craftsmen are capable of.

'We have brought our world to the very brink of destruction, and now it will fall to the worker caste to rebuild it. It is only right and fair that they should then lead us and that we, who have only advice and battle to offer, should follow.'
-Oelenn

New Skill Use: Concentration (Endure Hardship)

With their race's tradition of fasting, long preparation times for meals and ritual events, and the level of endurance required to undergo these physical ordeals with any degree of success, the Minbari have achieved a very impressive level of physical endurance under trying circumstances. This skill technique using Concentration to mentally overcome some of the physical effects of hardship and deprivation is suitable for their race, but it is also perfectly acceptable for any Player trying to overcome adverse conditions through willpower alone.

This trick is best used to simulate endurance under controlled circumstances, such as a prolonged fast in comfortable surroundings or the need to stay awake for 38 hours while preparing a special meal in ritual fashion. It can be used by those with enough skill to do so in situations more adversarial than these; individuals of any race may attempt to endure the hardships of traveling across a desert with no water under the blistering heat of a noonday sun or survive an extended period of time in a life pod without food, but eventually the frailties of the body will catch up with them.

When attempting to endure a trying condition and function normally, the Player makes a Concentration check at DC 10 to initiate the ordeal when the first event that might cause them to lose their focus as succumb to their environment occurs. This might be twelve hours after the beginning of a fast or the first hour of intense desert heat as best determined by the Games Master. At every appropriate interval (every six hours after the first 24 for sleep deprivation, every twelve hours for a fast, every hour for desert of freezing conditions, etc.), the character must

make another check with a cumulative increase to the DC of +1. Extremely trying conditions can raise the increase to +2 or even +3, but these should be assessed each hour and only occur if something challenging (a fasting character was forced to watch people eat, etc.) occurred during that time.

'During the preparation of this meal, he has not eaten or slept for three days to remain spiritually pure. If he had slept or made an error in its completion, he would have had to start all over again.'
-Oelenn

Minbari Feats

The feats in this part of the chapter are divided into six sections. The first section is physical and represents special traits that are common (or not so common) to the Minbari. Some of these are the result of special training bringing out gifts of birth, but most are simply benefits of some quick in the genetic code of a given Minbari. These abilities can often be brought out in infant Minbari through the use of genetic augmentation, but most clans do not choose to do this to their members, especially in recent years as birth rates have continued to decline.

The next three correspond to the castes and give a broad, cross-section of the Minbari as they train their people for the roles in society that they are intended to fill. These are either physical talents emphasised by one of the castes or the culmination of generations of special training techniques that elevate exceptional individuals to pinnacles of achievement in some task or skill. Some are martial in origin and reflect the almost monastic focus that the warrior clans impose upon their members. Others are labour in intention and modify some aspect of the creative process. Others are representative of the intensity of the religious caste's devotion of learning and mysticism.

Feats of the fifth section belong to the Casteless and show the many facets of their lives and personalities that have been shaped by the privation and circumstance that seeking freedom from their society have forced them to endure. Possibly the most physically and mentally adaptable of the Minbari, the Casteless are capable of dealing with change and shifting conditions far better than their stolid peers in the ever inflexible castes.

Lastly, the sixth category of feats belongs to the lost warrior clan, the Dark Knives. These Minbari, changed by the Shadows into the Shadowsouled, vary as much within themselves as they do as a race when compared to the Minbari they came from. The inheritors of numerous

gifts and quirks from their chaotic and atavistic patrons, this thrall race has emerged from centuries of waiting to find a universe without any of the rules that once bound their lives. With the exodus of the Shadows beyond the galactic rim, the Dark Knives must now decide what to do with their many talents.

Physical Feats

There is generally no limit to the number or combination of physical feats that a Minbari Player can take, with exceptions listed in the description of the feat itself. Minbari with physical feats tend to look different unless a given feat mentions specifically that it is not readily noticeable. Difference is not well appreciated in the castes, which may lead to a certain level of estrangement on the part of the Minbari Player in question, but this more of a background note than any real limitation. While the Minbari dislike anything that does not meet their levels of conformity, they rarely act against it either.

Traits

This section of the Character chapter introduces a new type of feat, the Trait. Traits are feats that, because of their internal balance of benefits versus detriments, do not count towards a character's allowable number of feats. Because traits are rare and do not tend to occur multiple times in

the same individual because of the physical integrity of a given race, a character may only begin play with one Trait feat unless it has Games Master's approval to select one or more additional ones.

Despite their nature as being physical oddities or changes, traits are not always limited to the first level of character creation. Instead, some can occur after a character has been played and advanced in level over the course of a campaign. A Games Master is always the final arbiter as to whether a character can take a trait; sometimes, the course of a game may dictate a given trait is imposed on a character due to some occurrence involving an unwanted change that could not be avoided. It is recommended that this be a rare event in game, as changes to characters can become disruptive if it occurs too often.

Awareness (General)

You have a latent psychic ability to use your senses even when prevailing conditions would otherwise prevent you from doing so.

Prerequisite: Minbari only (Games Master's approval only for other races, Narn may not take this feat), Wisdom 12+



Benefit: You only suffer half the listed penalty from any effect that limits your senses. Darkness, bright flashes from grenades or similar weapons, and other obfuscations are among the effects you can diminish. You also gain a Will save anytime you are exposed to any effect that alters your perceptions even if the effect does not normally allow one. In addition, you gain a +2 competence bonus to any saving throw necessitated by a Telepathic ability that would alter your ability to sense your true surroundings.



Crest Blindness (Trait)

Though you are not actually blind, this condition is named after one of its possible effects. Your crest has grown much more under the skin than those of other Minbari, threatening to sub-cutaneously encroach on your eyes and ears.

Prerequisite: Minbari only.

Benefit: Crest Blindness is not common, but it has been seen in many Minbari in the past and techniques to deal with its slow but steady encroach over the sensory organs have been developed. As long as you receive Minbari-specific medical treatment once a month, there is no risk of your massive crest actually cutting off your ability to see or hear. While this is a constant concern, the treatments are easy and do not require any skill checks to succeed. If one is missed, Listen and Spot checks will be penalised by 1 each month until Minbari trained medical attention can be attained. If these penalties reach -10, sight and hearing are lost until the crest can be trimmed back through treatment once again.

As a positive note, constant maintenance of your crest has made you very careful and cautious. You receive a +1 to Concentration checks because of this continual reminder of what can happen when obligations are ignored. The pressure of Crest Blindness also tends to give you headaches, but these are easily controlled and do not impose any penalties on you in any case.

Fading Soul (Trait)

While most Minbari are pale, you are truly white in colouration; your skin lacks even the basic pigmentation

of your race. In other species, this is called albinism, but it affects a Minbari differently.

Prerequisite: Minbari Only

Benefit: Your skin is pale to the point of chalk white, an indication of a chemical imbalance in your epidermis and a much deeper physiological condition. You suffer a -2 penalty to all Charisma based checks with your own race as this trait is considered the sign of a weak or faithless soul, hence the condition's name. Religious caste members feel this stigma the most; the penalty for dealing with them becomes -3 and they will feel distinctly uncomfortable around you because of your appearance.

The same imbalance that causes the Fading Soul condition also affects a Minbari physically. Instead of becoming physically weaker like most races, this Minbari-specific form of albinism causes the chemicals that would have generated pigmentation to flood the muscles and tendons instead. This influx of hormonal fluid actually bolsters the body; Fading Soul Minbari receive one additional hit point as a result.

Intuitive Reflexes (General)

The physical cause of your race's enhanced reaction time is over-developed in you, causing you to react to things before most other Minbari even perceive them.

Prerequisite: Minbari only, Dexterity 14+

Benefit: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to initiative checks. This bonus stacks with the Improved Initiative Feat and other effects that enhance initiative scores. In addition, you always gain a Spot check to keep from being surprised,

even when circumstances would normally not allow you to have one. This check is usually at a DC 18, but the Games Master may modify this value up or down depending on extenuating circumstances. If there is no physical way to sense an impending ambush, you do not receive a Spot check, but you still retain half of your Dexterity bonus to your Defence Value in the surprise round.

Massive Crest (Trait)

You have a physically over-developed crest, one that is noticeably larger than those of other Minbari. This is usually caused by a birth defect, but it can also be the result of early childhood trauma.

Prerequisite: Minbari only.

Benefit: A massive crest is a constant weight on the neck and shoulders, something that can cause severe stress to those muscles and joints after long periods of physical activity. Whenever you exert yourself for longer than an hour doing any form of physical work, you must make a Fortitude save with a DC of 15 plus 2 per additional half hour. Failure at this saving throw requires you to rest immediately for fifteen minutes by remaining effectively motionless. You may defend yourself during this period, but you may not initiate melee combat or willingly make any skill check based on Dexterity or Strength. If you must do so, the stress imposes a -4 penalty to the check.

As a true benefit, the crest's sheer size and its bone spikes combine to provide an effective physical weapon. You gain the ability to make a head butt as a natural weapon capable of inflicting 1d6 bludgeoning damage, but this does not allow you to be considered armed for the purpose of taking attacks of opportunity. You may take weapon related feats and the Improved Unarmed strike feat allows you to do 1d8 with your head butt instead.

Small Crest (General)

You have an unusually small crest, one that does not extend all the way down the back of your skull or come all the way around above your ears. This is seen as an omen of spiritual importance among the religious caste.

Prerequisite: Minbari only, Intelligence 12+, Wisdom 12+

Benefit: Your crest does not press against the walls of your cranium. While the Minbari brain has developed to overcome this pressure and is not improved in function when that condition is relaxed in this way, your crest also

does not limit the growth of brain structures responsible for the telepathic gift in the Minbari. This has no benefit unless you are already a telepath, but if you are, you gain an additional point of Psi Rating.

Caste Feats – Religious

The religious caste is known for its adherence to the tenets of Valen and its scholarly approach to life. There are very few pieces of lore that exist without the knowledge, indexing, and constant study of some member of this caste, if not an entire sect of them. Between their formation of private groups to fulfil some duty to their divinities, such as the Sisterhood of Valeria, and their devotion to the minutia of scientific studies, there are many realms of knowledge open to the Minbari that would not exist if the religious caste had not charted a course to them through hard work and diligent research.

Divine Guidance (General)

You are led through your life by the solemn and heartfelt belief you have in your convictions. They are your path and the lantern by which you light your way along it.

Prerequisite: Religious caste, Wisdom 12+

Benefit: Your deep-seated beliefs in the prophecies of Valen, the wisdom passed down by the gods, and the spiritual purity of your people can sustain you when nothing else will. You gain a +2 to all Concentration checks and once per gaming session, you may choose to pass any saving throw you would have otherwise failed through the power of your faith. You suffer subdual damage equal to the difference between the roll and the DC you required for success, the result of which may still knock you out.

Studious (General)

When given a topic to research, there is very little you cannot or will not do in the pursuit of that intellectual end. No source is safe from you and no fact can elude your notice for long.

Prerequisite: Religious caste, Gather Information 2+

Benefit: Researching a topic for one full day gives you a virtual rank in the Knowledge skill related to it. This virtual rank can stack with ranks you already possess in the given skill, but research cannot stack with itself. You may only possess one virtual rank at a time, but this skill allows you to make Knowledge skill checks you otherwise would not be able to because you lack ranks in the skill in

question. The virtual rank lasts only day after you stop studying, but once the initial day's research is done, it takes a mere one hour of supplemental study each day to maintain the virtual Knowledge rank. Prestige classes and feat choices cannot be based off the possession of this virtual skill rank.

True Dedication (General)

You believe in the power of the Divine as it has touched your people in the past and will guide them through the stars in the future. To you, the gods are very real and very much a part of your life.

Prerequisite: Divine Guidance, Charisma 12+

Benefit: Your passionate belief and force of personality enables you to embody the true essence of your deities, the ancient powers that once shaped the destiny of Minbar. You gain a +1 morale bonus to all saving throws because of this unshakable faith and if you must use the forced success aspect of your Divine Guidance feat, you only suffer half the subdual damage and cannot be taken below 1 hit point by its application as long as you were otherwise uninjured beforehand.

Caste Feats – Warrior

The warrior caste has a long, proud tradition for excellence in battle and combat skills that are second to none. The soldiers of other races are usually terrified to engage one in open warfare, usually with good reason. The warrior caste begins its training of new personnel at a very young age, with full martial arts classes occurring as early as the first year a young Minbari of the caste spends in his second crèche. Consequently, feats dedicated to the warrior caste are all about battle and martial superiority. Each clan has its own traditions in battle; these are represented here by the Combat Style feats given to each of the warrior clans.

Denn'bok Master (General)

Whether you were trained by Durhan himself or one of his honoured contemporaries, you have been granted knowledge of the secret techniques of fighting with a Denn'bok, a traditional weapon of the Anla'shok and some warrior caste clans.

Prerequisite: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn'bok), Weapon Focus (Denn'bok), Base Attack 6+, Dexterity 13+

Benefit: You gain the advantages of Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting when wielding a Denn'bok. You

also gain the ability to make a stunning blow with a Denn'bok once a combat in place of a melee attack. The stunning blow is rolled as normal and inflicts standard damage. The target must also make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + Strength modifier if positive) or be stunned for their next round.

Combat Style Feats

Another new type of feat, Combat Styles are feats that improve steadily as the Player with them goes up in character level. Combat Style feats are also unique in that they do not immediately apply any bonus at all. They represent the basic training that provides a character his or her fighting abilities and the framework that future development will build on. Additional abilities are accrued as the Player's base attack bonus increases. This way, even a warrior caste Minbari trained for some reason in a character class other than Soldier or Officer can still gain the benefits of his feats, just not as quickly.

Like Traits, Combat Styles do not cost a feat slot. They do not normally come with any drawbacks, but they also do not apply any benefits until at least one level after they are taken. Combat Styles are also very clan specific and require many formative years of training. As such, they can only be taken by members of the appropriate warrior clan and must be selected at first level. A Games Master may rule that a given character's background does not allow him or her to take their clan's combat style, but if this is done, it is recommended that some other appropriate feat be offered in its stead.

The Firesong (Combat Style)

You hear the Firesong in battle when you pilot a starfighter, the traditional combat vehicle for your clan.

Prerequisite: Warrior Caste, Fire Wings Clan, Must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: 'Hearing the Firesong' is a poetic way of visualising the many combat techniques developed by the Fire Wings clan for space combat, a kind of quiet mental focus that allows for the execution of several special manoeuvres as the pilot grows in experience.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +2:** Spacecraft Proficiency and Pilot becomes a class skill regardless of current character class.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +5:** +1 Piloting checks with a specific class of starfighter.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +8:** +1 to attack and damage rolls with the weapons systems of a specific class of starfighter.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +12:** +1 to the Acceleration and Deceleration of a specific class of starfighter.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +16:** One free manoeuvre (except Ram) each round at +5 to the Pilot DC.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +20:** One additional attack each round with any one starfighter weapon at full attack bonus. This only applies to a specific class of starfighter.

Fire Wings pilots choose a specific class of fighter when this feat is chosen. To change the class of starfighter (either because a previous fighter was lost or because the Player wishes to change out), one full month of training at least 20 hours a week must be spent in the new fighter before it becomes eligible for the bonuses granted by this feat.

Shields of Silver (Combat Style)

Trained to defend your people even unto death, you have a strong protective martial style.

Prerequisite: Warrior Caste, Moon Shields Clan, Must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: The warriors of the Moon Shields clan are given rigorous training in the defensive arts. They first learn to ward off attack meant for them, then quickly gain instruction in the techniques required to safeguard the lives of others. A master of the Shields of Silver is a bodyguard without peer.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +2:** +1 Dodge bonus to Defence Value. This stacks with the Dodge feat.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +5:** +1 to any existing DR granted from armour or other defensive systems worn. The character must have at least a DR of 1 granted by equipment to gain this bonus.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +8:** Grants all allies within 5 feet a +1 competence bonus to Defence Value.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +12:** Grants all allies within 10 feet a +1 competence bonus to Defence Value. This stacks with the +1 granted to allies within 5 feet.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +16:** May intercept, once each round, a melee or ranged attack that would have otherwise hit an ally within 5 feet. This intercepted attack automatically hits you.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +20:** May intercept any number of melee or ranged attacks directed against allies within 5 feet. These attacks automatically hit you.

The Nightstrike (Combat Style)

You attack swiftly and decisively, knowing that the only unbeatable defence is ensuring that your enemies do not survive long enough to return fire.

Prerequisite: Warrior Caste, Night Walkers Clan, Must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: The Nightstrike style is as violent and offense-heavy as it sounds. Nightstrike devotees almost always attack to kill and do so at an enemy's most vulnerable points. In combat, the Night Walkers have no sense of honour but their own and only one goal- ending the battle as quickly as possible.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +2:** Sneak Attack +1d6
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +5:** +1 to hit on damage on any opponent that acts after the Night Walker warrior in a combat round.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +8:** Sneak Attack +2d6
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +12:** Coup de Gras attacks can be done as a full attack action, precluding any other action or movement aside from a 5 foot move before or after the death strike.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +16:** Sneak Attack +3d6
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +20:** If the Night Warrior can strike at a flatfooted opponent during a surprise round, it must make a Fortitude save with a DC equal to the damage inflicted (maximum DC of 25) or be reduced to 0 hit points. Victims may add their DR to the Fortitude saving throw.

Ven'shor, The Star of Battle (Combat Style)

You follow the path of Ven'shor, the honourable ways of combat passed down from the first founders of the clan long before the coming of Valen..

Prerequisite: Warrior Caste, Star Riders Clan, Must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: Combat is the crucible in which your honour is forged, the anvil on which your soul is shaped. For those who follow the Star of Battle, there is one way to fight and one way only. A time-tested and honed combat style, Ven'shor has few equals and a long history of broken inferiors.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +2:** Against a chosen opponent in melee combat, gains a +1 competence bonus to attack rolls and Defence Value.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +5:** May, as a free action on his round once per combat, increase initiative

score to one more than the current score of any one opponent within 30 feet.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +8:** Competence bonus against a chosen opponent increases to +2.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +12:** When fighting a duel that has been declared and accepted, may declare a finishing blow. If it hits, the attack does maximum damage. Finishing blows may not be combined with sneak attack damage.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +16:** Competence bonus against a chosen opponent increases to +3.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +20:** As a master duelist, the devotee of Ven'shor may reroll a missed finishing blow using all of the same modifiers as the original attack.

The Storm's Edge (Combat Style)

You feel the wind at your back in battle, a storm front that lends its power to your every stroke and lightning fast attack.

Prerequisite: Warrior Caste, Wind Sword Clan, Must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: You never relent once combat is joined; surrender and mercy are terms that fall on deaf ears when the thunder of the Storm's Edge is echoing across the battlefield. The Wind Sword clan is legendary for its powerful, unremitting attacks and devastating frontal assaults.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +2:** Gains a +2 to damage when performing a melee charge action.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +5:** Speed increases by +10 when making a charge action or a move action in the same round as a melee attack.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +8:** Any time a warrior of the Storm's Edge rolls maximum damage on a melee attack, the opponent must make a Fortitude save (DC equals the damage, maximum DC of 15) or be moved directly away 1d3 squares by the force of the blow. A Tumble check (DC 15) leaves the opponent on their feet; otherwise, the opponent falls prone in that square.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +12:** May make any number of turns during a 30 foot or less charge action.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +16:** Using the unfailing techniques of the Storm's Edge style, the warrior may reroll a missed charge attack using all of the same modifiers as the original attack.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +20:** The ultimate technique of a Storm warrior, a Wind Sword with this ability can subtract any number of hit points from his own total as a free action and add them as a bonus to all attack rolls made by him for one full combat round.

Ventar Master (General)

You have been trained in the many forms of combat that specialise in the Ventar, making you exceptionally effective while wielding one of these ancient blades.

Prerequisite: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Ventar), Weapon Focus (Ventar), Base Attack 6+, Strength 13+

Benefit: The venerable art of Ventar combat has been passed to you, one of its last devotees. The special training given to you allows you to wield a ventar in the swift, deadly strokes taught by its first masters on the battlefields of tribal Minbar. This feat grants you the ability to make a 'cleaving stroke', the signature attack of a ventar. When faced with multiple opponents, you take one attack as a full attack action against every enemy in your threatened area. You roll one attack for the stroke and apply it to the Defence Value of each enemy, successfully hitting any opponent if your check exceeds their DV as normal.

Caste Feats - Worker

The worker caste of the Minbari have the most unsung and invisible role in their society; they are the ones who live behind the scenes and take care of all the background details that the other castes tend to take for granted. The religious caste worships in the temples they build and the warrior caste fights with weapons their forge, but neither really considers the level of impact the worker caste has on their lives. Though a true insurrection has never occurred between the worker caste and the rest of Minbari society, it would have a major effect in the Federation if it were to happen. The efficiency of the Minbari race, its very ability to function, would be compromised at its source.

This places the worker caste in an interesting position, both their people's most important asset and they most ignored. This imbalance would have caused a revolt inmost of the other galactic races, but the Minbari worker caste has taken a different approach. Their psychology is such that the acts of serving and creating have become a reward in and of themselves. This mindset has also led to some very specialised technical disciplines and some of the most effective work techniques in existence. The worker caste has become uniquely suited for their role, both masters and victims of their own efficiency.

Aesthetic Sense (General)

You are not just a craftsman, you are an artist. Everything you make has a sense of beauty and flow to it that belies its design and construction..

Prerequisite: Worker caste

Benefit: When you make an item using a Craft skill that you possess the Skill Focus feat for, the end result is worth 120% of its normal value plus another 5% for every point above DC 15 that you made the skill check by, assuming that your result was enough to make the item in the first place. The extra value is due to the item's artist qualities and may not always apply to a given buyer (Games Master's discretion on when the item might sell for its higher worth).

Meticulous Labour (General)

Nothing you do is quickly accomplished, but when you do complete a project, it is awe-inspiring and perfect down to the most infinitesimal level.

Prerequisite: Intelligence 15+ or Wisdom 15+, Skill Focus (any Craft or Profession), Perfection of Toil

Benefit: Your attention to detail has become so fine that while an given task takes you three times longer to perform than normal, you can be assured of success given that much time to work. As long as you have this extra work time, you may take 20 on any Craft or Profession check for which you have the appropriate Skill Focus feat. Your level of concentration is such that you may take this check regardless of distractions and other factors to the contrary, but if you must complete a job in less time, you lose the benefits of both your Skill Focus feat and Perfection of Toil for that task only. You must have normal tools to use this feat; improvised tools will not serve you well enough to get the precision you insist upon.

Work Ethic (General)

You believe in the sanctity of your role in Minbari society. To you, the work you do is a testament to your dedication to your people.

Prerequisite: Worker Caste, Worker class level 1+

Benefit: The devotion you have to your duties is evident enough for others to take strength in your convictions. Whenever you perform an Aid Another action regarding a Craft or Profession check or some other roll related to the performance of a worker caste related task (Games Master's judgment on when this applies), you grant a bonus equal to 2 plus your Charisma modifier (minimum of an additional +1) to as many other people as your Wisdom score modifier (minimum of 1 person). You are a natural leader among the working class.

Casteless Feats

With all of the hardships that a Casteless Minbari but go through just to survive in a world geared entirely towards submission and service to the castes, it is little surprise that they would develop their own talents and special skills. Perhaps the most remarkable trait about the Casteless is their devotion to freedom; for the right to make their own choices, they have willingly given up all of the security and support of their entire race and chosen to live as outcasts in the shadows of their society. The Casteless may be the strongest Minbari of them all, if only through the surety of their convictions.

A Mind of Your Own (General)

You refuse to have any part of a society that will not let you make choices for yourself. Strong-willed enough to break free, you have made the only choice you could.

Prerequisite: Casteless Minbari, Wisdom 13+

Benefit: You made the choice to leave a millennia of tradition and the shelter of your society to find your own way in life; any other compulsion or forced compliance does not have much of a chance of working against you. Whenever you fail a Will saving throw, you can immediately make a second attempt one round later on your action. One full round has to pass between the failed save and your second attempt, which may cause you to succumb to the compulsion on your next action if that much time has not elapsed.

Scrounging (General)

It is a n unfortunate fact of life for casteless Minbari that every day can be a challenge to survive. Food is not made available, clothes have to be fashioned from whatever can be found, and protection from the elements is a rare commodity. You have a special knack for finding these, both for yourself and for others.

Prerequisite: Casteless Minbari, Search 4+

Benefit: You have a gift for finding just what you need when you need it most. Though this skill does not provide the most luxurious or highest quality of goods and services, it does meet the absolute minimum of your needs. You can take ten minutes whenever you truly need something, be it a weapon, a meal, or a dry place to sleep, and make a Search check. A Survival skill of 5+ grants you a +2 synergy bonus on this roll. The DC is 10 plus a modifier of 0 to 20 points depending on the rarity of the item looked for and the applicability of your surroundings to find it,

as determined by the Games Master. If you want to find shelter from a coming storm in an urban environment, the DC would probably be just 10, but if your group needs a specific vaccine in a tent village kilometres from the nearest city, the DC could be 30. The Games Master may rule that finding a specific thing is impossible, but creative uses of scrounging should be encouraged if at all possible.

Will to Survive (General)

Your life is not an easy one, but it is all you have and nothing is taking it from you. They can have your caste and your history, but no one can take your future.

Prerequisite: Casteless Minbari, Constitution 13+

Benefit: Once per session, when you would be reduced below 1 hit point by any attack that will not kill you outright, you may make a Fortitude saving throw against a DC 15 or the damage inflicted, whichever is higher. If successful, the damage only takes you to 1 hit point and the remainder is ignored. You also stabilise automatically whenever you receive any outside medical aid while dying. Your will to live is very strong and you do not surrender quietly to the long night.

Shadowsouled Feats

From their dark fleet in the hidden shadows between distant stars, the descendants of the Dark Knives warrior clan have been biding their time and preparing for the Great War that would ascend their ancient masters and give them revenge on the race that shunned their leadership and chose a newcomer with no known past over their strength and proven leadership. They Who Denied Valen have been waiting, watching, and sharpening their blades in the black places where no light shines.

Then, in the blink of an eye, everything changed. The grand conflict that they had been preparing for over the course of generations came and went before they could fully commit themselves to the side of the Shadows. Their fleet was preparing to make the jump behind the battle lines when their progenitors left with the other Ancients beyond the rim of the galaxy. Now, all the skills and talent the Shadowsouled had been saving for centuries have no direction, no single goal to which they can all pledge themselves. The Minbari that refused to be Minbari know have no identity of their own, but with their sharp minds it will only be a matter of time before they find one.

Defiance (General)

The same rebelliousness that led your clan elders to break their ties to the Minbari is a part of your soul as well. You do not take orders well, but you are also not easily controlled.

Prerequisite: Shadowsouled Minbari

Benefit: Your Will saving throws always receive a +1 bonus as long as they are not initiated by the Shadows or any agent of the Shadows. If the cause of the Will saving throw is a Minbari or related directly to the Minbari in some tangible way, your bonus becomes +3 instead.

Eyes of the Night (Trait)

The changes made by the Shadows to your people are not entirely stable. A few Shadowsouled are born every generation with eyes that resemble something out of nightmares, something like those who remade your race.

Prerequisite: Shadowsouled Minbari

Benefit: Your eyes are yellow and do not have pupils to speak of. Any Charisma based checks you must make with people who can see you clearly are penalised by -2 and you have no ability to see colour of any kind. Instead, you possess darkvision to a distance of 90 feet and you can see telepathic abilities in other people as a dim aura of light. You cannot discern the P-Rating or character level of a Telepath, but you can automatically see them for what they are. Your eyes flare brightly when you are emotionally intense. Their acuity does have the additional drawback of causing a Shadowsouled with Eyes of the Night to suffer twice the usual effect of any light-based sensory attack such as flash grenades.

Sable Soul (General)

You can feel the power of the Shadows in every cell of your ebon-skinned body, but you can also feel their touch on your mind. Just as the Minbari were the Vorlon's first attempt to make telepaths, your people were the Shadows' attempt to combat the threat they posed.

Prerequisite: Shadowsouled Minbari, Charisma 15+

Benefit: You have what your people call a Sable Soul, a mark of the special power the Shadows tried to imbue your race with and, to a large extent, failed to make work.

You have some tiny piece of that gift in that you are not as vulnerable to the predations of telepaths as other Shadowsouled. When a telepath tries to scan your mind or affect you directly with a telepathic ability, you may choose to automatically make the saving throw as long as you possess the bonuses to succeed if your roll was a 20. You may instead choose to make your saving throw as normal, with success inflicting the difference between the DC of the check and your roll in subdual damage on the initiating telepath.

Zha'Dera (Combat Style)

You feel the touch of the Shadow in your soul whenever you enter battle, a quiet fury that lends strength to your blade and focus to your attacks.

Prerequisite: Warrior Caste, Dark Knives Clan, Shadowsouled Minbari, Must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: In the darkness of your shadowed soul, you find the strength, speed, and silent grace to meet any challenge of arms. You build on the violence that comes from both your warrior past and the many changes that have been inflicted upon your people.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +2:** You can choose to enter a Zha'Dera Trance, increasing either Strength or Dexterity by +2 as a standard action in battle. This increase lasts for as many full rounds as half your base attack bonus and you may invoke this power once per day plus a number of times equal to your Wisdom bonus (if positive).
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +5:** Emotional intensity makes you immune to fear during combat. If battle has not been joined, you can still be shaken, panicked, or left cowering, but once you take your first action in combat, you are immune to all fear effects until the encounter ends.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +8:** Grace and speed are as important as power to the battle dance of Zha'Dera. As long as you are free to move, you cannot be denied your Dexterity bonus to Defence Value.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +12:** When you use the Zha'Dera trance, both Strength and Dexterity are increased by +2.
- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +16:** The strength and speed of your blows are hard to resist. You gain the benefits of the Improved Critical feat, but only when you are in a Zha'Dera Trance and only when you are wielding a weapon you have the Weapon Focus feat for.

- ⑤ **Base Attack Bonus +20:** Fighting in a Zha'Dera Trance is second nature to you now. Initiating the Trance is a free action that can only be taken on your turn and its bonus now extends to Initiative checks and all opposed combat rolls such as grappling and disarming.

Minbari Prestige Classes

The mechanics for prestige classes in the Babylon 5 roleplaying game are fairly straightforward and applicable to any kind of specialised role that goes beyond the basic categories that character classes represent. Whenever someone's role becomes a little narrower than a character class would accurately represent given the defining attributes of skills and feats, a prestige class is usually the best way to provide the right level of rules support. Prestige classes reflect the special training and new abilities that a character would need to receive to properly portray someone in their chosen field.

For the Minbari, the prestige class system could not be more appropriate. Their society already defines very narrow roles for members of the race to fill, roles that suit the creation of prestige classes very nicely. While many of these roles can also be represented just as well by taking basic character class levels, the right feats, and the proper number of skill points, some are beyond the capabilities of these customising methods. Any type of warrior can be built with soldier and/or officer levels and feats to reflect their training, but in some cases, a prestige class can improve the 'fit' of Minbari duties even more.

Lorecrafters

To the Minbari, knowledge is not just power; it is sacred. Those who have knowledge are often treated with special reverence, especially in the areas of science and mathematics. While the worker caste is devoted to the application of scientific principles, the religious caste deals in the pure theory and contemplation of science itself. This devotion to what their race sees as an esoteric duty brings the scientists and philosophers that focus their studies into these areas a great deal of respect, elevating them above their peers.

Lorecrafters are not just scientists, nor are they given the respect they gain merely because of their research and study. To become a lorecrafter, a Minbari must exhibit not only a devotion to his calling but the ability to explore new aspects of science and the talent required to instruct others in the wonders that he discovers. For a religious caste or

worker caste Minbari to truly be a lorecrafter, he must research new avenues of experimentation and develop new theories constantly. Linguistics, mathematical formulae, astronomy, and engineering are all paths to the Halls of the Lorecrafters, but it is diligence, reverence, and faith that keep a Minbari firmly upon them.

Additional Hit Points: 1.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Lorecrafter, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Minbari (Any caste, though religious is most common)

Ability Scores: Intelligence 16+

Skills: Concentration 6 ranks, Knowledge (any) 8+, Gather Information 4+.

Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge (any)), Studious

Class Skills

The Lorecrafter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Speak Language (none), and Technical (any) (Int).

Skill points at each level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

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

Efficient Researcher: One of the qualities that makes a lorecrafter a respected leader in his given field of research is his ability to find, assimilate, and adapt all of the information that exists on that subject, regardless of what form the data is in or how obscure a reference it might be. From dusty tomes to hidden files in the newest computer systems, a lorecrafter can find vital facts on any topic if given enough time. A lorecrafter can improve the value of the virtual ranks given to him by use of the Studious feat by taking one day per point of virtual ranks desired up to a maximum number equal to the lorecrafter's Intelligence bonus. These virtual ranks stay for one full week unless replaced with a different topic; no supplemental research is required to keep them.

Master of the Field: The reputation of a lorecrafter precedes them, especially in anyone familiar with the fields of study he has mastered. If a Minbari has any ranks in the same Knowledge skill as the subject of any of the lorecrafter's Skill Focus feats, he will react more

favourably when meeting or speaking with him; this grants the lorecrafter a +4 to all Charisma based checks in such a circumstance. Non-Minbari with 5 or more ranks in the same skills will have heard of the lorecrafter, imparting a +2 bonus to the same checks.

Related Works: Science of any kind is rarely a solitary discipline with no connection to other fields. At some level, every form of knowledge is related to another in some way, meaning that ultimately, there is no field of study the lorecrafter cannot fathom or explore. At the 2nd level of this prestige class, a lorecrafter may choose any two Knowledge skills other than those he has a Skill Focus feat for. When making checks in this related work, he adds a +1 competence bonus. At 4th level, he may choose another pair to receive this +1 bonus. The original set will now receive a +2 competence bonus to reflect his growing mastery of supplemental sciences.

Analogies: A lorecrafter is exposed to so many facts and figures that at some level, intuitive leaps of logic become possible. This can reveal a great deal of information about topics the lorecrafter has had no formal training in. Up to three times a day, a lorecrafter can make a Knowledge or Profession check without needing ranks in it. These checks are modified only by the relevant statistic (Intelligence for Knowledge, Wisdom for Profession), but without this ability, the lorecrafter would not even be able to attempt the check. No preparation time is need as with the Studious feat; the knowledge comes spontaneously.

Sublime Science: The lorecrafter has had enough experience now that he begins to see how abstract scientific principles can apply to the physical world. This level of sublime understanding allows the lorecrafter to substitute the ranks he has spent in his highest Knowledge skill towards a check on any other skill. This ability can only be used once a day, as there is some effort involved in realising the correlations between theoretical sciences and their mundane applications.

Acknowledged Authority: The respect a lorecrafter of 5th level garners in his peers can be truly awe inspiring, especially from those who follow his discipline. All Minbari not specifically hostile to a lorecrafter at this level afford him the same +2 bonus to Charisma based checks as per the Master of the Field power, but when dealing with anyone who has 5 or more ranks in the same Knowledge skill as any of his Skill Focus feats, the lorecrafter may substitute a check using that skill for any Charisma-based skill he wishes to attempt. Non-Minbari are also acceptable subjects for this ability, but the skill check is penalised by -5 for the differences in philosophy and culture.

The Lorecrafter

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Efficient Researcher, Master of the Field
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Related Works +1
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	Analogies
4	+2	+1	+1	+2	Sublime Science, Related Works +2
5	+2	+1	+1	+3	Acknowledged Authority

High Foreman

The worker caste is just as stratified as any other caste on the Minbari, but because of the very practical nature of their existence, they are often not as concerned with formalities and tend to go with whatever authority or technique will prove the most efficient for the task at hand. This can lead to a more varied hierarchy within work groups and project divisions than the other subclasses of the religious and warrior castes. To the worker caste, the task at hand is the most important duty they have; if someone on a team is more effective at organising the job, that Minbari is given authority to do so.

The ranking structures of the worker caste somewhat reflect this trend to promote up through the ranks with little regard for levels that might be skipped in the process, but often the application of official rank is too slow for the needs of a given project. To this end, the concept of a High Foreman was developed outside the ranking system used by the worker caste. High Foremen may be from any rank in the caste, elevated to this special status because of the qualities of leadership and insight they possess. A High Foreman eventually qualifies for higher ranks and recognition in return for his good service to the caste, but his acceptance as a High Foreman is usually all the rank he needs to get the job done.

Additional Hit Points: 2.

Requirements

To qualify to become a High Foreman, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Minbari

Ability Scores: Wisdom 13+, Charisma 13+

Skills: Diplomacy 4+, Profession 8+ or Craft 8+

Feats: Skill Focus (the Profession or Craft skill chose above as a prerequisite)

Class Skills

The High Foreman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Listen (Wis), Profession (any) (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Technical (Int).

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the High Foreman prestige class.

Laymen Command: A High Foreman's most important duty is the guidance of those under his command in the fulfilment of their tasks. Generally, a single working team has a given project that they dedicate themselves to finishing before moving on to other duties. While a High Foreman is assigned to a project (which can be defined as the purpose behind a single Craft or Profession check or a related series of them such as the completion of a thousand PPG pistols for the military), those under his supervision may add the bonus value of this trait to their Craft or Profession check. High Foreman can 'lead' 10 Player and/or Non-Player Characters per prestige class level in this way, but those that are not Minbari cannot benefit from more than a +2 bonus, no matter how high this feature's bonus eventually becomes.

Delegation: As a High Foreman works on projects, he begins to identify people with the skills to accept some measure of responsibility themselves. These people can be taken with him from project to project, remaining under the authority of the High Foreman during their careers with the worker caste. These assistants are 1st level Minbari Workers or Scientists (as best fits the High Foreman as determined by the Games Master). The High Foreman gains 2 such assistants when he gets this class feature at 2nd level and one more for each level in this prestige class. When a new 1st level assistant is gained, all previous assistants gain one level in an appropriate character class

The High Foreman

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Laymen Command +3
2	+1	+2	+0	+2	Delegation, Conservation of Resources
3	+1	+2	+1	+2	Laymen Command +4
4	+2	+2	+1	+2	Exceeding Expectations
5	+2	+3	+1	+3	Laymen Command +5

as determined by the Games Master. Lost assistants are replaced one month later at their previous level.

Conservation of Resources: While a High Foreman is not expected to make their work teams any faster, they are expected to be more productive. This involved accomplishing more with less in terms of resources and manpower. Generally speaking, any Craft project normally takes half its price in materials and Profession checks often take a certain number of people to perform correctly. While a High Foreman of 2nd level or more is leading a project, the materials or manpower needed for a given assignment are halved, resulting in a large savings of both. For Craft checks, this is easy to adjudicate, but for Profession checks, it is safe to assume that one worker can perform twice the number of jobs required for a project than he could otherwise. In many ways, this ability is abstract, but so is the nature of these two vital worker caste skills.

Exceeding Expectations: The level of effort a 4th level High Foreman can get his team to accomplish is amazing. As long as he is in communication and direct authority over the people working on a given project that he has ranks in the appropriate governing skill, he can motivate and guide them into performing far better than expected. If he is part of a Craft team, the resulting item receives a +1 equipment bonus to a chosen aspect of its function (if appropriate). If the task is a Profession, it is completed in such a way that those affected by the job afford the work crew and himself a +1 reaction bonus to Charisma checks made for the next full week. Other skill sets will have their own exceptional benefits, as determined by the Games Master.

Alyt

This class actually extends its definition to the ranking officers of all three branches of the military and simulates the special command and combat training given to these exception leaders. Though the prestige class is called Alyt, those who belong to the other two branches call their class

by a different name (Ilyr for the Infantry and Ovar for the Navy, respectively). The basic focus for the class does not change with the name, though some of its specific benefits do. The overall concept of the class, that of a trained military leader expected to serve both in the war rooms and on the front lines, remains the same.

The Alyt (or whatever the upper ranks of the specific military branch are called) is an elite officer, trained with the finest methods available to the Minbari and given almost unquestioned access to staggering amounts of military material. When they choose to take an action, starships move by their command. As such, this prestige class is a kind of alternate Officer class for the Minbari, with progression here effectively the same as taking levels in the Officer character class listed in the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook. Though the abilities and skills here are slightly different, the effect of developing a command presence with the military is much the same.

Additional Hit Points: 2.

Requirements

To qualify to become an Alyt, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Minbari

Ability Scores: Charisma 13+

Skills: Diplomacy 8+, Knowledge (military) 4+, Profession (soldier or other appropriate division) 4+

Feats: Alertness, Nerves of Steel

Special: A Minbari wishing to take this prestige class must be part of the military, have earned some distinction in the line of duty, and gain the approval of the Games Master prior to their first level of Alyt.

Class Skills

The Alyt's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha),

Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Medical (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), and Spot (Wis).

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

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

Rallying Call: At 1st level, the Alyt may shout encouragement to any faltering allies within earshot (communications devices may be used) as a standard action. All allies hearing the call may make an immediate Will save at DC 15 to recover from any cowering, frightened, panicked or shaken effects. This ability may be used once per day. Upon reaching 10th level, Rallying Call may be used twice a day, and three times a day at 15th level.

Notice of the Council: The service the Alyt has rendered to his people has brought him to the attention of the Grey Council. While this notice has no direct affect on his abilities or status yet, the Minbari is watched to see if he shows signs of deserving greater authority in the future. This has no game effects immediately, but the Minbari's name has been spoken in the highest halls of power of his race, something that will likely have deep significance to him as a character.

Division Weapon Bonus: When using the typical weapon of his branch of the military, the Minbari gains a bonus listed to his attack rolls. For a fleet officer, this is the Nial starfighter. For ground forces officers, these are the Sha'an PPG and the Sha'nar fusion rifle. Naval commanders gain this bonus when manning a weapon system on a naval vessel directly.

Way of Command: Upon reaching 3rd level, the Alyt exudes an aura of confidence whilst under fire that steadies those under his command and makes them more receptive to his orders. All allies gain a +2 morale bonus to any skill checks. The range of Way of Command is the entire ship for a Minbari fleet officer (Alyt), 100 ft. for a ground forces officer (Ilyr) and up to 3 vessels within 1 mile for a naval commander (Ovar).

Faith of the Council: The attention of the Grey Council has not become a tacit approval of his actions based on his exemplary service in the past. The Minbari will be called to a meeting of the Grey Council at this level and interviewed by the warrior caste Satai as to his motives and sense of duty. Assuming this interview goes successfully,

the Alyt is given a commendation and sent back to his command. From this point on, the Alyt gains the direct command of a vehicle appropriate to his division (Games Master's choice) and can request the intervention of two more of the same class and up to four lesser craft (again, Games Master's choice) for any military action he engages in. Frivolous or catastrophically poor performance while using this ability can result in its removal.

Branch Elite: As the Alyt increases in rank and capability, his reputation and skill increases. A veteran of countless military actions, he is now considered one of the elite. Upon attaining 6th level, the Alyt gains a benefit dependant on the branch in which he serves. Fleet officers may grant a permanent +1 competence bonus to the DV, sensor score, or stealth score (one choice only, made as a free action at the beginning of each of the Alyt's rounds) of a ship so long as they are personally in command. Ground officers grant a +1 morale bonus to all attack rolls made by allies within 60 feet. Naval commanders can make a targeting run and acquire a target as a single move-equivalent action, so long as they or anyone below them in their immediate chain of command are piloting a naval vessel of Gargantuan size or smaller.

Friend to the Council: The warrior caste Satai are both know to the Alyt at this level and are considered to be on friendly terms with him, making his ability to manipulate his military branch even stronger. The Games Master will have to work out with the Player exactly what type of fleet (or army) is at his disposal, but it should be at least a medium sized division as listed in the Organisations chapter of this sourcebook. These troops and vehicles are entirely at the Alyt's disposal, though unacceptable losses or pointless deployments can strain the relationship between the Alyt and the Grey Council, resulting in the revocation of this benefit.

Legendary Speech: At 9th level, the Alyt has become a true leader of men, regardless of his prior background. Before entering battle, the Alyt may make an inspiring speech to the men he leads. This takes one minute and affects all allies who can hear his words. At the end of this time, the Alyt makes a Charisma check (DC 15). If successful, all allies will gain a +1 morale bonus to all saving throws, attack and damage rolls for the next 1d3 hours. In addition, they will not surrender during this time. At the Games Master's discretion, Legendary Speech may be used to gain other bonuses, such as swaying potential allies to join the Alyt's side in a forthcoming battle or war. Legendary Speech may be used once per day.

Great Leader: A Great Leader of the Minbari military is one step away from becoming proclaimed Shai Alyt,

The Alyt

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Rallying Call, Notice of the Council
2	+1	+2	+0	+2	Division Weapon Bonus +1
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Way of Command
4	+3	+2	+1	+2	Faith of the Council
5	+3	+3	+1	+3	Division Weapon Bonus +2
6	+4	+3	+2	+3	Branch Elite
7	+5	+4	+2	+4	Friend to the Council
8	+6	+4	+2	+4	Division Weapon Bonus +3
9	+6	+4	+3	+4	Legendary Speech
10	+7	+5	+3	+5	Great Leader

the overall commander of the grand Minbari fleet. Other divisions have their own titles, but the point of this feature is that the long service and impressive personal abilities of the Alyt have brought him to the brink of attaining that rank through merit alone. All Minbari treat a Great Leader with deference, granting him a +2 bonus to all Charisma related checks when interacting with them in person. If the Minbari in question is a member of the warrior caste or part of the same branch of the military (Fleet, Infantry, or Naval), this bonus increases to +4.

Devotee of Valen

Though Valen never wished for worship of any kind and active worked to keep it from occurring while he was among the Minbari, his disappearance from them and the many legacies he left with their race ensured that these people, who have a tendency towards reverence and religion, would form an attachment to him and eventually enshrine his memory. The devotees of Valen have built temples and created legends around the things their mentor of prophet did and was reputed to do.

Now, after a thousand years, the organisation had grown into one of the most influential religions on Minbar and among her many far-flung colonies. Even stoic members of the warrior caste feel a sense of pride and honour at the mention of the Prophecies of Valen and the onus that surrounds his name. While most Minbari, even those of the religious caste, are generally content to leave their devotion at that level, there are those among their race that take the worship of Valen to a level that implies just that; deification. The Devotees of Valen are a religious order that liken the coming of Valen in their past to the incarnation of a god among them, one deserving of reverence and respect.

While not all of the Minbari feel this way about their honoured ancestor, his legends are considerable. Very few argue the deification of him with those who believe, mostly out of respect for the man that formed so much of their culture. The Devotees of Valen do not have a great deal of political power, but a large enough percentage of the Minbari people believe as they do that if they chose to exercise their authority, they would be a force to be reckoned with.

Additional Hit Points: 2.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Devotee of Valen, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Minbari, usually of the religious caste

Ability Scores: Wisdom 13+

Skills: Knowledge (religion) 8+, Profession (priest) 5+

Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge (religion))

Class Skills

The Devotee of Valen's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (None).

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Devotee of Valen prestige class.

Devotee of Valen

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	The Teachings of Valen
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Devotion to the Past
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	Traditional Weapon – Denn’bok
4	+2	+1	+1	+2	Devotion to the Future
5	+2	+1	+1	+3	1,000 Years of Wisdom

The Teachings of Valen: Devotees study the many texts from the time of Valen and the years of analysis that have followed his disappearance. From his direct prophecies to the levels of analysis that have come from theological scholars, a Devotee of Valen knows everything Valen ever said that was recorded, all of the rumours surrounding him, and many other pieces of related information. He effectively gains a free skill, Knowledge (Valen Lore), with free skill ranks equal to his total character class level. Whenever a situation or event might have some relation to things from Valen’s past (the Shadows, ancient Minbar, the Ancient Races, etc.) is encountered, the Devotee can make a check against this skill to discover some useful information among the many trivial facts he knows.

Devotion to the Past: The lessons Devotees of Valen learn through their study of history allows them to take a certain amount of insight from the experiences of others. While Valen is the central figure of their religion, the many figures in history that surround his time with the Minbari have stories of their own. When a Devotee of Valen is confronted with a problem he cannot solve (such as a riddle, a tactical situation with no apparent chance for survival, etc.), he may make a Knowledge (Valen Lore) check at a base DC of 20 (or higher at the Games Master’s discretion). Success gives him some vital clue from the Games Master that may help him find a solution, assuming a solution exists at all. The ability can be used once per day per point of Wisdom modifier (minimum of 1).

Traditional Weapon: The Devotees of Valen are afforded the honour of being able to train with the Denn’bok as if they were members of the warrior caste or Anla’shok. This privilege is in memory of Valen and his appreciation for the weapon as an instrument of both strength and peace. Devotees of Valen get the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn’bok) feat for free at this level.

Devotion to the Future: After interpreting the teachings of Valen and rising through the ranks of his church, a Devotee begins to realise that what he is studying is not just history and prophecy; it is the central message of hope

that is part of Valen’s true legacy to the Minbari race. A 4th level Devotee of Valen constantly benefits from this deep faith in the ascendancy of life over darkness and gains a +1 morale bonus to saving throws. This bonus can be lost temporarily if something occurs to make the Devotee question his faith, but it always reasserts itself when he regains it.

1,000 years of Wisdom: At this level, the Devotee learns as much about Valen as there is to be known from ancient records and accounts of the past. In many ways, he knows Valen better than he knows himself and takes strength from the guidance that he finds in this historical figure. All of this accrued knowledge and teaching grants the Devotee a permanent +2 inherent bonus to his Wisdom score and a +2 competence bonus to all Knowledge (history), Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (Valen Lore) checks. Devotees of Valen that reach this high rank are afforded great honour by the rest of his religion and will likely be able to travel anywhere in the Federation at the expense of his church.

Singer-Poet

The Minbari as a race appreciate lore and knowledge, but only the religious caste can process the vast bulk of their people’s learning. Tomes and files full of dry facts are useful to a lorecrafter or Minbari scientist, but for the warriors and workers among their people, this information can be difficult to grasp appreciably. For these people, history and wisdom are easier to learn in the form of stories, songs, and poems. Appealing to the aesthetic as well as the intellectual in their racial identity, singer-poets bring the past alive for all those who will listen.

Singer-Poets are also a unique form of diplomat, honour-sworn to teach through entertainment any who would hear their message of peace regardless of race. While few species have the patience necessary to sit through the seven and a half hour ballad dedicated to the fall of the Inatrii, most find some redeeming quality in the short poems and lilting h’liil (‘moral songs’) that singer-poets perform for audiences with shorter attention spans. The universe can

be dark, but it is the duty of Minbari singer-poets to ensure that it is never silent.

Additional Hit Points: 1.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Singer-Poet, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Minbari, usually of the religious caste

Ability Scores: Intelligence 13+, Charisma 15+

Skills: Perform 4+, Knowledge (history) 8+, Profession (some form of entertainer) 4+

Feats: Skill Focus (Perform), Alien Empathy

Class Skills

The Devotee of Valen's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (history) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Speak Language (None).

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Singer-Poet prestige class.

Entrhall Through Enlightenment: Once a singer-poet begins a performance, it is very difficult for anyone present to do anything but peacefully watch the proceedings. Those who need to do something else or would not be inclined to watch a singer-poet perform at all may make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + the singer-poet's prestige level + the singer-poet's Charisma modifier if positive) to break away and take some other action. This DC drops by one for every full minute of the performance, though it can never go below 10 in any case. Anyone who regains the ability to act freely but does not move out of line of sight with the singer-poet must make another saving throw one minute after

breaking the enthrallment. A singer-poet cannot use this ability against anyone in combat if that encounter began before the performance does.

The Art of H'liil: Singer-Poets understand the need for brevity, especially when trying to bring the beauty and wisdom of their people to other races in the galaxy. To this end, the brief art form of H'liil was invented. As a full-round action, a singer-poet can perform a H'liil as a Perform skill check. The result of that check becomes the Will saving throw DC anyone within line of sight must make to keep from losing their next action as they contemplate the meaning of the H'liil's central message.

Alternately, a singer-poet can perform a H'liil with the intention of inspiring others into greater acts of heroism, valour, or sacrifice. If the singer-poet makes a Perform check (DC 15), all those within 30 feet of her gains a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and saving throws against fear effects. A singer-poet can do this once per day for every level of this prestige class and the bonus lasts for 1 full minute.

Poetic: The constant training and experience that a singer-poet receives during her career has the benefit of honing her performance skills to their maximum effectiveness. A singer-poet may add the value of this feature (+1 at 2nd level, +2 at 4th) to all Perform check she makes and the Will DC of her Entrhall Through Enlightenment ability.



Singer-Poet

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Enthrall through Enlightenment
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	The Art of H'liil, Poetic +1
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Peaceful Acceptance
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Open Arms, Poetic +2
5	+2	+1	+2	+4	Moving Overture

Peaceful Acceptance: Singer-Poets do not hold resentment for any living being in their hearts. To do so would remove the sincerity that lies at the core of their teachings and lend a false ring to the tales they tell of peace and harmony. This pacifistic mindset prevents them from acting offensively towards another living being, even in self defence, but it also lends them protection against assault in the first place. Living beings that attempt to target a singer-poet in combat must make a Will saving throw at a DC of 10 + the singer-poet's Prestige level + the singer-poet's Charisma modifier (if positive). Failure means the being chooses another opponent to target or, lacking this, ceases hostilities immediately. This protection can be instantly negated if the singer-poet acts violently or if the subject does not intend to kill the singer-poet in the first place.

Open Arms: If a singer-poet peacefully approaches another being she can see clearly, the act of her obvious sincerity may prevent it from acting against her until she has had a chance to speak. If the singer-poet can succeed in an Diplomacy check with a DC equal to 15 plus the target's total Will saving throw bonus, the opponent approached cannot do anything but allow the singer-poet to come within 15 feet and spend at least one round using her other prestige class abilities or any one use of the Diplomacy, Bluff, or Sense Motive skill. This only works if the singer-poet and her visible allies have never acted violently towards the subject.

Moving Overture: An expanded form of the Enthrall by Enlightenment feature, this performance can have a truly lasting effect on those who observe it. Although Moving Overtures can be used to ensure that the audience retains some fact or historical reference, its most potent ability is that of enforced peace. Those who watch a five minute performance given by a singer-poet of 5th level must make a Will saving throw with the same DC as the Enthrall by Enlightenment feature. If this saving throw fails, the subject cannot initiate hostilities with anyone for one day for every full ten points of the singer-poet's Perform check result. Subjects affected by this ability may still defend themselves normally and if the singer-poet herself attacks

anyone during this time, all those who can see the attack are instantly relived of this effect.

Grand Telepath

As mentioned before, the Vorlon's first tried to create telepaths through the alteration Minbari genetics and the augmentation of their minds to handle the power that such a talent would generate. When this experiment failed, the Vorlons moved on to other races and tried other techniques to ensure that the weapon they needed would exist without breaking the psyches of those that would provide it to them. One of the things done to prevent another disaster like the fall of the Kira Zhe was a reduction in how much energy the telepath's mind could process. This kept the telepaths of other races under control and when the gift was reintroduced into the Minbari gene pool, it was toned down to the same degree.

The original traits were still extant in the Minbari, though most of the bloodlines that carried it were hunted to extinction. As such, Minbari telepaths are on the whole no more potent than those of other species. Every once in a while, the right combination of traits and mental attributes occur in a Minbari telepath and the ancient strength of the Kira Zhe awakens in their mind. These grand telepaths are a rare and treasured commodity for the Minbari, though their exceptional gifts make even their own kind nervous.

Additional Hit Points: 1.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Grand Telepath, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Minbari, most often from the Kira Zhe sub-race.

Ability Scores: Wisdom 13+

Skills: Telepathy 8 ranks

Feats: Far Telepathy, Meditation

Class: Must have attained at least 6 levels as a Telepath before opting for this prestige class.

Class Skills

The Grand Telepath'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 at each level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Grand Telepath prestige class.

Enhanced Telepathy: As a grand telepath grows in skill and experience, he becomes a formidable mental adversary whose mind can cut through any shield or block. The grand telepath gains a bonus telepath feat at 1st level and 6th level. Any telepathic feat may be chosen at this time, assuming the grand telepath meets all of its prerequisites.

Mindecho: The power flowing through the thoughts of a grand telepath broadcast so loudly that even when he is trying to put up a mental defence, it is difficult to contain all of the psychic essence that is his own mind. This has no game effect unless an opponent telepath is simply to scan the grand telepath's surface thoughts, in which case it gets a bonus of +4 on the checks required to do so. Also, any telepath or character with the Latent Telepath feat that comes within 30 feet of a grand telepath can sense his general location (within five feet of his actual location) despite any obstructions in the way. No other information is imparted, but the telepath can feel a powerful telepathic presence in the vicinity.

Ancient Power (1/day): The potency that was once part of the ancient Kira Zhe's telepathic gifts is within a grand telepath's mind as well, enabling him to reroll any failed Telepathy skill check through sheer willpower. This reroll gets a competence bonus equal to the grand telepath's Wisdom score (minimum of +1), but if it also fails, the grand telepath is shaken psychically and cannot make a Telepathy check or use a telepathic ability for as many rounds as the value of the bonus.

Telepathic Ability: At 1st level, the telepath begins with the accidental scan, mind shield, sense telepathy and warning abilities. At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, he may select a new telepathic ability from Chapter 5. However, the telepath must meet the prerequisites for each new telepathic ability, based upon his P-Rating and other telepathic abilities already gained. If no prerequisites are met for any telepathic abilities, the telepath will receive a bonus hit point instead.

Touch of the True Mind (1/day): The potential in the mind of a grand telepath is immense, as they were truly meant to be the first and only ones of their kind when the Vorlons shaped the Kira Zhe in Minbar's long-lost history. This gift allows them to choose the effects of any one Telepathic feat as a free action on their turn. The feat immediately applies, but its effects only last for as many rounds as the grand telepath's Wisdom bonus (minimum of 1 round). At 7th level, when the grand telepath gains a second use of this ability each day, it may be combined with the first use at the same time if desired.

Irresistible Telepathy: Grand telepaths have incredible strength of mind, a presence in the psychic landscape that they only discover the full extent of at this level of ability.

The Grand Telepath

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Enhanced Telepathy, Mindecho
2	+1	+0	+0	+2	Ancient Power (1/day)
3	+1	+1	+1	+2	Telepathic Ability
4	+2	+1	+1	+2	Touch of the True Mind (1/day)
5	+2	+1	+1	+3	Ancient Power (2/day)
6	+3	+2	+2	+3	Telepathic Ability, Enhanced Telepathy
7	+3	+2	+2	+4	Touch of the True Mind (2/day)
8	+4	+2	+2	+4	Ancient Power (3/day)
9	+4	+3	+3	+4	Telepathic Ability
10	+5	+3	+3	+5	Irresistible Telepathy

Grand telepaths automatically gain the Mindshredder feat at 10th level. If this feat is already known to him or he opts to take it at a later level, its bonus triples his Charisma bonus to telepathic DCs as opposed to doubling it. This much psychic power does have its drawbacks; the range of effect for the grand telepath's Mindecho class feature is doubled to 60 feet and a telepath can discern his exact location instead of just his general whereabouts.

Stalker

The Shadowsouled have lain in wait for centuries, waiting for the day when they would return to the galaxy at the right hand of their masters, the Shadows. During this time, they stayed aboard their Black Fleet, trained themselves in the arts of combat as they remembered them from their days as a Minbari warrior clan, and prepared for the Great War to come. The silence was deafening in its way, and without word from the Shadows, the Shadowsouled knew they would have to seek out news of the war and of the doings of their hated enemies, the Minbari who turned their back on tradition to follow an unknown Minbari with an uncertain past.

To learn of the galaxy away from the Black Fleet, the Shadowsouled trained agents of darkness to go among the other races and listen for any word of the Shadows and their activities. They ironically believed Valen when he prophesied that the ancient enemy would rise again, but they intended to join it when it did. To that end, they also trained their agents as stalkers, killers without remorse who would remove obstacles to the coming of the Shadows. The resulting warriors are swift and stealthy, able to blend in with any race long enough to seek information, locate targets, and if necessary remove them.

Additional Hit Points: 2.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Stalker, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Shadowsouled Minbari

Ability Scores: Dexterity 16+

Skills: Gather Information 8 ranks, Move Silently 8+, Hide 8+, Disguise 8+.

Feats: Data Access, Sable Soul

Class Feature: Security Systems

Class Skills

The stalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Drive

(Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Technical (Int).

Skill points at each level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

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

Stalker's Gear: Because stalkers are intended to operate away from the Black Fleet for an extended period of time, they are given certain pieces of equipment to ensure their survival and the success of their vital missions. All stalkers gain the following equipment (assuming they did not already possess these items); an implanted Shadow Web, a hand computer with 4 empty data crystals, an exquisitely crafted black blade that offers a +1 equipment bonus to attack and damage rolls, a half suit of Darkshard armour, and a Sha'an PPG pistol.

Sneak Attack: Stalkers are skilled at silencing their victims quickly and efficiently. From 1st level onwards, if the stalker can catch an enemy by surprise, when flat-footed or by flanking, he can make a sneak attack. The extra damage the stalker deals to the enemy he has managed to sneak attack is listed on the table below. However, he may only make sneak attacks in melee combat or with ranged weapons when the target is no more than 30 feet away. Sneak attacks may not be made against non-living targets or those immune to critical hits.

Slayer of the Past: Stalkers are rigorously trained in the combat and espionage arts, especially the techniques most effective against the Minbari. Stalkers benefit from this training by receiving a +1 competence bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and Bluff, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Sense Motive skill checks when a Minbari is the target. Shadowsouled are far enough removed from their forebears that this bonus does not function against them.

Telepathic Burn: All Shadowsouled are vulnerable to telepaths, but a stalker is trained through years of dangerous and painful exposure to telepathic energies to turn that vulnerability into a weapon. Utilising the gifts of their sable soul feat, stalkers focus deadly attacks of enmity and ill will through a telepathic connection. Whenever their Sable Soul feat results in subdual damage to a telepath, the stalker inflicts normal damage instead.

The Stalker

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Stalker's Gear, Sneak Attack +1d6
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Slayer of the Past
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Telepathic Burn
5	+3	+1	+4	+4	Skill Mastery
6	+4	+2	+5	+5	Mask of Shadow
7	+5	+2	+5	+5	
8	+6/+1	+2	+6	+6	
9	+6/+1	+3	+6	+6	Sneak Attack +2d6
10	+7/+2	+3	+7	+7	Dark Riposte

This damage is optional; the stalker can choose to only inflict subdual as normal.

Skill Mastery: At 5th level, the stalker may select a number of skills equal to his Intelligence modifier +2. When making a skill check with one of these skills, the stalker may always Take 10 even if normally prevented from doing so. The atavistic training and ruthless efficiency of a stalker comes into play even in the most dangerous of situations.

Mask of Shadow: The touch of the Shadows is in every fibre of a stalker's being, marking him as one of their own. Agents of the Shadows will recognise a stalker as a kindred soul on sight, regardless of any disguise or shadow web image the stalker might be using. Though the Shadows know of the existence of the Shadowsouled, they prefer to leave them as a wild card and see how they will play out in the Great War. This being the case, the agent will be advised to steer clear of making any direct contact with the stalker, though he may render aid in some subtle way (Games Master's discretion).

Dark Riposte: Finely honed reflexes and a predator's stalking spirit culminate at 10th level in the dark riposte. Immediately after being attacked in any combat round in which the stalker has not yet acted (including surprise rounds which would normally deny him any action), the stalker may choose to forego his normal initiative score and act on the same score as his attacker. His initiative permanently changes to the new value and he gains a +1 circumstance bonus to his next attack roll as a side effect of his sudden, lethal response.

Riders of the Song

The Fire Wings warrior clan likens the art of starfighter combat to listening to a song that the stars themselves sing while battle takes place among them. To them, the hum of Minbari engines, the wail of energy weapons as they leap from ship to ship, and the sudden flares of detonating enemies all combine to make the Firesong and to drive those who can hear it along in an extremely swift aria, a deadly dance of crystal ships on a sea of black.

To ride the song is to fight with the rhythm of it in a warrior's heart and to block out all other distractions from an unclouded mind. Fire Wings pilots all seek to emulate this sense of being one with the Firesong, but a select few actually accomplish this metaphysical goal. Whether it is merely the manifestation of their consummate skill and focus or some small vestige of the telepathic potential in all Minbari, Fire Wings who can 'ride the song' are capable of some amazing feats as combat pilots, executing manoeuvres that are even more impressive than those of their incredibly well trained peers.

When the Firesong is with them, a Rider is a deadly opponent in a starfighter. This coupled with the superiority of Minbari ships makes for a lethal combination that only makes the starship combat capabilities of the Minbari that much better than those of other races. A flight of Nial heavy fighters is a worrisome sight for any opponent, but when those fighters have Riders of the Song in them, worry quickly becomes sheer terror.

Additional Hit Points: 2.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Rider of the Storm, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Rider of the Song

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	The Firesong
2	+2	+0	+2	+0	Defensive Flying
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Ship Upgrades
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Fiery Focus
5	+5	+1	+3	+1	Symphony of Destruction

Race: Minbari warrior caste, Fire Wings clan (unless the Games Master approves membership to other Minbari characters)

Skills: Pilot 8+, Technical 5+

Feats: Dogfighter, Vehicle Combat, Vehicle Dodge

Class Skills

The Rider of the Song's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Medical (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Technical (Int).

Skill points at each level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Rider of the Song prestige class.

The Firesong: The Firesong, the special state of awareness and focus that a Fire Wings pilot can attain through combat meditation can lend him superlative skill in battle. Before starship combat starts, if a Rider of the Song is piloting a starfighter he may make a Concentration check. This is a full round action that would provoke an attack of opportunity but is not likely to do so. The check result is the number of bonus points he may use during the upcoming battle to augment his rolls. Once used, these points disappear and will not return until the next combat when he makes this once-a-battle check again. Bonus points may be added to any attack, damage, or Pilot check, but a Rider of the Song may only add as many points to a single roll as he has levels in this prestige class.

Defensive Flying: The special focus that the Firesong gives a Rider is enough to make him a very difficult target in starship combat. The Rider of the Song adds his prestige class level to the Defence Value of any starship he is piloting. This ability stacks with other similar bonuses,



but the Rider must be sole control of the vessel to get this bonus and it cannot be of Gargantuan or larger size.

Ship Upgrades: By this point in his career, a Rider of the Song has been recognised as a special pilot and an asset to any fleet he serves. Resources are devoted to ensuring that he survives his battles and continues to bring honour and victory to his clan. The starship he pilots receives upgrades that raise its DR by 1, its Handling bonus by +1, its acceleration and deceleration by 1, and its main guns get an extra dice of damage. These are permanent changes but if this upgraded ship is lost, the Rider must advance another character class level (in soldier, officer, or Rider of the Song) before it gets replaced.

Fiery Focus: The Rider of the Song begins to realise that the song can be heard even when he is not in a starship. The rhythm he hears in his mind during any kind of combat is an echo of the Firesong and he can draw strength from it. He gains his Firesong class ability in any kind of combat, but outside of a starship battle, the result of his Concentration check is halved.

Symphony of Destruction: The Firesong reaches its final culmination during starship combat when a Rider of the Song's fighter suffers critical damage (has less than a fourth of its hit points remaining). When a Rider hears the symphony of destruction, his focus becomes even more intense and his skills become phenomenal. All of his bonuses from the Firesong combat style double and if he chooses to make a ram attack while in this state, his death is assured but the ram is so well placed and the damage it inflicts is so critical that it inflicts twice the damage it normally would given its size and speed. (see Ramming in the Combat section of the Babylon 5 Main Rulebook). A Rider of the Song that dies in this way is remembered in the annals of the Fire Wings as a glorious hero and his name brings honour to all those who share it.

Casteless Characters

The Casteless are a unique character opportunity for players wishing to try their hand at a challenge. Without the support of their society, every day can be a contest of wits and skill just for survival, but the benefits of freedom are often worth the endless struggle. Instead of the typical caste benefit of being a Minbari, the Casteless gain something new, the Survivor trait as summarised below. For reference in playing these or any other Minbari character, the racial traits of the Minbari are reprinted here with the Casteless option listed.

Minbari Racial Traits

- ⑤ +2 Strength, -2 Charisma: Minbari seem almost supernaturally strong for their light build, but have little regard or compassion for other races.
- ⑤ All Minbari are of medium size.
- ⑤ Minbari have a base speed of 30 feet.
- ⑤ Minbari are extremely quick and can react faster than most other races. They gain a +2 bonus to all Initiative checks.
- ⑤ Extremely resilient, it takes a lot to kill a Minbari and so long as they still draw breath, they will carry on with their assigned tasks no matter what befalls them. Minbari gain Great Fortitude as a bonus feat.
- ⑤ All Minbari belong to one of the three castes that form their society. Players must choose to belong to the worker, warrior or religious caste. They may also choose to become one of the Casteless, dissenters who have shunned the caste system of their people.
- ⑤ Religious Caste: Members of the religious caste are extremely knowledgeable, having spent much of their infancy and adolescence learning from the collected wisdom of their entire race. They gain a +2 racial bonus to all Knowledge checks.
- ⑤ Warrior Caste: The Minbari warrior caste is trained to fight – all members are proficient with all non-exotic weapons and may pick one as a favoured weapon. Whenever using their favoured weapon, the Minbari gain a +1 racial bonus to their attack rolls.
- ⑤ Worker Caste: Members of the worker caste have many diverse skills and trades. They gain a +2 racial bonus to all Craft and Profession checks.
- ⑤ Casteless: The Casteless are Survivors. Their long and arduous existence in the name of freedom and personal choice give them a +4 bonus to all concentration checks made to endure hardship and provides the equivalent of the Endurance feat.
- ⑤ Automatic languages: Dark, grey and light Minbari, and English.
- ⑤ Favoured Class: Diplomat (religious caste), Officer (warrior caste), Scientist (worker caste), Lurker (Casteless). A multiclass Minbari's favoured class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

Minbari

Campaigns

The previous chapter was all about Minbari character and as such was directed more towards players (though Games Masters will certainly find useful information there for their Non-Player Characters). This chapter is entirely for Games Masters and picks up with the unwritten question that results from the Characters chapter - 'What do I do with all these Minbari now?'

Integrating Minbari into a Babylon 5 roleplaying game can be a difficult thing to do, especially one with a mixed group of other races. Even a campaign set on Minbar or elsewhere in the Federation can be a hassle, mostly due to the alien mindset of the worlds and the people involved. As Lennier's quote mentioned previously, they may sometimes look human, but Minbari are most assuredly not human. They are isolationist, anti-social except within their own clans and castes, and they tend to hold themselves above the concerns and consideration of 'lesser' races. As such, they are not always a suitable mix in a campaign.

More simply put, including Minbari characters in a group with other races can be a chore. One either has to simply ignore the conflicts that would realistically develop or let them occur and move on with the game. The first option is not a desirable one, as it tends to remove a lot of the unique traits that make a Minbari a Minbari. If you allow a Minbari Player to exist in your scenarios without exhibiting any of the personality quirks that the race possesses, you basically just have a human with a very large bone stuck to the back of his head. The way the Minbari view other races and how they deal with adversity, even when it comes in the form of undesirable company, is one of the things that makes this race unique.

The other option, just dealing with the conflicts that will inevitably arise, might seem like the better way to go, but remaining reactive to these events can also be problematic. Once a Minbari and a Drazi come to blows in the game because of personality differences, it may be too late to salvage any kind of group loyalty. The Drazi, if he is being played true to racial form, will never forgive the insult, and the Minbari will have a very hard time working with such a savage again.

Obviously, some way to identify problems before they begin and plan for them in advance would be more helpful to the overall health of a campaign. Instead of reacting, the Games Master can choose to focus on the character clashes that are likely to occur and plan for them, even *focus* on them. If you know in advance that a Minbari will be a

source of conflict, working that conflict into the scenario makes the personality quirks not only less disruptive, they can actually help enhance the story. There are several techniques for doing so.

- 5 **Differences build character.** When players begin a new game, their characters are rarely fleshed out enough to be completely 'themselves'. It takes a few sessions of play for a new character to settle in to established patterns of behaviour and really develop their own personalities. For the Minbari in a play group, letting them behave in typical Minbari ways may be just what they, and the rest of the group, need to find their own acceptable behaviour. By allowing things to run their course, always remaining ready to step in and diffuse things if they get too out of hand, the entire group may become more cohesive as a benefit.
- 5 **Watch for warning signs.** Roleplaying can be an emotional experience, and few emotions build faster than resentment and anger. When characters argue, their players often become involved in the heat of the moment as well. Encouraging a Minbari Player to adopt the same detached, calm attitude his character should have may help keep things from getting confrontational. Watch the expressions on your player's faces and be ready to step in when they seem to be getting agitated. If you wait until the fight has already begun, you may be too late to head anything off.
- 5 **Create opportunities for external adversity.** Nothing promotes co-operation like an outside threat. Even if the players are bickering among themselves because of the Minbari's refusal to accept the ideas of others in the group, they are likely to set aside their differences when a Drakh cruiser opens fire on their transport. If the threat is a lingering one, such as the fact that Drakh ships rarely travel far from others of their kind, dealing with the immediate issue will not leave the players with the luxury of time to keep fighting. Eventually, the fervour of their disagreements will fade into the storyline and they will likely get along, if only to survive.
- 5 **Create opportunities for internal camaraderie.** Do not be afraid to meddle a bit with the backgrounds players invent for their characters. If a Minbari wishes to join the game, feel free to make her an old acquaintance of one of the other characters. In doing so, you have already created a bond between two players, one that may spread to the rest. If this does not really fit with the characters in question or the scenario, then ensuring that the Minbari serves a vital role in

the story can also help. If the Minbari is also the only doctor aboard the Player's ship, they will be a lot less likely to stuff her in an airlock for being haughty.

- 5 **Enforce behaviour in game, not out of it.** The most important thing to keep in mind when making certain that Minbari can function peacefully (or at least mostly peacefully) in a game is that players do not usually respond well to out of character enforcement. Doing this might actually compromise the integrity of the story line. Think about the conflicts that arose between Lennier and Sheridan over the latter's relationship with Delenn. If the 'Games Master' in that situation had said 'You two get along in game or else,' a very important element of the story between those three characters would have been lost. Conflict is all right, but when it does need to be curbed, one should try to do so through in-game mechanics.

To deal in specific with some of the situations that can come up between Minbari players and those of other races or even those of other Minbari caste or sub-races, it would be better to take specific examples of these situations and look at possible solutions. Each of the following scenarios could potentially come up in game and be serious enough to threaten the dissolution of group harmony or even the game itself. To keep things from going that far, a Games Master should know what to look for and how to keep it from becoming a major issue.

Keep in mind that some conflict is fine. While Sheridan and Lennier were able to set aside their differences for two full seasons of the show, they were still adversarial on several levels. Neroon, the warrior caste Minbari that strove to keep Delenn from becoming Entil'Zha of the Anla'shok and worked against her at every turn until the end of the Minbari civil war was able to find elements of his own nature in common with his 'enemies' and even sympathise with them at times. This kind of emotional connection can permit, at times, outright violence among players in the game, provided the complications are dealt with as they arise and everyone keeps in mind that ultimately, this is just a game.

Minbari Players From Different Castes

The interactions between the castes of the Minbari can make for some of the most engaging roleplaying to come from this race, especially after the upset of the Minbari Civil War. The sacrifice of Neroon at the end of the war symbolised the fusion of his spirit's two sides, the warrior

and religious and also formed a bond that both castes could be proud of. His death opened the door for co-operation between those castes, a door that had been shut since the latter forced the former to stand down and surrender at the Battle of the Line ten years earlier.

This sense of unity is not at all universal, but it leaves room for more than just animosity between the two castes. The worker caste was also not left untouched. In many ways, they emerged the most changed by the war, especially considering their new majority in the Grey Council as it was reformed by Delenn. Suddenly able to do more than just operate in the shadows has given the worker caste a whole new perspective on Minbari society, a newfound power that many of their own people do not know what to do with and that many in the other two castes resent. The dynamics of the castes and clans have completely shifted, which makes for excellent roleplaying opportunities in scenarios set after the year 2260.

To determine how the members of the castes react to each other, both as a guide to Games Masters for the interactions of Non-Player Characters and as a sense of scope within the Minbari, the following attitudes section has been compiled. It lists the typical behaviour of members of a given caste and their common attitudes regarding the others. This should not be seen as an absolute; the Minbari are a sentient, emotional race and individuals may vary wildly from these social norms.

The Religious Caste: Members of this caste tend to see the mystical and mysterious in all things. They are often contemplative to the point of halting, and they are the least quick to react to new situations, preferring instead to think about all sides of a problem before finding the optimal solution. Once a member of the religious caste has formed an opinion, it is very difficult to sway them. They are also the least pragmatic, instead easily allowing the universe to go its own course while they put their belief in higher powers. As they are fond of saying, 'Faith manages.'

- 5 **Warrior Caste** – The religious caste have often been at odds with the warrior caste because of their usually opposing methods and ways of thinks. A religious caste Minbari talking to a warrior caste member will likely become pedantic, assuming that the other will not have the patience or thoughtfulness to see his point any other way. As the religious caste would put it, 'We think. They act. Which is more important, the fist or the mind that guides it?'

- 5 **Worker Caste** – Honestly, the religious caste does not often think about the worker caste at all. They do not look down on them necessarily, but they are often considered to be part of the society rather

than true members of it, a background system that makes the rest of the Federation work. If forced to consider a member of the worker caste, a religious caste Minbari would likely take the time to form an opinion based on the person himself, but unless made to do so, they rarely even look at the faces of the people building their temples. 'The worker caste builds. It is their role as defined by Valen. Praised be the name of Valen.'

- 5 **Casteless** – The religious caste tries very hard to pretend the Casteless do not exist, mostly because the Casteless make no sense at all to them. How any Minbari would turn their back on Valen and the teachings of the caste system to live in poverty and adversity is quite beyond most of the religious caste. While its members are never directly cruel to the Casteless, the religious caste is pointedly myopic where they are concerned. 'The idea of Minbari turning from our blessed way of life is unthinkable. You must be mistaken.'

The Warrior Caste: Warriors among the Minbari are very reactionary and tend to act before thinking situations through. This is not as pronounced a problem for them as it might be for other races; the warrior caste are still Minbari and have the advantage of their race's quickened mental processes. As such, even a 'gut level' reaction from them is by no means a berserker instinct. They are often quick to anger and have a tendency to treat problems as nails to which they are very, very big hammers. This can be to the detriment of anything that gets in their way, even those problems that could be much more efficiently solved through diplomacy or calmer action.

- 5 **Religious Caste** – The warrior caste looks with disdain for the most part on these Minbari, usually considering them to be too weak to fend for themselves. Because the warrior caste is the one charged with the defence of Minbar and the Federation, they see themselves as shepherds to the religious caste's 'sheep'. In reply to the religious caste's opinion of them, they say, 'Which is more important, the mind or the fist that protects it?'
- 5 **Worker Caste** – The worker caste is most often beneath the notice of the warrior caste, who sees them only as construction crews for their grand warships and weapons. They tend to see them more often than the religious caste does, mostly because they are always involved in the worker caste's military projects, but they rarely consider them as anything more than labour. 'What matters is the ship. What matters is the weapon. What does the hand that makes it matter?'

- 5 **Casteless** – As opposed to the ignorance that the religious caste feigns where the Casteless are concerned, the warrior caste has a great enmity for these ungrateful souls that choose to step outside the caste system and shun their rightful place. Warrior clan Minbari who become Casteless are treated as cowards and traitors, while members of the other castes that do so are just visible proof of the weakness inherent in their ancestors. Of all the castes, the warriors are the ones most likely to react violently to the Casteless. 'Those who will not be with us are not worthy of being at all.'

The Worker Caste: Long suffering and stoic, the worker caste endures the ignorance and negligence of the other two with quiet sufferance. It is merely the way things have been for as long as they can remember, and they have come to take some sense of pride in their place as the foundation of all Minbari civilisation. By building everything in their culture, they have a place at the heart of everything their race accomplishes, a fact that they appreciate even if their peers in the other castes do not. When a worker caste member does receive recognition for some great deed, they more often than not have no idea how to react.

- 5 **Religious Caste** – To the members of the worker caste, the sedentary life of the religious caste is sometimes a cause for resentment. Usually, the workers pay the religious caste very little attention as their sense of aesthetics does lend beauty to the worker caste's buildings. Whenever the demands of the religious caste become too burdensome, the worker caste is more than willing to listen to their requests, nod acceptingly, and then proceed with their construction projects the way they were doing them in the first place. 'Without us, they would honour Valen in the street, kneeling on sand. We know who builds the churches. It is enough.'
- 5 **Warrior Caste** – The worker caste is still treated as little better than slaves by the warrior caste, an echo of the way things used to be when they were still small, disconnected tribes literally held captive and forced to labour for the fighting clans. They have gotten past the resentment they used to feel at this treatment, now content to be the lynchpin on the mighty military that ensures the safety of the Federation. 'When the fleet needs a new ship, the warrior caste must come to us. It would seem the hand is more important than the weapon after all.'
- 5 **Casteless** – The worker caste has the most sympathy for the plight of the Casteless of all the Minbari, mostly because their place in society means they see them the most often. While they

do not approve of their separation from the caste system, they appreciate the reasons behind it. The Casteless would have a much harder time of things were it not for the subtle aid the worker caste provides them through the occasional 'misplaced' crate of food or survival tents. 'Their lot in life is not much removed from our own. We would that they returned, but if they will not, we will watch over them as we can.'

Casteless: The ghosts of Minbar, the Casteless exist as a fourth caste while denying the power of the castes over them. Life is difficult as a member of the casteless, and it indelibly marks those who live this way. Casteless Minbari have pride, but they are also usually willing to do whatever it takes to survive. As such, they are very adaptive and active, traits that the rest of their race does not entirely share. Life in the shadows also makes the Casteless more capable of dealing with adversity, something that their sheltered peers cannot appreciate until they are plunged into the position of needing to fight for their lives.

⑤ **Religious Caste** – The Casteless find the blindness in the religious caste to be more pitiful than inflammatory, and thus do not pay them much need. The religious caste ignores them, and the Casteless would have it no other way. They do not have any real ill will towards the religious caste as a whole, though the long reign of dominance and forced submission the caste imposed on the Minbari people has been the cause of many Minbari joining the ranks of the Casteless. 'They can ignore us, but their silence is based on shame. They cannot bear to see us because we both know the truth; they made us.'

⑤ **Warrior Caste** – The warrior caste rightly terrifies the worker caste and whenever possible, they hide from them at every turn. When a member of the warrior caste comes into an area where the Casteless are, it is usually to hunt them down for some reason real or imagined. This kind of open aggression is not common and is not endorsed by the Grey Council, but it does occur and when it does, there are few repercussions for the offender. As such, the warrior caste is just avoided as a matter of course. 'They hate us, not for the abandonment we represent but for the freedom they do not have.'

⑤ **Worker Caste** – The worker caste has helped the Casteless survive for centuries and the Casteless are well aware of it. They do what they can to repay the favour whenever it is safe for them to do so, but they know that the caste could be censured if the support were ever discovered. As such, their gratitude is limited to small efforts and always

out of the public eye. When a worker caste team arrives on a job site one day to find all of the menial work taken care of during the night, they know the outcasts have been there. 'We know why they cannot join us, but we appreciate what they do.'

Minbari characters should always have some reason to get along in a mixed group of other races, regardless of their caste (or lack of same). Even a Casteless Minbari is a step above other races in the eyes of a warrior caste soldier, even if he is something the latter despises. As this shows, multiple Minbari may not form an instant cooperative of mutual appreciation, but they will probably prefer each others company to anyone else in the group. From a Games Master's point of view, this can be a good development or an obstacle to party unity.

By providing a sense of connection between one Minbari character and some other member of the group with a different racial type, the entire Minbari contingent can be brought in through this link, which can in turn ensure a level of teamwork that should solve any dissension issues. Just remember that a little adversity is not only acceptable, it is usually more realistic. Earth players may well resent the Minbari in the party regardless of their caste, but if forced to work with them for any period of time, his objections might fade in the light of repeated adventures together.

The Minbari and Other Races

While the Minbari generally view themselves as slightly (or not so slightly) above other races, their attitudes towards them vary widely depending on which species is involved. This attitude tends to cross caste lines and even dominate the reactions of the Casteless who are, ultimately, still Minbari in their minds. How other races react to the Minbari is just as dependent, but this chapter looks specifically at the way the Minbari think and how they view those who share the stars with them.

In general, other races are not as advanced or as socially controlled as the Minbari, two strikes against them where Minbari respect is deserved. If a Minbari is inclined to be kind and patient, a member of another race will likely be treated slight pedantically, like a parent trying to help a bright child aspire to something better than baby talk. If not, their reactions are usually tinged with arrogance, disdain, and a disregard for the accomplishments of the being's race, whatever those might be. The might of the Minbari military, its ancient traditions, and its cohesive government with a millennial reign tends to make their

race more than a little domineering towards others; this attitude can make relations difficult to say the least.

In contrast, some other races treat the Minbari as something akin to honoured elders, feared superiors, or near-gods with enough power to banish them from the galaxy forever. This quickly develops into fear if given reason, and in the case of races that have faced the Minbari in battle, begrudging respect and a constant, wary eye to where the weapons of the old race are pointing next. The Minbari take all of these reactions in stride, knowing full well that nothing they can do would change the attitudes of other races and in many cases simply not caring enough to try.

The Minbari's Reactions to Other Races

- ⑤ **Humans** – The Minbari have mixed feelings about humans, based mostly on whether or not they know the real reasons behind their surrender to Earth at the end of the Earth/Minbari War. For the most part, humans pose a conundrum to the Minbari. For such a young race to be strong enough to have threatened them, even if they were overwhelmed in the end, clearly shows the Minbari that even their vaulted power can be rivalled and that they are not untouchable. This does not come as a welcome revelation to most, leading to dislike and outright hostility on the part of the warrior caste. This is ameliorated somewhat in campaigns set during the time of the Interplanetary Alliance, mostly through the good examples provided by humans joining the Anla'shok.
- ⑤ **Centauri** – The Centauri have never been foolish enough to rival the Minbari in any way, a wise choice on their part. The Minbari consider this once-expansionistic race to be a threat whose time has passed. They usually think of the Centauri as a self-interested, imperialist group of sabre-rattlers with little possibility of ever building themselves into the power they once were. This usually prompts the Minbari to treat Centauri with a certain amount of reservation, mostly because they are not certain the Centauri are rational enough any more to realise that any action against the Federation would simply be a costly attempt at suicide.
- ⑤ **Narn** – The Narns are a race who have fought a long, bloody war for their freedom and are not plunged in the same kind of struggle to keep it. As such, the Minbari are hesitant to have anything to do with the race, abhorring that level of violence and wishing to keep such visceral combat as far away from themselves as possible. Some Minbari

are sympathetic to the plight of the Narn, but their voices are not enough to sway the support of the Grey Council towards aiding them in their War of Retribution. If the campaign is set after the formation of the IA, the opinion of the Minbari towards the surviving Narn people has shifted to reflect the honour and capacity for self-sacrifice that they showed during the Earth Civil War and the years following it.

- ⑤ **Drazi** – The Drazi are a vicious, introverted race built on the concepts of dominance over everyone weaker than them. At least, this is the opinion that most Minbari have of them. They do not much respect the views, opinions, and aims of the Drazi people, assuming that anything the Drazi espouse is based on the violence inherent in this honourless race. This attitude usually changes once a given Minbari meets a Drazi with qualities that surpass their low opinions. Once membership in the Anla'shok opens up to accept members of other races, the Minbari begin to see the deep traditions and valour that are part of the Drazi people.
- ⑤ **Brakiri** – The Brakiri are almost always held at arm's length from the Minbari, mostly because of their galactic reputation as technological packrats and thieves. While the truth of this moniker is debatable, the Minbari cannot be too careful with its scientific superiority and so the Brakiri are not held in good regard by them. Individual Minbari may have a good relationship with the Brakiri, especially worker caste merchants, but even these connections tend to be wary ones with the Minbari always watching over their possessions to ensure that their 'friends' do not attempt to rob them blind.
- ⑤ **The League of Non-Aligned Worlds** – It is difficult to generalise the opinion of the Minbari towards all of the races in the League because of the many different species that make up that political alliance. Of all the League races, the Abbai are the closest to the Minbari in both theological leanings and aesthetic sense. The other race that must be mentioned in any discussion of the League is the Pak'ma'ra. Most Minbari will, unless they must remain, will flee the room when a Pak'ma'ra enters. As alien to the mindset of the Minbari as a race can be, the Pak'ma'ra's habit of carrion eating and utter lack of bodily hygiene disgust them on every level. Though it would never be approved, there are many in the warrior caste that think a bombardment raid to glass the planet of Melat would be a service to the universe itself.

By exploiting the differences and accentuating the similarities between characters, a Games Master can overcome the trouble players of different races can have. Not only will making an effort to create an in-game unity often be enough to accomplish one, as players will respond to the needs of the campaign if they see that a Games Master is willing to recognise the importance of them, but doing so can provide character hooks for the enrichment of the players as well. If you look for a personality reason for the Minbari warrior caste Player to get along with the Brakiri Syndacrist, the players themselves might find one for you and in so doing, add a new facet to the personalities of their own characters.

In any case, the trials and tribulations of making Minbari characters work both within disparate castes and with other races need not be a problem. In fact, with the many quirks and arguments that can come out of a gaming session between characters that are not entirely settled with each other, entire story lines can emerge that the Games Master did not expect. With a little quick thinking and some guidance, an in-game dispute can become a background point between the arguing characters and a problem to be resolved through future roleplaying.

Why Minbari?

In previous passages, we have established that the Minbari are slightly xenophobic, distrust other races, consider themselves superior to any other form of life, and have a tendency to live within their castes and never venture outside the Federation. This being the case, why would Minbari characters exist as Player Characters at all? If they never leave their area of space except on rare occasions, then it does not make much sense for there to be Minbari running around with a large group of other races gallivanting all over the universe.

Or does it? First, keep in mind that a roleplaying game is usually the story of unusual individuals striving to survive under extraordinary circumstances. That neatly defines any number of reasons why a Minbari might be in human space, serving on a merchant ship light years from the nearest Federation world. Perhaps he is of the worker caste and got separated from his crippled transport, or is a religious caste member on a self-imposed pilgrimage to see the galaxy for himself. A warrior caste Minbari could be outside known space on a secret reconnaissance mission for the Shai Alyt himself, studying the development of other races and sending private messages back to his superiors.

Once the Interstellar Alliance is established in the year 2261, the integration of Minbari into other groups elsewhere in the galaxy becomes even easier, but before that, it is certainly not an impossible task. There is also the possibility of stories being told that have their basis in the Federation itself. Perhaps the rest of the players are on a ship of their own that strays past the borders of Minbari space. Rather than blow them out of the stars, the military finds them and, not wishing to cause an incident, just escorts them back to neutral territory with a liaison officer onboard to ensure the 'aliens' do not cause any trouble.

By the time this ship and her patchwork crew reach unaligned space, enough bonds of friendship may have developed that the Minbari requests reassignment to them to 'better keep an eye on what the other races are doing near the Federation'. Such a request is likely to be approved, especially if the Minbari officer has some rank and as the whole galaxy gears up for war between 2258 and 2260. Suddenly, everyone is together in a plausible way. Something like this could even be just backstory to the current campaign.

The Minbari are not likely to leave the Federation and travel with aliens, but Player Characters are not typical individuals. They have personalities that sometimes separate them from their peers in ways that make their acting outside the norm of their race more likely. A chronicle of story arcs *could* be told about characters that were all stereotypical members of their respective races, but it would not be likely to last long. Epic plotlines in the Babylon 5 universe are about extraordinary individuals doing what they must in turbulent times, not acolytes in a Minbar temple talking through every line of the two-day Prayer of Hope or flight mechanics repairing engines for hours during game. Think epic, think exceptional, and you have the right field of reference for both adventures and the players that experience them.

Campaign Concepts

At this point, you have your characters, some or all of which are Minbari, and you need to actually find something to do with them. That is all right; most campaigns begin with characters and build from there. If you want to make your games centre around the Minbari and their place in the galaxy, you have a lot of material in this book to draw ideas from. The Minbari have rich traditions, a detailed history, and numerous connections to some of the most powerful events and mysterious places in the known galaxy.

It can be a daunting task to find exactly where and when a Games Master wishes to set a Minbari-based story arc or full campaign. If it is based around the time of the first two years of the station, the Grey Council exists in its original incarnation with Delenn as the 'Satai in absentia' as the ambassador of her people on Babylon 5, the martyred Trigati is still having echoes of sympathy from the warrior clans, and things are tense throughout the Federation because the time of prophecy is close at hand. This is a turbulent time for the Federation and exceptional characters will find a lot of avenues to make a difference during these early months.

After the Shadows re-emerge and the Great War sweeps over the galaxy, things really change and individuals can make a massive difference. From crewing a White Star in the battles that lie ahead to trying to keep Minbar from destroying itself during the Minbari Civil War, there will be a call for heroes and players can have many long and memorable adventures answering it.

For ease in working Minbari characters and plot concepts into your games, several campaign possibilities and adventure 'seeds' are given below. Most of these require some tailoring to individual games by the Games Master, but all can be fairly effortlessly worked into a game. Some of these are the basic framework around which an entire story arc or campaign can be based around, while others are the stuff of single session adventures.

- 5 In 2258 and much of 2259, Delenn of the religious caste is away from the Grey Council serving as the ambassador of Minbar on Babylon 5. This is an honourable task, but it leaves a power vacuum in the highest ranks of the Minbari government. Politically minded Minbari may be called upon in lower echelons of the religious caste to take up some of the responsibilities the three representatives of their kind would normally handle. This could involve Minbari religious caste players performing important pilgrimages and handling administrative duties of serious consequence to their people. Several adventures could be centred around the Minbari players handling these special tasks, especially as there would be an unspoken possibility that the one among them who performs the best might be able to fill Delenn's place on the Grey Council should she not return from alien space.
- 5 While the worker caste has never revolted in their long history of service, this hardly means that every one of their members is content to take the abuse of their people and never react to it. A low level insurrection, or just one in the planning stages, could be the perfect setting for a story about the worker

caste and Minbari players belonging to it. Trying to keep the peace, or trying to break it asunder, would make for a fascinating chronicle set on Minbari or perhaps one of the outlying colony world where the scrutiny of the other castes is not so focused. If worker caste Minbari on one of the colony worlds decided to make a stand for their own rights under the tyrannical pressure of a particularly domineering Alyt in charge of their planet, the stage might be set for an precursor echo of the coming Minbari Civil War.

- 5 On Babylon 5, word of the Shadows did not come out until 2259 just as the Great War was about to unfold. In Minbari space, things might be revealed a bit sooner. Though such events would need to happen quietly, a small group of Minbari religious caste members might come across an alarming passage in an ancient text written by Valen and come to the realisation that the time of prophecy is at hand. Another possibility might be worker caste Minbari unearthing an ancient tomb and finding relics of the last Great War. One of these might react to the new movements of the Shadows and draw those who find it into the grand conflict against their will. Warrior caste Minbari on a lone scouting run could encounter a Shadow cruiser in hyperspace and have to fight a desperate battle for escape, one that leaves them stranded outside the Federation with no choice but to interact with aliens for the parts they need to return home.
- 5 In the era of the New Grey Council, the balance of power has shifted considerably. Instead of three and three and three, there is five and two and two with the worker caste in ascendance. This is bound to have sweeping effects on the culture of the Minbari as the once ignored and taken for granted worker caste has real political power and can make a difference not just as labour but now as leaders. Other castes will not be as enthusiastic as they are, and some serious strife could result from the clash of ideologies. By the same token, the worker caste has never wielded temporal power in quite this way; they may prove halting or even reluctant to make decisions at first. This hesitance will be seen as weakness by some and could, over time, lead to another Minbari Civil War. The players could be instrumental in averting that fate, serving as attaches to the worker Satai of the Council. Their decisions could have consequences, for good or ill, across the entire Federation, giving the players a chance to try their hand at politics and diplomacy at a level where everything they do and say can make a difference.

- 5 While the Rangers, the Anla'shok, are detailed completely in another sourcebook, there is no reason a Games Master cannot use the information found in this text as a backdrop for a campaign involving them. Players may even go through the earliest stages of training to become Anla'shok without needing the details of the organisation; after all, they are not revealed to its mysteries until after they prove themselves capable of secrecy and bravery under adverse conditions. Minbar is the home world of the Anla'shok and most of a trainee Ranger's education occurs here in the city of Tuzanor. This provides a setting in which many early adventures can take place long before the players need to know more about the Rangers and how they operate. Bravery, subtlety, and honour are the watchwords of the Anla'shok; that is all trainees need to know at first. The rest can come with time...
- 5 The Protective is seldom a completely peaceful place. The races there, especially the Klathu, tend to pull at their leashes from time to time. A military campaign could be set in this area of space by focusing on the peacekeeping efforts of the fleets that constantly monitor against threat both to and from the worlds they watch. If the Klathu or one of the other Protective planets were to be contacted by dark forces looking to overthrow the Minbari and seize the Protective for its own uses, Minbari players would have their hands full trying to overcome such a conspiracy. The Klathu are a few inventions shy of discovering faster-than-light travel as it is. If they were aided by a foreign power, the Minbari could have a serious new enemy practically at their gates without ever realising the danger it posed.
- 5 In 2262, the Vorlons are gone, their worlds abandoned to leave with Lorien beyond the rim of known space. The planets they left behind might hold treasures beyond imagining and dangers beyond belief. As the favoured race of the Vorlons, the Minbari are very likely to be the first ones to explore this sector of space. Since there could be great risk involved, the first expedition into Vorlon space would likely be with a single ship and a well-trained crew of elite Minbari, the perfect opportunity for an exploration-style campaign. The artifacts and ancient defences left by the Vorlons could pose constant challenges while rewarding the players for their perseverance. The Vorlons were beings of energy with living technology and worlds dedicated to the preservation of their kind; the wonders that an exploration crew might discover in their area of space would make for a fascinating story.
- 5 Games do not have to be set in the latest year of the setting or even the current age. Campaign ideas that use the other eras of the Minbari might be to set a story arc in the time of the Kira Zhe, immortal psychic overlords set to conquer Minbar and establish an empire in the name of their Vorlon gods. Games could also use the time of the Minbari revolution, the Dark Century, with desperate Minbari fleeing from the purges of the Vorlons as they try to find some way of defending themselves from death that literally rains down from the heavens. The long, sometimes dark history of the Minbari is detailed in another chapter and every age will have its heroes, its villains, and its stories to tell. A creative Games Master and skilled players could make any or all of them the canvas upon which their own versions of Minbari history is painted.
- 5 Instead of alternate ages, Minbari stories could involve one or more of the sub-races given previously. All three are very rare, so rare in fact that very few Minbari even know of their existence. They do not have much contact with 'normal' Minbari. In the case of the Starborn and the Shadowsouled, that is the way they prefer things. Campaigns or single story arcs could utilise these variant Minbari to a greater or lesser degree, with games set aboard archaic Starborn vessels forced to land by engine troubles and the Starborn players having to deal with gravity and alien life in an effort to return to the stars before the irrevocable damage dooms everyone aboard. The Shadowsouled make a fine villain race, but they can also be effective anti-heroes and useful characters in stories set after the Great War while their race tries to find a new purpose. Shadowsouled characters, especially stalkers with their imbedded Shadow Webs, can also be infiltrators into a normal group of players. Disguised as another race, with continued survival hinging on continued portrayal of that race, a Shadowsouled can be part of a normal campaign for a long time before the truth of his heritage is revealed.

The Essential Minbari

For a Minbari based or focused campaign, it is critical that this race be portrayed properly. The Minbari are not just bald humans with bones on their heads; they are an alien race with thoughts and reactions that are distinctly inhuman. Few people from Earth could appreciate the deep-seated devotion to caste, clan, and a thousand years of heritage and religion that any average Minbari has at the very centre of his soul. The aesthetics of a single flower can hold a Minbari's attention for hours and a single insult can keep him coming for the blood of his enemies for

years. Minbari live twice as long as humans, sometimes even longer, and with that age comes a perspective of time that humanity cannot hope to match.

To aid Games Masters and players in roleplaying Minbari effectively, it is helpful to look at the emotions and reactions that drive this race and give them the behaviours that they exhibit to each other and to outsiders. Once again, it is best to remember that these are suggestions and guidelines only; some Minbari certainly fall outside this mould.

Minbari Are Honourable

It might be better to say, 'Minbari are honour.' To a Minbari, what he does and says is as important as how he thinks and feels. Minbari never make promises, because it is assumed that what they say is always a binding truth. Minbari never swear to something, because their words should be unquestionable veracity. Minbari strive to be fair, even-handed, and always answer kindness with kindness and violence with just enough violence to ensure that such an insult never occurs again.

Minbari Are Polite

The society of Minbar is a cordial one. Minbari very rarely use nicknames and never do so among themselves unless exchanging affectations with a loved one. Contractions are a very infrequent part of their language and never part of formal speech when addressing a superior. The culture of the Minbari is one with clearly defined levels and a member of that society always knows where he or she exists in the rank and file. As such, there are modes of speech used for conversing with people above and below one's station, language used when talking with authority figures, and words spoken only to family in private. The structure is very similar to the way contemporary Japanese society works on Earth, to give a real world analogue.

Minbari Forgive, But They Never Forget

Even the calmest and most rational Minbari has within them the ability to take great offence to insult or slights against his people, character, or occupation. Minbari are dangerous to anger, which is why it is good for the universe that they are usually slow to do so. Even once offence has been taken, a Minbari does not act upon it until the time is right, meaning that an enemy may live for months or years

before revenge finds him in the cold of deep space or in the heart of a battle that begins for other reasons. The Minbari are honourable, but revenge may leave little room for 'respectable' actions.

In contrast, once a debt has been repaid, it is usually left at that. The Minbari hold anger in their hearts, but they rarely hold grudges. If an enemy is punished for their transgressions, balance is restored and if they survive that repayment, the former enemy can become an ally if circumstances permit. The incident that transpired between them will never be forgotten, however, and any echo of the previous crimes will be watched carefully. The Minbari are seldom fooled once, and they are never fooled twice.

The Minbari Act as One

That is the most important thing to remember about this race. Very little affects just a few Minbari; events tend to embroil the entirety of their society at once. A handful of Minbari do not stage an assault on a single temple on Minbar. Instead, the warrior caste declares war on the religious caste. A single world does not rebel against the will of the Grey Council. Instead, the entire Federation threatens to tear itself apart over disagreements and theological differences. A cruiser does not hunt down a ship that attacks it without warning. Instead, the Minbari seek to eradicate the offender's entire species. This singularity of purpose is the Minbari's greatest strength and their potential undoing.



Minbari Non-Player Characters

Games Masters may find that events in a scenario call for the players to come into contact, sometimes hostile and sometimes not, with Minbari unexpectedly. To facilitate game play and to keep Minbari Non-Player Characters consistent with the rules given here and in the Babylon 5 Main rulebook, a number of them are given here for your reference. These Non-Player Characters are from numerous walks of life in the Federation and should provide a wide enough cross-section for any Games Master's purposes. These can also be used as templates for new players entering the campaign who wish to adopt typical roles, at least to begin with.

This chapter also features statistics on several important Minbari as they appear in the Babylon 5 television series. Delenn, Lennier, Neroon, and others appear here, along with personalities, histories, and roleplaying suggestions for Games Masters looking to include them in scenarios. These historical figures should be used sparingly, but there are times when, depending on their actions, Minbari players will cross paths with them. Where appropriate, characters have been tagged with an appropriate year, especially if later years are likely to expand or change their abilities.

Minbari Adept-Telepath

2nd Level Minbari (religious caste) Telepath P5; hp 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; DV 10; +1 melee, +1 ranged; SQ Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +0, Ref +0, Wis +4; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Computer Use +6, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (telepathy) +6, Listen +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Telepathy +6; Meditation

Minbari Labourer

3rd Level Minbari (worker caste) Worker (blue collar); hp 11; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; DV 12; +4 melee, +2 ranged; SQ Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +6, Ref +2, Wis +1; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Bluff +1, Climb +8, Computer Use +4, Concentration +5, Drive +7, Jump +8, Listen +1, Profession (dock worker) +9, Spot +1, Technical +6; Endurance, Skill Focus (profession – dock worker)

Minbari Homeless

2nd Level Minbari (casteless) Lurker; hp 10; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; DV 14; +3 melee, +3 ranged; SQ Lurker's

Knowledge, Survivor's Luck, Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +6, Ref +4, Wis -1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Bluff +3, Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +6, Intimidate +3, Move Silently +6, Pick Pocket +6, Search +3, Survival +4; Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Minbari Merchant

1st Level Minbari (worker caste) Worker (white collar); hp 6; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; DV 10; +1 melee, +0 ranged; SQ Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +3, Ref +0, Wis +0; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Appraise +5, Bluff +7, Computer Use +3, Diplomacy +4, Forgery +2, Intimidate +5, Profession (trader) +5, Sense Motive +8; Skill Focus (sense motive)

Minbari Doctor

2nd Level Minbari (worker caste) Scientist; hp 7; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; DV 10; +1 melee, +1 ranged; SQ Primary Area of Study (medical), Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +0, Ref +0, Wis +4; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Computer Use +7, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (trauma cases) +6, Knowledge (xenobiology) +4, Medical +9, Profession (Medlab tech) +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Technical +7; Data Access

Possessions: First Aid Kit, Hand Computer

Minbari Guardian

3rd Level Minbari (warrior caste) Soldier; hp 16; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; DV 12; +6 melee, +4 ranged; SQ Covering Fire, Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +6, Ref +2, Wis +0; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Listen +1, Spot +1, Sense Motive +1; Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG), Weapon Focus (shock stick), Shields of Silver*
Possessions: PPG, shock stick

Minbari Survivor

4th Level Minbari (casteless) Lurker; hp 15; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; DV 12; +5 melee, +4 ranged; SQ Lurker's Knowledge, Multi-Skilled, Survivor's Luck, Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +8, Ref +2, Wis +0; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Computer Use +3, Concentration +4, Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Intimidate +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Pick Pocket +4, Sense

Motive +4, Spot +4, Technical +4; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Toughness
 Possessions: Club or knife

Minbari Infantry Soldier (Warrior Caste)

4th Level Minbari (warrior caste) Soldier; hp 19; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; DV 12; +7 melee, +6 ranged; SQ Covering Fire, Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +6, Ref +3, Wis +0; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 9
 Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Listen +1, Spot +2, Sense Motive +2; Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG), Weapon Focus (Fusion Rifle), The Nightstrike*
 Possessions: PPG, Sha'nar Fusion Rifle

Minbari Elite Fighter Pilot

5th Level Minbari (warrior caste) Officer; hp 16; Init +10; Spd 30 ft.; DV 12; +6 melee, +9 ranged; SQ Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call, Great Fortitude, Minbari Caste and Racial Traits; Fort +6, Ref +2, Wis +0; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 9
 Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Listen +2, Pilot +8., Spot +2, Sense Motive +2, Technical +5; Vehicle Dodge, Dogfighter, Improved Initiative, Data Access, Spacecraft Proficiency, The Firesong*
 Possessions: PPG, Nial Heavy Fighter (assigned, not personally owned), Flight Suit

Fleet Crewman

4th Level Minbari (workercaste) Officer (fleet); hp 12; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; DV 15; +6 melee, +5 ranged; SQ Rallying Call; Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 9
 Skills and Feats: Computer Use +6, Concentration +4, Listen +7, Medical +3, Pilot +4, Spot +6, Technical (space travel) +6; Data Access, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Spacecraft Proficiency, Way of the Warrior
 Possessions: Uniform, Hand Computer, PPG

Minbari Priest

2nd Level Minbari (religious caste) Diplomat; hp 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; DV 11; +2 melee, +2 ranged; SQ Contact (government official); Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12
 Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (Minbari religion) +5, Profession (priest) +4; Divine Guidance*

**Ambassador Deleenn,
 of the family Mir
 (2258)**

'I would never tell you anything that was not in your best interest.'

9th Level Minbari (religious) Diplomat

Hit Points: 15
Initiative: +4 (+2 Dex, +2 Minbari)
Speed: 30 ft.
DV: 17 (+7 Reflex)
Attacks: +5 melee or +6/+1 ranged
Special Qualities: Contact x5, Government Resources, Improved Diplomacy *
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +9
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16
Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +11, Computer Use +10, Diplomacy +19*, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (alien life) +11*, Knowledge (human society & culture) +13*, Knowledge (Minbari history) +14*, Knowledge (star systems) +11*, Listen +12, Sense Motive +15
Feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Resist Scan, Silent Tread

A member of the Minbari religious caste, many on Babylon 5 suspect that Ambassador Deleenn knows far more about galactic events than she openly admits. During her assignment to Babylon 5, Deleenn has developed a close friendship with Commander Sinclair though even he is beginning to doubt her true motivations.

Deleenn cares for the people around her and will go to great lengths to grant aid if someone is in trouble or danger. However, she also has a highly developed sense of personal honour that many find incomprehensible at times – Deleenn has been known to focus on the 'greater good' at the expense of more personal matters whenever the two clash. During meetings of the Babylon 5 Council, Deleenn is seen as a moderating force, albeit one who normally gets her own way when so directed by her government.

In Later Years: With the coming of the Great War, Deleenn takes on many responsibilities. She becomes Entil'Zha of the Anla'shok, shares that authority with John Sheridan, a human whom she later marries, and becomes integral to the formation of the Interstellar Alliance. See the individual Season sourcebooks of the Babylon 5 roleplaying game for updated character listing for Deleenn.

Lennier, of the Third Fain of Chudomo (2258)

**'Understanding is not required.
Only obedience.'**

2nd Level Minbari (religious) Diplomat

Hit Points: 9

Initiative: +5 (+3 Dex, +2 Minbari)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 13 (+3 Reflex)

Attacks: +3 melee or +4 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills: Bluff +2, Computer Use +5, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (probability) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (human society & culture) +5, Medical +4, Listen +4, Sense Motive +5

Feats: Great Fortitude, Toughness

Lennier's life on Babylon 5 has proved to be quite a shock after his prior life in temple on Minbar. Utterly faithful to Ambassador Delenn, Lennier has been trained to serve his people without question or hesitation and has proved to be a valuable assistant. He has a passion for history and takes any opportunity to learn the background of any other race on board the station, happily taking time to trade information with those who visit his ambassador whenever his duties allow.

His studies at temple on Minbar have made Lennier an incredibly knowledgeable individual, though he remains a little naive when confronted with all the wonders of Babylon 5. Some have managed to take advantage of Lennier because of this, but his primary responsibilities to Delenn and the Minbari serve to keep him out of harm's way most of the time.

In Later Years: Lennier as a character develops and grows into an effective warrior and spy, serving Delenn as a constant source of faith and companionship. Her relationship with Sheridan drives a wedge between them, but she is also foremost in his thoughts. Lennier's dedication to the ideals of his people, coupled with his need to distance himself from the marriage of his mentor takes him to the Anla'shok where he becomes even more capable.

Neroon, Star Riders Clan Alyt (2258)

**'You think like a Minbari,
Captain. It speaks well for your
race.'**

6th Level Minbari Officer (fleet)

Hit Points: 19

Initiative: +4 (+2 Dex, +2 Minbari)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 14 (+4 Reflex)

Attacks: +9/+4 melee or +8/+3 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 15

Skills: Bluff +12, Computer Use +10, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +8, Drive +3, Intimidate +8, Medical +2, Pilot +7, Sense Motive +9, Technical +5

Feats: Data Access, Spacecraft Proficiency, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Denn'bok), Weapon Focus (Denn'bok), Denn'bok Master, Ven'shor*

As a member of the Star Riders clan of the warrior caste, Neroon has a natural dislike for humans and for Jeffrey Sinclair in particular. Rather than simply being consumed by this hatred, Neroon possesses an unusual quality for a warrior caste Minbari, he is reasonable and contemplative. As such, he is willing to consider other sides to a story before making up his mind about people and he never rushes to judgment regarding any situation. This careful nature has not been a detriment to his military career; in fact, Neroon has used his intellect and charisma to rise quickly through the ranks of the fleet all the way to Alyt in a surprisingly short amount of time.

In Later Years: Neroon's ambitions and qualities serve him well during the years to come, though his life ends tragically and heroically at the conclusion of the Minbari Civil War when he sacrifices himself to heal the rift between the religious and warrior castes. Before this, he moves to block Delenn's ascension to the rank of Entil'Zha and, when he is thwarted by a human willing to give his life for her, relents and sees the wisdom in her appointment. This are Neroon's chief traits, he has the insight to see what many refuse to and the courage to stand by his convictions no matter the cost.

Lavell, of the Third Fane of Chudomo

'We are brothers. You should understand why I am doing this.'

2nd Level Minbari (religious) Diplomat

Hit Points: 8

Initiative: +5 (+3 Dex, +2 Minbari)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 13 (+3 Reflex)

Attacks: +2 melee or +4 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills: Bluff +5, Computer Use +5, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (probability) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (human society & culture) +5, Listen +2, Sense Motive +4

Feats: Great Fortitude, Silent Tread

Lavell is a perfect example of members of other castes sympathizing with the frustrations of the warrior caste over the losses they suffered in both lives and honour at the hands of humans in the Earth/Minbari war. Hatred of John Sinclair drove Lavell to the drastic measure of lying to protect the honour of Ashan, a member for the warrior caste who martyred himself to frame Sheridan for murder. While his motives were questionable and his actions were dishonourable, Lavell acted in a manner totally consistent for both his race and his character. While Lavell himself might not have a role in future stories and campaigns, he provides a good template for Minbari Non-Player Characters who might feel the same way he does and who might act in ways that seem contrary to racial stereotypes.

Hedronn, Member of the Grey Council

'You have been away from us for too long, Deleenn. We have decided in your absence.'

8th Level Minbari Officer (fleet)

Hit Points: 23

Initiative: +3 (+1 Dex, +2 Minbari)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 13 (+3 Reflex)

Attacks: +9/+4 melee or +9/+4 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call, Way of Command

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +8

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +10, Computer Use +10, Concentration +8,

Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +9, Jump +4, Medical +5,

Pilot +10, Sense Motive +8

Feats: Dogfighter, Spacecraft Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge, Weapon Focus (Minbari Fighting Knife), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Ven'shor*

Hedronn is a conundrum among Minbari, something that comes mostly from his unusual position as a warrior caste member in the Grey Council. He is sympathetic towards humanity despite the fact that his caste had to surrender without even learning why at the Battle of the Line and his primary concerns always seem to be for the well-being of his people, despite his heavy-handed applications of power to ensure those goals. He has been both ally and adversary to Deleenn and their relationship could be well described as strained under normal circumstances. Beyond all of this, he is a true Minbari who only wants what is best for his people. When he sees a threat, he does not hesitate to act against it, but he is also wise enough to know when to remain quiet and let others take the lead.

Shakiri, Shai'Alyt of the Grey Council

'We all die, Neroon. Only the timing varies.'

12th Level Minbari Officer (fleet)

Hit Points: 23

Initiative: +3 (+1 Dex, +2 Minbari)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 15 (+5 Reflex)

Attacks: +14/+9 melee or +13/+8 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call, Way of Command, Branch Elite (fleet)

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +8

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +10, Computer Use +5, Concentration +8,

Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +11,

Jump +5, Knowledge (military) +6, Medical +5, Pilot

+10, Sense Motive +8

Feats: Dogfighter, Spacecraft Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge, Weapon Focus (Minbari Fighting Knife), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons), Skill Focus (Intimidate), Vehicle Combat, Weapon Focus (Sha'an PPG), Ven'shor*

The leader of the warrior caste and Shai'Alyt of the Minbari military, Shakiri is the single most powerful and influential soldier in the Federation. His goals and desires are at the heart of the conflict between the religious and military castes and when those arguments explode into full civil war, he attacks his opponents with a vengeance. Regardless of his ambitions, Shakiri is a cunning tactician and a very effective war leader. His abilities has forged the current Minbari fleet into the potent engine of destruction that it is and his legacy, despite his cowardice in the Chamber of the Star Wheel at the end of the Minbari Civil War, will live on in the strategies and battle formations of his design that the fleet will use for centuries to come.

* These feats appear in the Characters section of this sourcebook.





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The Minbari Federation Fact Book

Of all the races in the universe of Babylon 5, none save perhaps the Vorlons are more enigmatic and mysterious than the Minbari. Possessing a culture steeped in tradition and dogma, the Minbari closely resemble humans but are very evidently not human. They are stronger, faster, and possess acute senses that humanity can only begin to understand. They are deeply spiritual but feel no need to share or even explain their beliefs to others. They gave great respect for their elders and accept the rule of a single council even on worlds far from their own territory. Their ways are unpalatable, even to some of their own kind, yet none dare question their motives. At least, none dare question them openly.

This book will detail the Minbari Federation in its entirety. From the homeworld of Minbar to its colonies, culture, religious practices and military every part of the Federation can be found in these pages. Vehicles, weapons, equipment, characters and more are examined in complete detail. The roleplaying possibilities are endless!

Inside You Will Find

Biology – A look at the unique biology and genetics of the Minbari race

Psychology and Sociology – A review of Minbari minds and culture

Castes of the Minbari – An in depth study of the Minbari Castes, including their structures and traditions

Organisations – Minbari government, politics and organisations, including the mysterious Grey Council

The History of the Minbari – A full and detailed history of the development of the Minbari Federation

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Technology – New equipment for Minbari characters

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