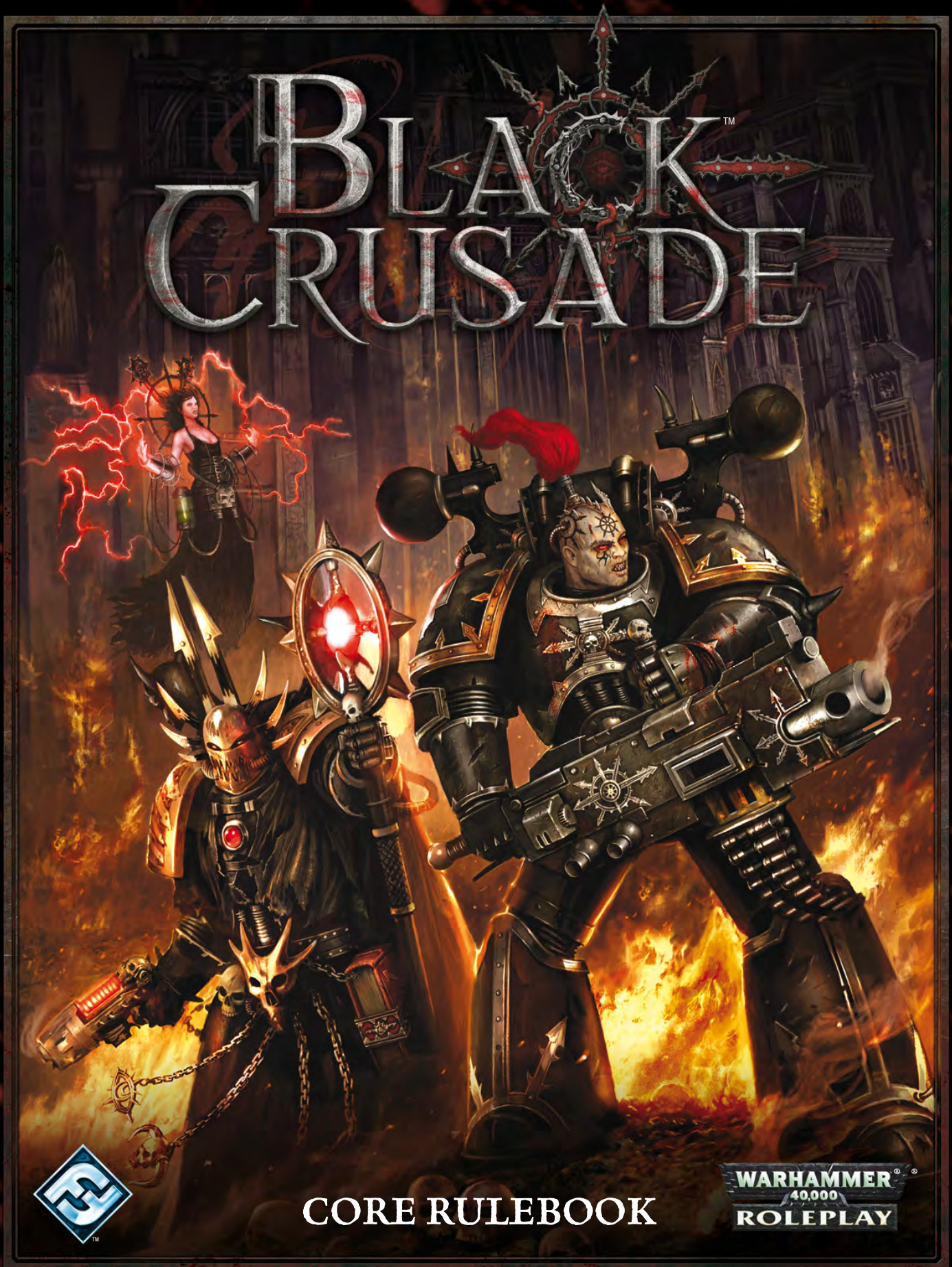
Black Crusade™



Core Rulebook

Warhammer® 40,000 Roleplay

BLACK CRUSADE™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM DARKNESS
OF THE 41ST MILLENIUM

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FOREWORD

In January, 2008, Warhammer 40,000 fans received something many of them had been waiting for decades—a roleplaying game set in the grim darkness of the 41st Millennium. Soon after, what would become the Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay development team here at Fantasy Flight Games received three books, a Game Master's kit, and a box. The books were the first three books of the **Dark Heresy** line; the Core Rulebook, the Inquisitor's Handbook, and the adventure Purge the Unclean. Inside the box were more than 500 sheets of printouts—the manuscript for the next book in the line, **Disciples of the Dark Gods.**

Now, more than three and a half years later, those four books have grown into four game lines (and more than thirty books and other products), each exploring a different facet of the Warhammer 40,000 universe.

Dark Heresy, the first of the lines, introduced fans to Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay through service to the secretive Inquisition of the Imperium of Man. **Dark Heresy** presented the Imperium of Man at "street level," with the players experiencing the life of an Imperial citizen amongst the cyclopean hive cities and towering monuments to mankind. In **Dark Heresy**, life is gritty, brutal, and all too often short.

Rogue Trader, the second line, took Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay a step further. As Rogue Traders, players were handed a ship, a Warrant of Trade, and most importantly, the freedom to go off and use it. Players could explore, fight, and even steal whatever they can find in the dark void beyond the known stars, bound only by the limits of their own ambition. Of course, that selfsame ambition can often lead them into dangerous situations, when they encounter ancient secrets best left undisturbed. In **Rogue Trader**, the tone shifts between high adventure and Lovecraftian horror, often without warning.

The third line, **Deathwatch**, upped the stakes yet again. One of the most iconic aspects of Warhammer 40,000 are the Adeptus Astartes, the mighty Space Marines. As a member of the alien hunting Deathwatch, the players could take on the role of an Adeptus Astartes. Now, with players becoming warriors deadly enough to laugh at the dangers of the last two game lines, **Deathwatch** took some of the greatest threats in the Warhammer 40,000 universe and threw them at the players. Tyranid Hive Tyrants, Tau battlesuits, entire armies of lesser foes, and even the Greater Daemons of Chaos. In **Deathwatch**, the action is fast, deadly, and non-stop in the fight against Mankind's most deadly foes.

So now, Fantasy Flight Games is taking the next step in Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay, in allowing players to take on the role of those self-same foes. In each of the previous game lines, gamers have been playing as servants, allies, and even champions of the Imperium. Now, for the first time, you can play its mortal enemies, the servants of the Ruinous Powers and the disciples of the Dark Gods.

We wanted **Black Crusade** to complement the work we've done on previous game lines, while taking Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay in a bold new direction. To that end we didn't rest on our laurels. We've added in new means of character generation, new and re-imagined mechanics, and new experiences, bundling that all up with a fascinating and frightening new setting nestled amongst the sectors, expanses, and war zones of our other lines. Our goal was to create a game that not only offered a new way to play Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay, but also would prove an invaluable resource to anyone playing one of our other games. After all, Chaos is so often the arch nemesis in Warhammer 40,000, so what better source for the ultimate villains than a book devoted to the Ruinous Powers?

In the end, we feel we've created a book that remains true to the game that so many love, while at the same time giving players exciting new adventures and experiences. **Black Crusade** promises to be the next step in a bright and thrilling future for Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay. So grab some D10s and pencils, find some friends, and crack open this book and start playing **Black Crusade**!

Oh, and death to the False Emperor!

Happy gaming,
The Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay Team



It is the 41st Millennium...

For more than a hundred centuries the Emperor has sat immobile on the Golden Throne of Earth. He is the master of mankind by the will of the gods, and master of a million worlds by the might of his inexhaustible armies. He is a rotting carcass writhing invisibly with power from the Dark Age of Technology. He is the Carrion Lord of the Imperium for whom a thousand souls are sacrificed every day, so that he may never truly die.

Yet in his deathless state, the Emperor continues his eternal vigilance. Mighty battlefleets cross the Daemon-infested miasma of the warp, the only route between distant stars, their way lit by the Astronomicon, the psychic manifestation of the Emperor's will. Vast armies give battle in his name on uncounted worlds. Greatest amongst his soldiers are the Adeptus Astartes, the Space Marines, bio-engineered super-warriors. Their comrades in arms are legion: the Imperial Guard and countless planetary defence forces, the ever-vigilant Inquisition and the Tech-Priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus, to name but a few. But for all their multitudes, they are barely enough to hold off the ever-present threat from aliens, heretics, mutants–and worse.



To be a man in such times is to be one amongst untold billions. It is to live in the cruellest and most bloody regime imaginable. These are the tales of those times. Forget the power of technology and science, for so much has been forgotten, never to be re-learned. Forget, the promise of progress and understanding, for in the grim dark future there is only war. There is no peace amongst the stars, only an eternity of carnage and slaughter, and the laughter of thirsting gods.

Yet there are those who rise above the teeming masses, rejecting the conformity and servility of mankind. The ignorant call them traitors, heretics, lost, and damned–but they know themselves as the Disciples of the Dark Gods.

Embrace the Power of Chaos

Welcome to **Black Crusade**, a roleplaying game of personal power, betrayal, and forging an epic destiny with one's own hands. You take on the roles of heretics, worshippers of the Dark Gods of Chaos fighting against the crumbling monolith that is the Imperium of Man.

The Imperium is the massive empire of humanity, stretching from one end of the galaxy to the other. However, it is beset on all sides by threats; both human and alien. It is also a harsh, cold regime, enforcing its rule with the iron fist of its mighty armies. The Imperial Guard, the Imperial Navy, and above all, the genetically enhanced superhuman warriors of the Adeptus Astartes, the mighty Space Marines.

Though the galaxy of the Imperium is vast, there is another realm, alongside which the Imperium is nothing in comparison. The Realms of Chaos, the warp, the immaterium, all are names humanity has given this parallel dimension. None, however, can hope to encompass it, for the warp is a realm of infinite size, infinite possibilities, and infinite madness.

Humanity makes use of the warp. Starships travel through it to reach the far ends of the galaxy, astropaths send messages through it that would take centuries to travel across realspace, and those blessed (or cursed) with psychic potential can manipulate the warp's energy to do miraculous and terrible things. However, the immaterium is far from a resource to be harvested, or even an ally to be trusted. The warp is a realm of swirling emotions, of thought made manifest, and of the purest chaos. Deep in the darkest corners of the immaterium, vast, unknowable intelligences move like sharks beneath the surface of the ocean. They speak to mankind, offering power at a price.

And though the price may be steep, it is one many gladly pay. As a disciple of the Ruinous Powers, you have turned your back on the Imperium. You have abandoned the oppressive society of mankind, and turned to those unknowable entities within the warp: the Dark Gods of Chaos. Now you fight for your new masters, or only for yourself, to gain plunder, glory, and infamy. Perhaps you will gain enough power to lead your own armies, rising up to command your own Black Crusade!

Black Crusade centres around a small group of powerful individuals, the warband. You, the players, take on the role of members of that warband, either as Traitor Legionnaires (Space Marines who have turned from the Imperium and embraced Chaos) or powerful human renegade and heretic Disciples of the Dark Gods. Though you have only yourselves to rely on, you are some of the most formidable warriors and dangerous adversaries in the galaxy, and there is much you can accomplish with your own hands.

The game focuses on your warband's rise to power and glory. Your characters must be resourceful, powerful, and bold to succeed. As you accomplish great deeds and defeat powerful foes you accrue more infamy and fortune. Meanwhile, you are constantly being infused with the attentions of the Ruinous Powers, attentions which can have very real effects and corrupt you in body and mind even as they give you greater abilities and powers. You must earn enough renown and infamy to impress the gods and be elevated to immortal daemonhood upon your end. Perhaps you may even be one of the very few skilled enough to earn the infamy required to lead your own Black Crusade before your apotheosis.



What is a Roleplaying Game?

In a roleplaying game (or RPG), you create an alter ego, a fictional character that is your avatar within the game world. Perhaps you create a honourable warrior, a cunning sorcerer, or a leader who inspires loyalty through dark magnificence. Next, you and your friends direct your characters through a series of adventures. Imagine reading a fantasy novel, watching an action movie, or following a television series—except instead of passively watching or reading the story unfold, you control one of the characters, making his decisions, selecting his actions, and even speaking for him. Instead of waiting to see how the story unfolds, *you* directly affect and even determine the outcome of the story.

How can you affect these events? How do you decide what happens? That is the role of the game itself. Roleplaying games such as **Black Crusade** provide a framework of rules that describe how to design your character and have him interact with the world within the game. Rules cover situations like sword fights, delicate negotiations, or infiltrating an Imperial stronghold to destroy it. Often, the rules require you to roll dice when performing an action, with some results indicating success and others indicating failure. While the rules provide structure and guidelines to the game, dice add the element of chance. After all, success would not be so sweet if you had no chance of failing!

At first, RPGs like **Black Crusade** seem like they have a lot of rules. However, as you read the book you will soon see that the rules are actually quite simple, easy to remember, and even intuitive. **Black Crusade** is built on a simple set of base mechanics. Once you grasp the basic mechanics, the rest is easily understood.

To adjudicate these rules, each game has a Game Master (or GM). The GM is you, or one of your friends, chosen by consensus of your group. Unlike everyone else, the GM does not control a single character. Instead, the GM runs the game, presenting the story and the myriad of situations that come with it. He controls the people your character meets in the game, controls the encounters and strange occurrences that shape your decisions as to your actions, and is basically both the game's narrator and the referee.

All of the other players control characters within the world, around which the story resolves. These characters are known as the Player Characters (also referred to as the PCs or Heretics). During the game, the players describe the intentions and actions of their characters to the GM, who then decides (based on the rules) whether those actions succeed or fail, and how their words and deeds affect the story.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

Black Crusade is divided into twelve chapters. They are:

Introduction

The section you are reading right now. It provides an overview of **Black Crusade** and roleplaying in general, then goes into detail about the galaxy in the 41st Millennium. This provides the background you need to understand the Warhammer 40,000 universe.

Chapter I: Playing the Game

This character explains the core mechanics of **Black Crusade**.

Chapter II: Character Creation

This chapter takes you step by step through the process of creating your character and advancing him during the game.

Chapter III: Skills

From Awareness to Forbidden Lores, each character has a variety of Skills he can employ. This chapter describes them and how they can be used.

Chapter IV: Talents & Traits

Every character also has certain special abilities that make him unique, such as Swift Attack or Cold Hearted. This chapter describes these Talents and Traits.

Chapter V: Armoury

This character describes some of the tools, armour, and weapons your character may use or encounter.

Chapter VI: Psychic Powers

The warp may grant strange and supernatural powers to certain characters. This chapter details the psychic powers available to those characters, how they work, and how they might go wrong.

Chapter VII: Combat

This chapter describes the rules for fighting combat encounters, from minor skirmishes with a single foe to massive battles against a horde of enemies.

Chapter VIII: The Game Master

The GM has a special role to play in any RPG, and this chapter explains how to best fulfil that role. In addition, this chapter contains rules for Fear, experience, and Compacts.

Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy

As characters accomplish great deeds, they earn Infamy, and as they garner the attentions of the warp, they earn Corruption. The interactions of these mechanics are described here.

Chapter X: A Galaxy in Flame

The Screaming Vortex is a massive warp storm, but within are countless worlds isolated from the Imperium. This is the setting for **Black Crusade**.

Chapter XI: Adversaries

From the deadly Harlequins to the servants of the hated Imperium, this chapter provides a host of enemies for you to face.

Chapter XII: False Prophets

This book includes an adventure optimized for starting characters. A mysterious invitation provides the spring-board for intrigue, chaos, and the introduction of larger adventures.

The Galaxy

"In its hubris, mankind claims dominion over the galaxy. However, their realm is naught but a few flickering candles in a vast and hungry darkness."

–A Treatise on the End of the Imperium, denounced and burned in 800.M41

The vast spiral of the galaxy stretches across over 100,000 light years and swells to 12,000 light years thick at its hub. It contains hundreds of billions of stars and untold millions of habitable planets. Through long ages the galaxy has seen successive civilisations rise and fall without end. Some never reached other stars and died stillborn on their birth worlds, while others rose to dominate vast swathes of the galaxy before collapsing back into dissolution and anarchy. The first phase of human expansion across the galaxy is lost in the distant past, obliterated by twenty thousand years of subsequent regression and rebuilding. In the current era the so-called Imperium of Mankind is only the latest ascendant to mount a throne set upon the ruins of earlier, greater ages.

The Imperium is mighty, centred around the high concentration of human worlds in the galactic west and alleging a divine right to the fealty of all mankind through its control of the cradle of Humanity itself: Sacred Terra. A million worlds fall beneath the dominion of the corpse-god that the Imperials call the Emperor; it controls countless armies billions strong and fleets of starships beyond number. Yet for all the Imperium's tremendous strength its million worlds are but pinpricks of light and order in the midst of the howling darkness of the galaxy. For every world that feels the autocratic boot of the Adepts of Terra upon its throat, a thousand others lie undiscovered in the void. There are alien empires thriving and multiplying in the outer reaches as well as fiercely independent human domains that refuse to acknowledge the Emperor's laws.

Beyond the reach of the zealots of the Imperial creed it is also possible to find the signs of eldritch powers that pre-date the Age of the Imperium. Some say that the seeds of man's salvation can be found there, the strength to win freedom from the corpse-god Emperor on Terra and wreak terrible vengeance for the broken promises of the Great Crusade. Outside the feeble light cast by the Emperor's domains there are many who remember the old ways of worship and sacrifice, and many that still know of the power of the gods.

The Realm of Chaos

"What is our realm but a cracked mirror? A filthy window that shows a broken reflection of the glory that lies beyond our sight! What tawdry hovels are these? Towers of silver and gold they would be in the Empyrean's gaze! Or fish! Or flowers! Or a seraglio of silken lovers! Every colour, every sense, every action, every reaction, every infraction is reflected and magnified a thousand times.

Gods and heroes dwell in that invisible realm in castles of cloud and grandeur, transcendent beings of wisdom and power beyond our comprehension! We who toil through the dross of mortal existence can never know the ultimate blessings of uncertainty, but we can embrace the path of change! The hidden glories of Immaterium lie all about us, waiting for us to notice and claim them as our birthright!"

–Demagogue Xentrias in his epistles to the Ghaudians

Insane savants argue that the material universe experienced by mortals represents only the tip of the iceberg and unseen realms exist just beyond perception. They say that the limitless depths of the Realm of Chaos surround

Be proud on this day of your ascension to manhood. Now that you have seen two hands of winters pass you are children no more. Breathe deep of the dream smoke and listen. On this, your first trip into the men's yurt, I impart to you a great mystery of our people (the tale of our origins) so that you might know your place in the universe.

In the beginning there was the void, and only the void, and the gods moved across the face of the void and they were made wholly of it. Some will tell you that a void is a nullity, a nothingness. They are fools. The void is everything; its infinitude encompasses all possibilities and their ultimate annihilation.

It pleased the gods to shape the void as they passed through it, giving it form at their fancy for a time before their makings collapsed back into primordial sea. When the gods met they battled and coupled in equal measure, their shapeless offspring sleeting into the void to lie forgotten in the shadows. So it was for an eternity, with only the void lit by the fire and lightning of the gods at sport.

Eventually tiring of the vastness the gods at last laid aside their differences and determined to create a Reality for their mutual pleasure. They took turns naming the laws they would make for the place:

The Warrior ruled that the strong would always dominate the weak. He did this because he knew his followers would triumph as they were mighty and warlike.

The Prince decreed that the heart would always rule over the head. He did this because he knew that the honeyed tongues of his followers would be able to sway their enemies through desire.

The Deacon demanded that all beings should be mortal, so that which lived must inevitably die. He did this because he knew that then all would ultimately come to rest within the narrow houses of his domain."

The Magus forbore to name any single rule of his own and instead reserved the right to make exceptions later as he saw fit, with much grumbling from his fellows.

The gods were satisfied that they had shaped the crude frame upon which mortal life would be borne, each taking a part of it eternally as their own. They went on to shape the universe as they saw fit. They made a thousand times a thousand laws; that things fall down and not up, that fire needs air to burn, that rock should be solid, that water should flow, on and on they went, now trying to outdo one another in the many ways to bring restriction upon the formless void. Their laws crystallised inside the primordial ocean and became the skein that we know as the loom of fate, and upon that skein the detritus that we know as Reality began to gather.

So it was that our miserable, mortal realm was made and life stumbled forth, a plaything for the god's sport woven from the dross of primordial Chaos by their passing whimsy. So think not to call upon the gods and have them hear your prayers, they gave us the gift of all that we are and they care nothing for it. Less than the dust beneath their feet are we.

- Three Wolf, truth-talker of the Red Hunters drill-clan, Messia.



and infuse the tiny chips of physicality that are planets and suns to mortal eyes. They declare that what humanity sees as "reality" is only a mask, a cloak of normality over the vast and swirling ocean known as the Immaterium, the warp, or the Realm of Chaos.

The raw, unfocused energy of the Realm of Chaos forms a parallel dimension to the material universe, a place of infinite possibilities where emotion and symbolism hold sway. The Realm changes constantly, ebbing and flowing in different locales as it does so. The flows, swirls, and eddies that it creates can form patterns and designs, drawing similar energies into themselves until they achieve a level of consciousness and purpose. When they find the courage to acknowledge the existence of such powers men call them the Chaos gods. Many nameless gods have been cast up by the warp only to be swept away again by the slow beat of aeons, but four great powers of Chaos seem eternal; Khorne the Blood God, Slaanesh the Prince of Pleasures, Nurgle the Lord of Decay, and Tzeentch the Changer of the Ways.

In primitive cultures countless creation myths are told of the formless void before the coming of the gods. In some tales the gods are said to have shaped the world from parts of themselves, in others they slay a great beast and use its bones to lay the foundation of creation, in others the mortal realm is formed from the debris left by their great battles with one another. Seers and magicians of more studious societies make complex arguments for the material universe having given birth to the Chaos Powers rather than vice-versa. They hold that the ocean of primordial essence that we now see as the seething Realm of Chaos was calm and undisturbed until it began to be altered by mortal passions and desires.

Materially it matters little what came first. The Chaos Powers are real, tangible forces in both the Realm of Chaos and the material universe. They absorb the energies of countless souls in turmoil, waxing ever stronger on the hopes and fears of mortals until they have become truly god-like entities. If mortals truly gave birth to the entities that have become the Ruinous Powers no hint of mortal frailty remains. The gods of Chaos represent absolutes completely unsullied by indecision or mercy.

Even beyond the Realm of Chaos there are some that give their fealty to the Ruinous Powers. Those that proclaim themselves followers of the Chaos gods must cleave their own path, and soon learn to fear the "blessings" of their deities. Countless gibbering madmen have declared that they have seen the true face of Chaos and received messages from the gods. Physical corruption, mutation and stigmata are apt to sprout from the followers of Chaos like unholy fruit. Even so many that lust for power disregard such risks, thinking they can evade the consequences of meddling with powers beyond comprehension.

The gods care nothing for their followers or their machinations, granting them unimaginable power or withdrawing it from them just as quickly as their fickle whims decree. Mortals are mere playthings to them, to be used and cast aside at will, at best the objects of momentary fascination. Perhaps they know that once the process of a soul's corruption has begun it becomes inevitable, and that the taint of Chaos will bring living souls to the gods whether they declare themselves devout or not. It is more likely the Ruinous Powers are simply unaware of the mass of mortality in any conscious sense because their state of existence and motivations are too vast and alien to comprehend. The gods of Chaos are such remote and terrifying entities that most mortals only hope only to escape their notice.



NURGLE

"Indeed the very process of construction and creation foreshadows destruction and decay. The palace of today is tomorrow's ruin, the maiden of the morning is the crone of the night, and the hope of a moment is but the foundation stone of everlasting regret."

–The Lost and the Damned

One of the four great Chaos powers is Nurgle. He is most commonly called the Lord of the Decay but he is known many names; the Fly Lord, the Great Corruptor, the Master of Pestilence. The power of Nurgle is embodied in entropy, morbidity, disease and physical corruption. Of the four great powers Nurgle is said to be the one most involved with the plight of mortals. Through the gifts of raging fevers and shaking chills Nurgle's hand is upon them from cradle to grave.

Few escape the touch of Nurgle in their lives. He is sometimes called the Lord of All because all things, no matter how strong and secure, fall to physical corruption in the end.

Every Chaos power embodies the hopes, fears and other strong emotions generated by mortal beings. In the case of Nurgle, their fear of death and disease is the source of his greatest power. The mortal's unconscious response to that fear—the desperation to cling to life no matter what the cost—gives Nurgle an opening into their souls. The whispered prayer of a parent over a fever-struck child, the anguished pleas of the dying man for one more day of life; these are meat and drink to Nurgle.

Nurgle is typically depicted as an immense, bloated humanoid, his body swollen with putrefaction. His skin is shown as leathery and necrotic, his surface pocked with running sores, swelling buboes and oozing wounds. Internal organs bulging with decay spill through splits in the ruptured skin to hang like bunches of scrofulous grapes around his vast girth. Nurgle is often illustrated with hordes of tiny daemons bursting forth from its pustules and suckling upon foulness.

The deranged worshippers of the Lord of Pestilence say that he concocts diverse contagions to inflict on the material universe for his amusement, and many of the most infectious and horrible diseases are Nurgle's proudest creations. It is their belief that those who die caught in the grip of one of Nurgle's terrible poxes are swept directly to his realm.

Those that sing the praises of Nurgle loud enough are sometimes spared so that they can spread his blessings further, for the church of the Fly Lord is always open to all. Nurgle has many supplicants but there are few with the fortitude to declare themselves as his champions. The few that can survive Great Corruptor's manifold blessings exhibit a feverish, morbid energy and a preternatural resistance to physical damage.

The power of Nurgle waxes and wanes as his pandemics sweep across the galaxy. When untold billions fall prey to the newest plagues his strength can overshadow that of any of the other Chaos powers for a period. At other times the power of Nurgle withers away to lie quiescent until circumstances are ripe for it to erupt forth once more.

Those that fashion themselves Champions of Nurgle represent a dire threat to densely populated worlds, where close-packed populations are vulnerable to a single contagion. Ships in the void are particularly vulnerable to disease and many dying crews have beseeched the Lord of Decay for his intercession. Such was the fate of the Death Guard Legion when it became marooned in the warp on the long journey to Earth during the Horus Heresy.

While they lay becalmed in the Immaterium, a mysterious contagion spread from one to another of the Death Guard's ships until the entire fleet was infected. Even the reinforced physiology of the Space Marines could not fight off the dire plague as it bloated the guts, distended the flesh and rotted its victims from the inside. It's said that when even the Legion's Primarch, Mortarion, fell victim to the plague he cried out to the Powers of Chaos in his delirium. His desperation to save himself and his Legion called forth Nurgle, and Mortarion became his Champion. Thus, the Death Guard Legion has enjoyed the favour of Nurgle for the last ten thousand years.

The Daemons of Nurgle

The daemons of Nurgle are truly putrid in their appearance and sickening to look upon. Their flesh pulses with the fever-heat of corruption, their innards push through lesions in their putrid skin and their bodies ooze with sticky slime. In contrast to their hideous appearance, Nurgle's daemons are cheerful, energetic beings that show a disturbingly friendly demeanour. They are jovial in their work and show great pride in their accomplishments, interpreting the groans of the afflicted as expressions of gratitude justly won by their efforts.

The most powerful daemons of Nurgle are called Great Unclean Ones. Great Unclean Ones are facsimiles of the god himself both physically and in spirit. Every Great Unclean One is also Nurgle himself in some sense, and their followers often refer to them as "Papa" or "Father Nurgle." Great Unclean Ones are seldom deathlike or morbid in character; in fact, they are usually motivated by the same trivial enthusiasms that drive the living. They are gregarious and even sentimental in their nature with a remarkable fondness for their followers. They often refer to their followers as their "Children" and take great pride in their appearance and oddly endearing behaviour.

The common daemons of Nurgle are known as Plaguebearers. These have a more approximately humanoid shape and lurch along on stick-thin limbs. Plaguebearers have single eye and a single horn, and chant in continuous monotone. They are also called the "Tallymen of Nurgle," as it is said that they constantly strive to enumerate the endlessly changing number of plagues and poxes in the universe. Despite their decrepit appearance Plaguebearers are extremely dangerous in battle. A single scratch from their rusted swords is sufficient to bestow a plague that sends its host to Nurgle's realm without delay.

The lowliest servants of Nurgle are the Nurglings, tiny daemons that look like miniature representations of Nurgle himself. They are mischievous, agile and constantly active slinking in the shadows of his champions or gathering in squealing hordes around Great Unclean Ones. Swarms of Nurglings overwhelm their enemies through sheer weight in numbers, using their scrabbling, diseased claws to pull down larger opponents so that they can gnaw at them with filth-caked fangs.

Nurgle is the age-old enemy of the Chaos Power Tzeentch, the Lord of Change. Their energies come from diametrically opposing beliefs; Tzeentch's power derives from hope and changing fortune while Nurgle's comes from defiance born out of despair and hopelessness. The followers of Nurgle often pit themselves against those of Tzeentch in complex political intrigues in the mortal realm, forever attempting to mire his schemes for change in dull minded conservatism and parochial self-interest. Their corrupting influence is often successful in thwarting the Architect of Fate and they erode at his accomplishments constantly, safe in the knowledge that whatever survives the collapse into entropy becomes their inheritance.

DLinschoten 6.567.544.M41
I. Magir Linschoten. am recently arrived to the port moon of Aog. to fill the post of chief chirurgeon in the port's largest mercy-house. the Alburae.
DLinschoten 6.580.544.M41
On Aog. while the priestly classes deal with matters spiritual. the Qaidyas look to the ailments of the body. The Qaidyas. of course. practice Eyuridea and as with Eyuridic physicians elsewhere they had reached their heyday centuries before my arrival. Inbreeding. blind and unquestioning obedience to ancient texts and a failure to innovate have gradually diminished their capabilities. They are still held in great regard for all that. and many local customs honour them. Not least of these is their entitlement to wear a special broad-brimmed hat hung with chimes that is forbidden to all others. I have determined to win myself a Qaidya's hat to prove my ability to the natives.
DLinschoten 6.583.544.M41
The sicknesses and diseases of Aog that are most common come with the change of the seasons and the weather. There is a sickness called mordesijn that steals upon the men it weakens. making them cast out all that is inside their bodies and oft times their lives as well. The bloody flux is very common and as dangerous as the plague. They have many continual fevers that are burning agues that consume men such that within four or five days they are whole or dead. This sickness is very common and dangerous. but the natives do cure it with herbs and ointments. I have petitioned the elder Qaidya to teach me this recipe. but the Qaidites are as jealous of their recipes as they are of their newborn sons.
DLinschoten 6.600.544.M41
The Alburae is filled to bursting point. They lie in the corridors and between the bunks in the ward. The street outside is filled with those too poor to gain admittance. A hot fever-wind has blown from the hills for weeks without surcease. Men fall in the streets and are dead before they can crawl to their homes. The sweet scent of putrefaction hangs over everything. a thick and evil cloud that saps the will and dulls the mind. While the Qaidyas send up prayers with their drums. I have tried every method of treatment known to me; I have dispensed every medicine and tincture I have mixed since my days of apprenticeship. All of it avails me naught. Day by day the corpse-piles grow higher.
DLinschoten 6.611.544.M41
Uzao. the master of Qaidyas came to the Alburae this morn. He is a wizened old creature with a hat so broad that his attendants bore its chiming brim aloft on poles. He laughed aloud at our efforts and told me the Lord of Flies would show mercy only when his tally was fully made. In desperation I beseeched him for his aid and a clear understanding of the all-destroying ague no matter the cost. I feel my humility and my heartfelt plea must have moved him for he has promised to conduct me to his ceremonies and show to me his secret power.
DLinschoten 6.615.544.M41
A miracle! The terrible plague is broken. ebbing away as if it were the Great Lake at low tide. Men on the brink of death awaken as if from a fevered dream. stand and walk from the Alburae showing no hint of sickness. Uzao's wisdom astounds me. his view of the body not in anatomical terms but in aetheric ones revealing the folly of my prior thinking. A man must be treated whole. in body and spirit both. to pave the way for his survival. The unction that Uzao has taught me. a simple blessing of his primitive gods. wields greater curative powers than anything I have witnessed previously. I have sworn not to speak of the sights I saw so I restrain myself only to this—I have come to an apotheosis of mind and spirit.

I have found records that Dr. Linschoten travelled widely on Aog before his eventual death. In his travels he spread rots and agues without number through the pricking of patients with infected instruments and the dispensing of contaminated potions. His notions of treatment through exposure exceeded sanity to the point where he cultivated the diseases of those in his charge as a farmer tends his crops. more solicitous of the distempers themselves than the mortal flesh that bore them.
- Interrogator Jorgan Malpire. during his investigations of the Aog Port-Moon



KHORNE

"Servants of the Lord of Slaughter stood from horizon to horizon, filling the air with their shrieks, gibbers and howls of blood. Their battle banners strained in the coppery wind that blew across the ranks. It was a banner of deepest, darkest red, with but a single rune and a legend of simple devotion: Blood for the Blood God. At some secret signal all fell silent and then came a single shriek of dark and bloody loyalty, a pact of hate and death. It echoed from leathered skins, and grew to shake the clouds... and far above the daemons' ranks, there was an answering roar of bloody approval, torn from Khorne's brazen throat."

–The *Tome of Blood*

Khorne is the Blood God, the angry and murderous lord of battle. He is said to be the warrior god whose bellows of insatiable rage echo through time and space back to the first act of violence ever committed. Devotees of the Ruinous Powers have debated forcefully about the primogenesis of the Blood God for millennia. Some hold that it was the will of Khorne that first impelled a primitive to seize a rock and brain one of his fellows in a fit of murderous rage, thereby triggering the spiral of violence that fed the Chaos Power into the formidable force it has become. Others declare that it was the first mortal impulses of fury that breathed life into Khorne, and that he represents the primitive lust for violence lurking in every mortal heart. However, the true disciples of Khorne care nothing for such debates as they are fully engaged with slaying all that come to hand.

Khorne's followers are the most ferocious warriors in the universe, and the Blood God abhors magic, sorcery and other unworthy tricks. The blood of magi is said to make a particularly welcome sacrifice to Khorne's unquenchable thirst. Some justify their slaughter through honour, bravery or pride but the most fanatical know that only the bloodshed matters.

Khorne's disciples believe that His great throne of brass sits upon a mountain of skulls in the midst of a sea of blood, evidence the sacrifice of his countless followers slain in battle and the multitudes killed in his name. They hold that Khorne is the Chaos Power that embodies mindless and absolute violence, the wild blood lust that, once unleashed, yearns to destroy everyone within reach whether they be friend or foe. Such true believers are few in number and they grow fewer all the time as his devoted followers gleefully send one another into his embrace, knowing that Khorne cares not from where the blood flows.

Depictions of Khorne often show him as a titanic, armoured figure covered from head to foot in plates of strange and alien design. The figure's armour is usually elaborately carved and worked with a repeating skull motif while his head is covered by a great winged helm showing a bestial, snarling face beneath. In most images, Khorne bears a rune-covered sword or axe, though in more primitive cultures he is often shown only with fists or claw-like hands.

In spite his apparently self-destructive aspects Khorne is overtly the most potent and active of all the Chaos Powers. Endless wars and bloodshed in the mortal realm fuel it with the skulls of the slain, constantly drawn into its raging depths. Khorne needs no honeyed promises or convoluted plots to draw mortals into his realm; the anger and fury lurking just below their civilised demeanour is often more than enough. The path to Khorne's domain can be just as slippery as any represented by the other, more subtle Ruinous Powers. The instinct to violence is a necessary one in a hostile universe, and is lauded in protectors or liberators. Many societies must

literally fight to survive and they celebrate their members for their ability to defend themselves and others.

So it is that soldiers, commanders, and even law enforcers begin their slow slide into Khorne's embrace with the noblest of intentions. A desire to protect their loved ones warps gradually into a determination to fight back against those that threaten them. Martial pride and a sense of brotherhood are fostered to protect against hostile outsiders, and the authorities direct the urge to inflict harm against those designated as undesirable. Under the banners of protection wars are begun that consume whole populations, under the guise of efficiency bombs are dropped and death camps are built, under the proclamation of necessity billions of lives are destroyed.

Outside the constraints of the Corpse-God's Imperium, those that go into battle commonly beseech Khorne in one of his warrior-god aspects to grant them some measure of his boundless fury. Victories are dedicated to one of his many names and defeats are repaid with blood sacrifices to win back his favour. Leaders of opposing armies strive to show that the favour of the Blood God is with them, and his greatest Champions are capable of winning the support of entire planets with the very rumour of their presence. Many of Khorne's mortal followers strive for conquest on a vast scale by training armies and gathering fleets to hurl against the universe. Their success or failure is a matter of no import to him, as Khorne waxes strongest wherever mortal ambitions clash, regardless of the outcome.

The Daemons of Khorne

Daemons of Khorne are fearsome entities of the kind most commonly associated with terrifying legends. Their horns, fangs, blood-red hides, and blazing eyes leave little doubt as to their murderous intent, and their ferocity is truly matchless. Only a fool treats with the daemons of Khorne without a ready source of blood sacrifices to trade for his own life. If a petitioner can evade death long enough a bargain is easy enough to strike—the ravening entities desire only to be unleashed on a victim, any victim, and joyfully charge into battle at the first opportunity. Of course such daemonic cohorts make for dangerous allies, apt to turn upon any that come within their reach, but for many that serves their purposes admirably.

The greater daemons of Khorne are known as Bloodthirsters and said to be the most favoured of his servants. Bloodthirsters exist purely for combat and combat alone. Their bloodlust extends far beyond mortal comprehension, and they attack everything within reach with terrible ferocity. They do not know fear, other than of Khorne, and act regardless of the cost or consequences, although the usual consequences are death for whatever they face. Their immense pride in their fighting abilities rarely permits them to call upon allies or servants and they usually rely purely upon their own strength and skill.

The rank and file of Khorne's vast daemonic legions are called Bloodletters. These are said to be formed from the mightiest mortal souls that met their deaths drenched in blood. Reborn as Bloodletters they appear as horned, red-scaled, man-like fiends with elongated skulls and black tongues lolling from fang-filled jaws. They clutch razor-edged hellblades in their taloned claws, weapons honed to perfection on the souls of all those that have fallen in battle with the armies of Khorne. Like all daemons of Khorne, the ferocity of Bloodletters is boundless, and they attack any foe without hesitation. A horde of Bloodletters in battle is an almost unstoppable force, their power exponentially increasing in magnitude as the frenzied slaughter continues.

Great and terrible beasts also attend the ranks of the Blood God's legions, the so-called Juggernauts and Flesh Hounds of Khorne. Flesh Hounds are lean and deadly hunters that pursue their prey relentlessly across the trackless Realms of Chaos. Those with witch-sight babble about blood-red hounds that hunt them through their dreams, whose rage-filled howls continue to echo in their waking minds. Juggernauts are hulking, bestial amalgams of machine and metal. Piston-like limbs drive the Juggernaut's brass-skinned body forward with the force of a battering ram, crushing its victims with appalling force. These monstrous beasts are ridden by daemons and champions in battle.

Khorne hates and despises the Chaos Power Slaanesh above all others. The self-indulgent sensuality of the Prince of Pleasure is an affront to the warrior instincts of Khorne. The sense of duty, honour, and self-sacrifice that fuels part of Khorne's existence is an anathema to the followers of Slaanesh, and the very antithesis of their own philosophy of self-indulgent pleasure seeking. The daemonic servants of Khorne and Slaanesh often attack each other on sight, and their mortal followers are often no less eager to join battle.

However, Khorne also has little respect for Tzeentch, the Arch Conspirator. Tzeentch's patronage of wizards and manipulators intensifies the antipathy between their respective followers and they are frequently in conflict. However, both Powers make common cause when the prospect for bloodletting is great and Tzeentch's unguessable schemes can be advanced through their mutual efforts. At such times the star of Chaos waxes strong in the mortal realm as the two most potent gods temporarily join forces and send their legions to war. Such mercurial pacts seldom endure for long before Khorne's disciples or Tzeentch's manipulators inevitably turn on their erstwhile allies.

"And lo we beheld a Daemon Lord come in the full panoply of battle. At his passing the trees gibber with rage, the earth writhes at his presence, and the stones shout their hate to the uncaring sky. He hunts the enemies of his Master, for his meat is mortal flesh and his wine mortal blood. At his left hand moans a Daemon, bound in the shape of an axe. Its songs of blood and hatred echo forth, and fill the sky with a wailing that stirs the dead. At his right hand stand lesser Daemons, huntsmen all, straining at the leashes of the hounds. They chomp upon the shades and spirits they have harried, throwing morsels of innocence to each other, so that all may sample the sweetest of meats.

Behind him wait the legions of his Master, arrayed in armour fluted and chased with gold, brighter than the sun and darker than midnight. Each holds a shrieking sword, and each shrieks in disharmony with his blade. Each joins the chorus of Chaos, a promise worse than death for those who hear it."



SLAANESH

"Take care lest your protests become tiresome. I have asked for so little! Anyone would think that I had asked you to sacrifice yourselves and your sons! And yet, in Slaanesh's boundless and pleasing mercy, I have asked only for your daughters. Surely you would not deny me my small enjoyments?"

–Tyrell, Renegade Lord of Arden IX

Slaanesh is also known as the Lord of Pleasure, or the Prince of Chaos. It is the Ruinous Power dedicated to the pursuit of hedonistic pleasures and the overthrow of constraints. It is said that Slaanesh is the youngest of all the Chaos gods, and was brought into being by the decadence of the galaxy-spanning Eldar civilisation. Slowly, over many centuries, the projected lusts and desires of the highly-psychic Eldar coalesced in the warp to create the new power. As the entity grew, the Eldar themselves were increasingly affected by its influence, driven to new heights of depravity in pursuit of their jaded lusts. The spiral became tighter as the increasingly frenzied activities of the Eldar spurred Slaanesh towards full wakefulness, even as its dreams stirred their darkest desires.

The Eldar race became trapped by its own dark nature, one that asserted itself more and more as Slaanesh's influence grew. The more it drove them into moral, social and artistic decadence the more the Eldar fought against it, but it was a hopeless struggle. Slaanesh was like an expanding balloon, straining outwards as pressure built inside, and it was only a matter of time before it burst. In the moment of Slaanesh's birth the golden empire of the Eldar was irrevocably shattered. The terrible psychic scream of the newborn god shattered heaven and earth, its shock-wave spreading outward through the warp to deal a numbing blow to the soul of every living thing.

It was too much for the psychically attuned Eldar to endure. Their souls were drawn into the growing Power of Slaanesh and their bodies evaporated as Chaos boiled into their minds. The warp energy unleashed by Slaanesh's birth tore out the heart of the old Eldar empire and transformed into it the vast region of warp overlap now called the Eye of Terror. Wherever Eldar populations were densest, the warp literally spilled through their minds and into realspace, creating new areas of warp overlap all over the galaxy.

The once-proud Eldar were left a broken, hunted people scattered through space, bitter with the knowledge that if not for them, Slaanesh—the Depraved One, the Great Serpent, She Who Thirsts—would never have been born.

Slaanesh represents the locus of the fallen Eldar race's deepest desires; the yearning for luxury and hedonistic over-indulgence, the exercise of cruel and unnatural passions, the pursuit of forbidden vices and unspeakable carnality. The Pleasure Lord always holds open the thrilling promise of the forbidden and the exotic beyond the boundaries of moral and societal laws. The siren call of its illicit pleasures draws everything from jaded planetary governors to mass pleasure cults onto Slaanesh's paths. Of all the Chaos Powers the Prince of Pleasure can offer the greatest temptations to the common man, those without any desire to be conquering warriors or clever sorcerers. The first weavings of Slaanesh's subtle influence can be as humble as a desire for rest or as simple as an end to hunger and he is said to capture many souls both willing and unwilling in his nets.

The followers of the Prince of Chaos pursue ever-greater heights of experience, seeking pleasure in increasingly extreme and outrageous fashion. Slaanesh's influence often

reaches into the upper echelons of hierarchies where the greatest luxury and privilege resides, corrupting nobility and wealthy families. It can be seen at its most insidious among those that strive for rectitude, as if the Prince of Chaos takes particular joy in corrupting those that dare to proclaim themselves as upright souls. Even the most pious pontiff must rest sometime, and when he does the unconscious desires in his dreams betray him to the Master of Carnal Joys. The more civilised a society becomes, the more frequently seeds of corruption planted by Slaanesh sprout within it. As leisure becomes widespread the unconscious wants of the many are led down dark paths by the subtle influence of Slaanesh.

Countless worlds have fallen into complete anarchy when Slaanesh pleasure cults became so widespread that all order was lost in an insane frenzy of self-gratification. On many, the Fall of the Eldar is reenacted in microcosm as society collapses and the howling winds of Chaos ravage the world through the minds of its psykers. The handful of gibbering survivors that are sometimes left behind are so changed by the experience that they can no longer be called in any sense mortal or sane. Certain Inquisitors of the Imperium have cultivated a particular loathing of the followers of the Slaanesh for the corruption they spread so readily through the corpse-god's mortal realm. Their efforts to suppress the pursuit of pleasure inevitably brings an ever-widening wide circle of recidivists, smugglers, criminals, and black marketers into contact with Slaanesh's mortal adherents.

Depictions of Slaanesh show it as an androgynous or hermaphroditic being of unearthly, unnatural and disturbing beauty. Two pairs of slender horns rise from the god's flowing golden hair. Slaanesh is often depicted wearing luxuriantly-lined, form-fitting armour and bearing a jade sceptre that is said to be his greatest treasure. His worshippers engage in great orgies involving every vice and perversity to praise the Lord of Pleasure, where the death of many through exhaustion and over-stimulation is taken to be a sign of the Prince's favour. His devotees say that any extremity of sensation or emotion can open communion with Slaanesh, for the echoes of his birth scream reside in every mortal soul. They pursue a rapturous, tortured, orgasmic drug-fuelled state of hyper-sensuality, their souls burning bright and hot like shooting stars as they plunge ever deeper into the psychic maelstrom that is Slaanesh.

The Daemons of Slaanesh

The Daemons of Slaanesh possess some elements of the perverse and unnatural beauty of their master, a beauty that provokes loathing and desire in equal measure. Their very presence evokes a tide of sensuality strong enough to drown a living soul, while their seductive promises can enslave even the stoutest heart. Their physical forms are both beguiling and monstrous, fairness and foulness intermingling to blast the soul of the viewer with their monstrous dichotomy.

The greater daemons of Slaanesh are called Keepers of Secrets; gorgeous, terrible beings that are said to hear the secret whispers made in every soul. Few can describe the sensations of shameful lust and dark ecstasy that attends a Keeper of Secrets, a heady tocsin of fear and fulfilment that can shiver a mortal mind into pieces. Making a pact with a greater daemon of Slaanesh is the most thrilling and dangerous thing to undertake in the universe. A Keeper of Secrets takes a gloating, sadistic pleasure in breaking down the last barriers to full ecstatic rapture, mercilessly shearing away the last dignities and presumptions of a snared soul until it is left naked and quivering before its bestial lusts.

The lesser daemons of Slaanesh are known as Daemonettes. They are lithe-bodied, crab-clawed creatures with attractive, pale faces marred by fanged mouths and green, saucer-like eyes. Their hypnotic, blasphemous beauty is as much a weapon as their razor-sharp claws, blinding their enemies with a mixture of revulsion and lust. Daemonettes have been known to weave perverse sorceries with their lascivious dancing and singing, corrupting the senses and baffling the mind with altered realities. Their laughter charms the senses as the tinkling of delicate chimes, even as they precisely and painfully tear their victims limb from limb.

Daemonettes often ride upon weird, bipedal beasts known as the Steeds of Slaanesh. These are spindle-limbed, fleet-footed beings that are faster than any mortal steed, with impossibly long whip-like tongues protruding from their vaguely equine heads. The questing tongue delivers a paralysing shiver of unholy ecstasy to whatever it touches, rendering its prey helpless before the attentions of its rider.

Slaanesh is said to have little interest in the other Chaos Powers, being too caught up in his own pleasures to be interested in alliances or co-operation. However, the followers of Khorne with their boorish beliefs in bloodshed for its own sake are particular enemies. Cults dedicated to Khorne and Slaanesh clash frequently in the mortal realm just as their daemonic legions are believed to battle endlessly in the Realm of Chaos.

Slaanesh's comparative weakness in direct confrontations is balanced by his endless capacity for corruption, often even leading Khorne's faithful astray through their own battle lust. A widespread and technologically advanced conflict is particularly vulnerable to Slaanesh's influence as a single well-placed convert can have the means to wreck a fleet or destroy an entire city. Wherever Khorne's followers become most strident those of the Slaanesh can be found working subtly in the background to bring about their opponents' downfall.

Servants of Slaanesh, by their incantations, conjuration and accursed crafts, have seduced, depraved and corrupted both Man and Beast, bringing them low in the sight of others. Numberless are their enormities and horrid offences; heinous and wicked their every action. Revelling in perversity and debasement, twisted in mind and body, these insidious servitors of the Pleasure Lord take delight in all manner of abominable and unclean deeds. The denizens of Slaanesh spread the depravity of Chaos to the unwary and uncaring with heretical crimes that cry out against nature and the true order of the world.

Amassed on the field of battle, the electric colours of their contorted forms offend the eye as their diseased lewdness offends the mind. Half-bared torsos of pink and blue boast of unreined lust; others display limbs of glistening greens and yellows—pale shades of corruption which belie the darkness they hide inside. They have abandoned the last vestiges of true decency and sacrificed their humanity to serve the Dark Power of the Master of Carnal Joys and spread his corruption among the innocent.



TZEENTCH

"You claim to be a plotter beyond compare because your plan anticipates failure and turns it to success? When your failures put schemes into motion that in turn flounder, only to spawn new designs whose failure is all part of some master plot... then you still cannot master the schemes of the Changer of Ways."

–De'Lanishel, Eldar Warlock

The enigmatic Chaos Power Tzeentch is known by many titles including the Changer of the Ways, the Master of Fortune, the Great Conspirator, and the Architect of Fate. These titles reflect its masterly comprehension of the twisting paths of destiny, history, intrigue, and plots. The hopes and plans of every man and every nation whisper through its many-chambered mind. Its all-seeing eye watches as plots unfold and intrigues alter the course of history.

Although far from the first to exhibit such traits, mankind is a notably volatile and ambitious species. Tzeentch feeds upon the need and desire for change that is so much a part of human nature. All men dream of wealth, freedom and a better tomorrow. The confluence of these desires creates a powerful impetus for change, just as the ambitions of leaders create a force that can change history. Tzeentch is the embodiment of that force.

Tzeentch is not content to merely observe the fulfilment and disappointments brought by the passage of time. It works its own schemes, plans so complex and convoluted that they touch upon the lives of every mortal, whether they know it or not. Tzeentch's true intentions are hidden behind layer upon layer of interweaving plots so convoluted and so long-term that no mortal can hope to understand them. Perhaps Tzeentch plans to overthrow the other Chaos Powers, or to extend his dominion across mortal realms, or to achieve some unguessable apotheosis. Perhaps Tzeentch plots endlessly because that is its driving force, and its schemes can never achieve fruition as they twist constantly into new plans and conspiracies.

Whatever Tzeentch's ultimate purpose, he pursues it by manipulating individual lives and thereby altering the course of history. The aura of magic and power around the god Tzeentch commonly draws influential people into its orbit; leaders, generals, and merchant princes looking for a way to pursue their ambitions or overcome their enemies. A glimpse of the future can be all that it takes to win a political conflict or close a deal, a simple spell might bury evidence of wrongdoing where no investigator would ever find it. All of these possibilities make irresistible temptations for those that dare to follow the path of Tzeentch.

A subtle nudge here or there and these influential individuals can in turn enmesh millions of lives in Tzeentch's grand schemes, lending it a disproportionate amount of power in comparison to its number of followers. However, few of Tzeentch's plots are straightforward, and many at first appear contradictory or even seem to act against its own interests. Only the Changer of the Ways can see all the threads of potential futures weaving on the loom of fate.

Of all the Chaos Powers, Tzeentch is said to be the most accomplished magician. Warp-magic is one of the most potent of all the agents of change and wielding it requires matchless ambition and hunger for power. Those who style themselves Champions of Tzeentch are often sorcerers of the most powerful kind. Any individual that pursues the learning of warp lore eventually discovers Tzeentch and feel the subtle tug of the rewards it can offer. Of all the Chaos Powers, Tzeentch

can appear the most rational and safest to deal with, granting huge dividends in exchange for seemingly inconsequential demands. Of course, it quickly becomes clear that once they are caught up in Tzeentch's schemes, there is no escape.

Images purported to depict Tzeentch are rare, and normally conflicting in their nature. Some show him as having the characteristics of birds or fish but most depict the Master of Magic as a long-armed, manlike figure with its face sunk low down between his shoulder blades. Huge, asymmetrically curving horns appear to spring from the figure's shoulders. Those that claim to have witnessed the Changer of the Ways in their dreams say that his skin crawls with constantly changing faces leering and mocking the onlooker. As Tzeentch speaks, these faces sometimes echo what he says with subtle but important differences, or provide a commentary that throws doubt on the words spoken. They say that the firmament about the Architect of Fate is heavy with brooding magic. Languid coils of essence weave like thick smoke around its head, forming subtle patterns. The vagrant forms of people and places appear in the vapours as Tzeentch's mercurial mind contemplates their fate.

The Daemons of Tzeentch

Daemons of Tzeentch are highly magical, with the lesser forms being entirely formed from constantly shifting patterns of unstable warp-energy. Greater daemons of Tzeentch are known as Lords of Change. These are described as massive, birdlike entities that are surrounded by a bright shifting aura of sorcery. Their bodies and wings shimmer with a thousand iridescent colours and their claws are said to be glittering diamonds. The gaze of a Lord of Change can penetrate the very depths of a mortal's soul, reading the thread of his fate and his ultimate destiny at a glance.

Lords of Change are possessed of all the scintillating brilliance and deep wisdom of their master, but each is its own creature with its own agenda. It is not uncommon for the agents of different Lords of Change to clash in pursuit of their own schemes, no doubt by the design of Tzeentch himself. It is said that no being in the Realm of Chaos understands the flow of the warp as naturally as they do, and that bargaining for their help brings success in the most desperate of schemes. However, a pact with a Lord of Change is as convoluted and inescapable as a web of steel, and the soul of the supplicant is the price for even the smallest morsel of wisdom.

The lesser daemons of Tzeentch are living flames of warp energy that cavort and twist in time to insane piping. They flicker along invisible patterns of change and fate in the Empyrean, briefly whirling into existence where the winds of magic blow strongly enough. Mortals know of two kinds of Tzeentch lesser daemons, Horrors and Flamers.

Horrors of Tzeentch possess long, gangling limbs protruding from a thick, trunk-like torso with no head. The Horror's leering face normally appears in its chest but may shift from moment to moment, slithering away to another part of their anatomy at random. Glowing warp energies wreath Horrors with pink and blue light as they bray and cackle blasphemously, their sucker-tipped fingers drooling with warp stuff. In combat Horrors playfully pull apart their enemies and burn them with aetheric fires. Striking them only splits them into miniature versions of themselves which caper and gibber with undiminished vigour.

The so-called Flamers of Tzeentch are even more strange and disturbing entities than the Horrors. They display no man-like characteristics at all, appearing only as thick trunk of living flame topped by waving tendrils spouting tongues of pink warp-fire. An inhuman, beaked visage can sometimes be glimpsed on the torso of the being but its voice is only the roar and crackle of flames.

Daemons of Tzeentch are capable of granting great powers to their followers. They may perform seemingly complex magical undertakings by instinct, making rites and summons with a level of energy that a mortal sorcerer could never dream of wielding. Thus, according to Tzeentch's unguessable whims, a mass of Horrors might open a warp rift through their collective efforts, or just as likely close one, or disperse a dozen seemingly unrelated incantations, causing rifts to open or close in the future.

Mention should also be made of the Discs of Tzeentch, shark-like predators of warp space that are sometimes used as mounts by Champions and Daemons of the Changer of the Ways. These beings take the shape of flattened, plate-like creatures rimmed with vicious teeth and spikes to slice through their prey. In the endless depths of the Realm of Chaos shoals of these creatures mercilessly hunt lost souls, but Tzeentch's followers know the secrets of capturing them and binding them to service as fast and agile mounts.

The antithesis of the Chaos Power Tzeentch is that of Nurgle, the Lord of Decay. Tzeentch's energy is derived from the excitement and will to change, the desire to forge one's own destiny, refashion fortune and gain power. Nurgle's power comes from a defiant brand of hopelessness and despair, a moribund acceptance of the way things are born out and a determination to keep plodding forward regardless. In stark contrast, Tzeentch's followers are often drawn to spark change and revolution in civilised societies, endlessly challenging the established order and breaking open the body politic before it rots from within.

And let it be noted that I saw the Gloaming Worlds of the Screaming Vortex, those corrupted spheres that have drunk so deeply of the winds of Chaos. There I beheld the Chaoticians of Q'sal. These Chaos sorcerers wielded magic in manifold blasphemies apt to scourge the mind's eye, and controlled their entire world. A voice spoke in my vision, saying that their society is one forged from magic and technology in equal measure. As it spoke I saw that they did indeed make many a foul reflection of the righteous paths of the Omnissiah.

On Q'sal, bound daemons appeared to serve as machine spirits would in other worlds, animating cold metal at their master's command. Sorcerers soared aloft in vessels impelled by warp-magics so powerful that they could pierce even the turbulent tides of the Immaterium surrounding their world and carry themselves across the void. On benighted worlds they made great trade from pirates and renegades that bought their wares, tithing souls for ships and armaments destined to bring great woe to the citizens of the Imperium.

The voice spoke again and told me that the Chaoticians profess to follow no single chaos power, and acknowledge no gods. I saw that they were contemptuous of mysticism and mummery, calling their pursuits a science in which knowledge is revered above all else. I saw also that the Chaoticians of Q'sal would pose a more dire threat to other worlds were it not for their proclivity for scheming against one another. Their great power was so fully absorbed in plotting the downfall of their immediate rivals that it was rare for their schemes extend beyond Q'sal itself. I perceived then that their scheming served some higher power and was of such dire portent that its culmination could never be permitted.

On hearing of this vision those who study such matters have offered me the firm opinion that the Chaoticians of Q'sal have become enmeshed by the Great Conspirator. Little do they realise that their hubris and ambition are nurtured by a power that they dismiss as mere superstition—Tzeentch, the Architect of Fate.

– Excerpt from Inquisitor Melkam Rang's Librus Heretica Delirium

The Age of the Imperium

"You are not free whose liberty is won by the rigour of other, more righteous souls. You are merely protected. Your freedom is parasitic; you take and offer nothing in return. You who have enjoyed freedom, who have done nothing to earn it, your time has come."

–Inquisitor Czevak's address to the council of Ryanti

Over one hundred centuries ago the all-powerful Emperor of Mankind was interred in a huge stasis crypt called the Golden Throne in the bowels of the Imperial palace on Ancient Terra. He has not moved or spoken in thousands of years, but his legacy lives on in the vast Imperium he helped to forge through an era of violence and conquest. In the intervening span the Imperium has slowly crumbled, battered by wars from without and dissension from within, but it remains unbelievably powerful. A million worlds united in the name of Humanity; monotheistic, xenophobic, paranoiac, and fuelled by war. With its vast fleets and uncounted armies the Imperium remains probably the single most powerful entity in the galaxy.

The Adepts of Terra cling to power ferociously, ruling on in the name of the corpse on the Golden Throne despite the Emperor's millennia-long silence. They hold the worlds of the Imperium in a constant state of terror, proselytising their zealotry and feeding the fears of the populace to keep them cowed and malleable. An Imperial citizen is raised from birth to believe that unseen forces are gathering to attack them and that their way of life could be destroyed at any moment, and that only the Emperor stands between them and damnation. Under the guise of protection whole populations are held hostage to authoritarian controls; searches, seizures and summary executions are routinely justified under the banner of omnipresent threat.

The Imperium thrives on war and oppression. Its weapon factories and shipyards run night and day, arming its forces, and faceless conscripts by the billion are hurled into conflicts they cannot win. Imperial citizens are indoctrinated from birth to hate and fear outsiders, and at any given time the Imperium is fighting dozens of genocidal conflicts. This perpetual state of war and fear has served the Imperium well over its many centuries of existence, reinforcing its self-righteous declaration of itself as defender of humanity while driving a wedge between itself and other races. The Imperium's ponderous, gargantuan military grinds relentlessly forward seeking new wars to embroil itself in, driven by its own momentum and blind arrogance. Some joke that an outbreak of peace would be the greatest disaster that could ever befall the Imperium, but in truth the Adepts of Terra are quite able to find enemies in their own ranks. Planets groaning too loudly beneath Imperial tithes are quickly branded as "traitors" or "heretics" and just as quickly feel the iron heel of the Imperial military on their necks.

On loyalist Imperial worlds witch hunts are actively promoted by the authorities, in particular mutants and psykers are mercilessly singled out and hunted down. Mutants are killed out of hand



on many planets amidst calls for 'genetic purity', but in places where they are too numerous and too vital to the economy wipe out they are pushed into an underclass despised and feared by "normals." Psykers have the crueller fate by far. The Imperium lays claim to any individual showing the slightest psychic ability. Periodically, often decades apart, the ominous Black Ships and the agents of the the dreaded Inquisition come to each Imperial world to demand its crop of psykers for processing on distant Terra. The slightest flicker of potential is enough for the Inquisitors, and their holds are filled with thousands, young and old.

All but the tiniest fraction of those who enter the Black Ships are never heard from again. Legends abound of their eventual fate; some say that their souls are fed to the Emperor and that a thousand are sacrificed every day just to keep his guttering life-spark vital. Others say the psykers are blinded and castrated in both their bodies and powers, and that once diminished they are joined to a great choir that endlessly chants mindless praises to the God-Emperor into the uncaring void. Whatever the fate of the psykers may be, the coming of the Black Ships is a great terror for any world, and their appearance frequently triggers rioting and rebellions from peoples unwilling to give up their own family members to feed the Imperium's voracious appetite. Such resistance is ruthlessly crushed by whatever means necessary.

The Imperium is said to encompass a million worlds but accurate numbers are impossible to gauge. In the time taken for reports to cross the galaxy conquered worlds are regained and new ones are lost more quickly than Administratum scriveners can update their ponderous data stacks. The worlds of the Imperium include every conceivable type, from isolated colonies to thriving hive worlds, from mono-culture agri-worlds and vast

A Matter of Perspective

The history and viewpoints of the Imperium change drastically, depending on whom you ask. To some, the Imperium of Man is a bulwark against the tides of darkness, a brutal but necessary defence against forces that would rip humanity asunder. To others, it is a harsh, crumbling monolith, lashing out with blind fury against those who want to save mankind and lift them to their true potential. It is an obstacle, and one that must be overcome at all costs.

Which is correct? Both, and neither. All depends on one's point of view. A champion of the Imperium such as a Space Marine Brother Captain or Puritan Inquisitor likely takes the former view, or perhaps holds the Imperium in even higher regard. On the other hand, a Champion of the Ruinous Powers (perhaps one of the Traitor Legions of Chaos Space Marines) almost certainly takes the latter view.

Needless to say, the following text is penned from the viewpoint of the Disciples of the Dark Gods, those who fight against the Imperium of Man, and the forces of order in all their forms. Is it correct? That is for the reader to decide.

orbital forges; wherever man has made a place for himself in the galaxy he stands beneath the shadow of the Imperial eagle.

As has been proven in the past, if the forces of the Imperium could ever be unified and set to a single purpose there is nothing they could not achieve. Fortunately for the other inhabitants of the galaxy human endeavour has been thwarted by the unthinkable distances involved in their sprawling empire, internal dissension, and inter-departmental rivalry. Even with the illusion of centralised control given by the Adeptus Terra, parts of the Imperium tens of thousands of light years apart can do little to support one another in practical terms. Instead rulership often devolves down to loosely aligned sub-sets of the most influential worlds colluding to exploit their immediate neighbours under the guise of Imperial authority. The Imperium has been far more successful in creating a common cultural and philosophical centre by dominating science, education, and the arts on worlds from one side of the galaxy to the other.

THE ADEPTUS TERRA

The Emperor has not spoken a word or moved a muscle in the ten thousand years since he was placed within the Golden Throne. The mechanisms of Imperial control that have built up over the millennia to ostensibly rule in his name are vast and intricate, an interlocking series of Ordo and Adeptus organisations set up to spy on one another while keeping planetary populations in line. They are also frequently blind, autocratic and counterproductive. The powers they wield are frightening and the forces they are able to bring to bear can, and do, destroy entire worlds for daring to defy Imperial authority.

Most Imperial citizens fervently hope that the offices of the Imperium never touch upon their lives. That does not prevent billions of them being swept up in endless wars or liquidated in the vast pogroms instituted by over-zealous Imperial servants. The core organisation of the Adeptus Terra is unthinkably huge, the ancient priesthood of Earth billions upon billions strong just on Terra itself. From here the web of its influence extends across the galaxy and its power rests upon every Imperial world. No man is free from its strictures, and no world beyond its titanic reach.

The Administratum

The Adeptus Terra is divided and sub-divided into countless subordinate departments and divisions large and small. The whole is so vast that no one can enumerate with certainty the exact number and purpose of all the parts of it. For example the innumerable scribes, assayers, clerks, and functionaries of the Adeptus Terra are known as the Administratum. Each sub-department of the Administratum has their own writs, legislation, authorisations and areas of responsibility painstakingly preserved and passed down from generation to generation of its membership. In some cases sub-departments exist that are still supposed to report to senior echelons that have long since been abolished, others exist for the express purpose of destroying data collected before it can be seen by anyone. In the Administratum, a hundred centuries of toil has erected a massive edifice to mediocrity and rote, with positions handed over from father to son and dogma completely replacing logic. Under its auspices superstition and ritual have become enshrined as unbreakable law.

The monumental structure of the Adeptus Terra drives deep into the heart of human existence for those living beneath the Imperium's shadow. Facts, censuses, and tithes are taken and gathered with mechanical regularity. On Ancient Terra, mountainous cogitator banks absorb input and spit out projections, robed priests dutifully record the results, and pass them along to others with no understanding of their contents. Policy is made and orders are issued with little thought or consideration of the outcome, the interlocking wheels of bureaucracy grinding slowly forward like the mechanism of an ancient and ponderous clock. Armies may be dispatched to wars long finished, or tithes of food taken from famine-struck peoples, but the Adeptus Terra is too vast and monolithic to even perceive, let alone correct, such oversights.

Legend has it that the priesthood of Earth has expanded its bureaucracy across so much of the planet's surface that grass and water have long since become forgotten memories buried under kilometres of rockcrete and plasteel. It's said that miles-long queues of supplicants snake through the grey, faceless wastelands of administration blocks awaiting to see someone in authority. To undertake a journey to Terra is far beyond the means of most citizens, but millions do so each year only to become caught in a labyrinth of centuries-old bureaucracy. In some cases petitioners are born of parents waiting in line, grow old, and eventually die giving their place to their own offspring. "Queue wars" are frequent occurrences when ragged hordes of desperate citizens reach their breaking point and must be brought to bay with the shock mauls and shotcannon of the Adeptus Arbites.

The Adeptus Mechanicus

One huge agency of particular note is the Adeptus Mechanicus, sometimes called the Cult Mechanicus or the Tech-Priests of Mars. The Adeptus Mechanicus are the jealous guardians of Earth's technological knowledge. The cult owns and administrates the planet Mars, the seat of their power and the source of many of the ships, weapons, and technically advanced machinery used in the Imperium. Other Mechanicus Forge worlds exist scattered across the galaxy, places of incalculable value to the Imperial war effort. Tech-priests and their lobotomised servitors can be found on virtually every Imperial controlled world tending to its machines and factories.

The Adeptus Mechanicus is as much an arcane cult as a scientific body, obsessed with finding and restoring ancient sources of technology but placing little value on research and development of new ideas—indeed, such pursuits are viewed as a dangerous form of heresy by some. Older technology is valued the most, rote-learning and repetition have replaced understanding, and much of the Mechanicus' greatest knowledge is completely forbidden to outsiders as well as its most of its own membership. The followers of the Cult Mechanicus earnestly believe that all technology is inhabited by "machine spirits" that must be tended and supplicated with the correct rites to ensure continuing function.

The Planetary Governors

Only a handful of planets are administered directly by the Adeptus Terra, the Ministorum or the Imperial Space Marines. Beyond the precincts of Earth, the Adeptus Terra generally exercises its control of other worlds through its appointment of their Planetary Governors. These are local rulers lent Imperial support in exchange for their unquestioning loyalty. A Planetary Governor holds the nominal rank of Imperial Commander within the Adeptus Terra and is in turn held directly responsible for the order and productivity of their world. If they are successful, the Administratum is content to take no further interest in their world beyond collecting its tithes, leaving the governor free to rule as he sees fit. Withholding tithes and failure to keep order or execute Imperial decrees in a timely fashion are grounds for summary execution.

The Planetary Governor's role is a critical one; he or she must continually walk on a knife's edge between the wants of their own society and the requirements of the Imperium. The exchange with the Imperium is not always entirely one-sided; the trade and technology gained may improve a world, and Imperial forces backed up by more rigorous laws make it a safer place. However, with so many worlds living under a continual state of martial law, the populations they control are often opposed Imperial rule, and their higher echelons especially so. It falls to the Planetary Governor to enforce unpopular new laws and extract additional taxation while placating a dizzying plethora of Imperial authorities, departments, and offices with their own demands.

Some Planetary Governors try to balance the needs of their society against the demands of the Imperium with varying degrees of success, although liberal agendas are frowned upon by those in high office. Most Planetary Governors take the easy route and dedicate themselves only to appeasing their Imperial masters no matter what the cost to their homeworld. Indentured servitude, strip mining, and mass industrialisation become common practices on such "civilised" worlds. Rebels and dissenters can always be crushed with the ready and often uninvited assistance of a number of Imperial agencies. In the cycle of oppression that develops the Planetary governor increasingly comes to rely on the Imperium for their support to keep his or her position, the Imperium in turn calls for higher tithes to justify their support and the Planetary Governor becomes less popular still. The stronger the grip the Imperium gains on a world the less likely the Planetary Governor is to rebel.

Enforcement and Control

The Adeptus Terra controls the Adeptus Arbites, the Adeptus Mechanicus, the Adeptus Astra Telelpathica, and the Adeptus Astronomica as well as (through the subordinate bureaucracy of the Administratum) the Imperial Guard and Fleet. While he remains a loyal member of the Adeptus Terra, a Planetary Governor has some measure of authority over the elements of these powerful organisations stationed on their world. However, the moment a world attempts to leave Imperial rule, these vital organs of justice, technology, communication, navigation, security and transportation are duty-bound to violently resist.

Once in a while brave or foolish Planetary Governor is motivated by ambition, frustration, caprice or a thousand other factors to begin to working towards secession from Imperial rule. Such ambitions are apt to draw attention from offices of the Adeptus Terra that are only spoken of in frightened whispers. The strangely altered agents of the Officio Assassinorum may be dispatched to remove the offending parties surgically, or the entire rebellious world may feel the retributive hammer of the Imperial Space Marines, the dreaded Adeptus Astartes.

On some worlds Space Marines are hero-worshipped as liberators, but on most they are known as terrifying oppressors, the mailed fist of Imperial rule. Space Marines are created through extensive genetic modification of feral children specially bred for the purpose on planets artificially kept at a particularly nasty stage in their development by their Imperial commanders. Over an extended training period, the developing adolescents are weeded out, hypno-conditioned, and indoctrinated to become loyal killers for the corpse-throne on Terra. A fully grown Space Marine warrior stands taller than a man with hulking muscles, double hearts, and armoured black carapace bonded to his flesh. Some of the more exotic varieties of Space Marines exhibit fangs or spit acid, and many are believed to participate in bloodthirsty, barbaric, and even cannibalistic rites.

Armed and armoured with the best equipment the Imperium can supply, a force of Space Marines can shatter armies many times their own size. Each Space Marine is worth a hundred warriors in battle, their deadly prowess greatly magnified by the fear they strike in ordinary humans. The Adeptus Astartes



are completely ruthless and highly efficient, they recognise no division of combatant and non-combatant. Planetary laws, borders and codes of conduct are irrelevant to them. They kill, burn, and destroy anything that gets in their way. When the Imperium chooses to wipe out a planet's population in its entirety such grisly work invariably falls to the Space Marines, creatures of the Emperor with no sense of humanity or remorse.

The great apparatus of the Imperium is almost entirely controlled by the Adeptus Terra, forming the greatest empire mankind has ever known. However, two branches of the Imperium fall outside the direct auspices of the priesthood of Ancient Earth; the Adeptus Ministorum, also known as the Ecclesiarchy, and the offices of the Inquisition.

The Adeptus Ministorum

Adherents of the Imperial Creed maintain that their Emperor has transcended mortal plane of existence and yet watches over them still, guiding the faithful through ecstatic dreams and visions. A great church called the Adeptus Ministorum has been built up around this faith whose zealous practitioners seek to spread their beliefs to other worlds.

Living under the harsh conditions of Imperial rule has inspired pious spirituality in many cultures, and the moment the Emperor was enthroned a plethora of Imperial cults sprang up on thousands of different worlds proclaiming true insight into His wishes. The Adeptus Ministorum has attempted to embody all of these different creeds and purge them of "undesirable elements" as they shepherd them towards a common set of beliefs. Many times great heresies and schisms have torn the Ecclesiarchy asunder, leading to vast religious wars, most notably during the Age of Apostasy when a galaxy-wide conflict erupted between its followers.

The strength of the Adeptus Ministorum can be gauged by the fact that, despite such embarrassments, it still wields enormous power. The head of the church, the Ecclesiarch, is one of the High Lords of Terra and entire worlds fall under his direct jurisdiction. Untold billions of Imperial pilgrims travel to far-flung Shrine Worlds and Holy Terra itself at the urging of their preachers and confessors, creating vital economic links between disparate parts of the Imperium. Missionaries carry word of the God-Emperor to unbelievers in the fringes of Imperial space, frequently finding instead the martyrdom they so earnestly seem to seek. The word of the Ecclesiarch can unleash crusading armies of Frateris and Sororitas billions strong, and many Imperial servants learned their first duties in the Ecclesiarchy-run orphanages of the Schola Progenium. The highly trained battle-sisters of Adepta Sororitas sniff out impurity or heresy with almost legendary fervour.

Much like the Administratum the Adeptus Ministorum has become an organisation of bewildering complexity and vast redundancy. A teetering hierarchy of cardinals, bishops, confessors, clerics, novices, missionaries, monks and preachers theoretically owe their allegiance to the Ecclesiarch in his palace on Earth. In practice there are frequent conflicts of interest between cults on far-flung worlds as the intolerance that underpins the Ecclesiarchy virtually tells its adherents to view each other as heretics. The social changes inflicted by the Ecclesiarchy can be both deep and long term as their followers tend to constantly agitate for more puritanical laws, exclusion of outsiders and increased capital punishment.

The Inquisition

By far the most shadowy and frightening organisation of the Imperium is the dreaded Inquisition. The Inquisition operates across the Imperium and beyond with no limitation on its power or access. The Inquisitorial Seal opens all doors, and silences all arguments. Anyone, be they an Imperial Commander or the lowliest drudge, is subject to an Inquisitor's authority. Inquisitors are empowered to ensure the survival of the Imperium, however extreme the measures required, and no matter the cost. They undertake any deed, no matter how vile or underhanded it may be, to discharge their sacred trust.

An Inquisitor is subject to no one; the only censure he might receive must come from his fellow Inquisitors, and each is constantly examining the others for signs of heresy or treachery. Different Inquisitors pursue their work in many different ways. Some are overt and use terror to bring the enemies of the Imperium into the open; they think nothing of burning ten thousand citizens alive to catch a single traitor. Other Inquisitors conceal themselves in order to move among criminals and lowlifes listening for words of heresy or sedition. Yet others might pose as nobles, ship captains or renegades, worming their way into the confidences of conspirators. Although they are few in number, the Inquisition exerts a disproportionate hold on the imagination of the average citizen. The consequences of attracting the Inquisition's attention can be cataclysmic; a world deemed irretrievably corrupt by an Inquisitor can be subject to Exterminatus—the systematic annihilation of all life.

There are some who whisper that the greatest enemies of the Inquisitors are actually each other. It is said that radical philosophies have emerged which lead to Inquisitors deliberately starting rebellions, unleashing forbidden lore or attacking other Imperial institutions. They say this secret war between puritans and radicals is the source of much of the turmoil within the Imperium, with the Inquisitors creating their own enemies and vanquishing them in a perpetual power play between a handful of deranged individuals.

ORIGINS OF THE IMPERIUM

Humankind spread across the stars far before the rise of the Imperium. Long ago in a forgotten golden age innumerable worlds were settled by humans, and dozens of different cultures flourished across the great wheel of the galaxy. Within the Imperium this first great expansion by humanity is known as the Dark Age of Technology. That Age is believed to have begun slowly, as multi-generational colony ships crawled across the void at sub-light speeds. However, as mankind discovered the secrets of warp travel their expansion accelerated rapidly.

Whole worlds were terraformed by these first waves of colonists, and their handiwork is still apparent thousands of years later. Many of the scientific wonders of that age are unparalleled in modern times, and most of the greatest creations made by the ancients are reckoned irretrievably lost during the ensuing Age of Strife. Tech-scholars and auto-savants of the Adeptus Mechanicus obsessively seek out traces of technology left from the Dark Age of Technology,

as its sophistication far exceeds anything built later. Some few artefacts are found from time to time, objects that have endured down the millennia due to the craftsmanship and forethought of their makers. On occasion a ship that has lain trapped in the tides of the warp for aeons is cast out into the material universe and brings with it a treasure house of Dark Age technology for those bold enough to seize it. Whatever the source might be, the adherents of the Cult Mechanicus descend on Dark Age technology like a pack of jackals. Their Explorator fleets comb the stars constantly, and are always alert for the slightest rumour.

One discovery that has been key to the rise of the Imperium is Standard Template Construction technology—the STC system, as it has become known. It appears that the technomancers of the earliest times created a robust automated factory program to support their emerging colony worlds, complex systems that could be adapted to local conditions and use a variety of raw materials. Templates have been found for everything from gigantic plasma reactors to steam-driven traction engines that were created to fulfil the needs of the colonists. However, most of the templates from the Dark Age of Technology are lost, and as such, the even a single template is a treasure beyond compare. Each new discovery is dutifully filed and hidden away in the archives of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Knowledge is power in the Imperium, and in many ways the STC system embodies the highest knowledge mankind can now achieve.

The Dark Age of Technology exists only in myth in modern times, and the causes of its ending are poorly understood. Many cultures share similar stories of a breakdown of the golden age, of entire regions becoming isolated by raging warp storms and turning against themselves in crippling wars. Others tell of a time of apotheosis for mankind, when mutations and psychic powers became increasingly prevalent, and predatory beings from warp space used such open conduits to feast on the living. Worshippers of the Ruinous Powers maintain that these times were the triumph of Chaos, when mankind's first fumbling attempts to rule over the mortal realm were cast down into anarchy by cackling daemons from the warp.

Whatever the cause, the Dark Age of Technology gave way to the Age of Strife. The patchwork remnants of human civilisation fought against each other as well as the hordes of aliens now swarming in to sack their worlds. Many human civilisations were enslaved or completely wiped out; others reverted to barbarism as order crumbled. Only worlds where the rising tide of psykers was rigorously repressed evaded the plummet into nightmare and madness. Earth itself became completely isolated by warp storms for several thousand years, collapsing into a state of total anarchy, with savage gangs of tech-pirates roving the ruins of its ravaged continents.

Followers of the Emperor claim that he first appeared on Earth during the Age of Strife, and that his true name and origins were obscure even then. The nameless Emperor fought his way to the top of the tribes, conquering them one after another. The Emperor emerged as a saviour, they say, leading armies across Terra in his efforts to re-unify it. The ranks of his armies swelled with eager followers and conquered tribes forced to pledge fealty alike. The Emperor united them all with a vision of humanity made whole once more, free from slavery and the chains of barbaric ignorance. He foresaw a day when his followers would leave Earth and strike out across the heavens to cleanse the scattered worlds of humanity of both aliens and daemons.

Some speculate that the Emperor must have had some precognitive sense of the approaching emergence of Slaanesh and the effects of that event on the warp. His psychic acuity is the stuff of legend and undoubtedly it was sensitive enough to sense the coming cataclysm. While Earth remained isolated by warp storms the Emperor was able to ascend to Mars and there he found the Tech-Priests of the Cult Mechanicus still enumerating among the rusting machinery of their predecessors. In perhaps his greatest coup before the creation of the Imperium itself the Emperor convinced the Tech-Priests of Mars that he was the living embodiment of their deity, the Omnissiah, and so won their fealty.

The Emperor's followers like to portray this joining with the Cult Mechanicus as a joyous occasion, the rejoining of two parts of a whole. Despite their propaganda the link was not an entirely comfortable one and, as would be proven later, a large number of the Tech-Priests did not truly accept the Emperor as their living god. Nonetheless, with the Tech-Priests' help the Emperor set about his final preparation for the coming crusade across the stars.

Fearing that the power of Chaos would eventually corrupt all of humanity at some point in the future, the Emperor set about creating mankind's replacement: the Primarchs. The Primarchs were genetically engineered super-humans with god-like powers, bred for strength and loyalty. The Emperor's intention was to create an entire race of super-humans from the genetic template of the first Primarchs. He hoped that his efforts would create a laboratory-bred purity completely immune to the influences of Chaos.

Followers of the Emperor maintain that the Primarchs were never intended to truly replace mankind, rather that they were to be shining examples of humans free from the taint of corruption. However, the Chaos Powers perceived the Emperor's schemes and seized the foetal Primarchs before they could reach maturity. Seeing the potential value of the Primarchs the Ruinous Powers did not deign to destroy them, instead scattering them far and wide across the galaxy. The Primarchs developed independently beyond the Emperor's reach, only being rediscovered later as the Great Crusade advanced.

Hence the Emperor lost his first battle with Chaos before he even left Earth. The Emperor was unable to re-create the Primarchs in the time left to him, and even now the birth-pangs of Slaanesh were becoming louder and louder as the godling came to full wakefulness. Instead the Emperor evolved a new plan. Using genetic material that had been imprinted from the Primarchs into laboratory golems, he reproduced some of their qualities as discrete biological organs. By implanting these organs into young, growing bodies some of the qualities of the Primarchs could be re-created albeit in a lessened form. In this way the first Space Marines were created, and soon entire legions were created utilising vat-grown genetic material from the Primarchs.

Loyalists also portray this event as a source of great rejoicing among the Emperor's followers, although the reaction of the veterans that had fought for his cause being supplanted in this manner can be imagined to be less than effusive. Nonetheless



the super-human Space Marine Legions were destined to become the killing edge of the Emperor's forces for the coming crusade and within the Imperium thereafter.

When the Prince of Chaos, Slaanesh, finally burst forth to full waking his birth-scream shook the galaxy. Despite its relative proximity to the newly-forming Eye of Terror, Earth escaped much of the ruin visited elsewhere. The churning warp storms surrounding Ancient Terra absorbed most of the psychic shock wave before being shredded apart by it, leaving the warp space around the cradle of humanity quiescent for the first time in thousands of years. Now was the moment for the reunification of mankind, and the Emperor's shining fleets swept outward into the darkness at his command. The Imperium was forged during the centuries that followed in an era of conquest and expansion known as the Great Crusade.

THE GREAT CRUSADE

The Emperor first directed his forces in pursuit of his lost Primarchs, no doubt fearing to allow such god-like beings to stray far from his guidance. The Emperor sought after them with his psychic powers and was drawn across time and space to the places where his offspring could be found. In each place they found the Primarchs to be full-grown leaders and warriors within their adoptive culture. The Emperor must have believed his experiment to have been a success, for the lost Primarchs proved to have no discernible taint of corruption about them despite their brush with Chaos.

There are many Imperium legends of the Emperor meeting one or other of his Primarchs for the first time during the Great Crusade. Most speak of a mysterious stranger arriving at the Primarch's court and performing one or more impossible deeds—usually including defeating the Primarch himself in combat—before the revealing his true identity as the Emperor. In the legends the awestruck Primarch pledges lifelong allegiance to the Emperor and happily joins his entourage immediately. It's certain that such stories are used to mask the ugly truth that several of the lost Primarchs had to be physically subdued before they would agree to join the Emperor.

The Emperor showed great indulgence to his foundlings. As each Primarch was won over they were given command over a Legion of Space Marines raised from their own genetic material. With their Primarch leading them a Space Marine Legion became utterly unstoppable, a fearless army of super-humans that would conquer or perish no matter the odds. Some felt that the love the Space Marines exhibited toward their primogenitors exceeded even their conditioned loyalty to the Emperor. With the Emperor at its head and the Primarchs at his side, the Great Crusade swept all before it. It's likely that no greater armada has ever been seen in the galaxy before or since.

The Emperor's forces certainly did not lack opposition, and heavy fighting marked their progress. Wherever the silver ships landed the flames of war followed. The Emperor's followers found many strange and terrible worlds where humans and aliens coexisted, or Chaos reigned triumphant—these they purged most mercilessly of all. Alien empires were driven back and defeated by the Great Crusade; enslaved populations of captive humans were set free. Psykers and mutants were ruthlessly massacred and the followers of the Chaos gods forced into hiding. Many aliens learned to hate and fear the Imperium during the Great Crusade, and the rabid xenophobia of those times has been attributed to all humans ever since.

In some places coalitions of human worlds had survived the Age of Strife and many of these attempted to resist the Imperialist onslaught from Ancient Terra. Untold billions were killed by the Space Marine Legions and much precious technology was lost when the Emperor's forces resorted to brute force to overwhelm more advanced worlds. The Crusade's indiscriminate use of virus bombs and cyclonic torpedoes obliterated secrets that had been preserved for millennia. Increasingly the Space Marine Legions began to find themselves deployed against human populations whose only crime was an unwillingness to join them. The Emperor's message of unification had changed to one of domination, and those that did not submit were branded enemies to be righteously purged. The Great Crusade rolled onward relentlessly, sustained now by its own momentum as it swept outward to the very fringes of the galaxy.

In the wake of the crusading forces the future infrastructure of empire moved into place on the conquered worlds; governments and nobility became subject to the Administratum, the Adeptus Arbites replaced judges and lawmakers, over time even mechanicians and technologists became supplanted by the Adeptus Mechanicus. Planetary Governors took control, providing they met their tithes. Decrees from distant Terra imposed rigorous conformity on wildly divergent peoples and cultures, establishing a pattern of oppression and drudgery that became the norm for life in the Imperium. Despite the warning signs, the majority of humanity rose to the challenge of rebuilding its ancient heritage in exchange for the promise of a better future. For a time the unity and strength of the Imperium seemed unstoppable, and the Powers of Chaos appeared to have retreated to their own realms. It was not so.

THE HORUS HERESY

The Primarchs had not escaped their brush with Chaos entirely untouched. As the Great Crusade wore on their dreams became disturbed by the insidious whispers of the Ruinous Powers. Each Primarch's character was severely tested by the unspoken urgings, each of them thinking that they alone bore such flaws. The future promise of power became a temptation for some; in others their pride or martial prowess opened a path of corruption. Little by little their flaws deepened into obsessions. Fully half of the Primarchs eventually failed the test and were seduced by the Ruinous Powers, their corruption occurring in ways so subtle that they never even suspected that their own loyalties were changing until it was too late.

Horus, the greatest Primarch of them all, was utterly convinced of the virtue of the martial ideals for which he fought. He enjoyed the Emperor's greatest trust and the admiration of the other Primarchs, gaining the title of Warmaster. He had stood at the Emperor's side from the earliest days of the Great Crusade and through the many long years that followed. Legends say that they fought back-to-back at the siege of Reillis and the Emperor saved Horus' life. At the battle of Gorro, Horus is said to have repaid the debt by hacking the arm from a frenzied Ork that was intent on choking out the Emperor's life. As the crusade advanced the Emperor eventually returned to Terra to administer his rapidly growing domain. He entrusted Horus with leading the crusade along the eastern fringes, little realising that by doing so he was planting the seeds of his own betrayal.

As the Great Crusade pushed outward Horus had begun to perceive the Emperor's actions as craven and dishonourable. All too often compromises were made that he felt were weak and unworthy of the Master of Mankind while wanton destruction was unleashed on other worlds on the slimmest pretext. The Emperor abandoning the Crusade forces in favour of returning to the administrative centre of the now-vast Imperium confirmed Horus' worst fears. The coming age of enlightenment and understanding preached by the Emperor was nothing but a mask for his own pusillanimous greed. Surely the warriors that had fought so hard to conquer deserved some say in how their conquests were ruled? What kind of man seeks to become sole ruler of the galaxy? So, perhaps, the worms of doubt began to squirm in the brilliant mind of Horus. Perhaps he even foresaw a time when the Emperor would have to be rid of him—the mighty warrior with no worthy opponents left to fight.

Horus began to quietly lay plans for rebellion. He subtly sounded out the some of the other Primarchs and began the slow process of gathering his far-flung forces. Horus' Space Marine legions were gradually seduced by their sense of pride and loyalty to their Primarchs into serving the Warmaster above the Emperor. Initially, the Space Marines had little idea that they were being led astray. The taint spread slowly and subtly, and only later when they reached the point of outright rebellion did their veneer of reason fall away to reveal that Chaos had invaded their hearts.

In the midst of Horus' preparations, the Imperial Commander of Istvaan III declared the whole of the Istvaan system an independent principality. The Emperor, ignorant of Horus' plans, ordered him to move to pacify the rebellious system. The Warmaster was unwilling to be drawn into a planetary campaign just as his schemes were coming to fruition and chose instead to virus bomb Istvaan III from orbit. Twelve billion souls died in a matter of minutes, their rapidly rotting carcasses consumed by a firestorm that enveloped the entire planet for days afterwards. During the bombardment a group of loyalist Space Marines discovered signs of corruption in Horus' followers. They succeeded in seizing control of the frigate *Eisenstein* and fled into warp space to warn the Emperor. Horus withdrew to Istvaan V to marshal his forces for the confrontation to come.

The Emperor hesitated, shocked by the betrayal of his Warmaster and unable to believe that his friend and general was really marshalling forces against him. However, even as he learned of the betrayal, dissent and rebellion spread throughout the Imperial Army. Meanwhile, on Mars those who had denounced the Emperor as a False Omnissiah saw that their time had come. The Adeptus Mechanicus' own Fabricator-General, the most powerful Magos of Mars, unleashed ancient, forbidden weapons on the surface of the red planet as Tech-Priests and hereteks fought for dominance. The fragile Imperium tore itself apart as recently-conquered systems declared independence, and newly-appointed planetary leaders seized their chance to declare for the Warmaster. Confusion reigned and at first many failed to recognise the resurgence of the Ruinous Powers, seeing the conflict as a purely political one between Horus and the Emperor.

The rot of Chaos spread quickly, passing from the Warmaster's forces to their allies and even their enemies with shocking speed. Loyalists and rebels clashed on hundreds of worlds across the galaxy. After an almost fatal delay the

Emperor ordered seven full Space Marine legions to destroy Horus and his rebel forces at Istvaan. He had recognised finally that the rebellion could only be brought to an end by eliminating its figurehead and inspiration: the Warmaster Horus. More precious months were lost organising and mobilising the forces to reach the other side of the galaxy. Horus was not idle in the intervening time and consolidated his hold on hundreds of systems by declaring himself their new Emperor. Wherever Horus' banners were raised the corrupting influence of Chaos followed.

The Emperor's retributive strike proved to be a disaster. Of the seven Legions dispatched to destroy Horus, four of them turned against the Emperor and helped massacre the other loyalists instead. The Warmaster now controlled nine Space Marine Legions and had eliminated three of the loyalist Legions. Thus, the Horus Heresy began in earnest.

The Traitor Legions

Nine Legions of Space Marines joined the Warmaster against the Emperor, a full half of the legions of the Adeptus Astartes.

The World Eaters

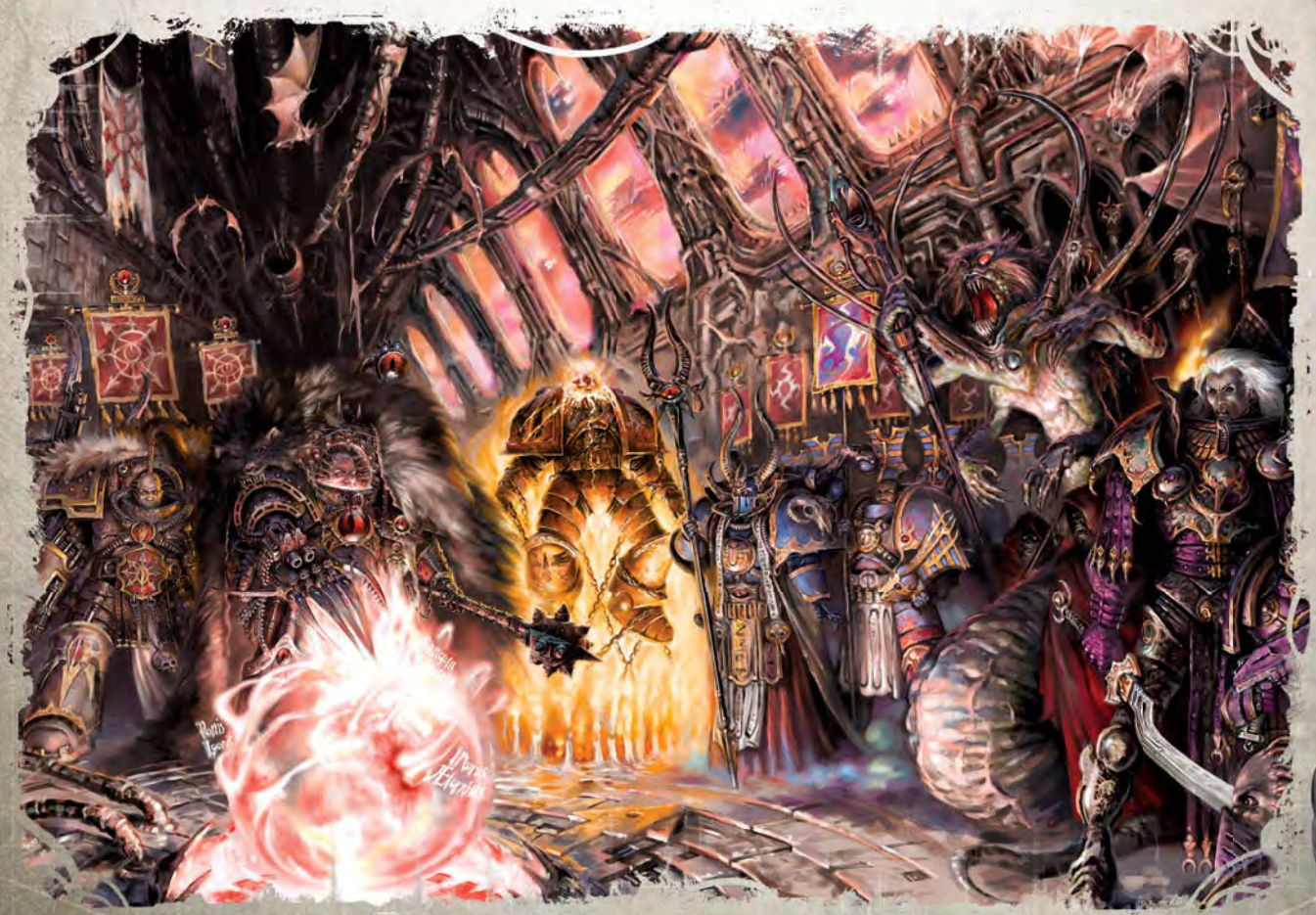
Under the Primarch Angron, the World Eaters underwent pscyho-surgery that transformed an already fierce legion into bloodthirsty berserkers. When they betrayed the Imperium, it was of little surprise that the vast majority dedicated themselves to Khorne. The Legion fractured after the Heresy, scattering into warbands across the galaxy. However, any member of the World Eaters is likely to be bloodthirsty and violent.

As is fitting to their patron God, the World Eaters wear armour as red as arterial blood, edged with brass and decorated with skulls and symbols of Khorne. Most disdain long-ranged warfare, preferring to close with the enemy to kill them with chainaxe, power sword, and (if need be) bolt pistols.

The Death Guard

The Death guard followed Horus into heresy, their sense of loyalty to their Warmaster and their Primarch, Mortarion triumphing over their duty to the Emperor on distant Terra. The rebel Death Guard Legion was marooned in the warp during the long journey to Earth to join the attack on the Imperial Palace. A mysterious, unstoppable contagion spread through the trapped fleet, putrefying all it touched. Mortarion himself became infected and in his delirium he called upon the Powers of Chaos to aid his Space Marines. Mortarion's fevered ravings were answered by Nurgle, and Mortarion became Nurgle's Champion.

The Death Guard survived but they continue to bear the marks of Nurgle's first blessings upon them. Their once-white armour became stained and cracked where the bubbling foulness of their mortal bodies has erupted to the surface. They bear the three-lobed mark of Nurgle rendered as flies or rotting heads upon banners and shoulder guards. Their bolt guns and chainswords are caked with filth and rust but are no less deadly. Plague and contagion have become the Death Guard's primary weapons and they can be found anywhere in the galaxy spreading Nurgle's blessings.



The Thousand Sons

The path to damnation for the Thousand Sons Legion of Space Marines was longer than most, but its final plunge more complete than any. Even before the Horus Heresy the Sons' cyclopean Primarch Magnus the Red led his sons in the study of arcane lore and the practice of sorcery despite the Emperor's disapproval. When Horus gathered his forces the Thousand Sons tried to use their occult powers to warn the Emperor. Disastrously the Emperor was mistrustful of anything tinged by Chaos and declared the Thousand Sons heretics. Leman Russ and the Space Wolves were sent to devastate the Thousand Sons' homeworld of Prospero. To survive and protect their accumulated wisdom, the Thousand Sons sought the patronage of the Chaos power Tzeentch, Changer of the Ways, greatest master of magic among the Chaos gods.

The surviving Thousand Sons have been split by internal schisms, their pursuit of occult knowledge estranging them to each other and even their cyclopean Primarch. A cabal of renegade sorcerers led by their once-Chief Librarian Ahriman unleashed a great magic upon the legion to prevent further mutation and corruption of its members by Chaos. The Rubric of Ahriman reduced most of the Thousand Sons to soulless suits of animated armour, but left the surviving sorcerers unmatched in power.

The Emperor's Children

The Emperor's Children were one of the legions assigned to crush Horus and his rebels on Istvaan V. During a parley the legion's primarch, Fulgrim, and his highest ranking officers were corrupted by the decadent pastimes that Horus and his Chaos-worshippers offered. Drugged, pleasured beyond endurance, and finally broken, they agreed to aid Horus. The rot spread quickly through the Legion, and the Emperor's Children embraced Chaos in all its depravity.

Little trace can now be seen of the original armour and equipment of the Emperor's Children, covered as it is by skins of iridescent fur or scales, jewels, or the fantastical renderings of screaming faces or rutting beasts. The Emperor's Children fight for sensation and sensory overload, bringing a clashing cacophony of sound, colour, and energy to the battlefield.

The Night Lords

Led by their saturnine Primarch, Konrad Curze (also known the Night Haunter) the Night Lords were greatly feared even before the Heresy. Curze believed in the use of terror as a weapon and his foes quickly learned to fear the night. The Night Lords were one of the first legions to join Horus' rebellion, turning on what they saw as a weak-willed Emperor incapable of having the strength to lead. Even after Horus' defeat the Night Lords have continued to wage an unremitting campaign of terror against the Imperium.

The Night Lords refuse to follow any of the Chaos Gods, and have become cynical, hard-bitten, and frighteningly ruthless warriors. They fight for the pleasure of it, and for the material rewards it can bring, and not for the worship of some deity. They look down upon their more dedicated brethren, whether they are fanatical Chaos Space Marines like the World Eaters, or zealous loyalist Space Marines like the Dark Angels.

The Alpha Legion

The Alpha Legion was the twentieth and final legion created in the first founding. During the Great Crusade the legion earned renown for its strict discipline and organization. The Alpha Legion strove hard to outshine its brethren in all things and prove their worthiness to be among the older legions. The war-lust of the Alpha Legion easily led them into heresy when Horus declared himself against the Emperor. Here at last was their chance to prove themselves against opponents just as tough, as battle hardened, and ferocious as themselves.

The Alpha Legion did much to ravage the Eastern Fringe during the Heresy, pursuing their own set of objectives far from Ancient Terra. In the millennia since they have continued to strike from bases hidden all over the galaxy. Unusually the Alpha Legion actively cultivates cultists and rebels, multiplying their impact many times over. The Inquisition holds a special loathing for the Alpha Legion for their part in spreading Chaos cults and fanning the embers of heresy into the raging fires of outright rebellion.

The Iron Warriors

The Iron Warriors once formed the Emperor's legion of siege troops. They fought on a hundred worlds in the great crusade, laying siege to alien citadels and the palaces of heretics with equal gusto. The Iron Warrior's Primarch, Perturabo, excelled in the arts of siege and trench warfare above all else, and his treatise on fortifications and their reduction formed the basis of several sections of the *Tactica Imperialis*. The Iron Warriors betrayed the Emperor on Istvaan V, their mazes of bunkers and razor wire becoming a death trap for their loyalist brethren instead of the sanctuary they promised to be.

The Iron Warriors wear relatively unadorned armour that is commonly pieced together from the older marks for its heavier frontal protection. They favour heavy weaponry like lascannon or missile launchers for long range engagements, although well-equipped Iron Warriors assault squads are also rightly feared.

The Word Bearers

Lorgar, Primarch of the Word Bearers legion, was a scrupulous and dedicated follower of the Imperial Cult. He led his legion in the building of vast monuments and immense rituals during the great crusade to secure the faith of those that were conquered. The Emperor rejected Lorgar's efforts however, telling him that he needed his Space Marines to fight, not worship. Lorgar's disillusionment with the Emperor's impiety drove him to worship of the Chaos Powers, entities that truly demanded worship and sacrifice from their followers. When Horus raised his banner the Word Bearers followed him into rebellion along with a thousand hidden cults they had established.

The Word Bearers fanatical zealotry has become dedicated to the worship of Chaos in its purest form, unadulterated by the veneration of any particular Chaos Power over the others. They are the only traitor legion that still maintains the rank of Chaplain, the darkly twisted individuals holding this office now leading their brethren in heretical prayers and insane catechisms. Immense cathedrals and rune-etched monuments still rise in the wake of the Word Bearer's conquests, but now they are blasphemous dedications to the glory that is Chaos.

The Black Legion

The Black Legion is the only traitor legion to have changed its name in its ten thousand years of exile. In the First Founding the legion was created as the Luna Wolves. The Emperor subsequently renamed the legion "the Sons of Horus" in recognition of its accomplishments in the Ullanor Crusade and in honour of its Primarch. The Sons of Horus willingly followed their Primarch and Warmaster into rebellion, fighting at the very forefront of his most important campaigns. When Horus was defeated by the Emperor the legion's morale was shattered; their patron, their father, was gone.

After the battle for the Imperial palace the Sons of Horus renamed themselves the Black Legion, changing their legion colours to black in memory of their fallen Primarch. They gave themselves to the worship of one Chaos power after another and lost many of their number through possession and madness. The hardened survivors lead warbands against the Imperium to this day, still eager to expunge the bitter memory of Horus' defeat.

THE IMPERIUM AT WAR

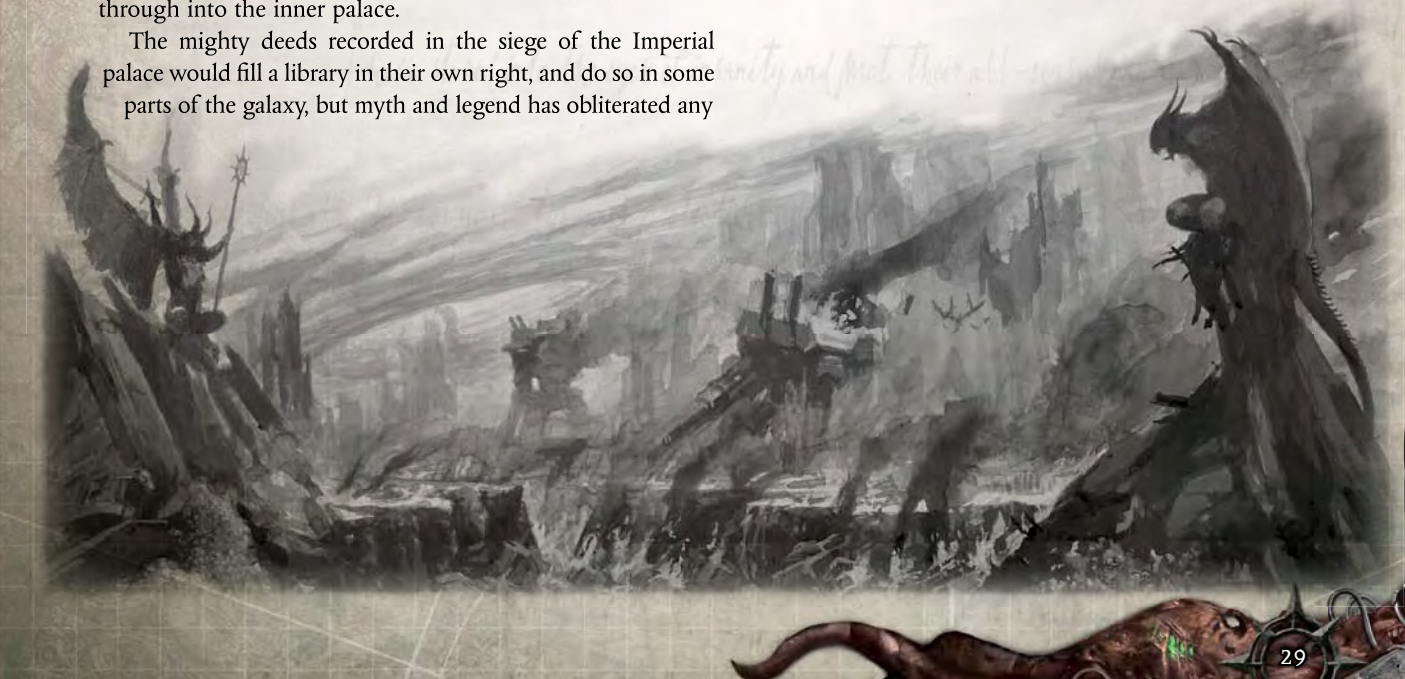
The fighting continued for years, and shook the nascent Imperium to its foundations. The Space Marine legions, the Imperial Army, the Adeptus Mechanicus, the entirety of mankind's dominion turned against itself, and ripped itself asunder. The loyalists eventually began to prevail over the rebel forces, but Horus knew there was still time to make a decisive strike and win the war.

Horus struck directly for his enemy's heart and attacked Earth with the full force of his Space Marine Legions. The Emperor was caught unawares by the Warmaster's audacious move, and was cut off and besieged inside the Imperial palace with a bare handful of loyalists to defend him. However, the palace defences proved formidable and the subject people of Earth rallied to protect their Emperor, so Horus was denied the quick victory he had hoped for. Bitter fighting marked every phase of the siege as it dragged out for over a month. Eventually, mighty war engines of the Legio Mortis breached the towering outer walls and the hordes of Chaos poured through into the inner palace.

The mighty deeds recorded in the siege of the Imperial palace would fill a library in their own right, and do so in some parts of the galaxy, but myth and legend has obliterated any hope of knowing the real truth of events. Loyalists hold that at the eleventh hour, the Emperor perceived a weakness in the shields protecting Horus' orbiting Battle Barge. According to their holy books the Emperor, along with his two remaining loyal Primarchs Sanguinius and Rogal Dorn, teleported aboard the battle barge to confront Horus. Other sources strongly imply that the Warmaster permitted the Emperor to come aboard, perhaps in an effort to bring an end to the bloodshed. A battle was certainly fought, and by all accounts Horus slew his brother Primarch Sanguinius before himself falling prey to the Emperor. The Emperor was mortally wounded in the battle with Horus, and his physical body all but destroyed.

Rogal Dorn is said to have retrieved the Emperor's body and returned it to Earth. There it was interred within the Golden Throne where it has remained, unspeaking and unmoving, for ten thousand years. Pious followers of the Imperial Creed believe that the spirit of the Emperor still resides within the corpse on the Golden Throne, but many doubtful souls have risked charges of heresy by questioning that supposition. The Warmaster's body was retrieved by his own legionaries and they fled Earth shortly afterwards. Without the key figure of Horus to hold his followers together the rebellion began to fall apart. Recent converts to the Warmaster's cause switched their loyalties back to the Emperor. The Space Marine Legions turned against on one another, servants now of the Ruinous Powers rather than any overall strategy. As the loyalists rallied rebel forces were crushed on world after world and the corrupted Space Marine Legions, the Traitor Legions as they had become known, were eventually pushed out of Imperial space.

Across the Imperium, the cult of the God-Emperor was born. In following centuries it would evolve into the Adeptus Ministorum and the puritanical cult of the Imperial creed. The Imperium itself evolved into an entity built on the foundations of fear and betrayal laid in what became known as the Horus Heresy. A hundred centuries later Horus' actions are painted in the blackest terms and his turning against the Emperor an unthinkable act of villainy. However, outside Imperial space some remember Horus differently, as a proud warrior who was unafraid to stand against the machinations of the Emperor and whose vision for humanity extended beyond autocratic rulership of Earth.



THE SERVANTS OF CHAOS

"Who pledged his loyalty?
The Warmaster.
Whom did we serve in faith?
The Warmaster.
From whom did we take our name?
The Warmaster.
Who was denied to us?
The Warmaster.
But whom shall we remake?
The Warmaster.
And who shall lead us to victory?
The Warmaster."

–Black Legion Catechism

The Imperium is mighty and its reach is long, but the infinite Realm of Chaos is greater still. Even in the material universe the Emperor's followers only control islands of light in a sea of darkness. There are many who do not want the protection of the Imperium, who defy its laws and seek to undermine its works. Even inside the Imperium itself rebels and secessionists struggle constantly to throw off the chains of oppression, particularly among the lowliest underclasses created by the priesthood of Terra.

These are the peoples that have not forgotten the taste of freedom, those who would rather give their fealty to the uncaring Ruinous Powers than grovel before the corpse-god of distant Terra. Some are peoples who seek to escape from bondage and go to any lengths to secure their release. Others resist the power of the Imperium without truly knowing why they do so, motivated simply by a conviction that they must fight against the tyranny it represents. All of these peoples are the servants of Chaos and knowingly or unknowingly they continue to fight in the Long War begun by Horus ten millennia past.

THOSE WHO LIVE WITHOUT

The first group of those the Imperium brand as "heretics" are those who live beyond Imperial control by living outside the Imperium. Though the Imperium is vast, its authority stretching from rim to rim of the galaxy, in reality there are vast swaths of space unknown to the Imperium of Man. These regions have many names, including but by no means restricted to, the "outlands," "wilderness space," and "The Halo Stars." Within them, whole civilisations can rise, prosper, and fall, without once knowing of the wider Imperium that surrounds them.

Just as the Imperium is vast beyond proper comprehension, so too are the renegade warbands too many and diverse to ever properly catalogue or define. Some may be feral tribes existing on worlds deemed too insignificant to warrant an Imperial presence, their only contact limited to ambitious missionaries and periodic orbital surveys by passing patrols. Others may be independent ships, mining operations, and whole colonies existing in regions too difficult for Imperial ships to reach. On occasion entire star systems that have been isolated by warp storms for centuries re-establish contact with the universe and sensibly opt to keep themselves hidden from the Imperium.

The Calixis Sector exists amongst the edges of the galaxy, an established bastion of Imperial control amongst the hazy borders. Thus, it is surrounded by regions of space not under Imperial control. The most prominent is the Koronus Expanse in the Halo Stars, linked to the Calixis Sector by a fluctuating warp passage. Beyond this passage, Imperial rule ends, and all manner of human civilisations exist unknown and undiscovered. However, there are other outlands around the Calixis Sector as well, including the Hazeroth Abyss, the fringes of the Drusus Marches, and the nomad space between the Calixis and bordering Ixaniad Sector.

These renegades are as varied as the regions of space they occupy. Some come from the savage worlds of the Koronus Expanse such as Naduesh and Vaporius. Others hail from nomad or heretical clans such as the Meratech Pirate Clans that waged war against the Calixis Sector and were exterminated for their pains many centuries ago.

Many of the outlander clans that populate these regions hold that they have survived because they learned to honour the Ruinous Powers, firmly believing that their sacrifices to the gods bring bounty into their otherwise barren existence. Powerful psyker-dynasties dominate some of these groups, and others claim to be parties to daemonic pacts forged by their ancestors when the Emperor still walked among the living. Frequently these peoples take the form of extended clans that share their knowledge only through their blood relatives, maintaining a level of knowhow about ancient technologies or local warp space conditions that astounds outsiders. The Adeptus Mechanicus is particularly sensitive to the existence of such hereteks (of which those in the Meratech clans are a particularly egregious example) and press other Imperial authorities to mobilise and capture or kill them as a matter of priority.

Even though some of these groups can trace an unbroken chain of antecedents reaching all the way back to the Age of Strife Imperial authorities view them all as smugglers, pirates ,and renegades. Battlefleet Calixis and other detachments of the Imperial Navy (such as Battlefleet Ixaniad) destroy unregistered ships as a matter of course, and eliminate known "pirate haunts" whenever they can. In consequence many renegade clans have learned to be extremely wary of taking actions that reveal their existence to the Imperium, and when they must do so they often use elaborate measures to disguise their activities.

The ranks of the renegades are constantly being swelled by those driven out by the Imperium's policies; deposed nobles, defeated warriors, disillusioned theocrats, failing merchants, mutants, and psykers all find refuge in wilderness space. It is a savage existence. Many seize anything its owner can't protect as a matter of course, although they respect armed strength and they understand how to deal for mutual profit. A clever and well-armed renegade can soon establish himself as a king on a feral world with connections to local pirate clans, and from there his ambitions might take him back into Imperial space to burn and plunder. Renegades like these are

particularly abhorrent individuals to Imperial eyes as they exploit their knowledge of the Imperium's defences to lead attacks against vulnerable trade routes and colonies.

Certain renegade communities co-operate with alien races for mutual profit, especially in common opposition to the Imperium. Ork mercenaries, Eldar Corsairs or Stryxis traders (in the case of those settlements within the Koronus Expanse) may be frequent visitors at some renegade settlements. Within some alien empires whole enclaves of humans exist ruled by xenos overlords that grant them freedom for their loyalty. It is impossible to say what bargaining and gifts may have been necessary to convince aliens to work with humans, although it may be that merely cursing the Emperor and his Imperium was sufficient for some. The dangerous taint of zealotry and xenophobia remains strong about all humans however, leading to some demand for their use as bodyguards among alien traders that enjoy intimidating their clients.

Smuggling xenostech into the Imperium, along with other illicit goods, is a profitable activity, and the so-called Cold Trade into the Calixis and neighbouring sectors from the Halo Stars is dangerously profitable in the eyes of the Inquisition's Ordo Calixis. Rogue Traders and Chartist captains can turn vast profits by meeting up with renegades in out-of-the-way star systems. There they can trade with them for goods that fetch vastly inflated prices in the Imperium. The risks are high and not only because the Imperial authorities may attempt to impound their ship and strip them of their license if they catch them. Reaver pirate clans sometimes simply cut out the middleman and seize a trader's cargo at the rendezvous. Dealing with renegades is always a risky business as good relations with one group won't extend protection from all of them.

Individual renegades sometimes slip into Imperium space to pursue their trade, but they find it a dangerous place to live. If caught and identified, they are tortured and executed by the Inquisition with no hope of mercy. Memory blocks and synaptic tampering are used by some groups (particularly the heretic Vaol Clans of the Drusus Marches Periphery) to protect their operatives—or, more accurately, the friends and loved ones they would put at risk if captured.

THOSE WHO LIVE WITHIN

For those with no love for the Emperor's laws, life inside the Imperium is a daily peril. Within a system where the innocent are routinely persecuted, the guilty must stay especially on their guard if they hope to survive. For most citizens the Imperium is nothing but a source of oppression and fear, and not all of those that cry out against the yoke of its authority are the dedicated servants of Chaos. The religious intolerance of the Ecclesiarchy persecutes entire belief systems by branding them as heresy and daemon worship for the slightest deviation from the dogmatic Imperial creed. Psykers and mutants face a terrible fate at the hands of the Imperium, at best existing as a shunned underclass where they aren't executed on sight. Political parties, labour movements, guilds and even criminal organisations that were once vilified by the citizenry can sometimes become their outlet for anti-Imperial sentiment when the authorities tighten their grip.

Fear of the Inquisition quickly drives these diverse groups underground to form a hidden network of cells and covens dedicated to the downfall of Imperial rule. Secret cults of worshippers tend shrines dedicated to their ancient gods in secret while presenting a face of bland devotion to the Emperor in public. Humble workers toil in the factories while they plan revolution and the overthrow of their hated bosses. Wherever there is sedition and dissent the conditions become ideal for the subtle spread of Chaos.

The lure of arcane lore and unearthly power exercises a fatal attraction for the ambitious and the desperate. All over the galaxy, even on Mars and Ancient Terra, there are people willing to dabble in matters beyond their understanding. Not all of these realise they are dealing with the Powers of Chaos, innocently becoming involved through warrior societies or intellectual communities that may appear outwardly quite benign in nature. Often a Chaos Power is venerated under a different guise with a seemingly unconnected name, and a host of Daemon Princes and lesser powers are worshipped by different cults with just as much fervour as those dedicated to Khorne, Tzeentch, Nurgle, or Slaanesh.

Some cultures devote themselves to Chaos in its unaligned glory and see the Powers of Chaos as a pantheon of gods, a polytheistic outlook common in many tribal religions. Ecclesiarchy missionaries usually try to insert the Emperor into such belief systems, claiming him to be more powerful than the others, but change is slow to occur and the last vestiges of daemon-worship are notoriously hard to stamp out. Even pious-seeming monks and holy men may transpire to be followers of "saints" who possess, upon closer inspection, decidedly daemonic aspects.

Those who truly desire change sometimes go to the most extreme lengths to gain the power they need to affect it. Forbidden lore, suppressed knowledge, and ancient pacts may offer routes to victory for an ardent freedom fighter or revolutionary where weapons and bombs fail to make an impact. On some worlds, the spread of law and industry rouses anarchists and madmen to oppose it, on others gentrified nobility anxious to keep control of their lands might turn to the methods their forefathers used in earlier, darker ages. Even the most advanced and powerful Imperial worlds have their own secret cults that have hidden themselves from sight for centuries while their members work tirelessly to worm themselves into position of power and authority. Such cults are a source of great concern to the Inquisition, none more so than those that actually manage to communicate with daemons directly or—worse still—summon them from the warp.

THOSE WHO LIVE BEYOND

A well-established cult has the potential to tip an entire world into Chaos in a very literal sense. Their greatest works of sorcery can open the gates of hell itself and unleash the daemonic legions of the Ruinous Powers. As the mutating power of Chaos saturates the world it becomes a realm not entirely of the material universe and not entirely of the warp: a Daemon World where the laws of nature and reason have been completely usurped by the whims of the Chaos Powers. Here daemons roam freely and are constantly nourished by

twisting winds of magic and mortals become their playthings with a value only as champions or slaves. Daemon Worlds are a sanctuary for the worshippers of Chaos with the means and courage to flee to them. The Inquisition never rests in its efforts to eliminate the devotees of the Ruinous Powers, but a Daemon World defies even their shadowy reach.

No one knows the exact number of Daemon Worlds in the galaxy, nor whether all of them could truly be said to even exist within the galaxy any more. Imperial Navigators have reported worlds in the deep tides of the Immaterium light years away from any star systems and severe warp storms are said to have shifted entire planets across time and space. Certainly the greatest concentration of Daemon Worlds appears to be in the region called the Eye of Terror, the birthing grounds of the Chaos Power Slaanesh, but many other Daemon Worlds are spoken of in myth and legend in different parts of the galaxy. Some hold that every major warp storm has one or more Daemon Worlds at its heart, the source of all the dangerous torrents of warp energy that sustain it.

Untold billions of mortals exist on Daemon Worlds, their lives utterly subject to the Ruinous Powers and their bodies marked by Chaos. Many are destined to form warbands battling for the amusement of their masters, hurling themselves against one another while screaming praises to their dark gods. Others are arranged into shuffling prayer gangs that trace the path of vast runes visible only from space; others might sift, weigh, and catalogue grains of sand in vast deserts or endlessly build and then destroy monuments that defy sanity and science. The activities pursued with such vitality and fervour on Daemon Worlds are often nonsensical and contradictory by nature—and apt to change at a moment's notice.

A few Daemon Worlds are dominated by the remnants of the Traitor Legions that once followed Horus. They have become training grounds, forges, and armouries for the Legions' continuing prosecution of the Long War. Entire regiments are raised and destroyed under their brutal regimes, the veteran survivors reformed and hurled into battle again and again to forge them in the crucible of war. On these hellish worlds anyone is capable climbing up from slave cannon fodder through hardened veteran to valued elite with sufficient skill and élan. The hardiest and most dedicated may some day win a place in the Legion and have their body broken by dark chirurgeons to be remade as something greater than human.

The Traitor Legions teach their slaves to hate the Imperium and to despise the Emperor with an unholy passion. Time runs differently on Demon Worlds and veteran Space Marines that stood beside Horus still live on a hundred centuries later in the Eye of Terror and other benighted places. They bitterly remember their defeat before the Imperial palace and have sworn to have their vengeance against the False Emperor on the Golden Throne. Incalculable woe has been unleashed on the Imperium by the Traitor Legions over the millennia since the Horus Heresy. These so-called "Black Crusades" have ravaged the regions around the Eye of Terror and destabilised huge areas elsewhere in the Imperium.

Even once the Imperium rallies its vast resources to re-conquer territory lost to a Black Crusade, the indelible taint of Chaos is left behind. On recaptured worlds the incidence of psykers and mutations in the liberated populations leaps sharply and cultist cells are always particularly active. The Traitor Legions attempt to erode Imperial power whenever they can and some specialise in utilising renegade and underground elements as parts of a larger conspiracy. Imperial Inquisitors are particularly alert for signs that cult or pirate activity may presage a larger invasion by the Traitor Legions, but with a million worlds to protect their task is a nigh impossible one.





Playing the Game

Game Dice

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Tests

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Movement

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Glory, Goals, and Epic Destinies

Chapter 1: Playing the Game

"I swear to make war on the Imperium and its people, and I will go to my grave attempting to tear down the walls of that benighted, decadent, and foolish empire. It is not I, at long last, who have betrayed the Imperium, it is the Imperium who has betrayed me. It is the Imperium who has betrayed us all."

–Commander Phineas Gage

The following chapter outlines the game's core game mechanics and how to use them to play **Black Crusade**. It covers the dice used to play, and how to make Tests and set task difficulties. This chapter also covers special rules for movement, lighting, gravity, and many other environmental conditions that have a direct effect on the Player Characters. Finally, it also touches on new game mechanics dealing with Infamy, Corruption, and the goals and final destinies of Player Characters.

GAME DICE

For ease of play, **Black Crusade** uses only ten-sided polyhedral dice for its core game mechanic. Ten-sided dice can be acquired online or anywhere role-playing games are sold, including game stores and larger chain book stores. In fact, the dice needed to play **Black Crusade** are likely available at the very store where this book was purchased. The GM and each player need at least one pair of ten-sided dice. These dice should preferably be of different colours to help differentiate between the "tens" die and the "ones" die. There are also special pairs of ten-sided dice that typically come in sets of dice called percentile dice. One of the pair is numbered 1-10 like normal dice, and the other is numbered 10-00. These dice are designed so that the outcome of the die roll can be quickly and unquestionably ascertained.

Black Crusade uses, at its core, two basic types of die roll, the "d10" roll and the percentile roll. D10 rolls are called for when the player or GM needs to generate a number between one and ten (or a higher number if multiple d10 dice are rolled and the results added together), perhaps when rolling Damage for a weapon. When making a d10 roll, the player or GM rolls the number of dice called for, three dice for a roll of 3d10 for example, and adds the results together (meaning the results could be between 3 and 30).

Table 1-1: Percentile Roll Examples

"Tens" Die	"Ones" Die	Result
7	3	73
4	2	42
0	1	1
0	0	100

Example

Haargoth, a Chaos Space Marine, is hit with a blast from a meltagun which inflicts 2d10+8 Energy Damage. The GM rolls two ten-sided dice and gets a "4" and a "9." He adds the two dice results, getting a 13 total, then adds eight more points for a total of 21 points of Damage.

Percentile rolls are called for when a player or GM needs to generate a random number from 1-100, and are perhaps the most common rolls made in the game. Characteristic and Skill Tests are two of the many ways in which percentile rolls are used in the game. When making percentile rolls, commonly abbreviated as "d%" or "d100," the player or GM uses a pair of ten-sided dice, one assigned as the "ones" digit and the other assigned as the "tens" digit, to generate his number. Unlike d10 rolls, the results of a percentile roll aren't added together. See Table 1–1: Percentile Roll Examples below for a quick explanation of how to read a percentile roll.

Example

Haargoth is searching a ruin for a hidden passage to some rumoured under-chambers. Once all modifiers have been applied, the GM tells Haargoth that he needs a 35 or below to find the passage, if it exists at all. Haargoth rolls his percentile dice and gets a result of 61, well over his target and a disappointing failure.

There are times when the rules require a roll of 1d5. To make this roll the player simply rolls a ten-sided die, divides the result by two, and rounds up.

Example

Haargoth is attacked by an opponent with a grenade launcher, and is struck with a krak grenade. The GM scores a solid hit that deals so much Explosive Damage to Haargoth that it punches right through his power armour and deals one point of Critical Damage. Consulting the appropriate Critical Damage table the GM finds that, along with the Damage dealt by the grenade, Haargoth is also thrown backward 1d5 metres. The GM rolls a ten-sided die and gets a result of seven which is treated as a result of four (7÷2=3.5 rounded up to four). Haargoth flies four metres and lands flat on his back.

CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics represent a character's raw potential and natural physical and mental gifts, such as his strength, agility, intelligence, and skill with melee and ranged weaponry. Characteristics operate on a scale of 1 to 100, and the higher the Characteristic is, the more raw talent the character has in that particular area. There are 10 different Characteristics in **Black Crusade**, and each represents a different area of mental or physical attributes. Each is listed briefly here, with its common abbreviation. (Willpower, for example, is often abbreviated as "WP" in game text.)

Weapon Skill (WS)

Weapon Skill measures a character's competence in hand-to-hand fighting, whether using fists, knives, or chainswords.

Ballistic Skill (BS)
Ballistic Skill reflects a character's accuracy with ranged weapons, whether bolters, lasguns, missile launchers or even throwing knives.

Strength (S)
Strength represents how physically strong a character is.

Toughness (T)
Toughness defines how easily a character can shrug off injury as well as how easily he can resist toxins, poisonous environments, disease, and other physical ailments.

Agility (Ag)
Agility measure's a character's quickness, reflexes, and poise.

Intelligence (Int)
Intelligence is a measurement of a character's acumen, reason, and general knowledge.

Perception (Per)
Perception describes how aware a character is of his surroundings and the acuteness of his senses.

Willpower (WP)
Willpower demonstrates a character's mental strength and resilience; his strength and toughness of mind. It is his ability to withstand the horrors of war, the terrors of the unknown, and—in the case of some individuals—the potency of psychic powers.

Fellowship (Fel)
Fellowship is a character's ability to interact with others, his ability to charm, command, or deceive.

Infamy (Inf)
Infamy is a measure of a character's reputation and presence, as well as how favoured he is by the Ruinous Powers. Infamy is a unique Characteristic, and is discussed separately starting on page 304.

CHARACTERISTICS AND CHARACTERISTIC BONUSES
Each Characteristic is a number between 1 and 99, with higher numbers better than lower numbers. In addition, each Characteristic has a Characteristic Bonus, a number equal to the tens digit of the Characteristic. For example, a character with a Strength of 42 would have a Strength Bonus of 4. Characteristic Bonuses are used in a wide variety of situations.

Characteristics are important to a Heretic for a number of reasons, not least of which is that they reflect a character's ability to succeed at particular actions. Characteristics are modified by external factors such as Skills, and can be improved in a number of temporary and permanent ways. Since Characteristics set the base target number for all Tests in **Black Crusade**, high characteristics are always more favourable than low characteristics. For more information on how to generate characteristics and how they relate to character generation, see **Chapter 2: Character Creation.**

Skills, Talents, and Traits
If the raw potential and natural gifts of a character are described by his Characteristics, his competence, prowess, and innate abilities are defined by his Skills, Talents, and Traits. Skills are learned abilities, such as speaking a language or driving a vehicle, that reflect a character's training and life experience. Talents are unique abilities and proficiencies that a character possesses either through his intrinsic nature or from years of hard-won experience. Ambidexterity, the ability to use both hands equally well, is a Talent. Finally, Traits are those abilities a character possesses by virtue of birth, mutation or racial circumstance. Dark Sight, the ability to see in complete darkness, is a Trait, as it's not something humans are normally able to do. More information on Skills can be found in **Chapter 3: Skills** on page 89, and information on Talents and Traits can be found in **Chapter 4: Talents and Traits** on page 113.

Tests
"To become strong, you must be eternally tested."

–Soloria Half-Blind of Furia

The test is the basic mechanic by which success or failure is determined in **Black Crusade**. Whenever a character performs a task or action that has a direct or dramatic effect on the game—be it firing a bolter at a fleeing enemy, fast-talking an Imperial Arbitrator, healing a comrade or negotiating with a daemon—that character may be called on to make a Test to determine whether their action succeeded or failed.

THE CORE MECHANIC
To make a Test, follow these steps.

- Determine the Skill or Characteristic being tested. Each Test identifies one Characteristic or a Skill (which is a Characteristic modified by circumstances) to be Tested.
- Once the Skill or Characteristic is identified, take the value of the Skill or Characteristic. This is a number between 1 and 99. Once you have that number, identify any modifiers that may affect the Test, either positive or negative. Easier Tests may grant bonuses (such as +10 or +20) to the Skill or Characteristic being Tested for the duration of the Test, while more difficult Tests may impose penalties (such as –10 or –20). In addition, actions and environmental conditions may impose further modifiers. Aiming a gun before firing it may grant a bonus to a Ballistic Skill Test, while running through deep snow may impose a penalty to an Athletics Test.

Automatic Success and Failure

Although technically all actions require Tests, in practice, this would greatly slow down the game and make for an unpleasant and repetitious experience. Therefore, particularly simple Tests such as driving a groundcar along an open road, climbing a ladder, or writing routine reports can be passed automatically, without any test needed. A good guideline is that if the Test wouldn't have any consequences for failing, no test should be required by the GM. On the other hand, the GM may determine that some tasks are so difficult that the character has no chance of success and fails automatically. This is to avoid players whose characters have no chance of accomplishing a task attempting to "fish" for a natural 1.

- Add all the modifiers together. Positive and negative modifiers may negate each other. Once all modifiers have been combined, the character should be left with a final number. This number may be greater than 100, or less than zero, but typically falls between 1 and 99.
- Make a percentile roll (see page 34).
- If the result of the percentile roll is less than or equal to the Skill or Characteristic being tested, after all modifiers are applied, then the test succeeds.
- If the result of the percentile roll is greater than the Skill or Characteristic being tested, after all modifiers are applied, then the test fails.
- Note, that if the result of the percentile roll is a natural "1," the Test succeeds, even if the total modifiers made the Skill or Characteristic less than 1. Likewise, if the result is a natural "100" then the Test fails, even if the total modifiers made the Skill or Characteristic greater than 100.

SKILL TESTS

The Skill Test is the most common test performed in **Black Crusade**. Each Skill is governed by a corresponding Characteristic, which sets the base level of the skill on a scale of 1-100. For example, Dodge is governed by the Agility Characteristic and Scrutiny is governed by the Perception Characteristic. To make a Skill Test, the player first adds all relevant positive and negative modifiers determined by the Game Master to the governing Characteristic. Once the final result is tallied, the player then makes a percentile roll. A Skill Test succeeds if the result of the percentile roll is equal to or less than the final target number after all modifiers are applied. A Skill Test fails if the result of the percentile roll is higher than the final target number after all modifiers are applied.

Succeeding at a Skill Test is always easier if a character has training in the Skill being Tested. A character can attempt to use any Skill untrained, but does so at a heavy disadvantage. Any attempt to Test an untrained Skill suffers a –20 penalty in addition to any other penalties. For more about Skill Tests and their penalties and benefits see page 90.

Example

Emir, a corrupt Tech-Priest, is attempting to decipher an ancient technical treatise found in a ruined hive. Due to the highly complex nature of the text, and its antiquity, the GM decides that this is a Hard (–20) Lore: Forbidden (Adeptus Mechanicus) Test. Under ideal circumstances, Emir would make this test against his Intelligence of 40. However, as this is a Hard Test, he suffers a –20 to his Characteristic and must roll under a 20 to succeed.

CHARACTERISTIC TESTS

There are times over the course of a **Black Crusade** game when no amount of education or training suffices, and a player must rely simply on raw physical prowess or mental acumen. Breaking through a reinforced door or resisting torture are two tasks that call for Characteristic Tests. To make a Characteristic Test, first the Game Master determines the most appropriate Characteristic for the test, then the player makes a percentage roll. If the roll is less than or equal to the Characteristic after any modifiers are applied, then the test is successful. If the roll is higher than the Characteristic after any modifiers are applied, then the test fails.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

During a **Black Crusade** game, knowing whether a test has succeeded or failed is typically sufficient. There are times, however, when it is helpful to know just how well a character has succeeded at a given task, or just how badly he has failed. This is of particular importance with social skills, such as Charm and Inquiry, as well as during some combat situations such as when firing an automatic weapon.

Measuring a character's Degrees of Success or Failure is a rather straightforward process. Once the percentage roll for the test is made, compare the outcome of the roll with the modified

Table 1-2: Characteristic Tests

Characteristic	Example Tests
Weapon Skill	Make an attack with a melee weapon.
Ballistic Skill	Make an attack with a ranged weapon.
Strength	Break down a door, restrain a captive, push over a grox.
Toughness	Resist poison or disease, tolerate temperature extremes, stave off mutation, resist hunger.
Agility	Determine initiative, maintain balance on a narrow surface, navigate treacherous terrain.
Intelligence	Recall an important detail, identify a familiar face, solve a puzzle.
Perception	Notice a hidden enemy, locate a secret door, gauge another person's attitude.
Willpower	Resist torture or psychic powers, or manifest psychic powers.
Fellowship	Make a good impression or inspire confidence.
Infamy	Trade on one's reputation.



Characteristic score. If the roll is lower than the Characteristic, the character has gained one Degree of Success. Furthermore, every 10 points by which the test succeeds grants yet another Degree of Success. Conversely, if the roll is higher than the Characteristic, the character has gained one Degree of Failure, and gains an additional Degree of Failure for every additional 10 points rolled over the Characteristic.

Example

Haargoth is lying in ambush with a heavy bolter for a squad of Battle-Brothers from the Imperial Fists chapter. Their Rhino heaves into view over a nearby ridge, presenting quite an easy target. From his position, Haargoth opens up on the unsuspecting Space Marines, spraying their armoured vehicle with bolt shells. Haargoth's player makes a roll against his character's Ballistic Skill of 55, scoring a 12 on the roll and rolling under his target number by a whopping 43 points. Haargoth gets one Degree of Success for succeeding on the test, and an additional four levels of success for his lucky roll. The bulk of his shells hit home, crippling the Rhino and perhaps wounding some of the Space Marines inside.

EXTENDED TESTS

Occasionally, a character attempts a task so complicated that it requires quite a length of time to complete. In cases such as these, the Game Master may require multiple Skill Tests to complete the task. This is known as an Extended Test. In general, each skill states within its description whether it requires an Extended Test. However, the Game Master may adjust the time represented by each test to best suit the situation and the needs of his campaign.

OPPOSED TESTS

There are times when a character needs to test himself against a foe, and times like these call for an Opposed Test. In an Opposed Test, each participant makes their appropriate test normally and whoever succeeds wins the test. If both parties succeed, the party with the most Degrees of Success wins the test. If the number of successes is equal, then the party with the highest Characteristic bonus wins. If the result is still a tie, then the lowest die roll wins.

Should both parties fail, then one of two things occurs: either the test ends in a stalemate and nothing happens, or both parties re-roll until there is a clear winner. Either outcome is appropriate, and is left to the GM's discretion.

Example

Haargoth is attempting to wrest the Chapter banner from an Iron Hands Standard Bearer, and the GM calls for an opposed Strength Test. Haargoth's player rolls against his character's Strength of 48 while the GM rolls against the Standard Bearer's strength of 50. Haargoth's player rolls a 47, a success but only just. The GM rolls a 19 and succeeds with three levels of success, a much better roll than Haargoth's. The Iron Hands Standard Bearer maintains his grip on the sacred colours and proceeds to smash Haargoth across the face with the heavy staff upon which the standard is mounted.

Test Difficulty

No two tests are created equal. Piloting a skimmer across an open field is one thing, while racing through a ruined, debris-choked cityscape while under heavy fire is quite another. Both require Pilot: Skimmer tests, but the latter is demonstrably more difficult than the former. The question, however, is just how much harder is piloting a skimmer through a war-torn city? This is where test difficulty and the Game Master's discretion come into play.

While the difficulty of a given test is occasionally clearly stated by the rules, often it is left to the GM to determine just how difficult an action is. Once the difficulty of a task has been determined, the GM needs to consult **Table 1–3: Test Difficulty** to find the appropriate modifier. The difficulty modifier is then applied to the governing Characteristic associated with the test before the percentile roll is made.

Example

Haargoth is attempting to decipher a particularly complicated section of an ancient heretical text regarding known Daemon Princes. Due to the age of the text and its mind-bending nature, the Game Master decrees that this a **Hard (–20) Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) Test**. *Normally Haargoth would test against his Intelligence of 38. In this instance, however (as this is a Hard test), he suffers a –20 penalty to his Characteristic and must roll an 18 or less to pass the test.*

Assistance

While going it alone certainly allows a character to reap a greater part of the glory and rewards of a given venture, it is not always the best or most prudent course of action. There are times during a **Black Crusade** game when a task is so great, an obstacle so insurmountable, or an enemy so implacable, that the only way for the players to succeed is to work together, pooling their skills and resources.

During a complicated or delicate test (and with the Game Master's permission), the character performing the test can request the assistance of other characters in the group. When the percentile roll is made, only the character who is actually making the test rolls the dice, but every other character giving assistance reduces the difficulty of the test by one step (see **Table 1–3: Test Difficulty**). If the test succeeds, the character performing the test gains an extra Degree of Success.

Limits on Assistance

While characters can assist each other in most tasks, there are some restrictions and conditions that must be met.

- To give assistance on a Skill Test, a character must have training in that skill.
- The assisting character must be adjacent to the character performing the test.
- Assistance cannot be given in performing Reactions or Free Actions.
- Assistance cannot be given on Tests made to resist disease, poison, Fear, or anything else the Game Master deems inappropriate. Remember, there are many Tests that characters must attempt alone.
- No more than two characters may attempt to assist another on a single test.

Table 1–3: Test Difficulty

Difficulty	Test Modifier
Trivial	+60
Elementary	+50
Simple	+40
Easy	+30
Routine	+20
Ordinary	+10
Challenging	+0
Difficult	-10
Hard	-20
Very Hard	-30
Arduous	-40
Punishing	-50
Hellish	-60

Example

Malgrave, a member of the Iron Warriors Legion, is attempting to activate an artefact of heretical technology deep beneath the surface of a dead hive world in order to bring power to some other ancient systems. This requires the Tech-Use Skill, a Skill which the Chaos Space Marine possesses. He quickly realises that despite his technical prowess, the eldritch systems are beyond even his understanding, and he calls upon his colleague Balthys for assistance. Balthys, a wizened and knowledgeable Heretek, also has Tech-Use trained and is uniquely suited to assist his accomplice, enabling him to add his know-how to Malgrave's and increase their possibility of success. Thanks to the antiquity and complexity of the systems, the GM declares that this is an ***Arduous (–40) Test****. With Balthys' help however, this becomes a* ***Very Hard (–30) Test****. Furthermore, if Malgrave succeeds in his test, he gains an additional Degree of Success thanks to Balthys' assistance.*

Movement

In most **Black Crusade** games, it is largely unnecessary to worry about how fast a character can run or how long it takes him to ascend the 660 stairs to the Orgion of Slaanesh. There are, however, a number of situations within a game, most notably during combat, when knowing how fast a character can move is very important. As discussed in **Chapter VII: Combat**, there are two different methods of keeping time in a **Black Crusade** game, Narrative Time and Structured Time, and each has its own unique rules regarding movement.

Table 1-4: Structured Time Movement (Metres/Round)

AB	Half Move	Full Move	Charge	Run
0	1/2	1	2	3
1	1	2	3	6
2	2	4	6	12
3	3	6	9	18
4	4	8	12	21
5	5	10	15	30
6	6	12	18	36
7	7	14	21	42
8	8	16	24	48
9	9	18	27	54
10	10	20	30	60

STRUCTURED AND NARRATIVE TIME

During Structured Time, which typically involves combat, a character may take a specific action during a round to move at one of four speeds: Half Move, Full Move, Charge, or Run. The number of metres a character moves at these various speeds is dictated by his Agility Bonus, and can be further modified through some Talents or Traits. **Table 1–4:** Structured Time Movement, located below, gives more details on the various speeds.

Often during Narrative Time, when a character isn't actively involved in combat or some other all-consuming, time-sensitive task, knowing how far a character can move in a given amount of time is, while perhaps not critical, still important to the story. Narrative Time Movement describes the standard speeds a character can move at a leisurely pace under ideal circumstances. Environment and terrain, discussed further below, and affect these speeds, helping or hindering the characters as they travel. **Table 1–5: Narrative Time Movement**, located below, gives more details on the various speeds.

Narrative Movement and Terrain

Terrain conditions affect on how quickly a character can cover ground during Narrative Time. Slogging through a waist-deep snow-filled field is much harder than walking across the broad flagstone-paved courtyard. When moving through thick foliage, dense crowds, soft sand, deep mud, and other similar difficult terrain, a character's movement is halved. Furthermore, the Game Master determines what, if any, modifiers apply to Narrative Time due to the environment.

Hurrying

A character can, when called for, pick up the pace by moving up to double his Narrative Time Movement for a number of hours equal to his Toughness Bonus. At the end of his exertion, the character must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1 level of Fatigue. In addition to the fatigue, a hurrying character is distracted and prone to miss tiny details in his surroundings. Thanks to this he suffers a –10 penalty to all Perception-based Tests.

In truly dire circumstances, the character may push himself to the limit and continue on despite his increasing fatigue and penalties. In this case, the character must continue to make progressively more difficult Toughness Tests to avoid accruing more levels of fatigue. For example, the character suffers a –10 penalty to his Toughness Test after the second time period, a –20 after the third, and so forth.

Running and Narrative Time

While characters can, and often do, run during Narrative Time, the act of doing so is extremely tiring. When running, a character triples his rate of movement. Each hour of sustained running requires the character to make a Toughness Test with a cumulative –10 penalty per each hour past the first to maintain his pace. Failing the Toughness Test inflicts 1 level of Fatigue. Running characters are even more focused on the task at hand than those simply hurrying, and suffer a –20 penalty to all Perception-based Tests. As in running, characters may push themselves past endurance after a failed test, but all penalties are cumulative.

Forced Marching

While the standard time for marching is ten hours in a day, nothing is stopping characters from continuing past that time. Characters may safely press on a number of hours equal to their Toughness Bonus. Beyond this, a character must make a Toughness Test with a cumulative –10 penalty per hour for each hour travelled beyond his Toughness Bonus. A character who fails his test suffers 1 level of Fatigue. It is quite possible for a character to march himself into unconsciousness. Fatigue gained from forced marching is removed at the rate of one level per two hours of rest.

Movement and Environment

Structured Time Movement Rates as listed in **Table 1–4** assume a relatively clear and uncluttered battlefield. This is rarely the case however, as few battles are held on a clear day in clear hive streets or open fields, and there can be any number of obstacles present to hinder a character's movement. Rubble strewn corridors, deep snow, thick fog, deep, soft sand, dense underbrush—these are but a few examples of the conditions that can complicate navigation. In such conditions, a characters

Table 1-5: Narrative Time Movement

AB	Per Minute	Per Hour	Per Day
0	12m	0.75km	7km
1	24m	1.5km	15km
2	48m	3km	30km
3	72m	4km	40km
4	96m	6km	60km
5	120m	7km	70km
6	144m	9km	90km
7	168m	10km	100km
8	192m	12km	120km
9	216m	13km	130km
10	240m	14km	140km

Structured Time Movement Rate is halved. If a character runs or charges he must succeed at a **Ordinary (+10) Agility Test** or fall prone. Of course, the difficulty of this test can be further modified at the Game Master's discretion based on any number of factors. See **Table 1–6: Treacherous Environment Agility Modifiers** for suggestions.

CLIMBING

There are many times in a character's experience when the best way to reach a destination or bypass an obstacle is by climbing. Clambering over a fence, scaling a city wall, descending into a crevasse, or climbing to an ideal sniper position on a rooftop are all instances where climbing is required. Typically, climbing is divided into two general categories: simple climbs and sheer surfaces.

Simple Climbs

Simple climbs include low walls, steep hills, tall piles of rubble, trees, or anything else that requires effort and concentration but no real skill to accomplish. Any character with his hands free can automatically accomplish a simple climb as long as he takes his time and isn't being distracted (while taking fire for example).

If a character is hurrying, being chased, under fire, or otherwise distracted, he needs to make a **Challenging (+0) Athletics Test** to perform a simple climb. With one Degree of Success, the character completes his climb at a rate of one-half his Half Move speed. For each further Degree of Success, the character climbs an additional metre. If the Test is failed, the character falls from his starting climbing position. At his discretion, the Game Master can adjust the difficulty of the climb to account for any other factors that he deems appropriate. Some types of climb, such as ascending a sturdy ladder or steep flight of stairs, are so simple that no test should be necessary.

Sheer Surfaces

Many surfaces are beyond the means of ordinary characters to climb, and often require specialised training and equipment. A sheer cliff with overhangs and no handholds, an icy crevasse, the walls of buildings, or the massive flying buttresses of a hive city are examples of such technical climbs, and attempting a climb like this requires a **Difficult (–10) Athletics Test.** With one Degree of Success, the character completes his climb at a rate of one-half his Half Move speed. For each further Degree of Success, the character climbs an additional metre. If the Test is failed, the character falls from his starting climbing position. Specialised tools such as grapnels and clip harnesses add bonuses to Climb Tests, and are discussed further in **Chapter 5: Armoury**.

Table 1-6: Treacherous Environment Agility Modifiers

Condition	Difficulty
Fog or Smoke	Ordinary (+10)
Mud	Challenging (+0)
Shallow Water	Challenging (+0)
Darkness	Difficult (–10)
Thick Snow	Difficult (–10)
Underbrush	Difficult (–10)
Dense Crowds	Hard (–20)
Zero Gravity	Hard (–20)
Rubble	Hard (–20)
Tremors	Hard (–20)

Abseiling

If a character needs to descend a sheer surface quickly, he can attempt abseiling as opposed to climbing down. Abseiling requires climbing gear, a drop harness, or at least a good, stout line, and requires a **Challenging (+0) Acrobatics Test**. With one Degree of Success, the character descends at a rate of 10 metres per Round, plus an additional metre for every additional Degree of Success. With one Degree of Failure, the descent rate is reduced to 5 metres per Round. Failure by two or more degrees requires the character to make a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test** or lose his grip—and if he is not wearing a drop harness or otherwise secured, he falls.

JUMPING AND LEAPING

A jump is a controlled vertical ascent or descent wherein a character attempts to either jump as high as he can, or jump safely down from an elevated surface without taking Damage. If a character is pushed from a ledge, or is otherwise not in control of his descent, he is not jumping, but falling (see page 257). A leap is a horizontal jump by which a character attempts to cover as much ground as possible. Both running and leaping can benefit from a running start, and both require a Full Action.



Standing Vertical Jumps

An average character can jump, from a standing position, roughly one half-metre straight up as measured from the ground to the bottom of his feet. Jumping distance depends as much on a characters body mass as it does on his Agility or Strength, so this distance tends to vary only slightly among characters. A character can jump up to reach an overhead item like a ledge or other handhold that is as high as his own height plus about one metre for average arm length and an additional half-metre for the average standing jump. A test is not usually required for such a jump, though pulling oneself up onto a grabbed ledge requires a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test**.

A character can attempt to safely jump down a number of metres equal to his Agility Bonus by making a **Challenging (+0) Acrobatics Test**. With one Degree of Success, he lands on his feet and takes no Damage. If he gets a Degree of Success but the drop is longer than his Agility Bonus, he takes falling Damage (page 257) equal to the distance jumped in metres beyond his Agility Bonus and he ends the Turn prone. If he gets a Degree of Failure on the test he takes falling Damage for the entire distance of the fall and ends the turn prone. However, if he gets additional Degrees of Success equal to the additional metres beyond his Agility Bonus, he takes no falling Damage and does not fall prone.

Running Vertical Jumps

With a running start of at least four metres in a straight line a character can increase the height of his jumps. At the end of his running jump, the character must make a **Challenging (+0) Acrobatics Test**. If he gains a Degree of Success on the Test, he can add half his Strength Bonus, rounded up, to his normal vertical jump distance plus an additional half-metre for each additional Degree of Success. If the character gains a Degree of Failure on the test he stumbles and must succeed on an additional **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or fall prone. Either outcome ends the character's Turn. For every four additional metres beyond the first four that the character runs before making the Jump, he receives a +10 bonus to his Agility Test, to a maximum of +30.

Standing Horizontal Leaps

To make a Standing Horizontal Leap a character must make a **Challenging (+0) Acrobatics Test**. With a Degree of Success, the character Leaps a number of metres equal to his Strength Bonus, plus another half metre for every additional Degree of Success. With a Degree of Failure, the character only Leaps a number of metres equal to half his Strength Bonus rounded up, and each additional Degree of Failure reduces this distance by another half metre (to a minimum of one-half metre). If it is important, the height attained during a leap is equal to one quarter the distance leapt in metres rounded up.

Running Horizontal Leaps

As with Running Vertical Jumps, to make a Running Horizontal Leap a character must have a running start of at least four metres in a straight line. At the end of the movement, the character makes a **Challenging (+0) Acrobatics Test**. With one Degree of Success, the character Leaps a number of metres equal to his Strength Bonus, plus another half metre for each additional Degree of Success. With a Degree of Failure, the character only Leaps a number of metres equal to half his Strength Bonus rounded up, and each additional Degree of Failure reduces the distance leapt by another half metre to a minimum of one-half metre. For every four additional metres beyond the first four that the character runs before making the Leap, he receives a +10 bonus to his Agility Test, to a maximum of +30. If it is important, the height attained during a leap is equal to one quarter the distance leapt in metres rounded up.

SWIMMING

Under ideal circumstances a character doesn't need to make a Swim Test, but ideal circumstances are rare in **Black Crusade**. Rough, choppy seas, restrained hands, heavy burdens, fighting while swimming and the like are all considered hazardous conditions and require a character to make a Swim Test to move. To swim under hazardous conditions, a character must make a **Challenging (+0) Athletics Test** as a full action. With one Degree of Success, the character moves a number of metres equal to one-half his Strength Bonus in any direction. He may also, at his discretion, simply tread water. A Degree of Failure on the Swim Test indicates that the character makes no progress and cannot move. A character can also swim underwater, but needs to hold his breath to do so. A character who is physically incapable of swimming (unconscious, paralysed, bound, etc.) automatically sinks. While under water, a character risks Suffocation by drowning. See page 257 for more information regarding Suffocation.

Heavy equipment, especially armour, make swimming incredibly difficult. If a character is wearing armour, or is otherwise heavily encumbered, all Swim Tests are Very Hard (-30) and a Degree of Failure on a Swim Test automatically imposes a level of Fatigue.

Swimming and Narrative Time

Prolonged swimming, no matter the circumstances, is exhausting and potentially dangerous. A character can swim for a number of hours equal to his Toughness Bonus. After that point, he must make an additional Toughness Test each hour with a cumulative –10 penalty per hour. If a character fails his Toughness Test he suffers a level of Fatigue. If a swimming character falls unconscious due to Fatigue, he immediately slips beneath the surface and begins to Suffocate (see page 257). To determine distance covered for each hour of swimming, use **Table 1–5: Narrative Time Movement** and swap the character's Strength Bonus for his Agility Bonus.

CARRYING, LIFTING, AND PUSHING OBJECTS

Under normal circumstances, it's not necessary know exactly how much a character can carry, and common sense can serve as a guide in most instances. In general, an average character can reasonably carry a primary weapon, such as a bolter, lasgun, or flamer, plus one or two secondary weapons like a pistol or melee weapon, along with a few clips of extra ammunition and several pieces of miscellaneous equipment in a rucksack, satchel, or similar container. It is not at all reasonable however, for a

character, even a very strong one, to be walking around with three heavy weapons and several thousand rounds of ammo for each, or for the character to have a backpack with one of everything from the equipment section of **Chapter 5: Armoury**. There are, however, times when just how much a character can lift or carry is crucial information. The amount of weight a character can move is dependant on the sum of his Strength and Toughness Bonus. Compare the total to **Table 1–7: Carrying, Pushing, and Lifting** to find out the limits of a character's might. It is important to note that certain Traits and Talents may increase these values.

Carrying Weight

A character's Carrying Weight is how much he can comfortably carry without suffering Fatigue and penalties to his movement. If a character carries more than his weight he is Encumbered.

Lifting Weight

A character's Lifting Weight represents the maximum amount of weight he can pick up off the ground. A character may attempt to move while holding a heavy load, but if that load exceeds his Carry Weight he is Encumbered. Lifting a heavy load is a Full Round Action. A character can attempt to lift more than his limit by making a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test**. For every Degree of Success achieved on a successful Test, the character gains +1 to the sum of his Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus for the purpose of determining limits. If the character gains two or more Degrees of Failure, he immediately suffers one level of Fatigue.

Pushing Weight

Pushing Weight is the maximum amount of weight a character can push across a smooth surface like a ship's corridor or the polished stone floor of a dark temple. Difficult terrain can make pushing objects difficult or even impossible. Pushing an object is treated as a Full Round Action, and pushing weight up to his limit requires no Test. A character may push weight that exceeds the sum of his Toughness Bonus and Strength Bonus by making a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test**. Each Degree of Success adds +1 to the sum of the character's Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus for the purpose of determining limits. If the character gains two or more Degrees of Failure, he immediately suffers one level of Fatigue.

Table 1–7: Carrying, Lifting & Pushing

Sum of SB and TB	Max Carrying Weight	Max Lifting Weight	Max Pushing Weight
0	0.9kg	2.25kg	4.5kg
1	2.25kg	4.5kg	9kg
2	4.5kg	9kg	18kg
3	9kg	18kg	36kg
4	18kg	36kg	72kg
5	27kg	54kg	108kg
6	36kg	72kg	144kg
7	45kg	90kg	180kg
8	56kg	112kg	224kg
9	67kg	134kg	268kg
10	78kg	156kg	312kg
11	90kg	180kg	360kg
12	112kg	224kg	448kg
13	225kg	450kg	900kg
14	337kg	674kg	1,348kg
15	450kg	900kg	1,800kg
16	675kg	1,350kg	2,700kg
17	900kg	1,800kg	3,600kg
18	1,350kg	2,700kg	5,400kg
19	1,800kg	3,600kg	7,200kg
20	2,250kg	4,500kg	9,000kg

Encumbered Characters

A character who attempts to carry more than his normal carrying limits, but less than his lifting limit, is considered Encumbered. An encumbered character suffers a –10 penalty to all movement-based tests and sees his Agility Bonus reduced by one for the purposes of determining movement rates and Initiative. Additionally, after a number of hours equal to his Toughness Bonus have passed while Encumbered, the character must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or gain one level of Fatigue.

Throwing Objects

There are many weapons, such as grenades and knives, that are designed to be thrown, but a character can attempt to throw nearly object that weighs up to half of his normal Lifting Weight as indicated by Table 1–7: Carrying, Lifting, and Pushing Weights. To throw an object, a character makes a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test**. A Degree of Success indicates that the object flies a number of metres equal to his Strength Bonus. For each additional Degree of Success this distance is increased by a factor one, so two Degrees of Success means that the character throws the object a distance equal to twice his Strength Bonus, three Degrees of Success means it travels three times his Strength Bonus, and so on.

With a Degree of Failure, the object falls short, flying a number of metres equal to half his Strength Bonus rounded down. A result of 100 means that the character simply dropped the object and it fell at his feet. If the thrown object hits a hard surface such as a wall or vehicle, it takes 1d10+SB Damage plus one for every additional Degree of Success past the first. These rules do not apply to aerodynamic throwing weapons or grenades. These weapons have a given range on the weapons table and have range brackets like other weapons. If the object is thrown at a specific target, it is treated as an improvised weapon and the character makes a Ballistic Skill Test instead of a Strength Test. A character can attempt to throw an object that weighs more than half his Lifting Weight, but requires a **Hard (–20) Strength Test** to do so.

LIGHTING

Characters in a **Black Crusade** game often find themselves operating in dimly lit temples, under black, moonless skies, and deep in the bowels of the underhive. As a result, the oppressive darkness becomes an enemy in its own right, concealing countless threats in its inky depths. An experienced character knows that a reliable, portable light source like a luminen-pack is every bit as important as his weapon. For ease of play, **Black Crusade** uses three levels of light: Bright, Shadow, and Darkness.

Bright light is any light that allows for normal vision, such as sunlight, a well-lit chamber or the light of a glow-lantern. Shadow conditions occur during pre-dawn and twilight hours on Terra-like worlds, when a character is just out of range of a light source, or when a light source is obscured by an environmental effect like smoke or fog. Darkness is, of course, the total absence of light. Aside from obscuring vision, Shadow and Darkness conditions also have a deleterious effect on a character's movement and combat capabilities. Characters my move through Shadow with no penalties, but may only move at half speed or less in Darkness. A character moving faster than half speed in darkness has a tendency to wander, and may become disoriented and move in random directions unless they succeed on a **Hard (–20) Perception Test**. For the effects of lighting on combat, see **Darkness** and **Fog, Mist, Shadow, or Smoke** on page 245.

FLYING

The following section describes the rules that bind everything in **Black Crusade** blessed with the power of flight, from flying creatures to characters with flight-capable technology.

Altitude

On a typical Terra-like planet, there are three broad Altitudes: Hovering, Low Altitude, and High Altitude. To move up or down in altitude requires a move action, and Altitude can only be changed one level with a standard move action. To move more than one Altitude level requires a Charge or Run action.

Hovering Altitude

A hovering character or creature is skimming just above the ground, typically at an altitude of no greater than two metres, and can move over low obstacles with ease. A hovering creature can both attack and be attacked by land-bound creatures and characters. Often, a creature that can hover cannot fly at other altitudes, as is the case when a creature possesses the Hoverer Trait (see page 141). A creature with the Hoverer trait always stays at roughly the same altitude, give or take two metres, even if it descends into low terrain like a crater or valley. Such creatures do not willingly descend into a place that they cannot escape from, much like any other creature would not enter an area from which it couldn't escape.

Low Altitude

A character or creature flying at Low Altitude is beyond normal melee range of land-bound threats, but still well within range of most ranged attacks from such characters or creatures. A Low Altitude flier takes no penalties for attacking the ground, but anyone or anything attacking it suffer a –10 penalty to their Ballistic Skill Tests in addition to any normal penalties for range.

High Altitude

A character or creature flying at High Altitude is well beyond the reach of any attacks coming from the ground or from Low Altitude. Characters or creatures at High Altitude can only attack or be attacked by others at the same altitude.

Flying Movement

Flying characters and creatures are broken into two general categories defined by Traits: Hoverers and Flyers (see Chapter 4: Talents and Traits for information on these traits). Hoverers move through the air, but are limited to an altitude of roughly two metres. A Flyer isn't limited to ground level, and can ascend or descend to any altitude. Each trait has an associated number in the creature's description that describes that creature's Flying Movement. Flying Movement works just like regular Movement, but only when the creature is airborn.

While flying, a creature must devote a Movement Action to maintaining its flight each Turn or it falls. Half Move, Full Move, Charge, and Run are all valid Actions for maintaining flight. If a hovering creature suddenly stops flying, due to being stunned or not devoting a Move Action for example, it simply comes to a safe landing on the ground. If it is at Low Altitude instead, it falls to the ground and suffers Falling Damage (see page 257) as if it fell 15 metres. A creature that falls from High Altitude suffers Falling Damage as if it fell 25 or more metres, based on the GM's discretion.

THE EFFECTS OF GRAVITY

While the inhabited worlds of the Imperium may vary slightly in gravity, the effects of gravity on game play are usually minimal. Only when characters visit High Gravity or Low Gravity worlds, or are caught in Zero Gravity, are movement, lifting, and other factors affected.

Low Gravity Worlds

On worlds with Low Gravity, all characters see their Agility Bonus increased by two points for the purposes of movement and for determining initiative. Characters also see their Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus increased by four points for the purpose of determining carrying, lifting, and pushing limits. When attempting to throw an object, a character on a Low Gravity world sees his Strength Bonus increased by two. All jumping and leaping distances are doubled when on a Low Gravity world.

High Gravity Worlds

On worlds with High Gravity, all characters see their Agility Bonus decreased by two points, to a minimum of one, for the purposes of movement and for determining initiative. Characters also see their Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus decreased by four points for the purpose of determining carrying, lifting, and pushing limits. When attempting to throw an object, a character on a Low Gravity world sees his Strength Bonus decreased by two, to a minimum of zero. Finally, all jumping and leaping distances are halved when on a Low Gravity world.

Zero Gravity

Characters in **Black Crusade** are most likely to encounter Zero Gravity in space when there has been a significant technological failure. Zero Gravity is considered Difficult Terrain for determining movement, and making a Charge or Run action requires a **Hard (–20) Agility Test** to avoid drifting off in a random direction. Characters who fail the

Agility Test are considered prone. Additionally, a character starting a Move Action in zero gravity must be adjacent to a floor, wall, ceiling, deck, or other secure object so that he has something to push off from.

Glory, Goals, and Epic Destinies

The Heretics in **Black Crusade** are, ultimately, running a race against both the corrupting nature of Chaos and time itself. They steadily and constantly accrue Infamy and Corruption. Most fall—either to the blades and bolters of their enemies or twisted and mutated by the Corruption that fills their bodies and souls. However, a few may transcend this fate, accumulating enough Infamy that their reputation spreads across the Screaming Vortex and the Dark Gods reward them for their accomplishments by raising them to become Daemon Princes. A very few may become so renowned, so feared, and so respected that warbands and warriors across the Vortex fight to serve under their banner, hungry for the plunder and glory that follows such an individual. These select few, chosen champions of the Ruinous Powers can control the Screaming Vortex and forge it into a mighty horde of destruction. With that, they can grasp the ultimate accomplishment—leading their armies on a **Black Crusade** against the very Imperium they warred against.

There are, generally speaking, two final destinies for **Black Crusade** characters. Apotheosis, becoming an all-powerful Daemon Prince, is the more positive of the two outcomes, and is tied to the accumulation of Infamy. As an alternative to becoming a Daemon Prince, some Heretics have their own personal Epic Destinies that they prefer to work toward. These, too, are reached through the accumulation of Infamy and are some variant of the ascension to daemonhood. The second—and most horrible—destiny is that the player is consumed by Corruption, mutating into a barely sentient creature known as Chaos Spawn. The Chaos Spawn serve Chaos until their (hopefully quick) death as nothing more than a monster.

However, there is a third possibility. Some individuals may acquire so much Infamy through their glorious exploits that before the tide of Corruption overcomes them, they are able to rally the support and allies necessary to lead a Black Crusade. Though these individuals will likely eventually reach Apotheosis as well (when they obtain the prerequisite amount of Corruption), they have also obtained a truly impressive amount of Infamy beforehand, and risen to the ranks of the most prominent Champions of Chaos.

More information on Infamy, Corruption, how they relate to one another and what they mean to the Player Characters is discussed further in **Chapter 9: Corruption and Infamy**.

Epic Destinies

Characters in **Black Crusade** may have a wide variety of goals—revenge for wrongs, seeking to become a legend, lead a Traitor Legion, or simply gain knowledge of the true nature of the universe. These goals are likely to be determined ahead of time, and are laid out in greater detail on page 267. However, no matter what a character's goals are within the game, he has only three ultimate fates—death, spawndom, or apotheosis.

Death

The most common fate for Heretics is death. Whether on the battlefield in mortal combat, at the tip of an assassin's blade, or one more pitfall in a perilous galaxy, most of those who follow the Dark Gods die, eventually.

Spawndom

Those Heretics who are weak, who fail too often, or who take too many liberties with the favour and good will of their daemonic masters are doomed to never reach their Apotheosis. Instead, their bodies riddled with Corruption and twisted by mutation, they become Chaos Spawn. Chaos Spawn are insane, mindless abominations, twisted mockeries of the mortal form. They are an all-too-present reminder of the cost of weakness or failure in the service of Chaos. If a Heretic accrues 100 Corruption Points before he is able to realise his ultimate destiny, his form is torn asunder and he is cursed to spend the rest of eternity as a creature out of nightmare. Once this happens, the book is closed on this character and he is removed from play. For more information on Corruption and becoming a Chaos Spawn, see **Chapter 9: Corruption and Infamy**.

Apotheosis

Those Heretics who manage to survive the dangers of a hostile universe and find favour in the eyes of the gods may be granted the ultimate boon, ascension to daemonhood and transformation into a daemonic entity—a Daemon Prince. With this comes power and freedom, the possibility of ascending to the very heights of Chaos and becoming the instrument of the Ruinous Powers' designs. To reach Apotheosis, a character must accrue 100 Infamy points, and he must do so while battling with the constant creep of Corruption. Once a Heretic achieves his ultimate destiny and ascends to daemonhood, his story is considered over and he is removed from play. For more information on Infamy and Apotheosis, see **Chapter 9: Corruption and Infamy**.





Character Creation

Champion
•
Chosen
•
Forsaken
•
Sorcerer
•
Apostate
•
Heretic
•
Renegade
•
Psyker

Chapter II: Character Creation

"Without the light of Chaos, the universe would stagnate and collapse. Only through this struggle, can any advancement occur."

—The Book of Magnus

In **Black Crusade**, players take on the role of someone who has devoted himself to the Ruinous Powers—a human or Chaos Space Marine who has turned against the ways of the Imperium. Through this character, the players may corrupt civilisations, incite religious wars, and sow havoc throughout the galaxy. Each character has chosen to ally with the unknowable entities that exist beyond the physical realm within the eddies of the warp. This exposure has undoubtedly cost some portion of the character's sanity, but it has also granted the character new insights into the nature of the universe. With this knowledge comes a proportionate degree of unnatural power.

That power serves these characters well as they embark upon a path of unmitigated gluttony through the galaxy. A dark acolyte of Chaos is granted the opportunity to indulge every whim in the service of Chaos. Each character is expected to leave a swathe of destruction through the worlds of the Screaming Vortex, the Calixis Sector, and the Jericho Reach. Every vice that can be indulged must be undertaken to promote the influence of the Immaterium.



The lives of a Chaos devotee are often short, though the time dilation of the warp may obfuscate this. Most heroes of Chaos aspire to the immeasurable power of a daemon prince, but few obtain that ultimate prize. The path of Chaos is a hard one, and the Ruinous Powers have little patience for those who fail them. These poor wretches may be fortunate to know the sweet release of death rather than the demeaning punishment of eternal life as a Chaos Spawn. Throughout a character's career, the promise of power and the threat of damnation are ever-present companions.

As a follower of this unholy path, each character has a duty to spread the warp's influence throughout the galaxy. The Dark Gods have granted these Heretics their blessings, but these gifts come at a price. The Dark Gods constantly seek to add to their followers. Their devotees are expected to fulfil this responsibility just as they spread the beliefs and ways of the unknowable powers through their words and deeds. The forces of the vast Imperium of Man are most commonly a potent foe, but they may also become allies. Any loyalist is just another person who has not yet known the unholy corruption of the Dark Gods.

At the same time, the enemy's foe is not necessarily an ally. Xenos may be targets for corruption, or they may be targets for elimination, due to their resistance to the divine word of Chaos. Even other servants of the Dark Gods may work at odds with the focal characters, as the mandates of Chaos are all too often indecipherable and inconsistent. To successfully navigate the paths of Chaos, each character must know whom to trust but always have a plan that accounts for betrayal.

CREATING A HERETIC

Before a player can embark upon a path of destruction through the galaxy, he needs to create an avatar through which he can interact with the world of **Black Crusade**. This alter ego is known as a Player Character (PC), often identified as a "Heretic." For many people, the act of designing a character can be an enjoyable game all by itself. While the process is straightforward, the final variations and options can create a selection of different outcomes that are nearly as vast as humanity itself. Upon first pass, this process may seem complex. This rulebook is designed to gradually clarify the process. As players continue to explore the text, the processes become clear.

In order to begin, each player needs to assemble a few tools to create his character. First is a blank piece of notepaper or a character sheet copied from the back of the book or printed from the **Black Crusade** website. He also needs two ten-sided dice and a pencil with a good eraser. As their characters take shape, players may find that earlier choices no longer fit their current vision for the character. Writing in pencil makes these changes far easier to adopt.

Some players prefer to create their characters in isolation. After all, designing characters—and even creating gaming models to emulate them—can be a fun pastime. However, if the character is to be part of an extended campaign, it may be most beneficial for the players to sit down with the Game Master (GM) and create their characters as a group. In this

way, the players can make certain that their Player Characters (Heretics) complement one another and are consistent with the campaign that the GM has designed. While a group of Heretics who are more focused upon destroying one another than upon completing the tasks at hand may be fun for some groups, this is not necessarily an ideal style of play for every gaming group.

Creating a Heretic requires the following eight stages. The first few times that each player creates a character, he may find it easiest to follow these in direct sequence. However, order can be varied as appropriate. For a player who is familiar with the process and has a strong vision of their character in mind from the beginning, it is perfectly acceptable to decide upon an Archetype and Race, for example, long before Characteristics are generated. These steps are further detailed on the pages that follow.

Stage 1: Choose a Race

The taint of Chaos may have wrought substantial changes upon a character, but before these changes occurred the character was either human or a Chaos Space Marine. Humans are extremely variable in physical and mental capacity, with a broad array of paths open to them. Chaos Space Marines have undergone dramatic physical enhancements but may have limited abilities outside the martial arts.

Stage 2: Generate Characteristics

Black Crusade uses numbers to represent most of each character's abilities. The 10 core abilities, common to all characters, are named Characteristics (for more information on Characteristics, see page 34. These represent the character's initial physical, mental, and social capacities.

Stage 3: Select an Archetype

Within a group of characters, each may be specialised in certain roles. While one might have a glib tongue, specialised in the arts of persuasion, another might be focused on the acquisition of knowledge, stealth, or physical prowess. A character's archetype describes a set of tasks that fall within a character's core competency. It may also be tied into how a character expects to pry the title of daemon prince from the Ruinous Powers.

Stage 4: Explore the Passions

Every character has a reason for embracing Chaos and a particular style for spreading its influence. At this stage, the character becomes more than just a set of numbers and descriptions. Instead, he becomes a fully-fleshed product of the player's imagination with understandable motivations, emotions, and goals.

Stage 5: Spend Experience Points

Every character in **Black Crusade** begins play with 7,000 Experience Points (xp) to spend during creation. A portion of these points may be spent when selecting Race and Archetype. At this stage, players should spend any remaining xp to select additional skills, talents, and traits or improve Characteristics for their Heretics. These starting abilities allow players to diversify a character's expertise or to tightly focus the character's abilities for their first game session. Additional calculated attributes are also recorded at this time.

Alternative Play Styles and Starting Experience

Campaigns and gaming groups are remarkably true to the ever-changing nature of Chaos. While these character creation guidelines are the most generalised, they cannot fit every situation. If a Game Master wishes to run a campaign where the characters are all cultists within a single hive, then the rules might be modified to allow only human characters and decrease the starting xp to 500. Alternatively, a campaign might focus on Chaos Space Marines who have served the Dark Gods since the time of the Horus Heresy. In this case, only Chaos Space Marine characters would be permitted and the starting xp might be increased to 2,000 or more points. In this case, the Game Master would be encouraged to also increase the starting Corruption and Infamy for these characters.

Alternatively, some GMs may wish their characters to start with more Experience, to represent more dangerous veterans of Chaos. This generally means that Character Creation is a more involved process, but it can lead to a more "epic" play experience. The increase in starting Experience is up to the group, but in general it's recommended that the GM not go beyond an additional +3000 experience, lest the Heretics not have any room to grow.

For every +1000 starting Experience, each character should also increase their starting Infamy Characteristic by +3, and their starting Corruption Point total by +5. If this puts their Corruption Points above one of the Alignment or Mutation Thresholds, they should spend all starting Experience before checking Alignment and roll any Mutations last.

Stage 6: Corruption and Equipment

Black Crusade characters have made a conscious decision to embrace the ways of Chaos. This has left a taint upon their very soul, which is reflected by their Corruption. The actions that they have performed in support of their Dark Gods provide them with a reputation that is reflected by their Infamy attribute. Their level of Infamy determines the equipment with which they may begin play. Note that some Equipment is provided by the character's selections of Race and Archetype.

Stage 7: Embrace the Dark Gods

The four Chaos gods each offer their own distinct paths to their followers. At this stage, each player needs to decide if his character embraces the path of a single god or treads each path lightly, as one who remains unaligned. Though the character's Devotions may change with time, the Dark Gods are jealous and may take vengeance upon those who choose to leave their service.

Stage 8: Play Black Crusade

With all of this complete, players are now ready to play **Black Crusade**!

Stage 1: Choose a Race

"Not everyone receives the attention of the Dark Gods. Only those who are demonstrably exceptional are worthy of their notice."

– Dark Apostle Aurelius of the Word Bearers

Before doing anything else, the player must select a race for his character. The Imperium of Man extends throughout the galaxy and is populated by untold millions of humans. A number of these humans have chosen to follow the Dark Gods, forsaking the Imperium and embracing the ways of the Immaterium. An extremely small number of those loyal humans have undergone the extensive biological enhancements to transform them into Space Marines. Over the millennia, many of these Adeptus Astartes have turned to the path of the Ruinous Powers as Chaos Space Marines.

Every Game Master may choose to limit all characters within a campaign to a single race. For some campaigns, it may be more appropriate for all Heretics to either be humans or Chaos Space Marines. Before players make this selection, they should check with their Game Master to see if he wishes to restrict characters in this fashion or if he is open to including both races.

CHAOS SPACE MARINES

Ten thousand years ago, nine of the Primarchs and their attendant Space Marine Legions saw through the lies that the Emperor told as he undertook his Great Crusade. They realised that his disavowal of the psyker and the entities of the Immaterium were little more than the mewling of a frightened kitten. They disagreed with his unwillingness to pry too deeply into the lost secrets of mankind's ancient past. Most importantly, they viewed his abandonment of the Great Crusade and return to Terra—leaving Horus and his fellow Primarchs to prosecute the Crusade—as the actions of an uncaring father, abandoning his dutiful sons. Angered, hurt, and betrayed, they took up arms against their father, and tore the Imperium asunder with civil war.

Though the Emperor's vast armies were triumphant in the end, the Dark Gods rewarded those who followed Horus. They, the Traitor Legions, have been devoted followers of the Ruinous Powers ever since, constantly striving to bring the influence of the Immaterium to all those who might embrace its ways. Those who have met with success have continued to garner new blessings that have become integrated with their superhuman natures.



A Heretic could be one of those surviving Chaos Space Marines—the time dilation of the warp could dictate that far less than 10,000 years has passed for him. Alternatively, he could be a recent convert—a loyalist Space Marine who realised the truth cloaked by the lies of his Chapter and Imperium, and joined the forces of Chaos. In either case, extensive exposure to the warp and decades or centuries of endless battle may have erased much of his memory. A Chaos Space Marine might recall little of his origins, instead focusing only on the recent events and his personal path to glory, or he may still remember every grudge and grievance—now millennia old—from his former life.

The enhancements and equipment granted to Space Marines gives them tremendous power over mortal men. This power is addictive and a veritable aphrodisiac. Those who have tasted of it are drawn to ever greater power, which can make them even more susceptible to the siren song of Chaos.

The paths of a Chaos Space Marine can vary broadly. Some of these dark heroes may have remained loyal (at least in concept) to one of the nine ancient Legions, though they may now be part of a smaller fractured warband. Alternatively, they may have cast off their past allegiances and forsaken their former brethren, moving onwards to their own ends. In some instances, such a warband might also include human renegades fallen from the Imperium and allied with the Ruinous Powers. Some may have

Chaos Space Marine Starting Abilities

All Chaos Space Marine characters begin play with the following Skills, Talents, Traits, and Equipment.

Starting Skills: Athletics, Awareness, Common Lore (War), Dodge, Forbidden Lore (Adeptus Astartes, The Horus Heresy and the Long War), Linguistics (Low Gothic), Navigate (Surface), Operate (Surface), Parry.

Starting Talents: Ambidextrous, Bulging Biceps, Legion Weapon Training, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Sight), Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Resistance (Cold, Heat, Poisons), Unarmed Warrior.

Starting Traits: Amphibious, Unnatural Strength (+4), Unnatural Toughness (+4).

Starting Equipment: Legionnaire Power Armour, Legionnaire Bolter or Legionnaire Bolt Pistol, Legionnaire Combat Knife, four magazines for starting weapon.

attracted an army of human, xenos, or even daemonic followers. Others might travel the galaxy in isolation, working with others only reluctantly as a means to an end. Likewise, their goals can vary wildly, from the desire to avenge themselves on the Imperium and Emperor that betrayed them, to the thirst for power amongst their fellows, to the hunger for knowledge and arcane lore.

While Chaos Space Marines are physically mighty, utterly devoted servants of the dark powers, even they possess some limitations. A Chaos Space Marine is generally incapable of blending in with human society. Their enlarged physique and extensive modifications are distinctive amongst virtually every human population. Their dedication to the art of war and ceaseless training limits the time spent studying other subjects. Their deliberate isolation from mundane society suggests that their social talents are likely to have atrophied from decades or centuries of disuse. They may also be unable to relate to some of the basic conceptual challenges faced by those who live a mundane life within the Imperium—after all, a Chaos Space Marine seldom wants for food, shelter, or basic conveniences. These are not absolutes, but they are challenges that Chaos Space Marine characters must choose to overcome.

Chaos Space Marines in Black Crusade

Black Crusade takes place in and around the Screaming Vortex, a massive warp storm on the edges of Imperial Space near the Imperial-controlled Calixis Sector. Far from Traitor Legions of the Eye of Terror led by Abaddon the Despoiler, the Traitor Legionnaires found in **Black Crusade** are less likely to be part of large armies or live amongst the company of their constant fellows, and more likely to operate alone or in small warbands of no more than a dozen or so. Though there are large armies within the Vortex, they are constantly forming and splintering, or being ground to bits in constant warfare with their fellows. Some of these warbands may even include non-human followers. Scattered amongst the countless

Chaos Space Marine Implants

Like the Space Marines of the Imperium, Chaos Space Marines also have a series of special organs and modifications implanted into their bodies. This section briefly describes the in-game effects of each upon the Chaos Space Marine character. The Traits and Talents provided by these implants are listed in the Chaos Space Marine's starting Talents and Traits above.

Secondary Heart: This organ contributes to the Unnatural Strength and Toughness Traits.

Ossmodula: This implant contributes to the Unnatural Toughness Trait.

Biscopea: This implant contributes to the Unnatural Strength Trait.

Haemastamen: This organ contributes to the Unnatural Strength and Toughness Traits.

Larraman's Organ: The Chaos Space Marine only has a 5 percent chance of dying each round from Blood Loss, rather than the normal 10 percent.

Catalepsean Node: Chaos Space Marines suffer no penalties to Perception-based Tests (such as Awareness) when awake for long periods of time.

Preomnor: This implant contributes to the Resistance (Poisons) Trait.

Omophagea: By devouring a portion of an enemy, a Chaos Space Marine can gain access to certain information from the foe's memories. The information he can access is at the GM's discretion, keeping in mind what may have been known by the enemy in the first place.

Multi-lung: This organ provides the Amphibious Trait.

Occulobe: This implant grants the Heightened Senses (Sight) Talent.

Lyman's Ear: This implant grants the Heightened Senses (Hearing) Talent.

Sus-an Membrane: The Chaos Space Marine may voluntarily enter a form of suspended animation. To do so, the character must meditate for 1d5 Rounds. This organ automatically activates if the character is knocked unconscious by Critical Damage. While in suspended animation, the Chaos Space Marine's wounds will not deteriorate or heal. It requires chemical therapy, auto-suggestion techniques, and a successful Hard (-20) Medicae Test to revive a character from suspended animation.

Melanchromic Organ: This organ contributes to the Unnatural Toughness Trait.

Oolitic Kidney: This organ contributes to the Resistance (Poisons) Trait.

Neuroglottis: This implant contributes to the Resistance (Poisons) Trait.

Mucranoid: The organ contributes to the Resistance (Heat, Cold) Traits.

Betcher's Gland: The Chaos Space Marine may spit acid at his foes. This acts as a ranged weapon with the following profile: (Range: 3m; Damage: 1d5; Pen: 4; Toxic). If the character rolls three or more Degrees of Success on his Ballistic Skill Test, he may also blind the opponent for 1d5 Rounds.

Progenoids: Implanted in a regular human, these glands may change his body into that of a Space Marine, or they may overwhelm his physique and destroy him. The loyalist Adeptus Astartes place great stock in recovering the Progenoid glands from their fallen brethren to create new Space Marines. However, many Chaos Space Marines are less concerned with this. This gland has no in-game effect, though certain individuals may be interested in obtaining them for nefarious purposes (such as creating more Space Marines!).

Black Carapace: This implant gives the Chaos Space Marine exceptional control over his power armour. Although a Space Marine in power armour has the Size (Hulking) Trait, his enemies gain no bonus to hit him thanks to the Black Carapace.

worlds trapped in the Screaming Vortex, many Chaos Space Marines find the opportunity to put their formidable powers to use in furthering their own ambitions—perhaps even leading their own Black Crusade one day.

Chaos Space Marines still bear the superhuman strength and resilience—the gift imparted with the implantation of the geneseed that creates all Space Marines. Thus, Chaos Space Marines are more resistant to the mutating effects of Chaos and better able to survive the capricious attentions of the Warp. A Chaos Space Marine character in **Black Crusade** could even be a Traitor Legionnaire from one of the nine original Traitor Legions in the Horus Heresy, having survived 10,000 years in the warp. Over the millennia (which, due to the time dilation effects of the warp, may seem like a mere hundred years to him) he could have made his way to the Screaming Vortex. Alternatively, he could be a more recent traitor who fled his kin into the Vortex. He could even be from the Space Marine Chapter who makes their home in the Calixis Sector, the Storm Wardens, or any other Chapter of Note.

The core skills and talents possessed by each Chaos Space Marine are due to the implants and rigorous training that transformed him into a superhuman entity. The nature of Space Marine creation dictates that characters of this race began life as a male human, though gifts of the Chaos gods may have rendered that distinction meaningless. A Chaos Space Marine may have additional traits and talents associated with his superhuman existence beyond the ones listed here, including ones that were Characteristic of the Legion into which he was originally inducted. Of particular note are those acquired due to devotion to one or more of the Chaos gods. These additional abilities may be selected during Stage 5: Spend Experience Points.

Human Starting Abilities

All human characters begin play with the following Skills and Traits at no xp cost.

Starting Skills: Common Lore (Any Two), Linguistics (Low Gothic), Trade (Any One)

Starting Trait: The Quick and The Dead

The Quick and the Dead

To survive in the Vortex, particularly as a human, one must be quick, both in wits and action. Sometimes fast reflexes can compensate for ceramite armour. All Heretics with this Trait add a +2 bonus to Initiative Rolls.

DISCIPLES OF CHAOS

Throughout the worlds of the Imperium of Man, untold millions of humans live their wretched lives under the eternal vigilance of their deathless tyrant. For many, there is little to distinguish one day from another. Their quiet lives of hopeless drudgery under the taskmasters of the Administratum offer little in the way of goals. Many embrace the Ecclesiarchy's direction to worship their Emperor as a false god, under the pretext of a chance at salvation. Those mortals who embrace Chaos instead are sometimes referred to as Disciples of Chaos.



As a human character, the Heretic may be someone who has seen through the lies perpetrated by those who conspire with the Imperium of Man. He ignored the threat of punishment imposed by the totalitarian regime for the sake of refuting these untruths. Instead, he embraced the powers and knowledge found among the entities of the Warp, believing their offerings are a path to salvation from unjust tyranny and mindless drudgery. Alternatively, the Heretic may be persecuted or betrayed by the Imperium. Perhaps he was born a mutant or psyker, and thus subject to being hunted down, killed, or enslaved. Or perhaps he simply ran afoul of one of the labyrinthine Imperial laws and, rather than submit to unjust punishment, fought back or fled, vowing revenge.

The character's initial contact with Chaos, and his reasons for heeding it, can vary substantially. Some characters are drawn to power for its own sake. Perhaps he was a military commander, a planetary governor, or an heir to a vast mercantile fortune. Though successful by any Imperial measure, his holdings were not enough to grant complacency. Whispers of forbidden knowledge offered simple solutions to problems. These required sacrifices, but they were of no consequence—at least initially. Now he plays the part of a hidden instrument within the Imperial order, spreading Chaos's influence amongst its highest offices or working to bring the crumbling edifice of the Imperium down through accidents and bookkeeping errors.

Maybe the character sought vengeance. It might be that the Imperium had unjustly punished a relative, sent a close friend to the Black Ships, or accidentally inflicted decades of starvation upon an entire culture. He heard about the forbidden ways and gained access to their secrets. Ignoring Imperial directives, he chose to embrace his chance at revenge and may even have earned it. Since then, he has been obligated to spread the word of his hidden masters, recruiting additional servants to the cause.

Alternatively, perhaps the character was an academic, an Inquisitor, or a member of the Ecclesiarchy who sought out information about the ways of Chaos with the goal of better understanding his foe. It might be that the information seemed harmless initially, but sometimes knowledge can corrupt. With the very best of intentions,

he might have successfully used that information to defeat the Imperium's greatest foes. However, the scars of such battles might have lingered and the dark hunger for the power eventually became unbearable.

Clearly, the motivations and methods of human characters that serve the Dark Gods can vary tremendously. While they are unlikely to ever achieve the raw physical abilities of a Chaos Space Marine, they begin with far more opportunities to choose their paths. These options can be leveraged into a character that can spread the word of the Ruinous Powers in ways that raw physical force could never hope to achieve.

Humans in Black Crusade

The human Disciples of Chaos in **Black Crusade** are likely to have fallen more recently than a Traitor Legionnaire. The ravages and corruption of the warp are seldom kind to a human body and psyche; and humans are simply less durable with regard to the Immaterium and its effects than Chaos Space Marines. Therefore it is unlikely that human Disciples of Chaos originate from mankind's distant past in the Horus Heresy or have travelled from the far ends of the Imperium to reach the Screaming Vortex.

Most of the human characters in **Black Crusade** come from one of the regions near the Screaming Vortex. Many are former inhabitants of the Calixis Sector, Imperial citizens or soldiers who, for whatever reason, fell from the Emperor's service. Hunted and hounded by the corpse-god's agents, they fled. Most of those who flee the Imperium are captured or slain, but a lucky few occasionally make it to sanctuary within the Screaming Vortex.

Others may have originated in the Koronus Expanse. On forgotten worlds far from the light of the Astronomicon, feral tribes of heathen savages have lived for millennia. They have no knowledge of the Imperium or the God-Emperor, but over the course of their primitive existence have turned to worship older, darker gods. Such worlds may not even be so primitive, but have entire civilisations cut off by lost warp-routes or warp storms. Perhaps a Rogue Trader discovered this world and enslaved these savages, taking them back on his ship as labour. Perhaps pirate reavers arrived, seeking slaves, plunder, and new recruits. Either way, such individuals found their way off-world, and eventually into the Screaming Vortex.

Other humans were born in the Jericho Reach. While they may have begun life as Imperial servants, it is just as likely they were born on one of the Chaos-held worlds in and around the Hadex Anomaly. In that case, though they may have snuck aboard an Imperial vessel passing through the Well of Night and returning to the Calixis Sector, it's more likely they travelled deep into the Hadex Anomaly and journeyed through the weaving paths of warp-space to reach the Screaming Vortex. In any case, such an individual is likely to be hardened and embittered to the warp and the Chaos gods, as they are the only life he knows.

Finally, there are those humans born within the bounds of the Screaming Vortex itself. The Screaming Vortex is covered in far more detail on page 323, but suffice to say, there are multitudes of worlds on which live savage tribes, glowering forges, and glittering sorcerous cities. Individuals from such places may be less interested in vengeance against a distant and largely unknown Imperium, but very interested in wresting away the wealth clasped in its weakening claws.



Stage 2: Generate Characteristics

"A man can only be measured by his deeds. Useless statistics cannot hope to reveal his true spirit."

– Warlord Mikhail Hassid

Characteristics represent a Heretic's raw ability, on a scale of 0 to 100, in a variety of physical and mental areas. These values primarily dicta the Heretic's chance of success under stressful situations, but do offer other hints about the character's abilities. Remember that when performing a Test, players need to roll under their Heretic's Characteristic on percentile dice. The higher the relevant Characteristic, the more likely the character is to succeed at a Test rather than facing the consequences of failure. More information on Characteristics can be found on page 34.

Weapon Skill (WS)

Weapon Skill provides a measurement of a character's capabilities in melee combat, whether armed with fist, claw, tooth, or chain axe.

Ballistic Skill (BS)

Ballistic Skill reflects the character's accuracy with ranged weapons, including bolters, lasguns, grenades, and even bows and arrows.

Strength (S)

Strength measures a character's ability to lift, carry, and generally apply raw physical force.

Toughness (T)

Toughness defines how easily the character can shrug off injury as well as how easily he can resist toxins, poisonous environments, disease, and other physical ailments.

Agility (Ag)

Agility measures a character's quickness, reflexes, and poise.

Intelligence (Int)
Intelligence is a measurement of a character's acumen, reason, and knowledge.

Perception (Per)
Perception describes how well a character perceives his surroundings. It reflects the acuteness of senses.

Willpower (WP)
Willpower reflects a character's ability to withstand the horrors of the warp, the terrors of battle, and the dreadful inhumanities that he might feel bound to inflict upon his opponents.

Fellowship (Fel)
Fellowship is a character's ability to interact with other creatures, to beguile, charm, or persuade them.

Infamy (Inf)
Infamy is a measure of a character's glory and reputation in the Realms of Chaos, with tangible effects on a character's abilities.

Characteristic Bonuses
Each Characteristic has a corresponding bonus. A Characteristic Bonus equals the tens digit of the Characteristic score. For example, a character with 41 Strength has a Strength Bonus of four. Generally, Characteristic Bonuses are used to determine the measure of success or failure in situations or tests that have variable results.

GENERATING CHARACTERISTICS
Characteristics are generated one at a time. For each, roll 2d10 and add the resulting numbers together. Then add a base number to the result to generate the final Characteristic.

The base number added to each result depends on whether the character is a Human or a Chaos Space Marine. Human characters add 25 to each result, while Chaos Space Marines add 30. This represents the Chaos Space Marine's higher innate qualities due to his genetic development. (However, Chaos Space Marine Characters receive less experience to spend at character creation, so don't worry, things balance out in the end!)

Allocating Points
An alternative method for generating Characteristic scores is to give each player a number of Characteristic points that he may assign as he wishes. In this case, a Heretic begins with a score of 30 in each Characteristic if he is a Chaos Space Marine and 25 in each Characteristic if he is a human. A player may allocate a total of 100 additional points to his character's Characteristics, adding no more than 20 to any one Characteristic. This method generally creates characters with slightly higher than average scores.

When using this method, characters must still generate their Infamy characteristic by rolling.

Follow this procedure once for each of the Characteristics until results are compiled for all nine and then fill them in on the character sheet. When recording each Characteristic on the character sheet, remember to write the first digit of the number in the circle. Writing those digits in the circles allows anyone to see the Characteristic Bonus values are at a glance. Note that one or more Characteristics might be further modified by choices that the player chooses to make during the later stages of character creation.

Because these characters have been blessed by the Dark Gods, each player may re-roll any one result of their choosing. Should a player choose to do this, he must keep the new result, even if it is worse than the old one.

The only exception to this is Infamy. Instead of rolling 2d10 and adding 30, characters generate Infamy by rolling 1d5 and adding 19. This can be the Characteristic players choose to reroll. This is covered in more detail on page 304.

Example
Jason is creating a new **Black Crusade** *character, a Chaos Space Marine, so he rolls 2d10 for his Weapon Skill Characteristic and gets 11, then he adds 30 for a final Weapons Skill of 41. He repeats this process for the rest of his Characteristics:*

Characteristic	2d10 Roll	Total	Characteristic Bonus
Weapon Skill	11 (+30)	41	4
Ballistic Skill	8 (+30)	38	3
Strength	16 (+30)	46	4
Toughness	10 (+30)	40	4
Agility	9 (+30)	39	3
Intelligence	5 (+30)	35	3
Perception	12 (+30)	42	4
Willpower	13 (+30)	43	4
Fellowship	7 (+30)	37	3
Infamy	4 (+19)	23	2

My Pupil,

I wish to grant you advice that I wish I had been giving so many years ago. Choose your servants, not by the skills they possess, but their potential to be trained.

I have seen a low mud gatherer bring great honour to the Blood God. Gathering mud in the clay pits did not prepare him to swing and axe. He had only a stout frame and a powerful build. I molded him as he molded the earth.

There on the rubble of the Emerald Temple he stood, a short time later, covered in the blood of my enemies, and bellowing for more. That is how you must choose your servants, young Adalaih.

You now have until the Bells of Santbon chime twice. I will come for you then, and I hope that you have gathered about you servants that will serve your survival. May the Dark Gods bless you in this test. Prove yourself my pupil.



Stage 3: Select an Archetype

Fictitious characters can generally be categorised into specific roles that they play within a story. These roles, like the young warrior, the elder sage, or the kind-hearted rogue, are sometimes referred to as Archetypes. Characters in **Black Crusade** are often wildly different due to the free-form character advancement system. However, Archetypes are a broad grouping of character types that help give some definition to a character concept.

The next stage in character creation is to select the sort of Archetype that a character could play during adventures in the **Black Crusade** setting. Many players may already have appropriate concepts in mind, in which case selecting their character's Archetype should be a straightforward process. Alternatively, it might be that a character's starting Characteristics suggest a strong proclivity for a certain path.

This section presents eight common Archetypes for heroes of Chaos. Four of these are focused on Chaos Space Marine characters and four are intended for human characters. At this stage, players should review their options, then select one of the racially appropriate paths. Keep in mind that this choice is very likely to have a strong influence on the types of situations that spotlight the character during game play. **Each character must select one and only one Archetype.**

Each Archetype also has a Special Ability, unique to that Archetype. By selecting the Archetype, characters gain access to that Special Ability as well, and may use it as long as the character exists.

ARCHETYPE LIST

The Champion (Chaos Space Marine): A warrior and commander, leader of soldiers by either fear or devotion.

The Chosen (Chaos Space Marine): A consumate soldier and hard bitten veteran.

The Forsaken (Chaos Space Marine): An outcast from his former allegiance, a lone wanderer who joins other warbands out of neccessity.

The Sorcerer (Chaos Space Marine): A Chaos Space Marine who has mastered the art of the psyker.

The Apostate (Human): An infiltrator and silver-tongued serpent, a powerful leader of the masses.

The Renegade (Human): A warrior who survives on skill of arms rather than brute force.

The Heretek (Human): One initiated into the mysteries of technology, a rebel from the cult of the Adeptus Mechanicus.

The Psyker (Human): An unsanctioned and chaos-turned psyker, extremely powerful and infused by the warp.

Champion

"Join me, brothers, and we will make the minions of the undying Emperor pay for the lies and betrayal they have dealt us!"

– Skyrar, Master of the *Thirst for Vengeance*

The Space Marines are superhuman in almost every way, and this holds true for their treasonous brethren as well. Amongst the Traitor Legions, however, there are those who stand apart. These Traitor Legionnaires show the traits of true leadership, honed keen by the constant struggle to maintain control over warbands of fallen Adeptus Astartes. Though they are known by many names, in **Black Crusade** these individuals are known as Champions.

Much of the formal structure and military organisation of the Traitor Legions has disappeared over the long millennia. Instead of squads following appointed sergeants, bands of Chaos Space Marines tend to form around the strongest, boldest, and most dangerous of their fellows. These Aspiring Champions are leaders in the making, adorning their amour with trophies from the slain and wielding ancient and potent weapons that may date back from the Heresy itself. They burn with ambition, aspiring to become more powerful champions amongst their fellows. However, only the most brutal and skilled can survive to become Chaos Lords.



The most powerful and ruthless Aspiring Champions strive to win a coveted suit of Tactical Dreadnought armour. Such armour makes them virtually immune to all but the most powerful weapons and allows them to easily wield weapons even a Traitor Legionnaire in power armour could not carry. However, such suits are extremely rare and the most common way for an Aspiring Champion to win one is to challenge and slay an existing Terminator in combat. Amongst a band of Traitor Terminators, one usually emerges as the leader. This Terminator Champion is typically an egotistical, brutish man, and someone whom the other Terminators aspire to become.

The most powerful Champions are the Chaos Lords—men with vision and strength to bind both the wills of their brethren and the forces of Chaos to their will. They are strong, charismatic leaders with indomitable will and keen martial prowess, and are often found leading massive warbands, pirate fleets, worlds, or even massive Black Crusades against the Imperium.

These are some, though not all, of the Champions one may encounter amongst the ranks of the Traitor Legions.

Skills, Talents & Gear

Champions must be Chaos Space Marines.
All Champions begin play with the following:
Starting Skills: Command, Scholastic Lore (any one), Charm *or* Deceive, Intimidate *or* Scrutiny
Starting Talents: Iron Discipline, Air of Authority *or* Disturbing Voice, Lesser Minion of Chaos *or* Sure Strike
Starting Gear: Legionnaire Power Sword
Wounds: 15+1d5

Special Ability: Inspiring Presence

The Aspiring Champions are natural leaders, and often shape warbands in their own image whether deliberately or not. When an ally within sight of the Aspiring Champion uses an Infamy Point, as a Free Action the Aspiring Champion may choose to allow the ally to use his Infamy Point as if he possessed the Aspiring Champion's Corruption Point level and Alignment.

Playing a Black Crusade Champion

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Chaos Space Marine Champion. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If a player comes up with their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

Many Champions swear their lives and deaths to Chaos, bargaining their own being in exchange for power and

patronage. The rewards are great—granted the knowledge and strength of the Ruinous Powers, a Champion can lead armies, conquer worlds, and even achieve immortality. However, even as he furthers his own ambition, the Gods who favour the champion also influence him, so that his own victories also further the dominance of his patrons.

Leadership styles differ, even among those dedicated to Chaos. The character may command respect simply by his heroic actions in the name of the Dark Gods and resolute faith in his followers to act upon their own beliefs. It could be that his example forces them to strive ever harder to fulfil his high expectations of them. Alternatively, he might depend upon physical force and intimidation to insure his loyalty. Even among a warband of Chaos Space Marines, the Champion might be the scariest entity on the battlefield. He might even use the promise of rich rewards—either physical or spiritual—to motivate those who follow him. Regardless of his methods, though, the Champion is usually a master of employing them to command respect, obedience, and dedication.

Of course, raw leadership is useless without the cunning and tactical acumen to use it properly. A Champion must be as capable of discerning his foes' weaknesses as he is of identifying his own advantages. When outnumbered, as is so often the case when facing the monolithic forces of the Imperium, he must be capable of identifying and creating situational advantages to carry the day. The universe of the 41st Millennium is harsh and unforgiving, and the ranks of those who follow the Ruinous Powers even more so. A Champion who fails to live up to their expectations—and perhaps even the expectations of the capricious Ruinous Powers themselves—may soon find himself dead or transformed into a Chaos Spawn.

A Champion may have chosen to embrace the ways of the Immaterium centuries ago—due to the vagaries of the warp, this might have been thousands of years as measured in the physical world. He might even be a survivor of the Horus Heresy. Even if he is a more recent convert, the Heretic has served the Dark Gods faithfully, first as a standard trooper within a Chaos Space Marine warband, and then later as a leader of his squad.

Over his long decades of service, he likely fulfilled a range of different responsibilities. He has become familiar with a broad array of military techniques and a variety of gear. While he certainly has strong preferences when it comes to how to pursue a battle or campaign, he has the skills and knowledge necessary to use the most appropriate approach for any given situation. His approach may be focused based upon his particular devotions, but he has developed the savvy necessary to choose the technique that is most likely to succeed, even if it is at odds with his preferences.

Most Champions are well aware of the rewards for success and consequences for failure offered by the Chaos gods. They yearn for the day that they might ascend to the mighty title of daemon prince, and are all too willing to sacrifice anyone or anything that might prevent or even delay them from attaining that goal.

Champions in the Vortex

The Screaming Vortex is host to numerous warbands of Chaos Space Marines, which in turn have many Champions amongst their ranks. However, the Traitor Legionnaires in the Screaming Vortex are scattered and factional, fighting amongst each other for supremacy and dominance. Also, the warbands in the Screaming Vortex are often made up of a motley mix of humans and Chaos Space Marines, and thus a Chaos Space Marine Champion may find himself a part of a warband comprised entirely or mostly of humans with only a few fellow Chaos Space Marines at his side.

Over the last ten millennia, members of all nine of the original Traitor Legions have found their way into the Screaming Vortex, along with many renegade Chaos Space Marines from later chapters. The many years have done much to blur their histories, though some may still retain recognisable traits of their former Legion or Chapter.

The following are some examples of Chaos Space Marine Champions found within the Screaming Vortex.

Dark Apostle of the Word Bearers: Members of the Word Bearers Legion are known for their devotion to Chaos and the Ruinous Powers as a religion. It is said their Primarch, Lorgar, was one of the first to embrace devotion to Chaos, and that his influence led to the fall of Horus. Their Dark Apostles are twisted reflections of Space Marine Chaplains and are able to command obedience and faith with the power of their words. It is believed several such individuals reside within the Screaming Vortex.

Member of the Alpha Legion: Members of the Alpha Legion are known for utilizing complex strategies of infiltration and sabotage to achieve their goals and are well-suited to tactical planning. They also show a willingness to work alongside non-Space Marines to achieve their goals. An Alpha Legion Champion in the Screaming Vortex is uniquely suited to lead a mixed warband of human renegades and Traitor Legionnaires, and indeed some have stepped forward to fill that role.

Fallen From Grace: There are those Champions in the Screaming Vortex who have fled there, not out of choice, but out of necessity. Some used to be part of larger warbands. However, when they attempted to rise to leadership and challenge those in command, they failed. Facing death, they fled to the Vortex, where they can amass power anew, and one day have their vengeance.

Warlord of the Gloaming Worlds: Then there are those Champions who have occupied the Vortex for countless Millennia, riding the cyclical wave of glory and failure. At times they may have led other warbands, or ruled entire worlds in the Vortex before losing that power to the tides of Fate and the warp. Now they join a new warband to once again ascend within the Vortex.

Chosen

"In this galaxy, there is only war!"

– Adrastus, Bodyguard of Captain Fenrix the Fated

Among the damned members of the Chaos Space Marine Legions, some members have a seemingly innate ability to thrive through even the most hostile of conditions. These most experienced and dedicated Chaos Space Marines become the Chosen, and other Chaos Space Marines see them as being particularly favoured by the Ruinous Powers. Chosen are even more hard-bitten, callous, and deadly than other Chaos Space Marines and think nothing of sacrificing the lives of their comrades to increase their own standing with the gods.

Squads of Chosen Chaos Space Marines have decades, often centuries, of combat experience and have learnt how to best survive the battlefields of the 41st Millennium. These highly experienced and ferocious warriors are typically in the vanguard of any attack, fighting from the front where they can earn the most glory and take the greatest spoils. Sometimes the Chosen will use their battle skills to infiltrate enemy lines and set up ambushes, or outflank an enemy army to launch surprise attacks on the opposition's strongpoints.



Like Champions, there are many Chaos Space Marines who may be called Chosen; dedicated, deadly soldiers. Chosen often band together with other such veterans and may be defined as much by the wargear they wield and the tactics they prefer as their dedication to a particular Ruinous Power. Both weapons and tactics can be extremely varied, from close combat weapons such as chainswords and lightning claws, to Reaper Autocannons and lascannons, and the ever-redoubtable bolter.

Chosen come in many forms, from the raging World Eaters Berserkers to the jaded Noise Marines of the Emperor's Children, and likewise their personalities vary wildly. Some leap into battle with unrestrained savagery, trusting in their berserker rage to overwhelm their enemies, while others may rely on a methodical, stoic approach or even simple, practical sorceries and dark charms to win the day. However, many Chosen are professional and pragmatic. They use all tools at their disposal to their fullest extent to ensure victory, making them consummate and terrifying warriors.

Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

Chosen must be Chaos Space Marines.
Starting Skills: Intimidate, Stealth, Dodge (+10) *or* Parry (+10)
Starting Talents: Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw *or* Rapid Reload, Disarm *or* Double Team, Sure Strike *or* Deadeye Shot
Starting Gear: Legion Bolt Pistol, Legion Chainsword, 2 clips for Legion Bolt Pistol
Wounds: 16+1d5

Special Ability: Cold Killer

Chosen are masters of conflict and combat, and few are better at crippling or killing their opponent. When a Chosen inflicts Zealous Hatred on a target, he may choose to reroll the Crit Result. The second result stands.

Playing a Black Crusade Chosen

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Chaos Space Marine Chosen. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If players come up with their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

Many Chosen are far more focused on the art of war than they are upon spreading the influence of Chaos. Disdaining lofty goals or devoted worship, these Chosen dedicate themselves to battle instead, becoming avatars of militant destruction. They live for fighting and embrace its countless forms. When not actively engaged in war, they train for it, and even when unable to train, their minds run ever

ahead to the next conflict. Though they may acknowledge the Dark Gods with rites and sacrifices, this is done in a pragmatic and often perfunctory manner. These Heretics offer tribute to the Gods so that the Gods will help them engage in their speciality and their greatest passion—war in all its countless forms.

Their constant study and practice has invariably borne fruit. Chosen are virtually peerless warriors. While they may have a chosen speciality—melee combat, heavy weapons, or some other combat doctrine—they are generally familiar with a broad array of different techniques. Chosen constantly analyse the techniques used by their opponents and their allies. Between battles they often spend time either incorporating new techniques into their arsenal or identifying ways to counter tactics that they have seen others use. This endless dedication and training sometimes grants them the capability to identify an opponent's background based upon their fighting style and prepared to counter their foe's moves long before they are undertaken.

Chosen embrace the challenges of battle with their whole being. They accept risks without question and, for many, battle is an end in itself. Glory, power, and material possessions are trivial concerns to these warriors, simply benefits that come from victory and allow them to continue waging war. The opportunity to vanquish a foe and revel in their triumph is the reward for which they strive. While they are grateful for the blessings of their Dark Gods and any tools of battle they might wrench from the stilled hands of their foes, the time after battle is not one for celebration. Rather, it is a time for recovery so that they might ensure victory over their next opponent.

The life of a Chaos Space Marine is a hard one, but the life of a Chosen may be even more challenging. The constant training and overwhelming thirst for battle can begin to stress even their superhuman physiques. Consequently, their lives are often snuffed out early, as they continue to accept ever more dangerous assignments. However, those who survive become ever more dangerous.

These Heretics are unusual in that they seldom fear the transformation to Chaos Spawn to the same extent as most other servants of the Dark Gods. Though they are hardly anxious to undergo such a conversion, they know that even those wretched creatures are used in battle by the Ruinous Powers for all eternity. While they would certainly prefer the powers and privileges granted to a daemon prince, Chosen typically are less interested in the responsibilities involved in leadership or rule.

As long as Chosen are granted opportunities for battle, these characters embrace those chances with their whole being. Their actions may earn them glory and the blessings of their Dark Gods, but such praises are not their goal. This is not due to any sense of false modesty. Rather, to these stalwarts, the only glory that can be savoured is that earned on the battlefield. The only praise worth remembering is the cry of agony wrenched from the throat of a defeated foe. Unless the recognition they receive enables them to engage in further battle or defeat more and ever more capable opponents, then that recognition holds no meaning to them. These characters live for the rush of conflict. All other matters are to be dealt with by those the Chosen view as lesser beings. They demand only their armaments and a foe upon which to test them.

Chosen in the Vortex

A Chosen in **Black Crusade** may have come from any of the original nine Traitor Legions or may be a more recent renegade. He may even still share an affiliation with his original Legion. However, in the Screaming Vortex, no Legion holds sway and no Chaos Lord currently dominates the warp storm. Consequentially, many Chosen who find themselves in the Vortex attach themselves to pirate wolfpacks or Chaos warbands in hope of conflict. Some attempt to journey to the Jericho Reach to join the ongoing war there. However, with the power vacuum amongst the Vortex, more are staying in anticipation of bloody wars fought amongst would-be leaders.

Reapers of the Extinction Angels: These cold killers are the most veteran warriors of the Extinction Angels warband. They have focused their studies to master the arts of melee combat, particularly working in conjunction against hardened targets. To overcome such opposition, a band of these proven souls attempts to surround and overpower their foes, using cooperation, misdirection, and crushing blows with power weapons. In cases where opponents are more numerous, the Reapers continue their pack-like approach, often herding foes to one another through cover during the melee.

Novae Armae: These brazen Chaos Space Marines tread a path of domination through constant innovation. Never content with their existing tactics, skills, or armaments, they vigilantly quest to discover new weapons and techniques. In many instances, these Chosen journey to uncover rumours of xenos or daemonic armaments they might employ in combat. Other times, they pledge their loyalty to a warband in exchange for knowledge of a fighting style or strategy. Many seek cybernetic or warp-spawned mutations. While they care little of the technology or rituals responsible for this gear, they often work closely with Hereteks or Sorcerers so that they may quickly learn how to use the artefacts they uncover.

Mercenaries: Loyalty in the Screaming Vortex is reserved for those who can provide for their own. Some small bands of Chosen make a business of selling their loyalty in exchange for the resources needed to continue in their constant battles and training. These heartless warriors fight mercilessly so that they can live to fight endlessly. They care little for any cause. Rather, they are only concerned that they are kept well supplied with the tools of warfare.

Forsaken

"The gods permit me to tread my own path. Who are you to question them?"

– Malich, founder and sole member of the Burning Eye Legion

After the Horus Heresy, as the leaderless armies of the now-dead Horus retreated from the Imperium into the Eye of Terror and the far corners of the galaxy, the nine Traitor Legions who sided with the Warmaster eventually and inevitably fractured and split. The once-cohesive Legions disintegrated into a myriad of warbands, pirate crews, and armies led by a host of charismatic leaders and champions of Chaos. Though some of the former Legions would periodically re-unite under the banner of a particularly powerful champion of the Dark Gods, such as Abaddon the Despoiler, the days of them fighting as a unified whole were gone.

Though many Chaos Space Marines tend to remain with warbands or hosts of their fellows, there are some who break with the remnants of the Legions entirely, forging their own way independently of their erstwhile comrades. Whether they deliberately forsake their former loyalties, be expelled by their fellows for some transgression, or have some secret reason for their exile depends on the individual in question. However, whatever the reason, these Chaos Space Marines now walk alone in the midst of a hostile universe, relying on their own cunning, resourcefulness, and skill at arms to survive.

Occasionally, one of these forsaken Traitor Legionnaires breaks his solitary existence and joins a warband for a time. Often, he has his own, personal reasons for doing so, and his joining may be temporary. Likewise, his new comrades may distrust an individual whose true loyalties are unknown or non-existent. However, few can deny the benefits of having such a resourceful warrior at their side.

Playing a Black Crusade Forsaken

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Forsaken in **Black Crusade**. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If a player comes up with their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

The Forsaken has parted ways with other Chaos Space Marines and seeks to complete his own goals. Generally, these Heretics are loners, distrustful of others, and reliant only on themselves. They never lack the confidence necessary to complete a task, even if they lack the manpower. To compensate, a Forsaken must be clever and resourceful, able to thoroughly research a target and ensure his precise actions succeed. This isn't to say Forsaken refuse to join with other groups—in fact, they are often working in warbands of Heretics, and are among the Chaos Space Marines most likely to be found working within non-Chaos Space Marine warbands and organisations. Their independent attitudes often make them more willing to admit that there are certain tasks human Heretics can accomplish that the Forsaken cannot. Though he is always mindful of his own goals and continuously works towards them, these attitudes may make him more likely to be a part of human warbands.

Forsaken are sometimes drawn to a particular facet of Chaos and driven to spread its influence. While this might be one of the



Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

Forsaken must be Chaos Space Marines.
Starting Skills: Acrobatics, Survival, Commerce *or* Security, Common Lore (any one) *or* Survival +10
Starting Talents: Hatred (Pick One), Jaded, Light Sleeper *or* Blind Fighting, Cold Hearted *or* Sound Constitution
Starting Gear: Legion Chainsword, Four Legion Frag Grenades, Legion Shotgun with 2 clips.
Wounds: 15+1d5

Special Ability: Resourceful

Forsaken are well acquainted with the challenges of operating alone, chief among them the need for supplies. The Forsaken gains a +10 to his Infamy Test when obtaining an item or items with an Availability of Rare or lower.

Chaos gods, it could also be a rogue daemon or even a conceptual issue. While they are certainly capable of unleashing their martial abilities, these abilities may well be matched by a surprising knowledge, be it philosophical, political, ancient, heretical, or even sorcerous. A Forsaken might be as concerned with the message that a battle carries to those who hear of it as he is with his success on the battlefield. This thirst for knowledge may even be connected to why the Forsaken has parted ways with other Chaos Space Marines.

Alternatively a Forsaken's goals may be utterly self-centred. He may desire to become a powerful warlord, or simply delight in expanding his reputation as a lone and incredibly deadly warrior. He may even simply seek the thrill of new challenges and new locales to explore and pillage, or even just wish to pillage and loot his way into wealth.

Forsaken are often found within the Imperium, working to crumble the rotting edifice from within. They may inspire cults, foment unrest, or carry out acts of sabotage and destruction. Yet, though they may form cults or subversive organisations, these characters are most often too individualistic to become capable leaders and are happy to let others rise to direct the cults they've formed. Just as they continuously rebel against authority, they are often incapable of respecting those who obey it. The Forsaken often have no desire to rule or lead, they leave that to their Legionnaire brethren. However, they often have a desire to destroy, to unmake, or to gain revenge.

A Forsaken may have chosen to separate from his brethren, or it might be due to outside influence. In some instances, his brothers in arms may have betrayed him, or they may have been slaughtered. He might even have been a loyalist Space Marine, who turned to the ways of Chaos and fled his chapter. Now, he operates alone or with a carefully selected cadre of like-minded individuals. These others might be humans who share similar beliefs and are willing to discuss them in such a way that the Forsaken is capable of viewing them as near peers.

If the Forsaken was betrayed or a sole survivor of a warband, then he is likely to be engaged in a quest for vengeance. The target of his fury could be an Imperial organisation, but it might also be a xenos or even another Chaos-aligned warband, and his vengeance may involve their crippling, humiliation, or utter destruction.

Forsaken holding this outlook rarely plan for an existence after the success of their mission. Most readily accept their impending martyrdom as an acceptable price to pay for their revenge. At the same time, they go to great lengths to see that they live long enough to accomplish their goals. This is especially true for those instances where the Forsaken's comrades in arms were slain. If he still holds a loyalty to his deceased brethren, the notion that he is acting in their name may be a tremendous motivation.

Forsaken are seldom preoccupied with the notion of becoming a daemon prince. Though not against the idea of Apotheosis, their goals are more focused upon their beliefs and their hungers. Conversely, they fear the doom of spawndom beyond all else, particularly if their transformation were to happen prior to completing the tasks to which they have devoted their lives. The very notion of submitting to another's will, no matter the power behind that will, is almost always anathema to the Forsaken.

Forsaken in the Vortex

Forsaken, more than any other Chaos Space Marine Archetype in **Black Crusade**, are individualists and loners. Consequentially, it may matter little what their origins are, as they are now consumed with their own goals and desires. However, it is also possible that a Forsaken is still defined by his former allegiance, even if he has renounced his prior ties long ago.

The following are some examples of Chaos Space Marine Forsaken found within the Screaming Vortex.

Chaos Bikers of the Outer Wastes: The freedom and mobility of a Legion war bike, with its powerful engines and impressive operating range, has an appeal to many Forsaken. Many of the worlds in the Screaming Vortex see lone Chaos Space Marine bikers roaming their most desolate wastelands. These solitary warriors roam these wastes exploring, raiding for supplies, and searching for new foes to challenge their skills. Eventually, they might join a warband in order to travel to a new world with new vistas and fresh foes to vanquish. In turn, many powerful warband leaders seek out these bikers. The ability to range far ahead of the main force on their war bikes, combined with their ingrained independence, makes them invaluable scouts and raiders.

Raptors of the Ragged Helix: Raptor is a name given to Chaos Space Marine assault troops, vicious hunters who can strike anywhere, falling on their foes like a shrieking gale via their powerful back-mounted jump packs. Such individuals often modify their armour to give themselves a more terrifying appearance, such as the stylised appearance of a bird of prey, and often add amplifiers and voxcasters to emit piercing wails and screams. Raptors see themselves as elite troops, while other Chaos Space Marines often view them as self-indulgent egotists. Neither is entirely wrong, and it is not unlikely for one "self-indulgent egotist's" pride to result in him becoming an outcast. Amongst the Screaming Vortex, the Raptors who haunt the asteroid belts of the Ragged Helix are legend. Here are countless miniature worlds reachable with a single thrust from a jump pack. The Raptors range from world to world, striking anywhere they desire within the Helix.

Legion Exile: Many forsaken Chaos Space Marines have left their fellows because they ran afoul of their fellows or superiors in some way and found themselves forced to flee the warband or army for some haven. The Screaming Vortex is such a place, as it offers a haven away from the remnants of the Traitor Legions that is nonetheless situated at the intersection of several vital regions of space. Here they are able to pursue their plans and launch their raids, while still having a place to fall back and regroup.

Sorcerer

"Those who ignore the blessings of the gods of the warp are doomed to suffer at their hands."

– Musim, Advisor to Arn-Ord the Merciless

A Space Marine Librarian who pledges his soul to Chaos becomes a Sorcerer and is gifted by his new gods. Some think of these gifts as magical, for those who receive them come to think of themselves as having the energy of the universe at their command. During the Heresy, Librarians and other Legions dedicated themselves to Chaos and received new psychic powers. The only exception were the Librarians of the World Eaters, who were hunted down and slain by their brethren as a bloody sacrifice to Khorne, for the Chaos God of anger hates all practitioners of sorcery.

Not only during the Horus Heresy have Librarians been tempted to draw upon sorcery. For those who already tread a fine line between righteous power and damnation, the temptation to wield the energy of Chaos for selfish means can be overwhelming. Although Space Marine Librarians are tested for the mental fortitude to withstand daemonic possession and lures of the Dark Gods, and are constantly monitored by the Chapter, there are those who still succumb.

The line between psychic power and raw sorcery is blurred, and every time a Librarian uses his powers he is risking corruption. He may overreach his abilities, unwittingly drawing on more power than he can control, and by these means attract the attention of the Chaos Gods. From that moment, he must endure cold whispers in his dreams, visions of immortality and promises of untold power.

There are those who cannot withstand this incessant temptation, and fall to Chaos. These characters are among the most iconic archeytpes of Chaos for they have embraced the Ruinous Powers in open defiance of the dictates of the Imperium. Sorcerers of Chaos are vilified and feared, one of the most hated foes of the Imperial Inquisition, who consider them the most severe of blights upon the galaxy.

Playing a Black Crusade Sorcerer

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Sorcerer of Chaos. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If players come up with their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

The promise of virtually limitless power often wakes a dark thirst for ever-greater power in the Sorcerer's soul. Now, the Heretic enthusiastically makes virtually any sacrifice for the satisfaction of feeding this newfound addiction. Knowledge, artefacts, sorcerous spells—all may be vehicles to feed his desire. Such a character has no hope, or

Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

Sorcerers of Chaos must be Chaos Space Marines.
Starting Skills: Psyniscience, Scholastic Lore (Occult), Deception *or* Scrutiny, Forbidden Lore (Daemons) *or* Forbidden Lore (Psykers)
Starting Talents: Psy Rating (x2), Up to 500 xp worth of Psychic Powers chosen from the Unaligned, Divination, Telepathy, or Telekinesis Disciplines (see Chapter VI: The Powers of the Warp), Meditation *or* Mimic
Starting Traits: Psyker
Starting Gear: Legion Bolt Pistol, Force Weapon
Wounds: 15+1d5

Special Ability: Sorcerer

The Heretic gains the Psyker Trait (listed above), a Psy Rating of 2, and 1 Corruption Point. When determining Psychic Strength (see page 206), he counts as Bound.



wish, for redemption. Rather, they live for the purpose of satisfying their dark lords so that they might receive ever more potent blessings.

Many of these Heretics have made the deliberate decision to dedicate their lives to Slaneesh, Nurgle, or Tzeentch, though some choose to avoid dedicating themselves to a particular power. Khorne, however, specifically obliterates any psyker who would beseech him for power. Sorcerers revel in the ways of the warp and the Dark Gods, often invoking them by name as they strive to extend their influence upon the material world. Though less powerful than a full daemonic manifestation, the physical capabilities of a Chaos Space Marine in conjunction with their extensive knowledge and training in the dark arts yields a being capable of unleashing a vast array of destructive and corrupting powers. They have seen things that are far beyond mortal comprehension, wielding powers that they cannot begin to understand.

Such Heretics constantly seek out additional sources of esoteric and forbidden information. They have studied a broad array of arcane knowledge, including xenos practices, legends, and secrets long thought lost. No targets or types of data may be off limits. While they are likely to favour arcane knowledge tied to the dark arts, they realise that the Ruinous Powers may have uses for seemingly mundane bits of data. Virtually any information is useful as it could be enough to persuade their sponsors to empower them yet further. The notion of forbidden knowledge is anathema to these Heretics, as they know that their personal destinies transcend any mortal strictures.

Heretics that choose this are confident that they can one day achieve the title of daemon prince, but they do not patiently wait for that day to arrive. Rather, they hunt down additional knowledge, securing it for themselves and guarding it zealously. As they continue this search, they also spread the influence of their gods wherever they go, leaving the taint of the warp in their wake and initiating countless mortals into the ways of Chaos.

Most Sorcerers of Chaos are members of a larger warband. This can lead to conflict, as the sorcerer is rarely willing to accept the commands of its leader, unless that leader has the force of will and strength of arms to maintain an iron command. Many warbands have splintered when a Sorcerer of Chaos attempted to take command, leading a portion of the members towards a goal distinct from that of the warlord. This may even result in the warlord's death, reminding his fellows of the risk of maintaining such a powerful individual as an advisor.

One thing that defines a Sorcerer of Chaos in **Black Crusade** is the powers they wield. As described on page 212, there are a multitude of Psychic Powers, some of which may be oriented with one of Tzeentch, Nurgle, or Slaanesh (Khorne has no patience for psykers, and does not grant psychic powers). Sorcerers dedicated to a specific Chaos God may be able to call upon that God's most awesome powers, but at the exclusion of others.

Unaligned Sorcerers, on the other hand, call upon all the Chaos gods and thus may wield powers oriented towards any of the Ruinous Powers. However, their lack of dedication means they may not have access to a particular God's most potent abilities.

Sorcerers in the Vortex

Sorcerers within the Screaming Vortex show their devotions to the Ruinous Powers in a variety of different ways. Some travel beyond its boundaries to aggressively recruit new followers to the ways of Chaos, thus granting their cruel sponsors more followers. Others choose a path of devotion to a particular deity, embracing everything that lord offers. Yet others devote every moment of their time to uncovering lost secrets and discovering new information. For these Heretics, the source of the lore is far less important than the knowledge and the power it represents.

Plague Priest of Mire: These Heretics are dedicated to spreading the influence of their dark sponsors through the gift of his pestilence, making their home on the pestilential world of Mire deep within the Vortex. Through their link to the Immaterium, these potent psykers invoke the glories of the Lord of Decay upon their unwitting opponents. As the Dark God's diseases take hold, the Plague Priest's foes often become the latest additions to his army. As these new followers embrace the ways of Chaos, the Sorcerer's potency grows with additional blessings from his dark sponsor.

Sorcerer King: In some cases, a Sorcerer seeks to hold worldly power in conjunction with his stores of arcane knowledge and ability. For these Heretics, an army of followers offer more direct solutions to obtain hidden knowledge—and protection from others who might seek to take the treasures that they have acquired. Sorcerers who follow this path often maintain a holding within the Screaming Vortex, where they can store their arcane resources and mentor their disciples. These rulers may then venture forth from their holdings to retrieve artefacts and components for their rituals that they undertake in the names of the Ruinous Powers.

Unholy Curator: A rare few Heretics are more concerned with acquiring knowledge of any kind, so that they might offer it in supplication to their Dark Gods. These potent Sorcerers use their talents to strip knowledge and secrets from the minds of any prey they encounter. This information is then carefully archived in the hopes that it might be used to garner a boon from their unholy sponsors. Heretics of this path often travel extensively, constantly in search of any new information so that it might be provided to the Chaos Gods.

Apostate

"The corpse-emperor cannot hear your pleas, but there are others who are happy to grant your every wish."

–Archdeacon Gabriel Huang of the Holy Oath

The forces of the Imperium maintain a stalwart barrier against Chaos intrusions within the worlds and organizations of their monolithic realm. Between the incessant speeches of the Ecclesiarchy and the ruthless enforcement of the Inquisition and the Adeptus Arbites, the Imperial Creed is effectively reinforced. Through the ministrations of the Adeptus Administratum and the legions of Imperial bureaucracy, the rule of Imperial law is brutally maintained. However, every so often one of those within that vast bureaucracy falls from grace. When this happens, the consequences can be disastrous.



Those who served within the Imperium's inner workings can be ideally placed and equipped to destabilise the very structures they spent a lifetime creating and supporting.

Some Apostates may be newly turned against the Imperium, whether through some personal rebellion against the Imperial Creed, succumbing to the dark lure of power, or any number of other reasons. These may begin their work against the Imperium in the very organizations they serve in. Apostate preachers and cardinals may subtly twist the words they speak, using their finely honed powers of persuasion to change beliefs until their flocks have become unwitting servants of Chaos. Traitorous members of the Administratum may redirect funds and supplies into their own coffers, starving entire planets to feed his own greed. Meanwhile, treasonous Munitorum agents may subtly alter orders so that entire Guard regiments are redirected from critical warzones, or even assault the wrong worlds.

Other Apostates are long-time foes of the Imperium and may even be the first agents of Chaos to begin an incursion upon a target world. They enter the planet under the cover of an Imperial loyalist. These Heretics begin their subterfuge under the pretence of an honest merchant or a loyal servant of the Ministrorum. Only once they have established a presence and friendly relationships with the world's residents can their true work begin.

These characters may rely upon subtlety, perhaps calling controversial facets of the Imperial Creed or seemingly pointless bureaucratic procedures into question. As they develop a sense of trust with their targets, they can begin to gradually draw those subjects to the path of the Chaos Gods.

Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

Apostates must be Human.

Characteristic Bonus: Apostates gain +5 Fellowship.

Starting Skills: Awareness, Charm, Command, Deceive, Scholastic Lore (any three), Forbidden Lore (any three), Inquiry, Dodge *or* Parry, Intimidate *or* Commerce, Charm +10 *or* Deceive +10, Command +10 *or* Inquiry +10, Security *or* Stealth *or* Logic

Starting Talents: Air of Authority, Hatred (any one), Peer (any one), Total Recall, Unshakeable Will, Weapon Training (Las, Primary), Disturbing Voice *or* Radiant Presence, Polyglot *or* Mimic, Inspire Wrath *or* Iron Discipline *or* Lesser Minion of Chaos

Starting Gear: Good-Craftsmanship Laspistol, Best-Craftsmanship Sword *or* Common Craftsmanship Power Blade, Flak Armour *or* Mesh Armour, Chaos symbol pendant, unholy tomes, 2 laspistol clips.

Wounds: 9+1d5

Special Ability: Serpent's Tongue

The Apostate is a master of infiltration, deception, and seduction, allowing him to ingratiate himself with organisations who would normally kill him on sight. Once per game session, the Apostate may make a Challenging Charm or Deceive Test to gain the Peer Talent with one organisation of his choice for the remainder of the session. If the Apostate has a Fellowship of 55 or higher, he can gain the Peer (2) Talent for a chosen organisation instead.

Playing a Black Crusade Apostate

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray an Apostate. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If a player comes up their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

An Apostate is a master of deception, manipulation, and misdirection. He can quickly read people's reactions and gauge how they are likely to think and feel. Though he likely lacks any moral integrity and possibly emotional responses, he is intimately familiar with these weaknesses and knows how to use them to control other people. He can comfortably lie to control his prey, choosing falsehoods carefully to fit his targets.

Much more than a simple confidence artist, many Apostates are motivated by a deep spiritual devotion to their cause. A Heretic who follows this path may believe that only through a willing dedication to Chaos may humanity achieve their ultimate potential and salvation. In some cases, an Apostate firmly believes that he is in direct communion with a specific Chaos God. As a consequence, he is likely to be very strongly devoted to this deity, viewing that entity as his personal sponsor. In other cases, the Apostate sees himself as the voice of all the Gods, not one in particular, and offers prayers and sacrifices to whichever deity may be appropriate as the situation calls.

His zeal is unparalleled; he believes his cause is not just right but also vital. Through his twisted worldview, the Apostate believes that he really is helping those that he draws to the corrupting influence of the Dark Gods. Even when confronted with the brutal consequences of his actions, he is likely to identify them as acceptable costs. Some must fall by the wayside as examples for those who might achieve the greater blessings.

Apostates are often defined by their skill in leadership and corruption and these attendant skills must often be learned. Thus, many Apostates begin their lives as a part of the very Imperium they later decide to destroy. He might have served within the Ecclesiarchy, spreading the word of the false God-Emperor to all who would listen. It could be that that at the heart of his faith he discovered a core of death, decay, and corruption, which left him disenfranchised. Alternatively, the Apostate might have served the Administratum. It could be that he had even established himself politically, and manoeuvred his way into the position of a planetary governor—or covertly pulled the strings of the official governor. From these lofty heights, he was exposed to the back room manipulations of the populace and might even have taken part in deciding about acceptable losses and other sacrifices for the continued survival of his world.

For most Apostates, the call to power is a vicious cycle. Even when they manage their greatest triumphs, they look over the horizon or across the stars and begin to plan for their next objective. As the Dark Gods grant them boons, they may also feed this lust through sibilant whispers of additional blessings that could come as ever more challenging tasks are offered.

Ultimately, this hunger for power must lead an Apostate towards the path of a daemon prince. From the moment they realise the amount of control that comes with this lofty transformation, their very souls ache for the blessing. Of course, in striving for this goal, they must make ever-greater sacrifices and accept ever-greater risks along the way. Few manage to attain their aspirations before their lives are cut short through failure.

Apostates in the Vortex

The Archetype of Apostate presents a broad concept, which may apply to any number of individuals across the galaxy. Any character who has garnered the opportunity to spread the word of Chaos among potential recruits and used it could be an Apostate. The examples who have established a presence within the Screaming Vortex commonly follow one of these paths:

Former Member of the Calixian Ecclesiarchy: The Ecclesiarchy in the Calixis Sector is rife with hidden intrigues, cults, and undiscovered corruption. The Inquisition works tirelessly to purge it, but there are always those who slip through the cracks. A former priest, confessor, or cardinal in the Ecclesiarchy is a charismatic and charming individual, able to convince those that not only is he a trusted ally, but things they may have believed all their lives are incorrect. His knowledge of the Imperial Creed and the particulars of faith in the Calixis Sector allow him to twist that faith in others, so that without realising it, he can tempt them on the path to Chaos.

Disenfranchised Member of the Jericho Adeptus Munitorum: An Apostate in the Munitorum would be ideally placed to see the futile waste of men and supplies in the Crusade to conquer the Jericho Reach. Through this he may have realised the impotence of the Imperium, and this stoked the fires of revolution in his heart. Such individuals have an unparalleled knowledge of the Imperial war machine, and may be able to develop a rapport with unsuspecting members of the Imperial Guard. Such a Heretic might see actions against the Imperial War Machine as the ultimate way to save the lives of untold human soldiers who would otherwise be fed into the meat grinder of the Jericho Reach.

Interloper within Sector Governor Hax's Lucid Court: An Apostate in the Lucid Court of the Calixis Sector Governor Marius Hax would be ideally placed to see the waste and corruption of the Imperial and planetary nobility and inspire him to prey on that corruption. These individuals may be able to worm their way into the highest strata of Imperial society, able to bring it down from within. As his influence spreads, such a Heretic could draw the nobility of an ever-broader region to the ways of the Ruinous Powers.

Corrupted Rogue Trader of the Koronus Expanse: In the role of a travelling merchant and diplomat, a Rogue Trader is uniquely suited to establish contact with the governments of many Imperial worlds in a relatively short time frame. From this position, an Apostate could establish an interplanetary network dedicated to the promulgation of heretical beliefs. This could quickly enable the heretic to assemble a potent and diverse force with a broad range of resources.

Heretek

"The path of the Omnissiah has left humanity dithering in the darkness, incapable of advancing on the paths of knowledge. Embracing the warp reveals technology that the primitives on Mars could never dream of wielding."

– Magos Caine of the Five-Fold Path

Long ago, during the darkest hours of the Horus Heresy, the Legions of the Adeptus Astartes turned against each other. However, they were not the only organisation subjected to schism. The Mechanicum, the Tech-priests of Mars and keepers of the secrets of technology, dissolved into war. The renegades sided with the Warmaster Horus, unleashing dark technologies and dabbling in warp heresy, before finally being driven from Mars by the resurgent loyalists. Those renegades fled the Imperium into the far corners of the galaxy. There they became the first Hereteks, a dark mechanicus, corrupted Tech-Priests enthralled to the warp and heretical technologies.



As these technophiles embraced their new masters and the ways of the warp, they ignored all of the strictures that the Adeptus Mechanicus chose to embrace. Consequently, their research often extends specifically towards areas that are forbidden to loyalist Tech-Priests. These include sapient technological artefacts, the physiology of the psyker, the ways of the Immaterium, and the vast array of xenos technologies.

Because of the nature of their split, these fallen Tech-Magos lack a central authority or consistent belief structure. Because of this, their ideology is far more diverse than that of their former brethren within the Adeptus Mechanicus. Hereteks may shun the Omnissiah as a false god, worship him as a part of the Ruinous Powers, or simply ignore their former beliefs to focus on their research.

Playing a Black Crusade Heretek

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Heretek. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If a player comes up with their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

Even among the open-minded Explorators of the Adeptus Mechanicus, there are subjects which must be avoided at all cost. A Heretek enthusiastically violates those strictures, exploring xenos technology, archeotech from the Age of Strife, and dabbling in matters of the warp. He may even be bold enough to develop entirely new devices, innovating and combining components in forbidden manners. He might even go so far as to share the tools of his trade and the secrets of its ways with those who have not been trained by the Cult of the Machine God.

Now he actively seeks out new technology and continuously experiments with new techniques in matters that his former brethren forbid. He no longer believes that any information, experiment, or device can be ignored. Rather, he deliberately focuses on those technologies that the cult's teachings once taught him to avoid, with particular interest in fusing the warp with technology. Few things are beyond the Heretek's scope of interest, though inevitably many of his inventions and constructions tend towards the tools of war.

As he builds these weapons for his fellow devotees, the Heretek has also invariably rebuilt his own body. It may be that he has few organic components left and those that remain are often marked by the blessings of the Chaos gods. His enhancements not only improve his technological acumen, they also invariably grant him additional abilities in combat. He is likely to be much hardier as well as much more capably armed.

Some think of those referred to as Hereteks to be a unified force, like the Adeptus Mechanicus itself. This is not the case—there is no galaxy-spanning Heretek organization. Rather, there are countless fiefdoms and Forges, each ruled by a fallen Magos (or several Magi) powerful enough to dominate cadres of their fellows and enslave thralls and servants. Just as amongst the warbands of the Traitor Legions, the corrupted Tech-Priests fight and war amongst each other, or even exist aloof and apart.

Hereteks often follow a path of constant innovation. He may be capable of powering devices directly from the warp and controlling them with summoned spirits. He might dabble with concepts of mechanical sapience, memory transference, or even attempt to capture and preserve souls within his devices. Many of

Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

A Heretek must be Human.
Characteristic Bonus: Hereteks gain +5 Intelligence.
Starting Skills: Logic, Common Lore (Adeptus Mechanicus, Tech), Tech Use, Dodge *or* Parry, Security *or* Tech Use +10, Forbidden Lore (Archeotech) *or* Forbidden Lore (Xenos) *or* Forbidden Lore (Warp), Scholastic Lore (Astromancy) *or* Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)
Starting Trait: Mechanicus Implants (see page 144).
Starting Talents: Die Hard, Technical Knock, Weapon Training (Las, Primary, Shock), Weapon Training (Bolt) *or* Weapon Training (Plasma) *or* Weapon Training (Power), Mechadendrite Training (Weapon) *or* Mechadendrite Training (Utility), Meditation *or* Total Recall, Armour-Monger *or* Weapon-Tech, Lesser Minion of Chaos (Must be servitor or servo-skull) *or* Cold Hearted, Enemy (Adeptus Mechanicus)
Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship Lascarbine, Common-Craftsmanship Power Axe *or* Good Craftsmanship Great Weapon (Greataxe), Light Carapace Armour, any two Good Craftsmanship cybernetics, unholy unguents, combi-tool, dataslate, Optical Mechadendrite *or* Utility Mechadendrite *or* Ballistic Mechadendrite with Laspistol, Lumenin Capacitors *or* Maglev Coils *or* Ferric Lure Implants
Wounds: 12+1d5

Special Ability: Traitor to Mars

The Heretek was once a Tech-Priest of Mars (or has been equipped by those who were). He still possesses the tools of his former life. The Heretek gains the Mechanicus Implants Trait (listed above), as well as two Good Craftsmanship Cybernetics of his choice (also listed above). In addition, he gains the Binary Chatter ability. This ability increases the loyalty of all minions who are servitors or other cybernetic constructions by 10.

these inventors mindlessly hew to the idea that new information is always better than established techniques. For them, the joy of a new idea or the recovery of an unknown technique is an exhilarating triumph, even if that idea or technique has already been made obsolete. With each new development, his passion for further success grows as does his hunger for new information.

The Heretek is often driven by his hunger for knowledge and is willing to use the Ruinous Powers as a source. At other times, he seeks out legends of xenotech and archeotech. He may even coordinate raids upon Imperial strongholds for the sole purpose of recovering their records of such legends. In many Hereteks' minds, there is no greater cause than technological advancement. Any sacrifices may be made towards that end.

It is relatively rare for a Heretek to earn a title of daemon prince. All too often, these characters end up transformed into a component of one of their own creations, with too little left of his own physical body to even receive such a reward. However, those who are granted this boon continue to spread their warp-tainted technology across the galaxy.

Hereteks in the Vortex

There are countless Hereteks or their equivalent scattered across the galaxy. Those encountered in the Screaming Vortex are most likely to hail from the regions surrounding it. A **Black Crusade** Heretek's career may have begun on one of these worlds.

The Lathes: The Lathe Worlds are the principle Forge Worlds in the Calixis Sector. Though they stringently work to apply their dogmatic principles to all things they do, there are those Tech-Priests who reject such hidebound thinking and rebel. A Heretek who hailed from the Lathes comes from a dogmatic background and may well have succumbed to the lure of Chaos while researching sequestered knowledge from the dark days of the Horus Heresy and the schism in the Mechanicus, or even forbidden research from the Dark Age of Technology. These characters are likely to focus on accruing additional artefacts and data necessary to expand upon the research which led to their banishment.

The Explorator Fleets: The Adeptus Mechanicus sends Explorator Fleets deep into the Koronus Expanse, seeking lost knowledge. The Explorator Magos are already predisposed to curiosity and easily tempted into exploring secrets they should not. Warp-tainted or xenos technology may hold an unhealthy fascination to them and it is entirely possible for one to discover something that sets him firmly on the path to damnation. Hereteks who follow this path are likely to be dominated by their curiosity.

The Forgotten Worlds: There are worlds within the Koronus Expanse, such as the war-world of Zayth, where humanity has been out of touch from the Imperium for millennia, and the Tech-priest orders have been corrupted by innovation and unrestricted thought. Such experimentation may lead entire schools of these technologists to the path of Chaos. Individuals subjected to these beliefs might also beseech the Ruinous Powers for protection when their heretical ways are discovered by the Imperium and persecuted.

The Dark Forges: There are Forges that have long fallen to Chaos, feudal bastions of dark engineering and damned craftsmanship, such as Forges Castir and Polix on the Hollows and the war-forges of Sammech in the Hadex Anomaly. A Heretek from these forges may have never trained under the stifling strictures of the Adeptus Mechanicus and may have startling and radical viewpoints on the nature of the Machine God and its interaction with Chaos. They are likely to be the strangest and most terrifying of their brethren, to the point of barely being recognisable as human. Their research may be completely esoteric or it might be so focused on the paths of the Ruinous Powers that all who viewed it could be overwhelmed by its malevolence.

Renegade

"We live for Chaos so that we may die for ourselves."

—Grand Marshall Angelica Benoit of the Free Systems Coalition

The Imperium is a brutal, totalitarian regime, an iron monolith of vast bureaucracy bound together by ancient oaths and intractable laws. However, this monolith sits upon a foundation of countless trillions of citizens and, with such numbers under its control, it is no surprise that the Imperium is often beset by rebellions against its oppressive rule. Such revolts may be populist uprisings of the dregs of Imperial populations—mutants, unskilled labourers, and indentured workers. Perhaps they feel they have little to lose and much to gain should their revolt succeed, or perhaps they have been infiltrated by the subtle messages of the Ruinous Powers and have sworn their souls to a darker allegiance.

Alternatively, these revolts may be well planned and co-ordinated defections of powerful military forces, such as entire regiments (or even armies!) of Imperial Guard and planetary defence forces or starships in the Imperial Navy. Sometimes, entire planets or star systems make the decision to break from Imperial rule, setting off devastating and lengthy wars. The Imperium seldom forgives such actions and fights what it considers vilest treason to a bitter and violent end.

Many such rebellions are led by powerful individuals, men and women of authority who have been corrupted by the power they possess (or sometimes, by the power offered to them by the warp). Now, these renegades seek to break away from the Imperium's constricting laws and freedom-stifling oppression, or they seek to grasp such power for themselves.



Playing a Black Crusade Renegade

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Renegade in **Black Crusade**. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If a player comes up their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

Once a loyal soldier of the Imperium, the Renegade has lost faith in the crumbling monolith. Now he fights against it, believing he is capable of defeating the titanic, but rotting, foe. He might belong to a cell of several traitors within a small portion of an Imperial Hive or he might command a fleet of warp-capable ships attempting to liberate multiple systems from the Imperium's influence. The difference between these is a matter of scope, but the Renegade's philosophical stance holds true in either situation.

Most Renegades believe the only way for any change in the Imperium to occur is through the rigorous application of military force. Negotiation is not an option; the time has come for action. Whether his motives are revenge on the institution that wronged him, power and glory, or freedom against an unjust system, most Renegades conclude their opponents are even more objectionable than the Ruinous Powers. At least the Chaos Gods are admittedly amoral and self-serving. In contrast, servants of the Imperium pretend to perform their destructive actions in the name of their deathless God-Emperor. This hypocrisy has sickened them and they firmly believe that they must be eliminated for the good of humanity and his own personal glory.

These characters are not necessarily strongly devoted to the cause of Chaos. Instead, many have chosen their new allegiance because it was the only alternative option available. These devotees might see the price of their soul and eternal torment as the price that must be paid so that others might live in freedom. Renegades with this outlook may be shocked to discover that they are unable to separate ways from Chaos or be stunned to discover that there are heinous costs to pay for the blessings that they have received.

Alternatively, these characters might be power-mad despots who seek nothing more than their own personal fiefdoms. It may be that they revel in the slaughter. Perhaps the strictures of the Imperium were shackles that they have thrown aside. Now, they can freely exert their martial ways for their own personal glories.

A Renegade almost always has a strong military background and a selection of allies that assist him in exploiting those talents. Though he lacks the raw physical capabilities of a Chaos Space Marine, he is far more capable of inconspicuously infiltrating Imperial society. He can comfortably blend in among mundane human populations so that he might conduct acts of sabotage, incite revolution, or perform covert assassinations.

Unfortunately, a Renegade is also less likely to have been exposed to the full horrors of the warp. Though he has doubtless been unhinged as part of his initiations into the dark pacts, his exposure has been comparatively limited. It is likely that his mind lacks the necessary resiliency to truly survive comprehensive interactions with

Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

Renegades must be Human.

Characteristic Bonus: Renegades gain +3 Weapon Skill and +3 Ballistic Skill.

Starting Skills: Athletics, Awareness, Dodge, Parry, Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis), Common Lore (War), Operate (any one), Command *or* Intimidate, Dodge +10 *or* Parry +10, Survival *or* Stealth, Tech Use *or* Medicae

Starting Talents: Jaded, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Weapon Training (Chain, Las, Primary, SP, SP), Heavy Weapon Training (Any One), Weapon Training (Bolt) *or* Weapon Training (Shock), Catfall *or* Combat Sense, Sure Strike *or* Deadeye Shot *or* Marksman, Double Team *or* Disarm *or* Takedown, Ambidextrous *or* Hip Shooting

Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship Lasgun *or* Good Craftsmanship Boltgun *or* Common Craftsmanship Plasma Gun *or* Common Craftsmanship Heavy Flamer, Best-Craftsmanship Laspistol *or* Common Craftsmanship Bolt Pistol, Best Craftsmanship Chainsword *or* Common-Craftsmanship Power Mace, Carapace Armour, medikit, dataslate with annotated version of Tactica Imperialis

Wounds: 10+1d5

Special Ability: Adroit

The Renegade is a skilful and talented individual who substitutes raw power for honed ability. The Renegade must select one Characteristic at Character Creation. Throughout the game, he adds one additional Degree of Success to successful Tests involving that Characteristic (this includes Skill and Characteristic Tests).

the Ruinous Powers. Because of this, the Renegade may have a less complete understanding of his allies and the full consequences of his devotion to Chaos.

These Heretics are ones who have been forced to make a very difficult decision to turn against the Imperium. These characters grew up in the protective arms of the Imperium. They were sufficiently devoted to it that they chose to join its militant arm, or at least a planetary defence force. Since that time, the Imperium has failed the Renegade. It might be that his unit was deployed as a suicide squad. It might be that while he was serving off planet, another force destroyed his home and all that he held dear. It could even be that military restrictions prevented him from taking the measures he felt were necessary. Whatever the cause, he has taken the most imaginably severe response to that disappointment.

A Renegade is unlikely to aspire to the title of Daemon Prince and might not even be aware of that possibility. Similarly, he might be naive to the consequences for failure. In fact, mutations and other blessings might come as a complete surprise if he is granted them as either punishment or reward. Instead, his goals are likely temporal—focused on overthrowing at least some portion of the Imperium. While following that path, he might focus on honing his combat abilities, acquiring additional forces and equipment, or converting other military units to his cause.

Renegades in The Vortex

Most of the Renegades found in the Screaming Vortex are former Imperial servants, often from the Imperium's militant arms. However, some may have grown up amongst the savage and heathen tribes in the Screaming Vortex, earning their infamy in the most vicious bloodletting imaginable.

However, these denizens of the Screaming Vortex have taken up arms in defiance against the Imperium, and in the eyes of the Adeptus Terra, this makes them renegades, traitors, and heretics. This is whether they are a former Imperial Guardsman from the Jericho Reach or a heathen warrior on a planet deep within the Vortex who never heard of the Imperium until he joined a passing Chaos warband. Under Imperial law, death is all these men and women in the Screaming Vortex have to look forward to, and that simply makes them fight all the harder in return.

The following are some examples of human Renegades found within the Screaming Vortex:

Former Imperial Guardsman of the Achilus Crusade: Far more soldiers of the Imperial Guard fall prey to Chaos than the Imperium would admit. Many of these end up as cannon-fodder in the warbands of the Ruinous Powers or slain on the bayonets of their still-loyal former comrades. However, some rise to possess power amongst the constant conflict between warbands and win respect. These individuals have a particularly martial background and are usually consummate soldiers. They may hail from the Imperial Guard regiments found in the Calixis Sector or the multitude of soldiers in the Crusade for the Jericho Reach. The Crusade may have even driven them to rebel, as multitudes of soldiers are thrown into the meat-grinder of Tyranids, Tau, and the Chaos worlds.

Former Battlefleet Calixis Officer: The Imperial Navy is ever on the watch for officers who may turn traitor. Those who do are in the unique position of starting a mutiny that may take control of an entire voidship, a priceless prize. Therefore, those who do succeed are charismatic and shrewd leaders, with a firm grasp of naval tactics and the principles of starship navigation. A former Navy officer may come from Battlefleet Calixis or the Crusade Fleet in the Jericho Reach.

Former Calixian Conclave Inquisitor: By far, some of the most dangerous Renegades in the Screaming Vortex are those rare former members of the Ordo Calixis Inquisition. Whether Acolytes who succumbed to Chaos or fully fledged Radical Inquisitors who delved to deeply into forbidden powers, a fallen member of the Inquisition is a valuable ally and implacable enemy, for their knowledge of the Imperium's innermost workings is second to none.

Psyker

"What you do not understand is that I am the future of humanity, while you fools are its distant past. Let me show you mankind's destiny."

– Kataria Skol, Scrying-Wyrd of Blasted Station

In the Imperium of Man, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica oversees the recruitment and training of psykers for use throughout the Adeptus Terra (and the Imperium as a whole). The Adeptus deliberately ensures these sanctioned psykers are unquestioningly loyal and meticulously trained, as well as both hidebound by nature and inflexible in their approach to the powers they wield. This is no error on the part of the Imperium, instead it is a deliberate defence cultivated by the psykers' tutors. The souls of humans burn in the warp and those of psykers more brightly than most. The entities of that alien realm are drawn to those souls like moths to flames, eager to devour and consume them. However, a dullard's mind is far less appetising to a Daemon and likely to be passed over in favour for sweeter meats.

However, there are those psykers who have not been trained by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. These may be quick-witted and self-taught wyrds whose intstincts and intuition have been honed by a lifestyle spent as a fugitive from the Black Ships and Inquisition who gather their brethren for deliverance unto the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. Alternatively, they may be feral mystics and shamans on backwater planets with no inkling of the source of their power, individuals whose powers have only just awakened, or those who have simply slipped through the cracks of the Imperium's monstrous bureaucracy. There are even those psykers who are entirely black-hearted and dangerous individuals, and even those who willingly embrace the seductive power of the Dark Gods of the Warp. Collectively, the Imperium knows these individuals as rogue psykers.

Not all rogue psykers are heretics, ne'er-do-wells, or traitors. However, the psykers in the Screaming Vortex are exactly that. Be they the warp-dabblers from Calthion V, the Scrying-Wyrds of the Ragged Helix, part of the Cabals of Q'Sal, or one of countless others, those psykers in the Screaming Vortex have recognised the powers of the warp and accepted the gifts of the Dark Gods. The psykers of the Screaming Vortex, for their part, can truly be numbered amongst the Disciples of the Dark Gods.



Playing a Black Crusade Psyker

The following are some of the ways a player can play and portray a Psyker in **Black Crusade**. Of course, these should be considered guidelines and suggestions, not directives nor canon. If a player comes up with their own backstory and character personalities, they should feel free to explore them.

Unlike the sanctioned and bound psykers of the Imperium, shackled with words and rites, the Psyker in **Black Crusade** is not bound or controlled. His only limits are those set by his own mind, and he often embraces his psychic abilities as a glorious source of boundless power. This conduit also means Psykers are often short-lived, consumed by a tidal rush of energy flowing through their body. However, those able to master the currents of the warp and bend them to their will become some of the most dangerous and potent servants of the Ruinous Powers.

Because of his constant interaction with the warp, a Psyker is often a conduit for entities native to the Immaterium to enter into the physical realm. At times, he might summon daemons as a deliberate action, though other times, their arrival may be entirely accidental. Either situation can prove dangerous for the Psyker, as capricious beings such as daemons may not appreciate being summoned.

Some Psykers who turn to the Ruinous Powers devote their lives to a particular entity of Chaos, showing a certain affinity for that God's manifestations. Other Psykers remain unaligned to any particular God, preferring to call on any and all as they choose.

Prior to embracing the ways of Chaos, the Psyker might not have been aware of his psychic potential. It may be that he used his powers inadvertently, or it might be that he had never even attempted to exert his mental force in such a manner. The teachings of the Imperial Cult are strict and countless psykers deny their own abilities for fear of an Inquisitorial Black Ship. All of that likely changed as the Psyker drew upon his abilities—possibly reluctantly—opening and exposing himself to the warp.

Eventually, his powers would come to full bloom. These first wavering steps towards Chaos may have been taken to save the lives of innocents or as part of an effort to save him from Inquisitorial agents.

Starting Skills, Talents & Gear

Psykers must be Human.
Characteristic Bonus: Psykers gain +5 Willpower.
Starting Skills: Awareness, Psyniscience, Forbidden Lore (Psykers), Deceive *or* Intimidate, Dodge *or* Parry
Starting Talents: Psy Rating 3, Jaded, Up to 500 xp worth of Psychic Powers chosen from the Unaligned, Divination, Telepathy, or Telekinesis Disciplines (see Chapter VI: The Powers of the Warp), Weapon Training (Primary), Weapon Training (Las) *or* Weapon Training (SP) *or* Weapon Training (Shock), Warp Sense *or* Child of the Warp
Starting Traits: Psyker
Starting Gear: Common Craftsmanship Laspistol or Common Craftsmanship Stub Revolver, Good Craftsmanship Sword or Common Craftsmanship Neural Whip, Flak Cloak, Psy-focus, dataslate filled with arcane lore.
Wounds: 8+1d5

Special Ability: Chaos Psyker

The Heretic is an unsanctioned psyker with access to the powers of the warp. He begins play with the Psyker Trait (listed above), a Psy Rating of 3, and 1d5 Corruption Points. In addition, when determining his Psychic Strength (see page 206) he counts as Unbound.

However, the purity of his motivations mattered naught. Ultimately, his conversion to the path of the damned was a swift transformation.

Psykers turned to Chaos, due to their innate connection to the warp, may well have a particular entity who serves as their patron. While this entity is dramatically less powerful than one of the Dark Gods, it can certainly reveal secrets and offer training to a Psyker. Of course, it is quite likely this entity has no interest in selflessly aiding the Psyker. Instead, it may hope to draw the power-hungry fool into a web of deceit where the psyker finally overreaches his grasp, and inadvertently offers himself to be consumed by his supposed ally. On the other hand, a canny Psyker may recognise this threat, and string the creature along for as long as possible before betraying it first. (This offers an interesting roleplaying opportunity for GMs and players, and something they could explore in the course of the game).

These Psykers seldom have the presence of mind to create extensive plans or consider lofty goals, though there are always exceptions to this. Rather, these witches often live in the moment, embracing each instant and the blessings of the warp that come with it.

This lack of foresight also dictates that few Psykers who fall specifically crave the title of daemon prince. While they might hunger for the powers that come with such a transformation, these characters are seldom anxious to assume that level of authority. While they wield immeasurable energies in the names of their Dark Gods, the Psykers' lives often end abruptly when they attempt to push themselves beyond their limits or disappoint their sponsors.

Psykers in the Vortex

The path to becoming a rogue psyker, wyrd, or witch are as varied as the psykers who tread them—which is to say infinitely so. Within the Screaming Vortex there are countless psykers, each different from the next, with wildly different origins and backgrounds. A Psyker could have come from any number of locations and backgrounds in and around the Screaming Vortex, from a wild shaman on a feral world to a powerful warp-witch on a Reaver warship.

Escapee of the Black Ships: The rogue psyker may be a former citizen of the Calixis Sector (or an Imperial world in the Jericho Reach) who manifested psychic powers. Doomed to be captured by the Imperium's security forces and placed on a Black Ship to be transported to Terra, he managed to escape. Such individuals are hunted by the Imperium and fear and hate it with equal measure. They are also the most familiar with Imperial society—and likely view their powers as a mutation.

Wyrd of the Koronus Expanse: On worlds far from the Imperium, psykers are born without knowledge or understanding of the warp. To such individuals, these powers are magic or sorcery and, thus, those who wield them are known as wyrds, witches, and sorcerers. These rogue psykers may believe they must use their powers with charms, rituals, gestures, or words, and because belief shapes abilities, in a way they do. Such individuals are likely obsessed with occult lore and superstition.

Fallen Sanctioned Psyker of the Imperium: Almost any sanctioned Imperial psyker, from Astropaths to the Primaris Psykers of the Imperial Guard, is constantly tempted by the power offered through the warp. Sometimes, that temptation proves too hard to resist and they tap into powers they should not. Though they started life as a Sanctioned Psyker, the Imperium still regards them as gone rogue and hunts them as vigorously as they would any other. Sometimes more so, infact—often an Imperial Psyker knows full well the peril of what he's done, and done so willingly anyway.

Warp-witch of the Vortex: It likely comes as no surprise that the Screaming Vortex harbours more than its fair share of mutants and psykers, what with its constant exposure to the warp. Though most of the warp-dabblers on the Vortex's many worlds spend their too-short lives dabbling with powers beyond their comprehension before it inevitably consumes them, some manage to master the tides of warp energy seething within. These psykers may rise above their petty upbringings and join one of the many warbands that roam the Vortex. There they lend their considerable abilities in exchange for promises of aid and further power.

Height and Weight

These attributes are determined by choice rather than referencing a chart and dice rolls. However, the initial racial choice should play a major factor in dictating these values. Human characters are loosely restricted in size by their physiology. Humanity has diversified tremendously over the millennia, but even spreading across the stars, the basics of anatomy can only be stretched so far. Adult humans range in height from about 1.2 to 2.1 metres in height. Anything outside of that range would be remarkable. A healthy adult has a weight that is proportionate to their height. On the extreme low end, a very short person might be healthy weighing as little 30 kilograms. At the opposite extreme, a very tall person could weigh in at over 100 kilograms without appearing obese. Of course, the ravages of Chaos might place a Heretic's weight well outside the range of what is healthy.

For Chaos Space Marines, these values are a little less variable. When clad in power armour, these characters typically stand 2.1 metres in height. Depending upon their gear load out, they may range in weight from 500–1,000 kilograms. Again, the blessings of their dark masters may vary this or their physiology might have simply interacted with their geneseed in an unusual fashion that placed them outside of this range.

Stage 4: Explore the Passions

"Plumb the depths of the warp, embrace its madness, and show its glory to those who fear it."

– Sanctifer LeVay, Cult of the Sacred Union

Prior to this point in the character creation process, all effort has been focused on creating a set of numbers and key words that determine what the newly generated character can do. The next portion of the process is about determining why he performs those actions. For many players, their character's personality only truly develops over the course of multiple game sessions. While that is perfectly acceptable, this portion of the process provides a few initial hooks to that personality. This stage also provides an opportunity for players to weave their character's physical appearance.

Gender and Appearance

For humans, a Heretic's sexual identity and appearance are entirely of the player's own choosing. There are many common stereotypes based upon their archetypes and path of Devotion: psykers are often gaunt, followers of Nurgle often dishevelled, and so forth. However, players need not feel bound by these. It is entirely possible that the character blends in well in order to better spread his dark master's influence. Alternatively, he may be a living embodiment of his god's dark vision.

For Chaos Space Marines, their sex and gender must be male, due to the requirements of the geneseed (although millennia of mutation and the influence of the warp may render this distinction meaningless). His power armour is likely painted in a scheme consistent with his warband and divine sponsor. However, his appearance beneath his helmet and any modifications to the armour's appearance are entirely up to each player's discretion.

Players should keep in mind as they make these decisions that all of this is subject to change through game play. The blessings of the Ruinous Powers may cause a character's appearance to change radically. Decisions made during character creation are unlikely to last for the character's entire adventuring career.

Personality

In many ways, each Heretic's personality is defined by his Failings (see page 73). While those aspects are undoubtedly core to his methods and beliefs, it is likely that there are additional key elements as well. At this stage, it may be worthwhile to consider other elements of the character's psyche. The more thoroughly better that each player defines



their character at this point, the more easily they may be able to make swift decisions that are consistent with the character's outlook during game play. One of the easiest ways to establish these aspects is to consider a few questions at this time. Many answers to these questions are proposed in the descriptions of the archetypes and the paths of the Dark Gods. The ones that players choose to employ for their characters may even come as a revelation.

Why did the Heretic Embrace Chaos?

For many characters, the decision to join forces with the Dark Gods was made with the best of intentions. Perhaps the Heretic sought knowledge or salvation. For others, the decision came out of a need for vengeance or anger. The reasons for this decision invariably colour the character's relation with his dark sponsors. As their relationship began, so too is it likely to continue and eventually terminate.

The answer to this question may set the tone for a character's entire career. It may be that, in spite of their passion for the unholy, there remains some seed of regret at their soul. If such a weakness exists, their gods and their opponents may seek it out and use it against them. Alternatively, it may be that the character is a ruthless force of destruction with little capacity for rational thought. This too can be a tool and a flaw.

What does the Heretic Desire?

Each Heretic's deepest cravings are invariably associated with their path to Chaos. Since they chose to embrace the Ruinous Powers, many of these desires have certainly come to fruition. However, as these lusts are indulged, new ones invariably emerge. It is likely that as the character's career continues, these needs become ever more central to his life. Players should choose these heartfelt desires carefully, as the character's foes are likely to learn of them and attempt to use them to manipulate him.

These needs might be physical power, unholy secrets, control over others, or even a greed for immeasurable wealth. Any of these goals can further powers of Chaos, but they might also lead to a character's destruction. As players choose the nature of the Heretic's lusts, consider also to what lengths he might go to obtain them.

Whom does the Heretic Hate?

The galaxy is filled with those who would do the Heretic harm. At times, even the character's closest allies might be willing to take advantage of a moment of weakness. The list of potential foes is endless. In order to establish a character's true passions, this must be narrowed.

A character may have an unfulfilled desire for vengeance. This could target an Imperial Institution, a breed of xenos, or even another Chaos warband. Players should consider both

Table 2-1: Prides

D10 Roll (Optional)	Pride	Description
1	Beauty	The Heretic defines himself by his physical appearance. He takes pride in his physical form and is even known and revered for it. **Characteristic modifier:** +2 Infamy, –4 Willpower.
2	Charm	The Heretic expects the respect and obedience of those around him. He revels in their worship, praise, and self-sacrifice in his name, and depends upon their assistance. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Fellowship, –5 Toughness.
3	Craftsmanship	No one has the combination of talent and training to create in the same way as the Heretic. He is a master artist whose works will be admired by all denizens of the galaxy until the stars grow cold. **Characteristic modifier:** +1 Infamy, +3 Agility, +3 Intelligence, –3 Weapon Skill, –3 Ballistic Skill.
4	Devotion	The character's faith in the Chaos sustains him. He is confident that there never has been nor will there ever be another follower of the cause as self-sacrificing. He believes that this grants him a special status to the Dark Gods, but is wont to rely on this instead of his own strength. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Willpower, –5 Strength.
5	Fortitude	The Heretic is strong and tough, able to shrug off blows that might kill a lesser man. Though his fortitude is impressive, it comes at a cost of flexibility and adaptability. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Toughness, –3 Agility, –3 Intelligence.
6	Foresight	The character believes that he is aware of the actions and schemes of everyone and everything around him. He constantly observes those around him, believing that the knowledge will allow him to control them. This does make the character rather cold around others. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Perception, –5 Fellowship.
7	Logic	The Heretic believes that his daunting intellect grants him the ability to understand and resolve every situation in the most efficient and effective manner imaginable. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Intelligence, –5 Perception.
8	Martial Prowess	The Heretic actively seeks out combat as a way to prove himself and can never refuse a challenge to do battle, no matter the odds. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Weapon Skill, –5 Intelligence.
9	Grace	The Heretic is proud of his grace and speed, so much so that he disdains the vulgarity of ranged combat and delights in engaging his opponents up close. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Agility, –5 Ballistic Skill.
10	Wealth	The character has defined himself entirely by his possessions. Others must look upon the grandeur and seethe with jealousy. **Starting Equipment:** The character makes an extra Acquisition Test with a +20 bonus prior to beginning play. **Characteristic modifier:** –3 Willpower.

why the character feels this thirst and how he is likely to choose to slake it.

Alternatively, a character could simply despise a particular race or organisation. His anger might be expended at moments of opportunity rather than as a central focus of his life's work. Even if this approach is taken, knowing his methods and justifications are crucial to understanding his psyche.

Name

The name the Heretic uses is likely one that he chose when he embraced the Dark Gods. His life prior to that rebirth is of no meaning to him. All that matters now are his passions and his dedication to forwarding the influence of the Ruinous Powers. As such, his name should strike fear into his victims and serve to spread his own infamy.

For many characters, their name is taken from that of a famous traitor. Countless devotees of Chaos have the hubris to take the name Horus when they entreat their new masters. Others delve further into the legends of the distant past to choose names such as Fawkes, Alcibiades, Brutus, or Iscariot.

History

A character's actions prior to embracing the ways of Chaos are largely irrelevant to their current life. When the Heretic joined the army of his dark masters, he was born anew. In some instances, he may even have undertaken a significant physical transformation as part of this rebirth. In other cases, the rebirth was largely metaphorical.

In any case, because of this primal separation, a character's history prior to joining with Chaos does not have as large a mechanical effect on whom they are. Their homeworld, for example, is so far in the past that any influence it may have had on them has long since vanished. Of course, their past may well have an effect on their personality, but this is largely left up to roleplaying.

The only exception to this may be those actions undertaken since embracing his new masters. These activities might contribute to his Corruption and Infamy.

Table 2-2: Disgraces

d10 Roll (Optional)	Disgrace	Description
1	Betrayal	The Heretic believes in looking out for his own interests first and foremost. Those around him are assets for only as long as they may be useful to his needs. Once their usefulness has been completed, their survival is subject to his whim of the moment. **Starting Corruption:** +5 Corruption. **Untrustworthy:** The character receives a –10 Situational Modifier to all Charm attempts.
2	Deceit	As all of reality is little more than a matter of perception, truth is a relative concept. This Heretic exploits that philosophy to the utmost. Much of what he says is compulsively cloaked in falsehood. Even in the most strict of circumstances, he feels tempted to colour the truth. C**haracteristic modifier:** +2 Infamy, –4 Perception.
3	Dread	Something in the Heretic's past haunts him; a fear that dominates his life. Though he may ignore it for a time, it never leaves him completely. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Perception, –5 Willpower.
4	Destruction	Defeating a foe is never sufficient. Opponents must be utterly annihilated, their works destroyed, and their reputations laid waste. Opportunities to spread suffering, by any means, must be fully embraced; as mortal suffering may benefit the Ruinous Powers. **Characteristic modifier:** +2 Infamy, –4 Fellowship.
5	Gluttony	Consumption is a passion for this character. He revels in using up any available resources for the simple thrill of its expenditure. It may be that he consumes vast quantities of food, but it could also be entertainment, natural resources, or the time of those with whom he interacts. **Starting Wounds:** +2 Wounds. **Characteristic modifier:** –5 Agility.
6	Greed	Often, when this character sees something novel, he is overcome by a passion to possess it. The item in question need not be useful, but the compulsion is much stronger if it is unique or rare. This urge may even overcome the necessities of a task at hand. **Starting Corruption:** +4 Corruption. **Overwhelming Need:** The character receives a –10 Situational Modifier to all Commerce attempts.
7	Hubris	The Heretic's self-confidence and bluster vastly exceeds his abilities. He never fears or even considers failure. Instead, he engages in every challenge, often with little consideration for what preparations might be necessary or the consequences of failure. **Characteristic modifier:** +2 Infamy, –4 Intelligence.
8	Regret	In the past, this character performed some deed that continues to haunt his mind. He is constantly plagued by guilt for this decision and its consequences. He is constantly driven to make amends for the act but remains incapable of compensating the victims. **Starting Corruption:** +5 Corruption. **Haunted:** Opponents always receive a +10 Situational Modifier when attempting to use Intimidation against the character.
9	Waste	When a person has achieved a level of wealth that material concerns are no longer an issue, then the ability to frivolously waste materials can be a joy in itself. This Heretic embraces that joy, even at those times when he can ill afford to do so. He destroys resources for the simple pleasure of their destruction. **Characteristic modifier:** +2 Infamy, –4 Willpower.
10	Wrath	Anger is a constant companion and drive for this Heretic. He firmly believes that the universe actively conspires against him, and that his success can only be achieved by exacting his vengeance upon his oppressors. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Perception, –2 Willpower. **Starting Wounds:** –1 Wound.

Table 2-3: Example Motivations

d10 Roll (Optional)	Motivation	Description
1	Arcane	The character is obsessed with uncovering lost and forbidden knowledge. Discovering and keeping these secrets drove him to embrace Chaos. His drive to continue this practice has not lessened. **Starting Corruption:** +4 Corruption, +2 Intelligence. **Characteristic modifier:** –3 Strength.
2	Ascendancy	Mortal power is fleeting and life is short. The Heretic wishes to overcome both of these limitations by assuming a permanent level of at least daemonic power, but preferably a transformation to the divine and unholy. **Starting Wounds:** –2 Wounds. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 Willpower.
3	Dominion	Some seek to control all they can survey, then travel to find new lands to conquer. The character wishes to have dominion over the galaxy itself, demanding that all lesser beings bow down to acknowledge his authority over them. **Characteristic modifier:** +1 Infamy, +2 Willpower, +2 Fellowhip, –4 Agility. **Starting Wounds:** –1 Wound.
4	Immortality	The character fears death in all its varied forms, or simply desires to live for eternity. To overcome this, he is willing to take whatever means are necessary to insure his continued survival; the means might be mechanical, warp spawned, or some unholy combination of the two. **Starting Wounds:** +2 Wounds. **Characteristic modifier:** –5 Weapon Skill.
5	Innovation	While uncovering lost knowledge is a worthy cause, it pales behind the glories of creating completely new forms of technology or psychic phenomena. This Heretic has embraced the ways of Chaos so that he might use its powers to create new tools and uncover information that was previously beyond the limitations of mortals. **Starting Corruption:** +2 Corruption. **Starting Characteristics**: +3 Intelligence. **Starting Wounds:** –2 Wounds.
6	Legacy	The Heretic has embraced his mortality by believing that he has a destiny to influence the universe that extends far beyond his lifespan. This character seeks to change galactic history in a powerful way that will be remembered through the millennia. However, such actions may lead him to not think intelligently about a situation. **Characteristic modifier:** +2 Infamy, –4 Intelligence.
7	Nihilism	The character firmly believes that he is the centre of all existence. Everything else is but a product of his imaginative subconscious. He has no moral restrictions to his actions, rather he engages every whim because he believes he is entitled to do so. **Starting Corruption:** +5 Corruption. **Characteristic modifier:** –3 Willpower.
8	Perfection	The character holds himself and all of his allies to an impossible standard of perfection, in at least one area of his life. However, attempting to reach this ideal ensures other aspects slacken. **Characteristic modifier:** +5 to any one Characteristic, –3 to any two other Characteristics.
9	Vengeance	In the past, this character was a victim. Since then, he has vowed to make those who have slighted him pay for their actions. He is willing to make every sacrifice necessary to right this wrong and to prevent anyone from ever hurting him again. **Starting Wounds:** +2 Wounds. **Characteristic modifier:** –5 Perception.
10	Violence	For some, violence is not a means to an end but an end in itself. This character revels in the wanton destruction of any who could be vulnerable to his actions. He has no fear of repercussions, for he believes he is the most potent force of destruction in the galaxy. **Starting Corruption:** +5 Corruption. **Characteristic modifier:** –3 Intelligence.

Other Heretics show their devotion to the Ruinous Powers by assuming a name intended solely to strike fear into the hearts of their enemies. Some such names are little more than adjectives or common words in a foreign tongue or High Gothic words mashed together. These names may reveal the character's methodology and their loyalty. Names such as Pox Mortis, Schwarzteufel, or Warpcaster might be appropriate for a character who wishes to spread their infamy in this manner.

The choice of a name should reflect the character's personality. It may also change as a character develops through play. He may earn additional titles through his accomplishments or through a change in his ambitions. The Dark Gods are a fickle lot; their followers may be as well.

FAILINGS

The act of rebellion requires a certain amount of Pride. Characters who were born to the Imperium have been subjected to a lifetime's worth of lessons about the dangers of Heresy and the Daemonic. Even those who lived on feral worlds were undoubtedly warned of the risks of tampering with the unknown. In spite of these warnings, the Heretic deliberately chose to embrace the risks associated with a life in service to the Ruinous Powers. Accepting these risks is a sure sign that the character believed that he was above them; a clear sign of enormous pride and hubris.

The reverse side of that coin is the notion of Disgrace. Just as a character is immensely proud of some acts, other acts leave him with a deep sense of shame. In embracing Chaos, at least some small portion of his pride was proven false. He needed to make an unexpected sacrifice. To this day, he regrets having made that decision. This regret eats away at his soul and causes him to sometimes act in ways to make up for his past failings.

Pride and Disgrace represent a character's greatest Failings. These facets of his persona allow the character to become a

more compelling agent in the stories that players craft with their game group. They form the critical basis for the character's decision to embrace the Dark Gods. Just as these aspects were key to his rebirth as a servant of Chaos, they are also vital to his continued decline into the ways of raucous corruption.

Players must choose one Pride and one Disgrace from Tables 2–1 and 2–2. If they like, they may roll randomly for them, however, this is not required.

As a result of these rolls, the Heretic's Characteristics may change. Modifications from Failings do not count as Advancements for purposes of determining Alignment.

Using Failings

In addition to the modifiers received from their Failings, characters may also receive a situational bonus to any Test directly related to one of their Failings. If the Game Master and the other players agree that the acting player is currently role playing to their character's Failing—accepting inconvenient situational modifiers, performing actions that reflect the Failing rather than following an easy solution, and even advancing the ways of Chaos at the Heretic's own expense—they may agree to grant the character a bonus to the test performed. This bonus is called an Incursion.

An Incursion grants the character an additional +10 situational modifier to the situation, as the beings of the Immaterium grant their blessings. In extraordinary situations, the Game Master may choose to grant an even larger bonus. This should depend upon the situation and the overall role playing involved. In these situations, Game Masters should propose a value to all players, who may then offer their own input about the reward and degree of difficulties that the character has undertaken.

MOTIVATIONS

Every character who follows the path of the Chaos continues along that path because of their passion and drive. This drive is represented by their Motivation. A character's short-term goals may change from adventure to adventure, but his Motivation is unlikely to change. These unholy drives are lifelong objectives, which may not even be achievable within a mortal lifetime.

Players must choose one Motivation from Table 2–3. If they like, they may roll randomly for them, however, this is not required.



Stage 5: Spend Experience Points

"Celebrate the blessings of the Gods! They grant us the abilities to overcome those fools who would ignore their powers."

– Archdeacon Gabriel Huang

After choosing a race and considering an Archetype, it is time to begin to truly customise the Player Character. By the end of this stage, every Heretic should be statistically distinctive. There are a myriad of options presented at this point. The tables presented in this section grant players the ability to create a unique character that presents them with a window into the darkest portions of the 40K Universe.

STARTING EXPERIENCE

All **Black Crusade** characters begin play with starting experience points. These, along with the choices made during the process of the character's Archetype, help define a character and ensure he is unique.

The amount of starting experience for a Heretic is based primarily on whether the character is a Chaos Space Marine or a Disciple of Chaos (a human character). Chaos Space Marines have less starting experience, while Disciples of Chaos have more. This reflects the fact that for a "mere" human to survive long enough to obtain power and recognition (in other words, become a player character!), he must have gone through trying experiences.

- Disciples of Chaos characters in **Black Crusade** have 1,000 starting experience to spend.
- Chaos Space Marine characters in **Black Crusade** have 500 starting experience to spend.

Characters can spend as much of this experience as they wish before the game begins (although they may save some or all of it to spend later, if they wish).

THE FIVE ALIGNMENTS

As characters develop, players must keep in mind the idea of their character's alignment loyalty. Each character's loyalties directly affect the costs of their continued development. Because this modifies the character's developmental costs, it is critical to keep track of the number of advances that each character has taken towards Devotion to a deity. Although it is nigh impossible for a character to begin the game Devoted to a certain Chaos God, depending on his choices he may quickly end up Devoted to one or another.

It is always necessary to be mindful of a character's Alignment to the four Chaos gods. A subset of the Characteristics, Skills, Talents, and Traits are associated with each of the four powers. If a player has purchased any of those specific associated abilities for his character, then the

Matching Black Crusade Characters with other Game Lines

Readers who have played the other Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay games may wonder how a **Black Crusade** character matches up against characters from other game lines. Since **Black Crusade** characters do not use Career Ranks (and the cost of Skills and Talents are different across game lines), this comparison can be slightly tricky. However, before spending starting experience, a **Black Crusade** human is the rough equivalent of a 7,000 experience character from Dark Heresy, Rogue Trader, or Deathwatch. A **Black Crusade** Chaos Space Marine is the rough equivalent of an 8,000 experience character.

character may have earned a Devotion to one of the unholy powers. To determine this, keep a tally of the number of abilities purchased and their affiliation with each deity. At certain points during the game (see "Checking Alignment") they should compare the number of abilities they have purchased with affiliations. If they have five more abilities (in total) associated with one particular deity than they have with any of the other Chaos gods, then they are said to be Aligned to that god's path.

All Archetypes start as unaligned, and any advances granted as part of the Archetype do not count towards Alignment. Also, note, that Advances that are unaligned do not have an Alignment. Therefore, taking them does not count as taking advances towards being unaligned. A character is unaligned only if he is not Aligned to any of the four Gods.

Every time an advance is taken, it may modify a character's standings with the Ruinous Powers. Refer to Table 2-5: Advances by Alignment to see which Advances are associated with each deity's path. Purchases made from their patron's path receive a discount for remaining True to their path. To purchase advances associated with an Opposed deity, the character must pay an increased cost. Purchases made from an Allied deity pay the normal listed cost for the advance. Refer to Table 2-4: Allies and Opponents to see the allegiances of the Chaos gods.

When purchasing an Advance, note down its Alignment on the Heretic's Character Sheet.

Checking Alignment

Whenever a Heretic earns 10 Corruption Points (in other words, when they hit the thresholds of 10, 20, 30, and so-forth), they check Alignment. This means they compare how many Advancements they have purchased that are affiliated with each Chaos Power. If they have changed Alignment (by having five more advancements dedicated to any one Chaos Power than any other), then they switch their Alignment to the God in question. This may change the cost of any future Advances. The Heretic will not check Alignment again until the next Corruption Point threshold.

(Also, Heretics pay costs for advancements based on their current Alignment, not the Alignment they may be trying to obtain in the future).

It is possible for a Heretic to gain enough Corruption during the later stages of Character Creation that he may pass one of the Thresholds. If this occurs, the Heretic does not check Alignment until Character Creation is completely finished and all starting Experience has been spent.

Characteristic Advances

A Characteristic Advance is an increase to a character's raw abilities. When players buy a Characteristic Advance, they add +5 to the Characteristic on their character sheet. Characteristic Advancements are divided into four progression levels. These are as follows:

- Simple: A small fulfillment of the character's potential.
- Intermediate: A significant improvement to the character's capabilities.
- Trained: Active, focused effort upon improving the character's prowess.
- Expert: The limit of the character's natural capabilities.

As players set about increasing a Characteristic for their characters, the Heretics must progress through each of the progression levels in turn, starting at Simple and ending with Expert. Characteristic advancement prices are based upon the attributes relationship to the character's patron deity. Note that only Strength, Toughness, Fellowship, and Willpower have affiliated deities. All other Characteristics—Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Agility, Intelligence, Perception, and Infamy are grouped under unaligned.

Also note that each time a character purchases a +5 Advance, this counts as one purchase for the purposes of checking Alignment. So a character who purchases four Strength Advances would have 4 points towards Alignment with Khorne.

As the chart indicates, the first +5 increase to a Khorne Devotee's Strength costs 100 xp; the next +5 (the Intermediate progression level) costs 250 xp; a further +5 improvement (the Trained progression level) costs 500 xp; while the final possible improvement (Expert progression level) costs 750 xp. If that same character were to attempt to

Table 2-4: Allies and Opponents

Path	Khorne	Nurgle	Slaanesh	Tzeentch	Unaligned
Khorne	True	Allied	Opposed	Opposed	Allied
Nurgle	Allied	True	Opposed	Opposed	Allied
Slaanesh	Opposed	Opposed	True	Allied	Allied
Tzeentch	Opposed	Opposed	Allied	True	Allied
Unaligned	Allied	Allied	Allied	Allied	Allied

Table 2-5: Advances by Alignment

Alignment	Characteristic	Skills	Talents		
Khorne	Strength	Athletics Command Parry	Battle Rage Berserk Charge Blademaster Blood God's Contempt Combat Master Crushing Blow Flesh Render	Frenzy Furious Assault Hammer Blow Hatred† Killing Strike Lightning Attack Pity the Weak	Street Fighting Storm of Iron Swift Attack Thunder Charge Unarmed Master Unarmed Warrior Whirlwind of Death
Nurgle	Toughness	Intimidate Medicae Survival	Baleful Dirge Bulging Biceps Corpus Conversion Die Hard Disturbing Voice Fearless Hardy	Iron Jaw Jaded Master Chirurgeon Mighty Shot Nerves of Steel Never Die Prosanguine	Resistance† Sound Constitution True Grit Unshakeable Will Unnatural Vigour War Cry
Slaanesh	Fellowship	Acrobatics Charm Deceive Dodge	Air of Authority Assassin Strike Catfall Crippling Strike Demagogue Excessive Wealth Hard Target	Inspire Wrath Into the Jaws of Hell Iron Discipline Leap Up Lightning Reflexes Mimic Precise Blow	Preternatural Speed Radiant Presence Rapid Reaction Rapid Reload Sprint Sure Strike Unremarkable
Tzeentch	Willpower	Forbidden Lore† Logic Psyniscience Scrutiny	Bastion of Iron Will Blasphemous Incantation Blind Fighting Combat Formation Crack Shot Deadeye Shot Eye of Vengeance	Favoured by the Warp Foresight Heightened Senses† Infused Knowledge Light Sleeper Mediation Paranoia Polyglot	Strong Minded Total Recall Warp Conduit Warp Lock Warp Sense Wisdom of the Ancients
Unaligned	Agility Ballistic Skill Infamy Intelligence Perception Weapon Skill	Commerce Common Lore† Operate† Slight of Hand Stealth Inquiry Linguistics† Navigation† Scholastic Lore Security Tech-Use Trade Awareness	Ambidextrous Ancient Warrior Armour-Monger Arms Master Betrayer Blade Dancer Bolter Drill Child of the Warp Cold Hearted Combat Sense Counter Attack Cursed Heirloom Deflect Shot Disarm Double Team Enemy Exotic Weapon Training	Ferric Summons Greater Minion of Chaos Gunslinger Heavy Weapon Training† Hip Shooting Hotshot Pilot Independent Targeting Legion Weapon Training Lesser Minion of Chaos Luminen Blast Luminen Shock Maglev Transcendence Marksman Master Enginseer Mastery† Mechadendrite Use† Minion of Chaos	Orthoproxy Peer Psy Rating Quick Draw Raptor Sacrifice Sharpshooter Sidearm Step Aside Takedown Target Selection Technical Knock Two-Weapon Wielder† Unholy Devotion Weapon Training† Weapon-Tech

†Denotes Specialist Skill or Talent Group

Table 2-6: Characteristic Advancement Costs

Patron Status	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
True	100 xp	250 xp	500 xp	750 xp
Allied	250 xp	500 xp	750 xp	1,000 xp
Opposed	500 xp	750 xp	1,000 xp	2,500 xp

raise Fellowship, which is affiliated with the Opposed deity, then those costs would be 500 xp, 750 xp, 1,000 xp, and 2,500 xp, respectively.

The costs for Characteristic Advances are cumulative. So a player couldn't just pay 500 xp for a +10 increase in a Characteristic associated with an Allied deity for their character. Instead, that player would pay 250 xp for the Simple Advance, and then pay 500 xp for the Intermediate Advance.

The only exception to this is Infamy, which may be purchased at a flat rate of 500 xp per +5 advance. This may be done as many times as the player likes, so long as his Infamy Characteristic is lower than 40. If his Characteristic is 40 or higher, he may not purchase Infamy advances, he must earn Infamy through his actions (see page 304).

Example

Going back to Jason and his Champion, Mordecai, when he first chose to purchase a Strength Increase, he was on the path of unaligned. Because of this, the Simple Strength Characteristic advancement counted as an Allied purchase. This had a price of 250 xp for the +5 Characteristic increase. Later, after Mordecai has embarked upon the path of Khorne, Jason decides to purchase the Intermediate Strength Characteristic advancement. Because he is a devotee of Khorne, this counts as a True purchase. The price for this +5 Characteristic Increase is an additional 250 xp.

Skill Advances

Characters learn new skills or improve existing skills by selecting skill advances. As with Characteristic Advances, the cost in xp of a Skill advance is affected by the path of their Devotion. This represents Heretics following certain paths finding more interest in learning Skills that pertain to their path, rather than non-related Skills. Skill advances are divided into four progression levels. These are as follows:

- Known: The character can use the Skill without penalty.
- Trained: The character receives a +10 on all Skill Tests when using the skill.
- Experienced: The character receives a +20 on all Skill Tests when using the skill. This bonus replaces the benefit for being Trained.
- Veteran: The character receives a +30 on all Skill Tests when using the skill. This bonus replaces the benefit for being Experienced.

When improving a skill, a character must progress through each of the progression levels in turn, starting at Known and ending with Veteran. So for example, players may not choose to pay for the Trained Skill Advance for their character without first purchasing the Known Skill Advance. Note that characters may have received the Known or Trained Advance already as part of their Racial or Archetype selections. Table 2-5:Advances by Alignment indicates with which deity's path a particular skill is associated. Table2-4: Allies and Opponents describes the relationship of another deity with that of each character's path.

Also note that each time a character purchases a progression level in a Skill (Known, Trained, Experienced, or Veteran), this counts as one purchase for the purposes of checking Alignment. So a character who purchases Veteran (+30) Psyniscience has four points in Alignment towards Tzeentch (unless one of those advances came as part of his Archetype, in which case that particular advance doesn't count).

Example

Now that Mordecai is firmly on the path of Khorne, Jason decides to purchase the Evasion Skill. Because this is a True Skill, the Known rank has a purchase price of 100 xp. If he were to choose to improve his Charm Skill—associated with Slaanesh—from Known to Trained, it would cost him a further 500 xp, as it would be an Opposed Skill Advance.

Please refer to **Chapter III: Skills** for more information on selecting Skills and Skill descriptions. Before choosing any Specialist Skill Advances, please refer to page 91 for information on selecting the individual Specialisations necessary.

Talent Advances

Talents are enhancements that permit a Character to use his natural abilities in new fashions. These may provide a situational bonus to the use of a skill or Characteristic. Other talents provide specific unusual ways for a character to take advantage of his equipment. Please refer to **Chapter IV: Talents** and Traits for detailed descriptions of all of these Talents.

Psychic Powers are also purchased using Talent Advances. Please refer to **Chapter VI: The Powers of the Warp** for

Table 2-7: Skill Advance Costs

Patron Status	Known	Trained	Experienced	Veteran
True	100 xp	200 xp	400 xp	600 xp
Allied	200 xp	350 xp	500 xp	750 xp
Opposed	250 xp	500 xp	750 xp	1000 xp

Table 2-8: Skills and Associations

Skill	Characteristic	Affiliation	Page
Acrobatics	Agility	Slaanesh	93
Athletics	Strength	Khorne	95
Awareness	Perception	unaligned	95
Charm	Fellowship	Slaanesh	96
Command	Fellowship	Khorne	97
Commerce	Intelligence	unaligned	97
Common Lore	Intelligence	unaligned	98
Deceive	Fellowship	Slaanesh	99
Dodge	Agility	Slaanesh	99
Forbidden Lore	Intelligence	Tzeentch	100
Inquiry	Intelligence	unaligned	100
Interrogation	Willpower	unaligned	101
Intimidate	Strength	Nurgle	101
Linguistics†	Intelligence	unaligned	102
Logic	Intelligence	Tzeentch	102
Medicae	Intelligence	Nurgle	103
Navigation†	Intelligence	unaligned	105
Operate†	Agility	unaligned	105
Parry	Weapon Skill	Khorne	107
Psyniscience	Perception	Tzeentch	107
Scholastic Lore	Intelligence	unaligned	108
Scrutiny	Perception	Tzeentch	108
Security	Intelligence	unaligned	109
Slight of Hand	Agility	unaligned	109
Stealth	Agility	unaligned	110
Survival	Perception	Nurgle	110
Tech-Use	Intelligence	unaligned	110
Trade	Intelligence	unaligned	111

†*Specialist Skill*

more information on Psychic Powers. Note also that the cost in xp for Psychic Powers is variable. Each Psychic Power's price is detailed in its description within that chapter. In order to purchase a Psychic Power that has an affiliation with one of the Dark God's, the character must first be Devoted to that god. This Power then counts as a Talent Advance along that deity's path.

As with Characteristics and skills, many talents are affiliated with the paths of specific Chaos gods. Talents which are typical of that deity's followers are less expensive for those on the Dark God's path. Those talents which are more commonly used by devotees of other Ruinous Powers are more expensive for the character to acquire. Refer to **Table 2-9: Talent Advance Costs** for the specific costs in xp.

In addition to their divine associations, Talents are divided into Tiers. Tiers are simply ways of representing that some Talents are more powerful (and therefore cost more experience) than others. Therefore, all Tier One Talents cost the same (though the prices may change depending on a character's alignment), all Tier Two Talents cost the same, and all Tier Three Talents cost the same.

However, Tier Two and Three Talents (as well as Tier One Talents) often have prerequisites that must be met before the Talent can be purchased. In this way, **Black Crusade** characters may find themselves needing to purchase lower Tier Talents before they buy higher Tier Talents.

Khorne and Psykers

The Blood God Khorne has a specific hatred of psykers and sorcerers and will not suffer their presence. This can prove to be interesting if a Psyker or Sorcerer takes enough advances that he becomes Aligned to Khorne.

In game terms, those Aligned to Khorne may never use Psychic Powers, even if they possess the Psyker Trait. As long as they are Aligned to Khorne, they also do not count as having the Psyker Trait.

If such an individual later leaves Khorne's Alignment, they can use their Psychic Powers and count as psykers as normal.

Specialist Talents

Some talents are designated as Specialist Talents. These talents may be selected more than one time, with a different speciality each time. Please refer to page 118 for more information.

Taking Talents Multiple Times

Some Talents may be taken multiple times, in which case this will be noted in the Talent description. There are only a few of these Talents, the most prominent being Sound Constitution (which increases a Heretic's Wounds) and Psy Rating (which increases a Heretic's Psy Rating). When taking these Talents subsequent times, simply pay the experience cost each time.

However, it should be noted that most Talents that can be taken multiple times have a hard limit—a maximum number of times they can be taken.

MARKS OF CHAOS

Those characters who are deeply ingrained upon the path of Alignment to a deity may earn that Dark God's Mark. A mark imparts particular abilities upon a character when it is received. When a character has taken twenty advances upon a single path of Devotion, their persistence will attract that sponsor's attention. If the character has at least five more Advances from that path than from any other Dark God, then

Table 2-9: Talent Advance Costs

Patron Status	Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three
True	200 xp	300 xp	400 xp
Allied	250 xp	500 xp	750 xp
Opposed	500 xp	750 xp	1000 xp

Table 2-10: Tier One Talents

Name	Prerequisites	Benefit	Devotion	Page
Ambidextrous	Ag 30	Use either hand equally well–reduce penalties for using two weapons.	unaligned	118
Ancient Warrior	Fel 35, WP 35	Veteran of the Long War.	unaligned	118
Cold Hearted	—	Immune to seduction, resistant to Charm.	unaligned	120
Combat Sense	Per 30	Use Per bonus instead of Ag bonus for initiative.	unaligned	121
Cursed Heirloom	—	Gain ancient item Heretic must always carry.	unaligned	121
Disarm	Ag 30	Force opponent to drop weapon.	unaligned	122
Double Team	—	Gain additional +10 for outnumbering opponent.	unaligned	122
Enemy	—	A group or organisation despises the Heretic.	unaligned	123
Ferric Summons	Ferric Lure Implants, Mechanicus Implants	Can summon larger metallic objects.	unaligned	124
Legion Weapon Training	Chaos Space Marine	Use any Traitor Legion weapon without penalty.	unaligned	127
Lesser Minion of Chaos	Fel 40	Gain a lesser minion.	unaligned	127
Orthoproxy	—	+20 bonus to resist mind control or interrogation.	unaligned	129
Peer	Fel 30	Character has good reputation amongst chosen group.	unaligned	129
Quick Draw	—	Draw weapon as Free Action.	unaligned	130
Raptor	Operate (Auronautica)	Increased damage when using jump pack.	unaligned	130
Takedown	—	Make special attack to stun opponent.	unaligned	131
Technical Knock	Int 30	Un-jam gun as Half Action.	unaligned	131
Weapon-Tech	Tech Use +10, Int 40	Increase potency of advanced weaponry.	unaligned	134
Weapon Training†	—	Use Weapon Group without penalty.	unaligned	134
Berserk Charge	—	Gain +20 bonus to hit when charging.	Khorne	119
Flesh Render	Weapon Training (Chain)	Inflicts more damage with Tearing Quality.	Khorne	124
Frenzy	—	Enter psychotic rage to gain combat bonuses.	Khorne	124
Pity the Weak	S 35, WP 35	Bonuses to Intimidate or Command with weak individuals.	Khorne	129
Street Fighting	WS 30	Add half WS to Critical Damage.	Khorne	131
Unarmed Warrior	WS 35, Ag 35	Improves unarmed attacks.	Khorne	133
Die Hard	WP 40	Improves chances of surviving Blood Loss.	Nurgle	122
Disturbing Voice	—	+10 to Intimidate, –10 to Charm.	Nurgle	122
Iron Jaw	T 40	Test Toughness to overcome Stunning.	Nurgle	126
Jaded	WP 40	Ignore mundane horrors.	Nurgle	126
Resistance†	—	Gain +10 bonus to particular resistance test.	Nurgle	131
Sound Constitution	—	Gain an additional Wound.	Nurgle	131
Air of Authority	Fel 30	Affect more targets with Command	Slaanesh	118
Catfall	Ag 30	Reduce falling damage.	Slaanesh	120
Excessive Wealth	Inf 40	Character has more resources.	Slaanesh	123
Leap Up	Ag 30	Stand as Free Action.	Slaanesh	126
Lightning Reflexes	—	Roll twice and take highest for Initiative rolls.	Slaanesh	127
Mimic	—	Character can copy voices.	Slaanesh	128
Radiant Presence	Fel 45	Character has bewitching aura.	Slaanesh	130
Rapid Reload	—	Reduce reload time.	Slaanesh	130
Sure Strike	WS 30	Reduce penalties for melee called shots.	Slaanesh	132
Unremarkable	—	Heretic is easily forgotten.	Slaanesh	133
Psychic Power†	Psyker	May take one psychic power.	Special	130
Blind Fighting	Per 30	Suffer half usual penalties for obscured vision.	Tzeentch	120
Combat Formation	Int 40	Use Intelligence bonus for initiative.	Tzeentch	121
Deadeye Shot	BS 30	Reduce penalties for ranged called shots.	Tzeentch	122
Heightened Senses†	—	Gain +10 bonus to particular sense.	Tzeentch	125
Light Sleeper	Per 30	Count as awake even when sleeping.	Tzeentch	127
Meditation	—	Character may enter trance to ignore fatigue.	Tzeentch	128
Polyglot	Int 40, Fel 30	Character has innate grasp of languages.	Tzeentch	129
Total Recall	Int 30	Character can remember trivial facts and minor details.	Tzeentch	132
Warp Sense	Psy Rating, Psyniscience, Per 30	Allows Psyniscience Test as Free Action.	Tzeentch	133

†Talent group.

Table 2-11: Tier Two Talents

Name	Prerequisites	Benefits	Devotion	Page
Armour-Monger	Int 35, Tech Use, Trade (Armourer)	Increase the efficacy of physical armour.	unaligned	118
Betrayer	Cold Hearted, Intimidate	Kill minions or allies for benefits.	unaligned	119
Child of the Warp	Psy Rating	Persistent Psychic Phenomena and potential psy rating boost.	unaligned	120
Counter Attack	WS 40	May attack after successful Parry.	unaligned	121
Deflect Shot	Ag 50	Add WS Bonus to AP against Primitive ranged attacks.	unaligned	122
Exotic Weapon Training	—	Gain proficiency with one exotic weapon.	unaligned	124
Hip Shooting	BS 40, Ag 40	Character may shoot when moving.	unaligned	125
Hotshot Pilot	Ag 40, Operate (any one)	Heretic can drive or fly anything.	unaligned	126
Independent Targeting	BS 40	Fire at multiple targets more than 10 metres apart.	unaligned	126
Luminen Shock	Luminen Capacitors, Mechanicus Implants	Heretic can discharge energy in melee attack.	unaligned	127
Maglev Transcendence	Maglev Coils/Mechanicus Implants	Heretic can hover for longer periods of time.	unaligned	127
Marksman	BS 35	No penalties for firing at long or extreme range.	unaligned	127
Mechadendrite Use†	Mechanicus Implants	Gain ability to use certain Mechadendrites.	unaligned	128
Minion of Chaos	Fel 45, Infamy 30	Gain a minion.	unaligned	128
Sacrifice	Psy Rating	Kill sentient being to augment ritual.	unaligned	131
Sharpshooter	BS 40, Deadeye Shot	Decrease penalty for ranged called shots.	unaligned	131
Two-Weapon Wielder†	—	May fight with two weapons.	unaligned	132
Battle Rage	Frenzy	Parry while frenzied	Khorne	119
Combat Master	WS 30	Opponents get no bonus for outnumbering Heretic.	Khorne	121
Furious Assault	WS 35	On a successful WS Test, gain free second attack.	Khorne	125
Hatred†	—	Gain +10 bonus to attack hated creatures.	Khorne	125
Killing Strike	WS 50	Spend Infamy Point to make melee attacks unavoidable.	Khorne	126
Storm of Iron	BS 45, Weapon Training (any one ranged)	Adds half WS to Damage against Hordes.	Khorne	131
Swift Attack	WS 30	May make multiple melee attacks.	Khorne	132
Unarmed Master	WS 45, Ag 40, Unarmed Warrior	Deadly fighter while unarmed.	Khorne	133
Whirlwind of Death	WS 40	Make one attack for each melee opponent.	Khorne	134
Baleful Dirge	Disturbing Voice, Intimidate +10	WP Test or suffer –10 to next roll.	Nurgle	119
Bulging Biceps	S 45	Remove bracing requirements for certain weapons.	Nurgle	120
Corpus Conversion	Psy Rating, Human	Use blood for power.	Nurgle	121
Hardy	T 40	Character always heals as if lightly wounded.	Nurgle	125
Nerves of Steel	—	Reroll Pinning Tests.	Nurgle	128
Prosanguine	Black Blood/Autosanguine, Mechanicus Implants	Test to heal 1d5 damage.	Nurgle	129
Unshakeable Will	WP 35	May reroll failed Fear Tests.	Nurgle	133
Crippling Strike	WS 50	Add +2 to melee Crit Damage.	Slaanesh	121
Hard Target	Ag 50	–20 to hit character when he Charges or Runs.	Slaanesh	125
Inspire Wrath	Air of Authority	Inspire crowds to hatred and anger.	Slaanesh	126
Iron Discipline	Fel 30	Followers resist Pinning and Fear.	Slaanesh	126
Precise Blow	WS 40, Sure Strike	Reduce penalty for melee called shots.	Slaanesh	129
Rapid Reaction	Ag 40	Test Ag to ignore surprise.	Slaanesh	130
Crack Shot	BS 50	Add +2 to ranged Crit Damage.	Tzeentch	121
Foresight	Int 30	Contemplate to gain +10 bonus to next Test.	Tzeentch	124
Paranoia	—	Heretic always alert for danger.	Tzeentch	129
Strong Minded	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Techniques)	May re-roll failed WP Tests to resist psychic powers.	Tzeentch	131
Warp Conduit	Psy Rating, Strong Minded, WP 50	Spend Infamy Point to get +1d5 to Psy Rating.	Tzeentch	133
Wisdom of the Ancients	Int 40	Spend Infamy Point to gain insight into situation.	Tzeentch	133

†Talent group.

Table 2-12: Tier Three Talents

Name	Prerequisites	Benefits	Devotion	Page
Arms Master	WS 40, BS 40, Weapon Training (any two)	Less penalty for using weapons untrained.	unaligned	119
Blade Dancer	WS 40, Two Weapon Wielder (Melee)	Reduced penalties for fighting with two melee weapons.	unaligned	119
Bolter Drill	Weapon Training (Bolt), BS 40	Additional DoS when firing Bolt weapons.	unaligned	120
Greater Minion of Chaos	Fel 55, Infamy 50	Gain a greater minion.	unaligned	125
Gunslinger	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	Reduce penalties for fighting with two pistols.	unaligned	125
Luminen Blast	Luminen Shock, Luminen Capacitors, Mechanicus Implants	May discharge stored energy as ranged attack.	unaligned	127
Master Enginseer	Tech Use +20, Mechanicus Implants	Can spend Infamy Points to automatically succeed on Tech-Use Tests.	unaligned	128
Mastery†	Rank 4 in Selected Skill	May spend Infamy Point to automatically succeed Test concerning selected Skill.	unaligned	128
Psy Rating	Psyker	Character increases psychic potential.	unaligned	129
Sidearm	WS 40, BS 40, Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic, Melee)	Reduce penalties for fighting with pistol and melee weapon.	unaligned	131
Step Aside	Agility 40, Dodge, Parry	May make additional Dodge or Parry attempt.	unaligned	131
Target Selection	BS 50	May shoot into melee without penalty.	unaligned	132
Unholy Devotion	Minion of Chaos	Minions take hits for the Heretic.	unaligned	133
Blademaster	WS 30, Weapon Training (any melee)	Reroll missed attack, once per round.	Khorne	119
Blood God's Contempt	Frenzy, WP 40	Spend Infamy Point to gain resistance to Psychic Powers.	Khorne	120
Crushing Blow	WS 40	Add half WS Bonus to damage inflicted in melee.	Khorne	121
Hammer Blow	Crushing Blow	Make a Thunderous single strike with a melee weapon.	Khorne	125
Lightning Attack	Swift Attack	Heretic may make many melee attacks with single roll.	Khorne	127
Thunder Charge	S 50	Break enemies with armoured charge.	Khorne	132
Fearless	Nerves of Steel	Immune to Fear and Pinning.	Nurgle	124
Master Chirurgeon	Mediacae +10	Perform advanced medical procedures.	Nurgle	127
Mighty Shot	BS 40	Add half BS Bonus to ranged damage rolls.	Nurgle	128
Never Die	WP 50, T 50	Ignore penalties from Critical Damage by spending Infamy Point.	Nurgle	128
True Grit	T 40	Reduce Critical Damage taken.	Nurgle	132
War Cry	S 50, WP 50, Disturbing Voice	Gain Fear Rating with fearsome war cry.	Nurgle	133
Assassin Strike	Ag 40, Acrobatics	After making melee attack, test Acrobatics to move.	Slaanesh	119
Demagogue	Inspire Wrath	Affect larger groups with Charm and Intimidate.	Slaanesh	122
Into the Jaws of Hell	Iron Discipline, Fel 50	Followers ignore fear and pinning.	Slaanesh	126
Preternatural Speed	WS 40, Ag 50	Doubles speed when charging.	Slaanesh	129
Sprint	—	Move more quickly in combat.	Slaanesh	131
Bastion of Iron Will	Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 40	Gain bonus to Opposed Tests defending against psychic powers.	Tzeentch	119
Blasphemous Incantation	Psy Rating	Incant secret words of power to enhance abilities.	Tzeentch	119
Eye of Vengeance	BS 50	Increase chances of Zealous Hatred.	Tzeentch	124
Favoured by the Warp	WP 35	Roll twice for Psychic Phenomena and choose.	Tzeentch	124
Infused Knowledge	Int 40, Lore (any one)	Know a little bit about everything.	Tzeentch	126
Warp Lock	Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 50	Ignore Psychic Phenomenon once per session.	Tzeentch	133



they earn the mark of their respective Chaos God. Once a Mark is earned, it is kept for as long as they remain true to their Devotion.

No expenditure of xp is required to receive a Mark of Chaos. It is instead a reward from the Ruinous Powers directly to those servants who are most true to their ways. Note that Marks may also be received via Gifts of the Gods on pages 299–303.

If a character ever leaves a path of Devotion that has earned them a Mark of Chaos, they immediately lose the Mark and all associated benefits. In addition, they incur the wrath of their former sponsor. At the time they leave the path that garnered them the Mark, they must immediately roll twice upon **Table 9–1: Gifts of the Gods** (see page 291) and pick the worse result (the GM is the final arbitrator whether a result is bad or not).

Note that there is no Mark for being unaligned.

Mark of Khorne

Characters that have earned the Mark of Khorne are marked by the Blood God, either as a physical mark emblazoned on a prominent part of their body or a more secretive but no less permanent mark upon one's soul. While the sigil causes no wound Damage, it continually weeps blood. These characters are constantly driven to spill additional blood for their dark patron.
Benefits: The character gains the Resistance (Psychic Powers) Talent, the Brutal Charge Trait, and Unnatural Strength (+2) if he does not already have them. In addition to these Talents, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM and may be a pre-requisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp, etc.

Mark of Nurgle

Heretics with the Mark of Nurgle are marked by the Plague Father, either as a physical mark corroded into their corrupted flesh or a more secretive but no less permanent mark upon one's soul. The sigil constantly weeps pus like a viciously festering wound, though this causes them no Wound Damage. These characters are compelled to constantly spread Nurgle's Rot throughout the galaxy.
Benefits: The character gains the Stuff of Nightmares and Unnatural Toughness (+1) Traits. In addition to these Talents, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM and may be a prerequisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp.

Mark of Slaanesh

Recipients of Slaanesh's mark are marked by the Lord of Pleasure, either as a perfectly formed mark upon their body or a more secretive but no less permanent mark upon one's soul. Characters who bear this Mark must attempt to seduce those they encounter to the paths of lust and greed.
Benefits: The character gains the Heightened Senses (All) Talent and the Unnatural Fellowship (+2) Trait. In addition, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM, and may be a prerequisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp, etc.

Mark of Tzeentch

Heretics with the Mark of Tzeentch are marked by the Master of Fate, either as a physical mark emblazoned on a prominent part of their body, or a more secretive but no less permanent mark upon one's soul. The emblem constantly glimmers with a distracting sparkle that flickers at the corner of the eye, almost like a gateway to the warp. These characters are constantly compelled to discover hidden secrets, to share with their Dark God.
Benefits: The character gains the Unnatural Willpower (+1) Trait and the Psy Rating (+1) Talent. If he does not already have it, he also gains the Psyker Trait. In addition to these Talents, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM and may be a prerequisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp.

Stage 6: Equipment and Corruption

"It is not enough to defeat your foe. His people must be ravaged, his homeland laid waste, and his reputation laid bare. Only then will your name be known as a true servant of the gods."

– Battlelord Octavius Kohl

At this stage players may choose to acquire additional adventuring gear for their characters. Rather than tracking particular amounts of currency, his ability to acquire gear is determined by his Infamy. As this value increases, he is more likely to have ransacked critical installations to acquire unusual objects. In addition, other devotees of the Dark Gods may know him by reputation and offer powerful artefacts to him as gifts to garner his favour as well as that of his dark master.

As a character performs more of these heinous deeds, the Immaterium gains ever-greater influence over his thoughts and even his body. The degree to which the malevolence has infiltrated his essence is measured by the Corruption attribute. As this value increases, the Heretic also receives additional blessings and gifts from the Ruinous Powers. Determining his starting Corruption value is essential to beginning that process of development.

EQUIPMENT

At this time, players may begin to reap the rewards for their characters' heinous past crimes. Each character starts with a number of pieces of additional equipment. The Heretic can select a number of pieces of gear, each piece with a total Acquisition modifier of –10 (see page 306). The number of pieces of gear available at this stage is equal to the Heretic's current Infamy bonus. See **Chapter V: Armoury** for more information on the selections available. No Test is required to obtain this equipment; so long as the equipment has a total Acquisition modifier no worse than –10, the Heretic gains it automatically.

In addition, the Game Master may choose to grant his Heretics additional starting equipment. It is suggested that any such gear be no rarer than Common Availability. See Availability, page 306 for more information.

Example

In creating Mordecai, Jason has a 24 Infamy. Since his Infamy Bonus is 2, he may select 2 pieces of additional starting equipment. He chooses a Meltagun for his first. The Meltagun is Very Rare, which entails a –20 modifier. However, he's only getting one, which brings with it a +10 modifier. Combined, the modifiers total out to –10,allowed for starting equipment. His second piece of equipment will be a Demolitions Charge. The charge is Rare with a –10 modifier. This means that Mordecai can afford to get 4 of them (a Minor amount, that comes with a +0 modifier, brings the total modifier to –10).

Corruption

All characters begin play with a Corruption of 0. Over the course of their careers, this value increases as they commit additional heinous crimes. These acts, undertaken to spread the influence of their dark masters, lead their souls ever further down the path to the daemonic. The unholy nature of their despicable actions marks their very essence, making additional feats of destruction ever easier.

As their Corruption increases, Heretics are rewarded with the blessings of the Dark Gods. For more information on this path towards destruction or salvation, refer to C**hapter 9: Corruption and Infamy**.

Stage 7: Embrace the Dark Gods

"The Dark Gods are our fears and our dreams made manifest. Their hungers are the same as humanity's, simply on a far vaster scale."

– Cardinal Xaphan, Saviour of Vraks

The next important stage in creating a Heretic is to choose a Dark God's path to follow. Not every character need select a patron and some characters are limited in their selections due to their previous choices. A character's choice of patron deity serves to guide their development as they pursue their agendas in the path of Chaos. Their patron may also dictate the sorts of tasks that they choose to undertake and the methods they use to accomplish their goals. For example, loyalists of Slaanesh are far more likely to choose to manipulate their prey with social cues, while a devotee of Nurgle might terrify his minions by spreading disease and corruption amongst the unworthy. Characters who have chosen a patron deity through the use of Advances are said to have a Devotion to that god.

Prior to making this decision, it is important to know that in latter stages of character creation, the Heretic's options become restricted based upon this choice. A psyker Devoted to Tzeentch finds it far more challenging to master the arts of melee combat than a warrior of Khorne. Please keep in mind that the character's choice of Devotion need not be permanent. As a character continues to develop in his understanding of the Ruinous Powers, he may choose to change his Devotion. This might be due to a new understanding of the ways of Chaos or it might simply be that the character is drawn to fulfil an alternative role. In the event this happens, a character's future advancement paths may change at that time.

Every **Black Crusade** character must choose to follow one of these paths. Those with a particular penchant for melee combat may wish to consider the path of Khorne. Heretics who embrace the notion of spreading fear, disease, and corruption may choose to Devote themselves to Nurgle. Characters that specialise in the arts of manipulation and seduction are likely to consider following the path of Slaanesh. Those who have an unparalleled hunger for knowledge are most likely to observe the myriad ways of Tzeentch. Finally, those who prefer to keep their options open, or are hesitant to over-specialise, may elect to consider themselves unaligned.

One important point players need to consider is that following the path of one of the Dark Gods does not mean the character has become a devoted servant or devout worshipper of that deity. On the contrary, it is far more likely that the Heretic is devoted to himself and his own goals rather than the goals of some incomprehensible deity. Thus, a devotee to Khorne may not kill to give Khorne skulls. Instead, he may kill to accomplish his goal of revenge. Even when he offers his kills to Khorne, he does this so that Khorne will favour him and make him stronger. Likewise, a devotee of Slaanesh does not seek out debauched pleasures because Slaanesh demands it. Rather he does so because he enjoys tasting these forbidden fruit. The fact that Slaanesh seems to delight and favour such hedonism is no concern, though it does not stop him from enjoying the Dark God's rewards as a result.

However, as a Heretic spends ever more time on a certain path, his goals and desires may grow to match those of the Ruinous Power he emulates. The warrior of Khorne cares more about killing and less about the vengeance itself, while the devotee of Slaanesh seeks ever-more-debased indulgences, even those that did not interest him previously.

Of all these paths, the path of the unaligned is the one where a Heretic may remain truest to himself. Though he gives each Ruinous Power their due, and may invoke the names of any and all of the Dark Gods, he resists becoming dependant on them. In turn, while he may not receive their favour, his will remains his own.

Selecting a Path

At this stage of creation, players do not need to spend any points or roll any dice. Instead, it is recommended that they consider the different paths and select one that seems most appropriate for their character. During the later stages, each player can then purchase the necessary abilities so that his character can best fulfil the yearnings of his dark sponsor. It is only during the character creation steps that follow—and his continuing adventures—that a Heretic can fully embrace his patron deity.

During the later stages of character creation, and as players develop their characters, they choose the character's path of Devotion when purchasing Advances. Many of the available talents have an affiliation in their description that associates them with one of the Chaos gods. If a character ever has three more Advances that are associated with a specific Ruinous Power than any other, then they are said to be Devoted to that Dark God. If a character's selected Talents and Traits do not favour a particular deity in this fashion, then they are followers of unaligned.

Example

When selecting Advances, Jason begins by selecting Iron Jaw, Survival, Sound Constitution twice, and Hardy. Because these all have the key word "Nurgle," and his character has no other Talents, his character has taken 5 Talents with the Nurgle keyword and is on the path of Nurgle. If Jason receives 10 Corruption Points before selecting any more advances, then he would become Aligned to Nurgle.

If he then selects a Talent with the key word "Khorne," he would only have 4 more Talents aligned to Nurgle than any other Gods. However, his alignment would not change until he received 10 more Corruption Points. At that stage, he would return to being unaligned. To remain upon Nurgle's path, he would first have to choose another Advance with the key word "Nurgle."

For more information regarding Talent selection, see Stage 5: Spend Experience Points on page 74.

KHORNE

"Blood for the Blood God! Skulls for the Skull Throne!"

—Battlecry of the Berserkers of Khorne

Devotees of Khorne have a boundless passion for violence in their Blood God's name. They journey through the warp all across the galaxy to commit acts of violence wherever they may. Often bearing his iconography and wearing his colours of blood red and bronze, they spread Khorne's influence through the fear his name represents.

Heretics who choose this path choose the path of the bloodthirsty killer and peerless warrior alike. Khorne desires bloodshed, war, and destruction. Those who provide this receive his gifts—strength, skill at arms, and boundless rage—in return. Some followers of Khorne are crazed killers, infused with his wrath and empowered by rage. They seek out wanton slaughter, with the simple logic that one foe's blood is as good as the next and each kill provides another skull for Khorne's throne. Other devotees of Khorne are martial paragons, driven to self improvement so that they might seek out worthy and dangerous foes on the field of battle. The notion of offering up the skull of a skilled opponent appeals to them and they feel Khorne looks favourably on their efforts. Neither follower of Khorne has use for mercy or compassion, though martial honour can be a common trait amongst certain groups of his devotees. Interestingly, a Khornate warrior is not necessarily a cruel individual. Though cruelty amongst his followers certainly exists, many feel their god does not care how one's blood is spilled, so long as it is through violence. Simply put, acts of sadism waste time.

The path of Khorne is a lethal one, both to their foes and, on some occasions, to their companions. When devotees of Khorne are in the heights of an ecstatic battle fever, they can be overcome by bloodlust and even attack their allies as they rejoice in the act of the slaughter. Again, many believe their god cares not from whence his skulls come.

The most common view of a Khornate warband is one who is indiscriminate and reckless, desiring only to commit violence with abandon and seldom discriminating in their target selection. At times, even victory is of a lesser concern when weighed against their desire for slaughter. While this is true in many cases, especially the infamous World Eaters Traitor Legion whose Berserkers are known for their brutality and violence, there are those Khornate warbands who do not fit this mould. Though no less dedicated to the Blood God, they plan their violence with methodical precision and careful strategy and scorn reckless rage as less effective than sharply focused anger. In effect, anyone who channels anger into acts of brutality becomes a follower of Khorne, though many would not be aware of their brief devotion. As the resultant violence spreads through the galaxy, Khorne's influence and power travels with it.

While Khorne spreads his influence through all acts of brutality, he is most drawn to those acts committed in close quarters and by strength of arm alone. Because of this, his influence drives his devotees to strongly favour melee combat. Some may even depend solely upon weapons that require them to close within arm's reach. In this way, they can be certain to smell and taste the blood that they spill in Khorne's name.

Of course, for those followers who fall in battle, Khorne



offers no sympathy. The Dark God has no patience for weakness or incompetence. Rather, he demands a steady supply of blood be spilled so that it might flow over the mountain of skulls beneath his throne of bronze. Those who provide such offerings are rewarded by his Ruinous Power. Those who fail provide offerings through their own deaths.

When Khorne does see fit to reward his followers, his blessings most often take the form of abilities that enhance a character's capacity for melee combat. As Heretics continue in the service of Khorne, their skills and hunger for battle alike may become elevated to unparalleled levels, allowing them to better serve their dark patron.

Dedicating a character to Khorne

There is one important restriction to keep in mind when considering the path of Khorne. This Dark God hates the manipulative ways of psykers every bit as much as he despises those who preach the notion of peace and compassion. Psykers who attempt to turn to Khorne's path lose their mental powers. Similarly, characters who have some measure of compassion—whether that compassion is an act or a reality—may not be well suited to the path of Khorne.

During the latter stages of character creation, and throughout their career progression, devotees to Khorne need to choose talents and traits that are specifically focused upon melee combat. Staying upon the Blood God's path also allows the character to more easily attain these abilities than those who are not true to Khorne's ways. As the number and potency of these abilities increase, the character may draw the full attention of the Blood God. Those who manage to achieve his notice are granted the Mark of Khorne. This mark permeates their very being with a constant lust for slaughter and an even greater capacity for engaging in it.

Talents that are tied to the Blood God are indicated by the fact that they have the keyword "Khorne." These include Frenzy, Berserk Charge, and others tied to melee combat (though by no means all).

NURGLE

"Only in the corruption of decay can we return to the purity from which life sprang."

—Oath of the Malignant Order

Those who choose to follow Nurgle's path are dedicated to the spread of disease and corruption throughout the galaxy. Wherever they travel, the masses die in agony as their bodies are overwhelmed by disease. There are no lasting cures for the contagions they spread through their Dark God's blessings. Rather, those who manage to resist seem to merely increase their suffering with each passing moment as they delay the inevitable. Further, their corruption affects not just the body, but the mind and soul as well.

Those who espouse Nurgle embrace the power of disease and decay, knowing that eventually every living thing in the universe must fall prey to these inescapable forces. Some do this through the nihilistic desire for rot and entropy, the belief that everything, even the universe itself, eventually dies and disintegrates. Others, however, worship Nurgle through their desire to endure and survive. For, as paradoxical as it might seem, Nurgle encompasses life as well as death and survival as well as decay. Rot and corrosion result in new life, virulent plagues, bacteria, and fungi feeding on the corpses of the dead, growing stronger on entropy. Thus, in a certain way, Nurgle represents the cycle of life and death, and his devotees are often blessed with supernatural endurance. Though they may suffer every ravage and symptom of Nurgle's plagues, they survive them with their dark master's blessing.

Heretics who follow this path may also be unusually patient, a patience possessed by their unique perspective. Their continued survival means they often feel they can simply outlast problems, surviving while those who oppose them die. Even if they have no desire to wait that long, a devotee to Nurgle is often methodical and precise, potentially verging on ponderous. Many of Nurgle's followers also possess a deeply morbid humour, mirth borne from the knowledge that no matter how much they suffer, they shall endure.

Those warbands dedicated to Nurgle often rely on the gifts of their deity to destroy targets—disease, rot, and decay. Potent viral weaponry, corrosive gasses, and necrotic weapons are all favoured by Nurgle, and such devices make him especially feared by his foes. Weakening their foes is sound tactically, as it allows devotees of Nurgle to survive and conserve their own strength, and the act of weakening and poisoning is thought to please their master. In this manner, Nurgle may conservatively preserve his own forces just as he exhausts those of his prey.

At the same time, some who are infected by Nurgle's diseases embrace the corruption rather than falling prey to it. As they begin to come to grips with their mortality, they reach out for any hope of survival. Nurgle listens for those who beg for survival, and may choose to grant his blessings upon some of those who have been infected.

Many who follow the Lord of Decay have been granted blessings that make them far more resistant to his diseases. In some cases, these blessings are immediately obvious. For these Heretics, their bodies are trapped in a state of perpetual decay. Their equipment, though it remains effective for them, might also have the appearance of extensive decrepitude. This can make concealing their presence far more challenging. However, not all of Nurgle's followers show these effects on the outside of their bodies, even if they are a festering hive of corruption within. Their inconspicuous appearance may make them doubly effective at spreading Nurgle's gifts.

This state of decay often provides some resistance to other forms of physical damage. Those who have been granted extensive blessings of Nurgle may exist in a veritable state of near death, with bodies composed as much of gangrenous tissue as living.

Dedicating a character to Nurgle

Not all Heretics are equally well suited to follow the path of the Lord of Decay. As his followers often bear distinctive signs of his handiwork, they are virtually incapable of intermingling with Imperial society. Between the stench of disease and their malformations, they may be easily detected. Characters that intend to follow a path of social manipulation may be better served by following another of the Dark Gods.

During the latter stages of character creation, and throughout their career progression, Heretics connected to

Nurgle need to choose Talents and Traits that are specifically focused upon survival, resisting death, and spreading disease. As the number and potency of these abilities increase, the character may draw the full attention of the Lord of Decay. Those who manage to achieve his notice are granted the Mark of Nurgle. This mark permeates their very being with the most virulent of plagues and the ability to spread them.

Talents that are tied to the Lord of Decay are indicated by the fact that they have the keyword "Nurgle." These include Hardy, Sound Constitution, Resistance, and others which are specifically tied to healing and enhanced physical toughness.

SLAANESH

"Embrace your hunger, your lust, your desire. The universe is ours for the taking!"

—Sanctifer LeVay, Cult of the Sacred Union

Followers of the Prince of Pleasure are devoted to excess and indulgence. They eagerly indulge their desires, no matter how dark or debased. As these Heretics travel through the galaxy, they constantly strive to experience new excesses, and if that seduces new victims, then so much the better. Those who taste of Slaanesh's rites and survive are invariably drawn to ever more indulgences, and thus start down the track of devotion to Slaanesh.

Devotees of Slaanesh revel in self indulgence and hedonism. They are interested in pleasing themselves and notions of restraint or sacrifice are foreign and unwanted. However, the nature of that excess varies wildly. Not all devotees of Slaanesh are devoted to physical debauchery. Gastronomic delights, novel sounds and smells, one's own appearance, or even the thrill of victory in battle are all pleasures pursued by Slaanesh's devotees. In the service of Slaanesh, physical punishment has no meaning—it is a perverse form of pleasure in and of itself. Rather, the only thing analogous to a punishment might be the endless repetition of a tedious act or the complete isolation from the world of sensation.

Some Heretics can only draw pleasure from carnal experiences. They are masters of seduction, wielding both pleasure and pain as their tools. Inhuman beauty often characterises these Heretics. Frequently, their besotted prey are only too willing to comply with the unholy requests of these unearthly beauties.

Other Heretics prefer to engage the mind and emotions as they engage the body. For them, their seduction may proceed from works of art or philosophy. They present awe-inspiring pieces as bait to entrap those who are drawn to their magnificence. Some of these Heretics even seed the galaxy with artefacts they have crafted, specifically to draw upon their prey's greed to compel them into worship of Slaanesh. These masterpieces invariably bear the taint of the warp. A painting may bear a spectacularly rendered malformation, or a poem or symphony might have an unnatural rhythm that corrupts the mind, and twists it towards the ways of Slaanesh. Similarly, philosophical texts could alter the mind of the reader as he engages it, twisting him to the ways of this Ruinous Power.

Slannesh's devotees constantly strive to seduce new allies to their cause, as the seduction and corruption of each new victim offers a completely novel experience. Slaanesh's followers are often incredibly persuasive beings, able to seduce with words, gestures, or lies. Of course, their methods of seduction and their goals as they corrupt their prey may vary substantially, but the ability to persuade is very common.

In some ways, the addiction to experience that Slaanesh grants these devotees is a blessing that overcomes many of the punishments that he might mete out. For just as these devotees crave the pleasures of the flesh and mind, they also crave the most severe of agonies. On those occasions when a devotee of Slaanesh is tortured to death, the Heretic's last words might be wails of ecstasy and devotion to the Prince of Chaos. Because of this, those who follow the path of Slaanesh are sometimes more prone to attempt riskier undertakings than those who follow the other Chaos gods.

Dedicating a Character to Slaanesh

For some characters, the Prince of Pleasure may not be the most appropriate Ruinous Power to follow. His path focuses on the abilities to persuade, understand, and deceive, and this may not be interesting for some characters. While exceptions to this rule exist, these characters may wish to spend time upon other paths before returning to the way of Slaanesh. Since Slaanesh champions self indulgence in all its forms, however, his path is thematically appropriate for a wide range of Heretics.

During the latter stages of character creation, and throughout their career progression, Heretics connected to the Prince of Pleasure must choose Talents and Traits that are specifically focused upon the arts of persuasion and seduction. Loyalty to Slaanesh permits these characters to easily attain these abilities. As the number and potency of these abilities increase, the character may draw the full attention of the Prince of Pleasure. Those who manage to achieve his notice are granted the Mark of Slaanesh. This mark transforms their very being into an entity of inhuman beauty. These creatures may turn many to their cause with only a few words.

Talents that are tied to the Prince of Pleasure are indicated by the fact that they have the keyword "Slaanesh." These include Air of Authority, Demagogue, and Rapid Reaction.

TZEENTCH

"All is Dust."

—Battlecry of the Thousand Sons

There are those who say that the Lord of Destiny knows the fate of every living being. Of those who believe this, some try to fight against their nature. These fools often create their own destruction as they attempt to do battle with the very essence of their beings. Others accept this truth and embrace their nature. In so doing, their eyes can be opened to the world beyond themselves. Many of these who have come to grips with the essence of reality choose to follow the path of Tzeentch, the Architect of Fate.

Heretics that embrace the path of the Changer of the Ways are drawn ever more deeply into a web of truths, both philosophical and scientific. In the path of their dark lord, these devotees truly learn that knowledge is the key that can be used to unlock tremendous power. For some, this power

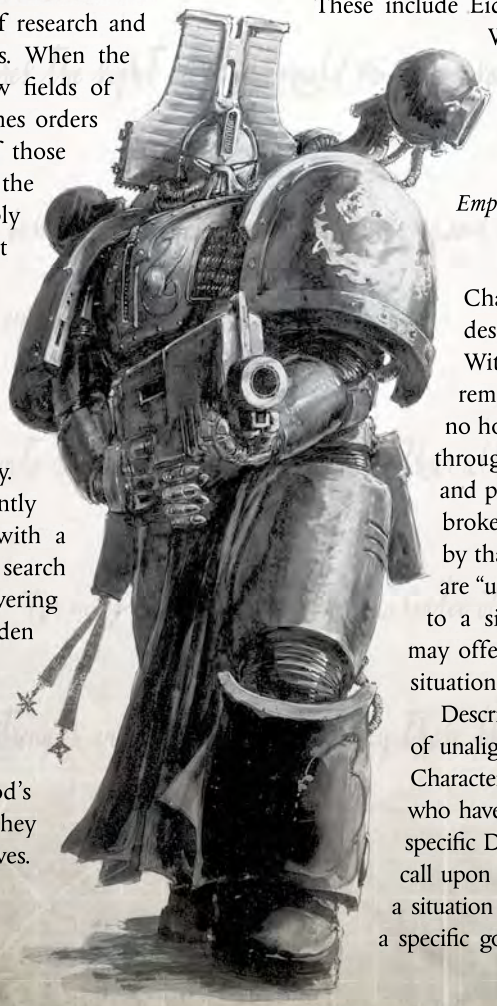
is a true manifestation of the energies from the warp. For others, the power is a metaphor for control. These characters discover hidden truths and use those secrets to control the actions of those they meet.

Many who follow Tzeentch cannot abide a mystery. These characters amass knowledge in all its myriad ways. Often, they are the purest of researchers—coveting knowledge for its own sake, rather than for some useful purpose. They strive for the thrill of discovery, and each new revelation offers new vistas of research. As one puzzle is assembled, countless others appear to be solved in turn.

At times, however, an esoteric bit of knowledge that they have acquired can become incredibly useful. It might be that they are suddenly capable of blackmailing prey into following their directives. On other occasions, they might be aware of a foe's weakness, even if their target is not. It could be that they are intimately familiar with a piece of xenotech or archeotech, thanks to the knowledge provided by their dark sponsor. For some, it may even be that the knowledge they have acquired has granted them the ability to commune with the warp, revelling in the very essence of Chaos and experiencing the constant glories of creation.

Tzeentch expects those who follow his path to earn his devotion. Though his knowledge is limitless, he hordes that information, doling it out to those who serve him only in accordance with his grand schemes. In order to earn the Dark God's continued benevolence, they must also provide him with influence and revelations. He expects his followers to discover the most intelligent of minds and draw them into his paths. The thrill of research and discovery can be a powerful temptress. When the proffered discoveries reveal whole new fields of research, their seductive potency becomes orders of magnitude more powerful. Some of those who follow Tzeentch's paths may view the universe with knowledge that is simply incomprehensible to those who have not beheld his majesty.

Many of the most powerful psykers and sorcerers in the service of Chaos are followers of Tzeentch, for the Lord of Fate is the master of mental abilities in all their myriad forms, including psychic powers, magic, and sorcery. Those who study the darkest arts frequently possess the mental acuity consistent with a follower of the Architect of Fate. As they search out new ways and new techniques, uncovering dark secrets and deciphering forbidden puzzles, they are fulfilling the desires of this Ruinous Power. Among these, accepting that they serve Tzeentch is often little more than a trifle. For as they come to grips with their Dark God's ways, they may abruptly realise that they have been serving him for their entire lives.



Dedicating a Character to Tzeentch

Some characters may find that the Master of Fortune's ways are not suited to their approach. Those unwilling to use secrecy, accumulate knowledge, and indulge in plots and plans are ill-suited to Tzeentch's path. They must change tactics as appropriate to the situation and constantly develop new tactics. Those who prefer a single solution to every problem, particularly if that tactic is one that lacks all subtlety, may not be well-suited to this path. Those who do not appreciate the miracle of discovery and the magnificence of holding knowledge hostage may wish to choose an alternative patron.

During the latter stages of character creation, and throughout their career progression, Heretics connected to the Architect of Fate must choose talents and traits that are specifically connected to knowledge in its countless ways and uses. For many, this includes the paths of the psyker and sorcerer. Loyalty to Tzeentch permits his devotees to more easily attain these abilities than those who are not true to his ways. As the number and potency of these abilities increase, the character may draw the full attention of the Great Conspirator. Those who manage to achieve his notice are granted the Mark of Tzeentch. This mark transforms their very being into a physical manifestation of the spiritual energy of the warp. By their very presence, they become a living gateway between the physical realm and the Immaterium.

Talents that are tied to the Changer of the Ways are indicated by the fact that they have the keyword "Tzeentch." These include Eidetic Memory and Favoured by the Warp among others.

UNALIGNED

"We are Returned! Death to the False Emperor!"

—War cry of the Black Legion

Chaos represents the primal force of destruction throughout the universe. Without its influence, the universe would remain a statically consistent place, with no hope for change or development. Only through the fires of change can evolution and progress occur. That which is must be broken down so that it might be supplanted by that which has yet to come. Those who are "unaligned" do not dedicate themselves to a single Ruinous Power. Instead, they may offer homage to all, one, or none as the situation demands.

Describing characters as followers of a "path" of unaligned is often a bit of an exaggeration. Characters with this devotion are simply those who have not chosen to embrace the path of a specific Dark God. Some of these Heretics may call upon a specific Dark God as appropriate to a situation at hand. Others may vocally endorse a specific god, but not hew to that entity's path.

Others might eschew the whole notion of unholy metaphysics, instead pursuing their own personal goals and desires.

Generally speaking, however, these characters despise the Imperium and desire its destruction, whether this is because of a personal vendetta, the belief that it is an unchanging monolith dedicated only to self preservation, or some other reason entirely. These agents of Chaos believe that in order for humanity to complete their conquest of the galaxy, they must first rebuild themselves. Only after this has been accomplished can mankind begin to come to grips with their ascendancy to embrace the ways of the Immaterium.

Keep in mind that unaligned characters are not necessarily heroic revolutionaries. While there are exceptions, they do not fight for justice, liberty, or to establish a civilisation dedicated to peace and higher learning. These Heretics fight because of their own pride, ambition, anger, or any number of other self-serving reasons. They have no qualms about instituting their own systems of oppression, nor do they object to spreading grief, tragedy, and injustice by their very actions. Their paths are not dedicated to the good of the population as a whole. Instead, they embrace the ways of the Immaterium, often so that they can simply revel in the destruction that their unholy power can inflict.

These Heretics are also not beyond the notice of the Chaos gods, or the notice of other entities that travel the depths of the Warp. While they do not directly serve any specific Ruinous Power, neither do they escape their notice or enjoy their protection. Any of the four Dark Gods may attempt to garner influence with an unaligned character, both by granting blessings and making requests for service. In this way, these followers may gain blessings associated with any of those powers. In turn, an unaligned Heretic often has no problem with calling on any of the Dark Gods to aid him in a particular task—usually the one most suitable depending on the situation.

Similarly, other lesser powers may also make contact with these Heretics. Some of these daemons, though far weaker in power than the Dark Gods, command far more influence and arcane majesty than any human mind could hope to comprehend. At times, these entities might set tasks before Heretics who follow this path. Through their influence, they may receive tremendous blessings, or they may be damned to a life of hideous transformation within the confines of the Warp.

While this path offers the broadest variety of opportunities to its followers, it also provides the least security and direction. Those who work with the lesser powers of the warp may not fully appreciate the nature of those entities with whom they deal. A daemonic power might make promises to the character that it is incapable of fulfilling. Similarly, if a Heretic upon this path angers one of the Dark Gods, he has no patron to turn to for protection. These characters must carefully consider their decisions and remain conservative in the risks they accept. Otherwise, a dark power might simply overwhelm their meagre resources and consign the Heretic and his followers to their cause permanently.

Keeping a Character unaligned

While some poor damned, deluded souls may think they can follow the path of the unaligned to play the various gods against the other, this is a foolish and futile notion. The Dark Gods are completely unknowable and incomprehensible, and one might as well attempt to outwit a hurricane. Of course, a Heretic might maintain these foolish beliefs, but not because he is succeeding in his deluded quest. More likely, his pitiful musings have merely been disregarded by capricious entities far more powerful than himself.

Other devotees may only be unaligned briefly. It may be that they have fallen out of favour with their current patron. It might also be that they have heard the siren song of one of the other Ruinous Powers. As they transition their loyalties, they may briefly consider the ways of the full spectrum of Chaos. Some might even begin a transition, but then fail to complete it as they discover the full glory of a more independent Heretic.

Yet other devotees of the Ruinous Powers may choose to follow the path of the unaligned because none of the four Chaos gods exemplify their beliefs. For example, such a character might embrace the glories of combat, but prefer to show more discipline than is permitted for those on the path of Khorne. Alternatively, they might hew too closely to the paths of two or more of the Dark Gods. Such a character might be a powerful sorcerer, Devoted to Tzeentch, who also engages in the manipulative and seductive ways of Slaanesh. These Heretics, who forge their own paths, are most likely to remain unaligned.

Finally, there are those for whom the idea of pledging oneself to any master is anathema. By remaining unaligned, these individuals believe they remain independent and true to themselves. In a way this is true, for the less they immerse themselves in one particular path, the less likely their goals and ideologies are to shift and merge with a single Ruinous Power.

For those Heretics who have an interest and methodology that is consistent with one of the four Chaos gods, remaining unaligned is a poor choice. These characters are better served by accepting the gifts that the Ruinous Powers seek to grant them directly for their loyalty. Such characters also find that they are more capable of advancing within their specialities than a character who attempts to forge their own, unaligned, path. It is only when the restrictions of their specific paths become too overwhelming that these Heretics should even consider the ways of being unaligned.

During the latter stages of character creation, and throughout their career progression, Heretics that wish to remain unaligned must be careful to balance their selections of Talents. While they may choose any Talents for which they meet the prerequisites, they should avoid over-specialising in any path associated with a specific Ruinous Power. If they choose to accept a disproportionate number of talents or Traits that are tied to a single deity, they instead become associated with that Dark God's path. As a consequence, they move from being unaligned and become a devotee of that god.



Skills

Using Skills

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Skill Ranks

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Skill Descriptions



Chapter III: Skills

"Knowledge is a sharpened blade in willing hands and the eager mind a razors edge to sink deep into the flesh of your foes."

–Zygthu Hel, Anointed Sorcerer of the Burning Path

Cunning and strength alone are not enough to walk the path to glory; a true servant of the Dark Powers must also be knowledgeable, insightful, and skilled. After all, what use are the tools of destruction if one does not know how to use them? And what use is the will to fight a foe without the knowledge of how best to defeat him? A true champion of the gods uses this kind of knowledge like a blade, cutting down those that oppose him or carving away the dead meat of his own retinue in his endless quest to gain favour with his dark masters. Knowledge and skill also often mark the difference between those that draw the eye of the gods and those that are destined to fall at their feet writhing in agony as their flesh twists, their bones snap, and they end their days as gibbering spawn.

In Black Crusade these abilities are represented by Skills and are the basis for a character's capabilities and the ways in which he can interact with the Warhammer 40,000 universe. Whether a character wants to use Survival to track a wounded beast, Athletics to swim across a filth choked canal, or Operator to drive an Imperial battle tank, Skills form an integral part of all characters in measuring their ability and competence at tasks and allowing them unique options during game play. More often than not when the GM asks a player to complete a task or overcome a challenge the player's character will need to pass a Skill Test to determine the outcome.

Using Skills

Skills can be used in a wide variety of situations from deciphering an ancient and cryptic pre-Heresy text or to sneak past a murder servitor. When a Skill Test is required it is set by the GM based either on the actions of the PC or as a response to the actions of NPCs and game events. The outcomes of successful or unsuccessful Skill Tests can vary widely and are covered in more detail in the individual descriptions of each Skill.

Skill Tests

All Skills are based on a Characteristic. When a character makes a Skill Test he is testing a Characteristic. If he rolls equal or less than his Characteristic on a 1d100 then he has been successful, if he rolls higher then he has failed. More details on Characteristics and Tests can be found in **Chapter I: Playing the Game**.

Example

Nick's character Azlyon is attempting to climb down the outside of a war-torn hab. Since this presents a challenge, and success is not guaranteed, the GM asks Nick to make an Athletics Skill Test for Azlyon. Athletics is based on Strength and so Nick notes Azlyon has a Strength of 35. Nick then rolls 1d100 and scores a 27. He has rolled less than his character's Strength and so has passed his Athletics Skill Test. Azlyon descends from the ruin without incident.

Opposed Skill Tests

Sometimes the outcome of a Skill Test depends on the actions of others and how well they can spot, argue, or hide from the character. In these instances the GM may call for an Opposed Skill Test. In an Opposed Skill Test, both the PC and the NPC, or the force opposing him, make a Skill Test as detailed above. Both parties then work out how much they have passed (or failed) their test by with the largest margin of success (or least margin of failure) indicating the winner. More details on Opposed Skill Tests can be found in **Chapter I: Playing the Game**.

Example

Having negotiated the ruined hab block, Azlyon runs into an Ashlander scavenger. To see if the Ashlander spots Azlyon as he tries to duck away and hide the GM calls for an Opposed Test between the Awareness Skill of the Ashlander and Azlyon's Stealth Skill. The Ashlander then rolls 1d100 against his Perception (the base characteristic for Awareness) of 37 and scores a 41, while Azlyon rolls 1d100 against his Agility (the base characteristic for Stealth) of 47 and scores a 77. Even though both the Ashlander and Azlyon failed their test Azlyon failed by a larger margin than his opponent and so has lost the Opposed Test. Spotting Azlyon as he tries to hide the Ashlander readies his meat-hewer and moves in to attack.

Guidelines on which Skills require Opposed Tests and the Skills which opposed them can be found in the individual Skill descriptions below.

Modifying Skill Tests

Quite often circumstances make a Skill test either harder or easier, increasing or decreasing the character's chances for success. In these instances the GM applies modifiers to the Skill Test to represent the difficulty or ease of the task, such as a bonus when trying to detect a large and obvious threat with Awareness or a penalty when trying to swim across a fast flowing river with Athletics. Modifiers to Skill Tests can also come from other sources such as Talents, Traits, and Gear and can be found in **Chapter IV: Talents and Traits** and **Chapter V: Armoury**. Characters can gain bonuses to their Skill Tests for having higher Ranks in Skills as detailed in Gaining Skills below.

Example

Azlyon is attempting to land a troop transport after descending from low orbit. Entering the atmosphere he flies straight into a storm front. To maintain control of the craft the GM makes Azlyon make an Operate (Aeronautica) Skill Test, imposing a –20 penalty for the severity of the storm. Azlyon rolls 1d100 against his Agility of 47 and scores a 34. Normally this would be a success. However, he must subtract 20 from the Characteristic due to the penalty for the storm, reducing it to 27 and thus resulting in a failure.

UNTRAINED SKILL USE

It is unlikely that a character is trained in the use of every Skill; focusing instead on the mastery of a few and proficient knowledge of a handful of others. However, a character can still use Skills in which they have no training when needs must, such as attempting to hide from an enraged Flesh Hound or trying to climb out of a pit of corpses before drowning in rotting flesh. In these instances the character makes a Skill Test as normal but suffers a –20 penalty in addition to any other modifiers.

There are several exceptions to this rule, but only when dealing with certain Skills which require a level of ability that cannot be attempted by the untrained, such as knowledge of the dark history of a particular daemon prince, commanding a Mars-class Battlecruiser, or speaking fluently with an Eldar Corsair in its own language. Which Skills are Specialist Skills is indicated both in the Skill list.

Special Uses

Several Skill entries have subsections that detail a specific, focused use outside its usual employment. These sections spotlight a particularly creative of interesting uses of the Skill, allowing for greater variety of Skill applications. Special Uses and their effects can be found at the end of each relevant Skill description.

SPECIALIST SKILLS

Some Skills are not just one Skill but many, representing a specialisation within the Skill itself. These are known as Specialist Skills and whenever a character learns a Specialist Skill they must choose a particular specialisation within it. Specialisations represent such things as specific knowledge of places, people and events, the ability to read and understands maps as well as the ability to plot a course across a world or the stars themselves, and the ability to speak, read or understand one of the countless languages, codes or glyphs used by the races of the 41st millennium.

A character may take a Specialist Skill more than once, taking a new speciality each time he takes the Skill. If a character takes a Specialist Skill more than once (each time choosing a new speciality), each speciality is treated as a separate Skill and must be advanced in Rank individually.

Example

Example: Nick is taking a new Skill for his character Azlyon. He decides to have Azlyon learn the Operator Skill so that he can drive a newly acquired dust-skiff. Azlyon already has the Operator Skill with a specialisation in Spacecraft, and so takes Operator with a specialisation in Skimmer as a new Skill. Though it uses the same base characteristic, for all purposes Nick treats this as adding a new Skill to his character.

A list of the individual specialities within each Specialist Skill can be found within the individual Skill descriptions.

SKILL DESCRIPTORS

Some Skills fall into broad categories that use common rules. These descriptors allow both players and GMs to instantly identify the appropriate rules section from **Chapter I: Playing the Game** for their resolution. These categories include: Crafting, Interaction, Investigation, and Movement.

Using Alternative Characteristics

Every Skill has a base Characteristic indicated in its description that is used to test against when making a Skill Test. Most of the time this is the Characteristic a character uses to determine success or failure. However, in some circumstances, when setting a Skill Test, the GM may wish to substitute an alternative characteristic which better suits the situation.

Example

Azlyon is attempting to camouflage his dust-skiff while he travels off on foot. The GM decides that he should use the Stealth Skill. He also decides that hiding a vehicle has little to do with Agility (the base characteristic for Stealth) and more to do with Perception and whether or not Azlyon notices he has left some part of it exposed. Therefore Azlyon makes a Stealth Skill Test (factoring any bonuses for talents, gear or extra Ranks in the Skill) testing against his Perception rather than his Agility.

Crafting Skills

Crafting Skills allow characters to create things from parts or raw materials. These creations can vary from exotic drugs and custom weapons to disturbing works of art and fiendish traps. The GM sets up an appropriate Extended Test for the task, and its resolution follows the guidelines in the Crafting sidebar.



Interaction Skills and Crowds

It is possible for a skilled commander or masterful orator to influence or control groups of people at the same time. When a character uses a Skill with the Interaction descriptor he can if he chooses affect a number of people up to his Fellowship Bonus, provided they can all clearly hear and understand him. If it is an Opposed Test then the character only makes one roll and compares the result to the rolls of each of the people he is trying to affect to determine success.

Interaction Skills

All Skills with the Interaction descriptor involve interplay with others. The difficulty of these Skill Tests depends on the individual's disposition towards the character, as defined by the GM, and according to the circumstances of the encounter. See page 276 of **Chapter VIII: The Game Master** for more information on NPC disposition.

Investigation Skills

Most of the Skills with the Investigation descriptor allow characters to collect information from various sources, and require Extended Tests as characters try to gather detailed intelligence on their foes or their mission. The GM determines the proper time frame for the test using the guidelines found in the descriptions of the Skills and his own common sense based on the task at hand, as it takes far longer to uncover the secret base of a rival cult than it does to scout the location of an armoured column.

Movement Skills

Skills with the Movement descriptor all relate to a character's mobility, anything from daring leaps across chasms to climbing up sheer cliffs. They involve the ability to move across, through, over, or between a character's environment. Movement Skills are all adversely affected by reductions to the character's mobility (such a crippling injuries to limbs) or environmental factors as detailed on page 40.

Gaining Skills

As the Heretics survive adventures and develop during game play they naturally become more competent and the range of their abilities expands and strengthens. A Player's

Table 3-1: Skill Ranks

Rank	Benefit
One (Known)	Use the Skill without the –20 penalty for being untrained.
Two (Trained)	+10 on all Tests with this Skill†.
Three (Experienced)	+20 on all Tests with this Skill†.
Four (Veteran)	+30 on all Tests with this Skill†.

†Characters only use the highest bonus.

Table 3-2: Skill List

Skills	Characteristic	Alignment	Descriptors
Acrobatics	Agility	Slaanesh	Movement
Athletics	Strength	Khorne	Movement
Awareness	Perception	unaligned	—
Charm	Fellowship	Slaanesh	Interaction, Investigation
Command	Fellowship	Khorne	Interaction
Commerce	Intelligence	unaligned	Interaction, Investigation
Common Lore †	Intelligence	unaligned	Interaction, Investigation
Deceive	Fellowship	Slaanesh	Interaction, Investigation
Dodge	Agility	Slaanesh	Movement, Combat
Forbidden Lore††, †	Intelligence	Tzeentch	Interaction, Investigation
Inquiry	Intelligence	unaligned	Interaction, Investigation
Interrogation	Willpower	unaligned	Interaction, Investigation
Intimidate	Willpower	Nurgle	Interaction, Investigation
Linguistics†	Intelligence	unaligned	Interaction, Investigation
Logic	Intelligence	Tzeentch	Investigation
Medicae	Intelligence	Nurgle	—
Navigation †	Intelligence	unaligned	—
Operate (Surface)	Agility	unaligned	—
Operate (Aeronautica) ††	Agility	unaligned	—
Operate (Voidship) ††	Intelligence	unaligned	—
Parry	Weapon Skill	Khorne	Combat
Psyniscience	Perception	Tzeentch	—
Scholastic Lore†	Intelligence	unaligned	Interaction, Investigation
Scrutiny	Perception	Tzeentch	Interaction, Investigation
Security	Intelligence	unaligned	—
Slight of Hand	Agility	unaligned	—
Stealth	Agility	unaligned	Movement
Survival	Perception	Nurgle	Crafting, Movement
Tech-Use	Intelligence	unaligned	Crafting, Investigation
Trade †	Intelligence	unaligned	Crafting, Interaction

†Denotes a Specialist Skill
††Denotes a Skill that cannot be used untrained.

Character learns new Skills and improves existing ones, getting steadily better and unlocking new options during play and new ways of overcoming challenges. Skills like other kinds of advances are bought, either during character creation or during play, by spending experience points. The amount of experience points a Skill costs depends its Rank and a character's affiliation to the gods as detailed in **Chapter II: Character Creation**.

SKILL RANKS

Simply knowing a Skill is very different from having mastered its use and different characters are likely to be able to use different Skills at varying levels. To represent this, all of a character's Skills are ranked from one to four, representing his level of ability. The benefits of having a Skill at a higher Rank is detailed on **Table 3-1: Skill Ranks**.

Skill Descriptions

The following are a series of in-depth descriptions of the Skills in **Black Crusade**, their uses, and other valuable information.

ACROBATICS (AGILITY)

Acrobatics covers feats of agile movement, graceful motion, and mastery of balance and form. With this Skill characters can leap nimbly across yawing chasms, maintain their balance on the pitching ship deck or fall gracefully to the ground without snapping their limbs. In combat a skilled acrobat can summersault, flip or cartwheel away from foes, twisting his body out of reach of their enemy or slipping past them in a blur of motion.

The GM may call on players to use the Acrobatics Skill when:

- They must avoid falling over on unstable ground.
- They wish to jump down from a height and land well.
- They want to move over or around a foe or obstacle in their path without breaking their stride.

Crafting

It is possible with the right skills and materials for a character to create their own items, either crafting basic gear and equipment like spears and storm-cloaks, brewing up herbal remedies or even advanced drugs and medicines, and building advanced gear such as automatic rifles or grenades. To create an item a character needs three things: the right Skill, materials, and time.

Crafting Skills

There are three different kinds of crafting Skills, each one covering the creation of different kinds of items.

Chem-Use: This Skill allows a character to create all manner of drugs and poisons as detailed on page 181 of Chapter V: Armoury. With the GM's permission players may even create new drugs and poisons based on the venom of slain creatures or to mimic the effect of certain worlds or environments. When creating drugs or poisons a character always needs at least a small sample of the substance he is trying to create.

Survival: This Skill allows a character to create any kind of primitive device or basic items such as clothing or foodstuffs. Survival can be used to craft any item with the Primitive Special Quality or any Primary Weapon (see Chapter V: Armoury). With the GM's permission players may also create any simple item with this Skill provided it can be fashioned from unprocessed materials and lacks any complex moving parts (i.e. clothing, a cart, a hovel, etc.).

Tech-Use: This Skill allows a character to create complex or technical devices such as those commonly created within the forges of Imperial worlds. With the GM's permission any weapon, armour, explosive or piece of tech can be created using this Skill. However, unlike Survival and Chem-Use, many items created using this Skill are fiendishly complex or their design a closely guarded secret and are only available to character with the right knowledge and access to advanced workshops.

Materials

When creating an item a character must have access to the right materials, otherwise he cannot make it. Whether or not these materials are on hand is up to the GM, though common sense should play a part (i.e. a character on a Feral world is going to have access to lots of basic materials good for the Survival Skill but might have trouble finding the complex parts or manufacturing base needed to make an autogun). Once it has been determined whether or not the materials are on hand, the GM then decides if the character needs to expend any resources acquiring them. As a general rule, when creating items using the Tech-Use Skill (or the Chem-Use Skill when creating advanced drugs such as those not occurring naturally) characters must always buy materials. Items crafted with Survival, on the other hand, can other be made from "found" materials, such as fashioning a bow when in a forest, or making a spear from scrap metal in an underhive.

When acquiring materials for crafting determine the items Availability and then decrease it by one step (i.e. Average items become Common, Common items become Plentiful, etc.). The character then makes an Acquisition Test to buy the materials just as if he were buying an item. Once he has the materials he can then try to create the item.

Time

Creating an item takes time and is always an Extended Test set by the GM. The length of the Extended Test and the time it takes depends on the complexity of the item. While both these factors are up to the GM he can use **Table 3–3: Crafting Items** as a guideline.

Table 3–3: Crafting Items

Type of Item	Time	Extended Test Successes
Chem Use Items		
Natural Drugs/Poisons	1d5 hours	4
Synthetic Drugs/Poisons	2d10 hours	8
Survival Items		
Weapons	1d5 hours	5
Armour	1d10 hours	6
Gear	1d5 Hours	3
Tech-Use Items†		
Weapons	1d5 Days	8
Armour	1d10 Days	12
Gear	1d5 Days	8

†Note in the case of Tech-Use, characters cannot create items they would not have access to designs for.

The GM can also modify Crafting tests depending on factors such as the presence of assistants, the workshop or lab available or an excess of funding or materials. Some example modifiers for crafting can be found in the individual Skill descriptions for Chem-Use, Survival, and Tech-Use.

Special Uses for Acrobatics

The following are certain special uses for the Acrobatics Skill.

Contortionist

A character can use his Acrobatics Skill to escape from bonds or the grip of a foe by twisting and turning his body. As a Full Action a character may make an Acrobatics Skill Test to free themselves from bonds, such as rope, manacles or the like. This test may only be attempted once to escape restraints; if he fails to free themselves the first time then he is simply too tightly bound and unable to contort his way free. The GM may modify this test depending on the quality of the bonds the character is trying to escape from.

Characters may also use Acrobatics to escape from a grapple (see page 243) by using their Acrobatics Skill instead of their Agility or Strength when grappling.

Manoeuvring

In combat, a character capable of acrobatics can more easily avoid foes or retreat from combat without harm. The character may make a Disengage Action (see page 235) as a Half Action (rather than a Full Action) if he makes an Acrobatics Skill Test.

Jumping

A well-trained acrobat excels at jumping, leaping, and lessening the effect of falls by folding their body as they hit the ground. When jumping or leaping (see page 40) a character may use his Acrobatics Skill in the place of Agility and Strength tests. When falling a character can make an Acrobatics Skill Test to reduce the distance fallen by a number of metres equal to their Agility Bonus.

Example Modifiers

+30	Moving in an open environment with Earth-like gravity, or completely unarmoured.
+20	Moving through an open forest or tall grass field, or with hands free of weapons or other objects.
+10	Moving in a low gravity environment, wearing armour only on torso.
+0	Moving across rubble or debris, or in loose and shifting sand.
–10	Moving in obstructed terrain, or in heavy armour.
–20	Moving in zero gravity or with both hands tied behind one's back.
–30	Moving in an environment with gravity three times Terran standard.

Skill Use: Full Action unless otherwise noted.

ATHLETICS (STRENGTH)

Athletics is the ability to run long distances, climb sheer surfaces ,and swim strongly without tiring or faltering. It encompasses all manner of strength and brawn based tasks that a character may undertake; a skilled athlete can run for miles, heft mighty loads, or cross fast-flowing rivers with relative ease. Athletics also allows a character to push themselves to greater levels of endurance and shrug off the effects of fatigue when running, swimming, or climbing.

The GM may call on players to use the Athletics Skill when:

- They must swim across a body of water or try to stay afloat.
- They wish to push themselves beyond their limits and keep going even when exhausted.
- They want to climb a cliff or cross extremely rough ground.

A character's background may dispose him more towards certain types of athletics. Not all skilled climbers make excellent swimmers, though both may have similar upper body strength. A GM can keep this in mind when determining the difficulty of a Test. For example, a character from a desert world or a Heretek with extensive augmentic parts could be required to make more difficult Athletics Tests to swim across a river than a character who grew up on an aquatic hive world.

Example Modifiers

+30	Climbing a ladder in a hurry or swimming in perfectly calm water.
+20	Climbing across a gantry or swimming with some method of staying afloat.
+10	Climbing the outside of a hive or swimming with specialised gear (i.e. flippers).
+0	Climbing a rough rock wall with protruding stones, or swimming across a deep lake.
–10	Climbing a brick wall or swimming a slow river.
–20	Climbing a ferrocrete wall without climbing aids or swimming against a current.
–30	Climbing up a slick plasteel bulkhead or swimming in a storm.

Skill Use: Full Action unless otherwise noted.

AWARENESS (PERCEPTION)

Awareness is a character's ability to understand and be aware of his surroundings and is vital to all characters who wish to see danger coming. A character skilled in Awareness is able to notice small details, sounds or smells before others and interpret what they might be and where they might be coming from. Awareness is most often used when trying to spot hidden foes or ambushes, though it can also be used to find hidden objects.

Special Uses for Athletics

The following are special uses for the Athletics Skill.

Endurance

Trained athletes are extremely fit and can push themselves far beyond the ability of normal people. As a Free Action, a character with the Athletics Skill may make an Athletics Skill Test at –10 whenever they suffer a level of Fatigue (see page 256) as a result of running, swimming, or climbing to ignore its effects. The character may continue to take tests and ignore Fatigue gained in this way indefinitely; however as soon as he fails a test he must rest for at least 4 hours and cannot use his Athletics Skill again during that time.

Heft

Athletes are also known for their strength and can lift great weights for short periods of time. As a Free Action, a character may make an Athletics Skill Test to increase their carrying capability for a single Encounter. For every Degree of Success the character achieves his Strength is increased by 10 for the purposes of how much weight they can carry, lift, or drag (see page 41) to a maximum of modified Strength of 100. Hefting may only be attempted once, and if the character fails the test he may not try again until the next Encounter.

In general, Awareness is used when trying to spot items or individuals that are either hidden or difficult to notice. Scrutiny is used to interpret hidden emotions, motivations, or other undercurrents. So while spotting someone hidden utilises Awareness, telling when someone lies requires Scrutiny (page 108).

When Awareness is used against an opponent (such as to spot an ambush) it is an Opposed Test (see page 91). Awareness opposes and is opposed by Stealth.

The GM may call players to use the Awareness Skill when:

- They are walking into an ambush or being spied upon by a hidden foe.
- They want to search an area for clues or find a hidden item.

Example Modifiers

+30	Detecting the approach of a tank, or spotting a jungle clearing containing a Marauder bomber from the air.
+20	Detecting a Hulking creature's passage or noticing a vehicle behind rubble.
+10	Detecting a small object in the open or spying a camouflaged artillery piece.
+0	Spotting someone in a crowd or searching a room.
–10	Detecting a well-laid ambush or searching a building for a specific document.
–20	Finding a specific spent bolt round on a battlefield.
–30	Noticing an assassin in a darkened room or searching through planetary records for a shipping manifest.

Skill Use: Free Action made in reaction to something.

Charm (Fellowship)

Charm is the ability to sway the reactions of others or impress people with a smile and kind word. A character with the Charm Skill can turn a hostile situation into a friendly one or ingratiate their way into secure places past suspicious guards. Charm need not be used whenever a character speaks to someone in a pleasant manner, but should be used whenever he wishes to modify a character's disposition and opinions, or persuade them to do something they may not have any interest or reason to do.

When Charm is used against an opponent (such as to change their mood) it is an Opposed Test (see page 91). Charm is opposed by Willpower.

The GM may call on players to use the Charm Skill when:

- They want to make someone like them.
- They wish to distract someone by drawing their focus away from others
- They are gathering information from locals or strangers

Example Modifiers

+30	Subject is already very friendly or loyal or the character is obviously harmless.
+20	Subject is friendly, or the character adds incentive such as a bribe.
+10	Subject is naturally talkative or the character is of a favoured gender or social class.
+0	Subject is ambivalent to the character, or has no prior reason to do what the character suggests.
–10	Subject doesn't wants to be bothered, or the character is rude or aggressive.
–20	Subject is suspicious of the character, or the character heavily armed.
–30	Subject is actively hostile, or the character has wronged the subject previously.

Skill Use: One minute or more (the length of a conversation, though brief interactions may provide opportunities as well).

Special Uses for Awareness

These are special uses for the Awareness Skill.

Lip Reading

Lip reading allows a character to effectively understand a conversation even though he cannot hear it. The character must have a clear view of the speaker's mouth and understand the language used by the target. The difficulty of this test is modified by –10 for every 10 metres of distance between the character and the speaker. The GM may assign other penalties for darkness, fog, or other factors affecting vision. However, magnoculars or other vision enhancing devices may offset this penalty or provide a bonus. A successful Awareness Skill Test reveals the general gist of the conversation. Additional Degrees of Success reveal correspondingly more information. One successful Test is enough to follow the conversation for the span of roughly one topic.

Special Uses for Command

These are certain unique uses for the Command Skill.

Inspire

A charismatic commander can try to inspire his followers to greater efforts through praise, careful direction, or threats of violence. As a Full Action the character can make a Command Skill Test to inspire one or more of his followers. Inspired followers receive a +10 on their next Skill or Characteristic Test.

Example: Azlyon is trying to smash his way into an officers' wardroom aboard an Imperial frigate in order to murder its occupants. Yelling threats at the mutants under his command he attempts to increase their efforts to break down the door. Using a Full Action (and thus not helping with the door himself) Azlyon makes a Command Test. If he is successful his followers gain a +10 on their next Characteristic Test (in this case a Strength Test to open the door) increasing the odds that Azlyon reaches those Imperial officers.

Terrify

A commander can use the Command Skill to terrify his followers into fearing him more than a Fear-causing foe. As a Reaction a character can try to counter the effects of Fear (see page 277) in his troops should they fail their Willpower test against a Fear-causing foe. Make a Command Skill Test opposed by the Willpower of the Fear-causing creature. Both the character and the creature add +10 to their rolls for each level of Fear they possess. If the character is successful his followers may ignore the effects of Fear from this creature for the encounter (they are simply more scared of their own commander).

Example

Hyr the Unspeakable is exploring the darkened corridors of a space hulk when his retinue stumbles into a ravenous Genestealer. Immediately his followers must make a Willpower Test to resist the fear caused by the vile alien, but fail their tests miserably, to a man. Before working out the effects of the Fear on his followers Hyr (having passed his own Fear test) tries to rally them with his own terrifying presence as a Reaction. Hyr now makes a Command Test opposed by the Willpower of the Genestealer; Hyr adds +10 as he has a Fear rating of 1 (in addition to any other bonuses he might have to his Command Skill) and the Genestealer adds +20 for their Fear rating of 2. Fortunately for Hyr he wins the contest and his followers overcome their fear of the beast, more afraid of what Hyr might do to them should they run, and fling themselves into the fray.

COMMAND (FELLOWSHIP)

Command is the ability to effectively lead men into combat and direct their actions against the enemy. This Skill allows a character to control the actions of his followers or change their standing orders in a combat situation quickly and accurately without the chance for misinterpretation or mistake. Command can also be used to inspire men to greater feats of courage or bloodthirstiness as well as to counter the effects of fear through the threat of violence.

The GM may call a player to use the Command Skill when:

- They wish to take control of an NPC under their command in combat.
- They need to rally their followers or organise them in the face of a surprise attack.
- They want their followers to execute a battlefield tactic such as "hold," "attack" or "retreat."



Example Modifiers

+30	Followers have high morale or commands are very simple to follow.
+20	Followers are performing well known tasks or commands can be followed out quickly.
+10	Followers outnumber their foes or commands are familiar to the followers.
+0	Commands are complex or the commander is newly in charge of the subjects.
–10	Followers are outnumbered by their foes.
–20	Followers are performing unfamiliar tasks or commands need to be interpreted.
–30	Followers have very low morale or commands are very complex or hazardous.

Skill Use: Half Action for simple commands, Full Action for more involved direction.

COMMERCE (INTELLIGENCE)

Commerce is an understanding of wealth, value, and exchange and how to use it to either make coin or procure goods and services for the best price possible. This Skill covers everything to do with deal making and business from bartering over chickens in a Feral world market to engineering interstellar trade agreements and ensuring a

Special Uses for Commerce

These are certain unique uses for the Commerce Skill.

Barter

Commerce can be used by a character to barter for personal items and gain a better than normal price. As part of buying an item a character may make a Commerce Skill Test opposed by either the seller's Commerce or Willpower (whichever is better). For every Degree of Success a character achieves he can temporarily add 2 to his Infamy (see page 304) for a subsequent Acquisition Test to buy the item. A character may only use barter when they are buying items for themselves face to face with the seller.

Evaluate

A character can use the Commerce Skill to determine the worth of an item or commodity. The GM should make this roll in secret, modifying the result depending on the Availability of the item or commodity in question (see above for example modifiers). A success tells the player the Availability of the item they are evaluating, while a failure tells them nothing. If they fail by more than three Degrees of Failure the GM should give them a false Availability.

Example

Azlyon is examining a newly-acquired Imperial officer's powersword with a mind to selling it. Powerswords are normally Very Rare, however this is an exceptional quality weapon with gilt edges and inlaid gems making it Extremely Rare. The GM secretly makes a Commence Skill Test for Azlyon. Unfortunately for Azlyon he is both untrained (suffering a –20 penalty) and only has an Intelligence of 29, modifying his Skill Test to a dismal 09. The GM rolls a 57, more than three Degrees of Success more than Azlyon's modified Skill. Because of the margin of failure the GM tells Azlyon's player that the sword is a cheap fake and only of Common Availability.

healthy profit. Commerce also includes an understanding of the value of things and can be used to appraise items or evaluate something potential worth.

When Commerce is used against an opponent (such as to broker a trade deal or haggle over a piece of gear) it is always an Opposed Test (see page 91). Commerce opposes and is opposed by either Commerce or Willpower.

The GM may call a player to use the Commerce Skill when:

- They want to get a good price for something.
- They wish to start a lucrative business venture.
- They are trying to figure out how much an item or raw material might be worth.

Example Modifiers

+30	Dealing with a highly-trusted merchant.
+20	Dealing with a trusted merchant.
+10	Dealing with a merchant who owes the character a favour.
+0	Dealing with an unknown individual.
–10	Dealing with a merchant which is suspicious of the character.
–20	Dealing with an alien merchant.
–30	Dealing with an openly hostile merchant.

Skill Use: One minute on average, longer for complex deals.

COMMON LORE (INTELLIGENCE)

All Common Lore Skills represent the common knowledge an individual might know about general information, procedures, divisions, traditions, famed individuals, and superstitions of a particular world, group, organisation, or race. This Skill differs from Scholastic Lore, which represents scholarly learning one might gain through study and research, and Forbidden Lore, which involves hidden or proscribed knowledge. Common Lore deals with basic information gained from prolonged exposure to a culture or area.

Unlike other Skills, Common Lore has multiple Specialisations. See page 91 for more information on how these Specialisations work. The Specialisations for this Skill are as follows:

Adeptus Arbites: Knowledge of the various arms and sub-sects of the Arbites, including details of rank structure, common procedures, and the basic tenets of Imperial Justice.

Adeptus Astra Telepathica: Knowledge of how psykers are recruited and trained for the Adeptus Terra, including how Astropaths are used throughout the Imperium, and the basics of sending and receiving astro-telepathic messages.

Adeptus Mechanicus: A general understanding of the symbols and practices of the Adeptus Mechanicus. For Heretics, this also includes a general understanding of those who left the hidebound strictures of the Mechanicus to strike out on their own.

Administratum: Broad knowledge of the labyrinthine workings, rules, traditions, and dictates of the Adeptus Administratum.

Ecclesiarchy: Understanding of the structure of the Adeptus Ministorum and its role in the worship of the Emperor.

Imperial Creed: Knowledge of the rites, practices, and personages of the Imperial Cult, the most common observances, festivals, and holidays in honour of the Emperor.

Imperial Guard: Basic information about the ranking system, logistics, structure, and basic tactical and strategic practices of the Imperial Guard, as well as particularly famed regiments.

Imperial Navy: Basic information about the ranks, customs, uniforms, and particular traditions of the Imperial Navy, as well as famous admirals and ships.

Imperium: Knowledge of the segmenta, sectors, and well

known worlds of the Imperium, including the Calixis Sector.

Jericho Reach: Information concerning the basic layout of the Jericho Reach and the events taking place there.

Koronus Expanse: Information concerning the general astrography of the Expanse, including known warp passages, regions, and legends of what may be found there.

Screaming Vortex: Knowledge about the myriad worlds, factions, and stories of the Screaming Vortex.

Tech: An understanding of simple litanies and rituals to soothe and appease machine spirits.

War: Knowledge of great battles, notable commanders, heroes, and famous stratagems employed by those who fight against the Imperium.

The GM may call a player to use a Common Lore Skill when:

- The GM feels the player's character may know something about a current situation, location, or individual.
- The character wants to know a specific detail about a common subject.

Example Modifiers

+30	Remembering the name of a broad region.
+20	Remembering generally known facts about a region.
+10	Learning general information about a specific planet.
+0	Remembering specific information about a specific planet or well-known location on a planet.
–10	Learning information about a large city.
–20	Learning information about a small settlement.
–30	Remembering information learned about a specific individual relatively unknown to most people.

Skill Use: Free Action.

Special Uses for Deceive

These are certain special uses for the Deceive Skill.

Disguise

A character with the Deception Skill can create a disguise for themselves, given enough time and a few raw materials. The time taken depends greatly on the complexity of the disguise; simply putting on an enemy's uniform or covering the character's face with filth may take minutes, while trying to change gender, race, or mimic a specific individual may take hours, days, or longer. The GM decides how long formulating a disguise takes and if the character has the materials at hand. Once the disguise is donned the GM then secretly tests for the player (using his Deception Skill and any appropriate modifiers) whenever the disguise comes under scrutiny (an opposed test against the Awareness of whoever is trying to see through the disguise). If a disguise passes this first test then it need not test again unless something changes (suspicion is cast on the character or a more observant NPC arrives).

Deceive (Fellowship)

Deceive is the art of lying or fooling others into believing something which is not true. A character skilled in Deceive is adept at convincing others of falsehoods, hiding their true intent from those around them or concealing some of the truth. Deceive can also be used to create a disguise, given the proper time and materials, which can be used to either hide their own appearance or even impersonate the appearance of another.

When Deceive is used against an opponent (such as to convince someone of a lie or fool them with a disguise) it is always an Opposed Test (see page 91). Deceive opposes and is opposed by Awareness.

The GM may call players to use the Deceive Skill when:

- They want to tell a convincing lie.
- They wish to distract someone with rambling nonsense.
- They are trying to disguise themselves.

Example Modifiers

+30	Telling a lie that is supported by what a person can see, creating a simple disguise meant to fool a stranger.
+20	Telling a lie which is partially true or only very slightly false.
+10	Telling a lie to someone who wants to believe it.
+0	Telling a lie to someone unknown to the character or creating a complex disguise with aid of props or kits.
–10	Telling a lie to someone who is already suspicious of the character.
–20	Telling a lie to someone who has been deceived by the character before.
–30	Telling a lie that contradicts what a person can see or disguising oneself as a close friend or loved one.

Skill Use: One minute, longer for complex deceptions.

Dodge (Agility)

Dodge is the ability to avoid blows in melee, duck incoming fire or leap out of the way of falling debris. It combines nimbleness of movement with trained reflexes and an awareness of all kinds of danger. A character can use his Dodge Skill to dodge either melee attacks or ranged attacks. Dodging attacks is a made in response to a foe's successful attack. A success indicates that the attack has been avoided and it does not hit the character. In the case of attacks which cause multiple hits (such as automatic fire) each Degree of Success a character achieves on his Dodge Test discounts one hit from the attack. Any excess hits not discounted by dodging are then applied to the character as normal.

The GM may call on a player to use the Dodge Skill when:

- They are attacked in melee.
- They are attacked with a ranged weapon.
- They need to avoid hazards such as falling wreckage or leap from a collapsing bridge.

Example Modifiers

+30	Character can easily detect the attack and has at least a round to avoid it.
+20	Character has full cover between him and an attack.
+10	Character has half cover between him and an attack.
+0	Character is avoiding an attack in the open. This is the default modifier for Dodge in combat.
–10	Character is on loose ground, mud, or knee-deep water.
–20	Character is in waist-deep water.
–30	Character is unable to see the source of the attack.

Skill Use: Reaction.

FORBIDDEN LORE (INTELLIGENCE)

All Forbidden Lore Skills represent knowledge forbidden or hidden to the average citizen of the Imperium of Man. In many cases, it is a heinous crime to even possess such knowledge. Though a Heretic in **Black Crusade** has nothing but contempt for the Imperium's restrictions, such knowledge is forbidden for a reason, and is often highly dangerous. In other cases, those within the group in question wish to keep such knowledge secret, and may go great lengths to ensure this.

Forbidden Lore has several different Specialisations. Specialisations are described in greater detail on page 91. The Specialisations are as follows:

Adeptus Mechanicus: An in-depth understanding of followers of the Machine God, including such things as their rituals, observances, common beliefs, core philosophies, and specific knowledge of the Universal Laws.

Adeptus Astartes: Knowledge of the practices, organisation, and homeworlds of the Imperial Space Marines and their Chapters including blasphemous knowledge of their rites, rituals, and beliefs.

Codex Astartes: Understanding and interpreting the Codex Astartes and how it relates to the organisation, deployment, and tactics of the Space Marine Chapters.

Archeotech: Knowledge of the great, lost tech devices of past times and clues to their mysterious functions and purposes.

Daemonology: Lore about some of the most infamous warp entities and their twisted physical manifestations.

Heresy: Wisdom concerning acts and practices deemed heretical by the Imperium, the most contemptible heretics of history, and their acts.

The Horus Heresy and Long War: The origins and history of the 10,000-year-long war between the forces of the Ruinous Powers and the Imperium of Man.

The Inquisition: Understanding the secretive organisation of the Imperium, its common tenets, and famous Inquisitors.

Mutants: The study of stable and unstable mutations within humanity, their cancerous influence and mutagenic development over time, and some of the studies and books on the topic.

Navigators: Secret knowledge about the Navis Nobilite families, their breeding programs, common mutations, and prominent patriarchs.

Pirates: Knowledge of the scourge of the warp lanes, their tactics, infamous vessels, and inhuman captains.

Psykers: Skill in identifying psykers, the physical effects of their powers, the danger they cause, and the general extent of their capabilities.

The Warp: An understanding of the energy of the warp, its interaction and interrelation with realspace, and how its tides and eddies affect travel between the stars.

Xenos: Knowledge of the minor and major alien species known to the Imperium, the threat they pose, and their general appearance.

A successful Forbidden Lore Test imparts information from the GM to the player. The GM may impart more information if the Test scores additional Degrees of Success.

The GM can require a player to make a Forbidden Lore Test when he:

- Seeks information about potential cults active on an Imperial world.
- Wishes to learn about the dangers the Inquisition may pose to a potential undertaking.
- Wishes to learn more about the mysterious monoliths on a desert world.
- Seeks information on the operations of the dreaded Eldar or their dark kin.
- Desires to learn the True Name of a powerful daemon.
- Seeks the proper procedure to summon a warp-spawn.
- Wishes to know more about psykers and psychic abilities, or the powers they can bring to bear.
- Must recall information about the Traitor Legions and their ongoing war against the Imperium.

Example Modifiers

+30	Learning of the existence of xenos races such as the Orks or Tyranids.
+20	Learning of the warp and what it is.
+10	Remembering the existence of a heretical text.
+0	Learning of the nature and events of the Horus Heresy.
–10	Remembering obscure xenos races in local regions of space such as the Rak'Gol.
–20	Understanding details of the nature and motives of Daemons and warp entities.
–30	Learning a Daemon's True Name.

Skill Use: Free Action.

INQUIRY (FELLOWSHIP)

Inquiry is used to gain information by asking questions, stimulating conversation, or simply eavesdropping. Unlike Charm or Intimidate, which focus on changing a character's disposition or influencing specific individuals, Inquiry focuses on gaining information from large groups, and may involve a great deal of time and effort. One or two Degrees of Success may reveal basic information about an area, population group, or individuals, while additional Degrees of Success on a successful Inquiry Test may allow the GM to impart more valuable or secretive information to his players.

The GM can require a player to make an Inquiry Test when he:

- Is trying to track down a local crime lord in a hive.
- Attempts to learn the attitudes of the local populace towards their leaders.
- Seeks a specific type of location such as a shop or tavern.

Example Modifiers

+30	Subject is already very friendly or loyal or answering the questions works towards the subject's best interests.
+20	Subject is friendly, or the character adds incentive such as a bribe.
+10	Subject is naturally talkative or the character is of a favoured gender or social class.
+0	Subject is ambivalent to the character, or has no prior reason to interact with the character.
–10	Subject doesn't wants to be bothered, or the character is rude or aggressive.
–20	Subject is suspicious of the character, or the character is inquiring about information the subject wants secret.
–30	Subject is actively hostile or answering questions likely results in serious problems for the subject.

Skill Use: One hour or more, depending on the nature of the inquiries, the size of the group targeted, and information sought.

INTERROGATION (WILLPOWER)

Interrogation allows a character to extract information from an unwilling subject. The application differs from torture, where a subject often says anything to stop the ordeal. Rather, it represents skilled application of psychology, various devices, serums, and other techniques. The GM may modify the difficulty of the test according to the availability of tools, facilities, and other conditions. Interrogation is always an Opposed Test, pitting the character's Intimidation Skill against an opponent's Willpower. If the character wins the Opposed Test, he gets one answer for each Degree of Success. If his opponent wins the Opposed Test, he gets nothing of worth. Two or more Degrees of Failure inflict 1d10 plus the character's Willpower Bonus in Damage to the subject, and prevents any further interrogation for 1d5 days. If the character suffers four or more Degrees of Failure, he deals the same Damage and the subject gains a +30 bonus to Willpower Tests made to resist Interrogation at the character's hands or his allies. Each Interrogation Test inflicts one level of fatigue on the target.

The GM can require a player to make an Interrogation Test when he:

- Attempts to force an Imperial Adept to reveal information about his superiors.
- Is attempting to learn about battle plans from an Imperial Guard captain.

Example Modifiers

+30	Subject has no reason to resist the interrogator, and actively cooperates.
+20	Subject is terrified of interrogator.
+10	Subject is frightened of the interrogator.
+0	Subject has a good reason to resist, or sees himself as the interrogator's equal.
–10	Subject feels he is the interrogator's better.
–20	Subject is confident in an impending rescue.
–30	Subject would suffer far worse fate than what the interrogator would do if he answered questions.

Skill Use: One hour or more, depending on the invasiveness of the interrogation and the subject.

INTIMIDATE (STRENGTH)

Intimidate is a character's ability to frighten others into either doing what he tells them or giving up information. A character skilled in Intimidation can bully their way past guards, terrify locals into giving up their secrets, or even force foes to back down from a fight for fear of the consequences.

When Intimidation is used against an opponent (such as to scare them into doing the character's bidding or make them back down from a fight) it is an Opposed Test (see page 91). Intimidation is opposed by Willpower.

Intimidate is a Skill that is particularly likely to benefit from the use of Alternate Characteristics (see page 92), as characters may use many creative means to scare their opponents. For example, a Heretic may threaten an individual with his powerful allies or dire retribution, which may allow him to use Intelligence to see how inventive the Heretic can be with his threats, or Fellowship to see how convincing he can be.

The GM may call a player to use the Intimidation Skill when:

- They want someone to get out of their way.
- They wish to extract information from a hostile or resisting NPC.
- They are trying to make an opponent back down from a fight.

Example Modifiers

+30	Opponent is obviously inferior to the character (i.e. grot, slave, etc.).
+20	Opponent is at a disadvantage to the character, such as being outnumbered or wounded.
+10	Opponent is weaker than the character (either in physical stature or social status).
+0	Opponent is the physical or social equal of the character.
–10	Opponent is stronger than the character (either in physical stature or social status).
–20	Opponent has an obvious advantage over the character, such as better weapons or more men.
–30	Opponent is considerably more powerful than the character, such as a planetary ruler or warlord.

Skill Use: Full Action.

Linguistics (Intelligence)

Linguistics covers all kinds of spoken and written languages, including codes, ciphers, and secret tongues. A character with the Linguistics Skill has learnt to speak, read, and write (if it has a written form) a particular language, code or cipher. No test is normally required to use Linguistics as it pertains to normal speaking, reading, or writing.

Any character who has Linguistics as a Skill knows how to read and write in their primary language (which for most Heretics is Low Gothic).

Linguistics is a Specialist Skill (see page 91) and requires a player to choose a speciality when first taken. The Linguistics Skill may be taken more than once, each time with a new speciality.

The GM may call on players to use the Linguistics Skill when:

- They must decipher an old or archaic version of their language.
- They wish to write a moving or particularly disturbing piece of prose.
- They are trying to convey a message using subtext or a limited vocabulary.

Example Modifiers

+30	Deciphering a language with the aid of a lexicon.
+20	Deciphering a primitive language based on a known language.
+10	Deciphering a code in Low Gothic.
+0	Deciphering a code in High Gothic.
–10	Deciphering a code in a local language.
–20	Deciphering an ancient or forgotten language (i.e. ancient Terrian)/Understanding a language unknown to the Heretic, but based on human language.
–30	Deciphering a completely alien language (i.e. Eldar)/Understanding a language both unknown to the Heretic and without any relationship to known languages.

Skill Use: Free Action.

Logic (Intelligence)

Logic is the ability to think logically, solve puzzles and dissect information rationally and quickly. A character skilled in Logic can detect patterns where others cannot, see how each piece fits together into a whole and gather meaning from chaos. In addition to finding clues, solving riddles, or completing puzzles, Logic can also be used to help a character in games and endeavours where chance plays a large part such as gambling.

The GM may call on players to use the Logic Skill when:

- They must solve a riddle or puzzle.
- They are looking for clue in a vast amount of unrelated information.
- They are trying to win at a game of chance.



Special Uses for Logic

These are some of the special uses of Logic.

Gambling

A character can use Logic when participating in games of chance rather than simply relying on blind luck. Each participant wagers an amount, though these are typically the same, and makes an Opposed Test with the Logic Skill. The character with the most Degrees of Success or fewest Degrees of Failure wins the pot.

However, this only covers Gambling if the character is attempting to win by playing the game correctly—analysing the odds and playing intelligently. Gamblers often can use bluffing, deception, and outright cheating in order to win. In this case, Deceive may be used to bluff or trick an opponent, while Sleight of Hand may be used to palm cards or alter results. These would be opposed by Scrutiny and Awareness, respectively.

Ciphers and Decoding

A Heretic can use the Logic Skill to decode ciphers and codes. This usually takes a great deal of time (days or weeks of prolonged work) and the difficulty depends greatly on whether the Heretic has a key or the number of examples of the cipher available. In general, these Tests should be Difficult (–0) at the easiest, unless the cipher is already partially decoded or the Heretic has a key available.

Example Modifiers

+30	Puzzle or riddle is very basic with few possible solutions.
+20	Puzzle or riddle is already partially complete.
+10	Puzzle or riddle is similar to one the character has solved before.
+0	A straightforward but new puzzle.
–10	Puzzle or riddle is long or buried in excessive meaningless information.
–20	Puzzle or riddle is incomplete and requires the character to fill in the blanks.
–30	Puzzle or riddle is of alien origin or created by a completely inhuman mind.

Skill Use: One minute, or longer for particularly complex problems.

Different Languages

There are many different languages in the galaxy, and Linguistics does not automatically allow a Heretic to know them all (although the Skill may make it easier to understand them). What languages a Heretic knows is largely based on his background. All Heretics know Low Gothic, while some Apostates highly placed in the Imperium before their fall may know High Gothic and Chaos Space Marines are likely to know the Chapter Runes that pertain to their Chapter.

If a Heretic does not know a certain language, Linguistic Tests pertaining to that language should be much more difficult (or even impossible) than if he does know the language. However, Heretics can use Linguistics to learn new languages. Doing this requires an Extended Linguistics Test, with a difficulty based on the difficulty of the Language. The time required can be weeks or months, depending on the Heretic's intelligence and diligence.

The following are some example languages.

Chapter Runes: Each Chapter of the Adeptus Astartes (and the Traitor Legions) has its own form of ciphers used to communicate between its warriors. These are closely guarded secrets they are almost never taught to those outside the Chapter or Legion; and as such form a reliable way for those within the Chapter or Legion to quickly identify each other.

Chaos Marks: There are countless symbols and signs used by followers of the various Dark Powers, each with its own subtle meaning or specific purpose.

Eldar: Though no human can hope to capture the subtle nuances and sub-tones of this extremely complex and ancient language, it is enough to make one's meaning clear.

High Gothic: The official language of the Imperium, used by Imperial officials, nobility, members of the Ecclesiarchy, and those involved in high-level negotiations.

Imperial Codes: Both the Imperial Navy and the Imperial Guard employ a battle language which comprises mostly of numbers and acronyms. Incomprehensible to those who do not know its meaning, it allows them to quickly signal for reinforcements, identify enemies, and call down fire support or artillery barrages.

Kroot: The native chirping language of the Kroot is almost impossible for a human to emulate, however with training and a good ear it can be understood.

Low Gothic: The common tongue of the Vortex (and most places humans are found), used by countless humans.

Mercenary Cant: Many mercenary companies operate in the Vortex, and each has an abbreviated, clipped battle language for orders and commands. Though there are some commonalities, each is essentially unique.

Ork: More grunts and physical violence than an actual language, it is possible for humans to speak and understand it, though it is doubtful they would be able to survive a conversation.

Techna-Lingua: The official language of the Adeptus Mechanicus (and its dark counterpart), this binary language has been optimised for rapid communication of technical data and servitor commands.

Tau: The language of the Tau Empire, spoken by the Tau themselves and shared by their multitude of alien subjects.

Underworld: Crime lords have used ciphers since before the time of the False-Emperor, and their sophistication has only increased over time. Each organisation uses their own to deter competition.

Xenos Markings: Many aliens make extensive use of symbolism and icons. Understanding these markings allows a broad understanding of their meaning such as where a tribe has marked its boundaries or areas they have marked as "dangerous."

MEDICAE (INTELLIGENCE)

Medicae is an understanding of the biologis sciences and how to set broken bones, heal wounds, or even perform complicated surgery such as attaching a bionic limb. A character with the Medicae Skill can apply first aid to his comrades, diagnose an illness, or remove an organ (and keep the patient alive given the right equipment). The Medicae Skill also relies heavily on certain tools (see **Chapter V: Armoury**) for more complex procedures, and even a simple medikit can make a significant difference to the effects of this Skill.

The GM may call on players to use the Medicae Skill when:

- They want to apply first aid to a wounded comrade.
- They wish to diagnose an affliction and work out a suitable treatment.
- They are trying to perform a surgical procedure such as the removal of a limb or organ.

Example Modifiers

+30	Healing a critical wound in a fully-stocked Surginarium with the aid of medical servitors.
+20	Healing a critical wound in a hive med-lab with well-trained assistants.
+10	Healing a critical wound in a field hospital with trained assistants
+0	Healing a non-critical injury in the field.
–10	Healing a critical wound without assistance.
–20	Healing a critical wound exposed to the elements.
–30	Healing a critical wound in the midst of a combat or battle.

Skill Use: Full Action.

Special Uses for Medicae

These are some of the special uses for first aid.

First Aid

Heretics can use the Medicae Skill to perform first aid for the injured, removing a small amount of Damage by suturing lacerations, bandaging abrasions, and plugging punctures. A successful Medicae Test removes Damage equal to your Intelligence Bonus on Lightly Damaged Characters or one Damage Point from Heavily or Critically Damaged Characters.

Extended Care

Using the Medicae Skill for extended care speeds the healing process. A character can properly treat a number of patients equal to their Intelligence Bonus. For every assistant the character has add an additional one to this number or the character's Intelligence Bonus again if the assistant also have the Medicae Skill (regardless of their ability). Each additional patient imposes a cumulative –10 penalty to the character's Medicae Tests to provide extended care. For Lightly Damaged patients, make one test at the end of each day. For heavily or Critically Damaged patients, test once at the end of each week. Success allows a patient to remove twice the normal Damage—removing Critical Damage first—plus one point for each Degree of Success. Failure does not adversely affect patients, who heal at the normal rate. Two or three Degrees of Failure indicates that all Lightly and Heavily Damaged patients take one Damage each, using sudden death to resolve any Critical Damage (see page 247). Four or more Degrees of Failure indicates all patients take 1d10 Damage, using sudden death to resolve Critical Damage.

For additional information on Healing, see **Chapter VII: Combat**.

Example

Hakor Bloodsight is treating a group of 12 wounded heretic guardsmen. He has an Intelligence Bonus of four and three assistants, one of whom also has medical training. This means he can effectively treat 10 patients (Four for his IB, four for again for the trained assistant and two for the two untrained assistants). Since this is two less than the 12 he wants to treat, he suffers a –20 (–10 for each extra patient) to his Medicae Tests when administering extended care.

Diagnose

The Medicae Skill can also be used to diagnose disease and other ailments, both on one's fellow characters and also on large groups. On individuals, a successful Skill test yields the name of the ailment and basic treatments. When used on groups, a successful Skill test can prevents the spread of disease or mitigate the effects of malnutrition as determined by the GM and dependant on the nature (and virulence) of the disease.

Chem Use

The Medicae Skill can be used to cover a character's understanding of drugs, poisons, chemicals, and toxins. A skilled chymist can both create and identify such compounds as well as know how best to use them either for medicinal effects or in combat against their enemies. Chem-Use is also useful in diagnosing those suffering from toxins and poisons or finding antidotes to treat them.

Applying Poisons and Chemicals: Particularly virulent or dangerous chemicals may require a Medicae Test to administer or apply to a weapon. This Test is usually Challenging, and failure by four or more degrees may indicate that something has gone seriously wrong with the dosage or application and the applicant suffers the adverse affects of the chemical or poison.

Crafting: Medicae can be used to make all kinds of drugs and poisons from animal venom and healing unguents to Stimm and Spook. The time, difficulty, and materials it takes to create these items is greatly dependant on their complexity, the kind of lab the character has and their access to recipes or assistance. See the Crafting sidebar on page 94 for the kinds of things which can be created using Medicae.

Antidotes: A chymist may manufacture an antidote if they can identify the poison or toxin and have the right material to hand. To create an antidote the character must have a sample of the poison in question or a sample of blood from the person he is trying to treat. The character must also have at least a basic medkit. He then makes an Extended Test requiring a number of Degrees of Success set by the GM depending on the strength of the poison; as a guideline this can be four for weak poisons, seven for average poisons and 10 for strong poisons. Success nets 2d10 doses of antidote for that specific poison. Creating an antidote takes 1d10 hours. The GM can modify these tests depending on the materials available (granting bonuses for labs and assistants).

NAVIGATE (SURFACE) (INTELLIGENCE)

Navigate is the ability to plot a course from one point to another, either on the surface of a planet or across the stars. A character with the Navigate Skill is able to find their way quickly and efficiently even when far from familiar landmarks; this could mean successfully navigating through a dense jungle or a crowded hive city. Navigate can also be used to guide a ship from world to world or through the maelstrom of the warp.

Navigation Surface covers the ability to Navigate across terrestrial environments from frozen tundra to sweltering jungles as well as navigating man made environments such as hive cities or subterranean complexes.

The GM may call a player to use the Navigate Skill when:

- They want to make a journey across unfamiliar terrain.
- They become lost or wake up in a strange place and need to get their bearings.
- To find the quickest route from one point to another.

Example Modifiers

+30	Navigating familiar or well travelled routes.
+20	Navigating with the aid of extensive charts or a guide.
+10	Navigating open terrain (i.e. lunar deserts or ash plains) with clear landmarks.
+0	Navigating in a forest during the day.
–10	Navigating at night or during bad weather.
–20	Navigating without the aid of any equipment or maps.
–30	Navigating a constantly-changing environment, such as shifting sand dunes.

Skill Use: One minute for simple location; 1d5 hours for plotting courses or routes.

NAVIGATE (STELLAR) (INTELLIGENCE)

Navigate is the ability to plot a course from one point to another, either on the surface of a planet or across the stars. A character with the Navigate Skill is able to find their way quickly and efficiently even when far from familiar landmarks; this could mean successfully navigating through a dense jungle or a crowded hive city. Navigate can also be used to guide a ship from world to world or through the maelstrom of the warp.

Navigation (Stellar) is the ability to plot a course across real space using stars, planets and other celestial phenomena. This ability is primarily used aboard voidships.

The GM may call on a player to use the Navigate Stellar Skill when:

- They want to make a journey across a star system.
- They find their ship stranded in an unknown region of space.
- They wish to find the quickest route from one point to another.

Example Modifiers

+30	Navigating familiar or well travelled routes in one star system.
+20	Navigating between star systems with the aid of extensive charts or a guide.
+10	Navigating between two planets in an open star system.
+0	Navigating between star systems without a guide.
–10	Navigating around stellar anomalies such as a pulsar.
–20	Navigating through an asteroid field or ice field.
–30	Navigating in a hazardous environment, such as a binary star system with a black hole and fractured planets.

Skill Use: One half hour for simple location; 1d5 hours for plotting courses or routes.

NAVIGATE (WARP) (INTELLIGENCE)

Navigate is the ability to plot a course from one point to another, either on the surface of a planet or across the stars. A character with the Navigate Skill is able to find their way quickly and efficiently even when far from familiar landmarks; this could mean successfully navigating through a dense jungle or a crowded hive city. Navigate can also be used to guide a ship from world to world or through the maelstrom of the warp.

Navigation (Warp) is the rare ability to navigate not reality, but the shifting and ever-changing vista of the warp. This is most commonly used by those who must guide voidships with a warp engine through the immaterium.

The GM may call on a player to use the Navigate (Warp) Skill when:

- They must guide a starship through the warp.

Example Modifiers

+30	Navigating familiar or well travelled routes.
+20	Navigating with the aid of extensive charts or the Astronomicon.
+10	Navigating established warp routes.
+0	Navigating between two nearby systems in the warp.
–10	Navigating off established warp routes.
–20	Navigating without the aid of any equipment or maps.
–30	Navigating in a warp storm.

Skill Use: One minute for simple location; 1d5 hours for plotting courses or routes.

OPERATE (SURFACE) (AGILITY)

Operate encompasses the ability to control and direct all manner of vehicles and heavy equipment. This can include everything from voidships the size of cities or macro batteries to land speeders or jump packs. A character with this Skill is adept at piloting, driving, or operating a particular type

Different Vehicle Types

These are some of the vehicles that can be piloted by Operate (Surface).

Bike: Powered bikes such as those used by the Adeptus Astartes or the Adeptus Arbites as well as any two-wheeled powered vehicle.

Hover/Skimmer: Land speeders, suspensor platforms and vehicles which hold themselves aloft with rockets, jets or anti-grav engines but are not true aircraft.

Tracked: Tracked vehicles from the humble Chimera to the mighty Land Raider; includes most kind of tanks used by the Imperium.

Walker: Vehicles which use legs rather than wheels or jets to move such as Imperial Guard sentinels and Eldar War Walkers.

of vehicle or machine. No test is normally required to pilot or drive a vehicle unless it is in a combat situation or other unusual circumstances (i.e. extremely rough terrain, high speed, etc.).

Operate (Surface) covers the ability to pilot any vehicle that primarily operates on the surface of a planet. Groundcars, walkers, treaded vehicles, boats, and skimmers (hovering or flying vehicles that must remain very low the ground) can all be piloted using Operate (Surface).

The GM may call players to use the Operate Skill when:

- They are piloting or driving a vehicle in combat situation.
- They wish to push their vehicle or machine beyond its normal limits.
- They are directing fire from the turrets on a vehicle in an adverse situation.

Example Modifiers

+30	Driving in situation outside of combat and without danger of crashing.
+20	Driving with the aid of a dedicated cogitator/ machine spirit.
+10	Driving quickly but on a clear road.
+0	Driving in combat but in an open area.
–10	Driving at excessive speeds.
–20	Driving in bad weather such as storms or high winds.
–30	Driving while also fighting in close combat.

Skill Use: Half Action.

OPERATE (AERONAUTICA) (AGILITY)

Operate encompasses the ability to control and direct all manner of vehicles and heavy equipment. This can include everything from void ships the size of cities or macro batteries to land speeders or jump packs. A character with this Skill is adept at piloting, driving or operating a particular type of vehicle or machine. No test is normally required to pilot or drive a vehicle unless it is in a combat situation or other unusual circumstances (i.e. extremely rough terrain, high speed, etc.).

Operate (Aeronautica) covers the ability to pilot any vehicle that operates in three dimensions. This primarily covers atmospheric fliers such as the Imperial Navy Thunderbolt or Chaos Hell Blade and Hell Talon, but also includes small manoeuvrable voidcraft such as landers, shuttles, starfighters, and bombers. Piloting jump packs is also covered by this ability.

The GM may call on players to use the Operate Skill when:

- They are piloting a vehicle in combat situation.
- They wish to push their vehicle or machine beyond its normal limits.

Example Modifiers

+30	Flying in situation outside of combat and without danger of crashing.
+20	Flying with the aid of a dedicated cogitator/ machine spirit.
+10	Flying with the aid of a navigator or co-pilot.
+0	Flying in combat but in open skies.
–10	Flying at high speeds, performing fast manoeuvres.
–20	Flying in bad weather such as storms or high winds.
–30	Flying in a damaged aircraft while in combat, performing high-gee manoeuvres while flying through a canyon.

Skill Use: Half Action.

OPERATE (VOIDSHIP) (INTELLIGENCE)

Operate encompasses the ability to control and direct all manner of vehicles and heavy equipment. This can include everything from voidships the size of cities or macro batteries to land speeders or jump packs. A character with this Skill is adept at piloting, driving or operating a particular type of vehicle or machine. No test is normally required to pilot or drive a vehicle unless it is in a combat situation or other unusual circumstances (i.e. extremely rough terrain, high speed, etc.).

Different Aeronautica Types

These are some of the vehicles that can be piloted by Operate (Aeronautica).

Flyers: Atmospheric aircraft such as Marauder Bombers or Thunderbolt fighters, also includes all manner of non-standard flyers whether they are driven by propellers, air balloons or some other more esoteric methods.

Jump Pack/Grav Chute: The use and operation of personal equipment such as Jump Pack and Grav Chutes**:** When to deploy them, how to take off and land with them and how to fight while wearing them.

Spacecraft: Small void craft such as interceptor fighters, shuttles (often also capable of entering a planet's atmosphere), boarding craft, or man-guided torpedoes.

What is a Voidship?

A voidship is a large (often hundreds of metres or even several kilometres in length) starship, a vessel designed to travel in deep space. Some are capable of travelling through the warp, and even those that are not are still massive vessels. Piloting such vessels is less about agility and reflexes, and more about the intelligence to make correct decisions and select proper manoeuvres.

Operate (Voidship) covers the ability to pilot large void-faring vessels often kilometres long. Any space-going vessel that requires a captain and large crew and cannot be conceivably piloted by a single individual is operated by Operate (Voidship).

The GM may call players to use the Operate Skill when:

- They are manoeuvring a voidship.
- They are overseeing the use of a massive weapon such as a macrobattery or orbital laser.

Example Modifiers

+30	Piloting a voidship in clear space.
+20	Piloting a voidship in an open orbit around a moon.
+10	Piloting a voidship in a cluttered orbit around a large planet.
+0	Piloting a voidship in a formation with other vessels.
–10	Performing stressful combat manoeuvres.
–20	Piloting a voidship through an asteroid belt.
–30	Avoiding being caught in a warp rift.

Skill Use: Half Action.

PARRY (WEAPON SKILL)

Parry is the ability to avoid blows in melee, either deflecting them using one's hands or weapons, or evading them entirely through quick reflexes. A character targeted by melee attacks can parry these attacks using Parry. Parrying is a Reaction (and as such can usually only be attempted once each turn) and can only be used against close combat attacks from foes engaged with the character in melee. A success indicates that the attack has been parried and does not hit the character. In the case of attacks which cause multiple hits (such as those from a foe with the Lightning Attack Talent) each Degree of Success a character achieves on his Parry test discounts one hit from the attack. Any excess hits not discounted by parrying are then applied to the character as normal.

The GM may call on players to use the Parry Skill when:

- They are attacked in melee.

Example Modifiers

+30	Character can easily detect the attack and has at least a round to avoid it.
+20	Character has a large obstruction between him and the attack.
+10	Character has partial cover between him and the attack.
+0	Character is avoiding an attack in the open. This is the default modifier for Parry in combat.
–10	Character is on unstable ground, or calf deep water.
–20	Character is in waist deep water.
–30	Character is unable to see the source of the attack.

Skill Use: Reaction.

PSYNISCIENCE (PERCEPTION)

Those with the Psyniscience Skill sense the currents and eddies of the Warp and Immaterium. Characters can use the Skill to detect the presence or absence of daemons, the use of psychic powers, psychic phenomena, disturbances, or areas where the flow of the Immaterium has been unsettled or disrupted. Unless otherwise noted a character can use the Psyniscience Skill to detect entities, locales, and events up to a number of kilometres away equal to their Perception Bonus. A GM may increase this range for particularly powerful events or creatures. The general results of Psyniscience tests are summarised on **Table 3–4: Psyniscience**.

The GM may call a player to use the Psyniscience Skill when:

- They are hunting for the location of a daemon.
- They wish to determine whether a psyker has used his powers recently in the area.
- They are trying to find a weak point between the Materium and the Immaterium.

Example Modifiers

+30	Detecting the presence of a Greater Daemon.
+20	Detecting the presence of a major daemonic incursion.
+10	Detecting the presence of a minor daemonic incursion.
+0	Detecting the presence of a nearby warp entity.
–10	Detecting the presence of a daemon among a large group of psykers.
–20	Detecting the presence of a daemon several kilometres away.
–30	Detecting the presence of a daemon somewhere in the midst of a hive city.

Skill Use: Full Action

Table 3-4: Psyniscience

DoS	Result
One	Awareness of Immaterium disruption or number of entities present.
Two	Approximate direction of the phenomena or creatures.
Three	Rough location of the Warp creatures or beings affecting the Immaterium.
Four	Exact position of the creatures or psykers present.

Scholastic Lore (Intelligence)

All Scholastic Lore Skills represent information that a Heretic would need to learn in a formal setting or institution of learning, whether from a knowledgeable mentor, an organisation, or even the careful study of rare tomes. Unlike Common Lore, this information is not readily available to the average inhabitant of a planet, but unlike Forbidden Lore, it is not forbidden or proscribed.

Scholastic Lore has several Specialisations (see page 91). These Specialisations are as follows:

Astromancy: A knowledge of stars, singularities, and the worlds around them, as well as theoretical understanding of how to use telescopes, astrolithic charts, and the like.

Beasts: An understanding of the genus and families of animals and familiarity with the characteristics and appearance of many semi-sentient creatures.

Bureaucracy: A familiarity with the rules and regulations involved with governments, particularly the Adeptus Administratum and their many and varied departments, bureaus, and policies.

Chymistry: A knowledge of chemicals, their alchemical applications in a number of uses, and their prevalence or scarcity throughout the Imperium.

Cryptology: An understanding of codes, ciphers, cryptographs, secret languages, and numerical keys. This may be used to either create or decipher encryption.

Heraldry: A grasp of the principles and devices of Heraldry, as well as a knowledge of the most common seals and heraldic devices used by the Imperium's most noble houses and families.

Imperial Warrants: Information concerning the establishment, legal scope, and use of the warrants used to by Rogue Traders, as well as the most well known and dynastic warrants of the Imperium.

Imperial Creed: An understanding of the specific rituals and practices of the Ecclesiarchy, from the traditional construction of their temples to specific points from its texts. This information may be used to conduct the rituals for others.

Judgement: Knowledge of the proper punishments for the myriad of crimes and heresies punishable by Imperial law.

Legend: Going beyond archaic knowledge, this encompasses most secretive portions of Imperial history, such as the Dark Age of Technology, the Age of Strife, the Great Crusade, and the Horus Heresy.

Navis Nobilite: Lore concerning the family trees, contracts, and histories of the great houses of the Navigators.

Numerology: An understanding of the mysterious link between numbers and the physical universe, from Catastrophe theory to the Sadleirian litany.

Occult: An understanding of occult rituals and theories, as well as the better-known mystical uses of occult items.

Philosophy: Knowledge concerning the theories of thought, belief, existence, and other intangibles. As it also includes logic and debate, it may be used for argument or creating philosophical works.

Tactica Imperialis: The theories of the Tactica Imperialis, as well as other systems of troop deployment and battle techniques used by the Imperium. This knowledge may be used to devise a battle plan or deduce the likely flow of war fought by Imperial forces.

The GM may call on a player to make a Scholastic Lore (History) Test when:

- He wishes to recount legends from mankind's past.
- He wishes to know what a Standard Template Construct is.
- He wishes to understand an obscure ruling made by a Judge of the Adeptus Arbites.
- Decipher the complex legal relationship between an Imperial Governor and the local Administratum representative.
- Decipher the workings of a complex piece of technology.
- He seeks to identify a rare beast.
- He is making a philosophical argument.

Example Modifiers

+30	Studying a broad history of the Imperium, focusing only on "approved" topics.
+20	Conducting research in a well-stocked library.
+10	Learning the particulars of the Imperial Creed.
+0	Researching a specific philosophical point.
–10	Studying occult rituals.
–20	Breaking down a particular chemical formula.
–30	Compiling a complete history of the Horus Heresy.

Skill Use: Free Action.

Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Skill helps assess the people or objects a Heretic encounters. The Heretic can use Scrutiny to gauge an individual's truthfulness, determine his motives, and appraise his personality and temperament. It can also be used to analyse an object or display in detail, determining information that may be hidden or simply not readily apparent.

In general, Scrutiny is used to interpret hidden emotions, motivations, or details unnoticeable unless subjected to a detailed analysis. Awareness is used when trying to spot items or individuals. So while spotting someone hidden would be Awareness, telling when someone lying would be Scrutiny.

The GM might call a player to use the Scrutiny Skill when:

- His character wants to tell if someone's lying.
- His character wants to discern information and conclusions from a report.
- He is interpreting augur or auspex readings and determining what they mean.

Example Modifiers

+30	Judging the mood of a close friend.
+20	Judging a comrade's mood.
+10	Judging the mood of someone you have met before.
+0	Reading an Augur or Auspex readout.
–10	Judging an alien's mood.
–20	Judging a Tech-Priest's mood.
–30	Judging a servitor's mood.

Skill Use: Half Action.

SECURITY (INTELLIGENCE)

Security deals with overcoming locks and safeguards, breaking into secure places or protecting them from intrusion. A character with the Security Skill is trained bypass locks or hack codes, whether using cogitators and tech or simple mechanical devices. Characters with Security are also able to safeguard systems and locals by making their passive defences more secure, even setting traps for unwary intruders and thieves.

The GM may call players to use the Security Skill when:

- They want to open a locked door.
- They wish to hack a cogitator and discover its secrets.
- They are laying traps for an ambush or to protect a camp.

Example Modifiers

+30	Lock is very crude or simple in design.
+20	Hacking a simple cogitator security system with a powerful machine-spirit.
+10	Lock is poorly maintained or parts are not working
+0	Deactivating a standard security system with basic but required tools.
–10	Lock is well made and maintained.
–20	Lock is well made and of a complex design with multiple parts.
–30	Lock is of alien manufacture or fiendishly complex.

Special Uses for Security

These are some special uses for the Security Skill.

Traps

A character with the Security Skill can fashion and set traps given enough time and raw resources. Traps can range from hiding a live grenade under a corpse (set to explode when rolled over) to elaborate spiked pits, dead falls or rigged shotguns. The time, resources, and Damage caused by these kinds of traps depends on the GMs discretion and the materials involved (see Chapter V: Armoury and Chapter VII: Combat for guidelines on weapon Damage and perils). The chance that a trap goes off as planned or that the character avoids detection by its victims depends on the character's Security Skill. This is either a Skill Test (modified depending on circumstance or the complexity of the trap) made secretly by the GM to see it works, or an opposed test against the victims Awareness to spot the trap (before it goes off).

Example

Azlyon is fleeing from an Imperial bounty hunter in the ruins of an ancient hive city. To slow down his pursuer, he decides to quickly rig a grenade in a doorway. The GM decides that the trap is simple enough that it should work if the bounty hunter fails to spot it. Azlyon then makes an Opposed Security Test against the bounty hunter's Awareness, which he manages to win. The trap works and the grenade goes off at the bounty hunter's feet... boom!

Skill Use: Full Action or longer, depending on complexity of lock or security system.

SLEIGHT OF HAND (AGILITY)

Heretics use Sleight of Hand for any task that requires a combination of deception and dexterity. Examples include palming small objects, picking pockets, or performing tricks. The GM sets the Difficulty of the Test based on the size of the object and the intensity of observation. This is always an Opposed Test against the opponent's Awareness or Scrutiny.

The GM may call on a player to use the Sleight of Hand Skill when:

- He attempts to steal something from the target's pocket.
- He must palm something so nobody notices.

Example Modifiers

+30	Stealing from a sleeping Ogryn.
+20	Picking an Ork's pocket.
+10	Palming a key on a table while others are not paying attention to you.
+0	Picking a human's pocket.
–10	Taking a data slate while speaking to someone.
–20	Stealing from the King of Eyes.
–30	Taking a knife from a Kroot's belt.

Skill Use: Half Action, or Free Action with an additional –10 penalty.



Stealth (Agility)

Stealth is the ability to remain unseen, either while moving through a crowd or the open markets of an Agri-world. A character with the Stealth Skill can move silently or conceal themselves from others, either to escape from their foes or take them by surprise. Stealth also allows a character follow opponents while moving through crowds, following them while not appearing to do so. Finally, Stealth can be used to move quietly.

When Stealth is used against an opponent (such as to hide from a foe or shadow a target) it is an Opposed Test (see page 91). Stealth opposes and is opposed by Awareness.

The GM may call on players to use the Stealth Skill when:

- They are trying to scout an enemy force.
- They want to sneak up on a foe and kill him quietly.
- They wish to follow someone without arousing suspicion.

Example Modifiers

+30	Sneaking past a sleeping enemy without waking them.
+20	Sneaking past a foe with the aid of pitch darkness and plenty of cover.
+10	Sneaking past a tired or distracted foe.
+0	Sneaking past a competent guard who has no reason to be suspicious.
–10	Sneaking past a suspicious or alert foe.
–20	Sneaking past a foe with no cover available.
–30	Sneaking past a suspicious foe with no cover in broad daylight.

Skill Use: Free Action as part of Movement.

Survival (Perception)

Survival is the mastery of ones environment away from the protection of dwellings, villages or cities. A character with the Survival Skill can live off the land, ride beasts, and predict weather with only a minimum of equipment and without the need for resupply or support. Survival can be used to create primitive items such as bows or blades as well as basic clothing. Survival is also used to track prey (human or otherwise) across all kinds of terrain by following the telltale signs they leave on the environment around them.

The GM may call on a player to use the Survival Skill when:

- They want to find food or water in a hostile environment.
- They wish to start a fire with no tools.
- They are trying to track a foe through the underhive.

Special Uses

The following is a special use for Stealth.

Shadowing

Stealth can be used to shadow others and follow them unseen, either on foot, in vehicles or even in shuttles and starships. On foot it might involve using physical cover or the press of bodies coming off mid-shift; in a vehicle techniques might include false turns or using a Cargo-8 as cover; aboard ships it can entail the use of asteroids or other stellar objects or busy space lanes around major systems. Stealth Skill Tests for shadowing are always Opposed Tests against the opponent's Awareness. A single Stealth Skill Test is sufficient to follow the opponent unseen for five minutes for each Degrees of Success.

Example Modifiers

+30	Tracking a bleeding foe or a Massive foe.
+20	Tracking a foe across soft dirt, ash or mud.
+10	Tracking a foe only minutes after his passing.
+0	Tracking a foe through a forest.
–10	Tracking a foe while moving rapidly (i.e. running or force marching).
–20	Tracking a foe at night or during a storm.
–30	Tracking a foe days after their passing over hard rock or across shallow waterways.

Skill Use: Full Action.

Tech-Use (Intelligence)

Tech-Use is the ability to use and interact with all manner of mysterious technological devices as well as create them. A character with Tech-Use can expertly operate common equipment such as vox or pict-casters



Special Uses for Survival

These are some of the special uses for the Survival Skill.

Crafting

Survival can be used to make all kinds of primitive devices from cloaks and stone buildings to spears and traps. The time, difficulty and materials it takes to create these items is greatly dependant on their complexity, the kind of workshop the character has and their access to designs or assistance. See the Crafting sidebar on page 94 for the kinds of things which can be created using Survival.

Tracking

A character can use the Survival Skill to follow the signs left by his quarry, allowing him to hunt them down. Following obvious tracks does not require a Skill Test, and is considered part of a character's movement. In instances where the time or elements have eroded the signs or where the very environment makes seeing them difficult, such as darkness or fog, Survival Skill Tests are required. The modifiers for this test depend on the condition of the traces and the tracker's surroundings. A cunning or devious quarry may attempt to conceal or erase their tracks. In any case where an opponent has attempted to do this, make an Opposed Test made against the prey's Stealth.

Wrangling

Characters can tame, train, and potentially ride animals they encounter in their travels, from Spine-Hounds to the noble warhorse breeds. Both taming and training beasts are Extended Tests, the duration of which is determined by the nature and temper of the creature involved. Once an animal has been broken to its master's will—or at least formed a partnership for particularly strong-willed beasts—directing it or issuing commands is a Half Action. Wild animals, or those trained for hostility and aggression, can have their Disposition changed by one level for every two Degrees of Success, up to a maximum of three levels by a Full Action use of this Skill. GMs may impose penalties for animals that have been well trained or those with uncommon Willpower and Intelligence. Wrangling is of no use against cyber or psy-bonded animals, or against any xenos with true sentience.

though they might not understand the inner working of such things. Tech-Use can also be used to build basic or complex technical devices with the right amount of time and materials. Tech-Use is more an understanding of the Blessing of the Omnissiah and the rites of the Machine Cult than it is an actual knowledge of the science behind technology—in the 41st Millennium, however, this amounts to the same thing.

The GM may call a player to use the Tech-Use Skill when:

- They want to repair a broken weapon or vehicle.
- They wish to push a device beyond its normal capabilities.
- Trying to figure out how a piece of unknown tech works.

Example Modifiers

+30	Repairing a common device with ample parts available (i.e. changing the barrel of a lasgun).
+20	Repairing a device with few fine moving parts (i.e. carapace armour).
+10	Repairing a device with the aid of a Tech-priest or Mech-Servitor.
+0	Performing work on complicated devices.
–10	Repairing a severely damaged device with complex parts (i.e. a data slate with a bullet hole).
–20	Repairing an ancient device or fixing a device without all the pieces available.
–30	Repairing an alien device or one with a machine spirit (i.e. a cogitator).

Skill Use: One minute, or more for more complex systems.

TRADE (INTELLIGENCE)

Trade Skills allow the Heretics to create things, from contracts to starships. At the GM's discretion, Explorers with this Skill can earn additional Profit Factor plying a trade. They can identify the work of particularly famous or infamous craftsmen, or recall information concerning items of their trade.

Trade Tests can represent the work of hours, weeks, or months depending on the complexity of the task at hand. However, Tests that involve the examination of an item to recall information require a Full Action.

Archaeologist: Used to locate, examine, and analyze ancient ruins and artefacts.

Armourer: Used to design, upgrade, and forge weaponry, from personal arms to starship batteries.

Astrographer: Used to create two and three-dimensional representations of stellar locations and warp routes.

Chymist: Used to create poisons, drugs, and a wide variety of other compounds.

Cryptographer: Used to create or decode ciphers, codes and other puzzles.

Explorator: Used in the exploration of unknown stellar regions, knowledge of procedures, supplies needed, and so-forth.

Linguist: Used to learn or decipher new languages, both spoken and written.

Remembrancer: Used to recount events in a variety of art forms, from sculpture to poetry.

Scrimshawer: Used to inscribe patterns, text, and art onto a variety of materials.

Special Uses for Tech-Use

The following are some special uses for the Tech-Use Skill.

Crafting

Tech-Use can be used to make all kinds of technical devices from simple clockwork and steam engines to advanced weaponry and armour. The time, difficulty and materials it takes to create these items is greatly dependant on their complexity, the kind of workshop the character has, and their access to designs or Adeptus Mechanicus knowledge. See the Crafting sidebar on page 94 for the kinds of things which can be created using Tech-Use.

Demolitions

Tech-Use can be used to determine the effectiveness of explosive devices, which is greatly dependent upon the skill with which they are placed. Success on a Tech-Use Skill Test indicates a character has successfully planted an explosive charge, set with the trigger of his choice. Possible triggers are only limited by a character's imagination, and can include trip wires, timers, proximity sensors or remote activators. Failure indicates that the explosives fail to go off when triggered, though the character does not know this until the time of activation. Four or more Degrees of Failure indicated the character has set the device off prematurely and it explodes while being set! Some tasks, such as rigging a building for demolition or bringing down massive suspension bridge, require an Extended Test. The GM sets difficulty and duration depending on the extent of the undertaking. When placing explosives, make sure to note the total Degrees of Success and the die roll, as it may be used in an Opposed Test if someone attempts to diffuse a character's hard work.

Defusing charges also falls under the Tech-Use Skill. Make an Opposed Test against the Tech-Use Skill Test of the individual who set the explosives. Winning the test indicates that the bomb has been diffused. Simple failure means that while the charge has not been disarmed, neither has it gone off. Four or more Degrees of Failure indicates the character has set off the device, suffering the consequences of the explosion. Defusing multiple charges or complex trigger mechanisms may require an Extended Test as determined by the GM.

Shipwright: Used to design, upgrade, and create void-capable vessels.

Soothsayer: Used to "foretell" the future by a number of interpretative arts, though its effectiveness is suspect.

Technomat: Used to maintain and repair technological devices, but through rote memorization rather than true understanding.

Voidfarer: Used in the day-to-day operation, logistics, and defence of starships.

Example Modifiers

+30	Making a simple product with plentiful tools.
+20	Making a more complex product, such as a scrimshawed design, but with good tools and plenty of time.
+10	Doing mediocre work quickly.
+0	Brewing a somewhat complex poison with basic supplies under a time limit.
–10	Constructing Good-Craftsmanship carapace armour.
–20	Constructing Good-Craftsmanship Power Armour.
–30	Constructing or working on ancient tech-relics, such as Terminator armour.

Skill Use: Variable depending on task and complexity.





IV

Talents & Traits

Using and Gaining Talents

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Talent List

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Minions

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Traits



Chapter IV: Talents and Traits

"How can I even begin to explain to such a creature as you the ways in which I am superior? Blessed as I am, it is the mastery of my flesh and my mind which have separated me from the common man and granted me the right to bask in the glory of the gods themselves!"

–Ardent Grey, Master of Bladed Spire

Those who seek the attention of the gods must be exceptional individuals; men and women who stand head and shoulders above their peers and who are capable of feats of arms, sorcery, and sophistry to make lesser beings weep with terror. It is not enough to merely know how to wield a weapon or sway a crowd with honeyed words—a true champion must go beyond this kind of mundane mastery and learn ancient secrets and hidden techniques to best his foes, becoming unique and powerful in his own right. This is the place Talents hold within the building blocks of a **Black Crusade** character, and more than any other factor mark him as an individual amongst the screaming hordes of supplicants to the might of the Ruinous Powers.

Talents are special abilities and proficiencies that a character possesses either through their intrinsic nature or through the application of well-practised experience. This is in contrast to Skills which represent abilities gained by learning or training. A Talent is an ability which a character is either capable of or is not, whereas a skill is something that they can be better at by degrees. When a character deflects an impossible blow with his powersword, falls from an extreme height without taking harm and predicts the future using cold hard logic he is using Talents. On the path to glory the right Talents can make the difference between magnificent success in the eyes of the gods or dismal failure and an ignominious end.

Using Talents

Talents differ from Skills, in that a player usually does not need to use an Action or test to utilise the ability. They are always in effect, and many Talents give bonuses to tests or allow Actions not available to the common man. In essence, once a character has a Talent, its benefits are always applied to his Actions unless specifically noted otherwise.

Gaining Talents

Talents represent a myriad of special abilities for characters reflecting their skill at arms, specific relationships and reputations they might have, or any number of other things that make them better than the average inhabitant of the 41st millennium. Just as with Skills, a character starts play with a number of Talents depending on their background and allegiances (see **Chapter II: Character Creation**) and then acquire more as they improve during play by spending experience points. The amount of experience points required to purchase a Talent depends on its Tier and a character's affiliation to the gods as detailed on page 74 in **Chapter II: Character Creation**.

Table 4-1: Tier 1 Talents

Talent Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Air of Authority	Fel 30	Affect more targets with Command
Ambidextrous	Ag 30	Use either hand equally well,reduce penalties for wielding two weapons.
Ancient Warrior	Fel 35, WP 35	Veteran of the Long War.
Berserk Charge	—	Gain +30 bonus to hit when charging.
Blind Fighting	Per 30	Suffer half usual penalties for obscured vision.
Catfall	Ag 30	Reduce falling Damage.
Cold Hearted	—	Immune to seduction, resistant to Charm.
Combat Formation	Int 40	Use Intelligence bonus for initiative.
Combat Sense	Per 30	Use Per bonus instead of Ag bonus for initiative.
Cursed Heirloom	—	Gain ancient item Heretic must always carry.
Deadeye Shot	BS 30	Reduce penalties for ranged called shots.
Die Hard	WP 40	Improves chances of surviving Blood Loss.
Disarm	Ag 30	Force opponent to drop weapon.
Disturbing Voice	—	+10 to Intimidate, –10 to Charm.
Double Team	—	Gain additional +10 for outnumbering opponent.
Enemy	—	A group or organisation despises the Heretic.
Excessive Wealth	Inf 40	Character has more resources.
Ferric Summons	Ferric Lure Implants, Mechanicus Implants	Can summon larger metallic objects.
Flesh Render	Weapon Training (Chain)	Inflicts more Damage with weapons that have the Tearing Quality.
Frenzy	—	Enter psychotic rage to gain combat bonuses.
Heightened Senses†	—	Gain +10 bonus to particular sense.
Iron Jaw	T 40	Test Toughness to overcome Stunning.
Jaded	WP 40	Ignore mundane horrors.
Leap Up	Ag 30	Stand as Free Action.
Legion Weapon Training	Chaos Space Marine	Use any Traitor Legion weapon without penalty.
Lesser Minion of Chaos	Fel 40	Gain a Lesser Minion.
Light Sleeper	Per 30	Count as awake even when sleeping.
Lightning Reflexes	—	Roll twice and take highest for Initiative rolls.
Meditation	—	Character may enter trance to ignore fatigue.
Mimic	—	Character can copy voices.
Orthoproxy	—	+20 bonus to resist mind control or interrogation.
Peer	Fel 30	Character has good reputation amongst chosen group.
Pity the Weak	S 35, WP 35	Bonuses to Intimidate or Command with weak individuals.
Polyglot	Int 40, Fel 30	Character has innate grasp of languages.
Psychic Power†	Psyker	May take one psychic power.
Quick Draw	—	Draw weapon as Free Action.
Radiant Presence	Fel 45	Character has bewitching aura.
Rapid Reload	—	Reduce reload time.
Raptor	Operate (Auronautica)	Increased Damage when using jump pack.
Resistance†	—	Gain +10 bonus to particular resistance test.
Sound Constitution	—	Gain an additional Wound.
Street Fighting	WS 30	Add half WS to Critical Damage.
Sure Strike	WS 30	Reduce penalties for melee called shots.
Takedown	—	Make special attack to stun opponent.
Technical Knock	Int 30	Un-jam gun as Half Action.
Total Recall	Int 30	Character can remember trivial facts and minor details.
Unarmed Warrior	WS 35, Ag 35	Improves unarmed attacks.
Unremarkable	—	Heretic is easily forgotten.
Warp Sense	Psy Rating, Psyniscience, Per 30	Allows Psyniscience Test as Free Action.
Weapon-Tech	Tech Use +10, Int 40	Increase potency of advanced weaponry.
Weapon Training†	—	Use Weapon Group without penalty.

†Denotes Specialist Talent.

Table 4-2: Tier 2 Talents

Talent Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Armour-Monger	Int 35, Tech Use, Trade (Armourer)	Increase the efficacy of physical armour.
Baleful Dirge	Disturbing Voice, Intimidate +10	WP Test or suffer –10 to next roll.
Battle Rage	Frenzy	Parry while frenzied
Betrayer	Cold Hearted, Intimidate	Kill minions or allies for benefits.
Bulging Biceps	S 45	Remove bracing requirements for certain weapons.
Child of the Warp	Psy Rating	Persistent Psychic Phenomena and potential Psy Rating boost.
Combat Master	WS 30	Opponents get no bonus for outnumbering Heretic.
Counter Attack	WS 40	May attack after successful Parry.
Corpus Conversion	Psy Rating, Human	Use blood for power.
Crack Shot	BS 50	Add +2 to ranged Crit Damage.
Crippling Strike	WS 50	Add +2 to melee Crit Damage.
Deflect Shot	Ag 50	Add WS Bonus to AP against Primitive ranged attacks.
Exotic Weapon Training	—	Gain proficiency with one exotic weapon.
Foresight	Int 30	Contemplate to gain +10 bonus to next Test.
Furious Assault	WS 35	On a successful WS Test, gain free second attack.
Hard Target	Ag 50	–20 to hit character when he charges or runs.
Hardy	T 40	Character always heals as if lightly wounded.
Hatred†	—	Gain +10 bonus to attack hated creatures.
Hip Shooting	BS 40, Ag 40	Character may shoot when moving.
Hotshot Pilot	Ag 40, Operate (any one)	Heretic can drive or fly anything.
Independent Targeting	BS 40	Fire at multiple targets more than 10 metres apart.
Inspire Wrath	Air of Authority	Inspire crowds to hatred and anger.
Iron Discipline	Fel 30	Followers resist pinning and fear.
Killing Strike	WS 50	Spend Infamy Point to make melee attacks unavoidable.
Luminen Shock	Luminen Capacitors, Mechanicus Implants	Heretic can discharge energy in melee attack.
Maglev Transcendence	Maglev Coils/Mechanicus Implants	Heretic can hover for longer periods of time.
Marksman	BS 35	No penalties for firing at long or extreme range.
Mechadendrite Use†	Mechanicus Implants	Gain ability to use certain Mechadendrites.
Minion of Chaos	Fel 45, Infamy 30	Gain a minion.
Nerves of Steel	—	Reroll Pinning Tests.
Paranoia	—	Heretic always alert for danger.
Precise Blow	WS 40, Sure Strike	Reduce penalty for melee called shots.
Prosanguine	Black Blood (Autosanguine), Mechanicus Implants	Test to heal 1d5 Damage.
Rapid Reaction	Ag 40	Test Ag to ignore surprise.
Sacrifice	Psy Rating	Kill sentient beings to augment rituals.
Sharpshooter	BS 40, Deadeye Shot	Decrease penalty for ranged called shots.
Strong Minded	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Techniques)	May reroll failed WP Tests to resist psychic powers.
Storm of Iron	BS 45, Weapon Training (any one ranged)	Adds half WS to Damage against Hordes.
Swift Attack	WS 30	May make multiple melee attacks.
Two-Weapon Wielder†	—	May fight with two weapons.
Unarmed Master	WS 45, Ag 40, Unarmed Warrior	Deadly fighter while unarmed.
Unshakeable Will	WP 35	May reroll failed Fear Tests.
Warp Conduit	Psy Rating, Strong Minded, WP 50	Spend Infamy Point to get +1d5 to Psy Rating.
Whirlwind of Death	WS 40	Make one attack for each melee opponent.
Wisdom of the Ancients	Int 40	Spend Infamy Point to gain insight into situation.

†Denotes Specialist Talent.

Table 4-3: Tier 3 Talents

Talent Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Arms Master	WS 40, BS 40, Weapon Training (any two)	Less penalty for using weapons untrained.
Assassin Strike	Ag 40, Acrobatics	After making melee attack, test Acrobatics to move.
Bastion of Iron Will	Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 40	Gain bonus to Opposed Tests defending against psychic powers.
Blademaster	WS 30, Weapon Training (any melee)	Reroll missed attack, once per round.
Blade Dancer	WS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	Reduced penalties for fighting with two melee weapons.
Blasphemous Incantation	Psy Rating	Incant secret words of power to enhance abilities.
Blood God's Contempt	Frenzy, WP 40	Spend Infamy Point to resist Psychic Powers.
Bolter Drill	Weapon Training (Bolt), BS 40	Additional DoS when firing Bolt weapons.
Crushing Blow	WS 40	Add half WS Bonus to Damage inflicted in melee.
Demagogue	Inspire Wrath	Affect larger groups with Charm and Intimidate.
Eye of Vengeance	BS 50	Increase chances of Zealous Hatred.
Favoured by the Warp	WP 35	Roll twice for Psychic Phenomena and choose.
Fearless	Nerves of Steel	Immune to Fear and Pinning.
Greater Minion of Chaos	Fel 55, Infamy 50	Gain a Greater Minion.
Gunslinger	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	Reduce penalties for fighting with two pistols.
Hammer Blow	Crushing Blow	Make a Thunderous single strike with a melee weapon.
Infused Knowledge	Int 40, Lore (any one)	Know a little bit about everything.
Into the Jaws of Hell	Iron Discipline, Fel 50	Followers ignore fear and pinning.
Lightning Attack	Swift Attack	Heretic may make many melee attacks with single roll.
Luminen Blast	Luminen Shock, Luminen Capacitors, Mechanicus Implants	May discharge stored energy as ranged attack.
Master Chirurgeon	Mediacae +10	Perform advanced medical procedures.
Master Enginseer	Tech Use +20, Mechanicus Implants	Can spend Infamy Points to automatically succeed on Tech-Use Tests.
Mastery†	Rank 4 in Selected Skill	May spend Infamy Point to automatically succeed on Test.
Mighty Shot	BS 40	Add half BS Bonus to ranged Damage rolls.
Never Die	WP 50, T 50	Ignore penalties from Critical Damage by spending Infamy Point.
Preternatural Speed	WS 40, Ag 50	Doubles speed when charging.
Psy Rating	Psyker	Character increases psychic potential.
Sidearm	WS 40, BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic, Melee)	Reduce penalties for fighting with pistol and melee weapon.
Sprint	—	Move more quickly in combat.
Step Aside	Agility 40, Dodge, Parry	May make additional Dodge or Parry attempt.
Target Selection	BS 50	May shoot into melee without penalty.
Thunder Charge	S 50	Break enemies with armoured charge.
True Grit	T 40	Reduce Critical Damage taken.
Unholy Devotion	Minion of Chaos	Minions take hits for the Heretic.
War Cry	S 50, WP 50, Disturbing Voice	Gain Fear Rating with fearsome war cry.
Warp Lock	Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 50	Ignore Psychic Phenomenon once per session.

†Denotes Specialist Talent.

Talent Tiers and Categories

Not all Talents are created equal and some are unashamedly better than others. For this reason all Talents are divided into three levels, or Tiers, rated one to three, with one being the weakest and three being the most powerful. Tiers primarily exist to price Talents, as higher-Tier Talents have a greater cost. In addition, higher-Tier Talents are more likely to have Prerequisites than lower-Tier Talents.

When selecting Talents a character can choose any talent from any Tier. However, he should be mindful that some Talents have Prerequisites. A character must meet the prerequisites before he takes the Talent.

Talent Prerequisites

Several Talents require the Heretic to possess a prerequisite before their selection. This represents a certain innate ability level required to employ specific Talents, or a Skill or other Talent necessary to access more advanced capabilities. These prerequisites may take the form of Skills, Talents, Characteristic scores, or even special abilities.

Specialist Talents

Several talents are not one talent but many and require a character to select a specific specialisation when taking the talent. Thus, when selecting the Peer talent, a character would also choose a specific group or organisation from those listed within the talent, such as Peer (Eldar). Each time a character gains the talent they are in effect taking a new talent, and must choose a different specialisation, so the next time a character selected Peer he might opt for Peer (Dark Mechanicus). In many cases group listings are representative as opposed to all inclusive, so even though groups like the "Alpha Legion and the Serrated Query" are not specifically listed in the Peer specialisations, a character could still choose them with the approval of the GM.

Talent Descriptions

The Heretic can find a complete listing of the Talents available in **Black Crusade** on **Table 1–1: Tier 1 Talents, Table 1–2: Tier 2 Talents**, and **Table 1–3: Tier 3 Talents**, and the full explanation of each Talent below.

Air of Authority

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Fellowship 30
The character was born to command, either motivating or terrifying those under their charge. When making Command Skill Tests, the character may affect a number of targets equal to 10 times his Fellowship bonus. If the character has Minions (see page 135) they are also more devoted to him and add +10 to their Loyalty when in his presence. This talent has no effect on hostile targets, and only affects NPCs.

Ambidextrous

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Agility 30
This talent does not represent true ambidexterity so much as sufficient training with both hands to make the distinction mute. The character may use either hand equally well for any task, and does not suffer the –20 penalty for actions using his off hand.
Special: When combined with the Two-Weapon Wielder Talent, the penalty for making attacks with both weapons in the same Turn drops to –10.

Ancient Warrior

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Fellowship 35, Willpower 35
The character is either a veteran of the Long War or has served with those that have fought in its many wars down the centuries. Though the character does not need to be a Chaos Space Marine to take this talent it is rare for those outside their ranks to possess it. This Talent must be taken at Character Creation. The character can command special respect from other veterans of the Long War and gains a +10 to all Fellowship Tests and Skill Tests based on Fellowship when dealing with such NPCs. In addition, Chaos Space Marine Minions of the character increase their loyalty by +10. Long War weaponry is also easier for him to obtain and all weapons with the word "Legion" in the title count as one Availability category easier than normal (i.e. Rare becomes Scarce, Scarce becomes Average, etc.). Finally, veterans of the Long War are despised by the Imperium and the Adeptus Astartes especially, and should the character's past become known by these powers it is likely to end in blood...

Armour-Monger

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Intelligence 35, Tech-Use, Trade (Armourer)
The character is a skilled armourer and constantly tinkers and improves his armour or keeps it in pristine shape by repairing the slightest Damage it sustains. With years of training the character has even learned to enhance the protection afforded by his armour and learned how to use it in its optimum fashion. The character increases the Armour Points of any armour he wears by 2 on all locations it would normally cover as long as he has at least an hour each day to clean and repair it or make minor modifications. This bonus applies only to armour worn by the character as it combines his training as much as his skill at armoury.



Arms Master
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 40, Ballistic Skill 40, Weapon Training (any two)
The Heretic is a true master of weapons and there is practically nothing he cannot pick up and use with ease, from boltguns to plasma pistol or powerblades to shock mauls. When the Heretic uses a weapon he is untrained in, he only suffers a –10 penalty, rather than a –20. The only exceptions to the Arms Master Talent are exotic weapons, which are so unusual or rare that they always require their own weapon training Talents to use without penalty and gain no bonus when combined with this talent.

Assassin Strike
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Agility 40, Acrobatics
The character's natural agility and graceful martial forms turn him into a dervish of death on the battlefield. After making a melee attack, a successful Acrobatics Skill Test allows the character to move at half rate as a Free Action. The character's opponent does not receive a free attack resulting from this move. The character may only make this move once per round.

Baleful Dirge
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Disturbing Voice, Intimidate+10
The character can sing an unnatural droning dirge which makes the skin of those nearby crawl and their minds shy away from its discordant notes. Singing the dirge takes some concentration and requires a Half Action each round to maintain. All creatures which can hear the character within a 30-metre radius must make a Willpower Test or suffer a –10 on their next roll. As long as the dirge is maintained, all those affected by it must test each turn to see if they suffer its effects. Once a creature passes a Willpower Test however, it has completely overcome the dirge and is not affected by it for the remainder of the encounter.

Bastion of Iron Will
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 40
The character's sheer willpower and psychic focus have become one and the same over years of practice and training, such that their combined use is second nature. The character adds 5 x his Psy Rating on any Opposed Test involving defending against the Psyniscience Skill or Psychic Powers.

Battle Rage
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Frenzy
Long experience and indomitable will have allowed the character to master the beast within; directing its rage while keeping his head despite the howling bloodlust in his mind. The character may Parry while frenzied. In addition such is the character's control he may reroll a failed roll to snap out of Frenzy or resist entering Frenzy if he so chooses.

Berserk Charge
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character has learned to put the whole force of his momentum behind his weapon blows and when the character charges into combat, few can stand before him. If the character uses the Charge Action, he gains a +30 bonus to Weapon Skill instead of +20.

Betrayer
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Cold Hearted, Intimidate
The character has little regard for the lives of others should it advance his goals. Once per game session the character may kill either an allied NPC (i.e. an NPC which is openly friendly toward the PC and trusts him) or one of his own Minions. Such calculated cruelty boosts the Heretic's reputation, granting him a +10 bonus on his next Infamy Test if the victim was an NPC and +20 if it was a Minion (and harder to replace). Killing NPCs and Minions usually has consequences as well which should be determined by the GM.

Blademaster
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 30, Weapon Training (any melee)
The character's mastery of bladed weapons and his martial disciplines has no peer. When attacking with any bladed weapon, including chainswords, axes, and powerswords, the character may reroll one missed attack per round.

Blade Dancer
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
The character has mastered the difficult ability to wield a blade or other melee weapon in either hand making expert simultaneous attacks as he weaves a deadly pattern of steel. When armed with two singled handed melee weapons with the Balanced Quality, the character reduces the penalties for Two-Weapon Fighting (see page 243) by 10 (so –20 would drop to –10). If taken with the Ambidextrous Talent, this drops the penalty to +0.

Blasphemous Incantation
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Psy Rating
As a realm of coherent thought and tangible emotion, the warp is influenced by the minds of mortals. Using complex formulae and ritualistic incantations to focus and direct thoughts, a mortal mind can exert influence over the Immaterium more easily. However, the tiniest slip in focus and concentration, the slightest mispronunciation in the incantation, can result in the warp being unleashed in a dangerous and destructive manner. Using a power with an incantation increases the Focus Power Test by a Half Action, as the psyker requires a few moments to speak the required words. Powers for which the Focus Power Test takes a Reaction cannot be used with an invocation. Using a power with an invocation grants the psyker a +1 bonus to his

Psy Rating, after determining Psychic Strength. This bonus to PR does not influence the Psychic Strength in any way; their benefit is applied after determining whether a power is used at the Unfettered, Fettered or Push level. However, the psyker must add +20 to any roll on the Psychic Phenomena table. Finally, any result of 91 or higher on the Focus Power Test is an automatic failure that results in Perils of the Warp.

Blind Fighting

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Perception 30

Years of practice and development of other senses allows the character to fight in close combat without the benefit of sight. This talent reduces all penalties for fighting with a melee weapon while suffering from obscured vision by half (rounded up), permitting the character to fight in fog, smoke or darkness more effectively. See page 245 for a full list of attack penalties based on lighting and vision. Note this talent only improves a character's chances to hit with melee weapons and has not effect on ranged weapon attacks.

Blood God's Contempt

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Frenzy, Willpower 40

The character spends the time before battle armouring himself against the power of the warp by cursing the names of sorcerers and showing his fearlessness before his feeble power and all those who wield the power of the warp. This talent may be used at any time by a character as long as he has at least an hour to perform his ritual of contempt (a player may say his character has already performed the ritual before play begins if the GM agrees). The character must also spend one Infamy Point.

During the game session whenever the character is the subject of the effects of a psychic power, daemonic power or other warp based power, he may make a Willpower Test (make this test before any tests he would normally be permitted to resist the effects of the power). If the Willpower test is passed the character is unaffected by the psychic power. If the test is failed then the psychic power affects him as normal and he becomes Frenzied in addition to any other effects (see page 124).

The effects of this talent only apply to powers that directly affect the character (such as targeted powers or powers which catch him in their area of effect) and not powers which may harm him indirectly (such as attack from summoned daemons or falling or flung debris from a telekinetic). In addition, powers used by friendly psykers must also be resisted (and also cause Frenzy should he fail to resist them). A power that is resisted by a character using this talent is not nullified and others are affected by it as normal.

Bolter Drill

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Weapon Training (Bolter), BS 40

The character is a master of the boltgun, either because of his training in the Space Marine Legions or because of long years of practise and copious amounts of ammo. The character can use bolters of all types to unleash devastating volleys of disciplined fire that can cut down his enemies like the sweep of a scythe. When firing any class of Bolt weapon on full or semi-auto the character may score one additional Degree of Success (provided the Test is successful) if he does not take a Move Action in his turn.

Bulging Biceps

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Strength 45

Whereas a weaker man would be sent flying when using heavy weapons, the character's strong physique allows him to remain standing. The character can fire heavy weapons using Semi-Auto Burst or Full Auto Burst without bracing, and he does not suffer the -30 penalty for failing to brace. In addition whenever the character uses the Athletics Heft Special Skill Use (see page 96) he may add +20 to his Athletics Skill Test to reflect his massive muscles.

Catfall

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Agility 30

Gymnastic ability and natural balance enables the character to fall great distances without harm. The character automatically reduces the distance of all falls by a number of metres equal to his Agility Bonus, ignoring this distance as if it did not exist. In addition the character adds +20 to his Acrobatics Skill Tests when using the Jump Special Skill Use as it pertains to reducing Damage from falling.

Cold Hearted

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

The character is almost devoid of sentiment or physical lusts and is seldom swayed by the emotions of others, almost to an unnatural degree. Seduction attempts against him automatically fail, and he gains a +20 to his Willpower when making Opposed Tests against an opponent using the Charm Skill. Taking this Talent gives the character one Corruption Point.

Child of the Warp

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Psy Rating

As a result of prolonged exposure to the warp and excessive use of psychic powers the character has become saturated with warp energy. This grants greater connection to the warp and increases the character's Psy Rating by +1 when he chooses to Push (see **Chapter VI: Powers of the Warp**). The downside, however, is that the warp is always partially manifest in his presence and he generates constant psychic phenomena. At the start of each game session the character should roll 1d10 on **Table 4-4: Child of the Warp** to determine the nature of these persistent effects which follow him for the duration of the session.

Alternatively, with the GM's consent the player may select one phenomena from the following list that always effects him, eliminating the need to roll each session.

Note that the character still suffers from Psychic Phenomena and Perils of the Warp as normal.

Table 4-4: Child of the Warp

Roll	Effect
1	**Warp Echo:** All noises cause echoes regardless of the surroundings.
2	**Unholy Stench:** The air around the psyker is permeated with a bizarre and foul smell.
3	**Hoarfrost:** A thin coating of frost covers everything within 10 metres.
4	**Aura of Taint:** Animals within 30 metres become spooked and agitated.
5	**Memory Worm:** People who see the psyker forget something trivial.
6	**Spoilage:** Food and drink go bad in a 10-metre radius.
7	**Haunting Breeze:** Winds surround the psyker blowing light objects about within 10 metres.
8	**Distorted Reflections:** Mirrors and other reflective surfaces within 10 metres are distorted.
9	**Unnatural Decay:** Plant life within 10 metres of the psyker withers and dies.
0	**Bloody Tears:** Blood weeps from stone and wood within 10 metres of the psyker.

Combat Formation

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Intelligence 40

The character has directed his comrades to be prepared for danger, planning out his actions for many contingencies if attacked. Before rolling initiative, all members of the group (including the character) add +1 to his Initiative Rolls. Any member of the group may also choose to use the Intelligence Bonus of the character for their initiative roll rather than their own Agility Bonus.

Combat Master

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 30

The character's weapon seems to be everywhere at once, keeping many more opponents at bay in close combat than would seem possible. Opponents fighting the character in hand-to-hand combat gain no bonuses for Ganging Up (see page 245).

Combat Sense

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Perception 40

The character has the ability to consciously recognise the prodding of his subconscious as it reacts to his preternaturally sharp senses, giving the character an edge that mere speed cannot match. The character may use his Perception Bonus in place of his Agility Bonus when rolling Initiative.

Counter Attack

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 40

The character's lightning ripostes are things of deadly beauty; swift and invisible as the wind. After successfully parrying an opponent's attack, the character may immediately make an attack against that opponent using the weapon with which he parried as a Free Action even though it is not his turn. This attack suffers a –20 penalty and may not be combined with any ability which allows more than one hit or attack such as Lighting Attack or Two-Weapon Fighting.

Corpus Conversion

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Psy Rating, Human

To the truly dedicated Sorcerer, the flesh is a fleeting inconvenience, a transitory shell to contain his glory until he ascends to something greater. Such beings, whether truly blessed by the Dark Gods, or merely insane, are willing to burn his flesh in exchange for power, gathering the corrosive power of the Warp and holding it within muscle, bone, sinew and hair until the time comes to unleash it. A psyker with the Corpus Conversion Talent gains access to this Path to Power, and may elect to use it before he attempts his Focus Power Test. The psyker may gain a number of bonus Degrees of Success no greater than his Toughness Bonus on his Focus Power Test. However, for every Degree of Success gained in this way, the psyker suffers 1d10 Toughness Damage (note, this is not permanent Toughness Damage) and one Corruption Point as the energies of the warp poison his body from within. Traitor Legion characters may not benefit from Corpus Conversion; the taint-resistant metabolism of the Astartes makes them incapable of burning away his flesh to fuel warp-based powers.

Crack Shot

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 50

The character can place his shots where it inflicts more harm such as at creases, gaps or joints in armour. When the character's ranged attack causes Critical Damage, add +2 to the Damage result.

Crippling Strike

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 50

The character can land his blows precisely where they inflict the most harm, cutting into seams or hammering at weak points. When the character's melee attack causes Critical Damage add +2 to the Damage result.

Crushing Blow

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 40

The character can channel the kinetic energy of his entire body into close combat attacks. The character adds half his Weapon Skill Bonus to Damage he inflicts in melee.

Cursed Heirloom

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

Passed down through the ages, the character has come into possession of an ancient ancestral heirloom. The character may choose any weapon (melee or ranged) or armour from **Chapter V: Armoury** with an Availability of Very Rare or less without the need to make an Acquisition Test. He must, however, roll

Table 4-5: Cursed Heirloom

Roll	Effect
1	**Bloodthirsty:** The item has an unnatural taste for blood and can sense death with a lust that seems almost human. Whenever the character kills a living creature he must make a Willpower Test or use his next action to put another round into—or make another swing at—the corpse.
2	**Unsettling:** The sight of the item is unnerving to anyone with half a brain, and though the character can't tell why people don't like it everyone subconsciously avoids it. The first time in each game session that the character makes a Fellowship Test or a Skill Test using the Fellowship Characteristic he must reroll the result if it is a success.
3	**Jinxed:** Something about the item seems to bring bad luck to those nearby, spreading its own misery to the character's companions. If the item is a ranged weapon, whenever it Jams all nearby ranged weapons also Jam. If the item is a melee weapon, whenever the character rolls minimum Damage all other nearby melee weapons inflict minimum Damage until the start of the characters next turn. If the item is a suit of armour whenever the character is hit by a weapon with a Pen equal or greater than his AP all other suits of armour nearby have their APs reduced by half (round up) until the start of his next turn. Jinxed affects items within 20 metres of the character whether they can see him or not.
4	**Doomed:** The item seems determined to kill its master and add him to the long list of previous owners now sleeping in the soil. The first time in each game session the character spends an Infamy Point roll a die: on a result of 9 the Infamy Point has not effect but is still spent.
5	**Toxic:** Touched by the unhallowed hands of those dedicated to Nurgle in times past the item has taken on the taint of disease and decay which it passes on to the character while he carried it. The first time in each game session that the character makes a Toughness Test or a Skill Test using the Toughness Characteristic he must reroll the result if it is a success.

1d5 once for the item on **Table 4-5: Cursed Heirloom** giving it a permanent curse. He is now bonded to the item and even if it is lost, destroyed, or stolen it always somehow turns up in its original condition at the start of the next game session. Such items also usually come with a history of their own and the GM should feel free to have the item's past come back to haunt the character from time to time.

Deadeye Shot
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 30
The character's rock-steady hand and hawk-like eyesight make him a dreaded marksman. No target, however precise, can escape his crosshairs. When making a Called Shot (see page 234) ranged attack, the character reduces the penalty by 10 (so a –20 becomes a –10 instead).

Deflect Shot
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Agility 50
The character's weapons move with such speed that they can deflect thrown weapons and shots fired from primitive weapons. When the character is armed with a readied melee weapon they add his Weapon Skill Bonus to his armour points on all locations (even unarmed locations) when calculating Damage from hits from ranged weapons with the Primitive Special Quality or Thrown weapons.

Demagogue
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Air of Authority
The character has learned the techniques required to influence large audiences. When the character uses the Charm or Intimidate Skill to affect more than one person they may affect up to a 100 times his Fellowship Bonus. In addition such is the character's natural magnetism and charisma that he adds +10 to the loyalty of all his Minions.

Die Hard
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Willpower 40
Through either willpower or sheer stubbornness, the Heretic refuses to die. When he suffers from blood loss, he may roll twice to avoid death.

Disarm
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Agility 30
The character can wrest weapons from his opponent's hands through practised technique or brute force. If in close combat, the character may use a Full Action to disarm his foe by making an Opposed Weapon Skill Test. If the character wins the test, the enemy drops his weapon at his feet. Should the character obtain three or more Degrees of Success, he may take the enemy's weapon from him.

Disturbing Voice
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character's voice has particularly baleful or menacing qualities, causing others to quail before it. The character gains a +10 bonus to all Intimidate Skill Tests, but suffers a –10 penalty to Fellowship Tests when dealing with others in a non-threatening manner, such as animals, children or the easily startled. In addition, the character is more adept at instilling fear in his followers and when using the Special Skill Use Terrify (see page 97), and adds +10 to his Command Skill Test to counter the effects of Fear.

Double Team
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character has experience fighting in paired teams that work together to take down their enemies. When ganging up on an opponent, the character gains an additional +10 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests. If one or more of the other allies ganging up on the opponent have this Talent, both gain an additional +10 bonus, for a total of +20. This bonus is in addition to the normal bonus gained from Ganging Up on an opponent (see page 245).

Powers Within and Without

The Vortex is a complex place ruled by lords and princes uncounted all under the watchful eye of the gods themselves. Added to these internal masters the Vortex exists in the shadow of the Imperium and many of those which come to the Vortex come from its ranks or bring with them connections to its great organisations. The Imperium itself is a vast machine made up of many divisions and sub-divisions of authority, power and responsibility. In addition to the many layers of organisation within the Imperium, there are countless more that exist outside the official architecture of power, or exist only within particular locales.

- **Administratum:** The vast bureaucracy of the Imperium that administers its domains.
- **Adeptus Arbites:** The keepers of Imperial law and enforcers of loyalty to the Golden Throne.
- **Adeptus Astartes:** The genetically enhanced, power armour clad angels of death.
- **Astra Telepathica:** The organisation that trains and sanctions Imperial Psykers.
- **Adeptus Mechanicus:** The Tech-priests who are the preservers and fabricators of technology.
- **Adepta Sororitas:** The female holy orders who include the Sisters of Battle.
- **Adeptus Titanicus:** The Titan Legions whose vast war machines shake planets when they walk.
- **Astropaths:** The telepaths who unite the Imperium through telepathic communication.
- **Chartist Captains:** The masters of space craft who voyage within the bounds of the Imperium.
- **Heretical Cult:** The countless cults of the Vortex can vary greatly in their power and intent.
- **Daemon Princes:** Lords of the warp and heralds of the gods.
- **Dark Mechanicus:** The dark cousins to the Adeptus Mechanicus.
- **Ecclesiarchy:** The keepers of faith in the Emperor's divinity.
- **Imperial Guard:** The Imperium's vast armies of men and women.
- **Imperial Navy:** The forces of warships that defend the worlds of the Imperium.
- **Inquisition:** The secretive protectors of the Emperor's dominion.
- **Navigators:** The mutants whose abilities allow starships to pass through the warp.
- **Officio Assassinorum:** The secret bringers of death.
- **Planetary Defence Force:** The military forces raised on planets to defend against invaders.
- **Rogue Trader:** One of those who voyage beyond the bounds of the Imperium.
- **Schola Progenium:** The schools that teach orphans of Imperial officials.
- **Scholastica Psykana:** The organisation that trains and sanctions Imperial Psykers.
- **Traitor Legions:** Fallen brothers of the Adeptus Astartes filled with hate and dark purpose.
- **Warlords:** Ranging from planetary masters to petty chieftains.

Enemy

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

Specialisations: Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Daemon Prince, Ecclesiarchy, Chartist Captains, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Navigators, Officio Assassinorum, Planetary Defence Forces, Planetary Governors or Warlords, Rogue Trader, Schola Progenium, Scholastica Psykana, Traitor Legions



The opposite of Peer; the character is particularly despised and possibly hunted by a specific social group or organisation. The character suffers an additional –10 penalty to Fellowship Tests when dealing with this group and the GM may use them to complicate his life from time to time.

Unlike other talents this talent does not cost any experience points to purchase and cannot be taken as an advance. Instead the GM and player may agree to award this talent when appropriate to the adventure or campaign. This talent can be removed with an Elite Advance, and the approval of the GM, if the character has redeemed himself with the group in question.

This Talent may be awarded multiple times for the same group, in which case it should be listed as Enemy (X), with X equalling the number of times the Talent has been awarded. This can be used to represent groups who particularly hate the Heretic, and want to see him dead. In game terms, the penalty to Fellowship Tests increases to –10 times X, with X being the number of times the Talent has been awarded.

Excessive Wealth

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Infamy 40

For whatever reason the character has more resources and hard currency than normal, perhaps because he have been granted a large boon by his secret masters, have found a cache of hidden supplies in the wastes of the Vortex, or he have simply stolen it.

The character gains a +10 bonus to his Infamy whenever he makes an Acquisition Test representing his increased ability to buy goods.

Exotic Weapon Training

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: None
Specialisations (each single exotic weapon)
The character is trained to use a particularly obscure type of weapon, allowing him to use armaments few others have ever seen. Weapons requiring this unique talent are noted in their armoury descriptions. When a character attempts to use a weapon he does not have the correct Weapon Training Talent for, he suffers a –20 penalty to any relevant Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test. Unlike other kinds of weapons training this talent applies only to a single weapon and not a class of weapons.

Eye of Vengeance

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 50
The character can focus his intent on where it is likely to do most damage to his enemy and then strike them down with a single shot. Before making a Standard Attack ranged attack action, the character may spend an Infamy Point. If he does so, his attack deals +X Damage and gains +X Pen, where X equals the number of Degrees of Success scored on the attack roll.

Favoured by the Warp

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Willpower 35
Whenever a Power Roll results in Psychic Phenomena, the character may roll one additional time on that table and take the more favourable result. Perils of the Warp affect him as normal—such is the capacious nature of the gods that not even the "favoured" can avoid their gaze from time to time...

Fearless

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Nerves of Steel
Through hard experience with horrifying situations, fear no longer commands the character's actions. The character is immune to the effects of Fear and Pinning, but disengaging from combat or backing down from a fight is difficult for him to stomach and as such requires a successful Willpower Test.

Ferric Summons

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Ferric Lure Implants, Mechanicus Implants
The Heretic can call an unsecured metal object to his hand as with Ferric Lure Implants, but may summon objects of up to 2 kilograms per point of his Willpower Bonus and may summon objects up to 40 metres distant.

Flesh Render

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Weapon Training (Chain)
The character has a taste for the massive damage that can be inflicted with chain weapons and other melee weapons that



rip apart the flesh of his enemies. When inflicting Damage with a melee weapon that has the Tearing Quality, the character rolls two additional die for Damage, rather than the normal one for using a Tearing weapon, and discards the lowest two Damage dice results.

Foresight

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Intelligence 30
Logic and analysis do for the character what animal entrails and the bones claim to do for the superstitious masses. By careful consideration of all the possible consequences, and examination of all evidence and information, the character can identify the best path for success. By spending ten minutes studying or analysing a problem, the character gains a +10 bonus to his next Intelligence Test or a Skill Test based on Intelligence.

Frenzy

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character's temper and passion boil just below the surface of his psyche, mostly held in check by his rational mind, but easily released when needed. If the character spends one full round fuelling his anger—through flagellation, drugs, or other means—on the next round he goes into an uncontrolled rage, gaining a +10 bonus to Weapon Skill, Strength, Toughness, and Willpower, but suffering a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill, Intelligence and Fellowship. The character must attack the nearest enemy in melee

combat if possible. If he is not engaged with the nearest enemy, he must move towards that enemy and engage it if possible. The character does not take obviously suicidal actions such as leaping off a building in order to engage someone on the ground, but he does take any actions that has a reasonable opportunity to engage in melee with the nearest enemy. While Frenzied, he is immune to Fear, Pinning, stunning effects, the effects of Fatigue, and he may not Parry, retreat, or flee. He remains Frenzied for the duration of the combat. Characters may not use psychic powers whilst in Frenzy. After combat ends, or if there are no more eligible targets for the character to attack he can make a Willpower Test to snap out of his Frenzy. If he fails he must continue to attack, favouring NPCs over PCs. Each successive round however he may make another Willpower Test, with a cumulative +10 Bonus to return to a stable state of mind and come out of Frenzy. After Frenzying a character may not Frenzy again for at least an hour as he recovers his mental and physical strength.

Furious Assault

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 35
The character's speed and martial prowess allow him to land several blows where lesser combatants land one. If the character successfully hits his target using the All Out Attack Action, he may spend his Reaction (and thus not being able to parry or dodge until his next turn) to make an additional attack using the same bonuses or penalties as the original attack.

Greater Minion of Chaos

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Fellowship 55, Infamy 50
Though various means the character has acquired a Greater Minion. Such a Minion may almost be as powerful as the character themselves and come in a myriad of forms such as a brutal Chaos Space Marine, a potent Heretic Sorcerer or a hulking mutant monstrosity. Details on creating a Greater Minion can be found on page 135. This talent may be taken more than once, each time adding another Greater Minion to the character's retinue.

Gunslinger

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 40, Two-Weapon Wielder
The character has trained with pistols for so long that they are like extensions of his own body, barely requiring conscious thought to aim and fire. When armed with two pistol-class weapons, both of which he can use single-handedly, the character reduces the penalty for Two-Weapon Fighting by 10 (so –20 would drop to –10). If taken with the Ambidextrous Talent, this drops the penalty to +0.

Hammer Blow

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Crushing Blow
The character strikes a single blow with such focus and force that it breaks armour and pulps flesh as it strikes. When the character makes an All Out Attack manoeuvre to make a single melee attack he may add half his Strength Bonus to the weapon's Armour Penetration. The attack also counts as having the Concussive (2) Special Quality to represent the shocking force of the blow's impact.

Hard Target

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Agility 40
Light-footed, the character dodges and weaves through combat with a lithe grave, skills learned from long years in the line of fire. When the character performs a Charge or Run action, opponents suffer a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit the character with a ranged weapon. This penalty continues until the start of the character's next turn.

Hardy

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Toughness 40
The character's constitution rebounds quickly from shock or injury. When undergoing medical treatment or healing from injures, the character always recovers Damage as if lightly wounded regardless of the level of Damage he has sustained.

Hatred

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: None
Specialisations: Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Chaos Space Marines, Daemons, Ecclesiarchy, Heretics, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Mutants, Psykers, Renegades, Xenos (specific)
A group, organisation or race has wronged the character in the past, fuelling this animosity. When fighting opponents of that group in close combat, the character gains a +10 bonus to all Weapon Skill Tests made against him. The character also finds it difficult to back down from a fight with his hated foe and must make a Willpower Test to retreat or surrender when fighting him unless massively outnumbered or outclassed.

Heightened Senses

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
Specialisations: Sight, Sound, Smell, Taste, Touch
Either genetics or augmetics have rendered one of the character's senses superior to others. When the character gains this Talent, select one of the five senses: The character gains a +10 bonus to any tests specifically involving this sense. Thus, Heightened Senses (Sight) would apply to an Awareness Test to see a flock of Shale Crows, but not to a Ballistic Skill Test simply because the character is using his eyes. This talent may be taken more than once, each time with a different specialisation.

Hip Shooting

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 40, Agility 40
The character's prowess with ranged weapons is such that he can still fire accurately without his eye behind the sights. As a Full Action, the character may both move up to his Full Move rate and make a single attack with a ranged weapon. This attack can only be a single shot and may not be a semi or full automatic

ranged attack. Characters with the Two-Weapon Fighting talent may use this talent with Hip Shooting to make two single shots if he is armed with a ranged weapon in either hand.

Hotshot Pilot

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Agility 40, Operate (any one)

The character can pilot or drive vehicles as if they were extensions of his own body and has a natural understanding of anything with wheels, wings or legs. The character counts as having all Operate Skills (essentially, he can drive or fly anything) at Rank 1 (Known). If he wishs to later improve his Operate Skills they must be bought using experience points (from Rank 1) as normal.

Such is his skill he also adds one Degree of Success to any successful Operate Tests.

Infused Knowledge

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Intelligence 40, Lore (any one)

The character has been infused with a great wealth of lore and knowledge, either through punishing noetic techniques, by arcane methods kept secret by the guardians of technology and knowledge, or a dark pact with the gods for secret lore. The character counts as having all Common Lore and Scholastic Lore (essentially, he knows something about everything) at Rank 1 (Known). If he wishes to later improve his Lore Skills they must be bought using experience points (from Rank 1) as normal. Such is his skill that he also adds one Degree of Success to any successful Common or Scholastic Lore Tests.

Independent Targeting

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 40

The character has developed his peripheral vision and situational awareness to a point where he can fire in two directions within a split second. When firing two weapons as part of a single action (using the Two-Weapon Fighting talent), the targets need not be less than 10 metres apart.

Inspire Wrath

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Air of Authority

The character's personal vitriol and bitter hatred is so ingrained in his being that the character can inspire the same hate in others. As a Full Action, the character can make a Charm Test to grant the effects of the Hatred Talent to any people in his immediate vicinity. Success on the test grants the Hatred Talent to the listeners (with the object of hate chosen by the character) for the duration of an encounter. Listeners can resist the effects of the characters speech (and therefore not be burdened with his chosen hatred) by passing an Opposed Willpower Test against the character's Charm Skill Test. Inspire Wrath affects up to 10 times the character's Fellowship, which can be increased with the use of the Demagogue Talent as normal. Both players and GMs should bear in mind, however, that once a crowd has been inspired to hatred or mindless anger the effects can be unpredictable...

Into the Jaws of Hell

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Iron Discipline, Fellowship 50

The Heretic's leadership is so stern and terrifying that his followers would rather die at the hands of a Grey Knight Terminator than disobey him. His followers become immune to the effects of Fear and Pinning as long as he is physically there to lead them and they can see him leading by example. Heretics cannot benefit from the Into the Jaws of Hell of another Heretic.

Iron Discipline

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Fellowship 30

Iron sharpens iron. The character does not coddle his subordinates nor motivate them through kindness. The character's stalwart example and stern leadership exhorts them with steel instead of spoils. If the character is visible to his followers, either in person or via vox- or pict-caster, they may reroll failed Willpower Tests made to resist Fear and Pinning. Heretics cannot benefit from the Iron Discipline of another Heretic.

Iron Jaw

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Toughness 40

The character has taken blows from Orks and given back as good as he got. The character can bounce back from most strikes without ill effects. If ever Stunned, a successful Toughness Test allows the character to ignore the effects.

Jaded

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Willpower 30

The character's wide travels have shown him both wonders and horrors beyond the ken of most. The galaxy has thrown its worst at the character and he has yet to flinch. Dead bodies, xenos creatures, and other terrifying but natural occurrences do not elicit Fear Tests. Terrors of the Warp still affect the character normally.

Killing Strike

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 50

With expert precision the character can land blows which defy his opponent's ability to counter, sliced through his defences as surely as a powerblade cuts flesh. When making an All Out Attack, the character may spend one Infamy Point to choose to make that melee attack unavoidable with the Parry or Dodge Skills. Other means of stopping attacks (such as Shadow Fields or Displacement Fields) are unaffected.

Leap Up

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Agility 30

A combination of athletic ability and speed allow the character to spring to his feet in virtually any circumstance. The character may stand up as a Free Action.

Legion Weapon Training
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Chaos Space Marine
Chaos Space Marines spend years becoming proficient with all manner of weapons, and by the time a Space Marine enters service in a Legion he has not only trained with both heavy and melee weapons, but used those weapons on countless battle fields. Chaos Space Marines are proficient with all weapons of the Bolt, Chain, Melta, Plasma, Power, Flame, Primary, Las, Solid Projectile, Thrown, and Launcher categories. In essence the only weapons that a Chaos Space Marine is not proficient with are Exotic Weapons; for these he must acquire individual Talents as normal.

Lesser Minion of Chaos
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Fellowship 35
Though various means the character has acquired a Lesser Minion. Such a Minion is considerably less powerful than the character, though useful nevertheless. Minions come in a myriad of forms such as a brutal subservient cultist, a tainted servitor, or a feral xenos hound. Details on creating a Lesser Minion can be found on page 135. This Talent may be taken more than once, each time adding another Lesser Minion to the character's retinue.

Light Sleeper
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Perception 30
The slightest change in conditions or the slightest disturbance brings the character from sleep to full awareness, remaining alert even in slumber. The character is always assumed to be awake, even when asleep, for the purposes of Awareness Tests or surprise. Unfortunately, the character's sleep is not deep and can be frequently interrupted, resulting in a less-than-cheery disposition when awake.

Lightning Attack
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Swift Attack
The character's speed with weapons is legendary, allowing him to launch flurries of attacks in melee. A Heretic with this Talent may make the Lightning Attack Combat Action (see page 238).

Lightning Reflexes
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character always expects trouble, even in the most innocuous situations, allowing him to act quickly when needed. When making an Initiative Roll the character may roll twice and add the highest of the two dice result to his Agility Bonus.

Luminen Blast
Tier: 3
Prerequisites: Luminen Shock, Luminen Capacitors, Mechanicus Implants
The energies charged in the Heretic's Luminen Capacitors can be expelled in a ranged attack with a Ballistic Skill Test directing this energy against a single target within 10 metres inflicting 1d10 plus twice the character's Willpower Bonus in Energy Damage with Pen 2 and the Shocking and Blast (X) Quality. X equals any value between 1 and the Heretic's Intelligence Bonus, chosen by the Heretic at the time of firing. The attack uses a Half Action to accomplish (counting as a Single Attack Action) and the character must pass a Toughness Test when he uses this ability or gain a level of Fatigue.

Luminen Shock
Tier: 2
Prerequisites: Luminen Capacitors, Mechanicus Implants
The energies charged in the Heretic's Luminen Capacitors can be expelled as he grapples with an opponent. By making a successful melee attack (without penalties for being unarmed) or instead of doing Damage during a grapple, the Heretic may deal 1d10 plus his Willpower Bonus in Energy Damage with Pen 2 and the Shocking Quality.

Maglev Transcendence
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Maglev Coils/Mechanicus Implants
The Heretic has learned how to better use his inbuilt maglev coils. He may hover for a number of minutes equal to 1d10 plus twice his Toughness bonus. He may move his Run speed when making a Half Move Action, and suffers no Damage from falling if the Coils are active. Each use expends half the power stored in the coils (therefore he may use the Coils twice before recharging them).

Marksman
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 35
The character's steady hand and eagle eye allows him to keep crosshairs steady on any target, regardless of range. Distance is no protection against the character's marksmanship and he suffers no penalties for Ballistic Skill Tests at long or extended range.

Master Chirurgeon
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Medicae +10
The character's advanced medical skills enable him to knit flesh with deft mastery. The character's exceptional education in the use of the Narthecium, Med-Slate and supplemental drugs give his patients an enormous advantage. The character gains a +10 bonus on all Medicae Skill Tests. Any successful heal attempt (including Heavily and Critically wounded patients) by the character heals 2 additional Wounds. If his patient is in danger of losing a limb from a Critical Hit (see **Chapter VII: Combat**), the character provides the patient with a +20 bonus to the Toughness Test to prevent limb loss.

Master Enginseer
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Tech Use +20, Mechanicus Implants
The character's knowledge of engines and their machine spirits

surpasses that of the hidebound savants of the Omnissiah and their blinkered thinking. The character can almost feel the plasma pulsing through a reactor's conduits as if it were his own veins. The character gains a +10 bonus on Tech-Use Skill Tests. The Heretic may spend an Infamy Point to automatically succeed on a Tech-Use Skill Test for enhancement, repair, or upgrade of a machine's system, taking the minimum amount of time possible on the task. In addition at the GM's discretion the character may repair objects without all the parts at hand, jury-rigging a working device as good as the original.

Mastery

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Rank 4 in Selected Skill
Specialisations: Any Skill
The character has become a consummate master of a single skill and can perform feats with it that would baffle lesser men. The character may spend an Infamy Point to automatically pass a Skill Test with his chosen skill provided the final modifier to his Skill Test is 0 or greater. In addition to simply passing the test the character passes it by a number of Degrees of Success equal to the Characteristic Bonus of its associated Characteristic. This Talent may be taken more than once, each time for a different Skill.

Mechadendrite Use

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Mechanicus Implants
Specialisations: Weapon, Utility
The character is trained in the use of a particular kind of Mechendrite (extra mechanical arms often sprouting from a cyber mantle mounted on the character's back) in much the same way as Weapon Training allows the use of weapons. Though there are many different types of Mechadendrite, this talent divides them into two categories:
Weapon: Mechadendrites of this type end in either ranged or close combat weapons, and have the supplemental support and strength necessary for combat.
Utility: Including such varied types as Machine Spirit Interface, Manipulator, Medicae, Utility, Optical and countless others, these Mechadendrites generally require less hardy mountings, but all interface with the Cyber Mantle in a similar manner.

Meditation

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character has mastered his body and its reactions by the practice of meditative techniques, shutting down unnecessary functions that enables him to refresh both body and mind. Success on a Willpower Test and 10 minutes without interruption removes one level of Fatigue.

Mighty Shot

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 40
The character knows the weak points in every armour and material, and has the skill to ensure that his shots land exactly where they do the most damage. The character adds half his Ballistic Skill Bonus to Damage the character inflict with a ranged weapon.

Mimic

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
Vox synthesisers, training, or innate abilities allow the character to accurately mimic the voice of another. The character must study the voice patterns of his intended target for at least one hour for proper imitation, and speak the same language. The character cannot accurately copy the voice of a xenos due to the difference in physiology and the subtle complexities of most alien languages. Listeners must pass a Scrutiny Skill Test with a –10 penalty to penetrate the deception. If the character's study relied on vox recordings, or comm-link conversations rather than in-person observation, then there is no penalty to the Scrutiny Skill Test to see through it. The character's deception automatically fails if the listener can clearly see him.

Minion of Chaos

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Fellowship 45, Infamy 30
Though various means the character has acquired a Minion. Such a Minion is less powerful than the character, though tougher than most and come in a variety of forms such as a disturbing wyrd sorcerer, a well-trained traitor guardsman, or a bloodthirsty alien mercenary. Details on creating a Minion can be found on page 135. This talent may be taken more than once, each time adding another Minion to the character's retinue.

Nerves of Steel

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: None
Long years on the battlefield enable the character to remain calm as fire rains down all around him. The character may reroll failed Willpower Tests to avoid or recover from Pinning. In addition is seldom impressed by the aggressive displays of his enemies and gains a +10 to Willpower Tests when resisting the effects of enemy Intimidation Skill attempts.

Never Die

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Willpower 50, Toughness 50
The character's will or devotion to the gods can sustain him when his flesh fails him. The character can spend one Infamy Point to ignore the effects of injury, Fatigue, and Stunning for a single combat. This talent does not prevent the Damage, but allows the character to temporarily ignore its effects for the duration of the combat. Death still affects him normally.

Orthoproxy

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
Either part of the character's brain has been removed or an inhibitor such as a reason inhibitor circuit has been

implanted within the character's skull, allowing him ignore mental strain that would affect a more "complete" person. The character receives a +20 bonus to Willpower Tests made to resist mind control or interrogation. He tends not to get jokes, however.

Paranoia
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: None
The character knows that danger lurks behind every corner and knows the galaxy hits him with everything it has as soon as he let his guard down. The character gains a +2 bonus on Initiative rolls, and the GM may secretly test using the character's Perception to notice hidden threats. The price of this eternal vigilance is a twitchy disposition and the inability to relax.

Peer
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Fellowship 30
Specialisations: Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Daemon Prince, Ecclesiarchy, Chartist Captains, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Navigators, Officio Assassinorum, Planetary Defence Forces, Planetary Governors or Warlords, Rogue Trader, Schola Progenium, Scholastica Psykana, Traitor Legions
The character knows how to deal with a particular social group or organisation. The character gains a +10 bonus to all Fellowship Tests when interacting with this chosen group and at the GM's discretion my call upon them for favours from time to time. The GM and player may agree to award this talent when appropriate to the adventure or campaign, though the character must still pay the experience cost for the talent as normal. For some more details on groups which can be Peers see the Powers Within and Without sidebar on page 123.

This Talent may be awarded multiple times for the same group, in which case it should be listed as Peer (X), with X equalling the number of times the Talent has been awarded. This can be used to represent groups who particularly like the Heretic, and may even be staunch allies. In game terms, the bonus to Fellowship Tests increases to +10 times X, with X being the number of times the Talent has been awarded.

Pity the Weak
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Strength 35, Willpower 35
Despised are the weak for they cannot stand alone against the power of the gods. The character has nothing but contempt for those less powerful than himself and gains a +10 on Command, Commerce, Deception, and Intimidation Skill Tests when opposed by someone with either a Strength or Willpower Characteristic lower than themselves. Unfortunately, the character also has trouble hiding his contempt from such people and suffers a –10 to Charm Skill Tests when dealing the same people.

Polyglot
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Intelligence 40, Fellowship 30
The character has an innate ability to derive meaning from unknown languages, and can make himself understood using this intuitive grasp. The character can make untrained Skill Tests with the Linguistics Skill even though it is a Specialist Skill. Being a Polyglot is not the same as having a true knowledge of a language, and characters must make a Linguistics Skill Test (along with the –20 modifier for being untrained) to have more than the most basic conversations or exchanges of ideas.

Precise Blow
Tier: 2
Category: Weapon Skill 40, Sure Strike
The character's eye, hand, and weapon act seamlessly together, placing the characters blows where he intends. When making a Called Shot (see page 234) melee attack, the character reduces the penalty by 10 (so a –20 becomes a –10 instead). If combined with Sure Strike, this reduces the penalty to 0.

Preternatural Speed
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 40, Agility 50
The character is a swift moving bringer of death; a living, bloody scythe before whom foes fall like corn before the reaper. When making a Charge Move the character doubles his normal charge movement (i.e. a character with an AB of 3 has a charge movement of 9 metres, which is then doubled to 18 metres by the Preternatural Speed Talent).

Prosanguine
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Black Blood (Autosanguine) Implants, Mechanicus Implants
Through iron will or warp-spawned powers, the Heretek may boost his Black Blood implants to greater levels of effort. He must spend 10 minutes in mediation and make a Tech-Use Test. If he succeeds, he heals 1d5 points of Damage plus one additional point of Damage for every two Degrees of Success. If he rolls a 96 or higher, he loses the ability to use his Black Blood implants or the Prosanguine Talent for one week.

Psy Rating
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Psyker
The character is a psyker, his power in game terms rated on a scale of 1 to 10, where Psy Rating 1 is the lowest to warrant the attentions of the gods and tap into the warp, and a rating of 10 represents one of the most powerful sorcerers or daemon princes in existence. See Chapter VI: The Powers of the Warp for detailed rules on the game mechanics of this ability. Increasing a character's Psy Rating represents that character unlocking more of his psychic potential and becoming more and more powerful. A character may take this talent multiples times. Each time this talent is taken the character's Psy Rating is increased

by 1, to a maximum of 10. An increase in Psy Ratings in **Black Crusade** does not give additional Psychic Powers. Characters must have the Psyker Trait to take this Talent. This means that only Sorcerers or Wyrds can take Psy Rating, unless a character gains the Psyker Trait by some other means.

A character may not purchase a higher Psy Rating than his Willpower Bonus plus his Corruption Bonus. If Heretics start play with a higher Psy Rating (or gain a higher Psy Rating through some other means), this simply means he cannot make further purchases until their combined bonuses increases.

Psychic Power

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Psyker

Either through training or natural development, the character has learned an additional Psychic Power. This power must be selected from one of the powers presented in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers.** The experience cost and requirements for psychic powers are not the same as other Talents (as detailed on page 77) and can instead be found in Chapter VI: Psychic Powers. Characters must have the Psyker trait to take this talent.



Quick Draw

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

The character has practiced so frequently with his weapons that they practically leap into his hands in response to a simple thought. The character can draw and ready a weapon as a Free Action when the character is armed with a Pistol or Basic-class ranged weapon, or a melee weapon that can be wielded in one hand.

Radiant Presence

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Fellowship 30

There is something wondrous and bewitching about the character, the way he holds himself and the look in his eyes that puts people at ease, blurring their minds and drawing their focus like moths to a flame. Everyone within 20 metres that can see the character feels a touch of euphoria just by being near him and suffer lessened effects from things that would upset of distress them. Those affected gain a +10 to Willpower Tests to resist Fear or against Intimidation attempts. This ability affects all those close to the character indiscriminately, though not the character himself.

Rapid Reaction

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Agility 40

The character has honed his reactions to a razor's edge, allowing him to act while most stand dumbfounded. When surprised or ambushed, a successful Agility Test allows the character to act normally.

Rapid Reload

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

The firing ranges and weapon drill chambers are the character's constant abode, and hours of reloading countless magazines or power cells means that he can replace them without looking and without thinking. The character halves all reload times, rounding down. Thus, Half Action reload become a Free Action, a Full Action reload becomes a Half Action and so on.

Raptor

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Operate (Aeronautica)

Many warriors of the Ruinous Powers, especially those of the Space Marine Legions, use jump packs so that he might close quickly with his foes and rip them to pieces face to face. When the character makes a Charge Action using a Jump Pack his melee attack deals an extra d10 of Damage for every two Degrees of Success he scores on his Weapon Skill Test to a maximum of two extra d10.

Resistance
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
Specialisations: Cold, Fear, Heat, Poisons, Psychic Powers
The character's background, experience, training, exposure, or plain stubbornness has developed a resistance within him. Each time the character select this talent, choose one area of resistance. The character gains a +10 bonus when making tests to resist the effects of this group. The character's GM may wish to approve certain choices or have them justified by the character's past.

Sacrifice
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Psy Rating
The Chaos Gods are said to demand blood and sacrifice from their followers, and those on the path to glory are always eager to offer such things in exchange for greater power. For sorcerers in particular, the offering of blood and life allow more ambitious use of their powers. A psyker with the Sacrifice Talent may ritually prepare and slay a sacrificial victim (which must be a human or intelligent xenos). It takes a Forbidden Lore (Warp) Skill Test, taking 2d5 minutes to prepare and anoint a bound and helpless sacrificial victim. Once prepared, it takes a Full Round action to slay the victim. In the subsequent turn, the psyker gains a +5 bonus to his Focus Power Test for every Degree of Success scored on Forbidden Lore (Warp) Skill Test. In addition, should any Psychic Phenomena or Perils of the Warp occur, the effects are focused through the dying victim. Any effects that would normally affect the psyker instead cause the body to burn to ash in a blaze of iridescent warp-flame, dealing 1d10 Energy Damage to anyone within three metres of the victim (gaining the Warp Weapon trait and increasing the area to a five-metre radius if it was caused by Perils of the Warp).

Sharpshooter
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 40, Deadeye Shot
The Heretic's steady hand and eagle eye allow him to place shots or strikes exactly where he wants. When making a Called Shot (see page 234), the character reduces the penalty by 10 (so a –20 becomes a –10 instead). If combined with Deadeye shot, this reduces the penalty to 0.

Sidearm
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Two-Weapon Wielder
Many champions of the gods, and despised captains of the Imperium, favour fighting with both blade and pistol. When armed with a pistol and melee weapon in either hand (which the character could normally use single-handedly), the character reduces the penalty for Two-Weapon Fighting by 10 (so –20 would drop to –10). If taken with the Ambidextrous Talent, this drops the penalty to +0.

Sound Constitution
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
The character gains an additional Wound. The character may purchase this Talent multiple times up to his Toughness Bonus. When a character has gained this Talent multiple times note the number of times it has been taken after the talent, such as Sound Constitution (3).

Sprint
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: None
The character can move at great speeds. When taking a Full Move Action, the character can move an extra number of metres equal to his Agility Bonus. When taking the run action, the character may double his movement for one round. The character gains one level of Fatigue if he uses this Talent two turns in a row.

Step Aside
Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Agility 40, Dodge, Parry
The character can sway his body out of the path of an attack, causing it to pass through thin air, or turn his blade in mid-swing to deflect a blow. The character may make an additional Evasion attempt (either a dodge or a parry) once per round. In effect, this gives the character a second Reaction that may only be used for Dodge or Parry attempts, allowing two dodges, two parries or a dodge and a parry in a turn. However, the character may still only attempt a single dodge or parry against each individual attack.

Storm of Iron
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 40, Weapon Training (any ranged)
When facing the massed enemies, the Heretic lays down a storm of firepower that even the most foolhardy cannot push through. When the Heretic deals Damage to a Horde with a semi-auto burst, a full-auto burst, or a weapon with the Spray or Blast Qualities, the Heretic deals additional Damage to the Horde equal to half his Ballistic Skill Bonus. This additional Damage is applied once per attack, not once per hit.

Street Fighting
Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 30
The character is adept at close and dirty fighting, favouring small weapons or even his bare hands to take down his foes. When armed with a knife (powered, chain or otherwise), similar small weapon, or simply armed with his bare hands, he adds his Weapon Skill Bonus to any Critical Damage he inflicts.

Strong Minded
Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Willpower 30, Resistance (Psychic Techniques)
The Heretic's mind acts as a fortress against psychic attacks. He

may reroll failed Willpower Tests to resist any Psychic Powers that affect his mind. Psychic Powers that have a physical effect, such as Doombolt, are unaffected by this Talent.

Sure Strike

Tier: 1
Category: Weapon Skill 30
The character's eye, hand and weapon act seamlessly together, placing the characters blows where he intends. When making a Called Shot (see page 234) melee attack, the character reduces the penalty by 10 (so a –20 becomes a –10 instead).

Swift Attack

Tier: 2
Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 30
The character's speed with weapons is legendary, allowing him to launch flurries of attacks in melee. When a character makes a melee attack, he scores one hit on the initial Degree of Success on his Weapon Skill Test, plus one additional hit for every two additional Degrees of Success. Additional hits are counted as separate hits for all intents and purposes, roll their Damage separately and are reduced by Armour and Toughness as normal. Additional hits are made against the same body location as the original hit. When using Dodge or Parry against a Swift Attack then each Degree of Success scored with a Dodge or Parry Skill Test negates one hit from the Swift Attack.

If a character is fighting with a weapon in either hand or benefits from a Talent or Power which allows him to make more than one attack in his turn only one of his attacks may be a Lightning Attack and have the chance of scoring additional hits. Melee weapons with the Unwieldy Special Quality cannot be used to make Lightning Attacks.

Takedown

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: None
As a Half Action or when making a Charge Attack the character may declare that he is attempting a takedown against an opponent in melee combat. He then roll to hit (using his Weapon Skill) as normal; using any modifiers for weapons and talents (or the +20 bonus from Charging). If the character hits and would have done at least one point of Damage (after reduction for Armour and Toughness) it is ignored, but the character's opponent must make a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test or be stunned for 1 round and knocked prone. In addition, when performing a Stun Action, the character does not suffer a –20 penalty to his Weapon Skill.

Target Selection

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Ballistic Skill 50
The character's dread gaze marks out his chosen victim, and not even the riotous confusion of close combat interferes. The character may shoot into melee with no penalty. If he aims beforehand, he can avoid any chance of hitting friendly targets.

Technical Knock

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Intelligence 30
Either through the ease of long practice, or the proper ritual to appease a weapon's machine spirit, the character can clear stoppages with a simple knock or solid smack of his hand to a weapon. The character may un-jam any gun as a Half Action, but may only use this talent on one weapon per round. The character must touch the weapon (often quickly and violently) to make this talent work.

Thunder Charge

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Strength 50
The character charges into combat using his body as an additional weapon to push foes away or to the ground. Driven by rage and momentum, the impact of such a charge can knock a foe flying or bring them their knees. When the character makes a Charge Action he can barrel through foes to get to his target. Make an Opposed Strength Test between the character and each foe in his way (i.e., each foe his charge would take him past or through). Those that fail are knocked to the ground. Once the character has tested to knock down those in his way, he may complete his Charge and make his attacks against his intended target.

Total Recall

Tier: 1
Prerequisite: Intelligence 30
Mental conditioning or mental augmentation enables the character to record and recall great amounts of information, effectively granting him a perfect memory. The character can automatically remember trivial facts or pieces of information the character might feasibly have picked up in the past. When dealing with more detailed, complex or obscure facts, such as the exact layout of a defence network, the GM may require a successful Intelligence Test to recall the information.

True Grit

Tier: 3
Prerequisite: Toughness 40
The character is able to shrug off wounds that would fell lesser men. Whenever the character suffers Critical Damage (after reduction for Armour and Toughness) reduce the amount by his Toughness Bonus (to a minimum of 1).

Two-Weapon Wielder

Tier: 2
Category: Melee, Ranged
Intensive training allows the character to use a weapon in each hand when needed. When armed with two one-handed weapons (either melee or ranged weapons), after making a Half Action Attack (this can be a Single Attack, a Swift Attack, or a Lightning Attack with a melee weapon, or a single shot, semi-auto burst, or full-auto burst with a ranged weapon), he may make a Half Action Attack following the same restrictions with the other weapon. (in effect, this allows

the character to attack twice in a round; once from each of his weapons). Both tests made to attack with the weapons suffer a –20 penalty.

This Talent may be taken twice, each time with a different focus (melee or ranged). If a character possesses both Talents, then he may fight with one melee and one ranged weapon. This talent may be enhanced by the Ambidextrous, Blade Dancer, Gunslinger and Sidearm talents.

Unarmed Master

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 45, Agility 40, Unarmed Warrior

The Heretic possesses unparalleled mastery of unarmed combat. He counts as having the Deadly Natural Weapon Trait.

Unarmed Warrior

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 35, Agility 35

Due to extensive training in techniques of unarmed combat the character has gained the Natural Weapon Trait (see page 142) improving all his unarmed attacks from 1d5-3 to 1d10 Primitive (7) and meaning he counts as armed even when facing opponents with weapons while bare handed.

Unholy Devotion

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Minion of Chaos

The character's Minions are fanatically devoted to him and would gladly die in his name. Whenever the character would be hit by a ranged attack he can make an Agility Test for any of his Minions which are no further away from him than his Agility Bonus in metres. If he passes the test then they suffer the hit instead as they have thrown themselves in front of their master, and all the hits effects are worked out against the Minion. Provided they are close enough any number of Minions may try to protect the character in this way—forming a human shield against harm. This Talent only works with Minions and not allied NPCs no matter how favourably they view the character!

Unremarkable

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

Something about the character's face just doesn't stick in people's memories. The character can more easily blend into crowds or pass himself off as a nobody. Any attempts to recall the character's face or spot him in a crowd suffer a –20 penalty. In addition the character gains a +20 when using the Deceive Skill to either convince someone he has never seen or met him before or if he is trying to appear harmless and ordinary. Naturally this Talent doesn't work if the character wears distinctive clothes or armour, or carries unique weaponry—a Chaos Space Marine hiding in a crowd of Imperial citizens is pretty easy to spot, especially since they are probably running screaming in all directions...

Unshakeable Will

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Willpower 35

The character's faith in the gods and in himself are so strong that he can face any danger with a sneer and a ready insult. The character may reroll any failed Willpower Tests to avoid the effects of Fear.

War Cry

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Strength 50, Willpower 50, Disturbing Voice

There is something supernatural about the character's bellowing voice, its tones filled with the wails of daemons and its words repellent to the mind, causing terror in the weak. The character may declare at the start of any of his turns that he is making a war cry as a Free Action. All creatures within a 50-metre radius treat the character as if he had a Fear Rating of 1 provided they can hear him (though they do not need to be able to see him) until the start of his next turn. While screaming his bloodcurdling war cry, the character may not communicate in any other way. Making a war cry is taxing however and at the end of any encounter in which it is used (even if only for a single turn) the character suffers a level of Fatigue.

Warp Conduit

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 50

The sheer power of the character's mind allows the character to channel vast amounts of Warp Energy when he chooses to exert himself. When Pushing (see page 207), the character may spend one Infamy Point to add 1d5 to his Psy Rating. Channelling such vast amounts of power is dangerous, however, and he must add +30 to any resultant Psychic Phenomenon rolls.

Warp Lock

Tier: 3

Prerequisite: Psy Rating, Strong Minded, Willpower 50

The character has learned to swiftly cut himself off from the warp to protect himself from harm and cocoon his mind against the worst of its effects. Once per game session the character may ignore a Psychic Phenomenon result he has rolled (including a result which would indicate rolling on the Perils of the Warp Table) completely negating its effects. Such rapid dislocation from the warp is stressful and traumatic to the character's mind, however, and he suffers 1d5 Damage (not reduced by armour or Toughness) as a result, and may not make any Focus Power Tests or sustain other Psychic Powers until the beginning of his next Turn.

Warp Sense

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Psy Rating, Psyniscience, Perception 30

The character's senses have evolved to perceive the Warp in parallel with the physical world. After gaining this talent, using the Psyniscience Skill requires a Free Action instead of



a Half Action. In addition, the character can passively detect psychic effects and entities without the need to actively seek them out. Whenever the character could detect such warp signature or creature the GM may allow him to make a Psyniscience Skill Test to detect it, in the same way he might use Awareness to spot an ambush without knowing it is there.

Weapon-Tech

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: Tech Use +10, Intelligence 40

The character has developed an extensive understanding of advanced technological weapons and their functions, opening them up and learning what makes them tick, hum or click. Once per combat, the character can enhance his weapon increasing it firepower and deadliness. For one Round per combat Encounter, a weapon personally wielded by the character from the Melta, Plasma, Power, or Exotic category increases its Damage and Penetration by an amount equal to his Intelligence Bonus.

Weapon Training

Tier: 1

Prerequisite: None

Specialisations: Bolt, Chain, Heavy, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Power, Primary, Shock, Solid Projectile and Throwing

The character can employ some of the most devastating weapons of the battlefield. The character can use all weapons with Class: Pistol, Basic, Heavy, Throwing, and Melee within the group he has selected with this talent. When a character attempts to use a weapon he does not have the correct Weapon Training Talent for, he suffers a –20 penalty to any relevant Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test. This talent may be taken more than once, each time with a different specialisation.

Whirlwind of Death

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Weapon Skill 40, Weapon Training (any melee)

When facing massed opponents in combat the character becomes a whirlwind of death, moving, hacking, gutting, and beheading with ceaseless fury. When attacking a Horde, the character deals additional Magnitude damage equal to half his Weapon Skill Bonus.

Wisdom of the Ancients

Tier: 2

Prerequisite: Intelligence 40

The character has survived many wars, seen much and been favoured with the experience of countless ancient warriors during his life. Within his mind and soul he holds the well of knowledge and wisdom that stretches back to the early years of the Long War. The character may spend an Infamy Point to get insight on a situation and ask the GM a question (which he should answer as helpfully as possible) about the immediate situation which his character faces. The question can be anything the character might legitimately know from stories he has heard or his own experience. For example, when raiding an Imperial cruiser the question might be "where are the Navigator's quarters."

Minions

"True power is not what you can do for yourself but what your minions can do for you."

– Talasta Veletin, First Lady of the Gilded House

The greatest champions of the Dark Gods seldom stand alone, nor do they do all their own dirty work. Instead they can call upon legions of fanatical servants and followers, each one enamoured of the champion and willing to spend their life for his cause. Characters are no different, and as they grow in power they can gather a following of creatures and warriors to their side to aid them in their rise to glory, using the strong backs and sharp blades of their underlings to advance their own interests, and even compel them to die in their stead should the need arise—as it so often does upon the path to glory.

Minions are special followers which Heretics can gain for themselves much as they might acquire a lasting reputation or a piece of valued equipment. Unlike the aid of friendly NPCs which may be fleeting and half-hearted (and still subject to the control of the GM) a Minion is under the direct control of the player just like his own character and though it might not always follow his orders to the letter it is as loyal as followers are likely to get. In time players can even gather a number of Minions for their Heretic which bolsters his fighting abilities; grants him access to Skills, Talents, and Traits he might not have; and—most importantly—die for him should he so choose.

Creating Minions

When a Heretic takes a Minion Talent (either Greater Minion of Chaos, Minion of Chaos, or Lesser Minion of Chaos), they gain the service of a Minion. Minions do not spontaneously appear out of nowhere, of course, and a player needs to come up with a reason why his Heretic has acquired the Minion, usually worked out with the aid of the GM. This could be as simple as buying a slave from a feral world market or enticing a soldier away from his warlord with the promise of glory and coin, or as complex as making a lasting pact with a powerful organisation like a Chaos Space Marine Legion and gaining the "assistance" of one of their warriors. The GM may also offer a character a Minion as part of an adventure, should an NPC become tied to the PCs and wish to enter their service (in this case the character still needs to take the appropriate Minion Talent). However it occurs, Minions should be added to a character during downtime between adventures or game sessions; after all bonds of loyalty taking time to strengthen.

Once a character has acquired a Minion a player can then create it using the rules below. There are no restrictions on what Characteristics, Skills, Talents or Traits a Minion can have beyond those imposed by being a Lesser, Normal or Greater Minion. The GM does however have final say over a Minion's abilities before it enters play. All Minions fall into three categories of ascending power:

- Lesser (chosen using the Lesser Minion of Chaos Talent)
- Normal (chosen using the Minion of Chaos Talent)
- Greater (chosen using the Greater Minion of Chaos Talent)

Menagerie of Chaos

The Vortex is filled with both the weird, the wonderful and the utterly terrifying. Allies and enemies come in countless shapes and forms, from the more recognisable flotsam and jetsam of the Imperium (renegade humans, corrupted servitors, and chaos worshipping rogue psykers) to the worst kinds of xenos or creatures of the warp (Eldar pirates, Ork mercenaries, and, of course, daemons). Unburdened by the oppressive social systems of the Imperium there is no limit on the kinds of Minions a character might acquire as long as he is able to coax a creature into his service, usually though either the promise of wealth and reward or the threat of death and pain (or both). As such there are no restrictions on the kinds of Minions a character can have, provided they are created using the rules for Minions presented below and they are approved by the GM.

Which type of Minion it is determines the level of its characteristics and its access to Skills, Talents, and Traits. Apart from these factors, however, there are no other restrictions on the exact form a Minion may take and players are encourage to be inventive.

Characteristics

All Minions have a set of characteristics just like PCs and NPCs representing their various strengths and weaknesses. Minions have a pool of points which they can divide amongst their characteristics depending on their level of power. When creating a Minion divide up these points between Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Strength, Toughness, Agility, Intelligence, Perception, Willpower and Fellowship. A Minion's characteristics cannot be less than 01 (i.e. players must put at last 1 point into each characteristic when creating them) and cannot be exceed a certain value as determined by the power level of the Minion. The only exception is Infamy, which cannot be bought for minions.

- Lesser: The Minion has 100 points to spread among its characteristics with no one characteristic higher than 30.
- Normal: The Minion has 175 points to spread among its characteristics with no one characteristic higher than 35.
- Greater: The Minion has 250 points to spread among its characteristics with no one characteristic higher than 40.

Example

Nick has acquired a Minion for his character, a combat servitor salvaged from a space hulk and tainted by long exposure to the warp. Because he wants his Minion to be a bit more powerful than an ordinary servitor he takes the Minion of Chaos Talent making his Minion Normal in power. The first step is creating the servitor's characteristics. As it is Normal he has 175 points to create its characteristics, though no one characteristic can exceed 35. He decides that it is strong and tough, with reasonable speed and senses, and skilled in close combat. He therefore chooses the following set of characteristics: Weapon Skill 35, Ballistic Skill 01, Strength 35, Toughness 35, Agility 24, Intelligence 10, Perception 24, Willpower 10 and Fellowship 01.

They're Not Like Us

Though Minions follow the same fundamental rules (i.e. Characteristics, Skills, Talents, etc.) as Player Characters, they are not created in the same way and therefore are not as powerful or diverse as a true character. This is entirely intentional as Minions are just that: followers, servants, and allies. They are not of the same calibre or destiny as a PC and should never overshadow them or outshine them during the course of an adventure. Even potent Minions like daemons and Chaos Space Marines, as powerful as they are, are likely not to be the equal of a Heretic in every way, being weaker examples of their kind than if they were PCs.

Wounds and Movement

A Minion's Wounds and its Movement rate are both derived from its characteristics (though they may be altered later by the selection of certain Talents and Traits). A Minion's Movement is based on its Agility Bonus, in the same way as a PC, using Table 1-4: Structured Time Movement on page 39. A Minion's Wounds are equal to twice its Toughness Bonus.

Example

Nick's tainted combat servitor has an Agility Bonus of 2 making its Half Move 2, Full Move 4, Charge 6 and Run 12. It also have a Toughness Bonus of 3 giving it 6 Wounds. If he later selects Unnatural Toughness, he has to adjust its wound Totals.

Skills

Just like their masters, Minions have access to a number of Skills, often at varying levels of mastery. The number and ranks of these Skills is dependent on the Minions level of power. GMs may also restrict access to certain Skills for Minions (such as Lore or Operate Skills) if there is no reasonable way the Minion could have learned them. Unless the GM states otherwise, all Minions start with one Linguistics Skill of the players' choice, allowing it to communicate.

- Lesser: The Minion may choose 4 Skills at Rank 1 (Trained).
- Normal: The Minion may choose 6 ranks of Skills (either 6 different Skills or fewer Skills at higher ranks) with no one skill higher than Rank 2 (Trained).
- Greater: The Minion may choose 9 ranks of Skills (either 9 different Skills or fewer Skills at higher ranks) with no one skill higher than Rank 3 (Experienced).

Example

Nick now selects Skills for his tainted servitor. As it is a Normal Minion he can choose up to 6 ranks of Skills. He selects Athletics at rank 2, Awareness at rank 1, Evasion at rank 2 and Stealth at rank 1.

Talents

A Minion's abilities can be further enhanced by the addition of Talents giving it greater abilities with which to aid its master. Talents are a vital part of a Minion and like Traits really define its nature and whether it is a skill orator, bookish scholar or expert assassin. The number and types of Talents a Minion can take is dependent on its level of power. When selecting Talents Minions must select their Talents following all the normal prerequisite rules, such as having the Psyker Trait for psychic Talents. GMs may also restrict access to certain Talents for Minions if it does not fit with their background. Finally, unless the GM specially determines otherwise, Minions cannot take any of the Minion Talents.

- Lesser: The Minion may choose 5 Talents none of which can be greater than Tier 1.
- Normal: The Minion may choose 7 Talents none of which can be greater than Tier 2.
- Greater: The Minion may choose 11 Talents up to and including Tier 3.

Example

Next Nick selects Talents for his Minion. He wants it to be a horror in close combat and quite hard to put down. As a Normal Minion, the tainted servitor can choose 7 Talents none of which may be higher than Tier 2. He selects: Berserk Charge (Melee Tier 1), Flesh Render (Melee Tier 1), Frenzy (Mental Tier 1), Sound Constitution (Physical Tier 1), Two Weapon Fighting (Melee, Ranged Tier 2), Weapon Training (Chain) (Melee, Ranged Tier 1) and Crippling Strike (Melee Tier 2).

Traits

More than anything else, Traits determine the true nature of a Minion and whether it is a ravening daemon, soulless machine or hulking beast. The number and types of Traits a Minion can take is dependant on the Minions level of power. Some Traits also have variable levels indicated by a number in parenthesis (X) denoting extra armour, multiple arms or similar things. When taking a trait the number of this variable depends on the power level of Minion as noted below and if a range of numbers is shown the player may choose a number from within that range. The only exception to this is the Unnatural Characteristic trait which may not have a variable number higher than the Minions associated characteristic bonus (in effect this trait may not more than double any one

Unique Minions

While there are a wide variety of Minions that characters can create with the rules as presented here, both players and GMs may want to include more powerful or unique Minions in their games. This could be because they want a Minion with more Skills or Talents than normal or one that has more powerful Traits, an existing trait at a higher level or one which comes with more potent gear. In all of these cases the GM can alter the abilities of Minions to suit his needs if he so chooses, allowing players to alter the rules to match their vision of the Minion they want to create. The GM should keep in mind however that Minions should still not be more powerful that the character they serve, after all a Minion which can best a PC in most areas is not really a Minion at all...

characteristic bonus). Minions which take the Daemonic trait also gain the Warp Instability trait.

GMs may also restrict access to certain Traits for Minions if it does not fit with their background. In addition, if the Minion odes not take the Size Trait, it is assumed to be Size (4), the size of an average human.

Lesser

The Minion may select up to 3 Traits from the following list: *Amphibious, Amorphous, Auto-stabilised, Bestial, Blind, Brutal Charge, Burrower (1-5), Crawler, Hoverer (1-4), Machine (1-2), Multiple Arms (1-2), Natural Armour (1-4), Natural Weapons, Quadruped, Size (1-10), Sonar Sense, Soul-bound, Stampede, Sturdy, Toxic (1), Unnatural Senses.*

Normal

The Minion may select up to 5 Traits from the following list: *Amphibious, Amorphous, Auto-stabilised, Bestial, Blind, Brutal Charge, Burrower (1-8), Crawler, Dark-sight, Deadly Natural Weapons, Fear (1), Hoverer (1-6), Machine (1-4), Multiple Arms (1-3), Natural Armour (1-6), Natural Weapons, Psyker, Quadruped, Regeneration (1-2), Size (1-10), Sonar Sense, Soul-bound, Stampede, Sturdy, Toxic (1-3), Undying, Unnatural Characteristic (1-3), Unnatural Senses.*

Greater

The Minion may select up to 7 Traits from the following list: *Amphibious, Amorphous, Auto-stabilised, Bestial, Blind, Brutal Charge, Burrower (1-10), Crawler, Daemonic, Dark-sight, Deadly Natural Weapons, Fear (1-2), Flyer (1-6), From Beyond, Hoverer (1-10), Machine (1-6), Multiple Arms (1-4), Natural Armour (1-8), Natural Weapons, Psyker, Quadruped, Regeneration (1-4), Size (1-10), Sonar Sense, Soul-bound, Stampede, Stuff of Nightmares, Sturdy, Toxic (1-4), Undying, Unnatural Characteristic (1-4), Unnatural Senses, Warp Weapons.*

Trading Traits

Some variables may be improved further by sacrificing the number of Traits a Minion could normally take. Players may further improve the Machine, Burrower, Flyer, Hoverer, and Natural Armour Traits in this way. For every trait they do not take they may increase a variable of one of these Traits by 1.

Example

Nick's tainted servitor is a Normal Minion and so can have up to 5 Traits. He chooses the Dark Sight, Machine (4), Unnatural Strength (3) and Unnatural Toughness (3). Rather than choosing a fifth trait Nick decides to instead sacrifice his fifth choice to increase his servitor's Machine by 1 point to Machine (5).

Equipment

The arming and armouring of Minions is largely the responsibility of their masters and a favoured Minion is usually one with the best weapons and equipment. Minions do bring some gear with them when they join the service of the character as determined by their level of power. Minions may only take Common Craftsmanship equipment.

- Lesser: The Minion may choose one suit of armour and one ranged weapon or one melee weapon with an Availability of Scarce or lower.
- Normal: The Minion may choose one suit of armour and two ranged weapons or two melee weapons (or one melee and one ranged weapon) with an Availability of Rare or lower. They may forgo taking one weapon to take another with an Availability of Very Rare instead.
- Greater: The Minion may choose one suit of armour with an Availability of Extremely Rare or lower (if power armour, it may only have one sub-system of the players' choice) and two ranged weapons and two melee weapons with an Availability of Very Rare or lower. They may forgo taking one weapon to take another with an Availability of Extremely Rare instead.

Players may forgo taking one of their weapons or armour to take other equipment with an equivalent Availability instead. At the GM's discretion Minions may also come with backup weapons (of Common availability or lower) and other small items and gear such as clothing, drugs, or tech, provided it is neither expensive or difficult to find. Players cannot choose equipment for their character's Minions which the Minion cannot use itself, nor can Minions give up their equipment readily when they enter play. Once a Minion is in the service of a character they have only what he gives them from this point on.

Example

Nick wants his tainted servitor to have some potent close combat weapons. As his Minion is Normal, he can choose one suit of armour and two ranged or two melee weapons of Scarce or lower Availability. He chooses a pair of chainswords for the servitor (Scarce Availability) which counts as its two melee weapons. Though he could purchase some armour, Nick decides that his servitor looks more thematic without it, and forgoes the armour.

Loyalty

The final aspect of creating a Minion is to determine its Loyalty. This is a measure of the Minion's devotion to the character and how readily it follows commands in their absence, or the lengths the Minion goes to in the character's name. A Minion's Loyalty is equal to the character's Fellowship. Whenever the character's Fellowship changes, for whatever reason, the Minion's Loyalty also changes.

The effects of Loyalty and how it can be used to command Minions on page 138.

Example

Nick's character has a Fellowship of 32, giving his tainted servitor a Loyalty of 32.

CREATING A RETINUE

Characters can if they choose take more than one Minion by taking the various Minion Talents more than once. As a guideline characters cannot have more Minions that their Fellowship Bonus, though these Minions can be of any level of power (i.e. Lesser, Normal or Greater). Players should

keep in mind that there is a difference between Minions and friendly NPCs, and while they may only have three or four Minions they may still command an army of NPC warriors and servants.

Using Minions

Minions differ from NPCs in that they are not controlled by the GM. Instead they are controlled by the player in the same way as his own character. In effect, a Minion represents an additional, weaker character run by the player, augmenting his abilities in the game and presenting him with different ways to overcome challenges. Minions are not, however, completely subservient to their character's will (even the most fanatical of followers are not completely infallible), and in certain situations may not do what the character wants (or they might just get it wrong).

Whenever a player wants one of his character's Minions to either:

- Risk their life (combat does not count provided the character is fighting alongside them)
- Perform a task out of character (i.e., refrain from attacking a hated foe or from looting the dead)
- Follow orders in their absence (i.e., left on guard duty or sent off to kill someone)

The GM makes a Loyalty Test for the Minion. The GM rolls 1d100 against the Minions Loyalty (see page 137), if the roll is equal or less that its Loyalty then the Minion performs exactly as the player wishes, if the roll is greater than its Loyalty then its nerve has failed or something has gone wrong and the GM takes control of the Minion for the remainder of the encounter.

Example

Nick's tainted servitor has been sent to kill an informant in the underhive while his character takes care of other matters. Because the Minion is performing a task on its own, the GM make a Loyalty Test for it. Rolling against the tainted servitor's Loyalty of 32 the GM scores a 47, a failure! As a result the GM takes control of the Minion for the duration of the mission and decides the outcome—doubtlessly there are some fresh bodies in the underhive tonight, though it looks like the informant is not going to be among them...

Improving Minions

Unlike Heretics, Minions do not improve as the character gains experience, and are set at the level at which they entered play, based on the Talent taken to acquire them. With the GM's permission, however, players may upgrade their Minions by upgrading the Talent associated with them. For instance, a Lesser Minion, acquired with the Lesser Minion of Chaos Talent, could become a Normal Minion if the player took the Minion of Chaos Talent. In this case the old Talent is either discarded (and its experience goes toward the new Talent) or the character can acquire a new Minion for it. In both cases characters must still follow all the Normal prerequisites for acquiring Talents.

When this occurs the player goes back through Minion creation with his Minion and adds Characteristic Points, Skills, Talents, Traits and gear to make up the difference between its current level and its new level. For instance a Lesser Minion which became a Normal Minion would have another 70 points to spend on characteristics and could raise characteristics up to 30.

Tainted Servitor

After centuries drifting in the warp aboard an unshielded vessel, this combat servitor has been restored to life to serve the agents of the Dark Gods.

Tainted Servitor

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
35	01	35	35	24	10	24	10	0	1	-	-

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 13
Skills: Athletics (+10), Awareness (+0), Parry (+10), Stealth (+0)
Talents: Berserk Charge, Flesh Render, Frenzy, Sound Constitution (1), Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Training (Chain), Crushing Blow.
Traits: Dark Sight, Machine (5), Unnatural Strength (+3) and Unnatural Toughness (+3)
Weapons: Paired Chainswords (Dam 1d10+8, Pen 2, Balanced, Tearing)
Armour: 5 on all locations (Machine Trait)
Gear: None
Loyalty: 32

Example

Nick's character has had his tainted servitor for a while and wants to upgrade its abilities. He takes the Greater Minion of Chaos Talent (spending experience points and meeting the prerequisites) and moves the tainted servitor up to Greater status. This allows him to go back through Minion creation and add additional Characteristic Points, Skills, Talents, Traits and gear to make up the difference between its current level (Normal) and its new level (Greater). Nick can now choose to either discard his Minion of Chaos Talent (provided he doesn't need it as a prerequisite) and use its experience points to pay for part of the Greater Minion of Chaos Talent, or he could acquire a new Minion of Chaos.

Replacing Minions

It is likely that sooner or later a character's Minions are going to die (or he is going to grow bored with them and dismiss them from his service, possibly violently). When this happens the character does not lose the Talent used to gain the Minion. Instead he may create a new Minion to fill the



slot left behind, in effect gaining a Minion for the Talent in the same manner as when he first took it. Replacing Minions is not an instant process, however, and unless there are exceptional circumstances, as determined by the GM (such as a loyal allied NPC already with the group and eager to serve), it can only take place in downtime between adventures (i.e., at some point the character would be able to go off and find a new Minion). Replacement Minions follow all the normal rules for Minions and are created in the same way and are subject to GM approval.

Example

After a long and distinguished service, Nick's tainted servitor is destroyed at the hands of an enraged Daemonhost. At the end of the adventure Nick's character can now replace the tainted servitor with a Greater Minion (as he still retains the Greater Minion of Chaos Talent the servitor was linked to). Perhaps the Daemonhost might be open to some kind of deal..

EXAMPLES OF MINIONS

The following are some examples of potential minions characters might gain through the Minion Talent.

Lesser Minion

Servo-skull: Through the Hoverer and Machine Trait, a high Agility and Awareness, and sacrificing weaponry for equipment such as an Auspex or a light source, a Heretic can build a servo-skull drone to use.

Canid: A four legged hunting and tracking animal can be represented by the Quadruped, Bestial, and Natural Weapons Traits. In this case, forgoing weapons and equipment would make sense, unless the animal has been cybernetically improved.

Minion

Tainted Servitor: The Tainted Servitor profile on the opposite page is a good example of a mechanical Minion able to fight for its master.

Feral Warrior: In this case, forgoing most Traits makes the most sense, as does equipping a heathen barbarian with a Great Weapon or Axe and primitive fur armour. Such an individual would have high Strength and Toughness, but likely suffer in Intelligence and Fellowship.

Greater Minion

Horror of Tzeentch: Binding a daemon to one's service is risky, but the benefits can outweigh the cost. In this case, the Daemonic Trait would be a must, and the Pysker Trait could be interesting as well. Psy Rating would be needed, and Deadly Natural Weapons make sense for a daemonic entity. In this case the GM could bend the normal Alignment rules for psychic powers and allow the Daemon to take a thematic Tzeentch power to use.

Chaos Space Marine: A Chaos Marine is a powerful ally indeed, though dangerous and mercurial. A Chaos Space Marine Minion is going to be a shadow of the player character version, but still doable. Unnatural Strength and Toughness, Power Armour, and a Legion Bolter get the job done.

Traits

"A daemon is such a beautiful beast—a foreigner to the Materium and yet perfectly formed to rend flesh and break the minds of men."

– Eylis Anilas, Arch-Demagogue of the Faded Host

Skills and Talents represent ability and knowledge gained over the course of a character's life. Traits, by contrast, are innate abilities gained by virtue of birth and racial circumstance. They may be gained through other means later in life, but they are almost never gained through choice. As indicated in **Chapter II: Character Creation**, player characters may acquire certain Traits as a result of their origins, experience or other factors that make them who and what they are.

TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

The rules for each trait can be found in the descriptions below. In some cases, a trait has a variable level, indicating a number of armour points, arms or some other factor. In these cases the trait has an (X) after its title, where X indicates the level at which a creature has the trait.

Amphibious

The creature can breathe water as well as air and can stay underwater indefinitely without the need to surface. If this trait is taken by a creature with the ability to breathe a substance other than air (i.e. water, ammonia, carbon-dioxide etc) then it can breathe air as well as its native atmosphere.

Amorphous

An amorphous creature which has a malleable form, capable of squeezing its body or expanding it. It can change size by one-step in either direction, though doing so does not change its speed. Creatures with this trait determine their movement rates using one-half their Agility Bonus rounded up. Amorphous creatures are often missing senses and so rely on the Unnatural Senses Trait to perceive their surroundings.

Auto-stabilised

The creature always counts as braced when firing heavy weapons and therefore may fire a ranged weapon on full or semi-automatic without taking the Brace action first without suffering any penalties to hit.

Bestial

A creature with this trait is animalistic, tending to behave instinctively rather than rationally. No matter how high its Intelligence score is, it is still bestial. A creature with this trait never needs to make a Survival Skill Test whilst in its natural habitat. Unless starving or desperate, a bestial creature must make a Willpower Test when frightened, startled or injured. On a failed test, the creature flees.

Blind

Blind creatures automatically fail all tests based on vision and automatically fail all Ballistic Skill Tests. Such creatures

Table 4-6: Traits

Trait	Description
Amphibious	Creature can breathe underwater.
Amoprhous	Creature is a slow blob.
Auto-stabilised	Always counts as Braced
Bestial	Creature is an animal, automatically passes Survival Skill Tests, tests Willpower to avoid fleeing.
Blind	Cannot see.
Brutal Charge	Extra damage on a charge.
Burrower	Move by digging.
Crawler	No penalties for moving over difficult terrain.
Daemonic	Increase Toughness Bonus against normal weapons, immune to disease and poison.
Dark-sight	See in darkness.
Deadly Natural Weapon	Natural weapons lose Primitive Quality.
Fear	Forces others to make Fear Tests to avoid shock and madness.
Flyer	Has the ability to fly.
From Beyond	Immune to Fear, Pinning, Insanity Points, and mind-affecting powers.
Hoverer	Can hover above the ground.
Incorporeal	Insubstantial and weighless, cannot be affected by mundane weaponry.
Machine	Creature gains immunities and resistances.
Multiple Arms	Additional limbs grant extra attacks.
Natural Weapons	Unnarmed attacks deal 1d10+SB damage.
Phase	Switch between incorporeal and corporeal as a half action.
Possession	Take control of another creature.
Psyker	Creature has a Psy Rating of 1 or more, can use psychic powers.
Quadruped	Movement equals ABx2
Regeneration	Test Toughness to remove damage.
Size	Determines creature size and benefits.
Sonar Sense	Percieve surroundings flawlessly within 30 metres.
Soul-bound	Bound to a particular group or creature in exchange for certain benefits.
Stampede	Failed WP Test causes creature to flee, trampling everything in its path.
Stuff of Nightmares	Gain appalling list of immunities.
Sturdy	+20 bonus to resist grapple and takedown.
Swarm	Made of a swarm of tiny creatures.
Touched by the Fates	Has Fate Points
Toxic	Attackers take damage.
Undying	The creature is immune to many environmental and natural dangers.
Unnatural Characteristic	Increases one Characteristic's Bonus
Unnatural Senses	Preceive surroundings by uncanny means.
Warp Instability	Creature must deal damage if damaged, or be cast back to the warp.
Warp Weapon	Attacks ignore armour entirely.

take a –30 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests and most other tests that ordinarily involve or are benefited by vision. Note that this Trait indicates not only that the creature cannot see but that it also has no other senses which would provide the same benefit as eyes. The Blind Fighting Talent reduces the penalties to Weapon Skill Tests as normal for Blind creatures, reducing it from –30 to –15.

Brutal Charge (X)

A creature with this trait deals an extra (X) points of damage per attack when it charges in the same round.

Burrower (X)

A creature with this trait can move through solid objects by burrowing through them. The number in parenthesis (X) indicates its speed when burrowing. Such creatures can burrow through soil, rock, sand, and so on, though some (expressed in the creature entry) can burrow through metal. When a creature burrows, it leaves behind a tunnel. Creatures of one-size smaller than the creature that created the tunnel can enter these areas without impediment. There's a 50% chance each round that the tunnel collapses behind the creature.

Crawler

Worms, serpents, and similar creatures crawl and slither rather than walk. The base move for a creature with this trait is half their normal movement rate (round up) as determined by their Agility Bonus, but they do not take penalties for moving over difficult terrain.

Daemonic (X)

Daemonic creatures are creatures of the warp, but can manifest in real space either through sheer strength of will, hunger, or occult rituals. Creatures with this trait increase their Toughness Bonus against all Damage by the number indicated in the parenthesis (X) in the same manner as an Unnatural Characteristic (see Unnatural Characteristics trait on page 144). The effects of this trait stack with the effects of the Unnatural Characteristic trait. This increase is negated by Damage inflicted by force weapons, psychic powers, holy attacks, or other creatures with this trait. Daemonic creatures are also immune to poison and disease. Creatures with the Daemonic trait also gain benefits when using Psychic Powers as detailed in **Chapter VI: The Powers of the Warp.**

Dark-sight

A creature with this trait sees normally even in areas of total darkness, and never takes a penalty for fighting in areas of dim or no lighting.

Fear (X)

A creature with this trait has an unnerving appearance. The fear of it always has an associated rating (1–4) to reflect just how awful the creature is to behold and is indicated by the number in parenthesis (X). The higher the Fear Rating the harder it is for others to resist going insane from the

Table 4-7: Fear Rating

Fear Rating	Penalty
Disturbing (1)	0
Frightening (2)	-10
Horrifying (3)	-20
Terrifying (4)	-30

encounter, as shown on **Table 4-7: Fear Ratings**.

When a character encounters a creature with this Trait, they must make a Willpower Test, modified by the severity of the creature's trait. On a success, the character may act as normal. On a failure, the character must roll on **Table 8-4: Shock** (see page 277), adding +10 to the roll for every Degree of Failure by which the Willpower Test was failed.

Flyer (X)

A creature with this trait has the natural ability to fly, whether with broad leathery wings, strange Warp energies, or inflatable gas sacs. The number in parenthesis (X) indicates its speed when flying. This number replaces the creature's Agility Bonus for movement Actions. For more details on flying, see **Chapter I: Playing the Game**.

From Beyond

The mind of a creature with this trait is beyond the petty frailties and precarious sanity of a mortal mind. It is immune to Fear, Pinning, Insanity Points, and psychic powers used to cloud, control, or delude its minds.



Deadly Natural Weapons

This creature's natural attacks are powerful enough to crush plasteel or punch through armour. The creature gains all the benefits of the Natural Weapons Trait, except that its attacks no longer have the Primitive Special Quality.

Hoverer (X)

Creatures with this trait have a limited capability for flight, flying no higher than two metres. The number in parenthesis (X) indicates its speed when hovering. This number replaces its Agility Bonus for purposes of calculating Movement. For more details on flying, see **Chapter I: Playing the Game**.

Incorporeal

Incorporeal creatures are insubstantial and weightless, able to pass through solid objects such as walls and weapons. An incorporeal creature gains a +30 bonus on Stealth Tests due to their ability to merge with objects and the fact they make practically no sounds when they move. Incorporeal creatures gain the Hoverer (6) trait. An incorporeal creature is also immune to normal weapons—they simply pass through its body as if it wasn't there. Daemons, psychic powers, warp creatures, other incorporeal creatures, and opponents armed with force weapons may all injure an incorporeal creature normally. An incorporeal creature can't normally affect the mortal world, and thus can't Damage non-incorporeal opponents unless it has a suitable special ability or Talent. Creatures with the Incorporeal trait can Damage other creatures with the Incorporeal trait normally.

Certain devices can keep an incorporeal creature at bay, most notably the Gellar Field of a spaceship. Creatures with this trait cannot pass through such a field.

Machine (X)

A creature with the Machine trait is fashioned from inorganic materials and is generally more rigorous then fleshy folks. Machines do not breathe, are immune to the effects of a vacuum, extremes of cold, any mind-influencing psychic effect, and their Armour Points apply toward fire Damage. Machines have a certain number of Armour Points (indicated by the number in parentheses). This armour stacks with worn armour, but not with the Natural Armour Trait.

Multiple Arms (X)

This creature has more than one pair of arms. The exact number of arms is indicated in parenthesis (X), so a Genestealer with Multiple Arms (4) has four arms total. It gains a +10 bonus on Athletics Tests involving climbing and swimming. In addition, for each pair of arms it has—the Multiple Arms value divided by 2—it may make an additional attack as if wielding multiple melee weapons (the creature must either have natural weapons or actual melee weapons to wield for this to take effect). Note, that a creature still requires Two Weapon Wielder (Melee) to make multiple attacks in the same turn.

Table 4-8: Size

Size	To Hit Modifier	Stealth	Base Movement
Miniscule (1) (Autoquill, Knife)	–30	+30	AB–3
Puny (2) (Bolt pistol, Servo-skull)	–20	+20	AB–2
Weedy (3) (Gretchin, Human Child)	–10	+10	AB–1
Average (4) (Human, Eldar)	0	0	AB
Hulking (5) (Ork Nob, Armoured Space Marines)	+10	–10	AB+1
Enormous (6) (Sentinel Walker, Krootox)	+20	–20	AB+2
Massive (7) (Battle Tank, Greater Daemon)	+30	–30	AB+3
Immense (8) (Land Raider, Great Knarloc)	+40	–40	AB+4
Monumental (9) (Squiggoth, Baneblade)	+50	–50	AB+5
Titanic (10) (Reaver Battle Titan, Ordinatus War Machine)	+60	–60	AB+6

Natural Armour (X)

This creature has a naturally tough hide or an exoskeleton, affording it some protection against attacks. The number in parenthesis (X) indicates how many Armour Points the creature gains to all locations. This trait does not stack with armour. This armour stacks with worn armour, but not with the Machine Trait.

Natural Weapons

This creature has sharp claws, teeth, spines or some other natural weapon with which it can slice and dice its foes. It counts as being armed even when not wielding weapons. Its attacks deal 1d10 points of Damage plus its Strength Bonus. The creature may make attacks with its Natural Weapons using its Weapon Skill, though it cannot parry with its natural weapons, nor can it be disarmed—unless, of course its limbs are hacked off! (In general, creatures with Natural Weapons are immune to the Power Field quality, as it's assumed they have enough teeth, claws, or spines to ignore a few being removed.) Natural weapons have the Primitive (7) Special Quality, unless stated otherwise in the profile.

Phase

A creature with this trait can transform its body into an insubstantial state, passing ghost-like through solid objects or barriers of any sort. This trait functions exactly like the Incorporeal trait, except the creature may become solid or insubstantial by spending a Half Action. Phase carries additional limitations. A creature in a phased state cannot cross psychically charged barriers, holy wards, or energy fields designed to flux space or manipulate the warp, such as a Gellar Field or a Void Shield.

Psyker

Whether due to unnatural influences, the study of forbidden lore, or simply sheer force of will, this individual is a Psyker, and can bend the Immaterium to his will. Though this Trait has no benefits on its own, it allows characters to purchase the Psyniscience Skill and the Psy Rating and Psychic Power Talents.

Possession

Certain spirit-beings and denizens of the warp have the ability to possess mortal bodies. This is a far more insidious and damaging process than most forms of mental control, or even the power of the strongest psykers to "wear" the bodies of others, as the very fabric of the assaulting warp being is merged with the victim's living body on a fundamental level so as to allow it to remain in our reality. The mechanisms by which these possessions occur in the game are detailed below, although circumstance and the nature of the entity itself may vary. Note that Daemonhosts, being extraordinary powerful examples of deliberate, ritualistic possessions, designed to bind and control daemons in living vessels, are a special case and dealt with separately.

The Possession Attack

The entity must be within a few metres of its intended victim and use a Full Action. The creature and target make Opposed Willpower Tests each round until either the entity or the victim achieve a total of five Degree of Success over the other—this is cumulative over several rounds. If the entity wins, it successfully possesses its victim. If their victim wins, he has repelled the entity who may not attempt to possess him again for 24 hours. A repelled entity also takes 1d10 points of Damage which is not reduced by armour or Toughness.

The Effects of Possession

A possessing entity takes control utterly, binding itself to its victim, and is capable of commanding the body to function regardless of pain and injury, (and indeed might delight in damaging or altering it to suit its whims). The victim increases its Strength and Toughness Characteristics by 10 and gains 1d10+3 Wounds. The victim uses the possessing entity's Intelligence, Perception, Willpower, and Fellowship, and uses the entity's Psy Rating and powers in place of its own (if any). Likewise, the possessed creature uses any mind-related Skills and Talents had by the entity and loses its own. The entity may also attempt to recall memories and Skills from its victim with a successful Intelligence Test. In the case of possession by daemon the victim has a good chance of becoming immediately mutated, and likely becomes further mutated the longer the possession continues (see **Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy** for more details on mutation).

Surviving Possession

Should the victim survive and the entity be cast out by exorcism or some other means, then the ordeal deals 2d10 points of

permanent Damage to the character's Toughness and Willpower Characteristics. In addition, the victim gains 1d10 Insanity Points. If they are, like the Heretic player characters, immune to Insanity Points, they gain 1d10 Corruption Points instead.

Quadruped

Quadrupeds are much quicker over a distance than their bipedal counterparts. There movement is double that normally indicated by their Agility Bonus (see page 39). This trait is intended to cover creatures with hind legs and forepaws. Creatures with more than four legs may gain this Trait as well increasing their movement as indicated above but adding an addition 2 to their final movement rate (after doubling) for each set of legs beyond the first two (i.e. +2 for 6 legs, +4 for 8 legs etc).

Regeneration (X)

Creatures with this trait heal very quickly. Each round, at the start of its turn, the creature makes a Toughness Test to removes an amount of Damage indicated in the parenthesis after the trait. It loses this trait when slain.

Size (X)

Creatures come in one of ten different size categories, as shown on **Table 4-8: Size**. Size affects movement, how well the creature can hide and move undetected and how easy or hard it is to strike in combat. When calculating movement, apply the size modifier first, and then other modifiers from other Traits or Talents (such as Quadruped). For the purposes of comparison, a human is a Size (4) creature. Note, a creature's movement cannot be reduced to less than 1.

Sonar Sense

A creature with this trait perceives its surroundings by emitting a frequency noise, allowing the creature to locate the position of any solid object within 30 metres. Other creatures within this 30 metre range, and that succeed on an Awareness Skill Test at -10, may detect the curious keening.

Soul-bound

The soul of this creature is bound to a higher power or being, in return for a measure of protection. When this Trait is first gained, the entity to which the soul is bound must be decided. Many Imperial psykers, especially Astropaths, are soul-bound to the Emperor, for example, whereas Chaos Sorcerers may be bound to one of the Ruinous Powers. A soul-bound psyker rolls an additional die when forced to roll on the Perils of the Warp table, discarding whichever one he chooses to get a more favourable result. (Essentially, he may replace either the ones die or the tens die with the extra die he rolls) Upon becoming soul-bound, a character must choose one of the following effects: 1d10 Insanity Points (this does not apply to Heretics, as they do not suffer Insanity), the permanent loss of their sight, permanent loss of 1d10 from one Characteristic, or a random mutation. In addition, a soul-bound character is permanently indebted to the entity, which undoubtedly entails all manner of other duties and consequences.

Stampede

Whenever a creature with this trait fails a Willpower Test, it automatically stampedes, charging in a straight line forwards as far as possible, overrunning anything in its path until the source of danger has escaped or is crushed under hoof, taking Damage equal to the creature's Natural Weapon Damage (or 1d5+SB I if it doesn't have one). One stampeding creature automatically causes all other creatures within sight to stampede. The stampede lasts until the source of danger is no longer visible or for 1d10 minutes, whichever occurs last.

Sturdy

Sturdy creatures are hard to move and thus gain a +20 bonus to tests made to resist grappling and uses of the Takedown Talent.

Swarm

Too small to do much on their own, swarms overwhelm their opponents via sheer weight of numbers. A swarm is often a mass of Miniscule or Puny creatures. Any attack from a weapon that does not either have the Blast, Flame, Spray, or Scatter Qualities only inflicts half Damage. In most circumstances, a swarm creature cannot be Grappled, Knocked Down, or Pinned, and the swarm may "pour" through suitable small openings such as ducts, vents, and the like, but they may not Jump. The swarm is counted as being destroyed once all its Wounds are lost. The swarm's attacks have a variable Penetration value (roll each time an attack lands), representing its ability to engulf their victims and attack vulnerable areas.

The Stuff of Nightmares

Some warp entities are so terribly powerful the will perpetuating their bodies in our reality is almost impossible to break or disrupt. Such entities are completely immune to the effects of poisons, diseases, the need to breathe, most environmental hazards, bleeding, stunning. They also ignore any critical result other than one that would destroy them outright, unless it was caused by a psychic power, force weapon, or holy attack.

Touched by the Fates (X)

The creature or NPC has a number of Fate Points shown in parenthesis (X). It may use these Fate Points in exactly the same way as Player Characters and may even 'burn' a Fate Point to survive death and destruction at the GM's discretion. The rules for Zealous Hatred also apply to this creature or NPC.

Toxic (X)

A creature with this trait is poisonous Some weapons rely on toxins and poisons to do their damage. Anyone that successfully deals damage to a Toxic creature must make a Toughness Test with a penalty equal to 10 times the number in parenthesis (X) or suffer 1d10 points of Damage (of the same type as the weapon which inflicted the hit) not reduced by armour or Toughness. For example a creature with Toxic (4) would impose a –40 on Toughness Tests. Some creatures may carry additional effects with their toxins or inflict more Damage as indicated in their individual descriptions.

Trait: Mechanicus Implants

The character was a servant of the Machine-God before his fall, or has been augmented by those who were. Therefore, he has access to implants beyond the ken of other heretics.

Although technically these are augmentations or cybernetic upgrades, the implantation of such devices is reserved for a select group, and consists of far more than simply obtaining these upgrades.

Electro-graft

The Electro-graft is a small port that is grafted into the nervous system. Once a recipient has been properly trained, this allows him to interface with machine data ports and certain types of data nets. Electro-grafts can take many forms, such as skull shunts, finger probes, or spine jacks.

Electoo Inductors

Electoo Inductors are palm-sized metal skin grafts that appear much like tattoos to the uninitiated. The electoos are wired into the nervous system, where they derive power from the bio-electrical emanations of the flesh and the sacred mysteries of the Potenia Coil. They can be used to emit or siphon power in many ways.

Respirator Unit

A Respirator Unit implant involves tubes, wires, vox-grills, or other augmetic parts replacing the neck and upper chest. The unit purifies the air supply, granting a +20 bonus to resist airborne toxins and gas weapons. The respirator unit also contains a vox-synthesiser capable of transmitting the voice in a variety of ways.

Cyber-mantle

The Cyber-mantle is a framework of metal, wires, and impulse transmitters bolted onto the spine and lower ribcage. As the initiate gains further implants, this mantle acts as a sub-dermal anchorage point. Amongst some servants of the Omnissiah, this cyber-mantle is often referred to as "the true flesh."

Potentia Coil

Cradled within the cyber-mantle is a power unit known as the Potentia Coil. This mass can store energy and produce various types of fields. Coils come in many types, from small crystal stack affairs to bulky electrical galvinators.

Cranial Circuitry

Cranial circuitry is a series of linked processors, implants, and cortical circuits that enhances mental capacities. Most sit within housing bolted onto the skull, whilst others nestle within the brain itself.

Undying

This creature has a strange and ill understood physiology. It cannot be harmed by diseases, poisons, or toxic effects. It has no need to breathe and can survive unaided in a vacuum.

Unnatural Characteristic (X)

One or more of the creature's Characteristics is unnatural. This is indicated by a number which is then added directly to the creature's Characteristic Bonus. For example, a creature with a Strength of 41 normally has a 4 Strength Bonus. If the creature had Unnatural Characteristic Strength (3) then its Strength Bonus increases to 7 (4+3). A creature may have this Trait more than once. Each time, it is applied to a new Characteristic. In addition, whenever someone with an Unnatural Characteristic succeeds on a Test utilizing that Characteristic, they gain a number of bonus Degrees of Success equal to half of their Unnatural Characteristic.

Unnatural Senses (X)

The creature can perceive its surroundings using senses other than sight or hearing, using special organs, fine hairs, or some other disturbing trait to make itself aware of what's around it. This trait always includes a range in metres indicated by the number in parenthesis (X).

Warp Instability

Most warp-entities have a tenuous hold on our reality, often maintained only by horror and bloodshed, and may be disrupted if sufficient harm can be done to their manifested forms. If a creature with this trait takes Damage and does not deal Damage or Insanity Points on other creatures by the end of its next turn, it must make a Willpower Test. The creature takes 1d5 Damage for failure, plus 1 Damage for each Degree of Failure. This Damage cannot be prevented by any means including armour and Toughness. If this would deal Damage equal to or in excess of the creature's Wounds, it is cast back into the warp.

Warp Weapons

Creatures with this trait have weapons that are partially insubstantial, able to ignore such mundane things as armour or cover. Natural weapons and attacks made by a creature with this trait ignore physical armour unless it is created from psychoactive materials or is somehow warded against the warp. Force fields still work against these attacks normally.



Armoury

Ranged Weapons
•
Melee Weapons
•
Armour
•
Drugs, Consumables, Tools, and Gear
•
Cybernetics
•
Daemon Weapons



Chapter V: Armoury

"Strength is an illusion conjured by man's cunning, the weapons he wields and his willingness to use them to tear the faces from his foes."

–Seventh Tenant of the Blood Child

Violence is the currency of the Vortex. The visceral tearing of the chainsword or the satisfying thump of the bolter are music to the ears of the servants of the Dark Gods, who revel in the destruction and death they can bring. From the hated Imperium which surrounds them, the inhabitants of the Vortex are armed and armoured largely by the forges of their foes; weapons produced in the billions and scattered across the void until they find their way into the waiting hands of heretics and renegades. Unbound by the restraints of the Ordos and the Adepta, the followers of the gods often modify, subvert, or alter their weapons, sometimes even passing on the taint of Chaos to them.

Weapons, armour and equipment are vital to a character's survival and his chances of overcoming his foes. A character becomes much more effective when carrying the right gun or wearing a good suit of armour, improving his chances of winning fights and continuing his existence to bring glory to the gods. This chapter covers all manner of equipment available to characters in **Black Crusade**, from humble laspistols and auspexes up to potent suits of power armour and plasma cannons.

Acquiring Equipment

To acquire wargear, a character must first be able to afford it and find it (or steal it from the corpses of his foes!). Characters begin play with certain weapons, armour, or gear depending on their choices when they are created (see **Chapter II: Character Creation**). All other gear must either be purchased (or found) during game play or during downtime between game sessions. The acquiring of all equipment is dependant on the Availability of the item and the Infamy (constituting his influence and resources) of the character. For rules on using Infamy to acquire equipment see page 305.

Craftsmanship

Craftsmanship represents the quality of an item, how well it has been made or the kinds of materials used in its creation. All items have a Craftsmanship (usually Common) which can alter its performance in the game. The effects of Craftsmanship depend on the item or service and can vary widely. Weapons and armour all use the same rules for Craftsmanship, as detailed below; other items and services will come into play less often and can be determined by the GM. As a rule, though, a Poor service may take longer and have lessened effects, while a Poor item may fail at an inopportune time. By contrast a Good or Best service will take less time and come with extras included in the price, while a Good or Best item will be well-made and survive harsh treatment. The effect Craftsmanship has on an items value and its cost to the Character to acquire can be found in **Chapter I: Playing the Game**.

Weapons

"A weapon unused is a weapon wasted."

–Barlagst, Proprietor of Visceral Torment

Weapons are divided into several groups covering a wide variety of armaments, including everything from crossbows and plasma cannons to all manner of close combat weaponry. Unless they are of Poor Craftsmanship, all weapons come with the appropriate holster or carrying strap as part of their cost.

All weapons have a profile that is presented using the following statistics, providing players and GMs with all the relevant information needed to use them:

Name: The weapon's title.

Class: What type of weapon, whether a melee, thrown, pistol, basic or heavy weapon.

- Melee weapons can be used in close combat. When using a melee weapon a character adds his SB to the Damage he inflicts.
- Thrown weapons cover anything propelled by muscle power alone and includes knives, axes, spears, and the like. Unless they are also classed as melee, thrown weapons cannot be used in close combat (or if they do, they count as improvised weapons). When using a thrown weapon a character adds his SB to the Damage he inflicts (with the exception of explosives such as grenades).
- Pistol weapons are fired one-handed and can be used in close combat. However, when a pistol is used in close combat, the firer gains no bonuses or penalties to hit for range or targeting equipment. Pistols with the Scatter Quality fired in melee are considered to be firing at Point-Blank range. However, they do not gain a +30 bonus for being at Point-Blank range.
- Basic weapons normally require two hands but can be used one-handed with a –20 penalty to hit.
- Heavy weapons always require two hands and must be braced in some way, usually either on a bipod or tripod but possibly on a windowsill or sandbag (or the firer's shoulder in the case of missile launchers), to be fired without penalties. Firing a heavy weapon without bracing incurs a –30 penalty to hit and prohibits Semi-Auto and Full Auto fire.

Range: This number is used to determine how far the weapon can be accurately fired in metres. A weapon's Short Range is half this number while its Long Range is double this number (for ranged bonuses and penalties see **Chapter VII: Combat**, pages 245-246). Weapons cannot be fired at targets more than four times their range distance.

RoF (Rate of Fire): This indicates whether a weapon can be fired either on Semi-Auto or Full Auto and how many rounds/charges it expends when doing so. A weapon's RoF has three entries to indicate the modes in which it can be fired. The first entry indicates whether the weapon can be fired singly (with an S). The second entry indicates whether a weapon can be fired semi-automatically, and the number listed describes the shots fired. Finally, the third entry describes if the weapon can be fired on full automatic. Any

A Dark Age of Technology

In the 41st Millennium most technology is a mystery to man. Many of its secrets have been lost to the endless march of time and the cursed ignorance and superstition spread by the servants of the False Emperor. Within the Vortex, characters may understand the rudiments of how their wargear and weapons work, but more likely they know only how to make it function and not what magic goes on beneath its metal casing. Tech-priests, of course, understand a little more and know it is always wise to show respect to the spirit that resides within a machine and placate it with rituals and rites; after all, only those who wish their gun to fail in the midst of battle would ignore these observances.

Ranged Weapon Craftsmanship

Poor: Shoddy and dangerous to use, this weapon has the Unreliable Quality. If the weapon already has this Quality then it jams on any failed rolled to hit.

Common: No effects. This is the default Craftsmanship for ranged weapons in this chapter.

Good: This weapon is constructed well, and loses the Unreliable Quality. If it does not have the Unreliable Quality, it gains the Reliable Quality. If it already has this Quality there is no further effect beyond the obvious fine workmanship of the weapon.

Best: As fine a piece of craftsmanship as can be found, this weapon never suffers from jamming or overheating, treating any such results as a miss.

Melee Weapon Craftsmanship

Poor: Lax craftsmanship or poorly balanced work means this weapon inflicts a –10 on all Weapon Skill Tests made with it.

Common: No effects. This is the default Craftsmanship for melee weapons in this chapter.

Good: An eye towards balance and design means this weapon grants a +5 bonus to all Weapon Skill Tests made with it.

Best: Superior materials and superb design means this weapon grants a +10 bonus to all Weapon Skill Tests made with it, and increases the damage it deals by +1.

Armour Craftsmanship

Poor: Badly fitted, designed or damaged, Poor armour is difficult to wear. Characters wearing Poor armour take a –10 penalty to all Agility Tests.

Good: Well constructed and better fitting, this armour is easier to wear. It also aids the wearer in non-combat situations, granting him +5 to the social test of his choice whilst wearing it. This could include +5 to a Charm Test for a gleaming suit of brass armour, or +5 to an Intimidation Test when interrogating a captured official for particularly horrific symbols carved into the plating.

Best: This finely wrought and perfectly fitted armour is like donning a second skin. This armour has the same bonus as Good Quality plus weighs half the normal amount and increases the AP by 1.

mode in which the weapon cannot be fired is indicated with a "—," though some weapons can be fired in more than one mode. If this is the case each of its different rates of fire will be listed in its profile. Characters must choose which mode they are firing their weapon in before making their attack.

Dam (Damage): The Damage the weapon does and the type of Damage it inflicts, for the purpose of Critical Hits (as shown in brackets): (E) Energy, (X) Explosive, (R) Rending, (I) Impact.

Pen (Penetration): Reflects how good the weapon is at cutting through armour. When a shot or blow from this weapon hits a target, reduce the target's Armour Points by the weapon's Penetration, with results of less than 0 counting as 0 (i.e., the armour provides no protection at all). Then calculate Damage as normal. For example, if a weapon with a Penetration of 3 hits a target with 5 Armour Points, the target will only count as having 2 Armour Points against any Damage the hit causes. Note that Penetration has no effect on fields, but it does affect cover.

Clip: How many rounds/charges the weapon holds when fully loaded.

Rld (Reload): How many Actions the weapon takes to reload. This is generally Half (for a Half Action) or Full (for a Full Action). Some weapons can take a number of Actions over several Rounds. The number of Rounds is given as a number, for example 2Full means that reloading takes two Full Rounds.

Special: This indicates if the weapon has any special qualities, such as creating a blast when fired or needing to recharge between shots.

Wt (Weight): Represents how much the weapon weighs in kg (kilograms).

Availability: This identifies the weapon's Availability and is used when making Acquisition Tests to buy the weapon (see page 306).

WEAPON SPECIAL QUALITIES

Some weapons possess special qualities to represent such factors as special Damage or unusual effects. The following is a list of the most widely used weapon qualities. Many Special qualities have an X in parenthesis after their name denoting a variable number of 1 or more depending on the strength or size of the effect. The value of this number as it relates to each individual weapon with this Special Quality can be found on the weapon table.

Accurate

Some weapons are designed with precision in mind and respond superbly to skilled hands. They grant an additional bonus of +10 to the firer's Ballistic Skill when used with an Aim Action, in addition to the bonus granted from Aiming. When firing a single shot from a single Basic Weapon with the Accurate Quality benefiting from the Aim action, the attack gains an extra 1d10 Damage for every two Degrees of Success to a maximum of two extra 1d10. These extra d10s cannot generate Zealous Hatred.

Using Weapons Untrained

If a character does not posses the appropriate Talent to use a weapon (see Chapter IV: Talents and Traits) he will not be able to use it as effectively as normal. When a character attempts to use a weapon he does not have the correct Weapon Training Talent for, he suffers a –20 penalty to any relevant Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test. If the weapon does not use a Test to hit (such as a flamer) then this penalty is instead applied as a bonus (i.e. +20) to tests by his targets to avoid the attack.

Balanced

Some weapons, such as swords and knives, are designed so that the weight of the hilt balances the weight of the blade, making the weapon easier to wield. Balanced weapons grant a +10 bonus to Parry Tests when using this weapon. Even if the wielder is using multiple Balanced weapons, he only gains the bonus once.

Blast (X)

Many missiles, grenades and some guns create an explosion when they hit their target. When working out a hit from a Blast weapon, anyone within the weapon's blast radius in metres (indicated by the number in parenthesis) is also hit. Roll Damage once and apply it to each person affected by the blast.

Concussive (X)

Some weapons create a deafening blast or shock wave when they hit. When target is struck by a Concussive weapon, must take a Toughness Test with a penalty equal to 10 times the number in parenthesis (X). For example a weapon with Concussive (2) would impose a –20 on Toughness Tests, and Concussive (0) would be a Test with no penalty. If he fails, target is stunned for 1 round per Degree of Failure. Additionally, if the target takes Damage greater than his Strength Bonus, the target is knocked Prone.

Crippling (X)

Particularly cruel or deadly weapons sometimes include things like living barbs or shards that remain in their victims' wounds causing them immense pain and even slowly killing them. When a target suffers at least one wound from this weapon they count as being "crippled" for the remainder of the encounter or until healed of all Damage. If a crippled



character takes more than a Half Action on their turn, they suffer Rending Damage equal to the number in parenthesis (X). This Damage is not reduced by armour or Toughness.

Defensive
A Defensive weapon, such as a shield, is intended to be used to block attacks and is awkward when used for making attacks. Defensive weapons grant a +15 bonus to tests made when used to Parry, but take a –10 penalty when used to make attacks.

Devastating (X)
If the target is a horde, a successful hit from this weapon reduces the Horde's Magnitude by an additional amount equal to X.

Felling (X)
To kill powerful foes often requires fearsome weapons or special rounds with the ability to punch through even the toughest hides. When calculating damage from Felling weapons, reduce the target's Unnatural Toughness Bonus by the number in parenthesis (X). Felling only reduces Unnatural Toughness, not the target's base Toughness Bonus. The reduction occurs for calculating Damage only, and does not persist.

Flame
Some weapons belch great gouts of flame, igniting anything they strike. If a target of a Flame attack is hit (even if he suffers no Damage), he must succeed on an Agility Test or be set on fire (see page 247).

Flexible
Some weapons are made up of a multitude of loosely-connected segments, such as chains, while others, such as whips, are woven from supple hides. These kinds of weapons lash about when used to attack and cannot be Parried.

Force
Used exclusively by psykers, these weapons combine archeotech circuitry pattern with rare psycho-reactive crystals to channel their mental power into deadly, reality-rending force. Force weapons can take many forms, and comprise several specialised variants, but are largely restricted to swords, staves, and axes. Any melee weapon with the Primitive Quality can be a Force weapon, and increases its Availability to Extremely Rare. Unless wielded by a psyker, Force weapons simply count as normal weapons of their type and are not considered to have the Force Quality.

In the hands of a wielder with a Psy Rating, their true power is revealed. For every point of Psy Rating the wielder has, the weapon's Damage and Penetration increase by +1. If the weapon possesses the Primitive Quality, it loses this Quality. For example, a Force sword wielded by a character with Psy Rating 3 would inflict 1d10+3 (plus SB) and have a Penetration of 3. In addition to normal Damage, whenever a psyker Damages an opponent, he may, as a Free Action, channel psychic force and killing will into the blade. This requires a Focus Power Test using Opposed Willpower. For every Degree of Success, the Force weapon's wielder deals an additional 1d10 E Damage, ignoring the victim's Armour and Toughness Bonus. Force weapons cannot be destroyed by a power weapon's field.

Gyro-stabilised
The weapon has a small auto-stabilisation unit that is typically built towards the end of the barrel. While not as powerful as a suspensor, the gyro-stabiliser helps keep the weapon levelled at the optimal firing angle. A Gyro-Stabilised weapon never counts its target as being farther than Long Range (normal maximum range still applies). Heavy weapons with this Quality reduce the penalty for firing without Bracing to –20.

Hallucinogenic (X)
Hallucinogenic weapons use drugs or mind-altering exotic energy to disorient or disable their targets, often inducing a variety of short-lived psychological states and delusions. When a creature takes a hit from a Hallucinogenic weapon it must make a Toughness Test with a penalty equal to 10 times the number in parenthesis (X) or suffer a temporary delusion and roll 1d100 on **Table 5-1: Hallucinogenic Effects.** Respirators and sealed armour provide a +20 bonus to this Test. The effects last for 1 Round, plus 1 additional Round for every Degree of Failure.

Haywire (X)
Haywire weapons make use of microwaves or electromagnetic radiation to destroy the inner workings of machines and tech. Everything within the field's radius, indicated by the number in parenthesis, is affected: Haywire (3) would affect an area with a three metre radius. Roll 1d100 on **Table 5–2: Haywire Field** Effects (adding any modifiers from the weapon) to determine the strength of the effect. As the field slowly dissipates, the strength lessens one step in severity each round until it becomes Insignificant (i.e., a result of Major Disruption would become Minor Disruption the following round and then cease to have an effect the round after that). Additional Haywire attacks in the same area do not stack but instead create a new effect that will either be ignored if lower than the current effect or replaced if higher.

Inaccurate
Inaccurate weapons are either far too cumbersome to aim properly or lack any kind of reliable sights. These weapons never gain a bonus from Aiming.

Maximal
Maximal weapons have two fire settings allowing the wielder to either use the weapon at its lower setting to conserve ammo and allow a higher rate of fire, or make single powerful blasts requiring the weapon to recharge between shots. Before making an attack the user can choose to either fire the weapon normally, in which case it uses the profile detailed on **Table 5-3: Ranged Weapons**, or to fire it on Maximal. When the weapon is fired on Maximal it adds 10 to its range, adds 1d10 to its Damage and +2 to its Penetration. If it has the Blast Quality then this is improved by +2, i.e., a weapon with Blast (3) become Blast (5).

Table 5-1: Hallucinogenic Effects

Roll	Effects
1	**Bugsbugsbugsbugs!** The character drops to the floor, flailing and screaming as he tries to claw off imaginary insects devouring his skin and flesh. In game terms, the character is Stunned.
2	**My hands…!** The character believes his hands have turned into slimy tentacles, or perhaps the flesh has begun to strip off the bone in bloody lumps. Regardless of the particulars, the character drops everything he is carrying and spends the duration staring at his hands and screaming. In game terms, the character is Stunned.
3	**They're coming through the walls!** The character sees gruesome aliens bursting through the walls/ceiling/floor/bushes and opens fire. The character must spend each Turn firing at a random piece of terrain within his line of sight. Any creatures caught in the line of fire are subject to attacks as normal. Each round, choose a new target at random (use the scatter diagram on page 244 to determine what direction that is, with a "7" meaning he shoots the ground, and a "0" meaning he fires wildly into the air).
4	**Nobody can see me!** The character believes he is invisible and wanders aimlessly, making faces at those around him. He waddles about in random directions each round (use the scatter diagram on page 244), using a Full Action to move. The character retains his Reactions.
5	**I can fly!** The sky looks so big and inviting, the character flaps his arms trying to imitate a pterasquirrel. He may do nothing but jump up and down on the spot. If he is standing above ground level, he may throw himself off in a random direction, with the usual consequences for falling—appalling Damage or death being the usual outcomes.
6	**They've got it in for me…** The character is overcome with paranoia, believing even his own comrades are out to get him. On the character's Turn, he must move to a position of cover, getting out of line of sight from any other characters. He remains hidden until the effect ends.
7	**They got me, mother…** The character believes that the gas is toxic and collapses to the floor as if dead—he counts as being helpless. Any other character who sees him "die" must pass an Intelligence Test or they think the character is dead too.
8	**I'll take you all on!** The character is filled with a burning rage and a desire for violence. The character enters a Frenzy (see page 124) and attacks the closest opponent.
9	**I'm only little!** The character believes he has shrunk to half his normal size, and everything else is big and frightening now. All other characters count as having a Fear Rating of 3 to the character.
0	**The worms!** The character desperately tries to remove a massive fanged worm he thinks is slowly winding its way up his leg. If holding a gun, he shoots himself with it, or if not, he hits himself in the leg with whatever melee weapon he is holding. If the character is currently holding no weapon, he draws a random weapon from those he carries and attacks himself with it. Randomly determine which leg the character believes to be trapped by the worm. The attack hits automatically and deals normal Damage.

The weapon also uses three times the normal amount of ammo per shot and gains the Recharge Quality.

Melta

Using intense blasts of heat to excite particles and carve away armour, these weapons can slag even the hardest materials if fired from a close enough range. This weapon doubles its Penetration when firing at Short Range.

Overheats

Certain weapons are prone to overheating, either because of poor design or because they fire unstable superheated ammunition. An unmodified roll to hit of 91 or higher causes the weapon to Overheat. When this happens the wielder immediately suffer a single hit from the weapon to his arm (left or right, depending on which hand he favours). Once the hit has been resolved the wielder must then make an Agility Test or drop the weapon as a Free Action. Whether or not the wielder drops the weapon, it must spend the following round cooling down and cannot be used. Weapons with this Special Quality never jam; and jam result indicates they Overheat instead.

Power Field

A field of power flickers around weapons with this Quality, increasing its Damage and Penetration. Such modifiers are already included in the weapon's profile. When a character successfully uses this weapon to Parry an attack (or his own attack is parried) by a weapon without the Power Field, Natural Weapon, or Warp Weapon Quality or Trait, he has a 75% chance of destroying his attacker's weapon.

Primitive (X)

Crude and basic in design, these kinds of weapons, while still deadly, are less effective than more modern weapons. When rolling for Damage with these weapons, any dice roll greater than the number in parenthesis (X) counts as that number. For example a weapon with Primitive (7) would count all Damage rolls of 8, 9 or 0 as 7. These weapons still require a Damage score of 0 to generate Zealous Hatred as normal.

Proven (X)

Weapons with a Proven Quality always inflict massive trauma and treat any die roll for Damage lower than the Proven rating (as indicated by the number in parenthesis) as if it were the Proven rating instead. Thusly, a Proven (3) weapon would treat any die roll of 1 or 2 as a 3 for the purposes of calculating Damage.

Razor Sharp

Certain weapons or ammunition have the ability to slice right through armour if they hit just right. If the wielder scores three or more Degrees of Success when rolling to hit with this weapon, double this weapon's Pen when resolving the hit.

Table 5-2: Haywire Field Effects

Roll	Field Strength
1-2	**Insignificant:** There is no noticeable effect on nearby technology.
3-4	**Minor Disruption:** All actions utilising technology, including firing Ranged weapons without the Primitive Quality, Tech-Use Tests, and any physical actions attempted while wearing power armour or employing cybernetics suffer a –10 penalty. The Base Movement of anyone in power armour is reduced by 1.
5-6	**Major Disruption:** All actions utilising technology, including firing Ranged weapons without the Primitive Quality, Tech-Use Tests, and any physical actions attempted while wearing power armour or employing cybernetics suffer a –20 penalty. The Base Movement of anyone in power armour is reduced by 3. Melee weapons with technological components function as a Primitive weapon of the analogous type.
7-8	**Dead Zone:** Technology within the affected area completely ceases to function. Power armour becomes unpowered, reducing the wearer's movement to 1. Characters with cybernetic replacements to any internal organ(s) suffer one level of Fatigue each round they remain in the Dead Zone. Melee weapons with technological components (i.e., power swords) function as a Primitive weapon of their type.
9-0	**Prolonged Dead Zone:** As Dead Zone (if this result is rolled, the field lasts for two rounds as it lessens to Dead Zone during the following round).

Recharge
Because of the volatile nature of the weapon's ammunition or due to the way it fires, the weapon needs time between shots to Recharge. The weapon must spend the Round after firing building up a charge and cannot be fired—in effect the character can only fire the weapon every other Round.

Reliable
Patterned on tried-and-true technology, Reliable weapons seldom fail. Reliable weapons only Jam on an unmodified hit roll of 00. Reliable weapons with the Spray Quality or which do not make hit rolls never Jam.

Sanctified
These weapons are blessed against the forces of Chaos. Any Damage inflicted by a Sanctified weapon counts as Holy Damage. Holy damage does not have any integral effects, but works different against some Daemonic and Warp creatures (see page 140).

Scatter
The standard ammunition of these weapons spreads out when fired, hitting more of the target. At Point Blank Range this weapon gains a +10 to hit and inflicts an additional +3 Damage. At Short Range it gains an additional +10 to hit. At Long or Extreme Range it suffers –3 Damage (to a minimum of 0).

Shocking
Shocking weapons can Stun their opponents with a powerful surge of energy. A target that takes a hit from a Shocking weapon must make a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test. If he fails, he is Stunned for a number of Rounds equal to his Degrees of Failure.

Smoke (X)
Rather than inflicting Damage, these weapons throw up dense clouds of smoke to create cover. When a hit is scored from a weapon with the Smoke Quality, it creates a smokescreen a number of metres in diameter from the point of impact equal to the number in parenthesis (X). This screen lasts for 1d10+10 Rounds, or less in adverse weather conditions (see the effects of Smoke on page 243).

Spray
Spray weapons project a cone of missiles, liquid or fire out to the range of the weapon. Unlike other weapons, Spray weapons have just one range, and when fired, hit all those in their area of effect. The wielder does not need to Test Ballistic Skill; he simply fires the weapon. All creatures in the weapon's path, a cone-shaped area extending in a 30-degree arc from the firer out to the weapon's range, must make an Agility Test or be struck by the attack and take Damage normally. Cover does not protect characters from attacks made by Spray weapons unless it completely conceals them. Because Spray weapons make no roll to hit, they are always considered to hit targets in the body, and will Jam if the firer rolls a 9 on any of his Damage dice (before adding any bonuses).

Snare (X)
Weapons with this Quality are designed to entangle enemies. On a successful hit, the target must make an Agility Test with a penalty equal to 10 times the number in parenthesis (X) or be immobilised. For example, a weapon with Snare (1) would impose a –10 on Agility Tests. An immobilised target can attempt no other actions except to try to escape the bonds. He can attempt to burst the bonds (a Strength Test) or wriggle free (an Agility Test) in his Turn. Both tests are made with the same penalty as the original test. The target is considered helpless until he escapes.

Storm
A weapon with the Storm Quality unleashes shots at rapid speed, often through use of a double-barrelled design. This Quality doubles the number of hits inflicted on the target and the amount of ammunition expended. For example, when firing a weapon with the Storm Quality in fully automatic mode, each degree of success yields two additional hits (to a maximum of twice the weapon's Full Automatic rate of fire).

Tearing
Tearing weapons are vicious devices, often using multitudes of fast-moving jagged teeth to rip into flesh and bone or simply blasting massive wounds in flesh. These weapons roll one extra die for Damage, discarding the lowest die rolled.

Currencies within the Vortex

Within the Vortex, currency is either tied to the masters of individual worlds (and secured against their own fortunes) or is itself intrinsically valuable (such as coinage minted from precious metals or rare gemstones). This means that characters are likely to encounter a dizzying array of coins, tokens and notes during their travels, like the Rubal Shards of Hyshabore, said to be made from pieces broken off the crystal palace of the Daemon Prince himself, to the Blood Notes of the Shadeling Warrens, stained by a drop of blood from all those who touch them. Some places even use Imperial currencies such as Throne Gelt from the Calixis Sector, though carrying large amounts of such wealth brings its own perils within the Vortex and might mark one out as an agent of the Imperium. Whatever form currency takes, its effects remain the same for the characters for buying and selling gear and goods, though the GM should feel free to make up his own methods for transaction dependant on where the characters find themselves.

Toxic (X)

Some weapons rely on toxins and poisons to do their damage. Anyone that takes Damage from a Toxic weapon, after reduction for armour and Toughness Bonus, must make a Toughness Test with a penalty equal to 10 times the number in parenthesis (X) or suffer an additional 1d10 points of Damage (of the same type as the weapon which inflicted the hit) not reduced by armour or Toughness. For example, a weapon with Toxic (4) would impose a –40 on Toughness Tests. Some weapons or creatures may carry additional effects with their toxins or inflict more Damage as indicated in their individual descriptions.

Tainted

These weapons are infused with the power of Chaos, and manifest the corruption in their bearer. Weapons with this Quality add their wielder's Corruption Point Bonus (the 10s column of their Corruption Point total) to Damage dealt.

Twin-Linked

A simple way to increase the firepower of a weapon is to strap two of them together! Twin-linked weapons represent two of the same kind of weapon fixed together and rigged to fire simultaneously with a single squeeze of the trigger. When firing a Twin-Linked weapon the wielder can choose to either gain a +10 to hit or an additional hit if they score at least one successful hit. Twin-Linked weapons expend twice their RoF in ammunition with each shot.

Unbalanced

Heavy and difficult to ready after an attack, these kinds of weapons impose a –10 penalty to any Parry Skill Tests when wielding this weapon. Unbalanced weapons cannot be used to make Lightning Attacks.

Unreliable

Certain weapons misfire more often than normal because they are badly maintained or constructed. An Unreliable weapon suffers a Jam on a roll of 91 or higher, even if fired on Semi- or Full Auto.

Unwieldy

Huge and often top-heavy, Unwieldy weapons are too awkward to be used defensively. Unwieldy weapons cannot be used to Parry. Unwieldy weapons cannot be used to make Lightning Attacks.

Warp Weapon

Rare weapons are sometimes composed of the raw power of the Warp or crafted with foul sorcery to hold its power and make them anathema to all living things. Warp weapons ignore Armour and the AP generated from cover. Force fields and armour specially warded work normally against them.

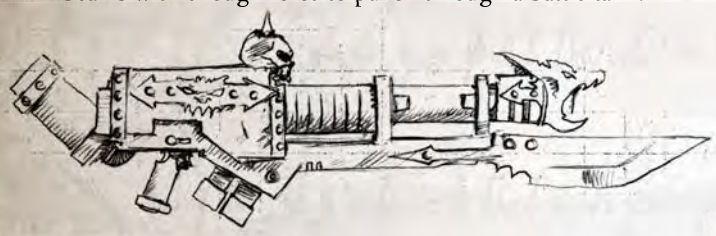


Las Weapons

Produced by the millions on countless forge worlds, laser or "las" weapons are by far the most numerous type of weapon throughout the dominions of mankind. While somewhat complex to manufacture, their STC template is well known and their extreme ruggedness and ease of use makes them common throughout the Vortex, and a favoured tool of Chaos worshippers for the minimal training and strength required to fire one.

Hell Hammer Lascannon

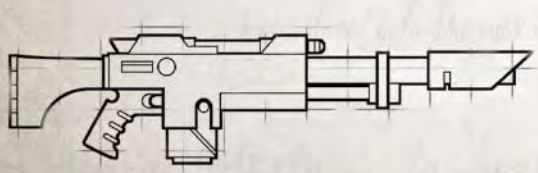
A common variant of the man-portable lascannon used by the Imperial Guard, the Hell Hammer is a large bulky weapon that usually has a crew of two or three men, or one Traitor Legionnaire. Though it is awkward to wield, it can fire laser beams with enough force to punch through a battle tank.



Lasgun

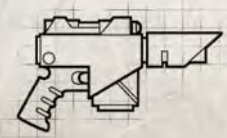
Produced in the trillions, the lasgun (created in hundreds of local and Imperial patterns) varies in shape and appearance but remains a reliable and functional infantry rifle. Though there are more powerful weapons, few rival the lasgun's dependability and robustness.

Lasgun variable setting: Certain patterns of lasguns have a variable setting option, allowing them to fire higher-powered bursts. This is especially true amongst the renegades of the Screaming Vortex, who are not forced by Mechanicus strictures to maintain their weapons to some artificial standard. Lasguns may be fired on overcharge mode, dealing +1 Damage but using two shots worth of ammunition per shot fired. Additionally, they may be fired on overload mode, dealing +2 Damage and gaining +2 Penetration. In this case they use four shots worth of ammunition per shot fired, lose Reliable, and gain Unreliable.



Laspistol

As common as the lasgun, the laspistol is the backup weapon of choice for both Imperial forces and many of their foes. It is a favoured sidearm for Imperial and Renegade officers alike, and shares the lasgun's reliability.

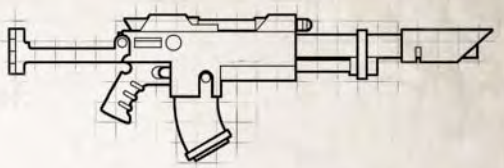


Laspistols benefit from the lasgun variable setting rule.

Las Carbine

A cut-down version of the lasgun, the las carbine makes a good backup weapon, often given to vehicle crews or support staff. Their smaller construction (they have shorter barrels and often come with folding stocks) mean they are popular with those who wish to carry a concealed weapon as well. Las carbines can be fired with one hand at only a –10 penalty, rather than the normal –20 penalty for basic weapons.

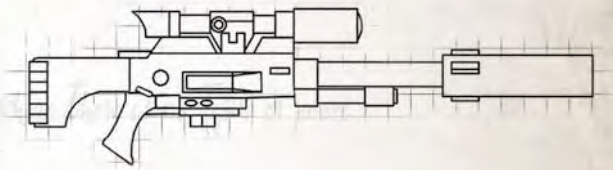
Las Carbines benefit from the lasgun variable setting rule.



Long-Las

Favoured by snipers, the long-las is a specially modified version of the lasgun constructed for added range and accuracy. As it's name implies, a long-las has a much longer barrel than a lasgun, both to increase range and prevent overheating.

A long-las benefits from the variable setting rule.



M41 Multi-laser

Often found mounted on vehicles as a counter to infantry and light vehicles, the multi-laser is a multi-barrelled gatling laser with an impressive rate of fire. However, its blasts lack the penetration of the lascannon, making it less effective against heavy armour.

Solid Projectile Weapons

Commonly known as slug-throwers, these weapons are exceedingly common throughout the Vortex. Most alien races have their own versions as well, as it's a fairly simple technology that is easy to manufacture. People of all types commonly carry one kind or another for their basic protection or livelihood.

Autogun

Autoguns are cheap and easy to produce weapons, popular when lasguns are not available. A typical weapon may not be incredibly accurate or as reliable as a lasgun, but will make up for it with a high rate of fire and cheap ammunition. Most autoguns fire solid low-calibre slugs from standardised clips, and the design is ubiquitous enough that many xenos have their own variants.

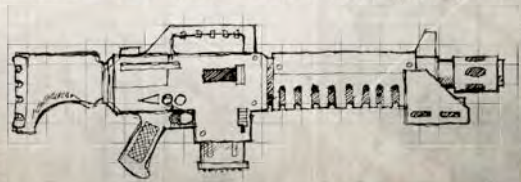


Table 5-3: Ranged Weapons

Las Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Hell Hammer Lascannon	Heavy	300m	S/–/–	5d10+10 E	10	5	2 Full	Proven (3)	55kg	Extremely Rare
Lasgun	Basic	100m	S/3/–	1d10+3 E	0	60	Full	Reliable	4kg	Common
Laspistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+2 E	0	30	Half	Reliable	1.5kg	Common
Las Carbine	Basic	75m	S/2/–	1d10+3 E	0	60	Half	Reliable	2.5kg	Common
Long-Las	Basic	150m	S/–/–	1d10+3 E	1	40	Full	Accurate, Reliable, Felling (4)	4.5kg	Scarce
M41 Multilaser	Heavy	150m	–/–/5	2d10+10 E	2	100	2 Full	Reliable	35kg	Very Rare

Solid Projectile Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Autogun	Basic	100m	S/3/10	1d10+3 I	0	30	Full	—	5kg	Average
Autopistol	Pistol	30m	S/–/6	1d10+2 I	0	18	Full	—	1.5kg	Average
Assault Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/3/–	1d10+4 I	0	12	2 Full	Scatter	5.5kg	Scarce
Bow	Basic	40m	S/–/–	1d10 R	0	1	Half	Primitive (6), Reliable	2kg	Plentiful
Crossbow	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+1 R	0	1	2 Full	Primitive (7)	3kg	Average
Flintlock Pistol	Pistol	15m	S/–/–	1d10+2 I	0	1	3 Full	Primitive (8), Innacurate, Unreliable	3kg	Common
Flintlock Musket	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+3 I	0	1	5 Full	Primitive (8), Innacurate, Unreliable	7kg	Common
Hand Cannon	Pistol	35m	S/–/–	1d10+4 I	2	5	2 Full	—	3kg	Scarce
Harpoon Gun	Heavy	40m	S/–/–	2d10+2 R	0	1	4 Full	Crippling (5), Primitive (9), Snare (1)	18kg	Scarce
Heavy Stubber	Heavy	100m	–/–/8	1d10+5 I	3	75	2 Full	—	30kg	Rare
Legion Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/2/–	1d10+6 I	0	10	2 Full	Reliable, Scatter	10kg	Very Rare
M34 Autocannon	Heavy	300m	S/3/–	3d10+8 I	6	20	2 Full	Reliable	40kg	Very Rare
Reaper Autocannon	Heavy	300m	S/4/–	3d10+8 I	6	40	2 Full	Reliable, Twin-Linked	60kg	Extremely Rare
Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+4 I	0	8	2 Full	Scatter	5kg	Plentiful
Stub Automatic	Pistol	30m	S/3/–	1d10+3 I	0	9	Full	—	1.5kg	Average
Stub Revolver	Pistol	30m	S/–/–	1d10+3 I	0	6	2 Full	Reliable	1.5kg	Plentiful
Stub Rifle	Basic	120m	S/–/–	1d10+3 I	1	5	Full	Accurate	5.5kg	Average

Bolt Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Bolter	Basic	100m	S/3/–	1d10+5X	4	24	Full	Tearing	7kg	Very Rare
Bolt Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+5X	4	8	Full	Tearing	3.5kg	Very Rare
Combi-Bolter	Basic	80m	S/3/–	1d10+5X	4	32	2 Full	Tearing, Twin Linked	12kg	Extremely Rare
Heavy Bolter	Heavy	150m	–/–/6	1d10+8X	5	60	Full	Tearing	40kg	Very Rare
Legion Bolter	Basic	100m	S/3/–	1d10+9X	4	24	Full	Tearing	10kg	Extremely Rare
Legion Bolt Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+9X	4	8	Full	Tearing	5.5kg	Extremely Rare
Legion Combi-bolter	Basic	80m	S/4/–	1d10+9X	4	32	2 Full	Tearing, Twin-Linked	15kg	Extremely Rare
Legion Heavy Bolter	Heavy	150m	–/–/6	1d10+12X	5	60	Full	Tearing	45kg	Extremely Rare

Melta Weapons

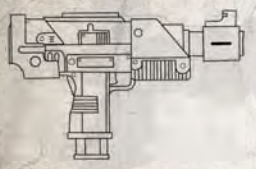
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Inferno Pistol	Pistol	10m	S/–/–	2d10+10E	12	3	Full	Melta	3kg	Extremely Rare
Legion Meltagun	Basic	20m	S/–/–	2d10+13E	12	6	2 Full	Melta	17kg	Extremely Rare
Meltagun	Basic	20m	S/–/–	2d10+10E	12	5	2 Full	Melta	15kg	Very Rare
Multi-melta	Heavy	60m	S/–/–	2d10+16E	12	12	2 Full	Melta, Blast (1)	40kg	Very Rare

Table 5-3: Ranged Weapons (Cont)

Plasma Weapons

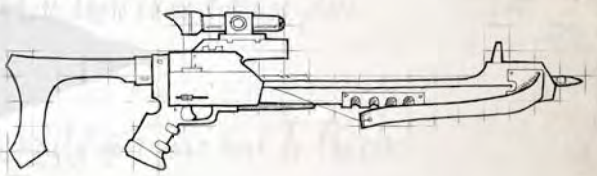
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Legion Plasma Gun	Basic	100m	S/2/–	1d10+12E	10	24	5 Full	Maximal, Overheats	18kg	Very Rare
Legion Plasma Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+10E	8	12	3 Full	Maximal, Overheats	4kg	Very Rare
Plasma Cannon	Heavy	150m	S/–/–	2d10+12E	10	16	5 Full	Blast (3), Maximal, Overheats	40kg	Very Rare
Plasma Gun	Basic	90m	S/2/–	1d10+8E	10	20	5 Full	Maximal, Overheats	18kg	Very Rare
Plasma Pistol	Pistol	40m	S/2/–	1d10+7E	8	10	3 Full	Maximal, Overheats	4kg	Very Rare
Flame Weapons										
Name	**Class**	**Range**	**RoF**	**Dam**	**Pen**	**Clip**	**Rld**	**Special**	**Wt.**	**Availability**
Flamer	Basic	20m	S/–/–	1d10+4E	2	6	2 Full	Flame, Spray	6kg	Common
Hand Flamer	Pistol	10m	S/–/–	1d10+4E	2	2	Full	Flame, Spray	3.5kg	Scarce
Heavy Flamer	Heavy	30m	S/–/–	1d10+8E	5	10	2 Full	Flame, Spray	20kg	Rare
Legion Flamer	Basic	20m	S/–/–	1d10+9E	4	6	2 Full	Flame, Spray	10kg	Scarce
Legion Heavy Flamer	Heavy	30m	S/–/–	1d10+12E	6	15	2 Full	Flame, Spray	25kg	Very Rare
Launcher Weapons										
Name	**Class**	**Range**	**RoF**	**Dam**	**Pen**	**Clip**	**Rld**	**Special**	**Wt.**	**Availability**
Grenade Launcher	Basic	60m	S/–/–	†	†	6	2 Full	†	12kg	Average
Missile Launcher	Heavy	300m	S/–/–	†	†	1	Full	†	35kg	Rare

†The Dam, Pen and Special of Launcher weapons is dependant on the grenade or missile used.



Autopistol

A common weapon for hivers and scum, the autopistol is a pistol capable of a high rate of fire and access to a variety of ammo types.



Assault Shotgun

The assault shotgun is a combat-ready version of the standard pump-action shotgun. The ability to fire on semi-auto makes the assault shotgun a dangerous weapon, able to fill entire rooms with a hail of indiscriminate and deadly buckshot.

Bow

One of the oldest weapons in civilisation, bows can range from primitive constructions of wood and sinew to weapons made from fine composites and wire micro-fibres. Their primary utility is silence, as they are relatively ineffective compared to modern weapons.

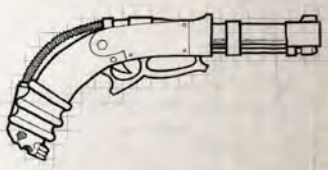
Crossbow

This slightly more sophisticated version of the bow uses a stock and winch to increase tension and fire a bolt or quarrel over a longer distance. These weapons can be used even by the unskilled, which is their primary selling point.

Simple Operation: The penalty for using this weapon without proficiency is reduced by 10 (i.e., the usual –20 would be reduced to a –10).

Flintlock Pistol and Flintlock Musket

Flintlock weapons are precursors to modern firearms, muzzle-loading single-shot black powder weapons with limited accuracy and short range. Amongst the feral tribes that populate the savage worlds of the Vortex, such weapons may be considered a sign of status. However, against power armour (and even the flak armour of the Imperial Guard) such weapons are woefully ineffective.



Hand Cannon

A heavier version of the stub gun, hand cannons are popular with those who have the arm strength to wield them. They fire massive slugs that can turn unfortunates into chunks of meat, but generally have a low rate of fire and small ammo capacity. A hand cannon has a massive recoil, and imposes a –10 penalty to hit with it. This penalty is negated if the wielder uses two hands, has compensation equipment such as recoil gloves, or a Strength Bonus of 5 or higher (with or without Unnatural Strength).



Harpoon Gun

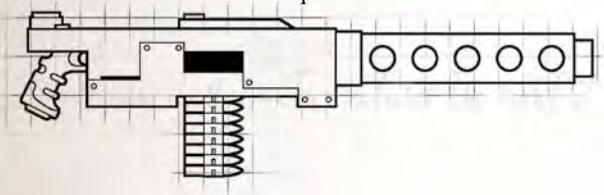
This projectile weapon fires a long, barbed spear attached to a rope or chain, allowing the operator to reel in a helpless target. Such weapons are popular amongst the reavers in pirate wolfpacks, as they can be used as impromptu boarding devices or to maim a victim then pull them close for a "personal kill."

If a target is snared by a Harpoon Gun, the operator can make an Opposed Strength Test with the target as a Full Action on his next turn. If he succeeds, he pulls the target a number of metres directly towards him equal to the Degrees of Success.

Heavy Stubber

The heavy stubber is a popular weapon amongst military forces and gangers alike, as—like most solid projectile weaponry—they are easily maintained and reasonably reliable. Heavy stubbers are large, belt-fed heavy weapons, often with long vented barrels. Though not as devastating as a heavy bolter or autocannon, they lay down an impressive rate of fire and can shred infantry and unarmoured vehicles.

Heavy stubbers are typically employed with a bipod or tripod mount to avoid the punishing recoil, though some tough individuals may be able to carry them with extensive bracing harnesses or suspensors. Many patterns use an ammunition belt of 100 rounds, though this often requires a loader to ensure the feed doesn't jam. However, heavy stubbers can also be purchased with a smaller drum magazine of 40 rounds that does not require a loader.



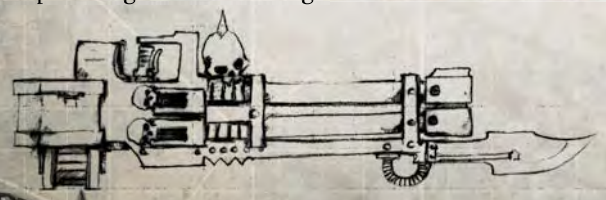
M34 Autocannon

An autocannon is a crew-served heavy weapon, a self-loading high calibre cannon that uses dense solid shells to punch through armour. Though unable to fully penetrate the ceramite of Space Marine power armour, they decimate light to medium vehicles and see widespread use in the Imperial Guard and many renegade armies.

The M34 autocannon is an older version of a common Imperial Guard pattern in the Jericho Reach, and uses a tripod mount. It can be manned by one person, though it ideally employs a crew of two to move and set up.

Reaper Autocannon

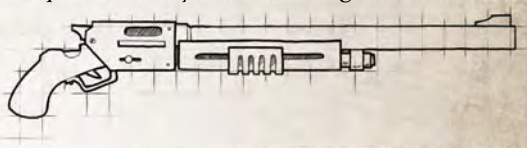
The Reaper Autocannon is a particular type of double-barrelled autocannon, no longer employed by the forces of the Emperor. It is often seen amongst the ranks of Chaos Terminators, who use the heavy volume of fire it lays down to great effect, giving warbands an ability to take out heavy troops and light armour at range.



Shotgun (Human and Legion)

Shotguns fire a smoothbore cartridge full of pellets (though some Heretics prefer to fill the cartridge with wire twists or even glass shards for particularly painful wounds), so one shot fires a high-speed cloud of lead. These robust and practical weapons are popular amongst pirate raiders and underhive enforcers, as they can wreak havoc in close quarters.

Some shotguns are specifically designed to be used by Space Marines, although most of these were originally possessed by the Space Marine Scouts of loyalist Chapters and "requisitioned" by the Traitor Legionnaires.



Stub Automatic

The stub automatic fires larger-bore projectiles than the autopistol, in single shot or semi-auto modes. Like other solid projectile weapons, its primary advantages are that its cheap and easy to maintain.



Stub Revolver

The stub revolver is an ancient pistol design, using a revolving chamber to hold stub rounds. Though the design is exceedingly primitive, it survives because it is also exceedingly reliable—with few moving parts and a simple loading mechanism.



Stub Rifle

The stub rifle is a common sight across the galaxy, a hunting rifle firing large-bore stub rounds. Like most solid projectile weapons, its primary benefit is ease of construction and maintenance. Though dismissed as a pitiful civilian weapon by some, the accuracy of a stub rifle means many rebellions begin with one well-placed shot to an Imperial official's head.

BOLT WEAPONS

Bolters are bulky assault weapons which fire self-propelled mass-reactive shells called bolts, set to explode just after penetration for maximum lethality. Bolter ammunition is expensive and difficult to manufacture, and there are many warlords who carry bolt weapons but never fire them due to the scarcity of ammo, especially within the Vortex. The standard bolter round is .75 calibre with a super-dense metallic core and diamantine tip; other variant shells exist for specialised purposes, such as penetrating armour plating or conducting silent assassinations.

Boltgun

The boltgun (also referred to as a "bolter") is a powerful weapon that confers much prestige to the wielder. Many are heirloom weapons, taken in ritual duels or armed conflicts and passed down through generations of owners. This version of bolter is designed to be used by an un-augmented human, although the recoil is still murderous.





Bolt Pistol

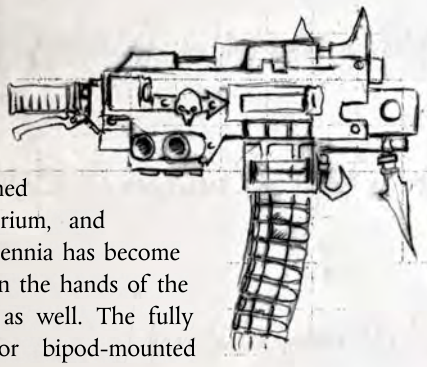
Large and intimidating pistols capable of decapitating a man with a single shot, bolt pistols are rare outside of elite Imperial forces, officer cadres of armies, or especially skilled or resourceful Heretics. This version of the bolt pistol is designed to be used by an un-augmented human, giving the lucky bearer superior firepower at his hip.

Combi-Bolter



The combi-bolter is a precursor to the Imperial storm bolter—essentially two bolters welded together with a linked firing mechanism. The result is an unwieldy and heavy weapon, but one that possesses an impressive rate of fire.

Heavy Bolter



The heavy bolter is a common weapon amongst the armed forces of the Imperium, and over the last ten millennia has become a common weapon in the hands of the Imperium's enemies as well. The fully automatic, tripod or bipod-mounted weapon spews out a torrent of mass-reactive bolts with a much higher calibre than regular boltgun ammo. The armour-penetrating explosive rounds can destroy vehicles and make mincemeat out of even heavy infantry.

Legion Bolt Weapons

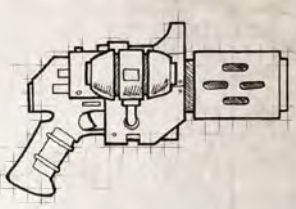
Just as the Adeptus Astartes of the Imperium wield weapons beyond the heft of mere mortals, so to do the Traitor Legions arm themselves with larger bolt weapons that fire far more powerful rounds. Those of the Chaos Space Marines are often true relic weapons, possibly even left over from the Heresy itself, and thus are possessed by ancient and murderous machine spirits. The blood-thirst of their weapons is kept in check only by the formidable will of their fearsome masters.

The Legion boltgun, bolt pistol, combi-bolter, and heavy bolter share many design similarities with their non-Legion variations, the most sizeable difference being the more powerful rounds and more reliable mechanisms. They also count as Legion weapons, and thus follow the rules concerning non-Legionaires wielding Traitor Legion weapons.

Melta Weapons

Melta weapons emit devastatingly intense but short-ranged blasts of heat which can melt through almost any material. Also known as cookers or melters, most types of melta induce highly-pressurised gases from an ammunition canister into an unstable sub-molecular state and direct the resulting energies down the barrel. Melta usage is accompanied by a distinctive hissing sound as the beam boils away the water in the air, then a roaring blast as the beam reduces the target to charred scraps or molten slag, hardly recognisable as remains.

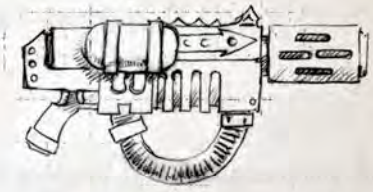
Inferno Pistol



Rare and often exquisitely-crafted pistols capable of cutting through almost any armour, inferno pistols are relics that are almost impossible for anyone within or outside the Imperium to reproduce. Arcane processes compact melta technology down to the size of a pistol, and although they have extremely limited clips, a single shot at close range can slag a Terminator in his tracks or burn through the hull armour on a Land Raider tank.

Meltagun

The most common melta weapons are meltaguns, given to infantry as a portable, close-ranged anti-tank weapon. They are equally effective against the heaviest infantry, as they can cook through any armour.



Multi-melta



The multi-melta is a much larger version of the meltagun that can project its devastating fire over longer distances. This makes it even more effective against enemy tanks, though the sheer size of the weapon often requires it to be mounted on a vehicle as well. Only a Chaos Space Marine has the brute strength to carry such a weapon into battle, and some do just that.

Legion Meltagun

The Chaos Space Marines make good use of meltaguns, though they favour a larger version that can put more heat on a target, dealing greater Damage. Legion meltaguns count as Legion weapons, and thus follow the rules concerning non-Legionaires wielding Traitor Legion weapons.

Plasma Weapons

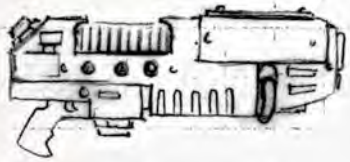
Plasma weapons work using hydrogen fuel suspended in a photonic state in either fuel flasks or backpack containers. As the fuel is fed into the miniature fusion core inside the weapon, the hydrogen energises into a plasma state, held in the core by powerful magnetic confinement fields. When fired, the fields dilate open and the plasma is ejected via a linear magnetic accelerator in a bolt of superheated matter akin to a solar flare in appearance and temperature.

Plasma Cannon



Fearsome to behold, the plasma cannon drenches an area in molten plasma when it fires—burning, melting, and dissolving almost everything it touches. These weapons are so large they require a backpack fuel canister, though only a Space Marine or their Traitor brethren would think about carrying such a weapon into battle. More often, plasma cannons are mounted on vehicles, which can carry the specialised cooling equipment needed to prevent catastrophic overheating. Like many plasma weapons, plasma cannons can be fired on maximal mode, in which case they become truly devastating.

Plasma Gun



The plasma gun is potent weapon capable of punching a glowing hole in almost any target, though they are dangerous to use and difficult to find. The ravaging energies held in check by the magnetic containment fields sometimes burst from their restraints and pour out of the weapon's specialised cooling vents. Though the weapon itself remains intact, the unfortunate wielding it often does not prove as lucky. However, plasma weapons are so rare and valued it's often better that the weapon survive than the wielder.

Plasma Pistol



The plasma pistol packs most of the power of a plasma gun into a smaller package, making it an extremely deadly sidearm. Often a sign of status and carried by powerful warlords or high-ranking commanders, few weapons of its size pack as much firepower.

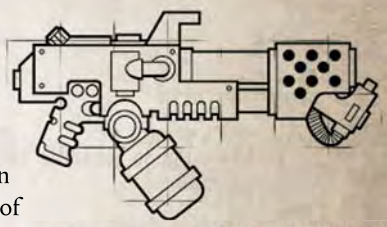
Legion Plasma Weapons

The Traitor Legions have long made use of larger plasma weapons containing hydrogen fuel in a higher quantum state, making them both more powerful and more dangerous to wield. The Legion plasma gun and Legion plasma pistol are simply more potent versions of the plasma gun and plasma pistol, thus both count as Legion weapons, and follow the rules concerning non-Legionnaires wielding Traitor Legion weapons.

Flame Weapons

Flame weapons project fire upon their foes and use a fuel generically referred to as promethium, though it can also be a home-made concoction or other chemical brew depending on the local technology level. Most are a mono-propellant fuel which ignites via a smaller pilot flame at the tip of the barrel, though some flamers use binary hypergolic fuels. Once produced, the intense jet that spurts from the barrel creates a torrent of liquid fire, which spreads out in an inferno that burns even underwater, leaving enemies hard pressed to put out the fire.

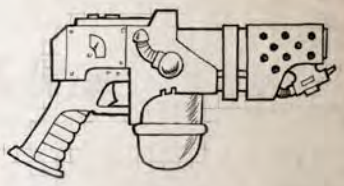
Flamer



The flamer or flame gun comes in a wide variety of designs and patterns, but all are ideal for flushing out enemies in cover and putting groups of foes to the torch. The two most common variants of flamers either have a detachable fuel canister under the barrel or a hose connecting to a backpack canister.

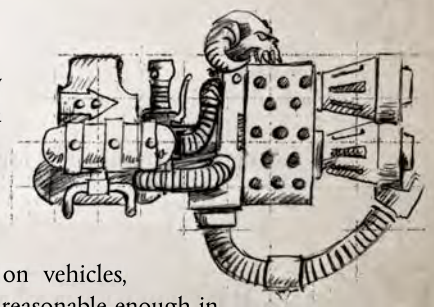
A flamer can have a backpack fuel canister instead of a detachable clip. The backpack canister must be worn on the user's back, doubles the flamer's clip size, and adds 10 kg to the weight. The Availability remains unchanged.

Hand Flamer



Flame pistols or hand flamers are miniaturized versions of the larger flamer. Small enough to carry in one hand, these weapons are favoured by assault troops which can fire them once or twice as they close with the enemy.

Heavy Flamer



The heavy flamer is a larger and more cumbersome version of the flamer. It is often mounted on vehicles, though it is just reasonable enough in size to be carried by an individual trooper. Any lack of accuracy is more than offset by the wide gout of burning promethium that is almost impossible to dodge. Heavy flamers must be fuelled by backpack fuel canisters—the weight is already part of the weapon profile, but again, the canister must be worn on the user's back.

Legion Flame Weapons

The Traitor Legions are able to carry larger-bore flame weapons with greater fuel reserves. These weapons can spit out more promethium at a time, and thus deal more Damage.

Table 5-4: Grenades and Missiles

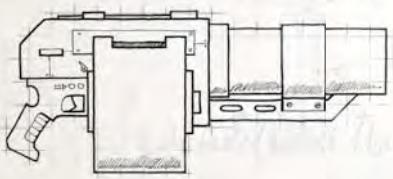
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Blight Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	2d10 E	0	1	—	Toxic (2), Blast (6)	.5kg	Scarce
Frag Missile	—	—	—	2d10+2 X	2	—	—	Blast (5), Devastating (1)	.5kg	Average
Krak Missile	—	—	—	3d10+8 X	8	—	—	Concussive (3), Proven (2)	.5kg	Scarce
Frag Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	2d10 X	0	1	—	Blast (3)	.5kg	Common
Krak Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	2d10+4 X	6	1	—	Concussive (0)	.5kg	Rare
Hallucinogen Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Hallucinogenic (2), Blast (6)	.5kg	Scarce
Haywire Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Haywire (3)	.5kg	Rare
Legion Frag Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	2d10+2 X	0	1	—	Blast (4)	.7kg	Scarce
Legion Krak Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	2d10+8 X	6	1	—	—	.7kg	Rare
Photon Flash	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Blast (10)	.5kg	Rare
Smoke Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Smoke	.5kg	Common
Stun Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Blast (3), Concussive (2)	.5kg	Common
Web Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Snare (2)	.5kg	Rare

Both the Legion Flamer and the Legion Heavy Flamer count as Legion weapons, and follow the rules concerning non-Legionnaires wielding Traitor Legion weapons.

LAUNCHERS

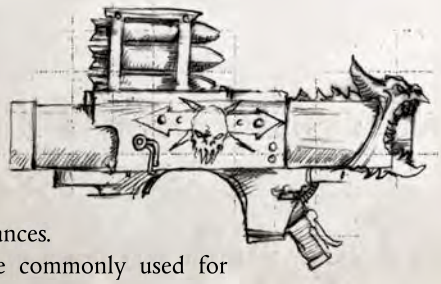
True weapons of war, Launchers send missiles spiralling into enemies or hurl grenades much farther than a man could throw. Launchers differ from most weapons in that their effectiveness is wholly determined by the ammunition they use.

Grenade Launcher



Simple in design, grenade launchers are usually little more than smoothbore launchers, often fed from revolving chambers. Their primary usefulness is the ability to fire a wide variety of grenades, from krak and frag grenades to more specialised loads such as smoke, gas, and flares.

Missile Launcher



Similar to the grenade launcher, missile launchers fire self-propelled and self-guided missiles over long distances. Missile launchers are commonly used for anti-vehicle duties, but can be loaded with a wide variety of warheads. This makes them extremely versatile heavy weapons. Missile launchers can be shoulder-mounted and fired by one person, but usually require teams of two—the second acting as a loader and spotter.

GRENADES AND MISSILES

Grenades and missiles are munitions which can either be hurled by hand (in the case of grenades) or launched from a grenade or missile launcher. Both have a variety of effects and can stun, entangle or kill targets depending on the munitions used. Unless otherwise noted, any grenade may either be thrown by hand or fired from a grenade launcher. Missiles may only be fired from a missile launcher. When buying grenades, due to their relative cheapness and disposable nature, a successful Acquisition Test provides 10 grenades of the type being purchased.

Blight Grenade

Most commonly created using radioactive or biological waste, a Blight Grenade is a crude but deadly grenade which can poison an area and everything within it. These weapons are particularly popular amongst the followers of Nurgle, who delight in the use of poisons and contamination.

These weapons ignore armour unless it is environmentally sealed. When used the cloud of noxious fumes and poisons remains in effect for 1d10 Rounds. Anyone entering the blast area takes 1d10 Energy damage with the Toxic Quality. Again, this damage ignores armour unless environmentally sealed.



Frag

Fragmentation or Frag grenades and missiles are filled with shot, heavy wire, or metallic shards to create high-velocity shrapnel fragments when they explode, making them deadly when used against infantry.

Hallucinogen
Hallucinogen grenades induce a variety of short-lived psychological states and delusions in its targets literally making them go mad.

Haywire
Designed to take out tech and vehicles, a well-placed haywire grenade shuts down electrical systems within its field of effect.

Krak
Krak grenades and missiles use concentrated explosives to punch holes in armoured targets such as vehicles or bunkers. The shaped warheads makes them impractical for anti-personnel work.

Photon Flash
Photon Flash grenades release a brilliant burst of light that blinds opponents. Everyone in the blast radius must make an **Ordinary (+10) Agility Test** or be blinded for a number of rounds equal to their Degrees of Failure.

Smoke
Smoke grenades release a dense cloud that obscures vision.

Stun
Stun Grenades use a combination of a loud explosive and flash of light to momentarily incapacitate targets.

Web
Web grenades release a mass of tangled goo that envelops targets, literally stopping them in their tracks.

Legion Grenades
A Traitor Legionnaire can carry larger and more potent explosive grenades than a regular human, though many of them utilise regular grenades when supplies are hard to find. Legion Frag and Krak grenades follow all the rules for Legion weapons.

EXOTIC WEAPONS
Some weapons defy classification or are rare enough to only be found occasionally in the hands of warriors within the Vortex. This includes rare alien weaponry, ancient pieces of archeotech, or unique devices created by a Vortex Daemon Prince or warlord for his own personal use. Each is not only rare but also difficult to operate. Such weapons require specialised training, and each must be mastered separately with a different Talent.

Noise Marine Blastmaster
The Noise Marines of Slaanesh are warriors whose senses are jaded and dulled by centuries of excess. Only the most extreme sensations stir them, hence their use of sonic weaponry. The louder and more discordant the noise, the more extreme the emotional reaction provoked, and sonic weapons use sonic waves to produce deafeningly loud, psycho-sonically and pyrotechnically explosive results.

The Blastmaster is a heavy weapon that focuses a throbbing bass note into an explosive crescendo that can burst eyeballs and rupture organs. The punishing sonic waves can even rupture and shatter armour, making the Blastmaster an effective anti-tank weapon.

A Blastmaster can be fired on two settings. If on the "Explosive Crescendo" setting, it counts as a Heavy Weapon in all respects. If on the "Hail of Noise" setting, it fires off short, discordant riffs instead of a single pulse, allowing it to be fired on the move. Then it counts as a Basic Weapon in all respects.



Throwing Grenades
Throwing grenades requires no special training or Talents and is resolved using a Ballistic Skill Test including any modifiers (such as range). On a miss, the thrown grenade goes in a random direction—see the scatter diagram on page 244.

Fumbling Grenades and Duds
Whenever a jam results from throwing a grenade or firing a grenade launcher or similar weapon (see Weapon Jams, page 245), something unfortunate has happened. Roll 1d10. On any result other than 10, the explosive is simply a dud and nothing happens. On a 10, the explosive detonates immediately with the effect centred on the attacker. If the explosive was fired from a launcher, it detonates in the barrel, having its normal effect as well as destroying the weapon.

Noise Marine Doom Siren
The Doom Siren is an arrangement of pipes and tubes that connects to a helmet and magnifies the bearer's war cries and howls of ecstatic pleasure into a manic shockwave of destruction.



The Doom Siren mounts onto the bearer's shoulders, leaving both of the bearer's hands free to carry other weapons or perform other tasks.

Noise Marine Sonic Blaster
A Sonic Blaster unleashes waves of crippling and distorted harmonics to rip targets apart. Many Noise Marines equipped with such weapons use them with manic intensity. They run up and down through the various chords and sliding scales so that these devices perpetually howl with a mixture of agony and ecstasy.

When fired on Full Auto, the Sonic Blaster counts as a Heavy Weapon in all respects (including needing to brace).

Table 5–5: Exotic Ranged Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt.	Availability
Noise Marine Blastmaster (Explosive Crescendo)	Heavy	250m	S/–/–	3d10+10	8	—	—	Blast (4), Devastating (2)	41kg	Near Unique
Noise Marine Blastmaster (Hail of Noise)	Basic	150m	S/2/–	1d10+12E	6	—	—	Devastating (1), Storm	41kg	Near Unique
Noise Marine Doom Siren	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+12 E	9	—	—	Spray	18kg	Extremely Rare
Noise Marines Sonic Blaster	Basic	100m	S/2/4	1d10+9 E	4	—	—	—	21kg	Extremely Rare
Razor Web	Basic	50m	S/–/–	1d10+2 R	3	6	2 Full	Blast (2), Crippling (3), Snare (1)	12kg	Extremely Rare
Reaver Long Rifle	Basic	150m	S/–/–	1d10+4 R	2	4	Full	Accurate, Felling (3), Toxic (0)	3kg	Scarce
Splinter Rifle	Basic	100m	S/3/5	1d10+2 R	3	200	2 Full	Toxic (4)	2.5kg	Extremely Rare
Spore Caster	Basic	10m	S/–/–	—	0	1	2 Full	Devastating (5), Hallucinogenic (3), Spray	5kg	Extremely Rare
Static Repeater	Basic	80m	S/4/–	1d10+1 E	0	4	Full	Haywire (1), Storm	3kg	Near Unique
Warp Cannon	Heavy	100m	S/–/–	3d10 E	0	8	4 Full	Blast (3), Recharge, Warp Weapon	30kg	Near Unique



Using Sonic Weaponry

Sonic Weapons do not require ammunition as other weapons do. Instead they are designed to amplify and focus noise into a weapon. They often do require some sort of power source. Most Sonic Weapons, specifically those designed for the Noise Marines of Slaanesh, are designed to be hooked into the bearer's power armour, drawing directly from the armour's power supply.

To use a Sonic Weapon, the bearer must be wearing a set of power armour (Legion, Human, or light). The Sonic Weapon has cables and leads that are attached directly into the armour's power supply. As long as the armour has power, the Sonic Weapon functions, and does not require reloading or ammunition.

Razor Web

Using the same tech as a conventional Imperial webber or web gun, the razor web fires a solid spray of web material, mixed with long barbed mono-filament strands. Not only does this entangle and entrap the victim, it also rends and tears him with a multitude of vicious barbs as he tries to free himself.

Reaver Long Rifle

A common sniper rifle variant within the Vortex, the reaver long rifle fires heavy glass and iron darts loaded with virulent toxins guided by a coherent sighting beam. This makes it accurate and extremely deadly, but difficult to use with precision.

Splinter Rifle

A weapon used by the decadent and cruel Dark Eldar, the splinter rifle fires crystalline ammunition shattered and propelled by a powerful magno-electric pulse. These shards are covered in incredibly virulent and fast-acting toxins, the better to ensure a painful death.

Spore Caster

These strange and completely unpleasant weapons hail from certain worlds in the Screaming Vortex with especially bizarre biologies. Spores harvested from the bulbous fungi of these worlds can be especially virulent, and are loaded into high-pressure air launchers. The resulting noxious mash can incapacitate a target with psychopathic hallucinations, making the weapon especially popular with certain Slaanesh worshippers.

Static Repeater

This ancient weapon of unknown origin has been recovered from the surface of the planet Kurse, deep within the Vortex. The static repeater fires bolts of electromagnetic energy from a revolving chamber, bursts that disrupt and destroy technological artefacts, or at the very least cause them to malfunction spectacularly. Such devices are particularly sought after by the Magos of Forge Polix, who have no means to search Kurse on their own, as their rivals on Forge Castir dominate nearby space.

Warp-render Cannon

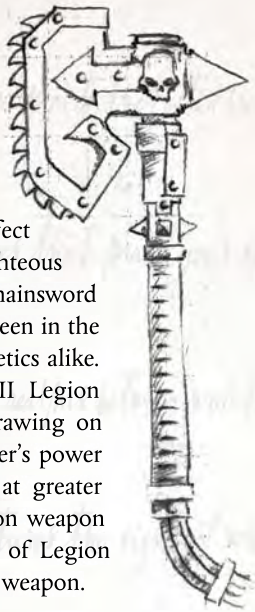
Forge Castir has long experimented with weaponry and items powered through warp-tainted means, and this brutal device is one of their triumphs. This weapon is massive, built around a black and unstable core that can destabilise reality, opening brief portals to the Warp within a target, to spectacular effect.

Chain Weapons

Chain weapons have been a popular choice for warriors from the days of the Great Betrayal. Brutal and merciless, they were the perfect assault weapon for the Crusades. All use rapidly whirling chains of serrated metallic teeth that run across the weapon's striking edge, ensuring that even a glancing blow can rip apart armour and reduce flesh to gory ruin. Few users bother to disguise their loud engine noise, preferring the recognisable sound and sight of the weapon to instil greater terror in their foes.

To use chain weapons the Heretic must have the Weapon Training (Chain) Talent.

Chainaxe (Legion and Human Variant)



Combining the heft and fury of an axe with the terrible rending teeth of a chain weapon, the chainaxe is a favourite implement of many warriors. Heavy and brutal, they are the perfect messenger to inflict their user's righteous hate on their foes. The Roth-pattern chainsword is one of the more common variants seen in the sector, used by both loyalists and heretics alike. The ancient Deimos-pattern Mark II Legion chainaxe is much more powerful, drawing on the additional support from the wearer's power armour to drive the heavier chains at greater speeds. The Legion variant is a Legion weapon and follows all the rules for the use of Legion weapons. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Chain Dagger

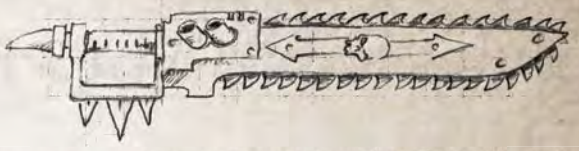
Small in size, these miniature weapons can easily be brought into play from hidden holsters. Their increased deadliness can literally give an edge in knife fights. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Chain Halberd

A rare variation more widely seen in underhive forces within the Calixis Sector, chain halberds feature a long staff with a double-sided chainblade operating only towards the end of the weapon. They can be used as either a slashing or thrusting weapon, with the lighter weight from the smaller chainblade allowing for more flexible defensive manoeuvres, the thrusting attacks preferred in the crowded and claustrophobic underhive passages. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Chainsword (Legion and Human Variant)

As the name suggests, chainswords are roughly sword-like in shape with a large flat housing containing the chain. Chainsword variants often used by Chaos followers often have the entire blade chassis opened to expose the chained teeth. This makes the weapon more dangerous to both user and victim, but for a truly dedicated warrior this is of little concern. Like all their weapons, the chainswords used by Legion forces are longer and heavier, fit only to be carried by these mightiest of warriors. The Legion variant is a Legion weapon and follows all the rules for the use of Legion weapons. This is a one-handed melee weapon.



Phobos-pattern Chain Greatsword

This huge two-handed weapon can run almost two meters in length, with a long grip and weighted pommel to allow for some semblance of balance in use. The chained teeth are exposed along the entire length, so that the user can swing it in both directions in combat more like a flail than a real sword. Originally used in Forge Polix as a tool for ripping apart large bulkheads and armour during construction, the tool was repurposed by warriors of Khorne who found it brutally effective on the battlefield. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Xerxes Arm-Mounted Chainblade

This ancient weapon design uses a chainblade affixed to an integrated forearm covering an armoured gauntlet and power supply. Heavy and solid, it can tear open bunker doors or armoured chestplates while keeping the hand free to use a ranged weapon. This bulkier assembly bears resemblance to a crude chainfist, scrapped together by Heretek denizens within the Vortex. This is a one-handed melee weapon. Note: this weapon can be used while gripping another weapon in the same hand, however the wielder must choose the weapon with which he is attacking on a given turn.

Power Weapons

Power weapons come in a variety of designs each featuring a disruptive energy field comprised of crackling discharge that runs along the weapon's striking edge. This field impacts with terrible force, enough to slice apart most armour and rend limbs with horrific ease. This means the actual design of power weapons does not always matter—some, such as the power sword, utilise regular weapon designs, while others (such as the Crosius of the Adeptus Astartes Chaplains) appear to be harmless badges of office until the power field activates. Most can operate effectively as a regular Primary weapon when not powered (essential if their power is exhausted or disabled in the midst of combat).

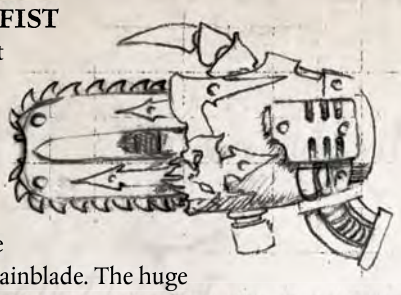
To use power weapons, a character must have the Weapon Training (Power) Talent. If not activated, the weapon counts as a Primary weapon of the most appropriate type.

Fallen Magos Power Axe

Those Tech-priests who renounce the False Omnissiah sometimes keep their Cult Mechanicus Power Axes, but transform them into even more powerful weapons as a sign of their proper allegiance. These axes count as containing a combi-tool. The user may also attempt to corrupt Imperial technologies and their Machine Spirits while interfacing with them on a successful **Very Hard (–30) Tech-Use Test**,

rendering them damaged and unusable except by fellow Hereteks. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

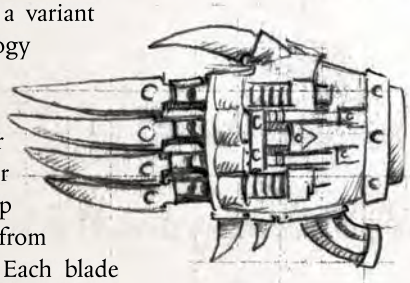
Legion Chainfist



Perhaps the most devastating melee weapon commonly used by a Legion, a chainfist combines the disruptive energies of a power fist with the rending strength of a chainblade. The huge gauntlet resembles a power fist with a short reinforced double chainblade extending from the glove. Too heavy even for Chaos Space Marines in power armour, only those wearing Terminator suits can operate such a weapon properly. Chainfists were originally designed for use in boarding actions, where they would be used to tear open voidcraft bulkheads or breach even the redoubtable of barricades. They have since been repurposed by chaos terminators, who use them to great effect against even the most heavily armoured adversaries. Each gauntlet is as bulky as a power fist and cannot be used for any but the most basic manipulative tasks (for example, one could not use a weapon or pick up a quill, but may be able to manipulate a heavy iron girder).

This is a Legion weapon, and follows all the rules for Legion weapons. It may only be used in Terminator armour. This weapon double's the user's Strength Bonus. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Lightning Claw



Lightning Claws are a variant of power fist technology most commonly used with Terminator armour, trading sheer crushing power for several razor-sharp blades that extend from the armoured glove. Each blade would be lethal even without their power field enclosure, but when activated, the claws can slice apart almost any material with ease. Early models of Terminator Armour featured a single claw, allowing the warrior to carry a ranged weapon in the other gauntlet. Later configurations would specialise in dual claw-usage, but many still prefer the single claw for greater tactical flexibility. This variant of Lightning Claw requires power armour to use, but can be used by Legionnaires or humans.

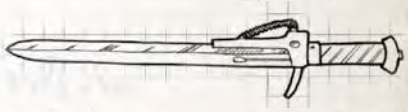
Lightning Claws do an additional point of Damage per Degree of Success on the Attack roll. When used as a pair, they instead do 2 additional points of Damage per Degree of Success. Each is very bulky, and cannot be used for any but the most basic manipulative tasks (for example, one could not use a weapon or pick up a quill, but may be able to manipulate a heavy iron girder). This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Power Axe (Legion and Human variant)

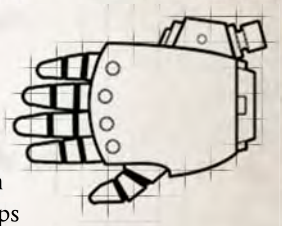
These weapons are a favourite of many elite assault squads, for while somewhat unwieldy to use they can hack apart most foes in a single strike. Even when not wreathed in their glowing power-field energies they make for a formidable weapon. Legion variants are as intimidating and deadly as their wielders, capable of slicing a foe in two with ease. The Legion variant is a Legion weapon and follows all the rules for the use of Legion weapons. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Power Blade

Easily concealable, these small knives are invaluable for infiltration missions where more obvious weapons would be impractical. Commonly they take the form of thin daggers and rely on the strength of their power field to maintain the integrity of the blade when used to strike. This is a one-handed melee weapon.



Power Fist



Power fists are the ultimate in crushing force, amplifying the user's strength many times such that little can withstand their might. When activated, energy fields surround the oversized gauntlet and when the wearer punches or grips a target it results in showers of flesh and bone, ruptured armour, and holed hull plating. They are a standard weapon for Terminator-suited Chaos Space Marines, but others adopt backpack mounted power supplies to wear them in lesser armours. This weapon doubles the user's Strength Bonus. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Power Mace

Developed early in the Crusades, the power mace was a simple adoption of the newly rediscovered power field technologies. Each is a relatively straightforward construction with a thumb activator in the haft to energise the weapon; once powered the mace can strike blows of impressive force. Many variants such as the Deimos-pattern Virge weapon included symmetrical flanges of spiked adamantium to better penetrate armour. This is a one-handed melee weapon. However, when used with two hands, it gains the Concussive (0) Quality.

Table 5-6: Melee Weapons

Chain Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Arm-mounted Chainblade	Melee	—	1d10+2 R	3	Tearing	5 kg	Rare
Chain Dagger	Melee	—	1d10+1 R	2	Tearing	2 kg	Rare
Chain Greatsword	Melee	—	2d10+2 R	3	Tearing, Unbalanced	16 kg	Scarce
Chainaxe (human)	Melee	—	1d10+4 R	2	Tearing	13 kg	Average
Chainaxe (Legion)	Melee	—	1d10+5 R	3	Tearing	14 kg	Extremely Rare
Chainsword (human)	Melee	—	1d10+2 R	2	Tearing, Balanced	6 kg	Average
Chainsword (Legion)	Melee	—	1d10+3 R	3	Tearing, Balanced	10 kg	Extremely Rare
Chain Halberd	Melee	—	1d10+3 R	3	Tearing	8 kg	Rare

Power Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Fallen Magos Power Axe	Melee	—	2d10+4 E	6	Power Field, Unbalanced	9 kg	Extremely Rare
Legion Chainfist	Melee	—	2d10† E	10	Power Field, Tearing, Unwieldy	48 kg	Extremely Rare
Lightning Claw	Melee	—	1d10+6 E	8	Power Field, Proven (4), Special	30 kg	Extremely Rare
Power Axe (human)	Melee	—	1d10+7 E	6	Power Field, Unbalanced	8 kg	Extremely Rare
Power Axe (Legion)	Melee	—	1d10+8 E	7	Power Field, Unbalanced	10 kg	Extremely Rare
Power Blade	Melee	—	1d10+3 E	5	Power Field	3 kg	Very Rare
Power Fist (human)†	Melee	—	2d10 E	8	Power Field, Unwieldy	13 kg	Very Rare
Power Fist (Legion)†	Melee	—	2d10 E	9	Power Field, Unwieldy	25 kg	Extremely Rare
Power Mace ††	Melee	—	1d10+6 E	4	Power Field	8 kg	Extremely Rare
Power Scythe	Melee	—	1d10+7 E	7	Power Field, Unbalanced	9 kg	Very Rare
Power Sword (human)	Melee	—	1d10+5 E	5	Power Field, Balanced	3 kg	Very Rare
Power Sword (Legion)	Melee	—	1d10+6 E	6	Power Field, Balanced	5 kg	Extremely Rare

Exotic Melee Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Axon Razor	Melee	—	1d5 R	4	Crippling (5), Razor Sharp,	1 kg	Near Unique
Bone Maul	Melee	—	2d10 I	2	Unbalanced, Tainted	7 kg	Near Unique
Fang Dagger	Melee	—	1d10 R	2	Warp Weapon	2 kg	Near Unique
Flensing Blade	Melee	—	1d10+5 R	3	Razor Sharp, Balanced	2 kg	Extremely Rare
Q'sal Glass Dagger	Melee	—	1d10+2 R	6	Toxic (1)	1 kg	Extremely Rare
Hellblade†††	Melee	—	1d10+6 R	10	Balanced, Power Field, Special	3 kg	Unique
Frozen Shard	Melee	—	1d10+6 R	8	Balanced, Felling (3)	2 kg	Extremely Rare
Velklir Rapier	Melee	—	1d10+7 E	7	Balanced, Flexible, Razor Sharp, Special	1 kg	Unique
Plague Sword	Melee	—	1d10+3 R	4	Balanced, Toxic (2) ††††	2 kg	Extremely Rare
Searing Blade	Melee	—	1d10+6 E	7	Balanced	3 kg	Near Unique

Force Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Force Rod	Melee	—	1d5 I	0	Force	1 kg	Near Unique
Force Scythe	Melee	—	1d10+4 R	3	Unbalanced, Force	10 kg	Near Unique
Force Staff	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Balanced, Force	4 kg	Near Unique
Force Sword	Melee	—	1d10+2 R	2	Balanced, Force	8 kg	Near Unique
Staff of Change	Melee	—	1d10+5 I	5	Force, Warp Weapon	4 kg	Unique

Shock Weapons

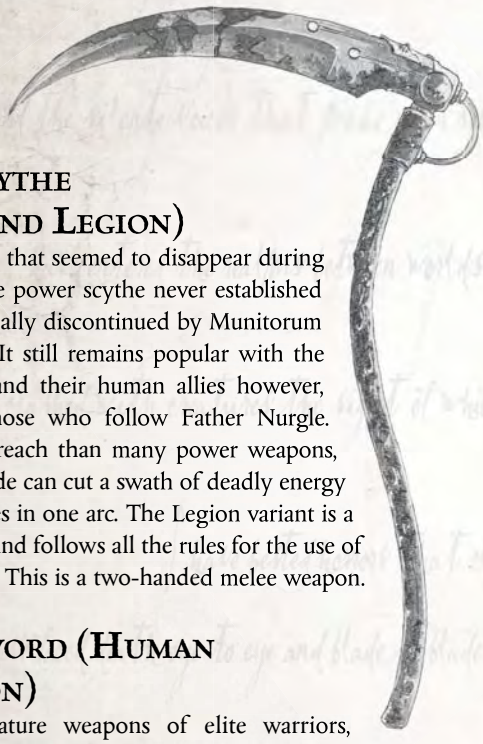
Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Shock Maul	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Shocking	3 kg	Scarce
Electro-Flail	Melee	—	1d10+2 I	0	Flexible Shocking	5 kg	Rare
Neural Whip	Melee	3m	1d10+1 R	0	Flexible, Shocking	4 kg	Rare

† Chainfists and Power Fists double the user's Strength Bonus when adding to Melee Damage.
†† Concussive (0) when used with two hands.
††† Hellblades add an additional 2 Damage for every death it inflicted in that combat.
†††† Plague Weapons inflict 1d10 Wounds and 1d5 Toughness Damage when the Toxic Test is failed.

Table 5-6: Melee Weapons (Cont)

Primary Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Armoured Gauntlet	Melee	—	1d5+1 I	0	Primitive (6)	1 kg	Average
Legion Combat Knife	Melee	—	1d10 R	2		2 kg	Very Rare
Axe	Melee	—	1d10+1 R	0	Unwieldy	4 kg	Average
Great Weapon	Melee	—	2d10	0	Unbalanced	7 kg	Scarce
Hammer	Melee	—	1d10+1 I	0	Primitive (9), Unbalanced	4 kg	Common
Improvised	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Primitive (7), Unbalanced	Varies	Plentiful
Knife	Melee/ Thrown	—	1d5 R	0		1 kg	Plentiful
Scythe	Melee	—	1d10+4 R	3	Unbalanced, Felling (1)	6 kg	Common
Shield	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Primitive (6), Defensive	3 kg	Common
Spear	Melee	—	1d10 R	0	Primitive (8),	3 kg	Common
Staff	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Primitive (7), Balanced	3 kg	Plentiful
Sword	Melee	—	1d10 R	0	Balanced	3 kg	Common



Power Scythe (Human and Legion)

An early weapon that seemed to disappear during the Crusades, the power scythe never established itself and was finally discontinued by Munitorum decree in M34. It still remains popular with the eternal legions and their human allies however, especially for those who follow Father Nurgle. It has a farther reach than many power weapons, and the long blade can cut a swath of deadly energy across several foes in one arc. The Legion variant is a Legion weapon and follows all the rules for the use of Legion weapons. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Power Sword (Human and Legion)

Often the signature weapons of elite warriors, power swords are perhaps the most dangerous of melee weapons. In the hands of skilled swordsman, they combine a deadly offence with a nearly impenetrable defence. They come in a variety of shapes and styles, and entire schools are devoted to their mastery. The Legion variant is a Legion weapon and follows all the rules for the use of Legion weapons. This is a one-handed melee weapon.



EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

Even amongst the wide range of melee weapons available to Heretics fighting the Long War, there are those weapons that stand out from the rest due to their unusual nature, singular construction, or rare availability. Exotic weapons are those outside the normal bounds of access and to carry one marks the Heretic as a personage of note even amongst the remarkable comrades in his fight. They also require special training to be used properly, so to use exotic weapons you must have the Weapon Training (Exotic) Talent for that specific weapon.

Axon Razor

Believed to originate from archeotech scavenged from the charred ruins of Kurse, this particularly sadistic relic has seen increased reproduction in the Screaming Vortex in recent centuries. Each appears to be a paper thin blade upwards of half a meter in length and seemingly too fragile to be of any harm. It slices through flesh with little or no actual tissue damage, instead tearing into nerve ganglions and causing agonising pain that can drop a foe as if they had been disembowelled. Those who delight more in suffering than in the actual kill find it a wonderful weapon, as it can be used over and over without permanent damage to the subject.

Axon Razors never cause any actual Damage but always count as doing Damage when they hit for the purposes of the weapon's Crippling Quality. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Bone Maul

A common weapon of the feral tribes on The Writhing World, each dull grey bone maul is covered with runic etchings from the world's biomancers and stains of ancient flesh and blood. Each is also much heavier and stronger than any normal bone. With each bloody impact the maul becomes cleaner and brighter than when the battle began, until its foe is dead and it appears as gleaming ivory. After the battle it slowly tarnishes again, until it returns to its original dull grey. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Fang Dagger

Taken from some great unknown beast in the Vortex, these daggers are roughly 30cm in length with a slight arc to their smooth dark grey shape. The tips of these daggers are near adamantium sharp, making many wonder what predator they may have come from, and what prey they must have hunted

that demanded such powerful teeth. Some have noted that each is also imbued with faint Warp energies and at microscopic examination the tip appears indistinct as if it were blurred, making them wonder if they even came from this reality. These rare weapons are often possessed as signs of power and coveted by the warlords and Chaos pirates that prowl the Vortex.

Fang Daggers inflict one Corruption Point on the wielder and target each time they inflict Zealous Hatred. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Flensing Blade

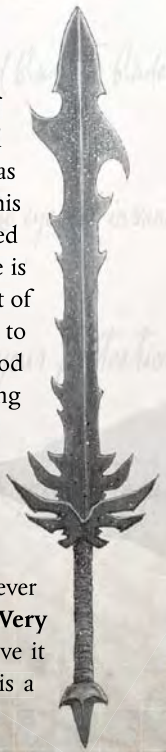
The refined version of the more common meatworking knife, a flensing blade is designed for actual combat where its wide and thin surface can slide to the bone, removing flesh in long strips of raw meat. Most are perhaps a meter long and made of special ceramics that can hold the edge despite their thinness. All are a product of underground cults of carnivores commonly found amongst the crews of vessels that frequent the Screaming Vortex. These sadistic cults take special delight in making their foes part of their ceremonial feasts. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Q'sal Glass Dagger

Glass daggers are crystalline blades, beloved by the sorceror-technocrats of Q'sal and a common tool of assassination among their glass-towered cities. The entire dagger is made from a single crystal length, including the hilt which is wrapped in leather or plastic so it can be gripped effectively. Despite the name each is almost indestructible until they pierce flesh and are bathed in blood, at which point a small part sheers away and shatters into tiny fragments. The resulting wound becomes badly infected as the pieces rot into black ooze, necrotizing the surrounding tissue. Many Death Cultists literally kill for the chance to use such a blade, as the lingering death that results if not quickly treated gains them much status with their peers. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Hellblade

The feared Bloodletters, warrior-daemons of Khorne, wield these powerful Warp-forged blades. On very rare occasions a mortal has bested one of these Daemons and claimed this potent weapon. A jagged metal sword, blackened but edged with glowing red embers, a hellblade is the physical manifestation of the sheer bloodlust of the user. Few mortals have the strength of will to wield such a weapon. However, the more blood it sheds the more powerful it becomes, glowing with ever-stronger crimson hues as blood flows.



Hellblades inflict more Damage with every kill, and add +2 to their base Damage for every death caused during a combat (this resets after every combat encounter). The sword is infested with a malign spirit, however, and never wishes to be put away. The user must take a **Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test** in order to remove it from his hand or place it in a scabbard. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Non-Chaos Space Marines using Legion Weapons

The weapons and armour of the Legion were fashioned for gods, not men, and anyone other than a Chaos Space Marine will have trouble using them. Legion Power Armour can only be used by Chaos Space Marines as other characters, even those of suitable stature, lack the implants and training to use it. Legion Weapons can be used by other characters but count as a Class larger than normal (Pistols count as Basic, Basic as Heavy, Heavy weapons remain Heavy). Legion melee weapons requiring one hand to use would require two hands for a non-Legion warrior to use, while two-handed weapons could not be used at all.

In addition, non-Legion characters using Legion weapons incur a –20 to all attack rolls in addition to any penalties for being untrained. This penalty is negated only if a character has Unnatural Strength (+4) or higher.

Frozen Shard

Legend says that these blades are tiny shards of the Frozen Heart of the Screaming Vortex, gifted by the Runic Powers themselves to their champion in ancient millennia. Passed from owner to owner over many centuries, the clean clear blades are impossible to disguise as no paint or masking can adhere to their frictionless surface. Their points slide across armour to find the smallest joint or defect, and can pierce through flesh in a whisper-like strike that is almost unrealized until arterial blood shoots out as the blade is withdrawn. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Velklir Rapier

Many of the sorcerers of Velklir on Q'sal are accompanied by elite bodyguards as they make their deals with warbands and pirates. These bodyguards are expertly trained and carry a unique pattern of sword that sends chills down the spine of even the most seasoned slaver. Any Heretic who fancies himself a swordsman would sell his soul for this weapon, or preferably someone else's. Impossibly thin, the blade seems more a ray of light than metal and shimmers with an iridescent milky-white colour. It is also seemingly unbreakable no matter what massive weapons it might act to parry. In combat the blade twists and bends towards its target as if it was guiding its tip itself, when removed blood drips off as if the weapon was disdainful of such an easy kill. Users often feel overly tired after these combats, but this seems a very small price to pay.

After the rapier is used to kill an opponent, the user must take a **Challenging (-0) Toughness Test** or suffer one level of Fatigue as the rapier literally drains them of their life force, the better to make further kills. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Plague Weapons

Each of these corroded iron blades is coated with rust and numerous diseases, the better to spread Father Nurgle's blessing across the galaxy. Only those pure in his sight such as his Plague Marines are granted such a weapon, and any

lesser being suffering even the slightest wound is gifted with one of his innumerable creations such as Nurgle's Rot or the Weeping Pox. The Toxic Quality on this weapon inflicts 1d5 Toughness Damage in addition to 1d10 damage. This is a one-handed melee weapon.



Searing Blade

A golden sickle-shaped sword somewhat akin to an elongated axe in appearance, this blade uses only its single wide cutting edge in combat. Its singular appearance makes it a favoured weapon for many of the cults that reside in the Screaming Vortex, where they claim inspiration from mighty empires of ages before the False Emperor took power. The metal of archeotech or xenos origin is what makes it truly unique though, for each bloody slice instantly ignites with intense heat strong enough to cook flesh into blackened ruin. The blade itself remains cool however, merely awaiting the opportunity to burn its next victim. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Force Weapons

Force Weapons are unique in that they will only function to their full potential when wielded by a true psyker, whose mental energies turn these ordinary looking weapons into devices of terrifying power. They can take the forms of almost any normal hand weapon such as a sword, axe, halberd, or hammer, though they may appear unusual with crystalline lattices running through the blade or elaborate runes along the hilt. Some date back to the Great Crusades, where psykers became too valuable a weapon to be ignored—no matter the misguided dictates of the False Emperor. To use Force Weapons, the character must have the Weapon Training (Primary) Talent.

Force Staff

Like force rods, a force staff can pass as a harmless item that would not cause alarm, appearing to the naked eye to be a simple walking stick. More ostentatious psykers, however, carry staffs with elaborate ornamentation (typically depicting their patron god), the better to announce their presence. A force staff also act as a Psy-Focus (see page 186) as long as it is gripped with one hand (though like all staves, two hands are needed to properly use it as a weapon). This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Force Sword

Appearing to be a simple but unusually coloured or etched blade, a force sword allows a well-trained psyker to fully channel his mental and martial abilities in combat. It is the mark of a truly powerful psyker to carry one and use it skillfully. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Staff of Change

Filled with rainbows of arcane energies that seem eager to leave their glassy prison, these crystalline staffs appear too fragile to be used as a weapon. It strikes with an impact that seems many times its weight however, as if drawing force from outside itself and its user. This weapon inflicts 1 random mutation on the target if the attack generates Zealous Hatred (if this would kill the target, he is reduced to a gibbering, harmless, and disgusting spawn), but if the psyker fails the Focus Power test, then the wielder gains 1 Corruption Point instead. This weapon requires two hands to use.

Shock Weapons

Shock weapons are designed to augment their attacks by administering a powerful incapacitating electrical charge to the target. This allows them to be used in a nonlethal capacity, though they are still capable of cutting flesh and breaking bone. To use shock weapons, characters must have the Melee Weapon Training (Shock) Talent.

Shock Maul

Commonly use by lackey forces such as Adeptus Arbites and Enforcer squads on countless worlds to enforce the will of their False Emperor, shock mauls are club-like weapons. They have an adjustable charge setting, which can range from a mild but painful strike to a heavy stun, enough to drop a charging rioter in their tracks. This is a one-handed melee weapon.



Electro-Flail

These whips are lined with electrical conduit lines, so that the already-painful lash from the short metal tendrils inflicts unbearable electrical agony as well. Most are attached to short handle grips, or even act as actual replacements for entire arms. This is a two-handed melee weapon.



Neural Whip

Neural whips are more often used to kill opponents via painful lacerations. Each resembles a normal whip, but with thicker, metallic lines and larger heavy-impact weights at the end of each cord. Even without the charge, lashes can rip open flesh or tear apart primitive armours. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Primary Weapons

Weapons such as spears, axes, and knives were perhaps the first tools invented and still remain brutally effective at dispatching denizens of the corpse-god. Even the most technologically adept warrior will still carry a simple but effective weapon like these with them at all times, as will any prudent individual no matter how "civilised" their planet may claim to be. For those acting to

discard the corrupt Imperium, weapons like these are essential, for there can be no telling when the next power recharge might come or mechanical repair facility may be found.

To use primary weapons effectively the user must have the Weapon Training (Primary) Talent. Certain Primary weapons may also be thrown as a ranged weapon, in which case they are labelled as Thrown weapons.

Armoured Gauntlet

These simple metallic gloves are worn over the hand to allow a degree of protection and to add to combat damage. Sometimes they include small spikes or cutting edges to further increase the blood shed by each blow. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Legion Combat Knife

A formidable weapon and one that only the great warriors of the Chaos Space Marines would call a mere knife—if it were not for the too-wide grip, humans could use these impressive blades as swords. Tough and thick, these knives are designed for in-close fighting and stabbing and are often the last weapon a Space Marine will use when all else has run out of ammunition or power. This is a Legion weapon and follows all the rules for the use of Legion weapons. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Axe

Many a Heretic will swear their axe is their most prized weapon, valuing its simplicity and brutality. With each strike they can fully express their hatred of the Imperium, with each cleave they chop away at the hypocrisy and failure maintained by the its deluded followers. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Great Weapon

The catchall term for the larger and heavier version of most melee weapons, these require two hands unless the user has exceptional strength. Be they giant axes, massive hammers, or even huge swords, they all are exceptionally brutal weapons that inflict serious damage with each strike. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Hammer

Hammers are larger versions of the regular hand tool, using a massive weighted end to inflict a harder and deadlier blow. As they can be carried openly by workers, they are doubly useful for Heretics plotting raids against Imperial installations. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Improvised

As the name suggests, improvised weapons are any heavily weighted object a Heretic finds themselves using when there is nothing else available. They can range from broken table legs to heavy rocks to severed limbs; using the butt end of a ranged weapon such as an autogun will also count as an improvised weapon. This also includes drive chains, lengths of wire used as a garrotte, and in general any item not designed to be a weapon but used in combat. This is a one-handed melee weapon (although at the GM's discretion some may require two hands instead).

Knife

Few warriors use a knife as their primary weapon, but fewer indeed would ever be caught without at least one of them as a backup. Most hive gangers wouldn't feel appropriately dressed without at least three on their person, and those who seek discretion prefer at least one secreted away should problems ensue. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Scythe

A common fieldworker's tool, scythes are also deadly in combat where their sharp blades and long reach make them effective in mowing flesh as well as grain. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Shield

Many warriors carry some kind of protective device in one hand when going into melee combat, ranging from primitive rectangles of reinforced wood to sophisticated sheets of plasteel. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Spear

A common hunting tool, spears are also common in feral and medieval worlds where they can be used to impale charging fighters or their steeds. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Staff

A basic length of wood or plasteel, a staff is a common enough sight that few would be concerned upon seeing one being carried. In the hands of a master however, they can easily dispatch even armoured warriors in seconds. This is a two-handed melee weapon.

Sword

The generic name for the basic hand-blade, the sword is perhaps the most widely used melee weapon. Relatively easy to manufacture, even untrained fighters can carry one into combat with some measure of success. Swords can range from mass-produced blades of cheap metal to lightweight plasteel, with elaborate versions made from Tyranid talons or petrified bones. However, as with most melee weapons, it is more the skill of the user than the actual weapon that determines the winner of the conflict. This is a one-handed melee weapon.

Modifying Weapons

In addition to varying levels of Craftsmanship, weapons can be modified in a variety of ways. Guns can have upgrades such as sights and variant types of ammo while blades can have monofilament edges or enhanced power fields. Alternately weapons can also be downgraded (making

them cheaper and easier to find and buy), reducing their effectiveness. All of these factors can significantly change a weapon's properties, such as the Damage it inflicts, its range or any additional effects it has on its target.

WEAPON UPGRADES

Weapon upgrades improve either a ranged or melee weapon in some way, but also make it more expensive by decreasing its Availability. Every upgrade a weapon has decreases its Availability by one step to a maximum of Unique. If a character is upgrading a weapon he already possesses then he must make an Acquisition Test for his weapon's current Availability. Upgrades need to either be applied by characters with the Tech Skill or by NPCs trained in its use.

Each upgrade can only be used with certain types of weapons as detailed on **Table 5–7: Weapon Upgrades**. There is no limit to the number of upgrades a weapon can have, though weapons cannot have conflicting upgrades (i.e., upgrades that would cancel each other out or make no sense, such as taking both Belt Feed and Extended Magazine) or multiples of the same upgrade or same type of upgrade (a gun can only have one kind of sight, for instance).

Example

Example: Nick wants his character to upgrade his shotgun with an Extended Magazine so that it holds more shells. A shotgun has an Availability of Common and so he must make an Acquisition Test against this Availability (with any modifiers for the weapon's Craftsmanship) to buy the upgrade. If successful, his newly-modified shotgun changes its Availability to Average (one step more difficult and expensive to acquire). Alternatively, if he wanted to buy a shotgun that already has an Extended Magazine he would make an Acquisition Test against an Availability of Average (one step more difficult and expensive to acquire than a normal, unmodified shotgun).

Belt Feed

The weapons conventional magazine has been removed and replaced with a belt feed attachment and open bolt mechanism. This allows both increased rate of fire and clip size but makes it more prone to jamming. The weapon adds 2 to its full auto RoF (though only if it has a full auto RoF of at least 1 before being upgraded) and increases its clip size to 100 unless it is already higher. It gains the Unreliable Special Quality and loses the Reliable Special Quality if it has it.

Censer Attachment

When added to any pole weapon such as a staff or flail, these censers can be lit to emit perfumed smoke, diseased vapours, euphoric substances, or other gases as desired. The effects of this depend on the gas or vapour used.

Duellist's Grip

True artists of the blade favour this stylised hilt grip, allowing them to wield their weapon with greater flexibility in swordplay. Such a grip adds +5 to Parry Tests made with this weapon.

Table 5-7: Weapon Upgrades

Name	Can Upgrade
Belt Feed	Any Bolt or Solid Projectile weapon
Censer Attachment	Any Two-handed Melee weapon
Duellist's Grip	Any Balanced Melee weapon
Extended Magazine	Any Pistol or Basic weapon
Fire Selector	Any Weapon with a clip size of 2+ and the ability to take multiple ammo types.
Mag-lock Holster/ Scabbard	Any Pistol, Basic, Thrown, or Melee weapon
Melee Attachment	Any Basic weapon
Mono	Any Melee weapon
Photo Sight	Any Ranged weapon
Pistol Grip	Any Basic weapon
Recoil Baffling	Any weapon with a Full Auto rate of fire
Red Dot Laser Sight	Any Pistol or Basic weapon
Silencer	Any Pistol or Basic weapon
Spread Limiter	Any weapon with a Semi-or Full Auto rate of fire, or the Scatter Quality
Storm Field	Any weapon with the Power Field Quality
Suspensor	Any Heavy weapon
Telescopic Sight	Any ranged weapon
Venom Drip	Any bladed Primary or Chain weapon

Extended Magazine

The addition of a drum magazine or extended sickle clips gives the weapon more rounds before it needs to be reloaded. This upgrade increases the weapon's clip size by 25 percent, rounding up.

Fire Selector

For weapons that can use differing ammunition rounds, a shot selector can be fitted for ease of switching from one type to another. A weapon with a fire selector can have up to three different clips added to it (this is included as part of the upgrade). At the start of the shooter's Turn, he can use his fire selector as a Free Action to choose which clip he wishes to draw ammo from that round.

Mag-lock Holster/Scabbard

A magnetic plate attached to the character's body allows him to holster a melee or ranged weapon simply by sticking it to the outside of his armour. The weapon seems to hover over his body and is much faster to ready than normal. The character may ready a weapon with this upgrade as a Free Action.

Melee Attachment

Bayonets, chain blades, and other long-bladed combat attachments can be fitted to most ranged weapons, making them more useful in assaults. A weapon with a melee attachment counts as a spear in close combat.

Mono
Mono weapons have specially-fashioned blades with superfine edges, which can easily cut through armour and never lose their edge. Mono weapons lose the Primitive Quality and add a +2 bonus to their Penetration. The Mono upgrade can be applied to a power weapon, but it has no effect whilst the power field is active. If the power field is ever lost or deactivated, the Mono upgrade's bonuses will then apply.

The Mono upgrade may be applied to any melee weapon, but when applied to close combat weapons that do not use an edge (e.g., hammers, mauls, etc.), it should be described in a different way. GMs are encouraged to come up with interesting definitions for non-edged weapons with the Mono upgrade. For example, a hammer with the Mono upgrade could be defined as having a pneumoshock enhancement. The in-game effects remain the same.

Photo Sight
This is a weapon sight that enhances ambient light levels, improving the user's vision and ability to see in the dark. A character using a Photo Sight suffers no penalties due to darkness.

Pistol Grip
A fairly ubiquitous upgrade, this simply modifies a weapon to add an extra (or "pistol") grip to a Basic ranged weapon. This allows the weapon to be wielded in one hand without suffering the usual –20 penalty. However, when wielding a Basic weapon with a pistol grip one-handed, the weapon's range is halved. Note that the weapon can still be wielded two-handed without the penalty. Also, note that this does not turn Basic Weapons into Pistol weapons, meaning they cannot be used in conjunction with the Gunfighter Talent, for example.

The GM has final say over what weapons can benefit from a pistol grip. However, certain Basic weapons that are either particularly heavy (such as melta weapons and plasma weapons) or particularly unwieldy (such as a long-las or sniper rifle) cannot be wielded one-handed even with a pistol grip, though they certainly may have one for aesthetic purposes (many weapons do in fact possess "pistol" grips, but cannot be wielded one-handed).

Recoil Baffling
Though the use of cunning compensators and counter-velocity breaks, the weapon is much easier to handle when fired on full auto. The wielder suffers no penalty to hit when moving and firing the weapon on full auto.

Red-Dot Laser Sight
This is a laser sight that grants a +10 bonus to Ballistic Skill Tests when the weapon is fired on single shot. The only drawback of the Red-Dot sight is there is a chance for foes to 'spot the dot' allowing them sense an attack before it happens. A **Hard (–20) Perception Test** allows the target to notice the dot and possibly take preventive action.

Silencer
Silencers lower the noise (and flash to a degree) from a weapon's discharge, preventing detection of the shot. Awareness Tests to hear shots made with a silenced weapon suffer an additional –20 penalty and can only be attempted at half the normal distance for detecting gunshots.

Spread Limiter
An extended barrel and chamber compressors mean that each round in a burst or shatter shot retains a closer grouping. When determining hit locations for Semi and Full Auto bursts using **Table 7-2: Multiple Hits** (see page 240), each location is struck twice before moving on to the next location indicated. Weapons with the Scatter Special Quality with this upgrade suffer no reduction to their Damage for firing at Long range, but gain no bonus to hit at any range.

Storm Field
A power weapon can be fitted with an overcharged generator to increase the output of its power field, though it is not without risk as the cracking halo of energy can sometime be as dangerous to the user as his foes. The weapon increases its Damage and Penetration by 2 and any weapon without the Power Field, Force, Natural Weapon, or Warp Weapon Quality or Trait which parries or is parried by a weapon with a Storm Field is automatically destroyed. If the wielder rolls an unmodified 91-00 when making attacks with the weapon he has been touched by the field and takes one hit from the weapon that cannot be evaded (do not add the bearer's Strength Bonus to this damage roll).

Suspensors
These anti-grav plates and studs attach to a weapon or piece of equipment, making the use of heavy or cumbersome devices much easier by offsetting some of their weight. Suspensors reduce the weight of a weapon by one-half. When firing a weapon with suspensors, the operator always counts as braced.

Telescopic Sight
Telescopic sights magnify the target's image, and are especially useful for long-range shots that need to hit a very specific target location. A weapon with a telescopic sight ignores penalties for Long and Extreme range as long as the shooter takes a Full Action to Aim.

Venom Drip
Many servants of the Dark Gods, especially followers of Father Nurgle, are eager to share their latest toxic creations with their foes. A Venom Drip will continually secrete the stored liquids across the blade, ensuring that it will seep into any cut and bring even more suffering to the wretched lackeys of the corpse-god. This upgrade gives the weapon the Toxic (0) Quality, though this may change depending on the specific venom used.

WEAPON DOWNGRADES
Weapon downgrades limit a weapon in some way by reducing its effectiveness. These kinds of weapons are common in the Vortex where heretics and warlords must scavenge arms for their soldiers from among the flotsam and jetsam of the Imperium and the broken wargear of their foes. When buying

a weapon a character can choose to buy it with a downgrade. A weapon with a downgrade increases its Availability by one step, making it cheaper and easier to find. Downgrades cannot be applied to a weapon a character already owns, and downgrades cannot be removed or reversed once applied to a weapon. Weapons may not have more than one downgrade. Each downgrade can only be used with certain types of weapons as detailed on **Table 5-8: Weapon Downgrades**. Downgraded weapons may incorporate upgrades as normal using the rules above provided they do not contradict or cancel the effects of the downgrade in any way.

Example

Example: Looking for a cheap weapon, Nick buys a shotgun for his character with the Homemade Rounds downgrade. This reduces the shotgun's Availability from Common to Plentiful.

Ammo Glutton

Due to poor design or an erratic rate of fire, the weapon uses up more ammunition than it should without any noticeable improvement in performance. For every shot the weapon fires it uses up two rounds of ammo.

Cursed Metal

Crafted from a strange or alien material which hums and glows, the weapon can be dangerous to the user if held for too long. At the end of every combat in which the weapon is used (even if only once) the wielder must make a Toughness Test or suffer 1 Wound without reduction for armour or Toughness.

Feral Manufacture

The weapon has been created by primitives on a feral world; cobbled together from half-understood plans using crude local components. The weapon gains the Primitive (7) Quality.

Fiendish Recoil

Almost completely devoid of any kind of recoil compensation, the weapon bucks and leaps about in the wielder's hands when he fires it at its full rate of fire. When firing the weapon on Full Auto the wielder suffers a –10 to hit or a –20 if he moves in the same round.

Homemade Rounds

Re-chambered by some forgotten armourer, the weapon has been designed to be used with an outdated or hard-to-find ammo. This means the majority of the rounds its uses will be crafted from crude modifications or poor replacements. The weapon reduces the Damage it deals by –1 and gains the Unreliable Quality, or loses the Reliable Quality instead if it possesses that Quality. Characters can, of course, try to find the specific ammo for their unusual weapon using the rules below for Special Ammunition, counting a clip for the weapon as Average Availability, which will negate the effects of the downgrade when used.

Table 5-8: Weapon Downgrades

Name	Can Upgrade
Ammo Glutton	Any weapon
Cursed Metal	Any weapon
Feral Manufacture	Any ranged weapon
Fiendish Recoil	Any weapon with a Full Auto rate of fire
Homemade Rounds	Any Bolt or Solid Projectile weapon
Noxious Discharge	Any ranged weapon
Overloaded Frame	Any Basic weapon
Scavenged	Any weapon
Single Shot	Any weapon with a Full or Semi Auto rate of fire
Slow Recharge	Any Las or Melta weapon

Noxious Discharge

When the weapon is fired, it expels waste from vents along its barrel, creating a noxious cloud around the firer. Each time the wielder fires the weapon he creates a smoke cloud one metre in diameter (see page 243 for rules on Smoke) that surrounds him. The cloud remains until the end of his following turn.

Overloaded Frame

Excessively bulky and robust in construction, the weapon is difficult to move and must be set up before it can be fired. The weapon must be braced to fire in the same way as a Heavy Weapon (see page 147), though the firer need not use a bipod, tripod or similar mounting.

Scavenged

In the Vortex, bone-pickers constantly scavenge the endless fields of war for weapons, hammering them back into shape so they may be sold back to warlords to spread further carnage. A scavenged weapon is made of mismatched parts or has been poorly repaired. Scavenged ranged weapons gain the Unreliable Special Quality **and** lose the Reliable Quality if they have it. Scavenged melee weapons become Unbalanced and lose the Balanced Quality if they have it. In addition, if a Scavenged weapon ever rolls an unmodified 00 on an attack roll it is destroyed, as it simply falls apart.

Single Shot

Quite often the easiest way to make a weapon easier and cheaper to manufacture is to simplify its design. Like the well known Las-Lock, a single shot weapon is a version capable of only firing a single round at a time, sacrificing rapid fire and reload speed for ease of use. A single shot weapon reduces its RoF to S/-/- and its clip size to 1. As some compensation it gains the Reliable Special Quality if it does not have it.

Slow Recharge

Poor power supply or damaged conduits means the weapon fires slower than it normally would as it needs time between shots to build back up its power. The weapon gains the Recharge Special Quality.

Ammunition

Ammunition is as vital to a gun as air is to a human, and without it a gun is little more than another useless lump of tech. Ammo falls into two types: Standard and Special. Standard ammo is readily available and can be found almost anywhere, while Special ammo is far harder to come by, but can dramatically transform the performance of a weapon.

Rule of Three

Keeping track of exactly how much ammunition a character is carrying at any one time can be more bookkeeping than players or GMs prefer. If the GM chooses he can use the Rule of Three. This simply states that each character carries three reloads of standard ammunition for each of their weapons at the start of the game session.

However, in **Black Crusade**, ammunition and equipment are not readily available or easily found. Keeping track of ammunition can add a feeling of realism and interest to a game, and thus is the default playstyle.

STANDARD AMMUNITION

Unless the GM specifically decides otherwise, characters always have access to standard ammunition for their weapons. This covers the basic kinds of bullets, bolts, slugs, arrows, shot, promethium, charge packs or needles the weapon requires to fire using its profile detailed on **Table 5-3: Ranged Weapons**. In the case of weapons which can fire multiple types of standard ammunition, such as missile launchers, characters can be assumed to carry both kinds of ammo. Character's need not make Acquisition Tests to buy this basic ammo and as long as they could reasonably lay their hands on it (i.e. they can scavenge it from the dead or trade for it) then they should be allowed to carry as much as they like. When determining encumbrance, each clip of ammo is 10% of the weapon's weight.

SPECIAL AMMUNITION

A variety of specialised ammo exists for most weapons, from armour piercing man-stoppers to explosive arrows for primitive bows. These specialised types of ammo can alter the Damage, Penetration or Special qualities of a weapon. Special ammo can only be used with certain weapons as detailed on **Table 5-9: Special Ammunition**. Only one kind of ammunition can be used at a time, and their effects can't be combined. A clip of special ammo weights as much as a standard clip for its weapon type (i.e. 10% the weapon weight). Special Ammunition is Acquired by the clip, not the round.

Amputator Shells

Explosive and filled with micro-shrapnel, these bullets are designed to shear flesh and shatter bone, shredding bodies and blowing limbs away. Amputator Shells add +2 to Damage rolls. When used in any weapon with the Scatter Quality, the weapon loses the Scatter Quality.

Table 5-9: Special Ammunition

Name	Can Upgrade	Availability
Amputator Shells	Hand Cannons, Shotguns (any type), Stub Revolvers, Stub Automatics	Scarce
Barbed Rounds	Any Solid Projectile weapon	Scarce
Dumdum Bullets	Any Solid Projectile weapon	Average
Explosive Arrows	Bow, Crossbow	Scarce
Hellfire Bolt Rounds	Any Bolt weapon	Very Rare
High-grade Promethium	Any Flame weapon	Scarce
Hot-shot Charge Pack	Any Las Pistol or Basic weapon	Average
Inferno Shells	Any Solid Projectile Pistol or Basic weapon	Scarce
Man-Stopper Bullets	Any Solid Projectile Pistol or Basic weapon	Scarce
Metal Storm Rounds	Any Bolt weapon	Very Rare
Purified Plasma	Any Plasma weapon	Very Rare
Stalker Bolt Rounds	Any Bolt weapon	Very Rare
Tox Rounds	Any Solid Projectile Pistol or Basic weapon	Average

Barbed Rounds

Barbed rounds are hollow shells or glass-tipped bullets filled with hundreds of tiny razor filaments which scatter within the wound and continue to rip and cut the target until removed. The weapon gains the Crippling (1) Quality.

Dumdum Bullets

These heavy blunt bullets cause maximum tissue damage and can tear apart soft targets, though they are less effective against armour. Dumdum bullets add +2 to the weapon's Damage, but reduce a weapon's Pen by 2 to a minimum of 0. If the weapon has Pen 0, these bullets add +1 to the weapon's Damage instead.

Explosive Arrows

Explosive arrows and quarrels might be crudely tipped with shells or treated with a variety of unstable alchemical compounds. Attacks with these arrows suffer a –10 to hit, Damage becomes Explosive (X), and the weapon loses the Primitive Quality.

Hellfire Bolt Rounds

Originally created by the Imperium to combat the Tyranid threat, these bolt rounds contain a powerful mutagenic acid that eats through living material with horrific speed. Several Chaos Space Marine warbands in the Vortex have taken these rounds from the bodies of Loyalist Space Marines and used them in turn. The weapon gains the Toxic (3) Quality and inflicts Zealous Hatred on a 9 or 10 when used against living targets. When used with a Heavy Bolter, these rounds change the weapon's RoF to S/–/– and add the Blast (3) Quality. When used against a Horde, each Hit from a Hellfire Round deals 1 additional damage to the Horde's Magnitude.

High-Grade Promethium
Most promethium is poorly refined or has already been through the engines of a shuttle or generator before it finds its way into the canisters of a flamer; high-grade promethium, as the name suggests, is of a much better quality and allows a flamer to fire further with a cleaner jet. The weapon adds 20 to its range.

Hot-shot Charge Pack
This is a powerful charge pack for a las weapon, favoured by snipers. Each hot-shot charge pack is good for only a single shot. A weapon using a hot-shot charge adds 3 to its Damage, gains the Tearing Special Quality, and gains a Penetration of 4. However, the weapon loses its Reliable Quality, and its clip is reduced to one.

Inferno Shells
These shells contain a volatile, clinging gel that ignites on contact with the target. The weapon gains the Flame Special Quality.

Man-Stopper Bullets
These densely tipped bullets are designed to punch through armour. A weapon using man-stopper bullets changes its Penetration to 3.

Metal Storm Bolt Rounds
Tipped with proximity detonators, these rounds explode after leaving the barrel, spraying out cones of shrapnel and making them ideal for dealing with massed foes or those behind cover. The weapon's Damage and Penetration are both reduced by 2 but it gains the Blast (2) Quality.

Purified Plasma
With experience and the right equipment an armourer can create a more pure mix of plasma for plasma weapons mitigating their reputation of constantly overheating. The weapon loses the Overheating Special Quality.

Stalker Bolt Rounds
Designed for sniping these rounds make a bolt weapon almost completely silent as the round exits the weapon with only a hushed hiss. Awareness Tests to hear shots made with stalker rounds suffer an additional –30 penalty and can only be attempted within 30 metres of the firer. However, reduce this weapon's Damage by 2.

Tox Rounds
Tox rounds are either covered in biological contaminates or are radioactive and can cause excessive tissue damage if they find their way to flesh. The weapon gains the Toxic (2) Quality.



Armour

"Only a fool fights without armour. My hate keeps me strong, but my armour keeps me alive."

– Captain Berzias, Iron Warriors Commander

It is a true indication of Imperial hypocrisy that though the sheep prattle on about how their faith in their False Emperor is their best defence, almost all go into battle layered in as much armour as possible. A Heretic knows better; there may be gods watching and perhaps aiding him as it suits them, but it is his own responsibility to defend himself against a hostile galaxy. This may range from millennia-old suits of power armour that predate the Imperium itself to the latest protective energy fields stolen from assassinated planetary governors. Combat squads of course will wear military armour, whilst saboteurs or terrorists must rely on less obvious defensive gear such as simple padded cloaks.

Whatever the form, armour provides Armour Points (AP) to various locations on a character's body. In addition some kinds of armour have special properties noted in their description.

Armour Type: The type of armour it is.

Location(s) Covered: What locations the armour covers, a combination of arms, legs, body and head. Some armour covers the entire body and is noted as covering "All."

AP (Armour Points): How many armour points the armour provides for the locations covered.

Wt (Weight): Represents how much the weapon weighs in kilograms. For information on how much a character can carry refer to **Chapter 1: Playing the Game.**

Availability: This identifies the weapons availability (see Availability, page 306).

Mixing Armour
A character can mix pieces of armour, however their protective qualities do not "stack." In cases where an area which is covered by multiple pieces of armour is struck, the highest Armour Points are used. If a character wearing heavy leathers and xenos hides is hit in the body for example, the lower Armour Points of the Heavy Leathers (AP 2) are ignored, and the Armour Points of the xenos hides (6) are used for the purposes of calculating Damage.

Primitive Armour
While not always of primitive manufacture, these armours are all basic and suited more to the casual violence of a taproom brawl than defending against the high-powered weapons of the 41st millennia. Mostly made from animal hides or wrought metal, these generally provide only minimal protection in real combat situations.

Flak Armour
Designed to be easily mass produced for armed forces, flak armour contains layers of ablative and impact-absorbent material and is effective against most small arms and nearby explosions and resultant shrapnel. It counts as 1 AP higher against indirect hits from a weapon with the Blast Quality.

Table 5-10: Armour

Primitive Armour				
Name	**Locations Covered**	**AP**	**Wt**	**Availability**
Underhive Leathers	Arms, Body	1	5 kg	Common
Quilted Vest	Body	2	2 kg	Common
Beast Furs	Body	2	10.2 kg	Average
Chainmail Coat	Arms, Body, Legs	3	28 kg	Average
Flak Armour				
Name	**Locations Covered**	**AP**	**Wt**	**Availability**
Flak Helmet	Head	2	2 kg	Average
Flak Gauntlets	Arms	2	1 kg	Average
Light Flak Cloak	Arms, Body Legs	2	4 kg	Scarce
Flak Vest	Body	3	5 kg	Average
Flak Jacket	Arms, Body	3	5 kg	Average
Flak Cloak	Arms, Body, Legs	3	8 kg	Scarce
Guard Flak Armour	All	4	11 kg	Scarce
Mesh Armour				
Name	**Locations Covered**	**AP**	**Wt**	**Availability**
Mesh Cowl	Head	3	1 kg	Rare
Mesh Gloves	Arms	3	1 kg	Rare
Mesh Vest	Body	4	1 kg	Rare
Mesh Combat Cloak	Arms, Body, Legs	4	2 kg	Very Rare
Carapace Armour				
Name	**Locations Covered**	**AP**	**Wt**	**Availability**
Carapace Helm	Head	4	2 kg	Rare
Carapace Vembraces	Arms	5	2 kg	Rare
Carapace Greaves	Legs	5	3 kg	Rare
Light Carapace	Arms, Body, Legs	5	15 kg	Rare
Chest Carapace Plate	Body	6	7 kg	Rare
Heavy Carapace	All	6	17 kg	Very Rare
Power Armour				
Name	**Locations Covered**	**AP**	**Wt**	**Availability**
Light Power Armour	All	7	40 kg	Very Rare
Power Armour	All	8	65 kg	Extremely Rare
Legion Power Armour	All	8	100 kg	Extremely Rare
Terminator Armour	All	14	400 kg	Near Unique
Legion Terminator Armour	All	14	450 kg	Near Unique
Exotic Armour				
Name	**Locations Covered**	**AP**	**Wt**	**Availability**
Obsidian Armour†	Arms, Body, Legs	7	4 kg	Unique
Xenos Hides	Arms, Body	6	9.5 kg	Rare

† Obsidian Armour negates the Force Quality in any weapons used against its wearer

Mesh Armour

Mesh armour is made of thousands of linked thermoplas cells forming a fabric like material. Most are sophisticated and lightweight, able to withstand most impacts or heat energy by becoming momentarily ridged, spreading and dissipating the attack.

Carapace Armour

Made of layered plates of armaplas, ceramite or other highly durable material, carapace armour is effective but generally heavy to wear. The stiff plates cannot easily cover flexible areas such as joints but offer significantly better protection than lighter kinds of armour.

Power Armour (Legion and Human)

Power armour is the standard by which all forms of human protection are measured. The first forms of power armour were constructed in humanity's distant past. However, during the time of the Great Crusade, the Emperor ensured to equip his Legions with power armour. When the Warmaster Horus rebelled and half the Legions joined him, they took their power armour with them.

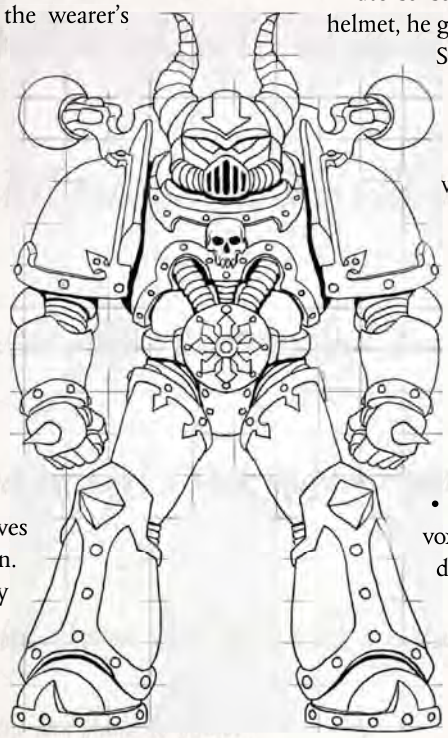
Power armour protects the wearer with massive ceramite plates, and offers not only superior defence, it also augments the user's strength from electrically motivated micro-fibre bundles running along the ceramite plates.

Some Traitor Legionnaires still have their original power armour suits, preserved through diligent effort or by the vagaries of the Warp. Others have newer marks of power armour—looted from fallen foes or because the Chaos Space Marine in question is a more recent convert to the Ruinous Powers. Some may even have mismatched suits, with pieces replaced piecemeal as they fail.

However, the Traitor Legionnaires are not the only ones who possess power armour. During the Great Crusade and in the 10,000 years since, suits of power armour have been constructed for human physiology. These "human" suits of power armour do not possess all of the complex sub-systems of the Legion power armour, but they make humans formidable warriors nonetheless.

All forms of power armour (Legion and Human) offer the following benefits and penalties:

- Light power armour adds +10 to the wearer's Strength Characteristic.
- Power armour adds +20 to the wearer's Strength characteristic and increases his size by one step (for example a human who is average size would become hulking). Note that Chaos Space Marines possess the Black Carapace, meaning they do not count their size as one step higher.
- Power armour also requires a constant power supply, which must be carried by the wearer (usually as a back pack). A standard power supply lasts for 24 hours before it needs to be replaced or recharged.
- While protective, armoured gloves are not ideal for fine manipulation. Delicate tasks suffer a –10 penalty unless using equipment designed to be used with power armour (generally, equipment designed to be used by Legions falls into this category).
- Legion power armour is even larger than regular power armour, and is designed specifically to be used with Legion weapons. Unless they have undergone certain modifications (at the very least the removal or modification of trigger guards!) non-Legion ranged weapons cannot be used with Legion power armour.



Power Armour Sub-systems

Power armour is more than simply protective gear. It is also defined by its numerous sub-systems, a host of devices that augment the wearer's combat prowess until he is the consummate warrior. Some of these systems are shared across human and Legion power armour, while others are limited to the Traitor Adeptus Astartes only.

However, the Disciples of Chaos do not have access to the resources of the Imperium, including its massive foundries, forges, manufactorums, and supply depots. Many suits of power armour were originally Imperial in manufacture, having fallen into the hands of renegades centuries or even millennia ago. Though they may have started with their systems entirely intact, years without proper maintenance and replacement parts means certain sub-systems may no longer be operable.

Whenever someone obtains (or begins play) with a suit of power armour, they may choose **three** sub-systems from the following lists as sub-systems that are still operational. Legion power armour and human power armour may select sub-systems from the general power armour sub-systems list. In addition, Legion power armour may select from the Legion power armour sub-systems list.

General Power Armour Sub-systems

The following sub-systems can be a part of any suit of power armour:

- Auto-senses: So long as the bearer is wearing his helmet, he gains the Dark Sight Trait and Heightened Senses (+10 to relevant Tests) for Sight and Sound. Input filtering provides immunity to photon flash grenades and stun grenades. (These benefits stack with any bonuses Chaos Space Marines may get from their organs and implants). In addition, the wearer gains the ability to make the Called Shot Action as a Half Action.
- Osmotic Gill Life Sustainer: With the helmet on, the armour is environmentally sealed and can maintain an adequate oxygen supply as long as the armour is powered.
- Vox Link: Serves as a standard vox and a channel for any more sophisticated data transmissions the suit or its wearer can access. If the suit has a working bio-monitor, it can transmit information through this link, permitting other power armour wearers to view an ally's vitals.
- Magnetised Boot Soles: These electromagnetically equipped boot soles allow the user to adhere to metallic surfaces such as exterior hull plating. When activated, reduce the wearer's Agility by half (this also affects Movement), but the wearer may otherwise move normally in low or zero-gravity areas provided there is a suitable surface to walk on.
- Sustainable Power Source: Whether a miniature stacked atomic pile or something more esoteric, the backpack power supply of this armour is effectively everlasting. This suit of armour does not need to be recharged or replenished to operate.

Legion Power Armour Sub-systems

The following sub-systems can be a part of Legion suits of power armour only:

- Enhanced Ceramite Plating: This armour has AP 10 on the Body, instead of AP 8.
- Bio-monitor and injectors: More extensive than stim-injectors, if the internal cogitator detects a problem with

Power Armour Customization

Unique is the suit of armour that survives a conflict unscathed. Through centuries of combat, hundreds of repairs, and the corruptive influence of the Warp, power armour changes over time. Each suit has its own quirks, presenting unique advantages to the Heretic who has grown accustomed to it. Roll 1d10 on the Armour Customization chart when a character first acquires a set of Power Armour or Terminator Armour. Additional customization is possible with GM permission, although doing so requires more than simply testing. For instance, a character who wishes to add "Scavenged Reconstruction" to his armour must slay several loyal Space Marines and take their armour to add to his own.

Roll	Customization Result
1	**Scavenged Reconstruction:** This suit of armour has been rebuilt from the armour of loyal Space Marines. It may have been repainted in the wearers chosen heraldry, but the icons and distinct markings are still visible, although probably defaced. When dealing with other Adeptus Astartes (both loyal and traitor) the character gains +10 to all Infamy, Intimidate or Command tests. Non-Traitor Legionnaires must re-roll this result.
2	**Power Supply Tampering:** The Power supply of the armour has been augmented to provide more power and to output that power into attached weaponry. A character can attach any Pistol or Basic Las weapon or any Pistol Melta, Plasma, or Flame weapon. That weapon no longer requires reloading, never running out of ammunition unless the power supply is disabled. Additionally, the weapon is connected by a thick cable and may not benefit from the Quick Draw Talent.
3	**Horns:** Large horns and a re-enforced neck guard allow the wearer to charge into battle, knocking weapons away as he rushes forward. The wearer may not be parried (but may still be dodged) when making a Charge.
4	**Spikes:** Dozens of finger sized spikes jut from the armour at strategic locations. Anyone attempting to make an unarmed attack against the wearer who fails their Weapon Skill test to hit suffers 1d5 damage per degree of failure.
5	**Careful Maintenance:** This armour has been carefully maintained by the user over its service. It looks almost new. Choose two additional sub-systems that the armour still has functioning (see page 175).
6	**Chain Bandoliers:** Several lengths of chain wrap around the body of the armour, providing additional protection from melee strikes. Any non-Power Field melee attack that hits the body must test to see if it is damaged as if being parried by a Power Weapon (see page 162).
7	**Chain Loinguard:** Worn around the waist, this protective garment helps defend the legs from attack, allowing the wearer to stay mobile. Any Critical Effect to the legs is reduced by 2.
8	**Devotional Iconography:** The armour is clearly dedicated to the service of one particular Chaos God. The wearer gains +10 to Command tests made against Daemons and targets devoted to that Chaos God. In addition, all Lesser Daemons of the chosen Chaos God not under someone else's command or control automatically treat the wearer as their commander. The character suffers a -10 to all Fellowship tests made against Deamons and targets devoted to a Chaos Gods opposed to the chosen Chaos God.
9	**Remnants of Mutation:** This armour was once worn by another who adapted it to function with a physical mutation. The armour remembers this mutation and longs for a bearer with similar physical properties. Select one of the following mutations: Animal Hybrid, Bestial, Winged, Boneless, Eye-Stalks, Centauroid, Flaming Skull, Grossly Fat, Slayer Limb, Additional Limb, Tail, Magnificent Horns, or Tentacle. When the wearer must next roll on Table 9-1: Gifts of the Gods he automatically gets this result instead.
10	**The Black Legion's Armour:** This armour once belonged to a member of the Black Legion, and it's dedication to the unaligned Chaos provides additional protection to its wearer. A Chaos Space Marine wearing this armour treats its armour rating as 1 higher on all locations if he is not aligned to a Chaos God. Non-Traitor Legionnaires must re-roll this result.

the wearer's vital signs, it can administer pain suppressors, combat stimms, and anti-toxins. This provides the following benefits: The wearer gains a +10 bonus to all tests to resist the Toxic Quality, toxins, or other poisons. The armour has 6 doses of pain suppressors, each of which allows the wearer to ignore Characteristic Damage or Characteristic penalties from Critical Effects for 1d10 rounds per dose. Finally, if the wearer is Stunned, the effect lasts for one round before being negated by the armour.

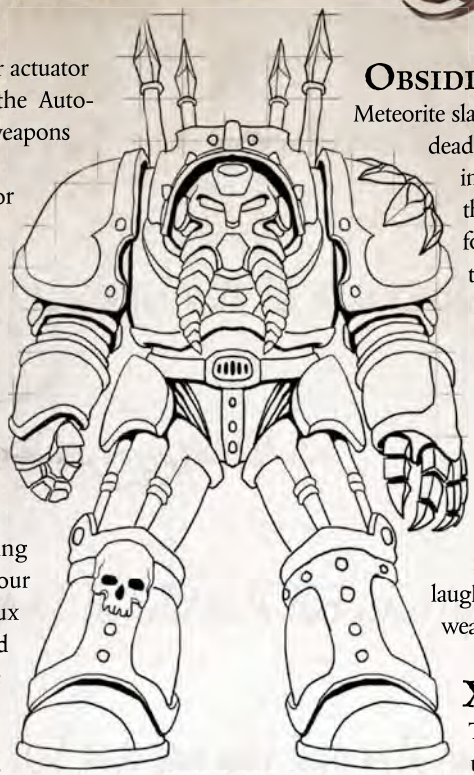
- Nutrient Recycling: Filters in the armour capture and purify body waste, re-constituting it into a nutrient solution that is intravenously returned to the body. This can sustain the wearer for some time, but not indefinitely. For every two weeks without any other source of nourishment, make a **Difficult (–10) Toughness Test** or suffer one level of Fatigue that cannot be eliminated until nourishment is consumed.
- Recoil Suppression: The wearer may fire Basic ranged weapons one-handed. Ranged weapons not classed as Pistols still may not be used in close combat.

Terminator Armour (Legion and Human)

Tactical Dreadnought or Terminator armour is the ultimate in personal armour. Originally designed for close quarters combat on board space hulks and other tight areas, Terminator armour is much more resilient than the more traditional power armour worn by Chaos Space Marines. A single suit of Terminator armour can turn an already formidable combatant into an unstoppable juggernauts of destruction.

Terminator armour, like power armour, can be designed for Humans and Chaos Space Marines. Like power armour, both variants have certain intrinsic benefits and penalties:

- Terminator armour has powerful micro-fibre bundles that grant +30 to the wearer's Strength characteristic.
- The massive bulk of the armour increases the wearer's size by one step (so for example a human who is average size would become hulking). In the case of Chaos Space Marines, the Black Carapace does not provide its standard bonus (Terminator armour is just too big!) so they also count as Hulking.



- Terminator armour possesses superior actuator and stabilisation systems, granting the Auto-Stabilised Trait and allowing Heavy weapons to be fired one-handed.
- Terminator armour possesses superior auto-senses. So long as the armour has a functioning Auto-senses sub-system, the wearer also counts as being equipped with an auspex.
- The loyalist Space Marine sets of Terminator armour include a Crux Terminatus, an icon that declares the wearer's worth and contains a powerful protective ward. The Traitor Legions disdain such traditions, as the very act of obtaining and wearing Terminator armour proves one's worth, and the Crux Terminatus is a symbol of the hated Imperium. Instead, they make use of the armour's inbuilt protection, laced with warp-spawned charms. Terminator armour counts as having a force field (see page 178) with a protection rating of 35. However, as this represents shots glancing off the armour's strongest surfaces, there is no chance for an overload.
- A character in Terminator armour cannot Run, suffers a –20 to Agility, and cannot Dodge (but may still Parry).
- Terminator armour is designed to work with a limited variety of weapons, some of which the Traitor Legionnaires can no longer obtain. Attempts have been made to adapt the armour to different weapons, with limited success. A Heretic in Terminator armour may only use the following weapons: Combi-bolter (this may also include any other variants of a combi-bolter, such as a bolter-melta or bolter-plasma combination), Chainfist, Lightning Claw, Power Axe, Power Fist, Power Mace, Power Scythe, Power Sword, Thunder Hammer, Reaper Autocannon, Heavy Flamer, Daemon Weapon, Force Weapon (any variant).
- Terminator armour also requires a constant power supply, which must be carried by the wearer (usually as a back pack). A standard power supply lasts for 24 hours before it needs to be replaced or recharged.
- Armoured gloves are not ideal for fine manipulation. Delicate tasks suffer a –10 penalty unless using equipment designed to be used with power armour (generally, equipment designed to be used by Legions falls into this category).

EXOTIC ARMOUR

The armours described above are the common forms seen throughout Imperial space on countless worlds and battlefields, but there are others that stand out no matter the setting. These are crafted by alien hands or arcane forges, and though they might seldom be found in the Imperium, in the renegade realms beyond Imperial control such items are easier to obtain.

Obsidian Armour

Meteorite slag, voidship hulls, and even the ruins from dead invaders are melted down and reforged into metallic sections then consecrated to the Dark Gods in daemonic ceremonies to form this rare armour. Performed deep in the bowels of Forge Castir, these rituals can last months as the members of the Dark Mechanicus work to forge this armour. As the baleful prayers take hold this foreign alloy becomes darker, eventually making even the blackest night glow softly around its edges even as it shames the shackles of gravity to become less heavy. As the metal spurns luminosity it also refuses the weapons of cowardly sorcerers, laughing along with its wearer as their force weapons are reduced to base metal or wood.

Xenos Hides

The galaxy teems with beasts as-yet uncatalogued by mankind, who have surrendered their shells, pelts, and skins to create crude but effective protections. Chitin harder than steel, fur that can rip flesh, serrated quills, tanned leathers that resist the sharpest blade—all these and more can be found in a limitless galaxy once the mind is open enough to search beyond the shackles of Imperial life.

ARMOUR UPGRADES

Like weapons, armour can benefit from a myriad of upgrades and modifications. Heretics often pride themselves in their uniqueness, and modifying one's armour can provide those benefits. Upgrades can be added to any purchase of armour. Every upgrade a piece of armour has increases its Availability by one step to a maximum of Unique. If a character is upgrading armour he already possesses then he must make an Acquisition Test for his armour's current Availability. Upgrades need to either be applied by characters with the Trade Armourer Skill or by NPCs trained in its use.

Each armour upgrade may only be used with certain types of armour (see **Table 5–11: Armour Upgrades**).

Ablative

Ablative is constructed from thin layers of material designed to burn or break off when struck as it absorbs the impact or energy of the attack. This is especially popular in chest and shoulder plating. Ablative materials provide +5 AP to the armour upgraded. However, every hit against the armour reduces the AP by one, until the armour is reduced to its standard AP.

Ceramite

This popular heat-resistant coating offers excellent resistance to heat-based weapons such as flamers or melta-weapons. Ceramite coatings add 3 points of Armour Protection against any such thermal weapons or heat-based attacks to that location.

Table 5–11: Armour Upgrades

Name	Weight per location	Can Upgrade
Ablative	+2 kg	Flak, Mesh, Carapace, and Power armour
Ceramite	+2 kg	Any
Insulated	+1 kg	Any
Refractory	+1 kg	Mesh
Spikes	+1.5 kg	Flak, Carapace, Power
Thermal	+1 kg	Any
Vac-Sealed	+2 kg	Mesh, Carapace, or Power Armour that covers all locations

Insulated

This armour has been modified with cooling regulators and fluid dispersal tubes under the plates, to allow for greater survivability in adverse environments. Heretics with Insulated upgrades to their armour do not need to take Toughness Tests due to hot temperatures or environments (within reason, as this will not protect against the extreme heat of being burned, for example).

Refractory

Reflective or Refractory armour coatings can redirect and dissipate laser bolts through layers of microscopic crystals embedded in its surface. Highly expensive and hard to maintain (as simple mud can render it useless), it is also decorative and easily disguised as an ornamental affectation. Those armour locations upgraded in this manner count as having 3 extra Armour Points against attacks from Las Weapons.

Spikes

These wicked talons of metal or bone are often affixed to armour, both for ornamentation and to inflict vicious strikes against any foe that would dare get too near the wearer. Any melee hits against the wearer to a spike-covered part of their body result in the attacker suffering 1d5+1 R Damage to the attacker (Dodge or Parry can negate, as the attacker attempts to twist out of the way). In addition, so long as the upgraded armour covers the wearer's arms, the wearer always counts as being armed with a Knife (page 168) in melee.

Thermal

These extra layers of cloth or electrically-powered heaters fitted under regular armour allow the user to better survive in arctic locations. Heretics with thermal upgrades to their armour do not need to take Toughness Tests due to cold temperatures or environments (within reason, as this will not protect against the extreme cold of a liquid nitrogen sea, for example).

Vac-Sealed

This armour has been modified with seals around joints, and has a helmet rebreather and self-contained air supply. Heretics with Vac-Sealed upgrades to their armour can survive in vacuum (or other environments with a hostile atmosphere) for 6 hours without suffering adverse affects. After that time, they run out of oxygen and suffocate.

Force Fields

"To watch their faces as their bullets flicker and fall at my feet is to also watch the faith in their corpse-god fall."

– Raceen D'Uborll, Despot of Ardenz IV

There are many situations when wearing overt armour is either impractical or impossible, and a more subtle means of protection is necessary. Defensive force fields are one solution, as they are generally easily concealable and very effective though usually difficult to acquire and maintain. Each is often a rare antique that may date back to the Great Crusade, and are ideal for infiltrators or assassins.

A character may only benefit from one field at a time, regardless of how many different fields he may have equipped. When a character wearing an active field is attacked, roll d100. If the result is lower than or equal to the field's protection rating, the attack is nullified and has no effect on the protected character (although the attack may have an impact on the character's surroundings or other nearby characters, such as weapons with the Blast Quality).

Fields may also overload. Compare the d100 roll to avoid Damage to the chart below. If the result is lower than or equal to the listed number, the field is overloaded and ceases to function until it is recharged or repaired (requiring the Mechanism Replenishment upgrade or a successful **Very Hard (–30) Tech-Use Test**).

Refractor Field

Perhaps the most common type of field protection, refractor fields are generally the size of an eyepiece and can easily be worn as a disguised broach or other ornamentation. When active, they disperse an attack through the wide area of the field effect, effectively negating it. When active, though, they surround the wearer with a soft haze of light, making them easily noticeable in low lighting or night. They impose a –10 penalty to any tests requiring Stealth to succeed in such situations.

Conversion Field

Also known as Flare Fields, these work by converting the energy of an attack into blinding light, allowing them to negate much higher forces and delivering a disorientating visual blast as well.

If the field blocks more than 12 points of Damage from a single attack, the release of light is strong enough to act as a photon flash grenade burst centred on the wearer (see page 160). The character wearing the conversion field is unaffected by this burst of light.

Table 5–12: Field Craftsmanship and Overload

Field Craftsmanship	Overload Roll
Poor	01-15
Common	01-10
Good	01-05
Best	1

Table 5-13: Force Fields

Name	Protection Rating	Weight kg	Availability
Conversion Field	50	1	Extremely Rare
Displacer Field	55	2	Near Unique
Power Field (Personal)	80	50	Near Unique
Power Field (Vehicle/Emplacement)	80	500	Very Rare
Refractor Field	30	2	Very Rare

Displacer Field

Displacer fields are very powerful but also more risky than other fields. Instead of absorbing or shunting away the energy of an attack, they instead shift the wearer away from the attack using miniature warp-jump technologies. This action is usually automatically triggered by the attack through unfathomable sensors, though a user can manually activate the device if desired. This flickering into and then back from the dangers of the Empyrean is often as hazardous as the actual attack, however.

Roll 3d10 for the number of metres travelled—the wearer will always emerge on solid footing and in a suitable empty space. If all three dice come up with the same number (e.g. three sevens), then the user does not re-emerge for 1d5 Rounds and gains 1 Corruption point from exposure to strange energies. If the activation is unexpected, then the wearer cannot act for a Round while he regains his sense of place.

Power Field

While most field devices are small enough to be easily disguised or concealed, power fields, though highly effective, are also the most obtrusive and overt. The smallest are heavy backpack-sized affairs, while larger models are the size of sentry weapons and can defend entire vehicles or installations. The force wall they project can deflect away the strongest of attacks, but sustained use drains energy very quickly. Personal units can only be active for an hour before depletion, and are so large that users are automatically Encumbered. Larger units can protect entire vehicles or emplacements, and are so large they cannot be carried.

A power field causes the air to visibly ripple and crackle with static discharge, imposing a –20 penalty on all Tests requiring stealth to succeed. It also does not defend against ranged attacks made within 1 metre or attacks in melee.

Gear

"Strip the bodies. It amuses me to use their own devices against them."

– Khol the Despoiler

It takes more than just weapons to maintain the struggle against the dominating might of the corrupt Imperium; a Heretic hoping to live to fight another day needs a wide range of equipment, accessories, and other devices to not only pull off successful missions but also keep out of the attention of local Enforcers, Inquisitors, and other lackey agents. From prosaic items such as backpacks and chronos to the rarefied like null rods and grav chutes, everything has a place in the Long War that will one day see a throne emptied of its corpse-god.

Clothing and Worn Gear

From the silky, eye-searing robes of a Tzeentch sorcerer to the rags of an underhive cultist, there are as many styles of clothing in the galaxy as there are planets. Generic clothing is assumed to be readily available (Availability Common or better) and includes cheap or simple jewellery, boots, masks, hats, and other accoutrements. For more exotic gear and clothing, consult the following entries.

Backpack

A regular carrying device worn with shoulder straps, these vary with style and form. Each can usually carry approximately 50 kilograms; Good and Best Craftsmanship versions can carry an additional 10 and 20 kg respectively.

Barbed Ring/Venom Nail

Two common assassin's tools, these allow for an unobtrusive kill that can escape the scrutiny of even the closest bodyguards. Barbed Rings are stylish but deadly and carry a concealed barb that can be activated by a special pressure point on the bottom. Venom nails are a false coverings affixed over (or replacing) the user's actual fingernail. Sandwiched between the layers that make up the false nail is a layer of poison, released to the blade-like tip of the nail when it is compressed and readily applied to any target by scratching or cutting the flesh. Targets must pass a Very Hard (–30) Toughness Test or take 2d10 wounds ignoring Armour or Toughness Bonus. Good Craftsmanship models will delay the illness for 1 hour, while Poor models only cause 1d10 wounds. Best Craftsmanship models deal 1d10+10 wounds, as well as the bonus for Good Craftsmanship.

Cameleoline Cloak

Cameleoline material is made up of mimic fibres that blend the coloration of the wearer into their surroundings and are the garb of choice for snipers. A character wearing a cameleoline cloak gains a +20 bonus to Concealment Tests. If the wearer remains stationary, any Ballistic Skill tests to target him suffer a –30 penalty.

Clip/Drop Harness

These are useful when operating on rooftops or rappelling down buildings and consist of a coiled safety line with a

The Clothing of a Heretic

Here are some examples of clothing that can be found across the galaxy, worn by Heretics depending on their rank and means.

Dreg Rags (Poor Craftsmanship)

Many of the common folk suffering in the Imperium wear whatever they can find or salvage from rubbish bins, or from corpses. Many a champion has started their path to power while wearing such humble garments, having nowhere to go but up.

Furnace Suit (Common Craftsmanship)

The common workman's clothing on most so-called civilised worlds, these cheap outfits are the norm for the bulk of the populace and the bulk of heretics as well.

Bodyglove (Good Craftsmanship)

The mark of specialised labourers and higher ranking operatives in the Long War, these form-fitting suits can range from softplas sheaths to enhanced materials with integrated cooling coils. Many are worn under other clothing or armour.

Sacrificial Robes (Best Craftsmanship)

Many rites require obedience and purity not only in the sacrifice but also for the worshippers, where only the finest clothing will suffice. These robes are made of microfabrics that softly sway even without a breeze, and when decorated with appropriately profane runes and dabbed with unholy ichor will ensure a successful ritual.

stout magnetic or hook fixture, all attached to a belt or torso harness. A character using a clip harness to descend a vertical surface gains a +30 bonus to Climb Tests and cannot fall if they fail. Common harnesses can hold 150kg, while Good can support 200 kg.

Deadspace Earpiece

Each of these devices can limit high-volume sonic disturbances such as explosions by automatically detecting and dampening the excessive noise down to a tolerable level. Users may take Toughness Tests against any sonic effects or against the auditory effects of a Concussive weapon with a +20 bonus.

Explosive Collar & Controller

Worn by too many of those unjustly imprisoned by their Imperium, these collars serve to keep the so-called "penal legionnaires" in check before they are allowed to die for their corpse-god's amusement. They come with a remote controller that can detonate the collar at ranges up to one kilometre, killing the wearer instantly and inflicting 1d10 Explosive Damage to anyone within three meters. The control unit can also remove the collar but removing the collar without the controller requires a Hard (–20) Tech-Use Test. A failure of three or more Degrees indicates the collar explodes.

Filtration Plugs

These simple plugs of porous fibres are worn in each nostril to screen out most pollutants and harmful gases. A character wearing filtration plugs gains a +20 bonus to any Toughness Test made to resist the effects of damaging gases. Good Craftsmanship models add another +10 bonus, while poor models must be replaced after five hours usage as the filter becomes clogged and unusable.

Photo-Visors/Contacts

These advanced lenses are designed to enhance low-level light so that even in the darkest nights users can see almost as well as in daylight. Characters wearing these gain the Dark Sight trait (see page 140). Good Craftsmanship visors also dampen the effects of Photon Flash Grenades, making the wearer immune to their effects.

Preysense Goggles

Preysense goggles allow the wearer to see thermal images in low lighting, revealing hidden bodies (and other heat sources) against the coolness surrounding them. Poor Craftsmanship models cannot belie their true nature and are bulky goggles with glowing lenses; Good and Best Craftsmanship models can be disguised to appear to be normal (if elaborate) eyeglasses. A character wearing these goggles suffers no penalties due to darkness and gains a +20 bonus to vision-based Perception Tests at night.

Rebreather

Rebreathers are designed to keep the wearer alive in even the most toxic atmospheres. Consisting of a mask or helmet, each contains an air supply and a character wearing a rebreather is immune to the effects of gases and can even survive underwater at limited depths. The air canisters last only for about one hour and then must be replaced, which takes a full action. Good Craftsmanship models last two hours while poor ones take two full actions to replace the canister. Replacement canisters are Scarce.

Recoil Glove

These specialised gauntlets use interlocking plates connected with memory wire so that when the user grips a weapon, it locks together into a rigid strut around the hand and wrist and prevents wrist or arm damage when the weapon discharges. A character using a recoil glove can fire a basic weapon with one hand without the normal –20 penalty and pistol weapons that require two hands can be used one-handed without penalty. Larger and higher-quality models (Best Craftsmanship versions) even allow a human to fit their hands around a Legion ranged weapon, reducing the recoil and size penalty for using one by –10 (so a –20 penalty would become a –10 penalty). Note that specialised weapon training will still be required to use the weapon properly, without which the untrained penalty of –20 would still apply.

Respirator/Gas Mask

A simple breathing mask that covers the nose and mouth or entire face, these offer much better protection than filtration

Table 5–14: Clothing

Name	Wt	Availability
Backpack	1 kg	Plentiful
Barbed Ring/Venom Nail	—	Extremely Rare
Cameleoline Cloak	1 kg	Rare
Clip/Drop Harness	2 kg	Common
Deadpsace Earpiece	—	Very Rare
Explosive Collar & Controller	1 kg	Rare
Filtration Plugs	—	Common
Photo-Visor/Contacts	0.5 kg	Scarce
Preysense Goggles	0.5 kg	Very Rare
Rebreather	1 kg	Scarce
Recoil Glove	0.5 kg	Common
Respirator/Gas Mask	0.5 kg	Average
Survival Suit	5 kg	Very Rare
Synskin	2 kg	Very Rare
Trophy Rack	2 kg	Very Rare
Void Suit	8 kg	Plentiful

plugs. A character wearing a respirator gains a +30 bonus to Toughness Tests made to resist the effects of gas and may re-roll failed results. Good Craftsmanship models add another +10 bonus, while poor models must be replaced after 10 hours usage as the filter becomes clogged and unusable.

Survival Suit

When working in harsh and extreme conditions (especially when it is not known in advance what they will be), survival suits are a must. No matter if it is too hot or too cold, the suit can maintain proper body temperature and hydration via excellent insulation capabilities. Using the differential between body temp and outside temp to drive thermoelectric power cells, it also has reclamation systems for turning sweat into drinking water. Most suits come complete with a hood, as well as goggles to protect the head and face. While it will not protect forever, for medium duration emergencies it will help sustain life until a rescue.

The suit grants a +20 bonus to any tests against the effects of extreme environments. Good and Best Craftsmanship suits grant a +25 and +30 bonus, respectively, while poor outfits will only last three days before their internal mechanisms falter and need removal from the extreme temperatures to recharge.

Synskin

Synskin is a bio-reactive body glove with an inert non-reflective surface that moulds itself to the wearers form. It grants 2 armour points to all locations not already armoured and the wearer gains a +10 bonus to Stealth Tests. It also renders the wearer invisible to the use of infra-red goggles and Dark Sight.

Void Suit

Void suits are clumsy affairs designed to protect a user against vacuum. A Common Craftsmanship void suit has 12 hours of air and imposes a –10 penalty to Agility Tests. Poor Craftsmanship versions have six hours of air, while Good and Best Craftsmanship versions eliminate the Agility penalty.

Trophy Rack

Many champions of Chaos proudly carry the marks of their victories on elaborate racks mounted to their armour or backpacks, such as banners representing their Legion or the powers they worship or to which they owe their allegiance. These often include the skulls or helmets of their vanquished foes, readily visible for all to see the might of the true powers and weakness of the False Emperor. Opponents making melee attacks against the wearer suffer a –5 to Weapon Skill Tests due to terror upon seeing the trophies (at a GM's discretion, certain opponents, primarily those immune to Fear, beasts, or mechanical constructs, are immune to the effects of the trophies). The user also gains +10 to Intimidation Tests but suffers a –10 to any Stealth Tests.

Drugs and Consumables

Ingesting mind, mood, or constitution-modifying substances into the body has been a habit of humanity since time immemorial. Now, in the 41st Millennium, there is an entire galaxy of drugs to choose from. The Screaming Vortex is home to a unique selection of drugs and tonics, many of which can be found in this chapter.

Alcohol

Alcohol is perhaps the oldest drug used by mankind and perhaps the most diverse in form, and as mankind moved across the galaxy discovering new plant life even more methods of fermentation were invented. In its cheapest form, rotgut booze is the catchall term for the foul tasting but powerful brews that are also useful as industrial solvents and impromptu explosives. More refined distillations such as amasec and raenka represent the other end of the spectrum and are usually reserved for the foppish elite rather than the workers who toil to produce them.

Alcohol grants the user +10 to any Toughness tests, and may also be used in some first aid situations to deaden pain or cleanse a wound. Users may suffer from drunkenness if they are not wary, and must take an **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test** after imbibing with modifiers based on the beverage (Poor Craftsmanship is a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test,** while Good and Best are a **Routine (+20)** and **Easy (+30) Test**, respectively). Failure means they suffer a –10 penalty to Agility, Perception, Intelligence, and Willpower based tests for the next hour plus one additional hour for every Degree of Failure.

Blue Fire (Drug)

Also known as Cerulean Flames to the nobility and other social elites and simply Blue to hive gangers, blue fire comes as small crystals that shine as if they had absorbed the sky on a perfectly clear day. When dropped in a vessel of water they dissolve, releasing a heatless flame of an even stronger hue. Users quickly breathe the cold fire into their lungs, where it rapidly travels in shivering tingles through the nerveways to the brain, lighting their eyes into glowing sapphires and igniting psychic consciousness.

Blue fire lasts for 1d10 rounds and allows the user to re-roll any Focus Power Test attempts made during that time. His

soul burns brighter than normal during this time, however, and even Fettered power levels can trigger Psychic Phenomena as if they were Unfettered. The user must also make a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test** or gain +1 Corruption Point when using this. This counts as gaining Corruption through a failing.

D-Dust (Drug)

Though its full name is daemon dust, few use that term openly as loyalist ears may be listening. Others call it bone, for legend has it that this chalky white powder flecked with pink threads is the milled remains of those beings not native to this reality. Still others claim it is the dusty residue they exhaled in deep panting breaths, burning the air with the warp-energies running through their unnatural lungs. Those who sell it only smile softly, knowing that those wise enough to learn the truth are wise enough never to use it.

A dose of "dust" or "d" is commonly inhaled through the nostrils or rubbed into the gums and acts quickly, transporting the arcane energies throughout the body and lasting for 2d5 rounds. The user must make a **Hard (–20) Willpower Test** to keep the drug under control; if successful the user gains the Daemonic Trait. If successful by two Degrees of Success he also gains the Phase Trait; if three or more he also gains the Warp Weapons Trait. If he fails his body is wracked with terrible contortions; he falls to the ground Stunned for the duration and gains a Corruption point for every round it lasts. If he fails by three or more Degrees, he gains one Mutation as well.

De-Tox (Drug)

A common component in many combat kits, this powerful drug can negate the effects of most dangerous toxins if administered fast enough. A dose immediately ends the ongoing effects, both positive and negative, of any drugs, toxins or gases affecting the character (unless the effect states that de-tox is not effective against them).

Using de-tox is both painful and debilitating, causing such unpleasant side effects as expulsion of fluids from almost every bodily orifice. Upon taking this drug, a character is stunned for a number of rounds equal to 1d10 minus his Toughness Bonus. A result of 0 or less means the character suffers no ill-effects.

Frenzon (Drug)

The generic name for a variety of combat drugs often used within penal legion units, frenzon is also used by underhive pitfighters and mercenary kill-teams. Once administered, the subject becomes fearless and fanatical in combat, gaining the Frenzy and Fearless Talents but also a –10 penalty to all Intelligence based tests. A single does lasts for 1d10 minutes.

Lho Sticks

A commonly-used mild narcotic, lho is made from dried plant leaves, which when set alight produce a smoke that carries the addictive drug into the lungs. The leaves are wrapped with special papers or whole leaves to create a stick, easy to carry and easy to use. Some users make their own (perhaps not trusting others in this matter) while most use the mass-produced sticks. Higher-end versions may be made from compressed whole leaves wrapped together into a thicker stick, or instead use special pipes to hold the burning leaves. Inhaling lho puts the user in a mildly relaxed state for 1d5 hours but otherwise has no in-game effects.

Excessive Drug Use and Addiction

When the same drug is used too often in a short period of time, there is a chance for it to have a diminished effect as the user builds up an immunity or tolerance. A Heretic using more than one dose of a drug in a 24 hour period must make a Toughness Test for each use after the first, with a cumulative –10 penalty. Should the test fail the drug has no useful effect and further doses have no useful effect for a full 24 hours

Excessive drug use can also lead to Addiction. Every time the effects of one of the drugs indicated below wears off, the user must take a **Routine (+20) Willpower Test** with a –5 modifier for every dose taken in the last week. Failure means the user is Addicted and will suffer one level of Fatigue unless he gets another dose (should this dose trigger the Excessive Drug User test above, it must be successfully passed for it to overcome the Fatigue loss). The Heretic (should he so choose) can overcome the Addiction by passing Very Hard (–30) tests for both Willpower and Toughness.

Ligature Oils

Extracted from properly-sacrificed captives and brewed to specific standards, these liquids are highly prized by renegade technomats and Tech-Priests who have broken free of the oppressive cults of their brethren. If applied to a weapon (a Full Action) it will become immune to jamming for one game session.

Mortis (Drug)

Mortis acts to shut down metabolic processes to a near death level, rendering the user a corpse to all but the most dedicated of examiners. Users who have taken Mortis are so near death for the following 4d10 minutes that any Tests to determine the user's status suffer a –30 penalty, with failure indicating the user is dead. Good Craftsmanship doses can be administered so the user can specify how long they last (up to 1 hour), while Poor doses only offer a –10 penalty to Tests.

Obscura (Drug)

One of more common illegal narcotics, obscura is widespread due to the many smugglers and distributors operating across Imperial space any beyond. As an old and established drug, the effects have become standardised and are relatively dependable. Obscura can be ingested in a number of ways from injection, inhalation, skinpatch, and more. Obscura users enter a pleasant dream-like state for 1d5 hours (if required to engage in combat consider them under the effects of a hallucinogen grenade, see page 150). Once they wake, they enter a deep depression for 1d10 hours unless another dose of obscura is taken.

Table 5–15: Drugs and Consumables

Name	Wt	Availability
Alcohol†	0.5 kg	Common (Poor), Average (Common) Scarce (Good)
Blue Fire†	—	Extremely Rare
D-dust†	—	Unique
De-Tox	—	Rare
Frenzon†	—	Very Rare
Lho Sticks†	—	Common
Ligature Oils	—	Rare
Mortis†	—	Very Rare
Obscura†	—	Rare
Plas	—	Very Rare
Recaf	—	Abundant
Rez†	—	Extremely Rare
Rose†	—	Rare
Scab†	—	Extremely Rare
Slaught†	—	Scarce
Spur†	—	Average
Stimm†	—	Average

†Indicates a drug that can cause Addiction.

Plas (Drug)

Most wastrels of the nobility use this biomorphic chemical to mildly alter their facial features for such frivolities as romantic assignation or humour. Others apply it in stronger doses to let them meld their flesh more painfully, rearranging the flesh into new forms and new identities for clandestine rendezvous' or other more serious applications. When applied to the skin, plas softens it to the consistency of soft wax for roughly five minutes, allowing the user to reshape it into new forms. Multiple applications allow even the flesh underneath to be moulded but with intense pain. These will gradually ware off in 1d5 days causing pain proportional to the extent of modification. This gives the subject a +30 against any Perception tests to determine his true identity and also to fool anyone into believing the false one. Poor doses will only do +10 to the same, while Good Craftsmanship applications will last 1-10 days as desired.

Recaf

Technically not a drug, this popular beverage does contain natural chemicals that act as a mild stimulant. As it is primarily made from native ground and boiled plant leaves, the flavour and effects will vary depending on the world of origin (and sometimes even depending on the locale on the planet). Recaf has no in-game effect.

Rez (Drug)

This unnatural drug is also known as resonate. Users emit a balm of soothing psychic energies, placating denizens of the aetheric realms and calming unruly Warp disturbances. Only few care to know how it is made, as only the most powerful of slain sorcerers can provide the raw ingredients. For it is their ground bones, especially from those who summoned but were consumed by daemons, that make up each dose.

Rez requires an **Easy (+30) Willpower Test** to activate after taking a dose and lasts for a number of minutes equal to the Degrees of Success multiplied by 10. During that time the user may subtract 2d10 from any rolls on the Psychic Phenomena or Perils of the Warp tables. Failing the Willpower Test, however, immediately triggers Psychic Phenomena.

Rose (Drug)

Many a Chaos worshipper has had to depart from the strict confines of Imperial society as their desires for new sensations become too extreme. For such adventurers, Rose is the drug of choice, as it heightens all sensory input to a thrilling degree. The slightest touch becomes a razor's caress, the softest whisper a sonic dagger of delight. A dose of rose lasts for roughly three hours. During that time the user gains the Dark Sight Trait and gains a +20 bonus to Perception based Tests. If the user ever passes a Test by five Degrees or more, however, he becomes overloaded by sensations and must take a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or become Stunned for 1d5 rounds.

Scab (Drug)

Scab is a favourite drug for those who follow the Lord of Plagues. Each dose of the thick purplish liquid worms into the user's body with the sickening sensation that the gelatinous mess is somehow alive. For one hour the skin turns a sickly greyish-green and crusts over. Though the user looks deathly ill, the drug actually gives him +1 Toughness bonus for the hour. Multiple doses do not stack, and every use past the first in a 24 hour period inflicts 1d10+10 Agility Damage as the user is wracked by crippling pain.

Slaught (Drug)

Also known as "onslaught," this drug heightens awareness and improves reaction time, speeding up the user but causing fatigue and neural damage with prolonged use. A dose increases the user's Agility Bonus and Perception Bonus by 3 for 2d10 minutes; after that the user must take a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or take a –20 penalty to Agility and Perception Tests for 1d5 hours.

Spur (Drug)

Spur is a powerful stimulant that increases overall stamina, ideal for nasty firefights or assaults where a quick burst of energy is literally a lifesaver, but with a serious depressive crash occurring afterwards. Each dose lasts 2d10 minutes, during which the user cannot be Stunned and takes no Fatigue. Afterwards however the character takes –20 Penalty for Toughness and Agility Tests for one hour, as well as one Fatigue level for every two they would have received while the drug was active.

Spur is very habit forming, and tests to withstand Addiction must be taken at a –10 penalty.

Stimm (Drug)

Stimm provides short-term energy and stamina to users, allowing them overcome pain and bodily harm in order to keep fighting no matter what. Each dose of lasts 3d10 rounds and during this time a character ignores any negative effects

to their characteristics from Damage or Critical Damage and cannot be stunned. When it wears off, the character takes a –20 penalty to Strength, Toughness and Agility Tests for one hour as their body recovers from the cumulative Damage.

TOOLS

In the Screaming Vortex, being prepared can mean the difference between life and death. From forging Imperial documents to blasting through a voidship's hull, the servants of the Dark Powers must have the right tools for the job. These are just a sample of the many tools available througout the Vortex.

Auspex/Scanner

The standard Imperial detection device, these are used to detect energy emissions, motion, biological life-signs, and other information. A character using an auspex gains a +20 bonus to Awareness Tests and may make a Tech-Use test to use it to spot things not normally possible to human senses such as invisible gases, nearby signs of life, non-visible radiation, or other things as specified. The standard range for an Auspex is 50m, though walls more than 50cm thick and certain shielding materials can block the scanner. Good Craftsmanship models increase the bonus to +30, but Poor Craftsmanship models can only penetrate 20cm of material.

Cartograph

Heretics often operate far from their normal locals, and cartographs are essential in allowing them to know exactly where they are so that their operations can unfold smoothly. Poor Craftsmanship models are no more than maps loaded onto a graphical data-slate, while advanced models can store entire worlds in multi-level modes and even link with orbital satellites to provide exact current location and heading. A standard Cartograph grants +5 to Navigation (Surface) Tests, while Good Craftsmanship versions grant +10.

Chrono

Chronos are hand-held or wrist-worn timepieces, generally dependable and simple to use. Most citizens of any means carry one, with fancy versions able to link into planetary datastreams for precision.

Combi-Tool

Most combi-tools are small compact devices, filled with fold-out and extending probes, blades, hooks, and socket-plugs ideal for coaxing operation from recalcitrant machinery, repairing damaged devices, and in general bending errant machine spirits to the will of the user. Using a combi-tool grants a +10 bonus to Tech-Use Tests.

Comm Leach

A heretical item unless properly consecrated by Mechanicus lackeys, a comm leach allows a Heretic to tap into vox signals or data transmissions. Advanced versions can copy broadcasts, allowing them to be hidden for later retrieval.

Data-Slate

Flat and rectangular, data-slates are widespread throughout Imperial space and are used to store text and other media. Cheap versions can only hold a single file and cannot be altered, while superior slates can be reconfigured with different information from manual input or machine transmission and even transmit the data to other devices. Since they are seen throughout the Imperium, most authorities would never think to closely examine what information was actually on a slate carried by a "loyal" citizen in their daily business.

Demolition Charge

Such explosives are relatively easy to use, ideal for those whose devotion is greater than their technical expertise. They are frequently used in simple destruction against closed doors, obscuring walls, or valuable bridges or landing zones. The stats given represent a charge weighing 1kg (note that it is possible to rig multiple charges together, thus increasing their destructive capability). When a demolition charge explodes, anyone (or anything) caught within its blast radius takes 3d10 Explosive Damage plus an additional 1d10 Damage for every kilogram used. The blast radius of the charge is equal to the number of kilograms used times five metres. Demolition charges can even be thrown as an improvised (and risky) form of grenade. For setting and defusing explosives see the Demolition Skill in **Chapter III: Skills,** page 112.

Demolition Kit

These kits are filled with all manners of supplies and materials for crafting explosives, including timers such as detcord and det-tape along sensory systems to trigger the explosion. In the hands of an expert, there are few Imperial installations that can withstand what such a kit can produce. Each kit includes supplies for five demolition charges, five binary charges, 100 meters of det-cord that burns at a rate of one metre per 10 seconds, and five simple pressure-release detonators. Good Craftsmanship kits include variable burn det-cord and advanced detonators that can trigger from motion or thermal imaging.

Disguise Kit

For those attempting to overthrow the hated Imperium, the ability to obscure true identity is very valuable. A good disguise kit can ensure a Heretic does not attract the improper attention and perhaps even throws suspicions towards others. Contents can range from basic makeup and prosthetic flesh appliances to elaborate skin dyes, vocal augmentors, and even false dermal layering to fool gene scanners.



Eclipse Pulsator

These archeotech devices are a common find for scavengers picking through the ancient ruins on Kurse. Members of the Dark Mechanicus have spent decades puzzling over these relics and have yet to unlock their secrets. The smooth metal device slowly builds up a charge until it can be felt vibrating and humming with energy. When triggered, the device emanates a pulse of energy that negates any force fields, psychic protections, or other unnatural defences within 10 metres of the device for 1d5 rounds. Once used, the device requires a day to recharge before it can be used again.

Forgery Kit

The perfect accessory for a disguise kit, this can help get a Heretic through the most oppressive of Imperial security checks or be used to create "newly found" documents discrediting their simpering saints. They can be used to alter ident cards, create fake work orders, or even produce travel slates allowing transport across the Imperium on official business.

Glow-Globe/Lamp

Sturdy and reliable, glow-globes illuminate many an Imperial paveway and cathedral. Most portable ones are roughly the size of a clenched fist and can shine strong, yellowish light a dozen or so meters in width, lasting roughly five hours before their power pack needs recharging or replacing.

Grapnel & Line

Grapnels use a small launcher or gas-gun to fire a hooked or magnetic grapnel, connected to the launcher with a coiled 100m length of thin but strong line. Once the grapnel attaches to the desired spot such as a rooftop, a Heretic can manually climb the line or activate a powered winch. In an emergency it can also be used as a crude ranged weapon in the same manner as a single-shot crossbow. Common sets can hold 150kg, while Good or Best can support 200 kg.

Injector

Most specialised drugs are not in easy-to-take pill form and require injectors; these can take many forms from cheap low-tech disposable syringes up to sophisticated hypo-sprays and even bio-attuned skin patches. An injector can hold one dose of any drug, which a character may administer as a Half Action.

Lascutter

Ideal for slicing open doors and bulkheads, lascutters were originally designed for mining where their short range but intense cutting beam could chop apart even the toughest rock. Most models can cut or weld around 10cm of metal depending on the thickness involved. They are large and cumbersome to use, however, precluding their effectiveness in combat situations. When needed they can be fired as a Melee weapon (Dam 4d10+10 E, Pen 10, Clip 5, Rld 2 Full) but only at stationary targets.

Laud Hailer

Bringing the word of truth to the masses requires great volume, and a laud hailer is the perfect tool. Each can amplify normal speech levels such that many hundreds can hear easily despite the best efforts of their minders.

Magnoculars

Even for those who see clearly amidst the smoke and lies of the Imperium, there are times for aids to vision. Magnoculars offer aid in long distance imaging, with advanced models also providing ranges, heat signatures, target positions, and even pic snapshots for later analysis.

Medi-kit

Small, compact, and reliable, medi-kits are an essential part of anyone operating outside of Imperial society or away from easy access to medicae support. Each has a diagnostic cogitator complete with bio-scanner and probes, along with chemicals, drugs, and other means to treat a variety of injuries and ailments and will grant a +20 to those using it in conjunction with the Medicae Skill. Advanced models include such items as tox wands, synth-skin applicators, and other aids usually available only to the wealthiest of the Imperial elite. These gain the +20 bonus even if not possessing the Medicae Skill, but weight +3 kg and are Rare instead of Common.

Micro-bead

The standard means for communication between a cohort of Heretics operating in the field, a micro-bead or comm-bead provides short-range communication out to about one kilometre (depending on weather conditions and intervening terrain however). Each fits discretely in the ear with higher Craftsmanship models nearly undetectable in casual inspection.

Multikey

A multikey is the perfect accompaniment for any Heretic seeking entrance to locked Imperial doors, the better to pry away the secrets hidden behind them. Multikeys can open almost all standard locks, making then illegal for most citizens to possess for understandable reasons and meaning most are carefully hidden away in boot heals or cloak padding. A Heretic using a multikey gains a +20 bonus to any Security Test when trying to open locks. There are no varying Craftsmanships of this item.

Null Rod

Imperial psykers are perhaps the saddest examples of how the Imperium denigrates its slaves; beings who should be unfettered to best realise their powers are shackled and bound to become lapdogs for their lessers. Still, they represent a threat until they can be swayed to the true path, and a null rod allows those unblessed with psychic defences to keep their powers in check. Most often appearing as obsidian cylinders of roughly 30cm crawling with arcane energies, a null rod can negate the powers of any psykers within 2d10 meters, causing them to take all tests to use any psychic powers with a –30 Penalty. They also offer personal protection from psychic attacks by granting a +30 bonus to resist any psychic power that directly affects him. A null rod also has such furious energy that it acts as a power weapon when used as a club or truncheon (use the profile for a power sword without the Balanced Quality).

Pict Recorder

Pict recorders can capture images into simple still images or holographic video imagery, depending on the model, with playback capability on large built-in screens.

Promethium

Promethium is the common name for Imperial petrochemical-based liquid fuel refined from a variety of raw minerals and ores. It is also the catchall brand for most the chemicals that make flamer weapons so deadly, as it will burn without oxygen and adheres to targets to excruciating burning effect. It can also be used to create improvised anti-personnel explosives and bombs, detonating with 1d10 E per kilogram used and a blast radius of four times the kilogram amount. Those caught in the blast must take an Agility Test or catch on fire.

Psy-Focus

Also known as warp-totems or mind-eyes, a psy-focus allows those blessed with Warp powers to more easily channel their powers. It could be an ancestral bone, irradiated crystal, the twisted metal shrapnel fragment removed from a murdered spouse, or even an otherwise unremarkable object normally found anywhere. But in the hands of a psyker ready to use his powers against an Imperium that would sentence him to death or worse, the item is a mighty accessory. When a psyker with a psy-focus makes a Focus Power Test (see **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**, page 208) he gains a +10 bonus.

Rendering Apothecarium

The human body contains a great many fluids and organic compounds that are valuable components for arcane rituals or other ceremonies. Most cultists who engage in such practices will construct or acquire a rendering apothecarium whereby a fallen comrade—or better still, the remains of a hated Imperial servant—can be broken apart into more useful substances such as tallow fat, sanctification oils, bonemeal, marrowjuice, and many more delights. One corpse can be rendered into materials that will grant a +20 to Focus Power Tests requiring sacrifice or profane symbols. Most are very large, but Best Craftsmanship constructions are no larger than a small footlocker.

Scrap Code Generator

Highly dangerous to possess, this mechanism is tech-heresy of the most wondrous kind. When coupled with most sanctified Imperial machine spirits, it will inflict electronic virus-patterns into the datacurrents, disrupting the currents and inducing electronic seizures. The shattered remnants of the machine spirit can be reformatted into a more pliable and useful configuration, with new loyalties and functions. This device requires a **Hard (–20) Tech-Use Test**, but if successful the machine operated on will give up its secrets and obey commands in the future with only a **Simple (+40) Tech-Use Test**.

Screamer

Relatively easy to operate, these proximity alarms alert their users to incoming dangers by setting off a horrendous noise.

Table 5–16: Tools

Name	Wt	Availability
Auspex/Scanner	1 kg	Scarce
Cartograph	1 kg	Rare
Chrono	—	Average
Combi-Tool	1 kg	Rare
Comm Leach	1 kg	Very Rare
Data-slate	0.5 kg	Common
Demolition Charge	1 kg	Rare
Demolitions Kit	8 kg	Very Rare
Disguise Kit	1 kg	Rare
Forgery Kit	1 kg	Very Rare
Glow-Globe/Lamp	0.5 kg	Abundant
Graffitio Paints	1 kg	Plentiful
Grapnel & Line	2 kg	Average
Injector	0.5 kg	Average
Lascutter	4 kg	Scarce
Laud Hailer	2 kg	Rare
Scrap Code Generator	3 kg	Extremely Rare
Magnoculars	0.5 kg	Average
Medi-kit	2 kg	Common
Micro-bead	—	Average
Multikey	—	Scarce
Null Rod	1 kg	Near Unique
Pict Recorder	1 kg	Average
Promethium	1 kg	Average
Psy-Focus	—	Average
Rendering Apothecarium	20 kg	Extremely Rare
Screamer	2 kg	Scarce
Signal Jammer	2 kg	Rare
Static Generator	3 kg	Very Rare
Stummer	2 kg	Average
Torture Tools	2 kg	Rare
Unholy Icon	0.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Vox-Caster	4 kg	Scarce

To activate, the player must succeed on a Tech-Use Test, but the GM will roll this test in secret; players will not know how well the device is working until later on, if they are lucky! Once set, a screamer has a Perception of 75 for the purposes of detecting sounds or motions. If it detects an intruder, it sounds its alarm, which can be heard anywhere out to one kilometre. Doors, walls and other barriers may reduce the alarm's range. Simple models (Poor Craftsmanship) will only detect loud noises or fast movements nearby while more advanced models (Good Craftsmanship) can be programmed to specific sound, movement, or even odour ranges and can also have more subtle warning methods (such as screaming only into comm channels).

Signal Jammer

As the name suggests, this device acts to overpower local vox, data or other transmissions so that outsiders cannot receive them. Basic models are overt and obvious, such that the transmitting agencies will know they are being jammed. Sophisticated versions will emit precisely-tuned frequencies that dampen out transmissions without anyone detecting the action.

Static Generator
Simple but obvious, this emits a powerful sphere of white noise across commonly used transmission frequencies within 30 metres. Comm devices will not function, but it will also be clear to all users that they are being disrupted and the device easily located. Still, when set on a timer and placed next to a transmission tower they are effective for short-duration sabotage.

Stummer
The reverse of a screamer but more advanced, these analyse nearby ambient sound, generate dampening waves to cancel out those same noises. An active stummer grants a +30 bonus to Silent Move Tests for about 20 minutes of continuous use before it needs recharging (taking about one hour).

Torture Tools
Most Imperial servants are sadly recalcitrant when questioned and require persuading to give up information. A skilled questioner will call on his tools in cases such as these, blades of varying sharpness, needles of all sizes, chemicals and drugs, thermal drills, neural probes, and many other items to enhance the dialogue process. A character with a torture kit gains a +20 bonus to all Interrogation Tests.

Unholy Icon
These are very dangerous to possess in Imperial space, especially in the eyes of the Ministorum's rabid lapdogs. Though they may take almost any form, each would be immediately recognisable as blasphemous to any loyal citizen, and may bring retribution or welcoming recognition depending on the true loyalty involved. This adds +20 to any Charm Tests to fellow Heretics. If found, it immediately triggers Hatred and Frenzy in any Imperial servants.

Vox-Caster
A vox is a standard and reliable communication device used to transmit over long distances, including to and from orbiting vessels. This allows communications with other who have vox-casters. Standard ranges are 100 kilometres, though higher Craftsmanship versions have longer ranges.

WARGEAR
Beyond weapons and armour, there are other pieces of equipment necessary to wage war.

Combat Webbing Harness
Designed to be worn over outer clothing, these allow a warrior ready access to combat gear such as ammunition packs, sidearm weapons, and grenades. Common styles include hip packs, holsters, bandoliers, and vests and can hold 20 kg comfortably. Good models can hold an extra 10 kg, but Poor versions hold 15 kg.

Grav Chute
Gravitic suspensors slow down a falling wearer for a manageable landing; at high energy settings they can even create a short-duration hovering effect. Rarely seen outside of the reviled Imperial Storm Trooper units, each is often more valuable than the user and firefights may break out to recover them from fallen corpses.

Grav chutes are pre-programmed to activate at a specified altitude; a roll of 1 on a d10, though, indicates failure and an **Ordinary (+10) Agility Test** or Routine (+20) Operate (Aeronautica) Test to reach the emergency manual drogues must be made before things get more exciting. The user will fall another 100 meters each time he attempts this test.

The activation process takes another 50 meters of descent, but once activated the user falls relatively slowly and can land with little or no mishap with an **Easy (+30) Agility Test**. Failure by three or more Degrees inflicts 1d10 I Damage to the user's legs, however, as he ends up falling badly.

Helmet Augmentations
While a basic helmet will offer simple cranial protection, specific upgrades can also add advanced vox links, targeting feeds, visual augmentations, combat data readouts, and more. These can include the benefits of wearing such items as preysense goggles, a rebreather, photo-visor, vox-caster, or micro-bead, with standard upgrades containing all but preysense goggles. Good Craftsmanship models contain the goggles as well, while the user can only choose two of the above for Poor models.

Jump Pack
These huge backpacks contain powerful turbofans or even rocket engines; users can fire them to lift high into the air and then swoop down to attack. Jump packs are also useful in leaping over high obstacles and reaching rooftops in a single bound, or without sufficient training more frequently impacting messily into a wall. They are more powerful than grav chutes and allow for multiple uses in a combat engagement, but they are also much more expensive, noisy, and cumbersome to use. Most are used by Legion assault forces but smaller versions can be worn safely by mere humans.

A user must have the Operate (Aeronautica) Skill to use a jump pack. The standard model allows a safe descent from any height along with an unlimited series of short jumps of up to double his Base Movement, avoiding any ground obstacles and landing at the end of each Round's movement. Alternatively, the pack can be used to duplicate the Flyer (12) trait for up to a minute at a time. On-board fuel supplies will be exhausted after an hour of continual use.

Melta-Bomb
Perhaps the most powerful portable explosive in existence, melta-bombs use mango-adhesives to adhere to metallic surfaces where they detonate with a lethal shaped charge of intense heat, similar in effect to a melta weapon. They are ideal for destroying bulkheads, vehicle hulls, and other heavily armoured targets. The common Imperial variety is roughly domed in shape but heavy and unwieldy. Handles on the casing instead allow the user to heft the bomb and slap it into place against the target surface but are impractical to throw (especially should the explosive side be facing the

Table 5-17: Wargear

Name	Wt	Availability
Combat Webbing Harness	1 kg	Scarce
Grav Chute	15 kg	Rare
Helmet Augmentations	1 kg	Rare
Jump Pack	25 kg	Rare
Melta-bomb	12 kg	Very Rare
Psychic Hood	2 kg	Extremely Rare

user when it detonates). A melta-bomb explodes with 6d10 E Damage, Penetration 12 with a range of two meters. Any survivors must take an Agility Test or catch on fire.

Psychic Hood

Psychic Hoods are ancient and arcane devices that allow a psyker protection against psychic attacks through networks of psychically-attuned crystals woven into the material surrounding the wearer's cranium. They are primarily integrated into Power or Terminator armour, though some are worn simply as a helmet or elaborate headdress. A Heretic wearing one may spend his Reaction to attempt to nullify a power used by another psyker within a range in meters equal to the character's Willpower, said Reaction to be announced before the other psyker has made his Focus Power roll. The wearer first makes a Focus Power (Willpower) Test, with every Degree of Success imposing a –10 penalty on the enemy's Focus Power Test. Alternatively the wearer may try to nullify a power that affects him directly, no matter the range. He makes the same test as before, and if successful is unaffected by the power but other targets or areas are affected as normal by the power. Note that a nullification test may trigger psychic phenomena based on the Psychic Strength as normal. The hood also grants the wearer a +5 bonus to all Focus Power Tests, including nullification attempts as described above.

Cybernetics

"All flesh decays, and all metal rusts. But the metal will last longer... long enough to see the corpse-god buried forever."

—Glomar Rho, Brassmeister of Aleph Nine

Mankind has been replacing defective or destroyed body parts for countless ages, so it is no surprise that in these dark millennia that mechanical augmentations and bionic replacements are relatively commonplace. Depending on the individual's wealth, social status, or role in the vast oppressiveness of Imperial authority, these may range from simple and obvious replacements to sophisticated designs that are not only indistinguishable from the real thing but actually improve performance. For the Heretic, cybernetics represent another tool to use against their hated foes. For many, no matter how much of the corpus becomes brass and plasteel, it is worth the price if it means becoming closer to their grand goal.

The Machine Cult venerates such augmentations; it is difficult to find any member of that pedantic organisation without several bionic limbs or mechanical implantations in their misguided quest to attain closeness to their sham Omnissiah. Those who have broken from the sect retain many of their augmentations, and most continue these upgrades—but now with clearer eyes (or reprogrammed bionic versions). For other Heretics, the violence of the struggle means bionic replacements are an inevitability, else they permanently lose use of the limb or other body part forever. The violence also makes replacements and augmentations attractive for superior combat or espionage skills as well.

Across Imperial space, the levels of availability for such devices vary with local superstitions and technological levels, as will the reaction to the more overt bionics (which can often be used to a Heretic's advantage when dealing with backward savages). Each different cybernetic system grants the user different benefits (and sometimes penalties) depending on its Craftsmanship (see Craftsmanship, page 146). The exception to this is Best Craftsmanship cybernetics. Unless otherwise noted, these provide no additional benefits beyond those of Good Craftsmanship, but are more impressive in the construction and design. The availability listed below represents Common cybernetics. All mechadendrites are considered to be of Good Craftsmanship unless otherwise noted.



Attaching Bionics and Implants

Simply acquiring implants or bionics is but the first step, as a Heretic will also require both the resources and skilled labour to have them installed. Usually operations of this kind are only available at significant medicae facilities and in societies with ready access to higher technologies, though there are underground resources that can be called upon when necessary.

Once a chirurgeon is located who is willing to perform the work, the operation takes 2d10 days, minus one day for each point of the patient's Toughness Bonus to a minimum of one day (however, the GM can decide certain operations take longer). The GM must make the final determination as to the operation's overall difficulty; a sufficiently advanced facility may allow it to be considered automatic. A disgraced underhive tech-adept being paid in illegal drugs, on the other hand, might require a series of Medicae or even Tech-Use Tests for success, and failure could lead to such things as permanent crippling or blood loss (see Chapter 1: Playing the Game).

BIONICS REPLACEMENT LIMBS AND BODY PARTS

Bionic replacement limbs are assumed to operate at the same level of strength and dexterity as the host body, as otherwise they might rip themselves out by over-stressing the surrounding tissue. They are generally more robust than flesh, however, and as such add +2 to the owner's Toughness Bonus against hits scored to the particular location. Damage taken to such locations count towards Damage to the character; Critical Damage dealt to these locations applies as normal but biological damage such as bleeding simply renders the mechanical limb useless as linkages fail or hydraulic fluids leak away. Critical Damage to a limb that results in the owner's death still causes death, as the limb explodes with terrible shrapnel or discharges lethal currents directly into the body.

Note that replacement and additional limbs including mechadendrites can only be used to perform tasks that the owner knows how to do; a Heretic with a Medicae Mechadendrite must have the Medicae Skill in order to take advantage of the extra abilities the limb grants. Any bonuses and penalties associated with the mechanical limb relate only to tests made using the limb and characters sporting two bionic limbs do not gain double the bonus; rather they may apply the bonus regardless of which bionic limb they are using.

Bionic Arm

One of the more common replacement limbs to be found, Common Craftsmanship versions ape a normal hand and arm exactly, retaining strength, dexterity and sense of touch.

Poor Craftsmanship versions are more cumbersome and visibly artificial; halve the owner's Agility score where matters of fine dexterity are involved. In addition, Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made when using the limb take a –5 penalty.

Good bionic arms improve on natural design and provide a +10 bonus on Agility Tests requiring delicate manipulation.

Best Craftsmanship arms add a +10 bonus to Strength Tests using the arm and can be used to store small items such as pistol ammo clips inside concealed interior compartments.

Bionic Legs

In the basic common version, locomotion bionics are fully integrated into the hip with spinal link and allow a Heretic to walk, run, and climb at human norm levels.

Poor Craftsmanship models, however, are lumbering affairs that reduce a Heretic's movement rate by one (rounding up), and when running the user must succeed on an Agility Test or fall at the end of his movement.

Good Craftsmanship level artificial legs grant the owner the Sprint Talent and add a +20 bonus to Athletics Tests made to jump or leap.

Bionic Respiratory System

Bionic respiratory systems are often a must due to damage caused by the often exceedingly toxic atmospheres to be found in many settings. Common Craftsmanship bionic lungs and implanted respiratory systems allow the user to breathe as normal and gain a +20 bonus to Toughness Tests made to resist airborne toxins and gas weapons.

Poor bionic lungs offer the same benefits as the Common system, but require louder mechanical filtration systems and users suffer a –20 penalty to all Silent Move checks. They are also overall less effective in blood oxygenatation and all tests involving strenuous physical activity are increased by one level of difficulty.

Good bionic lungs count as a full life support system, so if for any reason the user's own respiratory system fails, his bionic lungs will keep his blood oxygenated. These systems are generally unnoticeable when designed to be so.

Mechanicus Assimilation

This process is used either by the truly fanatical or the devastatingly injured, the user's body is rebuilt with interlaced bionic replacements, augmenting and supporting the biological systems. Now almost as much metal as flesh, the Heretic gains the Machine Trait (see page 141) with Armour points equal to the number of times this replacement upgrade is acquired. When taken multiple times, note the number, as in "Mechanicus Assimilation 3" when taken three times.

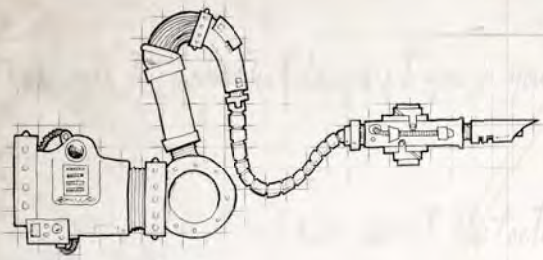
There are no Poor Craftsmanship versions of cybernetic, and Good and Best Craftsmanship versions simply make the upgrade less noticeable. Hereteks count this upgrade as Rare, as opposed to Extremely Rare.

IMPLANT SYSTEMS

The human body is merely the first stage, a canvas upon which a Heretic can not only create new artistic improvements but also fashion new tools to aid them in the Long War. Below are some of the more frequently used artificial implants available, granting new abilities and allowing for further mechanical upgrades.

Ballistic Mechadendrite

A common upgrade for many combat-oriented Hereteks, this two-metre mechanical limb emerges from the shoulder or back and is covered with writhing power conduits. It may be armed with any Pistol-class weapon with the Compact Upgrade. The Heretic may attack with this weapon as his Reaction. A Heretic must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use Talent to operate this implant.



Blade-tines

Long, thin blades sprout from one of the Heretic's hands, razor sharp and useful as scalpels or cutting weapons. The hand must be completely rebuilt to accommodate this, and most versions feature long, spindly fingers that can extend past the blades to allow for dextrous tasks. The full appearance is decidedly unpleasant and even downright sinister.

The blade-tines grant the Heretic +5 to Medicae Tests, +5 to Interrogation Tests, and can be used as a melee weapon in close combat, dealing 1d5+2 (plus Strength Bonus) Damage with a Penetration of 2.

Good Craftsmanship versions can vibrate the blades at high frequencies, increasing the cutting power. The weapons gain the Tearing Trait. Best Craftsmanship versions also include drug producing bio-mechanical glands, with thin tubules to carry the venomous liquids to small openings underneath the blades. This grants the weapons the Toxic (0) Quality.

Poor Craftsmanship versions only deal 1d5 plus Strength Bonus Damage without any Penetration.

Black Blood (Autosanguine)

A combination of microtech from the Dark Ages and obscene xenos biotech flows though veins now forever tainted. The minions of the Omnissiah refer to this as Autosanguine, but those who call themselves the Dark Mechanicus know it as Black Blood. Too small to see but powerful in their vast numbers, these machines can repair minor injuries and speed healing. When applying healing the Heretic is always considered Lightly Wounded; he also heals much faster than mere mortals and removes two points of Damage per day.

Cerebral Implants

Commonly used to repair a severely damaged brain or hopefully augment its abilities, these often risky implant systems represent a major step from simply replacing a limb to altering a Heretic from human to mechanism.

Common-level implants can restore paralysed and brain-damaged users to a semblance of normality, but with a permanent loss of 1d10 points from the character's Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Agility, Intelligence and Fellowship.

Poor versions restore brain function but destroy the personality and memories of the subject, rendering them no better than a servitor, and as such are unsuitable for player characters (though a Heretic may encounter many an unfortunate fellow Chaos worshipper who has suffered such a fate).

Good cerebral implants are very rare even among the elite and powerful, and are exceedingly difficult to arrange, becoming Near Unique in availability. These bestow Unnatural Intelligence (+2) (see page 144) and grants +20 bonuses to Logic and Lore Tests for the superior mental capabilities they now enjoy.

Chem Injector

Many Heretics who rely on pharmacological boosts in combat have taken this implant, allowing them to inject themselves as needed with the chemicals they crave. One dose of a single drug may be loaded into the injector via a skin-mounted port (if this implant is taken multiple times, then multiple drugs may be loaded). The user may activate the injector as a Half Action requiring a Routine (+20) Willpower Test. A Failure means that injector has malfunctioned, and will require a Challenging (+0) Tech-Use Test to repair.

Cranial Armour

Microstrips of plasteel are bonded directly to the skull in subdermal layers, allowing for extra protection against head injury.

Common Craftsmanship armour grants the user one extra Armour Point in the head location. Poor versions do the same, but permanently reduce the wearer's Intelligence Characteristic by one due to the screws driven into the skull. Good Craftsmanship armour grants +1 AP and also subtract one from any Critical Effects to the head

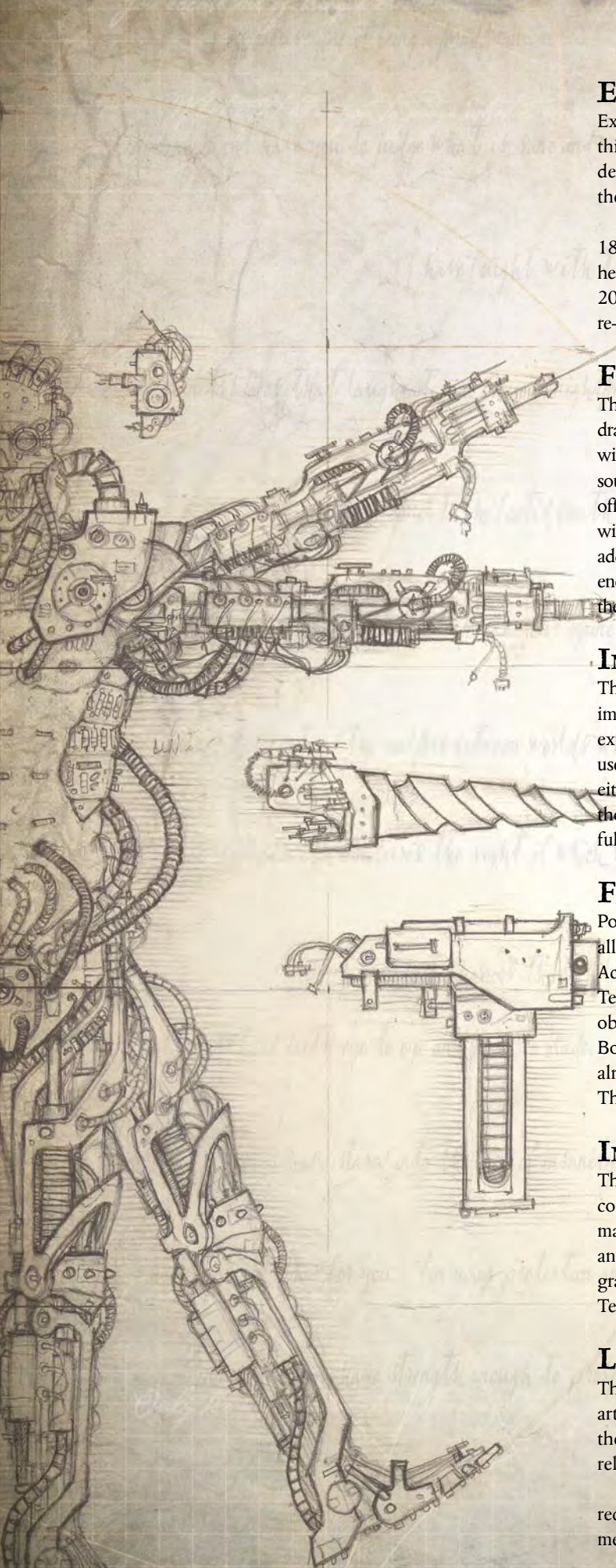
Cybernetic Senses

Most human senses can be artificially duplicated, allowing radiation ruined eyes or eardrums ruptured by concussion blasts to be replaced. Some Heretics even attempt to improve on their natural abilities or create new ones via these artificial implants, to further delve into new realms of sensation.

Common systems are usually obviously artificial and often oversized (especially optical implants) but duplicate the approximate human range of senses adequately with no further game effects.

Poor cybernetic senses are inferior to base humanity's level, often with static in the hearing, failures in colour vision, or taste buds that make everything taste like cloth. Users must take a –20 penalty to tests made involving the cybernetic sense.

Good Craftsmanship implants grant the Heightened Senses Talent for that particular sense, and a +20 bonus to tests made to resist attacks on the sense itself (such as deafening noises or blinding flashes). Basic and advanced cyber-eyes may also incorporate telescopic sights (counting as a telescopic sight, see page 170 for more details), a full photo-visor, and/or a system allowing the Dark Sight trait (see page 140). Likewise basic or advanced cybernetic hearing may also include an internal micro-bead system. Each of these "extra" upgrades counts as a separate implant for the purposes of acquisition.



Embedded Auspex

Expanding the realms of the senses is a common desire and this implant allows a Heretic a glimpse at what rewards true devotion might bring. Concentrating (a Half Action) allows the user to duplicate the effects of special sensory system.

Common implants function as a standard Auspex (see page 184). Poor models offer only a single detection ability (either heat, harmful radiation, or electromagnetic fields) with only a 20m range. Good systems act as a full Auspex but also allow a re-roll on Perception based tests when it is in use.

Flesh Replenishment

This implant system allows a Heretic to reinvigorate themselves by drawing on the energies of external machines. When in contact with a functioning machine, fully-charged battery, or other power source, the subdermal induction ports can allow the user to siphon off energy into their own body by making a Toughness Test with a +10 bonus. Success removes one level of Fatigue plus one additional level for each additional Degree of Success as the power energises neural and muscle tissue, or alternatively can recharge their Internal Reservoir if they have that implant as well.

Internal Reservoir

This implant acts as a powerful battery, storing energy for various implants and especially for functions that require energy to be expelled in rapid or violent fashions. When fully charged, the user will no longer gain fatigue from using Luminen Capacitors either to recharge something or offensively, but each use of those implants drains the reservoir by 50%. The battery will be full recharged after one day of resting.

Ferric Lure Implants

Powerful electromagnets are implanted in the Heretic, allowing him to cast forth a net of invisible energy as a Full Action requiring a successful Challenging (+0) Willpower Test and call an unsecured metal object into his hand. The object cannot mass more than 1kg per point of Willpower Bonus and must be within 20 metres, and the user must already have Mechanicus Implants for this system to function. This implant can be improved by certain Talents (page 124).

Interface Port

The Heretic now has a mechanical port implanted in his body, commonly in the rear of the neck, which can be connected to machines via his own data ports. This allows the user faster and smoother access to the valuable information within, and grants a +10 bonus to Common Lore, Inquiry, or Tech-Use Tests whilst connected to a relevant mechanism or data spool.

Luminen Capacitors

The Heretic's internal energies, either through biological or artificial sources, are channelled into capacitors buried into the flesh where they can be tapped to recharge items or even released in devastating attacks.

With a successful Toughness Test, the character may recharge or power machinery. This requires one minute of mental focus and meditation. The difficulty of the Toughness

Table 5-18: Cybernetics

Name	Availability
Ballistic Mechadendrite	Very Rare
Bionic Arm	Scarce
Bionic Legs/Locomotion	Scarce
Bionic Respiratory System	Rare
Black Blood	Very Rare
Blade-tines	Rare
Cerebral Implants	Very Rare
Chem Injector	Rare
Cranial Armour	Scarce
Cybernetic Senses	Rare
Embedded Auspex	Rare
Flesh Replenishment	Extremely Rare
Ferric Lure Implants	Very Rare
Luminen Capacitor	Very Rare
Interface Port	Rare
Internal Reservoir	Rare
Servo-Arm	Extremely Rare
Maglev Coils	Very Rare
Manipulator Mechadendrite	Very Rare
Mechanicus Assimilation	Extremely Rare
Medicae/Torture Mechadendrite	Very Rare
Mind Impulse Unit (MIU)	Rare
Nerve Induction Tines	Rare
Optical Mechadendrite	Very Rare
Pheromone Generator	Very Rare
Respiratory Implant	Rare
Skeletal Petrifaction	Rare
Synthmuscle	Rare
Tox Nails	Scarce
Utility Mechadendrite	Very Rare

Test varies depending on the nature of the powered system.

- Ordinary (+10): Simple Power Cell, Illuminator
- Challenging (+0): Weapon Charge Pack, Data-Slate, Bridge Terminal
- Difficult (–10): Shuttle electronics, Servo-Skull
- Hard (–20): Lascannon Charge Pack, Servitor, Bridge Hololith
- Very Hard (–30): Cogitator Core, Reactor Machine Spirit, Xenos Technology

The device call also be used offensively, however it requires Talents to use properly (see page 127). Only a Heretic with Mechanicus Implants may use this device.

Poor Craftsmanship variants impose a –10 penalty to all Toughness Tests made to use them (in effect, the Toughness Tests become one Degree more difficult). Good Craftsmanship variants grant a +10 bonus to all Toughness Tests made to use them (in effect, making the Tests one Degree easier).

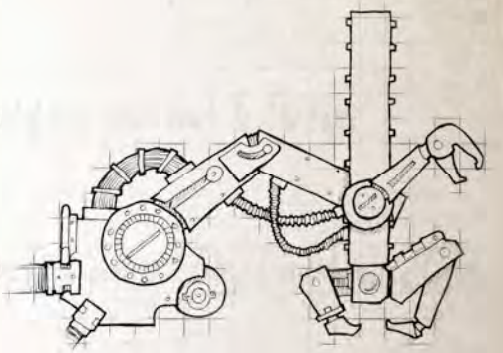
Maglev Coils

Archeotech systems of powerful gravimetric coils are implanted in the body, allowing the user to become unshackled from gravity's grasp for short periods. Using a Half Action, the user may hover 20-30 centimetres off the ground for a number of minutes equal to 1d10 plus the character's Toughness Bonus. The character must employ a Half Action each round to concentrate operating this implant and may use the other action to move normally. The character can slow their rate of descent when falling so long as this implant is active when the character reaches the ground, reducing all falling Damage to 1d10+3 Impact. Each time the character activates the coils, it drains the stored power and cannot be used again until recharged (taking one day).

Manipulator Mechadendrite

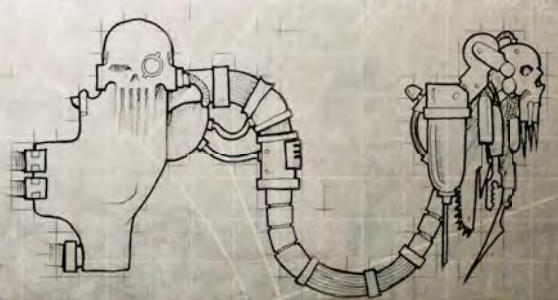
Possibly the most common form of mechadendrite, this artificial limb is a great aid to those working in industrial or technical areas and allows a Heretic to lift greater weights and more easily operate industrial gear. It can extend out to 1.5m and grants the user +20 to Strength Tests; the viscous gripping and crushing pincers can also tether the user to gantries or suitably heavy objects as a Free Action. The heavy metal pincers may be used in combat to make melee attacks. The Heretic may strike with it as his Reaction for the round or use it to make a Standard Attack (so long as it is only used once per round). The Manipulator Mechadendrite deals 1d10+2 I Damage.

While powerful, the manipulator is not subtle and attempts to use it for such tasks as data-slate typing, inscribing sacrificial etchings, handling delicate objects, or the like will only end with ruined equipment or failed summoning. A Heretic must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use Talent to operate this implant.



Medicae/Torture Mechadendrite

Made of thin, dextrous, two-metre tubes of metal and plasteel tipped with a variety of fascinating needles and blades, this mechadendrite can either heal or harm depending on a Heretic's intent. In most cases it can provide medical and surgical assistance, granting a +10 bonus to Medicae Tests. It houses six injector pistons; each may be filled with one dose of a drug and must be supplied and replaced separately (these can also be used to inject the user). Built-in flesh staplers may be used to staunch blood loss as a Half Action while the chainscalpel attachment reduces the difficulty of limb amputation to Challenging (+0) and deals 1d5 Rending Damage in combat, acting as an Improvised weapon. For those more interested in



answers than mending, the blades and needles grant the user +10 bonus to Interrogation Tests. This mechadendrite may be shoulder or sternum mounted and the Heretic must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use Talent for operation.

Mind Impulse Unit (MIU)

Also known as sense-links, these arcane implants allow direct interface with a machine or technological device. A basic MIU rig involves a single spinal or cortex connector, while the advanced variant will also include wrist connector probes (and possibly mechadendrite connectors) in addition to the flesh plug.

Common models add a +10 bonus to Tech-Use, Pilot or Drive Tests used in conjunction with devices capable of MIU linking.

Poor systems are not properly tuned to the user's brainwaves and require a successful Willpower Test to use. They impose a –10 penalty when attempting to interface with the device.

Good models, however, are perfectly tuned and the user feels the interfaced devices as if they were parts of their own body, even to specially modified weapons. They grant a +10 bonus to Tech-Use, Pilot, Drive, Logic, Inquiry and Weapon Skill Tests when interfaced with MIU systems.

Nerve Induction Tines

Thin flexible metal spikes are implanted underneath the fingernails, where they can emerge to a length of 5cm. Their nano-sharp ends enclose electrochemical induction ports, and can slice into skin to reach vulnerable nerves underneath to create excruciating pain or pleasure. This grants the user +20 to Interrogation Tests against prone or restrained subjects or alternatively +20 to Charm Tests against the same.

Optical Mechadendrite

This implant is highly flexible and can extend to 3m in length and the thinness of a bullet, with a tip covered with cameras and optical sensors. Ideal for inspection and detection even at the microscopic level, it grants a +10 bonus to all Perception-based tests and may also be used as a telescopic sight. The infra-red torch and sensors incorporated mean no penalties due to darkness and gains the user a +20 bonus to vision-based Perception Tests at night. If the user chooses, the end may also be mounted with a tiny but powerful glow-globe. This mechadendrite may be shoulder or sternum mounted, and a Heretic must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use Talent for operation.

Pheromone Generator

A combination of biological glands and injection systems, this implant allows the user to exude unseen but powerful chemicals into the air through modified sweat glands on a Routine (+20) Willpower Test. Charm Tests will gain a +10 bonus, rising to +20 if the test is taken in an enclosed area with little or no strong air movement.

Respiratory Implant

A simple and reliable procedure, this implant introduces microsieves and filtration screens into the airway so that the Heretic can breath even the most foully polluted Imperial air with no side effect, duplicating the action of a Respirator.

Servo-Arm

Utilised by the renegade Mechanicus Hereteks, these massive manipulators contain powerful crushing pincers designed for field repairs but also useful in combat as well. Each is integrated into the user's armour to offset the heavy weight and power requirements.

A Servo-Arm can extend up to 1.5m from its shoulder or back mounting and has a fixed Strength value of 75 with Unnatural Strength (+7) – the user always uses this, no matter his own Strength or any other factors. The powerful mandibles allow him to lift heavy objects or tether himself to a suitable anchor as a Free Action.

Against Imperial foes, a servo-arm is as mighty in battle as it is useful in repairs. The Heretic may strike with it as his Reaction for the round or use it to make a Standard Attack (so long as it is only used once per round). It hits using his Weapon Skill, dealing 2d10+14 Impact Damage with Pen 10.

Exceptional Craftsmanship from Heretek artisans (Best Craftsmanship versions) can improve the model, increasing the Strength to 85 (increasing Damage to 2d10+15) and granting +10 to any Grapple Tests.

A Heretic must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use Talent to operate this implant.

Skeletal Petrifaction

More a chemical treatment than an implant, metallic fluids are injected into bone marrow in a series of painful operations. The skeletal system incorporates them into the bone structure, making them heavier, stronger, and more damage resistant. A Heretic so altered gains the Bulging Biceps and (often literally) Iron Jaw Talents, and gains a +2 bonus to Damage for all unarmed attacks.

Synthmuscle

Ropey strands of vat-grown muscle tissue, thick with slurried nutrients and laced with flakweave, are woven into existing muscle groups granting increased strength of varying levels. Heretics gain Unnatural Strength 1; Best Craftsmanship grafts grant Unnatural Strength 4 but also impose a -10 to any Agility Tests due to the newly misshapen and unnatural body shape.

Utility Mechadendrite

This 2m mechadendrite incorporates a selection of useful tools and attachments, counting as a combi-tool and granting a +10 bonus to all Tech-Use Tests. It also contains six injector pistons each filled with one dose of Ligature Oil; these must be supplied and replaced separately. The limb is fitted with a Censer (see page 169), allowing it to billow fumes every 15 minutes with effects depending on the acquired ingredients. This can alternatively belch smoke clouds that may be employed in melee combat to distract and choke, imposing a –5 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests made by all living creatures within a two-metre radius for one round. This is a Half Action. Unless the censer is deactivated, all Perception Tests relying on a sense of smell made to detect the Heretic gain a +10 bonus. Also useful in combat is the cutting blade found at the end of one tip, counting as a knife with the Defensive Quality and Mono upgrade. A Heretic must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use Talent to operate this implant.

Daemon Weapons

"For seventeen long centuries have I remained in this blade, confined within these metal walls. During all of my time of imprisonment you are the first I have seen who is worthy to bear me into battle. Come, take my hilt, and I will serve you in the manner of my kind, drawing blood of your enemies, protecting you in the midst of the fight, bringing you safely home again. Now, draw me from the scabbard and test the fineness of my balance. See how easily I swing, how my keen edge cleaves the air. A good choice, am I not?

Willingly you picked me up. Your first mistake. Willingly you drew me. Your second mistake. I do not allow my servants to make three mistakes, foolish mortal…"

– Antinichus, Daemon of the Bloody Blade

Of all the tools employed to slay those who oppose the glory of Chaos, daemon weapons are amongst those most feared and least understood. Each contains the bound essence of a daemon, railing against its imprisonment and conferring upon the weapon great and terrible powers far beyond the capabilities of mundane weaponry.

Most daemon weapons contain only petty or bestial daemons, as such beasts are easier to summon, bind and control. The greatest of them, however, contain beings of horrific potency who once could slay armies single-handed and that now comprise weapons so powerful that they defy reason.

This section contains detailed rules for daemon weapons, allowing brave Heretics to attempt to control such willful and deadly weapons, or even dare to create their own, or suffer greatly in the attempt.

USING DAEMON WEAPONS

Amongst the most deadly and terrifying of all the tools of the arch-enemy, daemon weapons vary immensely in appearance, in construction, and in effect, but all share a few similarities: all are indisputably lethal, all are unnaturally durable, and all contain a savage monstrosity that desires nothing more than the freedom to wreak havoc upon the material world.

The greatest proportion of daemon weapons are simple devices—blades, mauls, axes, and the like. However, a small portion of them, often wrought by more creative and cunning artisans, are created from guns or other advanced weaponry. Regardless of their nature, however, all daemon weapons share the following basic qualities:

Lethality: In addition to any other powers and abilities they grant, daemon weapons are unnatural, hungering things that delight in slaughter and destruction. Daemon weapons with the Primitive Quality lose it, and all daemon weapons add the bound entity's Willpower Bonus to their Damage and penetration values. In addition, due to their blasphemous nature, any weapon which originally had the Sanctified Quality loses it when it is turned into a daemon weapon. Finally, any ranged daemon weapons lose their original clip size and reload time—the daemon within produces the ammunition, and consequently the weapon need never be



reloaded again, though it also can only use a single standard type of ammunition.

Uncanny Resilience: Regardless of their appearance and apparent construction, daemon weapons are extraordinarily difficult to damage. They count as having a natural armour of 20, and will not be destroyed if used to Parry or are Parried by weapons with Power Fields or similar effects. If a daemon weapon is somehow destroyed, roll immediately on **Table 6–3: Perils of the Warp** (see page 211). On any result which indicates a daemonic manifestation, it is the daemon within the weapon which is released, at which point it will likely attempt to slaughter every living creature it can find.

The Beast Within: All daemon weapons, as is their nature, contain within them a bound and enslaved warp entity, subjugated to the will of its wielder. In most daemon weapons, this creature will be relatively weak, incapable of anything but instinctive fury and unending bloodlust. However, more ambitious artisans have been known to try to bind more powerful entities into weapons, and some of the greatest gifts of the Dark Gods are legendary and terrifying weapons containing powerful daemons. The more powerful the bound daemon, the more powerful the weapon, and the greater the risk to the wielder.

In order to wield a daemon weapon, the user must first succeed in a Daemonic Mastery Test (see page 229), with the daemon suffering a penalty equal to –5 x the Binding Strength determined when the weapon was created. Success cows the weapon into obedience. After this point, should the wielder's concentration slip—should he be stunned or rendered unconscious, or should his Willpower fall below

that of the bound daemon—then the daemon will attempt to assert control, forcing another Daemonic Mastery Test. If, at any point, the wielder fails a Daemonic Mastery Test, then the daemon within the weapon may attempt a possession test (see page 229). If the attack succeeds, the wielder has succumbed and the daemon takes control over his body, enslaving him instead of the other way around.

DAEMON WEAPON ATTRIBUTES

Daemon weapons may display an almost limitless variety of different powers and attributes, which the beast within can grant grudgingly to its wielder, or by simple side-effect of its presence. The lists below illustrate some of the possibilities.

A daemon weapon may include attributes from the Unaligned list and any one other list—a daemon-possessed flamer could not have attributes from both the Slaanesh and Nurgle lists, for example, but it could take attributes from the Unaligned and Tzeentch lists.

Each list is presented as a d100 table, which is rolled on to determine a given daemon weapon's powers when it is created. Each table has entries which require rolls of greater than 100 to gain, representing powers beyond the reach of most daemons. When rolling on any of the Attribute tables, the daemon's Infamy characteristic may be added to the roll, representing the heights of power that the greatest of daemons can achieve, as described later in this section.

Unaligned Weapon Attributes

The following are attributes for unaligned Daemon Weapons.

Accursed

The daemon bound within this weapon is terrifyingly powerful, almost too powerful to be contained in this way. The creature's fury at being bound into an inanimate object, and the inhuman hatred it feels for all mortals, result in the weapon becoming far deadlier than it would normally be.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute deals an additional 1d10 Damage and has the Felling (4) Quality.

Howling

The daemon's displeasure manifests as a savage, unsettling howl whenever the weapon is used. The sound is one not swiftly or easily forgotten, and those who hear it find that it haunts their nightmares, accompanied by fleeting glimpses of the creature that created that terrible noise.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute grants the wielder the Fear (1) Trait (or increases any Fear Trait he may already have by +1) on any turn where he attacks with the weapon.

Impervious

The daemon within the weapon is a powerful creature indeed, unconcerned by the trivial blows of mortal weapons. This unholy resilience is conferred not only to the weapon, but to the wielder as well, who will find that the attacks of his enemy will be deterred by the shifting energies of the warp.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute grants the wielder a force field with a Protection Rating equal to the bound daemon's Willpower characteristic. However, being daemonic rather than technological in nature, the field will not overload. Instead, should the d100 roll to avoid Damage be any double, then the wielder must immediately roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena** and apply the result.

Impossibly Sharp

Sharper than the keenest mono-edge blade, these weapons glide through armour with contemptuous ease. The creatures bound within these weapons hold the protection of mortal armour in the greatest of scorn, honing their edges to impossible sharpness.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute has the Warp Weapon Quality.

Piercing

The daemon within this weapon seeks flesh eagerly, desiring only to rend and tear at skin and muscle, and to shatter bone. Its vile urges lead it to drag itself deep into the bodies of those it wounds, injuring them greatly.

Effects: Whenever a weapon with this attribute inflicts Critical Damage, the weapon deals additional Damage equal to the daemon's Willpower Bonus.

Vicious

This weapon is twisted, barbed, and serrated in ways that make it seem particularly savage. Powered melee weapons growl or hiss with an animalistic malice, while guns snarl and bark as they fire. Weapons so altered cause vicious wounds, faintly and impossibly reminiscent of those caused by a wild animal.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains the Tearing Quality. If it already has the Tearing Quality, then it gains the Razor Sharp Quality instead. If it already has both those qualities, it gains the Proven (2) Quality.

Voidchill

The daemon bound within this weapon is content to sit out its imprisonment with nothing but patient malice and cold detachment. So icy is its demeanour that the weapon it inhabits plunges to impossibly cold temperatures and bears with it an aura of killing cold.

Effects: Whenever a weapon with this attribute inflicts a wounding hit, it also causes 1d10 Toughness Damage.

Wounding

Dark splinters mar the edge of this weapon, or form from its ammunition, or otherwise find their way into the wounds this weapon inflicts, working their way deep into the flesh of the enemy, driven by the bound daemon's spite. These slivers of hate do little alone, but can cause agonising pain if the victim moves too swiftly.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains the Crippling Quality, with a value equal to the bound daemon's Willpower Bonus.

Khorne Weapon Attributes

The following are attributes for Khorne Daemon Weapons.

Bloodlust

This weapon craves battle, and constantly seeks to drive its wielder into combat. Nothing but endless conflict will sate this weapon's desires, and it will do everything it can to achieve that goal.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute forces the wielder to make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or enter a Frenzied state (as per the Frenzy Talent, see page 124) when drawing the weapon. The wielder may attempt, as a Full Action at any later point, a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test** to sheathe the weapon and end the Frenzied state.

Blood Tracker

Khorne's hounds can track any foe, any prey, over any distance, across space and time. No creature can elude Khorne's hunting dogs forever, and weapons bound with these daemons are renowned for their ability to find foes anywhere.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute grants the wielder the Unnatural Senses Trait, with a range equal to the Daemon's Willpower characteristic.

Fuelled By Slaughter

This blade contains the roaring, bellowing essence of one of Khorne's most powerful daemons, driven by bloodshed and slaughter. Its essence suffuses the weapon, drawing upon the death and carnage it inflicts to strengthen the wielder.

Effects: Whenever a weapon with this attribute is used to slay a living creature (creatures with the Daemonic or Machine Trait are not considered to be living creatures for this purpose), the wielder immediately regains 1d10 wounds, up to his normal maximum.

Null

Khorne's loathing of wizards and witchcraft knows no limits, and many of the Blood God's favoured creatures share that hatred. When bound into a weapon, that hatred manifests as a disbelief in the power of sorcery that defies that power rendering witches and wyrds powerless against the weapon's wielder.

Effects: Any psychic power which includes the wielder of this weapon as a target suffers an additional –20 penalty on the Focus Power Test.

Rampage

Many of Khorne's servant creatures are monstrosities of brass and bone and blood, creatures for whom slaughter is not the murder of one creature at a time, but rather a bloodbath of gouged and trampled bodies, a maelstrom of carnage. When bound into a weapon, these creatures leave nothing but destruction in their wake.

Effects: When making a Charge Attack using a weapon with this attribute, the weapon's wielder may instead make a Furious Impact. When using Furious Impact, the wielder moves its normal charge distance in a straight line towards a single target. If the weapon's wielder engages the target, that target and any other creatures, friend or foe, within 1 metre of the original target, suffer the weapon's Damage. The target and any other struck creatures hit by this attack may make Reactions as normal to avoid the Damage. The weapon's wielder does not need to roll to hit in order to use Furious Impact. Furious Impact may only be used once every other round.

Skulltaker

The weapon desires nothing but to rend the flesh and take the skulls of mortals, and it guides its wielder to that grisly end.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute suffers no penalty to perform a Called Shot attack, and may make that attack as a Half Action, so long as it is targeted against the enemy's head.

Spiteful

These weapons contain the bound and furious spirit of an unwilling daemon, imprisoned for the sole purpose of inflicting terrible injuries as these spirits lash out at any and all within reach. Such weapons are vicious, spiteful things, railing against their imprisonment.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains the Felling (2) Quality.

Thirsting

Khorne cares not from whence the blood flows, and neither does the daemon within this weapon. The desire to spill blood is this weapon's only instinct, and the weapon struggles against all restraint to slake that singular desire. With every wound it inflicts, the weapon drinks deeply of the victim's blood, leaving them drained and lethargic.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute inflicts a level of Fatigue with every wounding hit.

Nurgle Weapon Attributes

The following are attributes for Nurgle Daemon Weapons.

Bile-quenched

During the process of this weapon's creation, it was heated in a furnace fuelled by the flesh of lepers and quenched in the bile of those who have died from plagues, forever making it a tool of the Plague God and sealing the daemon deeply within it. The daemon's vile nature, emanating through disease-forged metals, causes nausea and distress in those it strikes.

Effects: A weapon with this Quality causes a creature it wounds to lose one of their half actions next turn, as nausea and dizziness overwhelms the creature's concentration. Certain creatures, such as those with the From Beyond, Daemonic, or Machine Trait, are immune.

Degeneration

The weapon is corroded and discoloured, tainted irrevocably by the daemon within. With every blow, a foe's body becomes increasingly palsied and disoriented, unable to act to the fullest of their ability.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute deals 1d10 Agility Damage with every wounding hit. This is a disease effect.

Embodiment of Decay

A vile mucous clings to this weapon, and bloated, mutant flies seem perpetually to buzz around it, yet no other living thing seems able to tolerate its presence, with plants and small animals nearby sickening and dying from mere proximity.

Effects: Any mundane plant, and any animal with a size of Puny or smaller and a TB of 2 or less, will sicken and die if it remains within a number of metres equal to the daemon's Willpower Bonus for more than one round. All other creatures suffer a –10 penalty on all Toughness Tests within that distance.

Enfeebling

The weapon's jaundiced appearance, and the way it writhes as if in pain, suggest it bears a vile malaise. The daemon within saps the strength of those it wounds, leaving them sluggish and feeble.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute deals 1d10 Strength Damage with every wounding hit. This is a disease effect.

Herald of Decay

The weapon exudes an aura that promises disease and decay to all nearby, which manifests as a noxious vapour, filled with buzzing of verminous insects and echoing with the death-rattle of the diseased. Only the greatest of daemons could create such a foul aura, which makes every wound a potentially lethal one.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute produces an aura of decay that leaves a rancid film within open wounds, causing greater pain as the slightest scratch can become infected. This aura extends around the weapon, when drawn, a number of metres equal to the daemon's Willpower Bonus. Within this range, all attacks that deal Explosive or Rending Damage gain the Toxic (1) and Felling (1) qualities, as does this weapon, regardless of the type of Damage it deals.

Pestilent Stench

The weapon is cursed with a foul smell that drives others to distraction. Few creatures can bear to stand near the rancid stench of rot and corruption.

Effects: All creatures within an area with a radius of the daemon's Willpower Bonus in metres, except those Devoted to Nurgle, suffer a –10 penalty on all Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Agility, Intelligence and Perception Tests due to feelings of nausea and revulsion.

Plague Carrier

Sealed within this weapon by runes of entropy and decay and bound by litanies of contagion written upon human skin and sealed with wax of human fat is one of Grandfather Nurgle's creations, a plague in the form of a daemon that chuckles to itself as it spreads from victim to victim.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute contains a virulent disease that spreads to anything it wounds. The weapon gains the Toxic (3) Quality, which deals 2d10 Toughness Damage upon a failed Toughness Test and makes the target contagious for the next seven rounds. Any who touch his flesh or bodily fluids within that time must pass a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test or also suffer 2d10 Toughness Damage and become contagious for the next seven rounds, as described above.

Table 5-19: Daemon Weapon Attributes

D100 Roll	Attribute
Unaligned Weapon Attributes	
01-20	Voidchill
21-40	Vicious
41-60	Piercing
61-80	Wounding
81-100	Impossibly Sharp
101-120	Impervious
121-140	Howling
141+	Accursed
Khorne Weapon Attributes	
01-20	Bloodlust
21-40	Thirsting
41-60	Blood Tracker
61-80	Null
81-100	Rampage
101-120	Spiteful
121-140	Skulltaker
141+	Fuelled By Slaughter
Slaanesh Weapon Attributes	
01-20	Envenomed
21-40	Lashing
41-60	Shrieking
61-80	Swiftness
81-100	Soporific Musk
101-120	Glittering
121-140	Entrancing Aura
141+	Commanding Presence
Nurgle Weapon Attributes	
01-20	Bile-quenched
21-40	Enfeebling
41-60	Degeneration
61-80	Embodiment of Decay
81-100	Plague Carrier
101-120	Stream of Corruption
121-140	Pestilent Stench
141+	Herald of Decay
Tzeentch Weapon Attributes	
01-20	Mutating
21-40	Spellbound
41-60	Mind Eater
61-80	Warp Flame
81-100	Illusory
101-120	Living Magic
121-140	Sorcerous Force
141+	Fateweaver

Stream of Corruption

The weapon, bloated and distended by the daemon's presence, drips with black bile and diseased blood. Upon depressing a bony stud near the weapon's grip, it expels a spray of vile, polluted fluids towards the enemy, coating them in rancid, corrosive filth.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains an additional form of attack, which may be used instead of the weapon's normal attack – the weapon may not be used to attack using both the Stream of Corruption and its normal method in the same turn. It is considered to be a Basic Weapon with a range of 30m, and deals 2d10 plus the daemon's Willpower Bonus in Impact Damage, with the Felling (2), Spray, Stream, Toxic (3) and Warp Weapon qualities.

Slaanesh Weapon Attributes

The following are attributes for Slaanesh Daemon Weapons.

Commanding Presence

The daemon's force of personality and innate charisma produce a weapon which almost glows with undeniable authority, making the wielder difficult to dismiss.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute, when drawn, grants the wielder the Unnatural Fellowship trait, with a rating equal to half the daemon's Willpower Bonus, rounding up.

Entrancing Aura

The daemon is well-versed in spells of enticement and desire, and weaves them about the weapon, making its motion impossible to ignore, grabbing attention and refusing to release it, leaving the entranced enemy exposed to attack.

Effects: A melee weapon with this Quality, when drawn, allows the wielder to Feint as a Free Action once per turn. Ranged weapons gain no additional effect.

Envenomed

The weapon appears to be made, in part, of fragile bone or glass, with many tiny openings from which seep a translucent fluid. Its touch is deadly, its bite more so, as daemonic venom is transferred into the target's wounds.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains the Toxic Quality, with a rating equal to half the daemon's Willpower Bonus, rounding up.

Glittering

The daemon cannot help but entice and enthral, and its essence causes the weapon to shine with a distracting iridescence, that grasps the target's attention at the last and most crucial moment.

Effects: Any attempt to use the Dodge or Parry Skill to avoid attacks from a weapon with this attribute suffer an additional –10 penalty.

Lashing

The weapon, like the daemon within it, has an ophidian Quality to it, writhing and shifting with sinuous grace in the wielder's hands. When it attacks, it lashes out, extending far further than it should be able to reach.

Effects: A melee weapon with this attribute gains the Flexible Quality, cannot be parried and can attack from up to the daemon's Willpower Bonus in metres away, in a similar manner to a whip. A ranged weapon with this Quality, due to the way it shifts and elongates, gains the Gyro-stabilised Quality.

Shrieking

The weapon's construction is bizarre, containing many tiny hollows and furrows that catch the air as it moves, emitting noises that sound faintly like the wrathful howls of the daemon within. Upon striking an enemy, this wailing reaches a crescendo, driving deep into the target's mind and causing intense pain.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains the Concussive (2) Quality.

Soporific Musk

The daemon's presence causes the weapon to exude a thin, iridescent pink mist that clouds reality in a dream-like haze. For those devoted to the Prince of Sensations, this is of no concern, but for others, this delusion occludes the senses and slows reaction time.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute causes all creatures within the daemon's Willpower Bonus in metres to suffer a –20 penalty to Perception and Agility. This penalty does not apply to creatures Devoted to Slaanesh.

Swiftness

This weapon may contain one of Slaanesh's beasts, swift creatures that can outpace most mortal beasts. Its presence within this weapon confers some of the creature's fleet nature to its wielder.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute, when drawn, grants the target the Unnatural Agility trait at a rating equal to half the daemon's Willpower Bonus, rounding up.

Tzeentch Weapon Attributes

The following are attributes for Tzeentch Daemon Weapons.

Fateweaver

The daemon within the weapon is well-versed in the ever-shifting tapestry of fate that influences all things, and knows how to influence destiny for its own ends.

Effects: The possessor of a weapon with this attribute gains an additional two Infamy Points, as if his Infamy were 20 points higher.

Illusory

The daemon within the weapon is a master of lies and deception, twisting reality about the weapon in order to conceal its nature and purpose.

Effects: The weapon appears to be a normal weapon of its type unless the observer passes a **Hard (–20) Awareness Test**. In addition, the weapon's deceptive nature imposes a –10 penalty on all Dodge and Parry Tests to avoid its attacks.

Living Magic

Tzeentch is the master of sorcery, and many of its daemons are skilled in the arcane arts. From deep within the weapon, the daemon whispers the secrets of sorcery to the wielder, for reasons all its own.

Effects: While a weapon with this attribute is drawn, the wielder gains a bonus to Focus Power Tests equal to twice the daemon's Willpower Bonus.

Mind Eater
The weapon leaves no visible wounds, no mark to demonstrate its passage. It appears as a baroque, impossible construct of smoke and crystal, and the daemon within does not feed upon flesh and blood, but upon intellect and awareness.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute rolls for Damage as normal, ignoring Toughness Bonus and Armour. However, no wounds are caused by the attack; instead, the weapon deals Intelligence and Perception Damage, with the total Damage rolled divided evenly between the two characteristics.

Mutating
The weapon's form is inconstant, perpetually shifting and changing, as if constantly in flux. The daemon within, railing against its confinement, seeks to change its prison, yet can find no contentment in any one form, and inflicts this unending change upon those it wounds.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute forces any creature wounded by it to make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or roll on **Table 9–1: Gifts of the Gods** (see **Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy**) and apply the results immediately as their forms are altered by the power of the weapon. At the GM's discretion, lesser creatures may be mutated directly into a vile but harmless spawn and count as killed.

Spellbound
Etched onto this weapon, and bound within the weapon alongside the malefic will of its daemonic inhabitant, is a single spell that can be unleashed upon the wielder's enemies.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute confers upon the wielder a single psychic power, chosen when the weapon is created, which is cast using the daemon's Willpower characteristic, and any Psy Rating it may have, requiring the normal action to use that psychic power. The Focus Power Test for this power suffers an additional –10 penalty for every 100xp the power costs after the first. The weapon can only use the power at the Unfettered power level.

Sorcerous Force
The weapon crackles with arcane power, indicating a greater power lurking just beneath the surface, barely suppressed. Upon tasting the flesh of its foes, the daemon within can unleash that power, blasting them with the raw power of the warp.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute may, upon dealing Damage, make an Opposed Willpower Test using the daemon's Willpower and that of the target. Every Degree of Success deals an additional 1d10 Energy Damage.



Warp Flame
Unnatural fires are a frequent part of the arcane lore related to Tzeentch, and many of Tzeentch's daemons are wrought from the fires of the warp. The daemon within the weapon is one such creature, giving the weapon a lambent glow that rises to a hellish inferno when it is used to attack.

Effects: A weapon with this attribute gains the Flame Quality. If it is a melee weapon, it gains the Proven (3) Quality as well. If it is a ranged weapon, it gains the Reliable and Warp Weapon qualities.

CREATING DAEMON WEAPONS
To wield a daemon weapon is a relatively simple matter, requiring only sufficient will to dominate the daemon within. To create such a weapon, however, is a far more complex affair, requiring considerable preparation and posing many challenges to be overcome.

For those who craft arms for the servants of Chaos, the process of binding daemons into weaponry is amongst the highest of arts, requiring great and far-reaching knowledge and extraordinary skill to accomplish without being torn apart by the daemons they intend to bind.

Preparation
The first and most crucial step involved in creating a daemon weapon is obtaining the weapon. While in theory a daemon can be bound to any weapon, in practise it is extremely difficult to force a daemon to inhabit a mundane vessel. Instead, Chaos artisans employ weapons crafted specifically for the purpose of binding a daemon into, or weapons with an appropriate legacy of slaughter. The former are specially prepared for the act of binding, while the latter are imbued with the echoes of grand emotion, to which daemons can easily be drawn and within which they can be easily entrapped.

Wrought for Purpose
These weapons are carefully crafted, in a manner defined by ancient and bizarre rituals. Surfaces are inlaid with micro-etched runes, too small for the eye to see, while the weapon's form is carefully crafted into shapes reminiscent of the daemon that the weapon is being created to contain. The most carefully-wrought examples cunningly conceal the true-name of the daemon within their construction, or mimic the patron deity of the intended inhabitant.

To craft a weapon for the purpose of creating a daemon weapon requires a Tech-Use Test, modified by the weapon's availability and Craftsmanship (see **Table 5–20: Difficulty and Time by Availability**)—rarer weapons are more difficult to craft in the first place. Additional embellishments, such as creating the weapon as an item of devotion for a particular Chaos God, or working the intended daemon's true name into the design, each impose an additional –10 penalty. If the penalty would be greater than –60, the task is impossibly complex, beyond the ability of mortal craftsmen to achieve.

Designing and creating a weapon in this way takes an amount of time determined by the weapon's availability

Table 5-20: Difficulty and Time by Availability

Availability	Modifier	Time Taken
Ubiquitous	Easy (+30)	24 hours
Abundant	Routine (+20)	2 days
Plentiful	Ordinary (+10)	5 days
Common	Challenging (+0)	10 days
Average	Difficult (–10)	20 days
Scarce	Hard (–20)	30 days
Rare	Very Hard (–30)	60 days
Very Rare	Arduous (–40)	90 days
Extremely Rare	Punishing (–50)	6 months
Near Unique	Hellish (–60)	1 year
Unique	Hellish (–60), reroll successful tests	2 years
Craftsmanship	**Modifier**	**Time Taken**
Poor	+10	x1/2
Common	+0	–
Good	–10	x2
Best	–30	x3

and Craftsmanship; more complex weapons take longer to manufacture. See **Table 5–20: Difficulty and Time** by Availability for details.

Upon successfully creating a weapon for this purpose, record the number of Degrees of Success scored on the Tech-Use Test—this will be relevant later.

Legacy of Slaughter

As an alternative to creating a weapon from scratch, an artisan may seek out a weapon which contains what sorcerers and dark scholars refer to as a "sympathetic emotional resonance." This means that the weapon itself has seen sufficient use in war and ritual, or has some particular connection to the daemon or its patron, to be powerfully charged with emotion to make it an ideal vessel for daemonic binding.

Finding such weapons is not an easy matter, and it often requires many months or years of searching to find the ideal item. Once a potential candidate has been located, it takes a **Very Hard (–30) Psyniscience Test** to confirm the presence or absence, and the strength of a suitable emotional charge, with more Degrees of Success granting more information. This is described on **Table 5–21: Legacy of Slaughter.**

With weapons, the strength of an emotional charge normally depends on the lives it has taken. Other factors can be relevant, such as the bond between a particular wielder and the weapon (for example, weapons created to commemorate a particular event or heirlooms passed between generations), but few things charge a weapon with emotion like the transition from life to death. The effects of this emotional charge are detailed later in this section. It is up to the GM to determine what sort of weapon this may be, and how many lives it has taken.

Summoning

A key element of creating a daemon weapon is, unsurprisingly, the daemon itself. Few daemons desire to be bound into a small inanimate object and given little to no freedom to slake their savage desires. (binding a daemon into a vehicle or a mortal host is far easier by comparison, as the daemon retains mobility and freedom of action), and consequently few daemons will willingly comply with a summoner's demands if he intends to create a daemon weapon.

Summoning a daemon for this purpose requires a ritual, as described on pages 228, in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**, which also provides a few sample summoning rituals. However, if the daemon becomes aware of a character's intent to bind it into a weapon, it gains a +20 bonus on its Willpower Test to resist any Daemonic Mastery Tests the character attempts until it is successfully bound. Daemons have long memories for such things, and do not easily forget those to attempt to enslave them.

Binding

With the weapon and the daemon both prepared, the matter of binding the two together is the next stage of the process. Binding a daemon into a weapon is a lengthy and difficult ritual, with many risks for those involved. There are a great many tales of those who have attempted this ritual and failed, only to be torn to pieces by the daemon they sought to bind.

The ritual to bind a daemon into a weapon is described below, and follows the rules for rites and rituals described on pages 228, in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**.

Forge the Accursed Weapon

This ritual binds a daemon into a single weapon of the Heretic's choosing, sealing them together into a single hellish device.

Requirements: An appropriate weapon must be selected and anointed in a ritualistic fashion, and a ritual performed in a space with some significance. One example is the weapon is anointed in human blood, daubing blasphemous runes upon it, and a single daemon must be summoned and held under the Heretic's control. An example location might be one where the veil between reality and the warp is thin, or upon ground which is sacred to an enemy of Chaos and has been defiled through sacrifice and iconoclastic acts. An example ceremony is one in which the weapon and the daemon must be within a ritual circle painted in a mixture of blood and bone dust and marked with runes of binding and enslavement. In addition, eight cultists must assist the ritual, bound in chains of black iron, chanting for eight hours before the ritual begins, and sacrificed to the Dark Gods at its conclusion. A **Hellish (–60) Forbidden Lore (Warp or Daemonology) Test** is required to successfully perform the ritual, modified by **Table 5–22: Summoning Ritual Modifiers**. The GM should also apply any other modifiers he feels are appropriate.

Effects: The daemon is bound within the weapon, creating a

Table 5-21: Legacy of Slaughter

Degrees of Success	Information Gained
1	Presence or absence of an emotional charge.
2	Strength of the emotional charge.
3+	Whether the emotional charge is aligned to a particular Chaos God or a particular known daemon (if any).

Table 5-22: Summoning Ritual Modifiers

Condition (Combine any of the following that apply to arrive at a net modifier no greater than +60 or –60)	Modifier
Power of the Daemon	–1/2 Daemon's Infamy
Weapon Wrought for Purpose: Degrees of Success on Tech-Use Test	+5 per Degree of Success
Legacy of Slaughter: Killed 100,000 or more	+30
Legacy of Slaughter: Killed 10,000 or more, but fewer than 100,000 Legacy of Slaughter: Daemon has encountered the weapon before Legacy of Slaughter: History is sympathetic to daemon's patron god Weapon Wrought for Purpose: Weapon is inscribed with the daemon's True Name	+20
Legacy of Slaughter: Killed 1,000 or more, but fewer than 10,000 Weapon Wrought for Purpose: Weapon's creation reflects the nature of the daemon's patron god Weapon is a Primary Melee Weapon Weapon is Best Craftsmanship Legacy of Slaughter: Weapon was a holy relic of an enemy of Chaos and is being defiled Legacy of Slaughter: Weapon is a Legacy Weapon	+10
Weapon is Good Craftsmanship	+0
Weapon is Common Craftsmanship	–10
Weapon Wrought for Purpose: Weapon's creation reflects the nature of a god opposed to the daemon	–20
Legacy of Slaughter: History is sympathetic with a god opposed to the daemon Legacy of Slaughter: Weapon has never drawn blood	–30

daemon weapon. Total the number of Degrees of Success gained on the test to complete the ritual—this is the Binding Strength, which is used to determine the power of the weapon.

Duration: The resulting daemon weapon is permanent, unless the daemon is somehow released.

Cost: The ritual is taxing to even the most powerful of Heretics, drawing upon their fundamental essence and leeching it away. Every participant in the ritual suffers 2d10 Damage to every Characteristic. In addition, the surging energies of the warp cause a single immediate roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**.

The Price of Failure: The binding fails to take and the daemon breaks free of the Heretic's control, moving to slaughter the mortal that presumed to enslave it, and any other creature that gets in its way. Further, the massive amounts of gathered warp energy intended for the ritual are unleashed, resulting in an immediate roll on **Table 6–6: The Contempt of the Warp**, modified by +10 for every Degree of Failure after the first.

Determine Abilities

Once bound into the weapon, the daemon is trapped, unable to free itself and forced to serve whoever wields and can master it. The weapon gains the abilities listed in the Using Daemon Weapons section, on page 194, and a number of rolls on the Daemon Weapon Attribute tables determined by both the strength of the daemon and the strength of the bindings.

A daemon weapon gains one roll on a single one of the Daemon Weapon Attribute tables (chosen before rolling) for every point of the daemon's Willpower Bonus, less one for every point of Binding Strength determined when the weapon was created, to a minimum of one attribute. All daemon weapons may have attributes from the Unaligned table, but only daemons aligned to a particular Chaos God may roll on the attribute table for that Chaos God. When rolling to determine a daemon weapon's attributes, a single roll on any one of the available tables may be modified by adding the daemon's Infamy characteristic to the roll.

Example

A Bloodletter of Khorne with an Infamy of 24 has been bound into an Axe, with a total Binding Strength of 1. As the daemon's Willpower Bonus is 3, it may make two rolls for daemon weapon attributes, on either the Unaligned or Khorne Weapon Attribute tables. To one these rolls it may add its Infamy of 24, giving it a chance of more powerful attributes.

Malice and Machinations

Daemons loathe the bondage and enslavement that a daemon weapon represents, regarding such captivity and the indignity of being forced to serve mortals as one of the greatest imaginable insults to beings born of hate and nightmares.

Daemons intelligent or lucid enough to communicate with mortals frequently express their loathing this way, speaking into the mind of their wielder to convey scorn or mockery, deriding their skills and their decisions at every opportunity. While impotent to act against their wielder directly, they are ever-vigilant for the moment when they can push to seize control of their wielder's body and vent their frustrations.

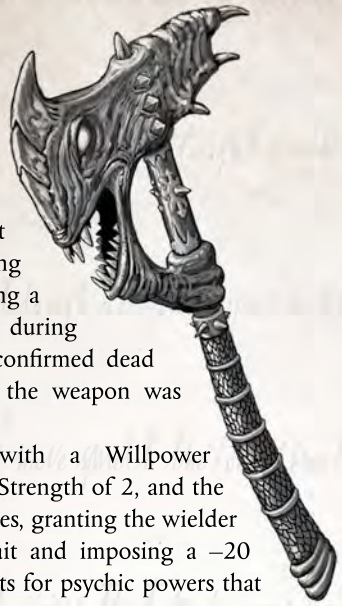
Perhaps more dangerous, however, are those daemons which act neutral towards their wielder, or even those who provide helpful advice on occasion. Such daemon weapons are a terrible peril, for the daemon within is a patient and cunning beast, and every word it speaks is likely just one more step towards some eventual and terrible goal.

EXAMPLE DAEMON WEAPONS

Across the Screaming Vortex, and in parts beyond, many weapons and the beasts within them have gained as much infamy as the champions that have borne them. Beasts of this nature are seldom powerful enough to forge such a reputation alone, but in the hands of the servants of the dark gods, the least of daemons can be a fearsome blade against the vassals of the corpse-god.

Each of these weapons is Unique, and should never be available simply through testing Infamy, as gaining such treasured items is never as simple as rolling dice.

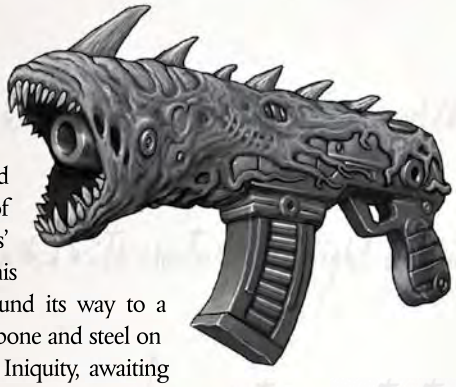
Goreseeker



Containing a Flesh Hound of Khorne, this razor-fanged axe confers those creatures' best known traits upon the one who wields it. It was last seen in the hands of the Aspiring Champion Gorath Varix, leading a warband of Khorne Berserkers during a raid on Midael. Varix was confirmed dead in the battle's aftermath, but the weapon was nowhere to be found.

Goreseeker is an Axe with a Willpower characteristic of 40, a Binding Strength of 2, and the Blood Tracker and Null attributes, granting the wielder the Unnatural Senses (40) Trait and imposing a –20 penalty on all Focus Power Tests for psychic powers that target him.

Vilemaw

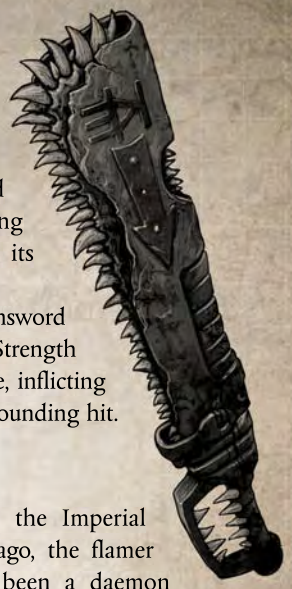


Once borne into battle by Ahn Sokar, the Icon Bearer and later Coryphaus of the Word Bearers' 39th Host, this Bolter somehow found its way to a makeshift shrine of bone and steel on the reaver world of Iniquity, awaiting a worthy master. Though the beast within is only a minor warp entity, little more than an astral spectre, the weapon itself is a relic of the Traitor Legions, proud and belligerent, and unwilling to suffer the touch of mortals. With every unworthy soul who attempts to claim this weapon, the shrine grows a little larger.

Vilemaw is a Legion Bolter with a Willpower characteristic of 28, a Binding Strength of 2 and the Vicious attribute, granting the weapon the Razor Sharp Quality.

An'garrach

A weapon perhaps more infested than possessed, An'garrach has a long history and has changed hands more times than anyone cares to recollect. A Legion chainsword containing the bound essence of one or more Nurglings, An'garrach exists to spread illness, and is too stupid a creature to realise the indignity of its situation. More enthusiastic than most daemon weapons, it revs its motor and drools pus-filled oil with annoying regularity, perhaps explaining its frequent change of ownership.



An'garrach is a Legion Chainsword with a Willpower of 28, a Binding Strength of 3, and the Degeneration attribute, inflicting 1d10 Agility Damage with every wounding hit.

Krz'at'tchal

Once a weapon proudly serving the Imperial Guard many thousands of years ago, the flamer now known as Krz'at'tchal has been a daemon weapon for so long that it barely remembers existence beyond the bizarre flesh and steel of its prison. Once a Flamer of Tzeentch, the daemon now projects its many-coloured flames through the mutated nozzle of the flamer it calls home.

Krz'at'tchal is a Flamer with a Willpower of 40, a Binding Strength of 2, and the Mutating and Warp Fire attributes, granting the weapon the Reliable and Warp Weapon qualities, and forcing all creatures wounded by the weapon to make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or begin to mutate.

Nach'ra'ael the Hungering

The final prison of the Daemon Prince Nach'ra'ael, this sword was crafted specifically to hold the daemon by artisans enslaved by a rival's warband, the name of which is long lost to history. A horrifically powerful weapon, the blade seems to move between the worlds of the Screaming Vortex seemingly at random, appearing occasionally in the hands of a warlord powerful enough to claim it without succumbing to the weapon's inhabitant. In this, Nach'ra'ael perhaps has the last laugh, for it has managed to reclaim former glories by possessing unworthy wielders.

Nach'ra'ael is a Sword with a Willpower of 75, a Binding Strength of 4, and the Accursed, Impossibly Sharp, and Vicious attributes, adding +1d10 to its Damage, and the Felling (4), Tearing, and Warp Weapon Qualities.

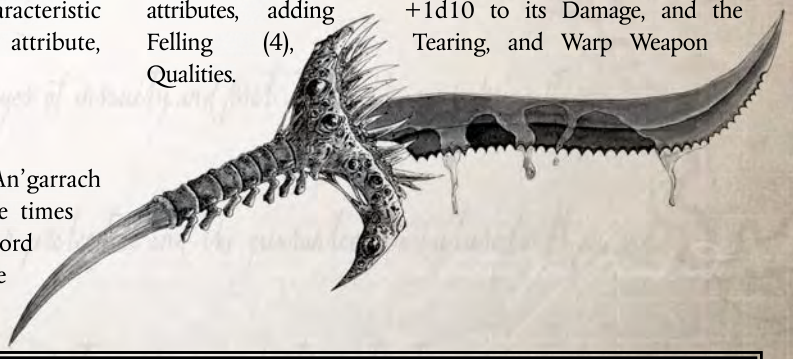


Table 5-23: Notable Daemon Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt.
Goreseeker	Melee	–	–	1d10+6 R	4	Unbalanced	4 kg
Vilemaw	Basic	100m	S/3/–	1d10+11 X	6	Razor-Sharp, Tearing	18 kg
An'garrach	Melee	–	–	1d10+5 R	6	Balanced, Tearing	10 kg
Krz'at'tchal the Soulburner	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+8 E	8	Flame, Reliable, Spray, Warp Weapon	6 kg
Nach'ra'ael the Hungering	Melee	–	–	2d10+7 R	7	Balanced, Felling (4), Tearing, Warp Weapon	3 kg



Psychic Powers

Using Psychic Powers

•

Unaligned Powers

•

God-Specific Powers

•

Exalted Powers

•

Additional Powers

•

Rituals

Chapter VI: Psychic Powers

"The fool, the coward, and the ignorant proclaim that the warp is a realm of unknowable peril and indescribable terror, that it is the hell of countless ancient myths and legends. This is a lie, told by those whose authority is based on lies, to keep the masses terrified of the unknown. The warp is limitless in power and its secrets are infinite; it is knowledge and strength, life and death, and the untapped potential to make and remake worlds. It takes only the discipline and the will to shape it; those who lack that clarity of purpose are liable to be shaped by it instead."

– Ahzek Ahriman of the Thousand Sons



Psykers, sorcerers, witches, warlocks, wyrds… the names for beings able to touch the warp are many. These individuals have the capability to reach into the warp and grasp from within it the power to shape the world, bending reality to their wills. Collectively, these feats of defiance against the material universe are known as psychic powers, sorcery, witchcraft, spells or a variety of other names, dependent upon who wields those powers and how they are regarded.

While these powers are regarded with fear and suspicion within the Imperium, this is not the case everywhere. Amongst the servants of the Ruinous Powers, the psychic gift is often regarded as a blessing from the Gods. It is seen as a means for mortals to contact the realm of daemons and gain insight into the desires of unknowable entities. The least of them are a resource to be expended, their fragile minds and frail flesh burning away under the harsh light of the warp, but the greatest of them are terrifying to behold, becoming literal conduits for the power of change, and no longer entirely mortal.

But the Imperium and the servants of Chaos are not the only forces that possess psykers. Many renegades and traitors stand outside the Imperium without seeking the Dark Gods for favour, and a great many alien species possess powerful psykers of their own, from the enigmatic and subtly powerful seers of the Eldar, to the brutal and unpredictable Weirdboyz of the Orks, to the horrific witch-beasts that lead the endless tide of the Tyranid menace, and many more besides.

Psykers in the 41st Millennium

Psykers take many forms and fill many roles across the galaxy, employed by many races, civilisations and factions, and these rare and exceptional individuals are variously revered and reviled by those who employ their abilities.

Witches and Wyrds

While many psykers do not survive the first manifestation of their powers, those who do—and manage to avoid being abducted or murdered by the agents of the Imperium—can learn to harness great power. Most of these are born to isolated or outlaw communities, or upon worlds completely beyond the reach of the Imperium, but a few can be found deep within the heart of the corpse-emperor's domain, eluding the persecution of the authorities.

These psykers rarely have the stability of those who have been enslaved and subjected to the "Sanctioning" of the Imperium, but can attain frightening degrees of power, their minds unconstrained by the dogmatic training that characterises the Sanctioned. Such wyrds are highly sought after by those of nefarious intent, and many find sanctuary in the service of the Ruinous Powers, gaining peers who have suffered the same persecution and peril, and finding routes to previously unimaginable power.

Sorcerers of Chaos

In the dark days of the Horus Heresy, the Librarians—the battle-psykers of the Adeptus Astartes—of those legions that followed Horus swiftly devoted their minds and souls to the glory of the Dark Gods, becoming vessels for greater power than they could ever have grasped while still in the servitude of the False Emperor. While the best known of these are the sorcerers of the Thousand Sons, most of those legions had Librarians who swore their eternal allegiance to Chaos.

In the millennia since the Long War began, many of the Adeptus Astartes have renounced their loyalty to the Golden Throne and sworn themselves to Chaos, and amongst this number have been many Librarians who cast off the shackles of their old masters and embraced a greater power. In addition, as the Legions

have replenished their numbers, they have unearthed those with psychic talent, who become sorcerers or die in the attempt.

Children of the Warp

Amongst the greatest and deadliest of all psykers are, perhaps unsurprisingly, those who hail from the depths of the Immaterium. The daemons of the warp manipulate its energies instinctively, naturally and without the same risks that plague mortal psykers.

Not all daemons draw upon the warp to manifest what mortals know as psychic powers—those that manifest from the power of Khorne, for example, do not call upon the Immaterium in this way—but those that do can achieve it without the mental discipline and ritualistic techniques that characterise mortal psykers. The greatest of daemons can tear at the fabric of reality with a scorn that only a creature born of pure hate could manage, unleashing impossible, horrific energies that defile all they touch.

Slaves of the Corpse-Emperor

For a civilisation that claims to abhor the witch, the Imperium employs a vast number of psykers and other beings able to touch the warp. The Imperium is reliant on Astropaths to communicate across the vast distances of space, Navigators to guide their starships through the void, Librarians to fight beside their armies, and more besides. This hypocritical use of so many psykers is often cited by seditious cultists to draw people to their cause.

The psykers of the Imperium bind their powers to fearful dogma and the psychic bondage of the False Emperor, unable to grasp the true potential of their abilities and frequently unwilling to embrace the powers they possess, viewing them as a dangerous, necessary evil. To view one's own gifts with fear and loathing is considered the greatest of follies by witches and sorcerers who have embraced Chaos.

Xenos Psykers

Beyond the multitudes of humanity, there are many alien species that possess psykers of their own, although often very different in form and ability to those of mankind. The brutish, unpredictable Weirdboyz of the Orks are deadly when surrounded by the bellowing masses of their kin, while species such as the Stryxis employ arcana that is the stuff of nightmares. Meanwhile, the savage psyker-beasts of the Tyranids fill the warp with a shadow that hinders the talents of all other psykers, drawing deep from an alien source unlike the raw energies of the Immaterium.

Of all the species in the galaxy, one stands as vehemently opposed to the glory of Chaos as the servants of the Imperium: the Eldar. Though their numbers are dwindling, their psykers—known as Seers and Warlocks—are subtle and powerful, able to call upon the warp deftly and carefully, to view the future with clarity unmatched by all but the greatest of daemons. The Eldar are vigilant and careful about contact with Chaos, terrified of the glories they could achieve in the embrace of the Dark Gods and incapable of reaching the heights of power that lay within their grasp if they were not so afraid of the true power of the warp.

Living Anathema

Amongst the greatest weapons mankind possesses against Chaos are so-called Untouchables, beings whose very existence is anathema to the glories of Chaos. Lacking a true presence in the warp, they are not psykers, but rather the complete opposite. Their mere presence dulls the talents of psykers nearby, hindering or even blocking their ability to draw upon the warp. They cannot be seen by the witch-sight of psykers or daemons.

As befits such vile creatures, their presence is unsettling to those around them, who can detect the wrongness that they embody, forcing them to live isolated lives. Daemons suffer even more greatly in their presence, their substance corroded by mere proximity to an Untouchable.

Psychic Powers in Black Crusade

Psychic powers are the physical manifestation of a psyker's abilities, and mark him as distinct from any other kind of character. In **Black Crusade**, Psychic Powers are available to comparatively few characters, typically only those from the Chaos Space Marine Sorcerer or Human Psyker Archetypes, or those who have dedicated themselves to Tzeentch, though others may develop these gifts as they grow in power and influence. Over the course of their adventures, Heretics are likely to encounter a variety of enemies with psychic powers, from the Warlocks of the Eldar to the Sanctioned Psykers and Librarians of the Imperium and the sorcerers of rival Chaos-worshippers. In all cases, the GM and players should use the rules presented here to represent a psyker's deadly gifts.

PSY RATINGS

Psy Rating (PR) is a raw measure of a psyker's power and his ability to draw power from the warp. The higher a psyker's PR, the more powerful he will be. PR usually ranges from 1 (a petty warp-witch or thrall psyker) to 10 (a monstrous Greater Daemon of Tzeentch or manipulative Eldar Farseer), though in some extremely special cases, it may go higher still. PR is used to determine the potency of all Psychic Powers, such as range, area effect, or Damage. To have any access to Psychic Powers, a character must have a PR of at least 1.

A starting Sorcerer has a Psy Rating of 2, while a starting Psyker has a Psy Rating of 3. Unlike other characteristics, however, Psy Rating is increased by spending Experience Points in a similar manner to gaining Talents. This represents the character's natural potential, his training, and the powers he has bargained for (see **Chapter II: Character Creation**).

Characters may not purchase a Psy Rating higher than their Corruption Point Bonus (the tens digit of their Corruption Point Total) plus their Willpower Bonus. Although Heretics may start with a higher Psy Rating, this simply means they cannot make further purchases until their Corruption Point Total increases.

USING PSYCHIC POWERS

When a psyker, such as a Sorcerer or Psyker, wishes to use a Psychic Power, he must first choose how much power he is pouring into the ability, and any other methods he is using to draw upon and focus the power of the warp. Then he must make a Focus Power Test (typically, but not always, a Willpower Test, modified by the difficulty of the power and the character's effective Psy Rating), to see if it manifests. Finally, if the test is successful, the power will take effect. Depending on how much energy the psyker used and what methods he used to bolster his efforts, there may also be additional consequences. The step-by-step process for using a Psychic Power is described below:

- **Choose the Power Level (Fettered, Unfettered or Push):** The power level at which the psyker uses his power (reflecting how deeply he is drawing from the warp) influences the likelihood of the psyker successfully manifesting the power, and also determines whether there are any unwanted side effects such as Psychic Phenomena.
- **Select any other Paths to Power:** Whether giving up a portion of his own essence, sacrificing the life of another, or employing ritual tools and blasphemous invocations, the psyker applies the benefits of any of these additional methods of gaining power.
- **Make a Focus Power Test:** In most cases, this is a Willpower Test (though there are some exceptions) the difficulty of which depends on the power, and which is modified further based on the power level chosen. In some cases, determined by the power, the target may Oppose this test (see page 37 for Opposed Tests).
- **Apply the Effects:** Depending on the psyker's final Psy Rating (as determined by the power level he has chosen), the power will have variable effects, such as increased range, area of effect, or Damage. Depending on the factors described above, the power may also generate Psychic Phenomena or even Perils of the Warp. It is also at this point that the consequences of any Paths to Power chosen take effect.

PSYCHIC STRENGTH

Whenever a psyker uses a power, he is drawing energy from the warp and channelling it into physical effects. However, opening such a conduit to the warp is always dangerous, and the psyker incurs a chance of causing disturbances in the warp that have undesired side-effects. In extreme cases, these disturbances may even lead to the opening of an uncontrolled rift between reality and the warp with potentially fatal consequences. By minimising the amount of power he draws, a psyker can reduce or eliminate the chances of side-effects such as Psychic Phenomena or Perils of the Warp (see pages 210-211). Equally, he can draw deeper from the well of the warp to boost his powers beyond his normal capabilities. Of course, such power always comes with greater risk of unleashing unintended effects or even summoning unwanted visitors from beyond. The precise effects of Psychic Phenomena vary based on the nature of the psyker: the soul-bound lackey psykers of the Imperium, the Librarians of the Space Marines, and the Sorcerers of the Chaos Space Marines draw on less power but may use it more safely, while unsanctioned witches and mortal wyrds are subject to harsher

Table 6-1: Psychic Strength

Class of Psyker	Fettered (Psy Rating/2)	Unfettered (Psy Rating)	Push (Psy Rating +1 to +3/+4)	Sustaining Powers
Bound: Chaos Space Marine sorcerers, Librarians, and sanctioned mortal psykers such as Astropaths.	Make a Focus Power Test, counting Psy Rating as half normal. No chance to manifest Psychic Phenomena.	If the psyker rolls doubles during a Focus Power Test, roll on the Psychic Phenomena Table (see page 160).	May add up to +3 to Psy Rating when Pushing. Roll on the Psychic Phenomena Table, adding +10 to the total.	+10 to all rolls on the Psychic Phenomena Table, decrease Psy Rating by 1 per power.
Unbound: Wyrds, renegade psykers and mortal sorcerers	Make a Focus Power Test, counting Psy Rating as half normal. No chance to manifest Psychic Phenomena.	If the psyker rolls doubles during a Focus Power Test, roll on the Psychic Phenomena Table (see page 160), adding +10 to the total.	May add up to +5 to Psy Rating. Make a check against the Psychic Phenomena Table at +5 per +1 rating desired, up to a maximum of +5/+25.	+10 to all rolls on the Psychic Phenomena Table, decrease Psy Rating by 1 per power.
Daemonic: psychic daemons, Daemonhosts, and daemon princes	May not use powers at the fettered level.	If the psyker rolls doubles during a Focus Power Test, roll on the Psychic Phenomena Table (see page 160), adding +10 to the total. The psyker is not affected by the result, though those around him may be, unless the result causes Perils of the Warp.	May add up to +4 to Psy Rating. Make a check against the Psychic Phenomena Table at +10 per +1 rating desired, up to a maximum of +4/+40. The psyker is not affected by the result, though those around him may be, unless the result causes Perils of the Warp.	+10 to all rolls on the Psychic Phenomena Table, decrease Psy Rating by 1 per power. The psyker is not affected by the result, though those around him may be, unless the result causes Perils of the Warp.

effects, but can draw more deeply in return, and those who are no longer mortal (that is, those with the Daemonic Trait) remain largely unperturbed by such trivial fluctuations of the Warp, and suffer far less severe effects. These varying effects are described on **Table 6–1: Psychic Strength**.

When a psyker uses a power, he has a choice of using it at one of three different levels:

- **Fettered:** The psyker holds back his full power and carefully channels energy from the warp, hopefully using just enough to manifest the power but not enough to trigger unnatural or dangerous effects. When any psyker uses a power at the Fettered level, he must make a Focus Power Test (see below) to manifest the power. The limited power involved means that the psyker must halve his PR (rounding up) when determining the bonus applied to the Focus Power Test and any effects the power has. However, regardless of the results of the Focus Power Test, there is no risk of triggering Psychic Phenomena.
- **Unfettered:** The psyker puts the full weight of his ability into the power and embraces the raging powers of the warp. When a Psyker uses a power at the Unfettered level, he must make a Focus Power Test (see below) to manifest the power. As he is using his full natural ability, he uses his full PR when determining the bonus applied to his Focus Power Test and any effects the power has. However, should he roll a double (that is, both the tens dice and the units dice come up with the same number), he will suffer from an unexpected surge in the warp and must roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**. Note that it is still possible for a psyker to successfully pass his Focus Power Test (thus successfully activating the power) and still suffer Psychic Phenomena.
- **Push:** The psyker draws deeply and greedily from the warp, and hurls as much power forth as he possibly can in an attempt to manifest truly wondrous and terrifying effects. When using a power at the Push level, he must make a Focus Power Test (see below) to manifest the power. As the psyker is drawing deeply and recklessly from the warp, he may add +3 or more (depending on the type of the Psyker; this is detailed on **Table 6–1: Psychic Strength**) to his Psy Rating when determining the bonus applied to his Focus Power Test and any effects the power has. However, regardless of the test's result, the psyker will automatically generate a significant disturbance in the warp and must roll twice on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**, applying one or both results, depending on the psyker's nature as described in **Table 6–1: Psychic Strength**. Additionally, Pushing a power is taxing—if a psyker using this level of power rolls a double on his Focus Power Tests, he suffers a level of Fatigue from the effort.

Example

Vandar Herroth is a powerful Wyrd with a Willpower of 55 and a Psy Rating of 6. When using his psychic powers at the Unfettered power level, Vandar's Focus Power Tests (before being modified by the power) that use Willpower will succeed on an 85 or less (Willpower 55, + Psy Rating 6 x 5).

Paths to Power

Simply reaching into the warp and bending it into shape with raw willpower is but one way of manifesting psychic powers. Those who delve deeply into warp-lore and heed the whispers of daemons know of other ways, techniques and methods by which the warp can be woven, teased and sung into shape. A few of these techniques are described here. These techniques may be used in conjunction with manifesting psychic powers, subject to the GM's approval. However, part of the reason they exist is that psychic powers are seen in many different ways, from magic to mental prowess. Since psychic abilities rely on belief and will, these systems can actually aid in the manifestation of psychic abilities, and also provide a thematic way for characters to use their powers.

Blasphemous Incantation

As a realm of coherent thought and tangible emotion, the warp is influenced by the minds of mortals. Using complex formulae and ritualistic incantations to focus and direct thoughts, a mortal mind can exert influence over the Immaterium more easily. However, the tiniest slip in focus and concentration, the slightest mispronunciation in the incantation, can result in the warp being unleashed in a dangerous and destructive manner.

Using a Power with an incantation increases the Focus Power Test by a Half Action, as the psyker needs a few moments to speak the required words. Powers for which the Focus Power Test takes a Reaction cannot be used with an invocation. Using a power with an invocation grants the psyker a +1 bonus to his Psy Rating, after determining Psychic Strength. This bonus to PR does not influence the Psychic Strength in any way; the benefit is applied after determining whether a power is used at the Unfettered, Fettered or Push level. However, the psyker must add +20 to any roll on the Psychic Phenomena table. Finally, any result of 91 or higher on the Focus Power Test is an automatic failure that results in Perils of the Warp.

Example

Urulek is a Daemonic Sorcerer with a Willpower of 52 and a Psy Rating of 7, who prepares to use the Pestilent Earth power at the Unfettered power level with an incantation. His total Psy Rating is now 8, which adds +40 to his Focus Power Test, which is a Hard (–20) Willpower Test, for a total chance of success of 72 or less.

Corpus Conversion

To the truly dedicated sorcerer, the flesh is a fleeting inconvenience, a transitory shell to contain his glory until he ascends to something greater. Such beings, whether truly blessed by the Dark Gods, or merely insane, are willing to burn their flesh in exchange for power, gathering the corrosive power of the warp and holding it within muscle, bone, sinew and hair until the time comes to unleash it.

A psyker with the Corpus Conversion Talent gains access to this Path to Power, and may elect to use it before he attempts his Focus Power Test. The psyker may gain a number of bonus Degrees of Success no greater than his Toughness Bonus on his Focus Power Test. However, for every Degree of Success gained in this way, the psyker suffers 1d10 Toughness Damage as the energies of the Immaterium poison his body from within.

Traitor Adeptus Astartes characters may not benefit from Corpus Conversion; the taint-resistant metabolism of the Chaos Space Marines makes them incapable of burning away their flesh to fuel warp-based powers.

Example

Vandar Herroth has a Willpower of 55 and a Psy Rating of 6. Attempting to obliterate a group of Enforcers with the Doombolt power, he turns to the Corpus Conversion power to bolster his efforts. He is restraining his efforts, using the power at the Fettered level, requiring a Focus Power Test result of 80 or less. He succeeds, with a roll of 43, scoring four Degrees of Success. To this he adds an additional Degree of Success from Corpus Conversion, taking 1d10 Toughness Damage in the process, allowing him to unleash five bolts from the power.

Profane Symbols

Sorcerers have many ways to draw upon and unleash their power, but one that is frequently observed is the use of sigils, symbols and other means of marking people and areas, binding power to them. A burning sign on the flesh or armour of an ally, or a roughly-daubed emblem upon the ground, or even a puddle of corrupted blood spat from the sorcerer's mouth can seal a power into another person or location.

Any power with a range of Self can be cast upon an ally, painting arcane symbols upon his flesh or armour. The normal duration of the Focus Power Test does not apply—it instead takes six rounds to manifest the power, at the end of which the Focus Power Test is made, with an additional –10 penalty. If this is successful, the power takes effect, though all the power's normal effects are applied to the ally rather than the sorcerer. The recipient must spend the actions to sustain the power's effect, though all other effects of sustaining a power affect the sorcerer.

Any power with a radius centred on the sorcerer may be cast upon a location, marking the ground or another fixed, immovable point in some blasphemous manner. The normal duration of the Focus Power Test does not apply; it instead takes six rounds to manifest the power, at the end of which the Focus Power Test is made, with an additional –20 penalty. If this is successful, the power takes effect, though all the power's normal effects are instead centred upon the chosen point. The sorcerer must sustain the power as normal.

Sacrifice

The Chaos Gods are said to demand blood and sacrifice from their followers, and those on the path to glory are always eager to offer such things in exchange for greater power. For sorcerers in particular, the offering of blood and life allow more ambitious use of their powers.

A psyker with the Ritual Slaughterer Talent may ritually prepare and slay a sacrificial victim (which must be a human or intelligent xenos). It takes a **Difficult (–10) Forbidden Lore (The Warp) Test**, taking 2d5 minutes to prepare and anoint a bound and helpless sacrificial victim. Once prepared, it takes a Full Round action to slay the victim.

In the subsequent turn, the psyker gains a +5 bonus to his Focus Power Test for every Degree of Success scored on the **Forbidden Lore (The Warp) Test**. In addition, should any Psychic Phenomena or Perils of the Warp occur, the effects will be focussed through the dying victim. Any effects which normally would affect the psyker instead cause the body to burn to ash in a blaze of iridescent warp-flame, dealing 1d10 Energy Damage to anyone within three metres of the victim (gaining the Warp Weapon trait and increasing the area to a five-metre radius if it was caused by Perils of the Warp).

Unnatural Willpower

Some particularly powerful creatures have wills of iron, a mental discipline far beyond the normal limits of the human mind, granting them the ability to more effectively bend the power of the warp into the desired form. Creatures and Characters with Unnatural Willpower can make for terrifyingly potent psykers, their personality imprinted upon the flows and tides of the Immaterium. Remember, a Focus Power Test is still a Test based on a Characteristic, and thus receives additional Degrees of Success on a successful Test.

FOCUS POWER TEST

Any use of a psychic power begins with a Focus Power Action (see page 236), which requires a Focus Power Test to determine whether or not the power manifests successfully, and how potent its effects are. The amount of time this action takes is determined by the power being used, and may be a Free Action, Half Action, Full Action or Reaction.

In most cases, a Focus Power Test is a Willpower Test, modified by the difficulty of the power being used, and the Psy Rating of the psyker, which grants a +5 bonus to the test for every point of Psy Rating the psyker uses for that power. If this test is passed, the power has manifested, while failing the test means that the power does not manifest and nothing happens, though the action is still used regardless of whether the power takes effect. A result of 91 or higher always indicates failure, regardless of any other factors. In many cases, the number of Degrees of Success scored when passing the Focus Power Test determines some of the effects of the power—when this is the case, it will be noted in the power's description.

Many powers also indicate an Opposed Test, especially when used against an unwilling foe. If the Focus Power Test is an Opposed Test, the psyker must successfully pass the Test and gain more Degrees of Success than at least one of his opponents to activate the power. Note that even if the psyker gathers fewer Degrees of Success than his opponent and does not activate the power, he still can generate a disturbance in the warp if using the power at Unfettered or Push level. When resisting an Opposed Focus Power Test, a psyker may select a Power Level for any Willpower Test to resist a power, adding his Psy Rating as normal to the Test.

Sustaining Psychic Powers

Some psychic powers can be sustained for a prolonged period of time, as noted in their description. A psyker may sustain such powers without the need to make further rolls, taking only a small amount of effort to sustain a single power. However, attempting to maintain multiple powers at once becomes increasingly taxing, dividing the psyker's attention between several simultaneous effects and requiring ever-greater amounts of concentration.

Any power that can be sustained has a listed Action which defines how much effort the power requires to sustain—for example, a power with a Sustain Requirement of Half Action requires a Half Action each turn to sustain its effects. If the psyker is only attempting to sustain a single power, this is enough to maintain the effects. Any power that does not have the required action spent to sustain it ends at the end of the psyker's turn.

Sustaining multiple powers is more difficult and more tiring. Any character attempting to sustain two or more powers at once must spend the longest action from the Sustain Requirements of all the powers being sustained, and reduces the effective Psy Rating for each power by the number of powers being sustained. More perilous still, the amount of energy the psyker is attempting to wield becomes unstable, swiftly going out of control at the most minor slip of concentration. Should the psyker cause Psychic Phenomena while sustaining more than one power, then he should add +10 to the result rolled on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena** for every power after the first being sustained.

Cumulative Effects

Modifiers, Characteristic increases, and other benefits generated by psychic powers do not stack—only the highest applies.

Range and Line of Sight

Unless noted in its description, a psychic power that directly targets an individual or thing requires a psyker to have line of sight toward (or otherwise be 'aware' of) the target. The target must also be within the power's stated range.

PSYCHIC BOLTS

A number of powers produce blasts or bolts of energy that inflict direct harm in a manner not dissimilar to a weapon. Powers of this type all follow the same basic rules. The psyker must nominate a single target within range and line of sight; if the Focus Power Test is successful, then the target has been successfully hit. There are three further variations on this: Psychic Barrages, Psychic Storms, and Psychic Blasts.

A Psychic Barrage is a cluster of bolts of energy, similar to a semi-automatic weapon. If the Focus Power Test succeeds, then the psyker produces one psychic bolt for the initial Degree of Success, plus one for every two additional Degrees of Success. The number of hits scored in this manner may not exceed the psyker's effective Psy Rating when using this power. The first hit must strike the initially-chosen target, while any subsequent hits may strike either the initial target or any other targets within two metres, providing all of the targets are within range and line of sight.



A Psychic Storm is many bolts of energy, similar to an automatic weapon. If the Focus Power Test succeeds, then the psyker produces a number of psychic bolts equal to the number of Degrees of Success. The number of hits scored in this manner may not exceed the psyker's effective Psy Rating when using this power. The first hit must strike the initially-chosen target, while any subsequent hits may strike either the initial target or any other targets within two metres, providing all of the targets are within range and line of sight.

A Psychic Blast detonates to cover a wide area, affecting multiple targets simultaneously. The psyker must nominate a single point in space anywhere within range and line of sight. If the Focus Power Test is successful, then every target within the radius of the Psychic Blast is hit by the power.

Psychic Bolts of all kinds may be dodged as if they were any other kind of ranged attack. A successful Dodge Test is sufficient to avoid a normal Psychic Bolt. Dodging a Psychic Storm or Psychic Blast is resolved in the same way as dodging Auto-Fire or Area Effect Attacks (see page 235).

CORRUPTION

A number of powers are less a matter of reaching into the warp and bending its energies to a psyker's will, but rather the unleashing of the taint polluting the psyker's body, distorting the material world with the warp-spawned corruption that seethes within them.

Corruption powers differ from normal Psychic Powers in a number of ways, the first of which being the nature of the Focus Power Test. In place of Willpower or any other characteristic, Corruption powers utilise the character's Corruption value, modified as normal by the power's Difficulty and the Psy Rating used for the power.

Corruption powers cannot be used at the Fettered power level; the very act of unleashing a corruption power prevents the restraint necessary to Fetter a power. In addition, the Sacrifice or Incantation Paths to Power cannot be used with Corruption powers—the spontaneous and instinctive nature of these powers prevents such preparation and ritual.

Finally, all Corruption powers have additional effects that take place when they cause Psychic Phenomena, which is further described in the section on Psychic Phenomena, below.

Detecting Psychic Powers

Psykers are attuned to the warp around them, as are daemons and other warp entities, able to sense the currents and eddies caused by other psykers dipping into the flow of the Immaterium. When psychic powers are in effect in a psyker's presence, he can make a Psyniscience Test in order to determine their source (see page 107 for details on the Psyniscience Skill and its uses).

Psychic Phenomena

When a psyker reaches deeper into the warp to power his abilities, there is always the chance of the Empyrean bleeding into reality, a factor which is at the very least disturbing and disconcerting, and which may be destructive or disruptive to the very fabric of reality. Sometimes this manifestation of the warp is unique to the Psyker, but in general it is as unpredictable as the warp itself. Some effects can include a dramatic drop in temperature, ghostly voices, feelings of unease, or nearby vegetation shrivelling and dying. In rare instances, full-scale warp breaches with the direst of consequences can occur.

When a psyker uses his power at the Unfettered level or Push level, he risks generating such a disturbance in the warp. Any Unfettered Focus Power Test that results in a double on the dice, or any power used at the Push level, means that the psyker must roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**. Particularly high rolls on this table can result in the psyker having to roll on **Table 6–3: Perils of the Warp**. A few powers, as noted in their descriptions, cause other effects upon the material world when they manifest.

Table 6-2: Psychic Phenomena

Roll	Effect
01-03	**Dark Foreboding:** A faint breeze blows past the sorcerer and those near him, and everyone gets the feeling that somewhere in the galaxy something unfortunate just happened.
04-05	**Warp Echo:** For a few moments, all noises cause echoes, regardless of the surroundings.
06-08	**Unholy Stench:** The air around the psyker becomes permeated with a bizarre and foul smell.
09-11	**Mind Warp:** The psyker suffers a –5 penalty to Willpower Tests until the start of his next turn as his own inherent phobias, suspicions and hatreds surge to the surface of his mind in a wave of unbound emotion.
12-14	**Hoarfrost:** The temperature plummets for an instant, and a thin coating of frost covers everything within 3d10 metres.
15-17	**Aura of Taint:** All animals within 1d100 metres become spooked and agitated; Characters with Psyniscience can pinpoint the psyker as the cause.
18-20	**Memory Worm:** All people within line of sight of the psyker forget something trivial.
21-23	**Spoilage:** Food and drink go bad in a 5d10 metre radius.
24-26	**Haunting Breeze:** Winds whip up around the psyker for a few moments, blowing light objects around and guttering fires within 3d10 metres.
27-29	**Veil of Darkness:** For a brief moment (effectively the remainder of the round), the area within 3d10 metres is plunged into immediate darkness.
30-32	**Distorted Reflections:** Mirrors and other reflective surfaces within a radius of 5d10 metres distort or shatter.
33-35	**Breath Leech:** Everyone (including the psyker) within a 3d10 metre radius becomes short of breath for one round and cannot make any Run or Charge actions.
36-38	**Daemonic Mask:** For a fleeting moment, the psyker takes on a daemonic appearance and gains a Fear rating of 1 until the start of the next turn. However, he also gains one Corruption Point.
39-41	**Unnatural Decay:** All plant life within 3d10 metres of the psyker withers and dies.
42-44	**Spectral Gale:** Howling winds erupt around the psyker, requiring him and everyone within 4d10 metres to make an **Easy (+30) Agility or Strength Test** to avoid being knocked to the ground.
45-47	**Bloody Tears:** Blood weeps from stone and wood within 3d10 metres of the psyker. If there are any pictures or statues of people inside this area, they appear to be crying blood.
48-50	**The Earth Protests:** The ground suddenly shakes, and everyone (including the psyker) within a 5d10 metre radius must make a **Routine (+10) Agility Test** or be knocked down.
51-53	**Actinic Discharge:** Static electricity fills the air within 5d10 metres causing hair to stand on end and unprotected electronics to short out, while the psyker is wreathed in eldritch lightning.
54-56	**Warp Ghosts:** Ghostly apparitions fill the air within 3d10 metres around the psyker, flying about and howling in pain for a few brief moments. Everyone in the radius (except the psyker himself) must test against a Fear rating of 1.
57-59	**Falling Upwards:** Everything within 2d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker himself) rises 1d10 metres into the air as gravity briefly ceases. Almost immediately, everything crashes back to earth, suffering falling Damage as appropriate for the distances fallen.
60-62	**Banshee Howl:** A shrill keening rings out across the immediate area, shattering glass and forcing every mortal creature able to hear it (including the psyker) to pass a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be deafened for 1d10 rounds.
63-65	**The Furies:** The Psyker is assailed by unseen horrors. He is slammed to the ground and suffers 1d5 wounds in Damage (ignoring armour, but not Toughness Bonus) and he must test against Fear (2).
66-68	**Shadow of the Warp:** For a split second, the world changes in appearance, and everyone within 1d100 metres has brief but horrific glimpse of the shadow of the warp. Everyone in the area (including the psyker) must make a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test** or gain 1d5 Corruption Points.
69-71	**Tech Scorn:** The machine spirits reject your unnatural ways. All un-warded technology within 5d10 metres malfunction momentarily, and all ranged weapons Jam (see Chapter I: Playing the Game), whilst characters with cybernetic implants must pass a **Routine (+10) Toughness Test** or suffer 1d5 Damage, ignoring Toughness Bonus and Armour.
72-74	**Warp Madness:** A violent ripple of tainted discord causes all creatures within 2d10 metres (with the exception of the Psyker) to become Frenzied for a Round and suffer 1d5 Corruption Points unless they can pass a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test**.
75+	**Perils of the Warp:** The warp opens in a maelstrom of energy. Roll on Table 6–3: Perils of the Warp, page 211 instead.

Table 6-3: Perils of the Warp

Roll	Effect
01-05	**The Gibbering:** The psyker screams in pain as uncontrolled warp energies surge through his unprepared mind. He must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or be stunned for 1d5 rounds.
06-09	**Warp Burn:** A violent burst of energy from the warp smashes into the psyker's mind, sending him reeling. He suffers 2d5 wounds, ignoring Toughness Bonus and Armour, and is stunned for 1d5 Rounds.
10-13	**Psychic Concussion:** With a crack of energy, the psyker is knocked unconscious for 1d5 rounds, and everyone within 3d10 metres must make a **Routine (+10) Willpower Test** or be Stunned for one round.
14-18	**Psy Blast:** There is an explosion of power and the psyker is thrown 3d10 metres into the air, falling to the ground moments later (see page 257 for Falling Damage).
19-24	**Soul Sear:** Warp power courses through the psyker's body, scorching his soul. The psyker cannot use any powers for the next hour and gains 2d5 Corruption Points.
25-30	**Locked In:** The power cages the psyker's mind in an ethereal prison, tormented by visions of the warp. The psyker falls to the ground in a catatonic state. Each round thereafter, he must spend a full action to make a Difficult (–10) Willpower Test. On a success, his mind is freed and restored to his body, haunted by his experiences but otherwise unharmed.
31-38	**Chronological Incontinence:** Time warps around the psyker. He winks out of existence and reappears in 1d10 rounds (for one minute in narrative time) in the exact location. He suffers one point of permanent Toughness and Intelligence damage as his body and mind rebel against the experience, and gains 1d5 Corruption Points.
39-46	**Psychic Mirror:** The psyker's power is turned back on him. Resolve the power's effects, but the power targets the psyker instead. If the power is beneficial, it deals 1d10+5 Energy Damage (ignoring armour) to the psyker instead of its normal effect.
47-55	**Warp Whispers:** The voices of daemons fill the air within 4d10 metres of the psyker, whispering terrible secrets and shocking truths. Everyone in the area (including the psyker) must make a **Hard (–20) Willpower Test** or suffer 1d5 Corruption Points and an equal amount of Willpower Damage. In addition, whether or not the psyker passes the Willpower Test, he still suffers an additional 1d5+5 Willpower Damage.
56-58	**Vice Versa:** The psyker's mind is thrown out of his body and into another nearby creature or person. The psyker and a random being (note, this cannot be a daemon, untouchable or other "soulless" creature) within 50 metres swap consciousness for 1d10 rounds. This may be allies or enemies. Each creature retains its Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Intelligence, Perception, Willpower and Fellowship during the swap, but all other Characteristics are of the new host body. If either body is slain, the effect ends immediately and both parties return to their original bodies. Both suffer 1d5 Intelligence Damage from the experience. If there are no creatures within range, the psyker becomes catatonic for 1d5 rounds while his mind wanders the warp. This journey causes 1d10 Willpower Damage, 1d10 Intelligence Damage and 1d10 Corruption Points.
59-67	**Dark Summoning:** Khorne's wrath swells at the arrogance of the psyker, and he sends a Bloodletter to deal with the fool. (see **Chapter XI: Adversaries**) The Bloodletter rips into existence within 3d10 metres of the psyker, for a number of rounds equal to 1d5 plus the daemon's Toughness Bonus. The psyker's turn immediately ends, and the Daemon may take its turn immediately. It detests the psyker and focuses all of its attacks upon the fool that unwittingly summoned it. It will not attack anyone else, even if others attack it.
68-72	**Rending the Veil:** The air vibrates with images of cackling daemons and the kaleidoscopic taint of the warp is rendered visible. All sentient creatures (any creature with an Intelligence characteristic) within 1d100 metres must test against Fear (2). The psyker must Test against Fear (4) instead. This effect lasts for 1d5 rounds.
73-78	**Blood Rain:** A psychic storm erupts, covering an area of 5d10 metres in which everyone must pass a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test** or be knocked to the ground. In addition to howling winds and the skies raining blood, any psychic powers used in the area automatically invoke Perils of the Warp for 1d5 rounds, in addition to any Psychic Phenomena those powers cause. The psyker gains 1d5+1 Corruption Points.
79-82	**Cataclysmic Blast:** The psyker's power overloads, arcing out in great bolts of warp energy. Anyone within 1d10 metres (including the psyker) takes 1d10+8 Energy Damage with a Pen of 5. The psyker may not Dodge this, or stop the attack with a Field Save. In addition, all of the psyker's clothing and gear is destroyed, leaving him naked and smoking on the ground. The psyker may use no further powers for 1d5 hours after the event.
83-86	**Mass Possession:** Daemons ravage the mind of every living thing within 1d100 metres. Every character in the area must resist a possession attack (see the Possession Trait in **Chapter IV: Talents and Traits**; the attacker is a random Lesser Daemon). This possession will last for no more than 2d10 rounds, after which the daemons are cast back into the warp.
87-90	**Reality Quake:** Reality buckles around the psyker, and an area radiating out 3d10 metres from him is sundered: solid objects alternately rot, burn, and freeze, and everyone and everything in the area takes 2d10 Rending Damage, ignoring armour (and unable to be dodged). Warded objects, daemons and untouchables halve the Damage rolled.
91-99	**Grand Possession:** A grand and terrible warp entity takes interest in the psyker's soul, descending from the warp to seize the mortal's body for its own purposes. A Greater Daemon chosen by the GM attempts to possess the psyker (see the Possession Trait in **Chapter IV: Talents and Traits**). Even if the daemon fails, the psyker still suffers 2d10 Toughness Damage, and will forever add +10 to all rolls on the Psychic Phenomena and Perils of the Warp tables as his body now serves as a conduit to the power of the warp. If the character dies while possessed, the Greater Daemon manifests in the real world for a number of days equal to its Toughness Bonus or until it is destroyed.
00	**Annihilation:** The psyker is immediately and irrevocably destroyed, burned to nothing by the screaming fires of the Immaterium or dragged into the deepest maelstrom of the warp. The psyker may not spend Infamy to recover from this death, he is irrevocably destroyed. There is a chance that a daemonic entity of some sort appears in the psyker's place—the type of daemon that appears is determined by the GM, based on how powerful the psyker was—more powerful psykers draw more powerful daemons. The percentage chance that the daemon appears is equal to the psyker's Willpower characteristic (roll a d100, if the result is equal to or under the characteristic, the daemon appears).

Psychic Powers

"From the warp, power. But power alone is nothing without form or purpose. From desire, will. But will alone is pointless without the power to make those desires real. Only by melding the two can one find freedom from this cloying, stagnant reality."

– Excerpt from Book IX of the Sibylline Incitements

Psychic powers work in much the same way as Skills and allow a psyker character to manifest effects and abilities. Sorcerers and wyrds tap into the raw and untamed power of the warp, learning powers when inspiration, experimentation or daemonic providence provide the opportunity.

Many sorcerers and wyrds had some training in the use of psychic powers before their rebirth as servants of the Dark Gods, and while they may forsake those teachings during their awakening, remnants of that training linger, to be joined by the divinely-inspired powers granted to them by their new masters.

The following section contains several disciplines of psychic powers. Five of them—Unaligned, Nurgle, Slaanesh, Tzeentch, and Exalted—are intended for Chaos-worshipping characters only. The others—Telepathy, Telekinesis and Divination may be used by psyker characters of any species or allegiance, and are designed to be used as much by NPCs opposing the Heretics as by Chaos psykers. Therefore, an unaligned Heretic may freely select powers from the Unaligned, Exalted, Telepathy, Telekinesis, and Divination Disciplines. A Heretic who is Aligned to a specific Chaos Power loses the ability to select Exalted Powers, but may take powers from his God-specific Discipline instead.

Unaligned Powers

These powers are the common techniques of most Chaos sorcerers, abilities that tap into the seething, corrosive nature of the Immaterium in its purest, elemental state. Unaligned powers provide a broad but basic array of abilities that may be employed by any Sorcerer.

Nurgle Powers

The powers of the Grandfather of Pestilence are insidious, repulsive and debilitating. Sorcerers of Nurgle leave mewling, diseased corpses and desecrated earth in their wake, their powers spreading hellish, warp-spawned diseases.

Slaanesh Powers

The Prince of Pleasure grants powers that ravage the mind and reach deeply into the soul of their victims. Sorcerers of Slaanesh delight in spreading pain, extremes of sensation and delusions.

Tzeentch Powers

The Lord of Deceit and Sorcery blesses and patronises many sorcerers, granting them great powers of change and desolation. Tzeentch sorcerers revel in the death they create, for the change from alive to dead is amongst the greatest of changes a mortal being can cause or suffer.

Exalted Powers

Amongst greatest and most terrifying of sorcerers are those able to balance the favour of all four Great Powers and remain free from their grasp. Exalted powers are those achievable only by sorcerers capable of treading this fine line.

Telepathy

For a psyker, the mind is a powerful tool, a device to be feared and respected. Able to reach into the minds of others to steal away thoughts and influence instincts, a skilled telepath can cause havoc if he chooses to do so.

Telekinesis

The will of a sufficiently-potent telekine can rend steel and pulverise flesh with nothing more than willpower. Their wills are literally as strong as iron, able to greatly influence the material world with a single thought.

Divination

The warp is beyond time and physical dimension, and a cunning psyker can gaze into its depths to learn secrets from other places and times. It takes great skill to discern knowledge of worth from the infinite reaches of the Immaterium, and many lack the talent to gain more than vague insights, but for those who can find what they seek, the rewards of divination are great.

Aligned Powers

Certain powers, Nurgle, Slaanesh, and Tzeentch Powers, are Aligned with that god. This has several effects.

First, taking one of these powers counts as an Advancement that furthers a Heretic's alignment with that God. Someone Aligned to Nurgle taking Nurgle's Rot increases his Alignment to Nurgle by 1. Secondly, Aligned Powers may only be used if the psyker in question is Aligned to that specific God. For example, if a Nurgle sorcerer with Nurgle's Rot later becomes unaligned, he may no longer use that Psychic Power. Note that the psyker does not "lose" the power, he just cannot use it. If he later returns to be Aligned to Nurgle, he can again use Nurgle's Rot. He does not have to purchase the power a second time. In a similar fashion, Exalted Powers can only be used by psykers who are unaligned.

Power Format

Each Psychic Power is presented using the following format:

Name: The power's name.

Alternate Names: A variety of alternate names commonly used to refer to the power. Some are used by Chaos psykers, others by Astartes Librarians, Astropaths and Eldar Farseers.

Value: This number represents the amount of Experience required to learn the power. Psychic powers may be purchased with Experience Points.

Prerequisites: Some techniques require the psyker to have learnt other ways to use his abilities, or devoted his soul to a particular Chaos God. The psyker must possess the Powers (or other prerequisites) listed in order to learn the power.

Action: The Focus Power Action (see page 236) required to activate the power. This is usually a Free Action, Half Action, Full Action, Reaction or an Extended Action.

Focus Power: This states the Characteristic used in Focus Power Tests to activate this power (normally Willpower, but occasionally other characteristics are used), and whether the Focus Power Test is Opposed. The difficulty of the power is also noted here.

Range: The range at which the power can be used is usually expressed in metres or kilometres multiplied by the PR at which the power was used. If the range is a radius, this is always measured with the psyker at its centre. Radius is also considered to a sphere around the psyker and so will extend up, down and in every other direction.

Sustained: This states whether the power can be sustained (see page 208), and what action is required to sustain the power. This entry will always be one of the following: No, Free Action, Half Action, or Full Action.

Description: This details the power's effects, including variable effects that the psyker's Psy Rating, or the Degrees of Success from the Focus Power Test, have on the power's final strength. Whenever a power's description refers to the psyker's Psy Rating, it means the PR at which he manifests the power, modified by the power level (Fettered, Unfettered, or Push) he chose.

Psychic Phenomena: Some powers cause alternate or additional Psychic Phenomena. If the power uses only the normal Psychic Phenomena rules, this section will be absent.

UNALIGNED POWERS

These powers are the basic list of powers, not linked to any one of the Chaos Gods, though sorcerers aligned to one of the Great Powers often use variants of these powers.



Abhorrent Ward [Corruption]

Alternate Names: Repulsive Shield, Mantle of Esh'raiik, Bulwark of Detestation
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Corruption 30+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Corruption Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer's tainted soul draws to it the denizens of the warp, who clamour to his presence. At his command, they can press against the skin of reality, their shrieks and howls and the visions they inflict horrific to behold. Few beings have the mental fortitude to gaze upon a being surrounded by a cacophonous swarm of daemons, disrupting their ability to target him.

While this power remains in effect, any creature attempting to target the Sorcerer with any form of attack must attempt a Willpower Test, with a –5 times the Sorcerer's Psy Rating penalty. If the attacker succeeds at this test, he may attack as normal. However, failure means that his revulsion prevents him attacking. He may choose another target to attack instead.
Psychic Phenomena: The pressure of daemonic horde tearing at the fabric of existence thins the veil, making it risky for psykers to draw too deeply from the warp. While this power remains in effect, any psyker within 30m must add +20 to all rolls on the Psychic Phenomena table (including any generated by this power).

Doombolt

Alternate Names: Shards of Malice, Fist of Ruin
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: None
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 20 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: Known by a variety of names, the Doombolt is a common destructive power utilised by a great many Chaos magos to strike down their foes. Formed from the coalesced spite and loathing of the Sorcerer, they are corrosive bolts of dark energy, raining down like black hail upon the enemy. As the Sorcerer conjures these bitter projectiles with clenched fists, he fills the air with the stench of brimstone and the booming roar of daemons for the brief moment of the power's manifestation.

Doombolt is a Psychic Barrage that deals 1d10+ Psy Rating Energy Damage with a Pen of 8.

Foul Cage

Alternate Names: Chains of Torment, Bonds of Flesh
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 4
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Opposed Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 25 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: Half Action

Psy Rating in Psychic Powers

Unless specifically stated otherwise, all modifiers in a power equal to Psy Rating are based on the Psy Rating used when manifesting the power. This means that if the sorcerer manifests a power at the Fettered Level, a power that has effects based on Psy Rating is going to do less than if he Pushes.

Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: Great long bonds of warp-spawned ropes, chains, and lengths of barbed sinew erupt from the ground and wind themselves around any creatures within reach. These bonds ensnare and constrict as if alive, and sprout barbs and thorns which dig deep into the flesh of those so ensnared.

Foul Cage is a Psychic Blast with a radius equal to the power's Psy Rating, that deals 1d10+3 R Damage with the Crippling (1d10), Snare (2) and Tearing qualities.

Gift of Chaos

Alternate Names: Fleshy Curse, Indigo Fire of Change, Festus' Transfiguration
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 5, Infamy 40+
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Opposed Hard (–20) Willpower Test
Range: 1 metre x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer tears a miniscule hole in reality for the briefest of moments, exposing a single foe to the full splendour of the warp. In seconds, their flesh is remade anew by the glory of Chaos, creating a howling, screaming mass of corrupted matter that thrashes and flails as it succumbs to mutation after mutation.

The target opposes this power with a Toughness Test. If the target wins, it suffers no Damage. If it loses, it suffers 1d10 Damage +2 per Degree of Failure, ignoring Toughness Bonus and Armour. If the target loses the Test by four or more Degrees, the target mutates, immediately suffering a random Gift of Gods (see page 291)—at the GM's discretion, minor NPCs or adversaries can simply be transformed into a mewling, disgusting, and harmless Chaos Spawn, effectively killing them.

Hatestorm

Alternate Names: Dream of Rage, Deluge of Fury
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 4, Frenzy, Hatred (Any One)
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack
Description: The Sorcerer calls upon the dark gods to gift him with a portion of their own hatred, and becomes the crackling focus of an aura of dark energy. Anyone caught within this explosion of unholy power finds himself with a psychotic hatred of all living things, hurling themselves at their foes at the first opportunity. The hellish psychic echoes of the warp are easy for a Sorcerer to find, though a challenge to control, often proving overwhelming for the unsuspecting.

While this power remains in effect, the Sorcerer, and all creatures within the power's radius immediately enter a Frenzied state, as if they had the Frenzy Talent. They will remain in this state for as long as they remain within the power's radius. The Sorcerer may continue to manifest psychic powers even while Frenzied.

Host of Fiends

Alternate Names: Cavalcade of Horrors, Cacophonous Mass
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 3
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres per Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The veil between reality and the warp is made thin and porous, allowing even the least of daemons to scratch and claw at the edge of the universe, their distant shrieks and howls and the nightmarish images they produce tormenting all mortals within their reach. Those who call such forces into being revel in the blasphemy they inflict and the suffering that comes from their presence.

All of the Sorcerer's enemies within range of this power suffer a –2 x PR penalty to all Willpower Tests. In addition, every time a creature affected by this power fails a Willpower Test, they gain 1d5 Corruption Points for every Degree of Failure.

Warptime

Alternate Names: Swift as Karanak, Gods' Speed
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The timeless nature of the warp grants the cunning Sorcerer the means to defy the normal limits of time, hastening his movements and reflexes such that his enemies appear to be moving in slow motion. Many liken it to the terrifying speed of Khorne's hunting hound, a figure that holds particular horror for psykers.

The Sorcerer gains the Unnatural Weapon Skill, Unnatural Ballistic Skill and Unnatural Agility traits, all at values equal to his Psy Rating.

Wind of Chaos [Corruption]

Alternate Names: Stream of Corruption, Scintillating Cascade, Blue Fire of Tzeentch, Whirlwind of Fangs
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Corruption 30+
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Opposed Challenging (+0) Corruption Test
Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration

Description: Reaching deep into the corruption within his soul, the Sorcerer unleashes a wave of energy that leaves devastation in its wake. Depending upon the devotions of the Sorcerer, the nature of this outpouring of corrupt power varies—those devoted to Nurgle produce a stream of bilious filth, while a rain of hypnotic luminescence or glittering golden light characterises the powers of a Slaanesh Sorcerer. Every Sorcerer's Wind of Chaos is subtly different, coloured by their own prejudices and insanity.

The Sorcerer produces a torrent of foul energy in a 30-degree cone out to the power's range, similar to a weapon with the Spray quality. Creatures caught within the spray may oppose the Focus Power Test with an Agility Test. Any creature that does not successfully avoid the power's effects suffers 2d10 + Psy Rating Energy Damage with the Felling (2), Tainted, and Warp Weapon Qualities, plus a single additional Quality determined by the Sorcerer's alignment.

If used by a Tzeentch Sorcerer, Wind of Chaos gains the Flame quality. If used by a Slaanesh Sorcerer, Wind of Chaos gains the Shocking quality. If used by a Nurgle Sorcerer, Wind of Chaos gains the Toxic quality. If used by an unaligned Sorcerer, Wind of Chaos gains the Tearing quality.

Psychic Phenomena: The psychic residue of the power's effects lingers on every surface for a few moments longer, whether ablaze with guttering azure flame, spattered in filth, or coated in a fine glittering dust imbued with the echoes of sensation. Until the start of the Sorcerer's next turn, every creature within 3d10 metres of the Sorcerer suffers a –10 penalty on all Willpower Tests due to the disconcerting and disruptive aftereffects of the Wind of Chaos. This is in addition to any normal Psychic Phenomena that might be manifested.



NURGLE POWERS

These seven powers are linked to Nurgle, and selecting them takes a Sorcerer further down the path of Nurgle worship. All Toughness Tests made to resist an Opposed Focus Power Test for a Nurgle power are considered to be tests to resist a poison or disease, and consequently any Talents, Traits, or special abilities that grant bonuses to resist poisons or diseases grant their usual bonus.

Choir of Poxes

Alternate Names: Litany of Pestilence, Delirious Chant
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Nurgle
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Difficult Opposed (–10) Willpower Test
Range: 30 metres
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: As enacted by Nurgle's daemonic legions, the Sorcerer's throat rattles with the names of every disease he has ever suffered from, and every disease that Nurgle has ever gifted mortals with. Those caught within earshot of this pestilential incantation find themselves wracked with spasms of pain and delirium, as the Sorcerer speaks the true names of different diseases, invoking plagues both ancient and yet to occur.

Creatures caught within range of this power may oppose the Focus Power Test with a Toughness Test, suffering an additional –10 penalty if they have the Heightened Senses (Hearing) Talent. Any creature that fails to resist this power takes 1d10 + Psy Rating Damage and is stunned until the start of its next turn.

Inviolable Flesh

Alternate Names: Effluent Form, Vigour Mortis
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Nurgle, Toughness 40+
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Hard (–20) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer's flesh twists and changes to resemble the blessed effluents of the Plague God, becoming crusted with filth and foulness such that the blows of the enemy do not cut so deep. Gifted with such a pestilential form, the Sorcerer can shrug off injuries that would fell a lesser man.

While this power is in effect, the Sorcerer gains the Unnatural Toughness Trait with a rating equal to the sorcerer's Psy Rating. However, so encumbered by filth is the Sorcerer that he suffers a –10 penalty to his Agility characteristic.

Leper's Curse

Alternate Names: Dessicant Word, Thousandth Necrotic Invocation, The Final Curse
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Nurgle, Psy Rating 5
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test

Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: None
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: Whispering an incantation taught to him by a Plaguebearer, the Sorcerer focuses a stream of decay into one of his victim's body parts. At this foul command, the victim's flesh and bone wither away in a display of glorious atrophy, leaving shrivelled ruin in the spell's wake. Some sorcerers know this as the Thousandth Necrotic Invocation, one in a long list of vile syllables beloved of the Grandfather of Pestilence and capable of inflicting terrible afflictions upon their victims.

This power is a Psychic Bolt that causes the target to suffer a single Rending Critical Effect equal to 1d10. Leper's Curse does not do Damage to Wounds, but can cause limb loss, blood loss, or even death, depending on the Critical Effect.An opponent can only be targeted by the Leper's Curse once per combat.

Nurgle's Rot [Corruption]

Alternate Names: The Destroyer Hive, Heart of Contagion, Pandemic's Herald
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Corruption 30+, Aligned Nurgle
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Corruption Test
Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The grandest and most infamous of Nurgle's contagions, Nurgle's Rot is known by many names and has appeared on countless worlds, leaving entire populations desolated by this terrible daemonic pathogen. Nurgle's devoted sorcerers take on all manner of diseases, serving as host to the creations of the Lord of Plagues. From this seething mass of decay and entropy, these devotees of pestilence summon forth the psychic echo of this paragon of plagues, inflicting it upon those nearby.

The infectious gift of Nurgle is cast outward to embrace all who stray too near to the Sorcerer. Creatures within range of the Sorcerer while this power remains in effect suffer 1d10 + Psy Rating Damage, with the Tainted and Toxic (4) qualities. The damage ignores Armour unless it is environmentally sealed. Those Devoted to Nurgle are unaffected by this power.
Psychic Phenomena: While this power remains in effect, the air within the power's range is filled with a thick, acrid fog and swarms of massive bloated flies. Any creature within range that is not devoted to Nurgle suffers a –5 penalty to Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Intelligence, Perception and Fellowship Tests as the foul vapour and buzzing flies hinder their concentration and drive them to distraction. This is in addition to any normal Psychic Phenomena.

Field of Pestilence

Alternate Names: Pestilent Earth, The Plaguefather's Quagmire
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Nurgle
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Hard (–20) Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: While touching the ground beneath his feet, the Sorcerer conjures forth a wave of pestilence and decay, turning hardened soil into a morass of greenish-grey sludge. Many sorcerers invoke litanies of infertility or speak prayers of desecration, while others trace abhorrent runes in the dirt or pour jars of diseased blood onto the ground. Many sorcerers believe that this power was granted to mortals by one of the most renowned of Nurgle's daemons.

While this power remains in effect, the ground around the Sorcerer, which moves as he does (centred on him at all times), becomes swamp-like. Any creature—with the exception of the Sorcerer himself—within the power's radius must pass a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or fall whenever attempting to move faster than a normal Half Action movement rate.

Putrefying Embrace

Alternate Names: Epidemic Touch, Hand of Filth
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Nurgle
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Yes
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer reaches out with arms dripping in foulness, to corrupt anything he touches. A single touch spreads stinking pus and other vile fluids, defiling anything they are left upon.

The sorcerer's unarmed melee attacks deal 1d10+Psy Rating I Damage and gain the Toxic (3) Quality, and he counts as having the Deadly Natural Weapons Trait. The Sorcerer's Strength Bonus is not added to the Damage.

Rain of Foulness

Alternate Names: Torrent of Decay, the Grandfather's Gift
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Nurgle
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 20m x Psy Rating
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: At the Sorcerer's command, the skies fill with brooding, discoloured clouds that split open and pour filth and rotten blood down upon the Sorcerer's foes. Few can do little more than flee from this downpour of vileness. The most devout of Nurgle's sorcerers speak of this power as being a gift from Grandfather Nurgle, bestowed upon the world from the Plague Lord's domain.

This power is a Psychic Blast with a radius of 1+ the Degrees of Success on the Focus Power Test. Anyone caught within the area of effect suffers 1d10+7 I Damage with a Pen equal to Psy Rating and the Toxic (3) Quality, and must take a Pinning Test.

Slaanesh Powers

These six powers are linked to Slaanesh, and selecting them takes a Sorcerer further down the path of Slaanesh worship.

Acquiescence

Alternate Names: Moment of Submission, Silver Haze
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Devoted to Slaanesh, WP 50+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 20 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer conjures a spark of delusion, overwhelming the target's mind with contradictory thoughts and feelings that drive him to distraction, incapable of performing any action amidst the psychic fog. Slaanesh sorcerers sometimes describe the power as a silvery fog that overwhelms all sensation, conjured with entrancing words whispered under the breath.

The Sorcerer nominates a single enemy within range, who resists the power with a Willpower Test. Every Degree of Success on the Sorcerer's Focus Power Test causes the victim to be Stunned for 1 turn. Losing the Test by five or more Degrees causes the victim to be rendered unconscious instead.

Ecstatic Oblivion

Alternate Names: Pleasure from Pain, Desolate Soul
Value: 250xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Slaanesh, Toughness 40+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer summons up every flickering moment of stray emotion he can find within the Immaterium, and draws them into himself, overwhelming his own senses and rendering him oblivious to the sensations of battle around him. Many sorcerers become addicted to the sensations they conjure, burning away their soul with warp-spawned ecstasy.

While this power remains in effect, the Sorcerer cannot be stunned or rendered unconscious, nor is he affected by fatigue. In addition, he is so addled by sensation that he can push his body far beyond its normal limits, gaining Unnatural Strength and Unnatural Agility at a value equal to half the Sorcerer's Psy Rating. However, he suffers a –20 penalty to all Perception Tests.

Hellshriek [Corruption]

Alternate Names: Eidolon's Call, Psyren Song
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Slaanesh, Corruption 50+
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Corruption Test
Range: 3 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration



Description: The Sorcerer reaches deep into the warp and produces a soul-shattering noise that inflicts terrible pain upon those that hear it. Many sorcerers attribute this power to the genetic tampering of Fabius Bile during the early days of the Heresy, and to the engineered talents of Lord-Commander Eidolon of the Emperor's Children.

A Hellshriek is a Psychic Blast centred on the Sorcerer. Any creature within the area of effect, with the exception of the Sorcerer, suffers 2d10 + Psy Rating Rending Damage with the Concussive (1) and Warp Weapon Qualities.
Psychic Phenomena: The shrieking cry of the Sorcerer reverberates through the warp, echoing for moments after the initial blast of sound, lingering in the ears and minds of those nearby. Until the start of the Sorcerer's next turn, all creatures within range of the power suffer a –20 penalty to all Perception Tests. This is in addition to any normal psychic phenomena.

Lash of Submission

Alternate Names: Bond of Dominion, Beam of Slaanesh
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Slaanesh, Willpower 50+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging Opposed (+0) Willpower Test
Range: Psy Rating metres
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer projects a lurid, glowing cord of energy that wraps itself around his enemies, worming itself into their minds and overwhelming their will for a few brief moments. Many sorcerers take a perverse pleasure in making others dance like puppets for them, becoming enthralled by

the power and dominance they can exert and delighting in the horrific acts they can make others perform.

The Sorcerer nominates a single creature within range and line of sight, which may resist the power using a Willpower Test. If the test is failed, then the creature's actions, for a number of turns equal to the Sorcerer's Psy Rating, are chosen by the Sorcerer instead. The victim may only perform a single half action each turn he is controlled, and may not perform any action with the Concentration subtype.

Soul's Secrets Unleashed

Alternate Names: Mastery of the Soul, The Dark Prince's Whisper, Insidious Utterances
Value: 500xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Slaanesh, WP 50+, Psy Rating 6
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Very Hard (–30) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 25 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer becomes a mouthpiece for the infinite voice of Slaanesh, crawling deep into the mind of a chosen victim, calling forth the darkest desires from the depths of his victim's soul, unleashing them and giving them free reign. Slaanesh sorcerers consider this power to be the greatest of blessings they can bestow upon a mortal soul.

The Sorcerer nominates a single creature within range, who may resist this power with a Willpower Test (the opposing Test for the Focus Power Test). If this test is failed, then the victim's darkest impulses take control of his mind for a number of turns equal to the Sorcerer's Psy Rating. During this time, he acts in accordance with the most destructive side of his personality, unrestrained by self-control, and attacks the nearest target (creature, Heretic, or NPC) with his most powerful weapons. He will not take suicidal actions such as leaping off a building to attack someone in melee, but he still takes otherwise foolhardy risks and automatically passes Willpower Tests to resist Fear or Pinning. He is also immune to stunning and the effects of Fatigue.

Symphony of Pain

Alternate Names: N'Kari's Concerto, Malignant Song
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Slaanesh, Toughness 40+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Hard (–20) Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer casts his arms wide, as if conducting a great orchestra of cavorting daemons that howl and dance around his echo within the Immaterium. Their siren call warps the minds of those nearby, causing blinding sheets of pain.

This power emanates from the Sorcerer in all directions, out to the listed radius. All creatures within that range—excepting those Devoted to Slaanesh—while the power remains in effect, are stunned for one turn and gain a number of levels of Fatigue equal to the Sorcerer's Psy Rating if they roll a double on any Test they make for any Action they attempt.

Tzeentch Powers

These nine powers are linked to Tzeentch, and selecting them will take a Sorcerer further down the path of Tzeentch-worship.

Bolt of Change

Alternate Names: Crimson Fire of Tzeentch, M'Kachan's Wrath, The Inevitable Gift
Value: 500xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Tzeentch, WP 50+, Psy Rating 5
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 10 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer focuses his will and his wrath into a searing bolt of warp-flame—often red, due to the pervasive lore of the many-coloured fires of Tzeentch—that reduces enemies to twitching masses of mutating gore, or swirling whirlwinds of iridescent ash. Few substances can withstand the corrupting energies of a Bolt of Change.

Bolt of Change is a Psychic Bolt that deals Xd10 Energy Damage with a Pen of 9 (where X equals the sorcerer's Psy Rating), and with the Felling (Psy Rating) Quality. In addition, a living creature struck by a Bolt of Change must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test**. Failure indicates that the target gains 1d5 Corruption Points for every Degree of Failure. Five or more Degrees of Failure indicates that the target becomes subject to swift and catastrophic mutation, transforming into a Chaos Spawn that swiftly collapses into a puddle of shrieking ichor.

Boon of Tzeentch

Alternate Names: The Cyclops' Gift, Emerald Flame of Tzeentch
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Tzeentch, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer reaches deep into the warp for greater power, bolstering his already potent abilities further. Many sorcerers learn this power from ancient copies and fragments of the Book of Magnus, conjuring a searing green fire that augments sorcerous might in those strong enough to wield it, and which may immolate those who grasp foolishly at the power it provides.

The Sorcerer gains a bonus to his Psy Rating for every Degree of Success he scores on the Focus Power Test, which may only be used on the next power the Sorcerer uses and only if that power is used at the Unfettered power level or Higher. However, upon using that bonus Psy Rating, the Sorcerer suffers an immediate hit, dealing 1d5 plus Psy Rating of the second power Damage with a Pen of 4 and the Shocking Quality. This hit cannot be Dodged, Parried, or blocked through a Field Save.

Flicker

Alternate Names: Warpstep, Ephemeral Passage, Violet Fire of Transition
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Tzeentch, Willpower 50+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer creates a shimmering field of unreality around him, his image becoming transparent and intermittent as he flickers between reality and the warp. In this manner, he may step through solid objects as if they were air, and the blows of the enemy pass through him as if he were nothing more than a holographic image.

For as long as this power remains in effect, the Sorcerer gains the Incorporeal Trait (see **Chapter IV: Talents and Traits**), and counts his Agility Bonus as equal to the Sorcerer's Psy Rating for the purposes of determining how far he may move, and he may move as easily vertically as horizontally. While in this state, the Sorcerer cannot cross psychically charged barriers, holy wards or energy wards designed to bend reality or manipulate the warp, such as a Gellar Field or Void Shield.

Gholam Curse

Alternate Names: Puppetmaster Sigil, Dance of Lies
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Tzeentch, Willpower 50+, Psy Rating 5
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 20 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer reaches into the mind of an enemy, and bends their body to his will. Many sorcerers conjure sigils that appear upon the victim, and whisper commands that the victim's body will obey without question.

The Sorcerer must target a single enemy within range and line of sight, who may resist the power with a Willpower Test. If the target fails the test, then his actions in his next turn may be decided by the Sorcerer. The victim cannot deal damage to himself with his actions. Any tests the victim attempts while controlled by the Sorcerer gains a bonus equal to twice the Sorcerer's Psy Rating.



Mantle of Lies

Alternate Names: Changeling, Veil of Illusion
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Tzeentch, Intelligence 40+, Fellowship 40+
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Willpower Test
Range: 25 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer calls upon the Weaver of Fates to bless him with the power of confusion. An illusion is woven over the Sorcerer and a target of his choice, and even the closest allies of the victim can seldom see the truth of the matter.

The Sorcerer nominates a single enemy within range and line of sight. While this power remains in effect, the Sorcerer appears to be the target, and the target appears to be the Sorcerer. The illusion is almost flawless, and is difficult for even the most careful observers to see through. A creature can attempt an Awareness Test, with a penalty equal to five times the Sorcerer's Psy Rating, in order to see through the illusion.

Mindscourge

Alternate Names: Death of Thought
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Tzeentch, Hatred (any), Psy Rating 5
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 25 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: At first, all the victim feels is a sharp stabbing pain in his head. However, the Sorcerer has placed a sliver of psychic energy in the victim's mind, which will inflict debilitating pain as it moves through the victim's psyche, leaving him ultimately comatose.

This power is a Psychic Bolt which deals 1d10 + Psy Rating Energy Damage with the Warp Weapon and Shocking Qualities. After suffering Damage from this power, the target suffers 1d5 Damage to Intelligence, Willpower and Fellowship every turn for a number of turns equal to the Degrees of Success on the Focus Power Test. This power can only affect creatures with a mind, so non-Heretics with the Machine Trait, plant life, and other creatures at the GM's discretion may be unaffected.

Protean Form [Corruption]

Alternate Names: Flesh of Clay, Chimeric Transmutation, Blue Fire of Transformation
Value: 500xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Tzeentch, Corruption 50+, Toughness 50+, Willpower 50+, Psy Rating 6, Corpus Conversion
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Corruption Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer distends and warps his form into a new and horrific shape, channelling the power of Chaos into his own corrupt flesh to bless his enemies with a glorious image of change. Sorcerers of Tzeentch consider this power to be amongst the greatest blessings Tzeentch can bestow upon a mortal—the power to change themselves into any form they choose.

Upon successfully using this power, the Sorcerer gains Unnatural Characteristics equal to twice his Psy Rating, divided as he chooses amongst his Characteristics. Alternately, the Sorcerer may choose to gain a number of Traits from the following list, each Trait taking the place of two points of Unnatural Characteristics he would gain normally. Amphibious, Amorphous, Burrower (2), Flyer (3), Deadly Natural Weapons, Multiple Arms (1), Natural Armour (2), Sonar Sense, Sturdy, Unnatural Senses (5). Traits with a value in parenthesis can be taken multiple times, each time after the first adding +1 to the listed value.

However, so unstable is the Sorcerer's form that he cannot easily maintain his shape, gaining the Warp Instability Trait. Should he be reduced to 0 wounds, the power's effects end immediately, leaving the Sorcerer Stunned until the end of his next turn as his body swiftly returns to its natural shape.
Psychic Phenomena: The constant stream of warp energy pouring through the Sorcerer's body causes ripples in reality that cannot easily be contained. At the start of the Sorcerer's turn, every turn this power remains in effect, roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena** and apply the result immediately, re-rolling results of 75 or higher. The second results stand.

Psyphon

Alternate Names: Thoughtleech, Violet Flame of Deprivation
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Aligned Tzeentch, Willpower 40+, Psy Rating 4
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer locks his gaze with a victim, drawing away his will and using that stolen mental strength to bolster his own. Frequent use of this power has been known to result in a coma or braindeath for the victim, and leave fleeting echoes of memory in the Sorcerer.

The Sorcerer nominates a single enemy within range and line of sight, who may resist this power with a Willpower Test. If the target fails to resist, he suffers 2d10 Willpower Damage, and the Sorcerer gains Unnatural Willpower (1), +1 for every full 5 points of Willpower Damage the power inflicts. This Unnatural Willpower remains for as long as the power's effects persist.

Vile Revelation

Alternate Names: Orange Fire of Prophecy, Harrowing Glimpse of Destiny, The Unforeseen Future
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Mark of Tzeentch, Perception 50+, Psy Rating 5
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Opposed Perception Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer feels the shifts and flows of the warp keenly, and can discern brief slivers of events yet to come from this morass of swirling potential. Many Sorcerers are driven mad by the visions they receive from the Immaterium.

While this power remains in effect, the Sorcerer can see enough of the future to grant him an advantage in his endeavours. The Sorcerer gains a bonus on all tests while this power remains in effect equal to twice his Psy Rating. However, he suffers 1d5 points of Intelligence Damage every turn this power is in effect.

EXALTED POWERS

These powers are powerful and difficult to obtain, though several of them are simply more powerful versions of Unaligned powers. An Exalted power can only be obtained by those who manage to walk the narrow path between the Ruinous Powers, and consequently may only be purchased and used by characters who are not aligned to any one of the Chaos Gods. These powers represent an unaligned psyker's ability to draw power from each and every Ruinous Power to shape his psychic abilities.

Blasphemy Made Flesh [Corruption]

Alternate Names: Transcendence of Esh'raiik, Desolation of the Soul
Value: 500xp
Prerequisites: Corruption 60+, Psy Rating 6, Abhorrent Ward
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Corruption Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer's soul is the foulest of blasphemies, utterly awful to behold and almost impossible for mortal beings to look upon him without feeling nauseous or repelled. So vile is the Sorcerer's nature that daemons swarm around him, desperate to tear through the veil and revel in the horror of the Sorcerer's presence. This power, and its lesser version, was devised by the sorcerer Esh'raiik to turn his foulness into an advantage.

While this power remains in effect, any creature attempting to target the Sorcerer—with a melee attack, a ranged attack, a psychic power, or any other form of attack – must attempt a Willpower Test, with a –5 times the Sorcerer's Psy Rating penalty. If the attacker passes the Test, he may attack as normal. However, failure means his revulsion prevents him attacking, wasting the action and any remaining actions that turn.

Psychic Phenomena: The pressure of daemonic horde tearing at the fabric of existence thins the veil, making it risky for psykers to draw too deeply from the warp. While this power remains in effect, any psyker within 30m who causes Psychic Phenomena automatically rolls a 100, causing Perils of the Warp.

Hellish Blast

Alternate Names: Savage Conjuration, Ygethmor's Wrath
Value: 600xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 5, Hatred (any)
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 30 metres x Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer reaches into the warp for pure destructive force, gathering up raw hatred and the most concentrated spite. The sorcerer Ygethmor, who has long been an advisor to Warmaster Abaddon, calls down anger and fury and coalesced wrath in a skull-like conjuration made of black flame and crimson lightning.

This power is a Psychic Blast with a radius of the Sorcerer's Psy Rating in metres, which deals 3d10 + Psy Rating Energy Damage with a Pen of 10 and the Flame and Tearing Qualities.

Maelstrom of Rage

Alternate Names: Slaughterer's Song, Deepest Fury
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 6, Frenzy, Hatred (Any One)
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 10 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack
Description: The Sorcerer reaches deep into the warp, bringing forth the deepest, darkest rage and hatred he can find, unleashing it upon all those nearby. While there are no sorcerers devoted to Khorne, many do offer up prayers to the Blood God, seeking to beseech the source of all rage.

While this power remains in effect, the Sorcerer and all creatures within the power's radius immediately enter a Frenzied state, as if they had the Frenzy Talent. In addition, they gain the Hatred Talent against all enemies. They will remain in this state for as long as they remain within the power's radius.

Primordial Annihilation [Corruption]

Alternate Names: Laughter of Thirsting Gods
Value: 1000xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 7, Corruption 70+
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Hard (–20) Corruption Test
Range: 10 metres x Psy Rating radius
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer unleashes the raw power of the warp into reality, burning away the sham of the material universe. Few things can stand before the relentless tide of the Immaterium, and fewer emerge unscathed. Many sorcerers think of this power as being a reflection of the true nature of the Chaos Gods, the purest manifestation of their desires.

Primordial Annihilation must be used at the Push power level. This power is a Psychic Blast, centred on the Sorcerer himself, with a radius equal to the range of the power. All creatures within the radius, except for the Sorcerer himself, take a single hit dealing 1d10 Energy Damage times the Sorcerer's Psy Rating, with the Flame and Warp Weapon qualities.
Psychic Phenomena: The warp boils forth in an unstoppable tide, doing far more than simply burn away everything in its path. Roll twice on **Table 6–3: Perils of the Warp** and apply both effects immediately, instead of any normal Psychic Phenomena.

Shattertime

Alternate Names: Sunder the Clock, Defile Time
Value: 400xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 6, Precognition
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Hard (–20) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The Sorcerer draws upon the timeless nature of the warp and uses it to unravel the hindrances of linear time, stepping from moment to moment in no particular order.

The Sorcerer gains the Unnatural Weapon Skill, Unnatural Ballistic Skill, and Unnatural Agility Traits, all at values equal to his Psy Rating. In addition, the Sorcerer can choose to vanish from reality during any given round, for a total number of rounds (which do not have to be consecutive) equal to the Degrees of Success on the Focus Power Test. He will reappear in exactly the same place he vanished from when he chooses to reappear.

Sunder the Veil

Alternate Names: The Calling, Summoning the Horde
Value: 500xp
Prerequisites: Psy Rating 5, Forbidden Lore (Warp) +20
Action: Full Action
Focus Power: Arduous (–40) Willpower Test
Range: 10 metres per Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The veil between reality and the warp is breached, allowing daemons to pour through and wreak havoc upon the material universe for a brief time. To be able to tear open the veil with a thought is considered by many sorcerers to be the pinnacle of arcane might.

The Sorcerer creates an area of the listed radius, within which the barrier between warpspace and reality is broken. Within this area, all psychic powers must be used at the Push power level, and +20 is added to all rolls on the Psychic Phenomena table. Further, for every Degree of Success on the Focus Power Test, a single lesser daemon of the Sorcerer's choice will manifest within the area, each remaining for a number of rounds equal to the Sorcerer's Psy Rating before it vanishes back into the warp. This power may not be re-used until its effects have ended.

VI: Psychic Powers



TELEPATHY

Telepaths are able to contact and control the minds of others. From outright mental domination to subtle tricks of perception, telepaths can mould and shape thoughts with little more than a whim. However, to be able to hear the minds of all those around them, to feel the overflowing emotions of mortal creatures and remain sane requires great discipline, and many telepaths are incapable of completely blocking out the perpetual chatter of other minds. Many telepaths develop a loathing for others as a result, while others lose sight of their own self, overwhelmed by quirks of personality and beliefs that lodge in their minds over many years of telepathic contact. Only a few have the strength of will and certainty of belief to resist such fates.

The depth and potency of a telepath's powers are determined by his Psy Rating. At Psy Rating 1-2, the psyker can only send and receive messages equivalent to verbal communication. At Psy Rating 3-4, the psyker can send and receive visual communications as well, though these are only in black and white, and will often have a dreamlike quality or otherwise be somewhat indistinct. At Psy Rating 5-6, any images will be crisp, clear, in colour and accompanied by other sensory input—sound, taste, etc.—as appropriate. At Psy Rating 7 or higher, the psyker sends so powerfully that any communication at higher than the Fettered power level comes across as "shouting" unless used carefully.

Compel

Alternate Names: Subversion, Puppetmaster
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Delude, Thought Sending
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres per Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The psyker reaches into the target's mind and forces him to perform an action against his will. The most powerful of psykers can force a man to take his own life, overwhelming even the basic survival instinct. Few psykers are that powerful, but the havoc that a ruthless psyker can cause by bending minds is still considerable.

The psyker must nominate a single target within range and line of sight, who may resist with a Willpower Test. If the psyker succeeds, the target must follow his commands. The commands must be simple and achievable within a single round. Some examples include "Flee," "Fall," "Attack the closest target," and so forth. If the command is a potentially suicidal act, the target gets a +20 to his Opposed Willpower Test.

Delude

Alternate Names: Witch's Deception, Obfuscate
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Thought Sending
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 1 metre per Psy Rating
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The psyker clouds the target's perceptions, tricking him into feeling that the psyker is someone to be trusted implicitly, reacting positively to interactions with him. The deceptive potential of psykers is a constant fear for the authorities of the Imperium and for good reason, as renegade witches throughout the history of mankind have used their powers to subvert and defy authority figures.

The psyker must nominate a single target within range and line of sight, who may resist with a Willpower Test. While this power remains in effect, the psyker gains a +5 x Psy Rating bonus to all Interaction Skill Tests against that target. Note that this power is not "mind control" as such and the psyker cannot force others to act against their better judgement or harm themselves, nor does it obscure acts of overt hostility by the psyker.

Inspire

Alternate Names: Embolden, Defy Fear
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Thought Sending, Resistance (Fear)
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 3 metres per Psy Rating radius
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration

Table 6-4: Mind Probe

Rounds of Contact	Information Learned
One – Initial Contact	The psyker makes initial contact, and learns basic information about the target, such as his name, mood, and his approximate state of physical and mental health.
Two – Surface Thoughts	The psyker can now sense the thoughts foremost in the target's mind, such as immediate fears and concerns, conscious lies, and so forth. The target's Corruption level is also now known to the psyker.
Three – Short Term Memory	The psyker can now sort through the target's most recent memories, covering the last twelve hours or since the target last slept. Less casual information the target may be keeping secrets—such as simple passwords or recent experiences he might wish to hide—may also be found at this level. The target's Infamy characteristic, if any, is also now known to the psyker.
Four – Subconscious	The psyker gains detailed knowledge of people, places and/or objects that the target considers as important and how they relate to each other. The target's beliefs, motivations and personal goals are revealed, as are any contacts or complicated hidden ciphers. The psyker is also aware of the pivotal moments in the target's life.
Five – Broken Mind	The psyker may plunder the target's mind at will. Any information contained in the target's psyche is an open book for the psyker. The psyker can also identify implanted memories or personalities.

Description: The psyker can bolster the resolve of his comrades with waves of emotion that drive away fears and heighten righteous spite. Eldar Warlocks and Imperial Savants alike employ powers of this sort to strengthen the wills of their allies against impossible odds and terrifying adversaries.

A number of allies within range equal to the psyker's Psy Rating, plus the psyker himself, may immediately overcome the effects of pinning, and gain a +10 bonus to all Willpower Tests to resist the effects of Fear while this power remains in effect. Allies affected by this power lose its benefits as soon as they move out of range.

Mind Link

Alternate Names: Warp Whisper, Silent Voice
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Thought Sending
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test
Range: 1 kilometre per Psy Rating
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: A natural development of the simplest telepathic techniques, the psyker forms a lingering mental bond between himself and several others, allowing them to share thoughts over considerable distances. Chaos cultists regard such communication as the speech of the daemonic, a truer, purer way of conveying information, and secret organisations of all kinds value the swift and silent communion that telepathy allows.

While this power remains in effect, a number of willing creatures equal to the psyker's Willpower Bonus are mentally linked, allowing them to communicate instantly and silently. This power requires line of sight between the psyker and all the other participants at the moment the power is used, but once the power is in effect, line of sight is no longer necessary.

Mind Probe

Alternate Names: Thoughtworm, Deep Interrogation, Thief of Memory
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Thought Sending
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 1 metre per Psy Rating
Sustained: Full Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The psyker reaches into the mind of a single creature, unravelling the layers and defences within it to uncover thoughts both obvious and hidden. The servants of the Inquisition frequently employ such methods to interrogate particularly resistant suspects, and it is for this reason that they are so feared by enemies of the Imperium, but they are far from the only group who employ psykers to steal secrets from the minds of their foes.

It takes five rounds of sustained effort to completely probe the mind of an individual. It requires a Focus Power Test, opposed by the target's Willpower Test, each round the power is sustained, with the same modifiers as the initial test to use the power (though there is no chance of Psychic Phenomena for any round after the first). If the psyker wins the Focus Power Test, he gleans information from the target's mind, depending on how long he has successfully maintained the power. If the psyker fails the Focus Power Test, he is ejected from the target's mind, unable to dig any deeper, and the power's effects end. However, the psyker retains any knowledge he has already gained from the power's use up until that point.

A psyker can attempt to perform this power subtly, preventing the target from knowing that his mind has been infiltrated. This changes the Focus Power Test to a Hard (–20) Opposed Willpower Test, and the power may only be used at the Fettered power level.

Psychic Scream

Alternate Names: The Banshee's Wail, Splinter of Agony, Soul-killer
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Thought Sending
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Hard (–20) Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres per Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The psyker's mind unleashes a wave of psychic force that resonates in the target's mind, inflicting great pain that can injure or incapacitate an enemy. The Eldar tell of the wail of the banshee that calls souls from their body, a cry that is felt rather than heard, while many psykers both sanctioned and renegade know of telepathic attacks that can wrack a mind with agony and wound the soul.

This power is a Psychic Bolt which deals 1d10 Explosive Damage, +2 for every point of Psy Rating, with the Shocking and Warp Weapon Qualities. The target suffers a penalty to his Toughness Test to resist the effects of the Shocking quality equal to –5 x the psyker's Psy Rating. Additionally, if successfully used, this power will always hit the target's head—as the power affects the target's mind directly—rather than a random location.

Thought Sending

Alternate Names: Echo of Thought, Whispered Will
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: None
Action: Free Action
Focus Power: Simple (+40) Opposed Willpower Test
Range: 1 kilometre per Psy Rating radius
Sustained: No
Subtype: None
Description: The psyker can send his thoughts into the minds of those around him. This is the most crude and basic of telepathic techniques, known to vast numbers of psykers of many species and allegiance.

The psyker can broadcast a short message—no more than one sentence per Psy Rating—to a number of individuals (no more than two for each Degree of Success scored on the Focus Power Test), or indiscriminately to every single creature within range.

Minds who do not wish to be contacted in this way may resist with a Willpower Test, gaining a +20 to their test if they do not share a language with the psyker, as many of the mind's processes are still linked to the structure of language.



TELEKINESIS

The art of telekinesis is the translation of mental imperative into physical force. Telekines—practitioners of this discipline—gather together emotion and mental strength, using powerful psychic energy to influence the motion of objects and defy the laws of physics.

Force Bolt

Alternate Names: Kurnous' Arrow, Mind-bullet, Destructive Impulse, Furious Echo
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Mind over Matter
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test
Range: 10 metres per Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack
Description: The psyker gathers up his will, coalescing it into a fist-sized bolt. The Eldar, when inclined to tell of their lore at all, speak of the arrows of the hunter-god Kurnous that strike invisibly and silently, while the psykers of the Imperium, when not teaching of bland and clinical telekinesis, speak of destructive thoughts and righteous fury given physical form.

This power is a Psychic Bolt that deals 1d10+2 Impact Damage, +2 per point of Psy Rating, with a Pen of 0. If the psyker hits after scoring at least four Degrees of Success the target is also thrown 1d5 metres away and knocked prone (certain especially large targets such as battle tanks, Greater Daemons, and Titans are immune to this at the GM's discretion).

Force Storm

Alternate Names: The Maiden's Scorn, Witch-Barrage, Telekinetic Onslaught
Value: 350xp
Prerequisites: Force Bolt, Mind over Matter
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Willpower Test
Range: 10 metres per Psy Rating
Sustained: No
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The psyker's will is extended out into a great flurry of bolts of invisible force, akin to a storm of fire from an automatic weapon. The scholars of the Imperium maintain chain-bound grimoires of witch-lore that speak of barrages of ghostly force, or onslaughts of telekinetic brutality, while Eldar Warlocks sing songs of Lileath, the Maiden, whose ire manifested as punishing blasts that shine like moonlight.

This power is a Psychic Storm that deals 1d10 Impact Damage +3 per point of Psy Rating, with a Pen of 0.

Mind over Matter

Alternate Names: Spectral Hands, Ethereal Motion
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: None
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Willpower Test; Special – See Below
Range: 5 metres per Psy Rating
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Attack (if used to throw target), Concentration
Description: The basic talent of telekinesis is a versatile and immensely useful tool in any psyker's arsenal, a valuable means of exerting his will upon his immediate surroundings. Human psykers, whether sanctioned by the Imperium or lurking in the shadows beneath so-called civilisation, speak of reaching out with hands of spectral presence, or imbuing objects with motion or inertia that should otherwise not exist.

A psyker with this power may use it in one of three ways: constant motion, rapid push or forceful throw. When using constant motion, the Focus Power Test is Routine (+20), and the psyker may move any object within range and line of sight that weighs no more than 10kg x Psy Rating. Objects moved in this way can only be moved too slowly to be used to attack, and when released the object drifts slowly to the ground.

When using a rapid push, the Focus Power Test is Ordinary (+10), and Opposed by a Strength Test from a single target within range and line of sight. If the target fails the test, he is thrown backwards Psy Rating metres, plus an additional metre for every Degree of Success on the Focus Power Test.

When using a forceful throw, the Focus Power Test is Challenging (+0), and allows the psyker to lift an object weighing no more than 5kg x Psy Rating and thrown at an enemy within range, hitting them to deal 1d10 Impact Damage +1 for every 5kg of the object's weight.

Precision Telekinesis

Alternate Names: Subtle Will, Geisthand, Iridescent Grasp of Edriané,
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Mind over Matter
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Willpower Test
Range: 5 metres per Psy Rating
Sustained: Half Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The true Telekine does not just manipulate large objects with clumsy force. Precision and care are essential for the more complex applications of telekinetic force. Adeptus Astra Telepathica Savants speak of the subtle will as a state of calm determination, while Eldar legend tells of the seeress Edriané, whose gifts produced a psychic touch of peerless dexterity.

This power allows the psyker to perform any task he could accomplish with his bare hands, such as operating complex controls, picking a pocket, wielding a weapon or grabbing an adversary. In any situation where the task in question would require a Characteristic Test, the psyker substitutes his Willpower instead. The psyker's Psy Rating substitutes for his Strength Bonus while using this power.

Telekinetic Shield

Alternate Names: Bulwark, Kineshield, Bunker of Will
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Mind over Matter, Willpower 45+
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The psyker constructs a barrier of denial and defiance that deflects the attacks of his enemies as if it were a solid object. Ancient, long-buried lore from the time of the Heresy calls these manifestations Kineshields, and explains that great psykers of the past could once protect squads, or even armies, of warriors beneath great and impervious barriers of this sort.

While this power remains in effect, the psyker is considered to have all locations protected by cover with an AP value equal to his PR. This cover is not ignored by weapons with the Warp Weapon Quality.

Telekinetic Weapon

Alternate Names: Keenest Edge, Wyrd-knife, Ephemeral Razor
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Mind over Matter
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Willpower Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The psyker's mind cuts deeper than any mortal blade, manifesting as an impossibly sharp blade of psychic force that shears through flesh and armour with contemptuous ease. Rumours abound of psychic murder-cults in the depths of hive-worlds that employ these powers as tools of assassination, slaying without any tangible weapon.

Table 6-5: Personal Augury Results

Degrees of Success	Result
1	**Doom:** The psyker receives a symbolic warning of the greatest peril or obstacle faced by the target in question. This is a vague hint about what is to come.
2	**Malign Influences:** The psyker gains intuition of the target's doom, and a further two negative influences that the target will face.
3	**Benign Factors:** The psyker gains an additional impression of the greatest advantage or weapon the target has in their possession.
4+	**Fate:** The psyker is aware of all the previous effects, and may also offer a single sentence of cryptic advice to the target.

While this power remains in effect, the psyker bears a sword of telekinetic force, which imposes no penalty for lacking the required Weapon Training Talent. The psyker may use the Telekinetic Weapon as he would any other melee weapon, and the blade may be parried, though it cannot be destroyed by weapons with the Power Field quality. The weapon deals 1d10 plus Psy Rating Rending Damage with a Pen equal to the psyker's Psy Rating. This is further modified by the wielder's Strength Bonus as normal for a melee weapon.

DIVINATION

Diviners seek to discern the hidden past and know the course of future events. Their abilities allow them to look into the Immaterium to find the answers they seek. However, this discipline is not an easy one to master—to look upon the warp is taxing and even dangerous, often leading to insanity for those not fully prepared to embrace the glory of the aethyr.

Unlike most powers, some of those in the Divination discipline make Focus Power Tests based on Psyniscience instead of Willpower, as they are far more reliant on the awareness of the psyker than his strength of mind.

Precognition

Alternate Names: Momentary Foresight, Defy the Crone, Fortune's Favour
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Psyniscience Rank 1
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Ordinary (+10) Psyniscience Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The psyker's mind skims the warp for glimpses of the immediate future, seeking to discern threats to himself so that he may avoid them. Many latent psykers are unknowing of the gift they possess, considering their survival to be a matter of luck, while Eldar seers describe it as an act of defiance against the fate-weaving Crone Goddess, Morai-Heg.

While this power remains in effect, the psyker gains a bonus to all Evasion Tests equal to twice his Psy Rating.

Preternatural Awareness

Alternate Names: Unavoidable Sight
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Precognition
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Psyniscience Test
Range: Self
Sustained: Free Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration
Description: The psyker's perceptions are focussed on his immediate surroundings, searching for even the slightest disturbance or most minor change.

While this power remains in effect, the psyker gains the Unnatural Perception Trait, at a rating equal to his Psy Rating. In addition, he gains a bonus to his Initiative equal to the Degrees of Success on his Focus Power Test.

Precognitive Dodge

Alternate Names: Whispers of Fate, Prophet's Escape
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Precognition
Action: Reaction
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Perception Test
Range: Self
Sustained: No
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The psyker's awareness of the warp grants him the means to elude his opponents' attacks without needing to rely on mortal reflexes. It takes a skilled psyker to reflexively observe the warp in this way, and such a difficult technique is often performed only by the most potent of diviners, such as Eldar Farseers.

In any situation where the psyker would be called upon to make an Evasion Test, he may instead attempt to use this power. If the power is successful, the psyker avoids the attack exactly as if he had passed an Evasion Test.

Personal Augury

Alternate Names: Tarot Reading, Casting the Runes
Value: 200xp
Prerequisites: Precognition
Action: Special
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Psyniscience Test
Range: 1 metre
Sustained: No
Subtype: Concentration
Description: The psyker's gaze is cast upon the infinite tides of the warp, to seek out the future of a single, specific individual. While supposedly something of a staple of soothsayers and other petty seers, it takes real skill to gain more than the vaguest impressions. The Emperor's Tarot is a common method within the Imperium, while Eldar Farseers typically employ tiny, psychically conductive runes to divine the future, but untold billions of different methods exist within the myriad civilisations across the galaxy.

To begin with, the power's target must specify a circumstance that he wishes to have divined. This may be as detailed as "What forces defend the Mechanicus Basilica on Belacane?" or as vague as "How can I attain glory and power in the name of the Dark Gods?" The more precise the question, the more specific the reading may be. Once the question is established, the psyker and the target spend the next thirty minutes using assorted psychic foci—drawing Tarot cards, sifting through the entrails of exotic beasts, casting runes, gazing deep into fire or toxin-saturated water, or any of countless other methods. At the end of this time, the psyker makes his Focus Power Test to discern the weave of the target's future. Each Degree of Success reveals more information, as explained on **Table 6–5: Personal Augury Results**.

Glimpse

Alternate Names: Moment of Insight, Witch's Ruse, Outcome Thief
Value: 100xp
Prerequisites: Precognition
Action: Half Action
Focus Power: Challenging (+0) Psyniscience Test
Range: Self
Sustained: No
Subtype: None
Description: The psyker reaches into the warp to grasp a single moment from the possible futures arrayed before him—a moment in which he succeeds at a particular task—and the trials and travails that could prevent that moment coming to pass. Unscrupulous psykers have frequently used this technique to perform all manner of illicit tasks, their

Table 6-6: The Contempt of the Warp

Roll	Effect
01-50	**Ignored:** Silence and stillness greet the Heretic's efforts; he has failed, but survived unscathed.
51-80	**Mocked:** Howls of daemonic laughter fill the tortured air, and the character's worst secrets and shames are hurled at him in mockery. The character gains 1d5 Corruption Points.
81-90	**Struck Down:** The character is blasted with the raw energies of the warp, and take 2d10 Energy Damage with the Warp Weapon Quality. The foully seething energies fill the character, and he gains 1d10 Corruption Points.
91-100	**Assailed:** For the Heretic's presumption, a minor daemon is dispatched to deal with him. A minor daemon or similar warp entity (chosen by the GM) appears in the midst of the ritual. This daemon is not subject to Mastery. If the ritual was to summon a daemon, then that daemon is summoned, but it is not subject to Mastery and will attack the would-be-summoner immediately.
101-120	**Possessed:** Chaos repays the Heretic's arrogance by making him its plaything, and an Unclean Spirit—or worse—attempts to overthrow his mind. If the ritual was to summon a daemon, then that daemon is summoned, but is not subject to Mastery, and will attempt to possess the would-be summoner.
121+	**Devoured:** Reality is sundered as the Heretic is sucked screaming into the warp or devolved into a mindless, mewling puddle of twisted flesh. The character is worse than dead.

uncanny proficiency in a vast range of tasks due as much to prophetic talent as to any mundane skill.

The psyker gains a bonus equal to five times his Psy Rating on the first non-Evasion Skill Test he performs before the end of his next turn.

Precognitive Strike

Alternate Names: Khaine's Ruthless Blade, Templar's Foresight
Value: 300xp
Prerequisites: Precognition, Precognitive Dodge
Action: Free Action
Focus Power: Difficult (–10) Psyniscience Test
Range: Self
Sustained: No
Description: To discern one's own future is sometimes deemed easier than discerning the futures of others—to look for the echoes of one's own soul, rather than those of unfamiliar foes. However, the psyker has learned to do just that, seeing the way his foes fight and discerning moments of weakness, discerning opportunities to strike. Eldar Warlocks often turn this technique to their advantage, striking with uncanny accuracy.

The psyker gains a bonus on the first Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test during this turn, equal to +5 x his Psy Rating.

Rites and Rituals

"The grand horror of the warp touches many minds; it is not merely the mind of the witch that can delve into the depths of the Immaterium. Through grand rituals and arcane rites, the devoted can speak to the Gods and beseech them for favour."

– Vandar Herroth, the Architect of Blasphemy

Sorcery, warpcraft, magic, call it what you will, it is a real and deadly force in the 41st Millennium. The Imperium regard this "dark magic" as a great evil, a dire peril that awaits any who delve into knowledge of the forbidden. The truth of the matter is far more complex, a mess of paradox and contradiction.

What is known for certain is that through the use of certain mimetic formulae and esoteric equations, expressed variously as simple verbal or somatic patterns or through complex rituals of murder and discord, the stuff of the warp can be drawn through the fabric of reality. This warpcraft can be made to alter and corrupt physical matter, imbue objects with unnatural power, mutate flesh, summon forth entities from the Immaterium, and even create deliberate breaches or rifts in the structure of the universe. To undertake such vile rites or even to search out the means to do so within the Imperium is a crime punishable by death and excommunication.

The malefic arts must either be independently researched, experimented with and honed with practice—a process fraught with peril—or be gleaned through the equally treacherous process of tutelage under a master occultist or even a daemonic entity. As such, knowledge of these dark rituals is typically fragmentary and paradoxical, for what one sorcerer can accomplish with a gesture and an incantation, another will require sigils painted on the floor and the blood of the murdered.

"Chaos ritual" is a catchall term that covers the diverse rites, occult formulae, and strange ceremonies by which the warp can be called upon to alter reality or its denizens summoned forth to erupt into the physical universe. Chaos rituals can take a potentially endless variety of forms and are often inconsistent, malign and irrational things, employing insane formula and centred on damaging reality in some way. Such a ritual acts like a flare unleashed into the endless dark tides of the warp beyond in order to attract the attention of daemons and ease their passage through the veil or perhaps used to create a specifically desired buckling of physical laws and a release of occult energies that can be controlled and channelled by the ritual's conductor for his own ends. Warp rituals are horrifically dangerous things whose potential scope is limited only by the depraved imagination of mankind and the ageless malevolence of the Ruinous Powers.

Performing Chaos Rituals

In game terms, Chaos rituals are there to achieve specific effects. A particular ritual might exist to summon a daemon, possess an unwilling victim, contact a powerful entity, taint an area with unholy forces, foretell the future, animate the dead or simply rip open reality and let the daemons have their way… the list is potentially endless. As a general rule of thumb, the more complex and potent the effect to be achieved, the more difficult the ritual will be to accomplish.

Rituals require time and preparation to perform, and there are many difficulties in successfully carrying them out. These are either owing to the requirements of particular components (rare substances, sacrificial victims and the like) or other more arcane needs such as a particular astrological alignment, the fact that a particular locale must be used, etc. Another difficulty worth noting is, of course, the attention of hostile forces (such as agents of the Imperium or the Eldar). Attracting such attention can make life very difficult for the malefic cultist.

Subject to such an endless variety of uses, Chaos rituals seldom have much consistency. However, human

Table 6-7: Summoning Ritual Modifiers

Modifier	Condition (Combine any applicable modifiers to arrive at a net modifier with a total of +60 or –60)
+30	The summoner knows the daemon's True Name. The summoner has the Mark of the daemon's patron god.
+20	"The Stars are Right"—auspicious circumstances. The summoner has sworn allegiance to the daemon's master or cause, or is Devoted to the daemon's patron god.
+10	Ritual follows the "Rule of Sympathy." The daemon has been provided with a suitable sacrifice to partake of upon its arrival The summoner has an artefact connected to the daemon.
+0	The summoner knows the daemon's allegiance and kind.
–10	The summoner knows little of what is being called up.
–20	The summoner has sworn allegiance to a master or cause, or is Devoted to a patron god opposed to that of the daemon.
–30	The summoner knows nothing of what is being called up. The summoner recently summoned or commanded daemons of an opposing allegiance.

suffering and death are an integral part of most (the release of emotional and psychic energy is as meat and drink to the denizens of the warp), and what magi sometimes call the "Rule of Sympathy" often applies. That is to say, sympathetic objects and rites are used to help create the desired effect. So for example, a ritual to summon a daemon of the Lord of Decay might well involve the use of rancid offal, rusted implements and diseased and contaminated sacrificial victims—all objects of sympathy to the nature of the creature being called upon.

Alternatively, the ritual might be structured to help weaken the barriers between reality and the warp. In such cases, during the rites, hallucinogenic drugs, tortuous incantations and numbing trances might be employed to attune the minds of the celebrants to visions of the beyond that may crawl their way through the rupturing synapses of the onlookers to take physical form.

USING RITUALS IN GAMES

The number of Chaos Rituals that exist within the 41st Millennium is immense, and they serve a crucial purpose to ongoing games, granting access to great powers and greater monstrosities, but not without cost or difficulty. Chaos Rituals follow a basic structure which is presented below.

Chaos Ritual Template

A ritual can be defined by the following criteria.

Description: This section describes what the ritual is for, why it is carried out, its origin and any other pertinent facts.

Requirements: What is needed to perform the ritual-specific components, time, place, etc., as well as any Skill Tests, Corruption or Infamy level, known Talents or Traits needed to make the ritual work properly. How well these Tests are made and the wider makeup of the ritual may affect the quality of the results achieved. Many factors both esoteric and mundane may affect a ritual's chance of success. Particular examples for daemonic rituals can be found on **Table 6–7: Summonining Ritual Modifiers**.

Effects: The successful effect of the ritual.

Duration: How long the ritual's effects last.

Cost: The cost in physical and spiritual terms to those that carry out the ritual; from physical harm to the wrath of the daemonic.

The Price of Failure: All attempts to control the warp have an unpleasant cost should they fail. These consequences are listed here, usually represented by Psychic Phenomena, immediate Perils of the Warp, or in the specific cases of summoning or warp-rift opening rituals, an effect called Contempt of the Warp as detailed in **Table 6–6: The Contempt of the Warp**.

THE DAEMONIC MASTERY TEST

Commanding a daemon is no minor thing, as even the least of entities that may answer a sorcerer's call are malign creatures of rage and hate that would sooner rend a mortal apart for sport than serve one. In order to control a summoned daemon, a battle of wills is fought psychically between the summoner and the daemon, represented by an Opposed Willpower Test taking a Full Action to perform. If the summoner is a psyker, he may add a +5 bonus to his test for every point of Psy Rating he has. This test is further modified by the criteria listed on **Table 6–7: Summoning Ritual Modifiers**, by Daemonic Presence, and by any other pertinent factors.

If the summoner wins the contest, he may command the daemon to do his bidding, and it will follow his spoken and telepathic instructions clearly and accurately. If the summoner fails the Test, then the daemon is free to do as it wishes, and will usually start by seeking to take out its rage upon the summoner.

BREAKING MASTERY

Daemons are alien-minded and untrustworthy things at the best of times, and it is always wise to simply summon them to do what they are best suited for—slaughter and butchery. If the daemon is forced to go against its fundamental nature in some way, it may attempt to break the summoner's control, forcing a second Mastery Test, with a negative modifier for the controller of –30.

EXAMPLE CHAOS RITUALS

Below is a selection of commonly used rituals, known by many of those who truck with the Ruinous Powers.

Call the Lord of Skulls' Soldier

While Khorne employs no sorcerers, he is nevertheless frequently reliant upon the acts of mortals to bring his daemons into the material universe. Employed by cultists intent upon murder, this

ritual summons a Bloodletter, one of the daemonic footsoldiers of Khorne, to do their bidding and slaughter their enemies.

Requirements: The ritual must take place at the site of battle or murder and requires an inscribed summoning circle marked out with invocations and sigils sacred to the Blood God. Braziers of boiling blood and burning coals must be placed at the cardinal points of the circle, and an adult human who has killed another during his life or a predatory beast must be ritually killed and bled to summon the daemon as the correct prayers to the Lord of Skulls are roared with bestial fervour. A **Hard (–20) Lore (Daemonology) Test** is required to successfully conduct the ritual, modified by **Table 6–7: Summoning Ritual Modifiers.** If the daemon is successfully summoned, then a Daemonic Mastery Test must immediately be taken in order to control it.

Effects: A Bloodletter (see page 352) appears at the centre of the summoning circle.

Duration: Once summoned, the Bloodletter remains corporeal for 1d5+5 rounds, plus an additional round for every Degree of Success on the test to complete the ritual. This duration may be extended further by areas where the veil between reality and the warp is thin, or if the daemon slays enough living creatures to empower it further (this last is up to the GM, however he should keep in mind that daemons are often empowered by death and bloodshed, and may remain in the material realm longer because of it.) At the GM's Discretion, the ritual may be enacted to summon a daemon for a specific task. In that case, the daemon may remain corporeal long enough to accomplish this.

Cost: Whether successful or not, the ritual causes an immediate roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**. Further, the mindless rage that accompanies a ritual to Khorne forces all participants to make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or enter a frenzied state, as per the Frenzy Talent (see page 124), lashing out at all those nearby. This may prevent the Daemonic Mastery Test being attempted.

The Price of Failure: Failure results in a Test for the Contempt of the Warp (see **Table 6–6: Summoning Ritual Modifiers**), modified by +10 for every Degree of Failure after the first.

Summon Slaanesh's Handmaiden

The servants of the Prince of Torments are many and varied, but most numerous amongst them are the Daemonettes, handmaidens and courtiers to their master and creator. Cultists of excess draw Daemonettes into the material world to partake of mortal sensation or to engage in orgies of destruction.

Requirements: The ritual must take place in a location where great debauchery and excess has taken place, and requires an inscribed summoning circle marked out with invocations and symbols sacred to the Dark Prince. Braziers of hallucinogenic incense and vast quantities of intoxicating elixirs are spread around the ritual site. Six adult humans made delirious by blessed narcotics must be slashed with anointed knives, marked with daemonic runes, and then murdered. A **Hard (–20) Lore (Daemonology) Test** is required to successfully conduct the ritual, modified by **Table 6–7: Summoning Ritual Modifiers**. If the daemon is successfully summoned, then a Daemonic Mastery Test must immediately be taken in order to control it.

Effects: A Daemonette (see page 353) appears at the centre of the summoning circle.

Duration: Once summoned, the Daemonette remains corporeal for 1d5+5 rounds, plus an additional round for every Degree of Success on the test to complete the ritual. This duration may be extended further by areas where the veil between reality and the warp is thin, or if the daemon slays enough living creatures to empower it further. At the GM's Discretion, the ritual may be enacted to summon a daemon for a specific task. In that case, the daemon may remain corporeal long enough to accomplish this.

Cost: Whether successful or not, the ritual causes an immediate roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**. Further, the overwhelming ecstasy that accompanies a ritual to Slaanesh forces all participants to make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or become Stunned as they writhe in joy and agony. This may prevent the Daemonic Mastery Test being attempted.

The Price of Failure: Failure results in a Test for the Contempt of the Warp (see **Table 6–6: Summoning Ritual Modifiers**), modified by +10 for every Degree of Failure after the first.

Summon the Cackling Spellfiend

The Horrors of Tzeentch are bizarre, unpredictable creatures wrought from flame and magic and twisted flesh, frequently called upon by sorcerers and cultists to wreak havoc upon the world, their myriad limbs and pseudopodia spitting arcane flame with the kind of insane abandon that only a daemon could manage.

Requirements: The ritual must take place in a location desolated by fire or magic and requires an inscribed summoning circle marked out with symbols sacred to the Changer of Ways. Enchanted braziers spewing multi-coloured smoke and flame are arrayed at random points around the circle and an adult human branded with arcane runes, to be reduced to ashes by magic and flame at the culmination of the ritual. A **Hard (–20) Lore (Daemonology) Test** is required to successfully conduct the ritual, modified by **Table 6–7: Summoning Ritual Modifiers**. If the daemon is successfully summoned, then a Daemonic Mastery Test must immediately be taken in order to control it.

Effects: A Pink Horror (see page 254) appears at the centre of the summoning circle.

Duration: Once summoned, the Pink Horror remains corporeal for 1d5+5 rounds, plus an additional round for every Degree of Success on the test to complete the ritual. This duration may be extended further by areas where the veil between reality and the warp is thin, or if the daemon slays enough living creatures to empower it further. At the GM's Discretion, the ritual may be enacted to summon a daemon for a specific task. In that case, the daemon may remain corporeal long enough to accomplish this.

Cost: Whether successful or not, the ritual causes an immediate roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena**, adding +20 to the roll due to the influx of untamed arcane power that accompanies Tzeentch rituals.

The Price of Failure: Failure results in a Test for the Contempt of the Warp (see **Table 6–6: Contempt of the Warp**), modified by +10 for every Degree of Failure after the first.



VIII

Combat

Combat
•
Injury
•
Critical Hits
•
Special Conditions
•
Healing

Chapter VII: Combat

"Come. My axe thirsts."

—Warlord Crox

The galaxy is a dangerous place, especially for those who choose to leave behind the relative safety of established worlds and explore the unknown. Over the course of their travels, Heretics are bound to encounter all manner of people, aliens, and worse that would see them dead. Unless the characters plan to spend their lives running away from their enemies, they will have to fight. As a result, combat can form a key component to a **Black Crusade** game.

This section refers specifically to combat between two or more individuals. The Horde rules at the end of the chapter allow players to adapt these rules to represent a small group of characters against a large-scale opposing force.

NARRATIVE TIME VS. STRUCTURED TIME

The passage of time is flexible in a game of **Black Crusade** and subject to the GM's discretion, based on the needs of the story and the choices the players make. Sometimes the GM only needs to convey a very loose sense of time, which is known as Narrative Time. In other situations, especially combats, more precise time keeping is necessary, and the GM should adopt what is known as Structured Time.

NARRATIVE TIME

Many situations in a game of **Black Crusade** do not require precise time keeping. It is usually enough to know if a certain action takes a few minutes, about an hour, several weeks, or anything in between. Narrative Time is most often used outside of combat and other situations where the precise order of actions is unimportant.

STRUCTURED TIME

In contrast to the abstract approach of Narrative Time, Structured Time is important for resolving complex Encounters, such as combat, when every second counts and the order in which things happen is crucial. Structured Time is divided into Rounds, Turns, and Actions.

Rounds

A Round consists of every character participating in the Encounter taking one Turn each. It is assumed that characters act more or less simultaneously in an Encounter, so a Round is approximately five seconds long, regardless of how many characters are involved.

Turns

Each character in an Encounter gets one Turn each Round. During a character's Turn, he can perform one or more Actions. While characters' Turns overlap each other slightly, Turns are resolved in a specific order known as Initiative Order (see page 233).



Actions

A character can perform one or more Actions on his Turn. If a character is performing multiple Actions during his Turn, the order in which they are resolved may or may not matter. For example, a character could draw his pistol and then move a few metres, or he could move first and then draw his pistol, but either way the end result is the same. However, if the same character wants to shoot his pistol, he obviously needs to draw it first! Actions are described in detail on page 233.

COMBAT OVERVIEW

Combat is usually resolved using Structured Time divided into Rounds, Turns, and Actions. Each character, including NPCs, takes one Turn each Round. The order in which Turns are resolved depends on Initiative Order. When a new combat begins, follow these steps to determine what happens.

Step 1: Surprise

At the beginning of a combat, the GM determines if any characters are Surprised. This can only happen once at the beginning of a combat, and there will be many combats wherein nobody is Surprised. A Surprised character loses his Turn on the first Round of combat because he has been caught unawares by his enemies. If no one is Surprised, move immediately to Step Two.

Surprise

Surprise only affects the beginning of a new combat. It is up to the GM to decide if any of the combatants are Surprised. Ultimately, this comes down to a judgement call on the GM's part, based on the circumstances and the Actions of the various combatants leading up to the encounter. The GM should take the following into account when determining Surprise:

- Is anyone hiding? Successful use of the Concealment Skill before the combat may mean that some combatants are hidden. Extremely wary characters may oppose this with an Awareness Test.
- Is anyone sneaky? Successful use of the Silent Move Skill may have positioned some characters for an ambush. Again, wary opponents may oppose this with an Awareness Test.
- Are there any unusual circumstances that would mask the approach of attackers? This can cover nearly anything, from pouring rain to whining engines to nearby explosions.
- Are there any distractions? It's possible that something quite distracting is going on. A cultist's attention may be so fixated on the sermon of his confessor that he doesn't notice his attackers approaching.

Bearing all of this in mind, the GM must decide which combatants are Surprised. While it's often the case that one entire side or the other is Surprised, there can be individual exceptions. If no one is Surprised, proceed with the combat as normal.

A Surprised character loses his Turn in the first Round. He can do nothing except stand dumbfounded. Furthermore, a non-Surprised attacker receives a +30 bonus to Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack a Surprised target. After the Surprise Round completely resolves, all Surprised characters recover their wits and can act normally. All combatants then roll for Initiative and the combat proceeds normally.

Step 2: Roll Initiative

At the start of the first Round, each character rolls for Initiative. Each character rolls 1d10 and adds his Agility Bonus (the tens digit of his Agility characteristic). The result of the roll applies to all successive Rounds in the combat.

Step 3: Determine Initiative Order

The GM ranks all the Initiative rolls, including those of the NPCs, from highest to lowest. This is the order in which the characters take their Turns during each Round of combat.

Step 4: Combatants Take Turns

Starting with the character at the top of the Initiative Order, each character takes a Turn. The character currently taking his Turn is known as the active character. During his Turn, the active character can perform one or more Actions. Once his Actions have been resolved, the next character in the Initiative Order becomes the active character and takes his Turn, and so forth.

Step 5: Round Ends

Once each character has taken a Turn, the Round is over. Any lingering effects that specify a duration of "until the end of the Round" now end.

Step 6: Repeat Steps 4–5 as Needed

Continue to play successive Rounds until the combat is complete or until the event that triggered the switch from Narrative Time to Structured Time is resolved.

Initiative

Initiative determines the order in which participants act during each Round. To determine Initiative, roll 1d10 and add the result to the character's or NPC's Agility Bonus. The GM rolls the Initiative for any NPCs and creatures present. To keep things simpler, it is recommended that the GM make one Initiative roll for an entire group of similar enemies. After each combatant (or group of combatants) has determined his Initiative, the GM makes a list and places them in order, from highest to lowest. This is known as the Initiative Order, which is the order the combatants act in each Round, until the combat is over.

If more than one character has the same Initiative, they act in order from the highest Agility to the lowest. If they also have the same Agility, then each should roll a die, with the highest going first. Most combats last for multiple Rounds, but each combatant's Initiative is only determined once at the start of the combat. Once the Initiative Order has been established, it usually remains the same from Round to Round. If new combatants join in the middle of the fight, simply determine their Initiatives normally and insert them into the Initiative Order.

Actions

During each normal Round, every character gets a Turn to act. On his Turn, a character can take one or more Actions. There are five types of Actions in **Black Crusade**, and every action also has one or more subtypes.

Types of Actions

Every Action is categorised into one of the following types: Full Actions, Half Actions, Reactions, Free Actions, and Extended Actions.

Full Actions

A Full Action requires a character's complete attention to accomplish. A character can take one Full Action on his Turn and cannot take any Half Actions. Grappling an opponent is an example of a Full Action.

Half Actions

A Half Action is fairly simple; it requires some effort or concentration, but not so much that it consumes a character's entire Turn. A character can take two different Half Actions on his Turn instead of taking one Full Action. Readying a weapon or making a Standard Attack are both examples of Half Actions.

Reactions
A Reaction is a special Action made in response to some event, such as an attack. A character receives one Reaction each Round, which may only be used when it is not his Turn. Examples include making an Evasion test to avoid an attack.

Free Actions
A Free Action takes only a moment and requires no real effort by the character. Free Actions may be performed in addition to any other Actions on a character's Turn, and there is no formal limit to the number of Free Actions one character can take. The GM should use common sense to set reasonable limits on what can be done in a few seconds. Examples of Free Actions include dropping an item or speaking a few words.

Extended Actions
Some Actions take more time than a single Round to complete. Once a character commits to an Extended Action, he is considered to be working towards completing it for as long as necessary. If the character abandons the Extended Action, or is interrupted, all progress towards completing the Extended Action is lost.

Action Subtypes
Into addition to its type, every Action is also categorised into one or more subtypes. Action subtypes don't do anything in and of themselves, but they are used to clarify what a character is and is not allowed to do in a variety of special circumstances. For example, a character that is Immobilised cannot perform any Actions with the Movement subtype.

USING ACTIONS
During his Turn, a character may perform one Full Action or two different Half Actions. A character could, for example, make a charge attack (Full Action) or aim and shoot (two Half Actions). It's important to remember that a Round is only a few seconds long, so the character's Turn within that Round is but a few moments.

Any Action can be combined with talking, banter, battle cries and other short verbal expressions—these are considered Free Actions. It is left to the GM to decide what a player might be able to say in that amount of time. A wry aside to a companion or a terse insult of an enemy is always reasonable, but recounting the intimate details of one's seven duels-to-the-death between swings of a power sword should probably count as something more than just a Free Action.

Most Actions are started and completed within the active character's same Turn. For example, a character does not begin a Charge on one Turn and finish it on a later Turn or a later Round; he performs the entire Charge (which is a Full Action) at once on his Turn. However, there are two broad exceptions: reactions are always performed when it is not the reacting character's Turn, and Extended Actions always take more than one Round to complete.

In addition, characters in Black Crusade may only take one action with the Attack subtype and one action with the Concentration subtype during their turn. They may still take Reactions with the Concentration or Attack subtype during the same round, since this does not happen during their Turn. Note that sustaining psychic powers (most of which have the Concentration subtype) does not count as taking actions.

Action Descriptions
These Actions provide players with options in combat.

Aim
Type: Half Action or Full Action
Subtype: Concentration
The active character takes extra time to make a more precise attack. Aiming as a Half Action grants a +10 bonus to the character's next attack, while aiming as a Full Action grants a +20 bonus to the character's next attack. The next action the Aiming character performs must be an attack or the benefits of Aiming are lost. Aiming benefits are also lost if the character performs a Reaction before making his attack. Aiming can be used with both melee and ranged attacks.

All Out Attack
Type: Full Action
Subtypes: Attack, Melee
The character makes a furious melee attack at the expense of personal safety. He makes one melee attack with a +30 to his Weapon Skill, but he cannot make Dodge or Parry attempts until the start of his next Turn.

Brace Heavy Weapon
Type: Half Action
Subtype: Miscellaneous
Heavy weapons must be braced before they can be fired accurately. Bracing a Heavy weapon can involve using a bipod or tripod, propping the weapon up on a windowsill or sandbags, or simply assuming a wide stance or kneeling. When a Heavy weapon is fired without being braced, the attacker suffers a –30 to his Ballistic Skill Test (in addition to any other penalties). Once this action is made, the weapon is braced, and remains braced until the character moves it. Once a Heavy weapon has been braced, the firer cannot move without losing the benefits of bracing. However, the user can still traverse his weapon 45 degrees (or sometimes more) depending on the type of bracing. For example, a weapon braced in the notch of a broken wall would have a limited traverse, while a weapon with a full tripod could potentially traverse up to 180 degrees.

Called Shot
Type: Full Action
Subtypes: Attack, Concentration, Melee or Ranged
The active character attempts to attack a specific or vulnerable area on his target. The attacker declares a location on his target (e.g., Head, Body, Left Arm, Right Arm, Left Leg, or Right Leg) and makes an attack following all the rules for Standard Attacks, except the test is either a **Hard (–20) Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test** (depending on whether the attack is melee or ranged). (Therefore, he does not get the usual +10 bonus for Standard Attacks.) If he succeeds, he skips the Determine Hit Location step of the attack and instead hits the declared location. At the GM's discretion, this attack may be used to aim at specific locations on monsters or within the environment, such as shooting a door lock from across the room or disabling a wall-mounted vid-recorder.

Charge
Type: Full Action
Subtypes: Attack, Melee, Movement
The character rushes at his target and delivers a single melee attack. The target must be at least four metres away, but still within the attacker's Charge Move (see Table 9-31: Structured Time Movement). The last four metres of the Charge must be in a straight line so the attacker can build speed and line up with his target. Once the attacker reaches his target, he may make one of the following Actions: a Standard Attack (melee only), Swift Attack, or All Out Attack. In doing so he follows all of the rules for these Actions, however these Actions are considered to be a part of the Charge Action. If the Charging character is unarmed, he can attempt to Grapple his opponent instead of inflicting Damage. See Grappling, page 237.

Defensive Stance
Type: Full Action
Subtype: Concentration, Melee
The character makes no attacks and instead concentrates entirely on self-defence. Until the start of his next Turn, the character may only use his Reactions to make the Evasion Reaction, but may make one additional Reaction, and all opponents suffer a –20 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests made to attack him.

Delay
Type: Half Action
Subtype: Miscellaneous
Instead of acting immediately, the character waits for an opportunity. When a character chooses Delay, his Turn ends, but he reserves a delayed Half Action for later use. Any time before the start of his next Turn, the character can perform a delayed Half Action of his choice. If the delayed Half Action is not used before the start of the character's next turn, it is lost. If two or more characters both attempt to perform delayed Half Actions at the same time, they must make an Opposed Agility Test to see who acts first.

Disengage
Type: Full Action
Subtype: Movement
The character breaks off from melee combat and may take a Half Move. Opponents that were engaged with the character do not gain any free attacks. See the Fleeing sidebar for more details.

Evasion
Type: Reaction
Subtype: Movement (Dodge) or Melee (Parry)
Evasion is a Reaction that a character can perform when it is not his Turn. After a character is hit, but before Damage is rolled, the character can attempt to avoid the attack by making a Dodge or Parry Test. A character must be aware of the attack in order to make the test. If the test succeeds, the character gets out of the way at the last moment and the attack is considered to have missed (and thus no Damage is rolled). If the Evasion Test fails, the attack connects and deals Damage normally. If the attack is a Ranged Attack, the character must test his Dodge Skill. If the attack is a Melee Attack, he may test either his Dodge or his Parry Skill. The default difficulty for this Test is **Challenging (+0)** before any applicable modifiers.

Evading Auto-Fire, Multiple Attacks, and Area Effect Attacks
Some attacks—such as those made with grenades, flamers, or guns firing semi-automatic or fully-automatic bursts,—are especially difficult to avoid. When Dodging an area effect weapon (such as a flamer), a successful Dodge Test moves the character to the edge of the area of effect, as long as it is no further away than the character's Agility Bonus in metres. If the character would need to move further than this to avoid the attack, then the Dodge Test automatically fails. When Evading Full Auto or Semi-Auto Bursts, each Degree of Success on the Dodge Test negates one additional hit.

When Evading Swift or Lightning Attacks, each Degree of Success on the Dodge or Parry Test negates one additional hit.

Feint
Type: Half Action
Subtype: Melee
The character attempts to use guile and combat training to trick his opponent into a mistake. The character and his target make an **Opposed Challenging (+0) Weapon Skill Test**. If the active character wins, his next melee attack against that same target during this turn



Table 7-1: Combat Actions

Action	Type	Subtype(s)	Description
Aim	Half/Full	Concentration	+10 bonus to hit as a Half Action or +20 to hit as a Full Action on the character's next attack, or target a specific body location.
All Out Attack	Full	Attack, Melee	+30 to WS, cannot Dodge or Parry.
Brace Heavy Weapon	Half	Miscellaneous	Prepare to fire a heavy weapon.
Called Shot	Full	Attack, Concentration, Melee or Ranged	Attack a specific location on the target with a –20 to WS or BS.
Charge	Full	Attack, Melee, Movement	Must move at least 4 metres, +20 to WS.
Defensive Stance	Full	Concentration, Melee	Gain an additional Reaction, opponents suffer –20 to WS.
Delay	Half	Miscellaneous	Before character's next Turn, he may take any Half Action.
Disengage	Full	Movement	Break off from melee and move.
Dodge	Reaction	Miscellaneous	Test Dodge to negate a hit.
Feint	Half	Melee	Opposed WS Test, if character wins, his next attack cannot be Dodged or Parried.
Focus Power	Varies	Varies	Use a psychic power.
Full Auto Burst	Half	Attack, Ranged	–10 to BS, one hit for every Degree of Success.
Grapple	Half/Full	Attack, Melee	Affect a Grappled opponent or escape from a Grapple.
Guarded Attack	Full	Attack, Concentration, Melee	–10 WS, +10 to Parry and Dodge.
Jump or Leap	Full	Movement	Jump vertically or leap horizontally.
Knock-Down	Half	Attack, Melee	Try to knock an opponent to the ground.
Lightning Attack	Half	Attack, Melee	–10 to WS, one hit per Degree of Success.
Manoeuvre	Half	Attack, Melee, Movement	Opposed WS Test, if character wins, move enemy 1 meter.
Move	Half/Full	Movement	Move up to movement as Half Action or twice movement as Full Action.
Overwatch	Full	Attack, Concentration, Ranged	Shoot targets coming into a set kill zone.
Parry	Reaction	Melee	Test Weapon Skill to negate a hit.
Ready	Half	Miscellaneous	Ready a weapon or item.
Reload	Varies	Miscellaneous	Reload a ranged weapon.
Run	Full	Movement	Move triple, enemies get –20 BS and +20 WS.
Semi-Auto Burst	Half	Attack, Ranged	+0 to BS, additional hit for every two additional Degrees of Success.
Stand/Mount	Half	Movement	Stand up or mount a riding beast or vehicle.
Standard Attack	Half	Attack, Melee or Ranged	+10 to WS or BS, make one melee or ranged attack.
Stun	Full	Attack, Melee	Try to Stun an opponent.
Suppressing Fire	Full	Attack, Ranged	Force opponents to take cover, –20 to BS.
Swift Attack	Half	Attack, Melee	+0 to WS, additional hit for every two additional Degrees of Success.
Tactical Advance	Full	Concentration, Movement	Move from cover to cover.
Use A Skill	Varies	Miscellaneous	Character may use a Skill.

cannot be Evaded. If the active character's next Action is anything other than a Melee Attack Action, the advantage of Feinting is lost.

Focus Power

Type: Varies by Power
Subtype: Varies by Power
This Action is used to manifest Psychic Powers in combat. Every Psychic Power specifies an action type and one or more subtypes. For more information, see Chapter 6: Psychic Powers.

Full Auto Burst

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Ranged
The character hurls a roaring burst of fully-automatic gunfire at his enemies. The attacker must be wielding a ranged weapon capable of fully automatic fire to take this action. If the character has a pistol in each hand, both capable of fully automatic fire, he may fire both with this action (see Two-Weapon Fighting, page 242).

The attacker makes a Ballistic Skill Test with a –10 bonus to his attack. If he succeeds, he scores one hit with his weapon per Degree of Success. The number of extra hits scored in this manner cannot exceed the weapon's fully automatic rate of fire. Extra hits can either be allocated to the original target or any other targets within two metres, provided none of the new targets would have been harder to hit than the original target. If extra hits are allocated to the same target, use Table 7–2: Multiple Hits to determine the extra Hit Locations. Remember, the first hit is always determined by reversing the numbers of the dice result made to perform the test (see The Attack, page 240).

Grapple

Type: Half or Full Action
Subtype: Attack, Melee
This action is only used when a character is already engaged in a Grapple. See Grappling, page 241, for rules on starting a Grapple. If the active character is controlling the Grapple, the first thing he

Fleeing and Leaving Melee

Sometimes the best course of action in combat is to get away from danger by any means necessary. A character can voluntarily flee from an opponent or be forced to flee because of Fear, a Psychic Power, or some other effect. When a character flees under his own control, he may take any of the following Actions: Disengage, Move, or Run. When a character flees against his will, he must Run.

Leaving Melee

If a character is engaged in melee with one or more opponents and he leaves combat with them (such as fleeing or moving to another target) without using the Disengage Action, each of his opponents gets a free Standard Attack against the fleeing character. Such a free attack is made in addition to any other attacks the combatant receives during his Turn.

must do on his Turn is declare Grapple as a Full Action in order to maintain the Grapple; if he does not declare Grapple as a Full Action, the Grapple immediately ends. After that, he can choose one of the following Controller Grapple Options:

Controller Grapple Options

- **Damage Opponent:** The controller of the Grapple can attempt to Damage his opponent with brute force by making an Opposed Strength Test with the Grappled opponent. If the active character wins, he inflicts unarmed Damage (1d5–3+SB) to his opponent's body location and one level of Fatigue. If the grappled opponent wins the Opposed Strength Test, no Damage is dealt, but he is still grappled. This action can benefit from Assistance. There are certain Talents and Traits that may modify these numbers.
- **Throw Down Opponent:** The controller of the Grapple can attempt to wrestle his Grappled opponent to the ground by making an Opposed Strength Test. This test can benefit from Assistance. If the active character wins, the Grappled opponent becomes prone.
- **Push Opponent:** The controller of the Grapple can attempt to force his Grappled opponent to move. This is resolved with an Opposed Strength Test, which can benefit from Assistance. If the active character succeeds, he pushes his opponent one metre in a direction of his choice, plus one additional metre for each Degree of Success. This pushed distance cannot exceed the active character's Half Move distance. The active character must move with his Grappled opponent in order to maintain the Grapple, or he can choose to let go of his opponent, which ends the Grapple, but allows the active character to keep his ground.
- **Ready:** The controller of the Grapple can ready one of his own items. Or if the GM allows, he can use the Ready Action to grab an item belonging to his Grappled opponent.
- **Stand:** If both Grappling participants are on the ground, the controller of the Grapple can regain his feet with this action. He can also attempt to drag his Grappled opponent up with him by making an Opposed Strength Test. This test can benefit from Assistance. If the controller of the Grapple wins, both participants stand.
- **Use Item:** The controller of the Grapple can use a readied item.

Grappled Target Options

If the active character is the target of the Grapple, the first thing he must do on his Turn is declare Grapple as a Half Action—this is part of the penalty for being Grappled. After that, he can choose one of the following Grappled Target Options:

- **Break Free:** The Grappled target can attempt to break free of the Grapple by making an Opposed Strength Test against the controller of the Grapple. This test can benefit from Assistance. If the active character wins, he breaks free and may perform any Half Action.
- **Slip Free:** The Grappled target can attempt to wriggle out of the Grapple by making a Challenging (+0) Contortionist Skill Test. If he succeeds, he slips free and may perform any Half Action.
- **Take Control:** The Grappled target can attempt to take control of the Grapple by making an Opposed Strength Test against his Grappling opponent. This test can benefit from Assistance. If the active character wins, he becomes the controller of the Grapple and his opponent becomes the Grappled target. The active character may then immediately perform one of the Controller Grapple Options, but he cannot take any other Half Actions.

Size Differences

If one participating Grappler is larger than the other (see Size, page 249), the larger Grappler counts an extra Degree of Success per size category difference on all successful Opposed Tests performed within the Grapple.

Guarded Action

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Concentration, Melee (Parry), Ranged (Dodge)
The character's next actions are careful and guarded, making sure he remains well poised to defend himself. The character suffers a –10 penalty to any Weapon Skill Tests or Ballistic Skill Tests made this turn, but he gains a +10 bonus to all Evasion Tests until the start of his next Turn.

Jump or Leap

Type: Full Action
Subtype: Movement
The character can Jump vertically, or Leap horizontally. If the character is engaged in melee, each opponent he is engaged with can make a free Standard Attack against the character. See Movement, page 40, for details on Jumping and Leaping.

Knock Down

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Melee
The attacker smashes his opponent in the hopes of knocking him off his feet. Make an Opposed Strength Test. If the attacker wins, the target is knocked prone and must use a Stand Action on his Turn to regain his feet. If the attacker

succeeds by two or more Degrees of Success, he may choose to inflict 1d5–3+SB Damage and one level of Fatigue on the target. If the target wins the Opposed Strength Test, he keeps his footing. If the target wins by two or more Degrees of Success, the attacker is knocked prone instead. If the attacker spent a Half Action to move before performing the Knock Down Attack, he gains a +10 bonus to the test.

Lightning Attack

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Melee

This action may only be taken if the attacker has the Lightning Attack Talent. With fury and precision the attacker strikes his target multiple times in close combat. The attacker must be armed with a melee weapon or be able to make unarmed attacks to take this Action. If he is armed with two melee weapons, he may attack with both as per the rules for Two Weapon Fighting. Unbalanced or Unwieldy melee weapons cannot be used to make a Lightning Attack.

The attacker makes a Weapon Skill Test with a –10 bonus. Success indicates he has hit his target with his melee weapon once for every Degree of Success. The number of hits scored cannot exceed the attacker's Weapon Skill Bonus. Extra hits can either be allocated to the original target or any other targets the character is in melee with, provided none of the new targets would have been harder to hit than the original target. If extra hits are allocated to the same target, use Table 7–2: Multiple Hits to determine the extra Hit Locations. Remember, the first hit is always determined by reversing the numbers of the dice result made to perform the test (see The Attack, page 240).

If the attacker is wielding a second weapon in his off hand, he may make an additional attack as part of this action. See Two Weapon Fighting on page 242.

Manoeuvre

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Melee, Movement

By using superior footwork and aggression, the attacker can force his opponent to move by making an Opposed Weapon Skill Test with his opponent. If he succeeds, the opponent must move one metre in the direction of the attacker's choice. If desired, the attacker can advance one metre as well. The opponent cannot be forced into another character or some other obstacle (such as wall).

Move

Type: Half or Full Action
Subtype: Movement

The active character can spend a Half Action to move a number of metres equal to his Agility Bonus. As a Full Action, he may move twice that distance. If the Active character ends his movement adjacent to an opponent, he may engage that opponent in melee. If the active character moves away from an opponent with whom his in engaged, that opponent may make a free Standard Attack against the active character.

Overwatch

Type: Full Action
Subtype: Attack, Concentration, Ranged

The active character guards a specific area or target, poised to shoot at an opportune moment. When Overwatch is declared, the active character establishes a kill zone consisting of any general area, such as a corridor or tree line, that encompasses a 45-degree arc in the direction that active character is facing. The active character then specifies either Standard Attack, Full Auto Burst, or Semi-Auto Burst, along with the conditions under which he will perform the chosen attack. At any time the specified conditions are met before the start of the character's next Turn, he can perform that attack. If this attack occurs at the same time as another character's Action, the character with the higher Agility acts first. If both characters have the same Agility, they make an Opposed Agility Test to see who acts first.

Additionally, targets caught in the kill zone must make a **Challenging (+0) Pinning Test** or become Pinned (see Pinning on page 244). If a character on Overwatch performs any Actions or Reactions, such as Evasion, his Overwatch immediately ends. Note this does not include Free Actions, such as speech.

Ready

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Miscellaneous

The active character draws a weapon or retrieves an object stowed in a pouch or pocket. A weapon or item can also be properly stowed away with this action (but note that simply dropping an item is considered a Free Action). This Action can also be used to do things such as apply a medi-patch, inject stimm or some other kind of drug, coat a blade with poison, and so forth. Ready can be declared twice in the same Turn if it is used on two different weapons or items.

Reload

Type: Half, Full, or Extended Action (Varies by Weapon)
Subtype: Miscellaneous

The active character can reload a ranged weapon. The amount of time the Reload Action takes depends on the weapon. See Chapter 5: Armoury for details. Note that any Reload Action that is spread across more than one Round is an Extended Action.

Run

Type: Full Action
Subtype: Movement

The active character runs, covering a distance equal to his Run Movement (see Table 9-31: Structured Time Movement).



This makes the character harder to hit with ranged weapons, but easier prey for melee attacks. Until the beginning of the character's next turn, ranged attack made against him suffer a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests, but melee attacks gain a +20 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests.

Semi-Auto Burst

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Ranged
With cold precision, the active character shoots a burst of semi-automatic gunfire at his enemies. The attacker must be wielding a ranged weapon capable of semi-automatic fire to take this action. If the character has a pistol in each hand, both capable of semi-automatic fire, he may fire both with this action (see Two-Weapon Fighting, page 242).

The attacker makes a Ballistic Skill Test with a +0 bonus. A dice result of 94 to 00 indicates the weapon has Jammed (see Weapon Jams, page 245). If he hits, he scores a hit for the initial Degree of Success plus an additional hit for every two additional Degrees of Success. The number of extra hits scored in this manner cannot exceed the weapon's semi-automatic rate of fire. Extra hits can either be allocated to the original target or any other targets within two metres, provided none of the new targets would have been harder to hit than the original target. If extra hits are allocated to the same target, use Table 7–2: Multiple Hits to determine the extra Hit Locations. Remember, the first hit is always determined by reversing the numbers of the dice result made to perform the test (see The Attack, page 244).

If the character is armed with two weapons, he may make a secondary attack with his other weapon as part of this action. See Two Weapon Fighting on page 242.

Stand/Mount

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Movement
If the active character is on the ground, he can stand. If he is already standing, he can mount a riding beast or a vehicle.

Standard Attack

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Melee or Ranged
The active character makes either one melee attack by testing Weapon Skill with a +10 bonus or one ranged attack by testing Ballistic Skill with a +10 bonus. Success inflicts one hit on the target. For more information on making a Standard Attack, see page 240. If the attacking character is unarmed, he can attempt to Grapple his opponent instead of inflicting Damage. See Grappling, page 241.

If the character is armed with two weapons, he may make a secondary attack with his other weapon as part of this action. See Two Weapon Fighting on page 242.

Stun

Type: Full Action
Subtype: Attack, Melee
If the active character is unarmed or armed with a melee weapon, he can strike to Stun instead of attempting to land a killing blow. The attacker makes a Hard (–20) Weapon Skill Test. If the attack succeeds, roll 1d10 and add the attacker's Strength Bonus. This result is compared to the targets total of his Toughness Bonus +1 per Armour Point protecting his head. If the attacker's roll is equal or higher, the target is stunned for a number of rounds equal to the difference between the rolls and gains one level of Fatigue.

Suppressing Fire

Type: Full Action
Subtype: Attack, Ranged
The active character unleashes a devastating hail of firepower to force his opponents to take cover. This action requires a weapon capable of semiautomatic or fully automatic fire (see Rate of Fire, page 147). When Suppressing Fire is declared, the active character establishes a kill zone which is any general area, such as a corridor or tree line, that encompasses a 45-degree arc in the direction the active character is facing. Then, as part of the Action the character fires a Full Auto or Semi-Auto Burst (as per the Full-Auto and Semi-Auto Burst Actions) and expends the appropriate ammo. All targets within the kill zone must make a **Difficult (–10) Pinning Test** or become Pinned (see page 244). If the attacker fired a Full Auto burst, the Pinning Test is **Hard (–20)** instead.

The character does not roll to hit following the usual penalties or bonuses of the Full Auto and Semi-Auto Burst Actions. Instead the character makes a Ballistic Skill Test with a –20 penalty to see if his gunfire has hit anything. A roll of 94–100 on the test indicates the weapon has Jammed (see Weapon Jams, page 245). If the Ballistic Skill Test succeeds, the GM assigns the hit to a random target within the kill zone. Furthermore, every two Degrees of Success scores an extra hit against another random victim. Use of the Suppressive Fire action does not affect the defensive benefits of armour or cover. The number of hits scored may not exceed the weapon's fully automatic Rate of Fire. Use Table 7–2: Multiple Hits to determine Hit Locations against the same target. The active character cannot choose to fail this Ballistic Skill Test.

Swift Attack

Type: Half Action
Subtype: Attack, Melee
This action may only be taken if the attacker has the Swift Attack Talent. With fury and precision the attacker strikes his target multiple times in close combat. The attacker must be armed with a melee weapon or be able to make unarmed attacks to take this Action. If he is armed with two melee weapons, he may attack with both as per the rules for Two Weapon Fighting.

The attacker makes a Weapon Skill Test with a +0 bonus. Success indicates he has hit his target with his melee weapon once for the initial Degree of Success, plus once for every two additional Degrees of Success. The number of hits scored cannot exceed the attacker's Weapon Skill Bonus. Extra hits can either be allocated to the original target or any other targets the character is in melee with, provided none of the new targets would have been harder to hit than the original target. If extra hits are allocated to the same target, use Table 7–2: Multiple Hits to determine the extra Hit Locations. Remember, the first hit is always determined by reversing the numbers of the dice result made to perform the test (see The Attack below).

Table 7-2: Multiple Hits

First Hit	Second Hit	Third Hit	Fourth Hit	Fifth Hit	Each Additional Hit
Head	Head	Arm	Body	Arm	Body
Arm	Arm	Body	Head	Body	Arm
Body	Body	Arm	Head	Arm	Body
Leg	Leg	Body	Arm	Head	Body

If the character is armed with two weapons, he may make a secondary attack with his other weapon as part of this action. See Two Weapon Fighting on page 242.

Tactical Advance

Type: Full Action
Subtype: Concentration, Movement
The active character moves from one position of cover to another position of cover. In so doing, he may cover a distance up to his Full Move. For the duration of the move, he is considered to benefit from the cover he left, even though he is moving in the open for a brief time.

Use a Skill

Type: Half, Full, or Extended Action (Varies by circumstance)
Subtypes: Concentration, Miscellaneous
The active character may use a Skill. This usually involves making a Skill Test. This can be an Extended Action, depending on the Skill and the circumstances.

Other Actions

If a player wants to do something not covered by the Actions described here, the GM should make a judgement about how long something might take and what type of Action it would be. Generally, most Actions should be resolved with some sort of test: Characteristic Test, Skill Test or Opposed Test. Keep in mind that a Round is only a few seconds long, which is a very limited amount of time to accomplish a task.

THE ATTACK

The most common Action in combat is the attack—the characters are fighting, after all. Whether armed with a melee or ranged weapon, the process is the same. Before an attack is made, the GM should verify that the attack is even possible by checking the basic requirements for the attack. Melee attacks require the attacker to be engaged in melee combat with his target. Ranged attacks cannot be made if the attacker is engaged in melee unless he is firing a pistol-class weapon. In either case, the attacker must be aware of his target. See the Spray and Pray sidebar for additional information. Assuming



Evasion Reactions

When a target is hit by an attack, it may have a chance to negate the hit with an Evasion (see page 235) reaction. If the Evasion attempt is successful, then the attack is negated and no Damage is dealt.

the attack is possible, follow these steps:

- Step One: Apply Modifiers to Attacker's Characteristic
- Step Two: Attacker Makes a test
- Step Three: Attacker Determine Hit Location
- Step Four: Attacker Determines Damage
- Step Five: Target Applies Damage

Step One: Apply Modifiers to Attacker's Characteristic

A melee attack requires the attacker to make a Weapon Skill Test. A ranged attack requires the attacker to make a Ballistic Skill Test. There are many instances where one or more factors make performing an attack easier or more difficult than normal. For example, using the Full Auto Burst attack action imposes a –10 penalty to the attacker's Ballistic Skill Test, whereas a Standard Attack grants a +10 bonus whether the attack is melee or ranged. If a situation calls for two or more bonuses or penalties, simply combine all modifiers together and apply the total to the appropriate Characteristic. The maximum total bonus that can be applied to a test is +60. Conversely, the maximum total penalty that can be applied to a test is –60. When adjudicating difficulty, common sense should prevail. Regardless of the usual limits on test penalties, some actions are simply impossible.

Example

Azar wants to use a Standard Attack action to shoot his laspistol at an Imperial Guardsman. Azar's Ballistic Skill is 45 and he is at Short Range, which grants him a +10 bonus. Helgath spends a Half Action to Aim, granting him another +10 bonus. In addition, the Standard Attack confirs a +10 bonus to the attack roll as well. However, there is a lot of heavy mist in the area so Helgath will suffer a –20 penalty for that. After all bonuses and penalties have been combined, Helgath will need to roll 55 or less on his Ballistic Skill Test to hit the Guardsman (45 + 10 + 10 + 10 - 20 = 55).

Step Two: Attacker Makes a Test

After the modified Characteristic has been determined, the attacker makes a Weapon Skill Test if he is performing a melee attack or a Ballistic Skill Test if performing a ranged attack. Both of these are resolved like any other test. If the roll is equal to or less than the modified Characteristic, the attack hits.

Example

Azar makes a Ballistic Skill Test by rolling percentile dice and gets 14, which is less than his modified Ballistic Skill of 55. His attack hits the Imperial Guardsman.

Table 7-3: Hit Locations

Roll	Location
01–10	Head
11–20	Right Arm
21–30	Left Arm
31–70	Body
71–85	Right Leg
86-00	Left Leg

Dodge and Parry Reactions

When a target is hit by an attack, it may have a chance to negate the hit with a Dodge or Parry Reaction. See Combat Actions, page 234 for details on resolving each of these Reactions. If the Dodge or Parry attempt is successful, the attack is negated and no Damage is dealt.

Example

After Azar's las shot hits the Guardsman, the GM rules that the soldier will attempt to Dodge the attack. The Guardsman's Agility is 30, and has Dodge trained, so he must roll under a 30 to avoid the burning hot las shot. The GM rolls for the Guardsman and gets a 56. The Guardsman fails to dodge the attack.

Step Three: Attacker Determines Hit Location

On a successful hit, the attacker needs to determine where the hit landed. Using the percentile dice result from the attacker's Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test, reverse the order of the digits (e.g., a roll of 32 becomes 23, a roll of 20 becomes 02, and so on) and compare this number to Table 7–3: Hit Locations.

Example

*Azar's Ballistic Skill Test to hit the Guardsman resulted in a percentile dice roll of 14. He reverses these digits and gets 41. Consulting **Table 8–2: Hit Locations**, he sees he has hit the Guardsman's body.*

Step Four: Attacker Determines Damage

After the hit location has been determined, the attacker determines the Damage dealt by his attack. Each weapon has a Damage listing, which is usually a die roll, plus or minus a number. Roll the appropriate die and apply any indicated modifiers. Finally, if the attack involved a melee weapon, add the attacker's Strength Bonus. The result is the Damage total. For all attack rolls, count the Degrees of Success. The attacker may choose to replace the result on a single Damage die with the number of Degrees of Success from his attack roll. If the attack inflicts more than one die of Damage, the attacker may replace the result on one die of his choice with the Degrees of Success from the attack roll. If a natural 10 is rolled on any Damage die, there is a chance of Zealous Hatred.

Tactical Combat Maps (Optional)

During large combats, some players may want visual references to help keep track of enemy positions, as well as their own. The GM can accomplish this by sketching out simple overhead maps on paper. Many game stores also sell large game mats that you can draw on with wet-erase markers. These mats are usually pre-printed with squares grids or hex patterns to make measuring distances quick and easy. Tactical combat maps can be drawn to any scale, and some roleplayers like to combine large-scale maps with miniatures where a one inch square represents one square meter. While tactical combat maps can be very useful, they are not necessary to play **Black Crusade**. Many roleplayers prefer to use rich narrative descriptions to allow fellow players to simply imagine all the action. This requires players to keep a snapshot of the relative positions of all combatants in their heads, but it also allows for greater freedom in detailing the events of a combat.

Zealous Hatred

When rolling Damage after a successful attack, if any die rolled results in a natural 10 (rolling the 10 result on a 10 sided die), a particularly bloody and spectacular hit may be inflicted. (This also includes a result of 10 when rolling 1d5 for Damage.) After resolving the effects of the hit, one of two things may happen.

If the attack dealt damage after being reduced by armour and Toughness Bonus, then the shot becomes more severe. The attacker then rolls 1d5 and consults the Critical Hit Table appropriate to the Damage type and location of the original attack. The target suffers all effects listed, even if the attack itself did not do Damage. However, the target does not count as having suffered a Critical Hit. In other words, if he takes Damage during later turns it will affect his Wounds, not directly stack onto worsening Critical effects. Talents that modify Critical Damage (such as Crack Shot and Crippling Strike) **do not modify** the critical effects generated by Zealous Hatred, and these critical effects do not stack if a target suffers Zealous Hatred multiple times. Each roll is applied as a separate effect.

However, if the attack does not do any damage once reduced by armour and Toughness Bonus, then the attack deals 1 point of damage, not reduced by armour or Toughness. This is the extent of the Zealous Hatred effect for this attack, the victim does not suffer a roll on a Critical Hit Table. This represents some weapons simply not being potent enough to deal major damage, but still able to do harm through a "lucky hit."

Zealous Hatred for Heretics and NPCs

In **Black Crusade**, Zealous Hatred is something that both Heretics and NPCs can inflict and suffer from. This means if a Imperial Guardsman shoots a player character and rolls a 10 for Damage, then the player character suffers a 1d5 Critical result. This makes combat gritty, dangerous, and more dynamic, as Heretics can now suffer from flavourful (and often awful) Critical effects, and may leave combat with interesting new scars.

However, in order to ensure that combat does not bog down too much, when a low level NPC (a faceless soldier or minion, usually an unnamed NPC not central to the story plot) suffers Zealous Hatred, he is simply slain instead. This allows for faster paced combat, and also "lucky shots" on the part of the Heretics.

Finally, if the GM desires, he can choose to reserve Zealous Hatred for Heretics and high level NPCs only (so only named, important NPCs can inflict it on the characters). This makes for a faster-paced, more "epic" game as the Heretics may easily shrug off most attacks. It also ensures that combat moves more quickly. However, the GM should probably refrain from doing this unless he finds his combat bogging down excessively. After all, it's not Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay if the player characters don't suffer a few scars along the way!

Example

Azar has hit the Guardsman with his laspistol and proceeds to make his Damage roll. A laspistol deals 21d10+2 points of Damage. Helgath rolls 1d10 and gets an 8, a good hit! He adds this to the 2 for a total of 10 damage dealt to the unlucky Guardsman.
If Azar had been lucky enough to roll a 10 instead of the 8, he would have also been able to roll 1d5 on Table 7–8: Energy Effects: Body, and applied those effects to the poor Guardsman as well.

Step Five: Target Applies Damage

From the Damage total, the target subtracts his Toughness Bonus and any Armour Points that protect the location hit by the attack. If this reduces the Damage to zero or less, the target shrugs off the attack. Any remaining Damage is recorded by the target as Damage. If the target's Damage equals or exceeds his Wounds, he notes any excess Damage as Critical Damage and the GM consults the appropriate table based on the type of Damage, the location hit, and the amount of Critical Damage accumulated. See Critical Damage on page 245 for more information.

Example

Azar's laspistol pistol shot has struck the Guardsman's body for 10 total Damage. The GM notes the target's Toughness Bonus is 3 and he is wearing Guard Flak, which provides 4 points of armour. The laspistol has no AP, so the Guardsman can apply 7 total damage reduction to the attack. This means he suffers only 3 damage, and since he has 10 Wounds, could suffer 7 more Damage before he's in trouble. He takes aim at poor Azar, who'd better be ready to dodge!

UNARMED COMBAT

Not every fight in **Black Crusade** requires bolters and power swords. Some conflicts can be settled the old-fashioned way with fists (not to mention feet and, if you're a dirty scummer, teeth). To make an unarmed attack, the attacker must be engaged in melee with his opponent. The attacker then makes a **Challenging (+0) Weapon Skill Test**, or if his opponent is armed with a weapon, a **Hard (–20) Weapon Skill Test**. If the unarmed



attack hits, it deals 1d5 – 3 Impact Damage, plus the character's Strength Bonus. In addition, a successful hit that inflicts Damage equal to or greater than the target's Toughness Bonus also inflicts one level of Fatigue. During unarmed combat, if a 10 is rolled on a die for Damage, the rules for Zealous Hatred apply with 10s counting as 5s in terms of Damage caused. As with most melee attacks, an Unarmed attack can be Parried.

Grappling

Instead of inflicting Damage with an unarmed attack, a character can attempt to Grapple his opponent. Attempting a Grapple is a melee attack that uses either a Charge Action or a Standard Attack Action. The attacker makes a Weapon Skill Test as normal. The target of the Grapple may use a Reaction, if able, to avoid the attack. If the attack is successful, the attacker and the target are Grappling, with the attacker controlling the Grapple. The controller of the Grapple can end it any time as a Free Action.

In a Grapple, all of the following apply:

- Participants in a Grapple cannot use Reactions.
- Participants in a Grapple are considered to be engaged in melee combat.
- Participants in a Grapple can only use the Grapple Action.
- As a Free Action, the controller of the Grapple can voluntarily end the Grapple on his Turn.
- Other attackers gain a +20 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests to hit any target engaged in a Grapple.
- Only two characters can be engaged in the same Grapple, but up to two other characters can lend Assistance to each Grappler in certain situations. See the Grapple Action on page 237 for details.

Two-Weapon Fighting

Many warriors fight with a weapon in either hand. There are advantages and disadvantages to this style of fighting. While it offers some improved opportunities to make attacks, it reduces the chances of successfully striking a target. Unless the two-weapon fighter has the Ambidextrous talent, it is important to consider which hand is his primary hand and which is his secondary hand; players should have these details noted on their Heretics' character sheets.

The following apply when fighting with two weapons:

- The character may use any melee weapons or ranged weapons that can be reasonably used in one hand. This is generally pistol-class ranged weapons (though some Basic-class weapons may have modifications that allow them to be used with one hand), and melee weapons that note they are one-handed weapons in their description.
- The character may use either hand to make an attack. Attacks made using the character's secondary hand suffer a –20 penalty to Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Tests.
- If the character has the Two-Weapon Wielder Talent, he may attack with both weapons, but each attack suffers a

Table 7-4: Cover Examples

Cover Type	Armour Points
Armour-glas, Generatoria Pipes, thin metal	4
Flakboard, storage crate, sandbags, ice	8
Cogitator Bank, Stasis Pod	12
Rockcrete, hatchway, thick iron, stone	16
Armaplas, bulkhead, Plasteel	32

Table 7-5: Combat Difficulty Summary

Difficulty Skill Modifier	Example
Easy +30	Attacking a Surprised or Unaware target.
	Shooting a Massive target.
	Shooting a target at Point Blank Range.
Routine +20	Melee attacks against a foe who is outnumbered three to one or more.
	Attacking a Stunned opponent.
	Shooting an Enormous target.
Ordinary +10	Melee attacks against a foe who is outnumbered two to one.
	Attacking a Prone opponent with a melee weapon.
	Attacking from higher ground.
	Shooting a Hulking target.
	Shooting a target at Short Range.
Challenging +0	A Standard Attack.
Difficult –10	Any test whilst Fatigued.
	Attacking or Dodging whilst in the mud or heavy rain.
	Shooting a target at Long Range.
	Shooting a Prone target.
	Shooting a Scrawny target.
Hard –20	Shooting into melee combat.
	Dodging whilst Prone.
	Making an unarmed attack against an armed opponent.
	Melee attacks in darkness.
	Shooting at a target in fog, mist or shadow.
	Shooting a Puny target.
	Using a weapon without the correct Talent.
Very Hard –30	Attacking or Dodging in deep snow.
	Firing a heavy weapon that has not been Braced.
	Shooting a Minuscule target.
	Shooting a target at Extreme range.
	Shooting at a completely concealed target.
	Shooting at a target in darkness.

Stray Shots (Optional Rule)

GMs keen on reinforcing the merciless nature of the 41st millennium may rule that if a character shooting into a melee combat misses his target by a small margin (one Degree of Failure or less), the attack instead hits another target engaged in the same melee. The GM might also rule that anyone shooting into a melee combat with a Semi-Auto Burst or Full Auto Burst must allocate multiple hits to different targets engaged in the melee.

–20 penalty to the Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Test, plus an additional –20 penalty for attacks made with his secondary hand. If the character has the Ambidextrous Talent, the penalty to the attack made by his secondary hand disappears completely, and the penalty for fighting with two weapons drops to –10. (Other Talents or situational modifiers may further affect these modifiers.)

- If the character is wielding at least one melee weapon, he may use the Parry Skill to perform an Evasion Reaction once each Round as normal with this weapon, though he still may not Evade more than once in a Round. This Weapon Skill Test is not an attack, and therefore it does not suffer the standard penalty for attacks made using a secondary hand.
- If a character with the Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee) Talent is armed with two melee weapons, he may perform a melee Attack Action (either a Standard Attack, Swift Attack, or Lightning Attack) with one of these weapons. He may then perform a melee Attack Action (either a Standard Attack, Swift Attack, or Lightning Attack) with the other weapon, with any applicable modifiers to the Test. This attack may be against any target in melee.
- If a character with the Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee) and Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic) Talent is armed with a melee weapon in one hand and a pistol in the other, he may perform a melee Attack Action (either a Standard Attack, Swift Attack, or Lightning Attack) or ranged Attack Action (such as Standard Attack, Semi-Auto Burst, or Full-Auto Burst) with one weapon. He may then make a second melee Attack Action or ranged Attack Action with his secondary weapon. Any pistol hits must be against targets in melee. Resolve each attack separately by testing Weapon Skill for the melee weapon and Ballistic Skill for the pistol.
- If a character with the Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic) Talent is armed with two pistols (or two other ranged weapons that can reasonably be wielded in one hand), he may perform a ranged Attack Action (either a Standard Attack, Semi-Auto Burst, or Full-Auto Burst) with one of these weapons. If he does so, he may perform another ranged Attack Action (either a Standard Attack, Semi-Auto Burst, or Full Auto Burst) with his second weapon.
- When firing a ranged weapon with each hand, the character may fire each weapon on a different mode, for example, one on full automatic and one on semi-automatic. When firing a full automatic weapon in each hand, the character may only lay down one area of suppressive fire.
- The character may fire two weapons at different targets, though the targets must be within 10 metres of each other.

COMBAT CIRCUMSTANCES

Black Crusade offers endless potential for gripping, dramatic, white-knuckle action. Combat is essential element for such action, and each combat, from simple corridor shoot-outs to titanic civilisation-crushing battles, should offer unique experiences. The combat circumstances described in this section offer many ways to help make every combat exciting, varied, and dangerous.

Combat circumstances can be used to reflect the effects of terrain, the weather, tactical situations, and a variety of other factors. Many circumstances alter the difficulty of tasks by providing bonuses or penalties to tests, while others provide opportunities for characters to leverage good fortune, or exploit misfortunes that befall their enemies. Heretics should make as much use of beneficial circumstances as possible. A good plan, suitable equipment or skilful use of tactics can often make the difference between life and death for a Heretic. The following circumstances are some of the most common ones encountered in combat. For situations not covered here, use these as a guide. Remember, the GM has the final say about the Difficulty of any particular test or the outcome of any unusual situation.

Cover

Cover is a vital part of surviving a firefight and a good Heretic knows that you go for your cover first and then draw your gun. There are no penalties to Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack targets standing partly behind cover. However, there is a chance that the shot may hit the cover rather than the target. It is up to the Heretic to decide which parts of his body he is exposing when behind cover, but as a general rule, a character firing around or over cover will have his body and legs concealed. If the shot would hit a body location that is concealed behind cover, work out the Damage against the Armour Points of the cover instead, with any excess being applied to the target as normal (see Table 7–4: Cover Examples for a guide to the Armour Points of different kinds of cover).

Damaging Cover

Cover is not invulnerable. Attacks can damage or destroy the protection afforded by cover. Each successful hit against cover that deals any amount of Damage in excess of the Armour Points it provides reduces the cover's Armour Points by 1.

Darkness

Weapon Skill Tests made in darkness are regarded as **Hard (–20)**, while Ballistic Skill Tests are regarded as Very **Hard (–30)**. While a character is concealed by darkness, Concealment Skill Tests are **Routine (+20)**.

Difficult Terrain

Weapon Skill and Evasion Tests made whilst standing in difficult terrain, such as mud, are **Difficult (–10)**. Tests made whilst standing in arduous terrain, such as deep snow or slick ice, are **Very Hard (–30)**.

Engaged in Melee

If an attacking character is adjacent to his target, both the character and his target are considered to be engaged in melee.

Shooting into Melee Combat

Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit a target engaged in melee combat are **Hard (–20)**. If one or more characters engaged in the melee is Stunned, Helpless, or Unaware, this penalty is ignored.

Extreme Range

Targets that are at a distance of more than three times the range of a character's weapon are at Extreme Range. Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit targets at Extreme Range are **Very Hard (–30)**.

Fatigued

When a character is Fatigued, all his tests, including any Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests, suffer a –10 penalty.

Fog, Mist, Shadow or Smoke

Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack targets concealed by fog, mist, shadow, or smoke are **Hard (–20)**. While a character is concealed by fog, mist, or shadow, Concealment Skill Tests are **Ordinary (+10)**.

Ganging Up

A character has an advantage when he and his allies engage the same foe in melee combat. If a group of characters outnumber their opponent two to one, their Weapon Skill Tests are **Ordinary (+10)**. If a group of characters outnumber their opponent by three to one or more, their Weapon Skill Tests are **Routine (+20)**.

Helpless Targets

Weapon Skill Tests made to hit a sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise helpless target automatically succeed. When rolling Damage against such a target, roll twice and add the results.

Higher Ground

Characters standing on higher ground, such as on a table, hill, or atop of a mound of dead comrades, have an advantage. Weapon Skill Tests made by these characters are **Ordinary (+10)**.

Long Range

Targets that are at a distance of more than double the range of a character's weapon are at Long Range. Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit targets at Long Range are **Difficult (–10)**.

Missing and Scattering

Sometimes, when flinging a thrown weapon, it's important to know where the weapon lands should the attacker fail his Ballistic Skill Test. On a failed roll, the GM rolls 1d10 and consults the following Scatter Diagram. Roll 1d5 to determine the number of metres the weapon travels in the indicated direction. This is also used with weapons with the Blast Quality—they affect a wide enough area that if the shot goes awry, it may still Damage something, even if it's not the original target.

Scattering in Zero Gravity

The consequences of throwing dangerous objects in a zero gravity environment can be both amusing and deadly. One way of determining exactly where that errant krak grenade floats after it bounces off the bulkhead is to roll twice on the scatter diagram, once for the X axis and once for the Y axis.

Pinning

Being shot at is a terrifying experience at the best of times, and even the most inexperienced Heretics know to keep their heads down when the bullets and bolt shells start flying. Pinning represents a character's survival instincts telling him to stay in cover. Certain combat actions or other circumstances call on their targets to make a Pinning Test (**Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**). On a success, the character may act normally. On a failure, the character becomes Pinned.



Being Pinned

A Pinned character may only take Half Actions. Additionally, he suffers a –20 penalty to all Ballistic Skill Tests. If a Pinned character is in cover relative to the attacker that Pinned him, he may not leave it except to retreat (provided he can remain in cover while doing so). If he is not in cover when Pinned he must use his next Turn to reach cover. If there is no cover nearby, he must move away from the attacker that Pinned him. A character can make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** at the end of his Turn to escape Pinning, in which case he may act as normal on his next Turn. This test is **Easy (+30)** if the character has not been shot at since his last Turn or is under cover. A character engaged in melee combat automatically escapes Pinning.

Point-Blank Range

When a character makes a ranged attack against a target that is two metres away or closer, that target is at Point-Blank Range. Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack a target at Point Blank Range are **Easy (+30)**. This bonus does not apply when the attacker and the target are engaged in melee combat with each other. For weapons with a short range of less than 3 metres, Point-Blank Range is 1 metre less than the weapon's short range.

Prone

A character is considered Prone any time he is lying on the ground. Weapon Skill Tests made to attack Prone targets are **Ordinary (+10)**, but Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit Prone targets are **Difficult (–10)** unless the attacker is at Point Blank Range. A character who is Prone suffers a –10 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests and a –20 penalty to Evasion Tests. Unless a character is engaged in a Grapple, he can drop Prone as a Free Action.

Short Range

Targets that are at a distance of less than half the Range of a character's weapon are at Short Range. Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack targets at Short Range are **Ordinary (+10)**.

Size

Size is an important factor when shooting ranged weapons because it's usually easier to hit a larger target. All characters and creatures in **Black Crusade** have a defined size category, and it should be relatively easy for the GM to assign appropriate size categories to objects as needed. Use **Table 4–8: Size** (page 142) for determining bonuses and penalties based on a target's size.

Stunned Targets

WS and BS Tests to attack Stunned targets are **Routine (+20)**.

Unaware Targets

When a character has no idea that he about to be attacked, he is considered an Unaware target. Usually, this happens at the beginning of a combat when one or more characters are Surprised (see page 232). Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack Unaware targets are **Easy (+30)**.

Weapon Jams

Weapons may jam either through extreme age, maltreatment of their machine spirit, or just plain poor design. An unmodified result of 96 to 00, in addition to being an automatic miss, also indicates the weapon has jammed. A Jammed weapon cannot be fired until it is cleared. Clearing a Jam is a Full Action which requires a Ballistic Skill Test. If the test is successful then the Jam has been cleared, though the weapon needs to be reloaded and any ammo in it is lost. If the test is failed, the weapon is still Jammed, though the character can attempt to clear it again next Round.

Note: Some weapons, such as plasma guns, grenades and missiles, are particularly dangerous to use. For these weapons, refer to their descriptions and Weapon Special Qualities (see Chapter V: Armoury). Semi-automatic and fully automatic fire also increases the likelihood of Jamming. This is described within the Semi-Auto Burst, Full Auto Burst and Suppressing Fire Actions.

Weather and Unnatural Conditions

Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack whilst enduring harsh weather or unnatural conditions, such as heavy rain, an ash storm, or standing knee-deep in waves of fungus, are considered **Hard (–20)**, unless stated otherwise (see **Chapter 1: Playing the Game**).

Injury

Common physical injuries to **Black Crusade** characters are represented by Damage and Fatigue. Additionally, characters can also experience several types of Conditions and Special Damage such as fire, suffocation, and limb loss. It is important to know how much physical abuse a character can take and a key measurement of this is how many Wounds he possesses.

WOUNDS

Wounds are a measurement of how much punishment a character can take before suffering debilitating effects and ultimately death. Every character in **Black Crusade** has specified number of Wounds. Wounds do not normally deplete. Even when a character is injured, that injury does not decrease his Wounds. Instead, a character's Wounds simply serve as a threshold, and the injury is recorded on his character sheet as Damage. When a character's Damage exceeds his Wounds, he is in real trouble.

Damage

Damage is physical trauma dealt to a character. Characters can suffer Damage a number ways, including being shot by a boltgun, lacerated by daemon claws, falling into a lava-filled crevasse, exposure to the hard vacuum of space, and so forth. When a character suffers Damage, record the amount on his character sheet. That Damage remains with the character until it is removed over time by natural healing, or the character receives medical attention (see page 256). Damage is cumulative; each time a character suffers Damage, the amount is added to any previous Damage he had.

Each time a character is dealt Damage, there may be an opportunity for him to reduce it before it is applied to his total. By default, a character reduces incoming Damage by an amount equal to his Toughness Bonus. Armour can also help further reduce Damage. If the source of the Damage struck a body location protected by armour, the incoming Damage is reduced by an amount equal to the Armour Points provided by the armour. It is important to note that some sources of Damage ignore armour and/or Toughness; such cases are always detailed in the description of the Damage source. As long as a character's total Damage is equal to or less than his Wounds, his body still functions normally. If a character's Damage ever exceeds his Wounds, he begins to take Critical Damage.

Damage Types

All Damage is divided up into five types: Energy (lasers, fire, plasma), Explosive (grenades, bolt rounds), Impact (clubs, bullets, falling), and Rending (swords, claws). If a source of Damage does not specify a type, treat it as Impact. Damage Type is usually only important for determining Critical Effects resulting from Critical Damage.

Critical Damage

Whenever a character's total Damage exceeds his Wounds, he begins to take Critical Damage. Each time a character suffers Critical Damage, he also suffers one or more Critical Effects. These are determined by consulting the appropriate Critical Effect Table based on the affected body location (Arm, Body, Head, or Leg) and the Damage type (Energy, Explosive, Impact, or Rending).

As with normal Damage, Critical Damage is cumulative and remains with the character until he either heals naturally over time or receives medical attention (see page 256). Each Critical Effect also has its own duration (including permanent). If a Critically Damaged character suffers more Damage, the amount is added to his existing Critical Damage and a new set of Critical Effects are applied based on his total Critical Damage (assuming he is still alive).

Removing Damage

Characters automatically remove Damage (both ordinary and Critical Damage) over time through natural healing. Medical attention and some psychic powers can also remove Damage. The rate of Damage removal depends on several factors and is fully explained in Healing, page 256.

FATIGUE

Not all injuries in **Black Crusade** are lethal. Exhaustion, combat trauma, or swapping licks with bare fists can all leave a character battered, but more or less intact. Fatigue measures the amount of non-lethal injury a character can take over the



Table 7-7: Energy Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The attack grazes the target's arm, causing it to spasm uncontrollably. All tests involving that arm suffer a –30 penalty for 1d5 Rounds.
2	The attack smashes into the arm, sending currents of energy crackling down to the fingers and up to the shoulder. The arm is useless for 1d5 Rounds and the target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The attack causes energy to course through the target's arm leaving him Stunned for 1 Round, and the arm is useless until the target receives medical treatment.
4	The shock of the attack causes the character to temporarily lose control of his autonomous functions. He is Stunned for 1 Round and is knocked Prone. The arm is useless for 1d10 Rounds.
5	The arm suffers superficial burns inflicting no small amount of pain on the target. The target may only take a Half Action in his next round, and he suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
6	The attack wreathes the arm in flame, scorching clothing and armour, and temporarily fusing together the target's fingers. The target suffers 1d5 Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Damage , suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue, and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or lose the use of the hand permanently.
7	With a terrible snapping sound, the heat of the attack boils the marrow in the target's arm, causing it to crack or even shatter. The target's arm is broken and until it is repaired the target counts as only having one arm. The target is Stunned for 1 Round, and suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
8	Energy sears through the arm at the shoulder, causing the shoulder joint to explode and the arm is severed from the body. The target must take a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or become Stunned for 1d5 Rounds. In addition the target suffers 1d10 levels of Fatigue. The target now only has one arm.
9	Fire consumes the target's arm, burning the flesh to a crisp right down to the bone. The target must make an immediate **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. If he survives, however, the target suffers 1d10 levels of Fatigue and is Stunned for 1 Round. The target now only has one arm.
10	The attack reduces the arm to a cloud of ash and sends the target crumbling to the ground where he immediately dies from shock, clutching his smoking stump.

Table 7-8: Energy Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	A blow to the target's body steals the air from his lungs. The target can take only a Half Action on his next Turn.
2	The blast punches the air from the target's body. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be knocked Prone.
3	The attack cooks the flesh on the chest and abdomen, inflicting 2 levels of Fatigue and 1d5 Toughness Damage.
4	The energy ripples all over the character, scorching his body with horrid third-degree burns and inflicting 1d10 levels of Fatigue. The target may only take a Half Action on his next Round.
5	The fury of the attack forces the target to the ground, helplessly covering his face and keening in agony. The target is knocked to the ground and must make an Agility Test or catch fire (see Special Damage). The Target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round.
6	Struck by the full force of the attack, the target is sent reeling to the ground, smoke spiralling out of the wound. The target is knocked to the ground, Stunned for 1d10 Rounds, and suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue. In addition, he must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or catch fire (see Special Damage on page 247).
7	The intense power of the energy attack cooks the target's organs, burning his lungs and heart with intense heat. The target is Stunned for 2d10 Rounds and suffers 1d10 permanent Toughness Damage.
8	As the attack washes over the target, his skin turns black and peels off while melted fat seeps from his clothing and armour. The target is Stunned for 2d10 Rounds and the attack halves his Strength, Toughness and Agility until he receives medical treatment. The extensive scarring deals 2d5 permanent Fellowship Damage.
9	The target is completely encased in fire, melting his skin and popping his eyes like superheated eggs. He falls to the ground a blackened corpse.
10+	As above, except in addition, if the target is carrying any ammunition, there is a 50% chance it explodes. Unless they can make a successful Evasion Test, all creatures within 1d5 metres take 1d10+5 Explosive Damage. If the target carried any grenades or missiles, one round after the Damage was dealt they detonate where the target's body lies with the normal effects.

Table 7-9: Energy Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	A grazing blow to the head frazzles the target's senses, imposing a –10 penalty to all Tests (except Toughness) for 1 Round.
2	The blast of energy dazzles the target, leaving him Blinded for 1 Round.
3	The attack cooks off the target's ear, leaving him with a partially burned stump of cartilage and deafened until he receives first aid or waits for 1d5 hours.
4	The energy attack burns away all of the hairs on the target's head as well as leaving him reeling from the injury. The attack deals 2 levels of Fatigue and the target is blinded for 1d5 Rounds.
5	A blast of energy envelopes the target's head, burning his face and hair, crisping his skin, and causing him to scream like a stuck Grox. In addition to losing his hair, he is blinded for 1d10 Rounds, Stunned for 1 Round, and takes 1 permanent Fellowship Damage
6	The attack cooks the target's face, melting his features and damaging his eyes. The target is blinded for the next 1d10 hours and suffers 1d5 permanent Fellowship Damage and 1 permanent Perception Damage. The target also suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
7	In a gruesome display, the flesh is burned from the target's head, exposing charred bone and muscle underneath. The target is blinded permanently and suffers 1d10 levels of Fatigue. Also, roll 1d10. This is the target's new Fellowship, unless their Fellowship is already 10 or less, in which case don't bother rolling, as nobody really notices the difference.
8	The target's head is destroyed in a convocation of fiery death. He does not survive.
9	Superheated by the attack, the target's brain explodes, tearing apart his skull and sending flaming chunks of meat flying at those nearby. The target is no more.
10	As above, except the target's entire body catches fire and runs off headless 2d10 metres in a random direction (use the scatter diagram on page 244). Anything flammable it passes, including characters, must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or catch fire (see Special Damage, page 247).

Table 7-10: Energy Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The blast of energy sears the flesh and bone of the target's leg, leaving a nasty burn scar. The target may not Run or Charge for 2 Rounds.
2	The attack flash-fries the target's leg, cooking chunks of flesh into char. The target must pass a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The blast causes a nasty compound fracture in the target's leg. The target reduces his Movement by half (rounding up), and the target may not run or charge. The effects to the target's Movement persist until the target receives medical attention.
4	A solid blow to the leg sends currents of agony coursing through the target. The target suffers 1 level of Fatigue and reduces his Movement by half (rounding up) for 1d10 Rounds. The Target is knocked Prone.
5	The target's leg endures horrific burn Damage, fusing clothing and armour with flesh and bone. The target suffers 1 level of Fatigue and reduces his movement by half (rounding up) for 2d10 Rounds. The target is knocked Prone.
6	The attack burns the target's foot, charring the flesh and emitting a foul aroma. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or lose the foot. On a success, the targetreduces his movement by 1/2 (rounding up) until he receives medical attention. In addition, the target suffers 2 levels of Fatigue.
7	The energy attack fries the leg, leaving it a mess of blackened flesh. The leg is broken and until repaired, the target counts as having lost the leg. The target must take a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or become Stunned for 1 Round. In addition the target suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue. The target now only has one leg.
8	Energy sears through the bone, causing the leg to be severed. The target must take a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or become Stunned for 1 Round. In addition the target suffers 1d10 levels of Fatigue and is suffering from Blood Loss. The target now only has one leg.
9	The force of the attack reduces the leg to little more than a chunk of sizzling gristle. The target make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. The leg is utterly lost.
10	In a terrifying display of power, the leg immolates and fire consumes the target completely. The target dies in a matter of agonising seconds

Table 7-11: Explosive Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The attack throws the limb backwards, painfully jerking it away from the body, inflicting 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The force of the blast snaps the bones of the arm in half. The target drops anything held in the hand and must pass a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round,
3	The explosion removes 1 finger (and the tips from up to 1d5 others) from the target's hand. The target suffers 1d10 WS and BS damage, and anything carried in the hand is destroyed. If this is an explosive such as a hand grenade, it goes off. Messy (use result 9 instead).
4	The blast rips the sinew of the arm straight from the bone. He is Stunned for 1 Round, and the limb is useless until medical attention is received. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer Blood Loss.
5	Fragments from the explosion tear into the target's hand, ripping away flesh and muscle alike. He must immediately make an **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test** or lose his hand. If he succeeds, he suffers 1 permanent Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Damage from the damaged nerves.
6	The explosive attack shatters the bone and mangles the flesh turning the target's arm into a red ruin, inflicting 1d5 levels of Fatigue. The target's arm is broken and, until repaired, the target counts as having only one arm. In addition, the horrendous nature of the wound means that he now suffers from Blood Loss.
7	In a violent hail of flesh, the arm is blown apart. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. On a success, the target is Stunned for 1d10 rounds, suffers 1d10 levels of Fatigue, and suffers Blood Loss. He now only has one arm.
8	The arm disintegrates under the force of the explosion taking a good portion of the shoulder and chest with it. The target is sent screaming to the ground, where he dies in a pool of his own blood and organs.
9	With a mighty bang the arm is blasted from the target's body, killing the target instantly in a rain of blood droplets. In addition, if the target was carrying a weapon with a power source in his hand (such as a power sword or chainsword) then it explodes, dealing 1d10+5 Impact Damage to anyone within two metres.
10	As above, except if the target is carrying any ammunition it explodes dealing 1d10+5 Impact Damage to anyone within 1d10 metres (this is in addition to Damage caused by exploding power weapons noted above). If the target is carrying any grenades or missiles, these too detonate on his person.

Table 7-12: Explosive Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The explosion flings the target backwards 1d5 metres. The target is knocked Prone.
2	The target is blown backwards 1d5 metres by a terrific explosion, taking 1 level of Fatigue per metre travelled. The target is knocked Prone.
3	The power of the explosion rends flesh and bone with horrific results. The target must make a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test or suffer from Blood Loss and be Stunned for 1 Round.
4	The force of the blast sends the target sprawling to the ground. The target is knocked backwards 1d5 metres, Stunned for 1 Round, and is knocked Prone.
5	Concussion from the explosion knocks the target to the ground and turns his innards into so much ground meat. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer Blood Loss and 1 permanent Toughness damage. The target then suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue and is knocked prone.
6	Chunks of the target's flesh are ripped free by the force of the attack leaving large, weeping wounds. The target is Stunned for 1 Round, may only take a Half Action in his next Round, and is now suffering Blood Loss.
7	The explosive force of the attack ruptures the target's flesh and scrambles his nervous system, knocking him to the ground. The target suffers Blood Loss, is knocked Prone, is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds, and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or fall unconscious.
8	The target's chest explodes outward, disgorging a river of partially cooked organs onto the ground, killing him instantly.
9	Pieces of the target's body fly in all directions as he is torn into bloody gobbets by the attack. In addition, if the target is carrying any ammunition, it explodes dealing 1d10+5 Impact Damage to anyone within 1d10 metres. If the target is carrying any grenades or missiles, these too detonate on the target's person.
10	As above, except anyone within 1d10 metres of the target is drenched in gore and must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or suffer a –10 penalty to Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests for 1 Round as blood fouls their sight.

Table 7-13: Explosive Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The explosion leaves the target confused. He can take only a Half Action on his next Turn.
2	The flash and noise leaves the target Blinded and Deafened for 1 Round.
3	The detonation leaves the target's face a bloody ruin from scores of small cuts. Permanent scarring is very likely. The target suffers 2 levels of Fatigue and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1d10 points of Perception and Fellowship damage.
4	The force of the blast knocks the target to the ground and senseless. The target suffers 1d10 Intelligence Damage and is knocked Prone. He must also pass a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1 permanent Intelligence Damage and be stunned for 2 Rounds.
5	The explosion flays the flesh from the target's face and bursts his eardrums with its force. The target is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds and is permanently deafened. Finally, the target gains hideous scars—he suffers 1 point of permanent Fellowship Damage.
6	The target's head explodes under the force of the attack, leaving his headless corpse to spurt blood from the neck for the next few minutes. Needless to say this is instantly fatal.
7	Both head and body are blown into a mangled mess, instantly killing the target. In addition, if the target is carrying any ammunition it explodes dealing 1d10+5 Impact Damage to any creatures within 1d5 metres. If the target was carrying grenades or missiles, these too explode on the target's person.
8	In a series of unpleasant explosions the target's head and torso peel apart, leaving a gory mess on the ground. For the rest of the fight, anyone moving over this spot must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or fall Prone.
9	The target ceases to exist in any tangible way, entirely turning into a kind of crimson mist. You don't get much deader than this, except…
10	As above, except such is the unspeakably appalling manner in which the target was killed, that any of the target's allies who are within two metres of where the target stood, must make an immediate **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or spend their next Turn fleeing from the attacker.

Table 7-14: Explosive Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	A glancing blast sends the character backwards one metre. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness** Test or be knocked Prone.
2	The force of the explosion takes the target's feet out from under him. He is knocked Prone and may only take Half Move movement Actions for 1d5 Rounds.
3	The concussion causes the target's leg to fracture, inflicting 2d10 Agility damage.
4	The explosion sends the target spinning through the air. The target is flung 1d5 metres away from the explosion. It takes the target a Full Action to regain his feet, and his Movement is reduced by half (rounding up) for 1d10 Rounds.
5	Explosive force removes part of the target's foot and scatters the ragged remnants over a wide area. The target suffers 1 permanent Agility damage. The target must make a **Difficult (–10) Toughness Test** or suffer 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
6	The concussive force of the blast shatters the target's leg bones and splits apart his flesh, inflicting 1d10 levels of Fatigue. The leg is broken and, until repaired, the target counts as having only one leg. The target must also make an immediate **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or permanently lose his foot.
7	The explosion reduces the target's leg into a hunk of smoking meat. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. On a successful Test, the target is still Stunned for 1d10 Rounds, suffers 1d10 levels of Fatigue and suffers Blood Loss. He now has only one leg.
8	The blast tears the leg from the body in a geyser of gore, sending him crashing to the ground, blood pumping from the ragged stump: instantly fatal.
9	The leg explodes in an eruption of blood, killing the target immediately and sending tiny fragments of bone, clothing, and armour hurtling off in all directions. Anyone within two metres suffers 1d10+2 Impact Damage.
10	As above, except in addition, if the target is carrying any ammunition, it explodes dealing 1d10+5 Impact Damage to anyone within 1d10 metres. If the target is carrying any grenades or missiles, these too detonate on the target's person.

Table 7-15: Impact Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The attack strikes the target's limb, with a powerful blow, causing him to drop anything held in that hand.
2	The strike leaves a deep bruise, possibly causing minor fractures in the arm. The target suffers 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The impact crushes flesh and bone. The target drops whatever was held in that hand, and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1d10 WS and BS damage.
4	The impact smashes into the arm or whatever the target is holding, ripping it away and leaving the target reeling from pain. The target is Stunned for 1 Round and drops whatever he was holding in his arm. There is a 10 percent chance that anything the target was holding in that hand is damaged and unusable until repaired.
5	Muscle and bone take a pounding as the attack rips into the arm. The limb is useless until the target receives medical attention.
6	The attack pulverises the target's hand, crushing and breaking 1d5 fingers . The target suffers 1 level of Fatigue and must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 2 permanent WS and BS damage.
7	With a loud snap, the arm bone is shattered and left hanging limply at the target's side, dribbling blood onto the ground. The arm is broken and, until repaired, the target counts as having only one arm. The target suffers from Blood Loss.
8	The force of the attack takes the arm off just below the shoulder, showering blood and gore across the ground. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. If he passes the Test, he is still Stunned for 1d10 rounds, suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue and is suffers from Blood Loss. He now only has one arm.
9	In a rain of blood, gore and meat, the target's arm is removed from his body. Screaming incoherently, he twists about in agony for a few seconds before collapsing to the ground and dying.
10	As above, except as the arm is removed it is smashed apart by the force of the attack, and bone, clothing and armour fragments fly about like shrapnel. Anyone within 2 metres of the target suffers 1d5–3 Impact Damage to a random location (see Table 7–2: Hit Locations).

Table 7-16: Impact Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	A blow to the target's body steals the breath from his lungs. The target can take only a Half Action on his next Turn.
2	The impact punches the air from the target's body, inflicting 1 level of Fatigue and knocking the target Prone.
3	The attack breaks a rib and the target is knocked Prone. The target is also Stunned for 1 Round.
4	The blow batters the target, shattering a rib. The target suffers 1d10 Toughness Damage and must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or be knocked Prone.
5	A solid blow to the chest pulverises the target's innards, and he momentary doubles over in pain, clutching himself and crying in agony. The target is Stunned for 2 Rounds and must make an **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test**.
6	The attack knocks the target sprawling on the ground. The target is flung 1d5 metres away from the attacker and falls Prone (if the target strikes a wall or other solid object, he stops). The target suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue and is Stunned for 2 Rounds.
7	With an audible crack, 1d5 of the target's ribs break. The target can either lay down and stay still awaiting medical attention (a successful Medicae Test sets the ribs) or continue to take Actions, though each Round there is a 20% chance that a jagged rib pierces a vital organ and kills the character instantly. The target suffers 1d5 permanent Toughness Damage.
8	The force of the attack ruptures several of the target's organs and knocks him down, gasping in wretched pain. The target suffers Blood Loss and suffers 1d10 permanent Toughness Damage.
9	The target jerks back from the force of the attack, throwing back his head and spewing out a jet of blood before crumpling to the ground dead.
10	As above, except the target is thrown 1d10 metres away from the attack. Anyone in the target's path must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or be knocked Prone.

Table 7-17: Impact Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The impact fills the target's head with a terrible ringing noise. The target must make a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test or suffer 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The attack causes the target to see stars. The target suffers a —10 penalty to any Perception or Intelligence Tests for 1d5 Rounds.
3	The target's nose breaks in a torrent of blood, blinding him for 1 Round. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round..
4	The concussive strike staggers the target. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round and knocked Prone.
5	The force of the blow sends the target reeling in pain. The target is Stunned for 1 Round and staggers backwards 1d5 metres. He suffers 1 permanent Intelligence damage.
6	The target's head is snapped back by the attack leaving him staggering around trying to control mind-numbing pain. The target is Stunned for 1d5 Rounds, knocked backwards 1d5 metres, must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or be knocked Prone.
7	The attack slams into the target's head, fracturing his skull and opening a long tear in his scalp. The target is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds and halves all movement for 1d10 hours.
8	Blood pours from the target's noise, mouth, ears and eyes as the attack pulverises his brain. He does not survive the experience.
9	The target's head bursts like an overripe fruit and sprays blood, bone and brains in all directions. Anyone within 4 metres of the target must make an Agility Test or suffer a –10 penalty to their WS and BS on their next Turn as gore gets in their eyes or on their visors.
10	As above, except that the attack was so powerful that it passes through the target and may hit another target nearby. If the hit was from a melee weapon, the attacker may immediately make another attack (with the same weapon) against any other target they can reach without moving. If the hit was from a ranged weapon they may immediately make another attack (with the same weapon) against any target standing directly behind the original target and still within range of their weapon.

Table 7-18: Impact Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	A blow to the leg results in deep bruises and teeth-clenching pain. The target suffers 1 level of Fatigue.
2	A grazing strike against the leg slows the target. The target's Movement is reduced by half (rounding up) for 1 Round, and he must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round and fall Prone.
3	A powerful impact causes micro fractures in the target's bones, inflicting considerable agony. The target suffers 2d10 Agility Damage, and is knocked Prone.
4	A solid blow to the leg sends lightning agony coursing through the target. The target suffers 1d10 Agility Damage and is knocked Prone.
5	The blow breaks the target's leg, leaving him Stunned for 1 Round and reducing his movement by to 1 metre until he receives medical attention. The target is also knocked Prone.
6	Several of the tiny bones in the target's foot snap like twigs with cracking noises. The target must make an immediate **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or permanently lose the use of his foot. The target's Movement is reduced by 1/2 (rounding up) until medical attention is received. The target suffers 2 levels of Fatigue.
7	With a nasty crunch, the leg is broken and the target is knocked Prone mewling in pain. The target falls to the ground with a broken leg and, until it is repaired, he counts as only having one leg. The target is Stunned for 2 Rounds.
8	The force of the attack rips the lower half of the leg away in a stream of blood. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. The target suffers from Blood Loss and suffers 1d5 permanent Agility Damage. He now only has one leg.
9	The hit rips apart the flesh of the leg, causing blood to spray out in all directions. Even as the target tries futilely to stop the sudden flood of vital fluid, he falls to the ground and dies in a spreading pool of gore.
10	As above, but such is the agony of the target's death that his piteous screams drowns out all conversation within 2d10 metres for the rest of the Round.

Table 7-19: Rending Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The slashing attack tears anything free that was held in this arm.
2	Deep cuts cause the target to drop whatever was held and inflicts 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The atack shreds the target's arm into ribbons, causing the target to scream in pain. The target drops whatever was held in that hand and must make a successful **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer Blood Loss.
4	The attack flays the skin from the limb, filling the air with blood and the sounds of his screaming. The target falls Prone from the agony and takes 2 levels of Fatigue. The limb is useless for 1d10 Rounds.
5	A bloody and very painful looking furrow is opened up in the target's arm. The target suffers from Blood Loss and vomits all over the place in agony. He drops anything held and the limb is useless without medical attention.
6	The blow mangles flesh and muscle as it hacks into the target's hand, liberating 1d5 fingers in the process (a roll of a 5 means that the thumb has been sheared off). The target is Stunned for 1 Round and must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or lose the use of his hand.
7	The attack rips apart skin, muscle, bone and sinew with ease, turning the target's arm into a dangling ruin. The target suffers 1d10 Strength Damage. The arm is broken and, until repaired, the target counts as having only one arm. In addition, numerous veins have been severed and the target is now suffering from Blood Loss.
8	With an assortment of unnatural, wet ripping sounds, the arm flies free of the body trailing blood behind it in a crimson arc. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. If he passes the Test, he is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds and suffers Blood Loss. He now has only one arm.
9	The attack slices clean through the arm and into the torso, drenching the ground in blood and gore and killing the target instantly.
10	As above. However, as the arm falls to the ground its fingers spasm uncontrollably, pumping the trigger of any held weapon. If the target was carrying a ranged weapon there is a 5% chance that a single randomly determined target within 2d10 metres is hit by these shots, in which case resolve a single hit from the target's weapon.

Table 7-20: Rending Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	If the target is not wearing armour on this location, he takes 1 level of Fatigue from a painful laceration. If he is wearing armour, there is no effect. Phew!
2	A powerful slash opens a painful rent in the target's body. He suffers 1 level of Fatigue and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round.
3	The attack rips a large patch of skin from the target's torso, leaving him gasping in pain. The target is Stunned for 1 Round and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer from Blood Loss.
4	The blow opens up a long wound in the target's torso, causing him to double over in terrible pain. The target suffers from Blood Loss and is Stunned for 1 Round.
5	A torrent of blood spills from the deep cuts, making the ground slick with gore. All characters attempting to move through this pool of blood must succeed on an Agility Test or fall Prone. The target suffers 1d10 Toughness Damage and also suffers Blood Loss.
6	The mighty attack takes a sizeable chunk out of the target and knocks him to the ground as he clutches the oozing wound, shrieking in pain. The target is knocked Prone and suffers 1d10 Toughness Damage and Blood Loss.
7	The attack cuts open the target's abdomen. The target can either choose to use one arm to hold his guts in (until a medic can bind them in place with a successful Medicae Test), or fight on regardless and risk a 20% chance each turn that his middle splits open, spilling his intestines all over the ground, causing an additional 2d10 Damage. In either case, the target suffers 1d5 permanent Toughness Damage and is now suffering Blood Loss.
8	With a vile tearing noise, the skin on the target's chest comes away revealing a red ruin of muscle. The target must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die. If he passes, he suffers 1d10 permanent Toughness Damage, is stunned for 1 Round, and now suffers Blood Loss.
9	The powerful blow cleaves the target from gullet to groin, revealing his internal organs and spilling them on to the ground before him. The target is now quite dead.
10	As above, except that the area and the target are awash with gore. For the rest of the fight, anyone moving within four metres of the target's corpse must make make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or fall Prone.

Table 7-21: Rending Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The attack tears a painful the target's face, meaning he suffers 1 level of Fatigue. If the target is wearing a helmet, there is no effect.
2	The attack slices open the target's scalp which immediately begins to bleed profusely. Due to blood pouring into the target's eyes, he suffers a –10 penalty to both Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill for the next 1d10 Turns. The target must pass a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer from Blood Loss.
3	The attack rips open the target's face, leaving him Stunned for 1d5 Rounds. If the target is wearing a helmet, the helmet is torn off. The target suffers Blood Loss.
4	The attack slices across one of the target's eye sockets, possibly scooping out the eye. He must make a **Routine (+20) Toughness Test** or lose the eye (augmetics can repair this). He also suffers 1d10 Perception Damage
5	The attack tears the target's helmet from his head. If wearing no helmet, the target loses an ear instead, becoming Deafened until he receives medical attention. If he loses an ear, he must also must pass a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1 point of permanent Fellowship Damage.
6	As the blow rips violently across the target's face—it takes with it an important feature. Roll 1d10 to see what the target has lost. 1–3: Eye (see Permanent Effects on page 247), 4–7: Nose (the target suffers 1d10 permanent Fellowship Damage), 8–10: Ear (the target suffers 1d10 permanent Fellowship Damage.) In addition, the target is now suffering Blood Loss and suffers 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
7	In a splatter of skin and teeth, the attack removes most of the target's face. He is permanently blinded and has his Fellowship permanently reduced to 1d10, and also now has trouble speaking without slurring his words. In addition, the target is suffering from Blood Loss and is Stunned for 1 Round.
8	The blow slices into the side of the target's head causing his eyes to pop out and his brain to ooze down his cheek like spilled jelly. He's dead before he hits the ground.
9	With a sound not unlike a wet sponge being torn in half, the target's head flies free of its body and sails through the air, landing harmlessly 2d10 metres away with a soggy thud. The target is instantly slain.
10	As above, except the target's neck spews blood in a torrent, drenching all those nearby and forcing them to make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test**. Anyone who fails the Test, suffers a –10 penalty to his Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests for 1 Round as gore fills his eyes or fouls his visor.

Table 7-22: Rending Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Critical Effect
1	The attack knocks the limb backwards, painfully twisting it awkwardly. The target suffers 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The target's kneecap splits open. He must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or fall Prone and suffer from Blood Loss as the already damaged extremity hits the ground.
3	The attack rips a length of flesh from the leg, causing blood to gush from the wound. The target suffers 1d5 Agility Damage and suffers Blood Loss.
4	The attack rips the kneecap free from the target's leg, causing it to collapse out from under him. The target's Movement is reduced by 1/2 (rounding up) until medical attention is received. In addition, he is knocked Prone and suffers 1d10 Agility Damage.
5	In a spray of blood, the target's leg is deeply slashed, exposing bone, sinew and muscle. The target suffers Blood Loss, and must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1 point of permanent Agility Damage.
6	The blow slices a couple of centimetres off the end of the target's foot. The target must make an immediate **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or permanently lose the use of his foot. On a success, the target's Movement is reduced by half (rounding up). In either case, the target suffers Blood Loss.
7	The force of the blow cuts deep into the leg, grinding against bone and tearing ligaments apart. The leg is broken and, until repaired, the target counts as having only one leg. In addition, the level of maiming is such that the target is now suffering from Blood Loss. He also is Stunned for 1 Round and is knocked Prone.
8	In a single bloody hack the leg is lopped off the target, spurting its vital fluids across the ground. The target must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or die from shock. On a success, the target is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds, and suffers Blood Loss. He now has only one leg.
9	With a meaty chop, the leg comes away at the hip. The target pitches to the ground howling in agony before dying.
10	As above, except that the tide of blood is so intense that, for the remainder of the battle, anyone making a Run or Charge Action within six metres of the target this Turn must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or fall over.

course of game play. Characters gain Fatigue from certain types of attacks, Grappling, some Critical Effects, and other Actions that push them beyond safe limits.

Fatigue is measured in levels. A character can take a number of levels of Fatigue equal to his Toughness Bonus and still function, albeit with some side-effects. Should a character take a number of levels of Fatigue in excess of his Toughness Bonus, he collapses, unconscious for 10–TB minutes; after the character awakens, his levels of Fatigue revert to a number equal to his Toughness Bonus. Characters suffering from any level of Fatigue suffer a –10 penalty to all Tests.

Removing Fatigue

Fatigue goes away with time. Each hour of normal rest (not counting states of unconsciousness) that includes no combat, no Psychic Powers, and no other strenuous activity, removes one level of Fatigue. Six consecutive hours of rest remove all Fatigue.

CHARACTERISTIC DAMAGE

Some Psychic Powers, poisons, diseases and other hazards circumvent a character's Wounds and deal Damage directly to a Characteristic. Characteristic Damage cannot reduce a Characteristic below zero. Characteristic Damage may also affect the corresponding Characteristic Bonus. Table 9-10: Effects of Zero Characteristic Scores summarises what happens when a particular Characteristic is reduced to zero.

Removing Characteristic Damage

Unless otherwise specified, Characteristic Damage is never permanent. A character automatically recovers one point of Characteristic Damage each hour, regardless of his activity level. The GM may allow certain types of medical attention to remove Characteristic Damage at a faster rate.

CONDITIONS AND SPECIAL

Table 7-6: Effects of Zero Characteristic

Characteristic	Effect
Zero Weapon Skill	The character may not make tests based on this Characteristic.
Zero Ballistic Skill	The character may not make tests based on this Characteristic.
Zero Strength	The character collapses into unconsciousness.
Zero Toughness	The character dies.
Zero Agility	The character is paralysed, helpless, and can take no Actions.
Zero Intelligence	The character slips into a dreamless coma and is treated as helpless.
Zero Perception	The character is bereft of his senses and suffers a –30 penalty to all Tests (except Toughness) until he recovers.
Zero Willpower	The character collapses into a nightmare-filled sleep.
Zero Fellowship	The character withdraws into a catatonic state. He may not speak or take Tests based on this Characteristic.

DAMAGE

Common injuries are far from the only forms of bodily harm facing those who dare to venture into the unknown. Heretics may find themselves set on fire, suffering from massive loss of blood, broken bones, or facing a permanent amputation. All of these, and more, are collectively known as Conditions and Special Damage.

Amputated Limbs

A character that loses body parts (except for his head, which almost certainly means death) is also affected by Blood Loss and must be treated for it quickly. If the character lives, someone with the Medicae Skill must be found to adequately treat the stump to ensure that it heals well. If no medic is available, there is only a 20% chance that the stump will heal over. If it does not, the amputee dies a horrible death from infection after 1d10 days. Whether or not it heals naturally or a medic treats it, the character does not start removing Damage for 1d10+2 days. Assuming the character survives all of the above, he'll also have to cope with the disagreeable side-effects of the lost limb, which are explained below.

Lost Hand

The character suffers a –20 penalty on all Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on the use of two hands and he cannot wield two-handed weapons. A shield can be strapped to the injured arm, however. Should this be the character's primary hand, he must cope with the customary –20 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests made to attack with weapons using his secondary hand. For every 100 xp he spends, he can reduce this penalty by 10.

If a character loses both hands, he should either secure at least one replacement or get someone to sharpen his teeth.

Lost Arm

As with a lost hand, but a character cannot strap a shield to the arm since he no longer has it. Losing both arms is just as bad, plus it's a bit difficult to reach those hard-to-clean spots.

Lost Eye

Losing one eye permanently reduces a character's Ballistic Skill by –10. In addition, he suffers a –20 penalty to all Skill and Characteristics Tests that rely on sight. Should a character have the misfortune to lose both eyes, he becomes blinded (see below).

Lost Foot

The character permanently reduces all his movement by half (round up) and suffers a –20 penalty to all movement Actions as well as Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on mobility, such as Shadowing. Losing both feet makes it hard to walk, though perhaps the Heretic can grow tentacles to compensate...

Lost Leg

Treat this as a lost foot, but the character cannot use the Dodge Skill. Losing both legs renders the character half the person he was, but the good news is he also becomes half the target.

Blinded

A blind character automatically fails all tests based on vision and automatically fails all Ballistic Skill Tests. He also suffers a –30 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests and most other tests that ordinarily benefit from vision. Needless to say, most Heretics find blindness very inconvenient, but any member of the Inquisition will tell them they don't need their eyes to see the truth.

Blood Loss

Blood Loss is a Critical Effect that can result from Critical Damage. Characters suffering from Blood Loss have a 10% chance of dying each Round unless treated in some way. If the suffering character is conscious, he may attempt a **Difficult (–10) Medicae Test** each Round to staunch the bleeding. If the character is also trying to simultaneously engage in strenuous activity, such as running away from whatever caused the Blood Loss, attempts to staunch the bleeding instead require a V**ery Hard (–30) Medicae Test.** If the suffering character is not conscious, or doesn't fancy his chances, another character may attempt the test.

Deafened

The character cannot hear at all, or at least not well enough to communicate with others. Until the character recovers or has his disability repaired, he automatically fails any Skill or Characteristic Test that relies on hearing. Apart from having trouble communicating with his fellow Heretics, the GM is free to decide what effects a deaf character will have on the game.

Fire

A character suffers Damage from fire each Round he is exposed to it. At the beginning of each Round after the first in which a character is exposed to the same source of flames (or if he is hit by a weapon with the Flame Special Quality or suffers certain Toxic Critical Effects), he must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or catch on fire.

Once a character is on fire, he suffers 1d10 Damage (ignoring armour) and takes 1 level of Fatigue each Round until the fire is extinguished. All Damage from fire is Energy Damage—if the location is not otherwise specified, use the body location. While on fire, a character must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** at the beginning of each of his Turns in order to be able to take Actions normally; otherwise, he may only run around and scream, counting as a Full Action. A character that is on fire may try to extinguish the flames by dropping prone and making a **Hard (–20) Agility Test** as a Full Action.

The GM can make this test easier or harder depending on environmental conditions and whether the blazing character is able to receive any help from nearby allies.

Falling

Characters can fall off things for all manner of reasons, though the results are usually the same. To work out Damage from falling, simply roll 1d10 and add +1 per metre the character fell. Use Table 7–3: Hit Locations to determine which part of the body hits the ground first. Armour offers no protection against falls. Damage from falling is Impact Damage. The GM may adjust the Damage depending on the type of surface landed upon as well abnormal gravity conditions, and so forth.

Stunned

In addition to Damage and Fatigue, characters may also become Stunned due to certain attacks or effects. Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests to hit Stunned characters are considered **Routine (+20)**. In addition, Stunned characters cannot take Actions or Reactions such as Evasion. A Stunned character is not helpless or unaware.

Suffocation

There are many ways to suffocate, including drowning, smoke inhalation, and exposure to certain toxins. The rate of suffocation depends on the character's activity level. If a character is actively trying to conserve oxygen, he can hold his breath for a number of minutes equal to his Toughness Bonus. If a character is instead engaged in strenuous activity (combat, swimming, and so forth) he may hold his breath for a number of Rounds equal to twice his Toughness Bonus. While holding his breath, a character must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** each minute (if conserving oxygen) or each Round (if engaged in strenuous activity). If he fails, he suffers one level of Fatigue. Remember, any amount of Fatigue imposes a –10 penalty to all Tests, and if a character ever has a number of levels of Fatigue in excess of his Toughness Bonus, he immediately falls unconscious for 10 minutes. If the character has not gained a fresh source of oxygen by the end of the allotted time, he automatically falls unconscious regardless of his levels of Fatigue. If a character is both unconscious and deprived of a fresh source of oxygen, he dies after a number or Rounds equal to his Toughness Bonus.

Unconsciousness

Unconsciousness is usually a temporary state that typically results from excessive levels of Fatigue or Critical Damage. The duration of a state of unconsciousness is usually included in the description of the effect that caused it, but if no other duration is given, unconsciousness lasts for 10 minutes.

An unconscious character is completely unaware of his surroundings and cannot take any actions. He is also treated as a helpless target (see page 243). If a character falls into unconsciousness due to excessive levels of Fatigue, he recovers some of that Fatigue when he awakens. See Fatigue, page 246.

Useless Limbs

Certain Critical Effects indicate a risk of permanently losing the use of a limb unless the affected character succeeds at a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test**. Should a character with the Medicae Skill assist the injured character, the victim gains a +20 bonus to such a test. Even if the test is successful, the limb must be held in a sling for 1d5+1 weeks and is useless during this time.

Should the Toughness Test fail, the limb must be removed, requiring a character with the Medicae Skill to succeed at a **Difficult (–10) Medicae Test**. Should this fail, the limb still comes off, but the surgery inflicts 1d10 Damage to the limb—almost always Critical Damage. Should the amputee live, the limb comes off, but he suffers Blood Loss and must be treated for it. Once this has been dealt with, the chirurgeon must treat the wound as if it were an amputated limb (see above).

Vacuum

There is nothing good about being exposed to vacuum. There are two main ways this unfortunate event could occur: a character can be suddenly thrust into an airless, pressureless environment (such as being expelled from an airlock), or they can be slowly affected (such as being on a star ship as atmosphere is vented into space).

If exposed to vacuum, a character may survive unharmed for a number of Rounds equal to his Toughness Bonus. Unless he has an oxygen source, he will begins to suffer from the effects of Suffocation. At the end of each Round after this, he suffers 1d10 Explosive Damage from depressurisation. If he is in the vacuum of space, at the end of each Round make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer 1d10 Energy Damage from the extreme cold. Both ignore armour and Toughness Bonus. If a character dies in space, it takes five Rounds for his corpse to freeze. If a frozen corpse suffers any Damage, it shatters into thousands of blood-red ice shards.

If a character is trapped in a gradually worsening atmosphere, he may survive unharmed for a number of Rounds equal to twice his Toughness Bonus. At the end of this time, he begins to experience suffocation and depressurisation as detailed previously. However, the damage is only 1d5 instead of 1d10.

HEALING

A character will inevitably suffer Damage during his explorations of the galaxy. As a character accumulates Damage, he progresses through three different states: Lightly Damaged, Heavily Damaged, and Critically Damaged.

Lightly Damaged

A character is considered Lightly Damaged if he has taken Damage equal to or less than twice his Toughness Bonus. A Lightly Damaged character removes one Damage per day through natural healing. If a Lightly Damaged character devotes an entire day to bed rest, he removes an amount of Damage equal to his Toughness Bonus.

Heavily Damaged

A character is Heavily Damaged whenever he has taken more Damage than twice his Toughness Bonus. A Heavily Damaged character removes one Damage per week though natural healing. If a Heavily Damaged character devotes an entire week to complete rest, he removes an amount of Damage equal to his Toughness Bonus. Once a Heavily Damaged character's Damage is equal to or less than his Toughness Bonus, he becomes Lightly Damaged.

Critically Damaged

A character is Critically Damaged whenever he has taken Damage in excess of his Wounds. Critical Damage does not heal on its own—it requires medical attention. With rest and medical attention, a character removes one point of Critical Damage per week. After all Critical Damage has been removed, a character becomes Heavily Damaged instead.

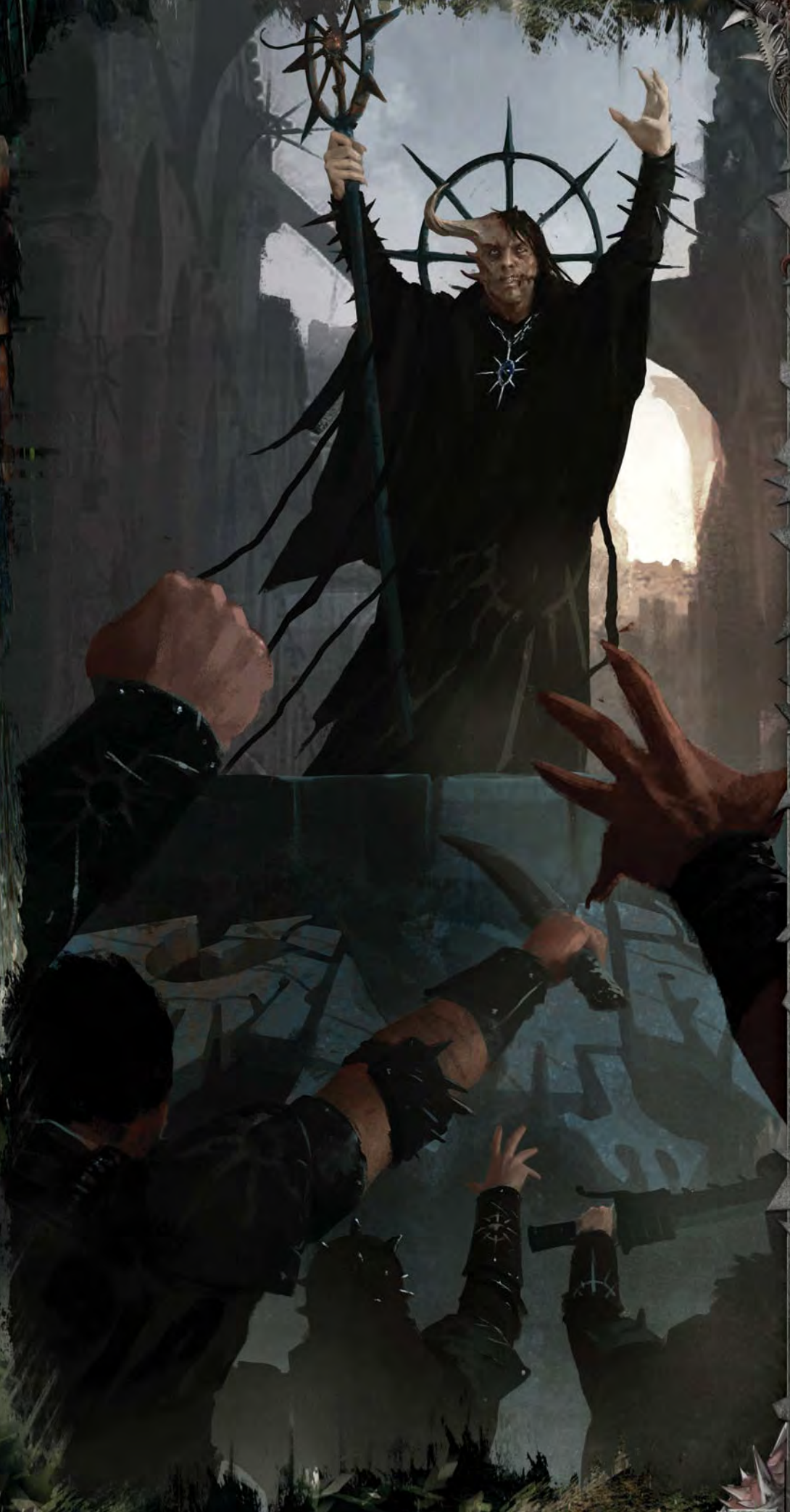
Medical Attention

Medical attention can range from the application of healing drugs to a successful Medicae Test. Medical attention can provide immediate recovery or can speed the process of natural healing. For additional information, see the Medicae Skill on page 83.

Cybernetic and Bionic Replacements

It is possible to restore lost limbs with bionic replacements; sometimes a character may prefer to lop off a perfectly good arm to gain the benefits of having a cybernetic replacement. See Chapter 5: Armoury.





VIII

The Game Master

Role of the GM

Evoking the Setting

Experience and Goals

Compacts

Interaction

Terror and Madness

Interacting with other Games



Chapter VIII: The Game Master

"We are finished, you and I. Because you are unjust, unfair, unkind. I will block you! I swear it! I will hinder and harm your so-called Imperium I will ruin your works, as you have ruined mine."

–Cardinal Maurius Castille before his disappearance

In **Black Crusade,** players assume the roles of men and women who have, for any of a number of reasons, fallen out with the Imperium and left the light of the God-Emperor behind. Hereteks, Traitor Legionnaires, deeply corrupt Imperial officials, and all manner of apostates, renegades, mutants, and outcasts make up the ranks of the Followers of Chaos. While their personal motivations and short-term goals are as varied as the individual players themselves, they generally share the same long-term goal, the utter destruction of the Imperium of Man.

In **Black Crusade**, the characters seek to accomplish this by beginning a Black Crusade of their own. They seek to either tear down the worlds in the Calixis Sector, Koronus Expanse, or Jericho Reach in violent bloodshed, or unite the squabbling and disparate factions of the Screaming Vortex. Whatever they choose, they then must build a vast army from this base and launch it into the unprotected Imperium.

To this end they plot and scheme, wage bloody wars, steal, loot, corrupt, and destroy the works of the God-Emperor with unrelenting zeal. While the players are responsible for breathing life into their characters, it is the Game Master's responsibility to bring their bloody, desperate existence to reality.

The Role of the GM

In **Black Crusade** one member of the group must take on the responsibilities of Game Master, or GM. Game Masters can be thought of as a combination of screen writer and film director. Where the players are like actors, men and women playing roles within the game world, the GM is responsible for everything else. He creates the worlds the players inhabit, and within those worlds he sets the scene, guides the plot, and decides the outcome of the players' actions. While comparing a roleplaying game to a film production is a handy way to understand what goes into running and playing a game, it's not a perfect analogy. Where in a film the director has near absolute control, a roleplaying game is more a collaborative effort between the players and the Game Master. For while the GM sets the stage, it is ultimately the players' responsibility to decide their characters' actions and drive the story.

Along with creating the world and guiding the plot, the Game Master also plays an important role as an adjudicator and referee, the final word in all matters of game rules and mechanics. As in any game, **Black Crusade** uses a clearly defined ruleset to determine the outcome of players' actions and to determine the magnitude of success, or failure, of their endeavours. It is the Game Master's job to decide when and where these rules are

Choosing the Game Master

When organising a game of **Black Crusade**, one player must take on the role of the Game Master. While this person can be nominated by his peers, it is better if the Game Master takes on this job of his own volition. A game run by a volunteer Game Master is usually better as the GM is more enthusiastic about the job at hand. Typically, the Game Master is chosen well beforehand, as it is usually the Game Master who first owns the core rulebook and who organises the game in the first place, creating a story and drawing together his players. It is also common that over the course of a game, other players may want to try their hand at GMing, sharing the work and creating adventures all their own. This allows players more creative control over a game, and can be very rewarding as GM tag-team adventures can lead to plots and campaigns with more depth and detail.

applied and how they are interpreted to ensure the game runs as smoothly as possible. In doing so, the Game Master must remain impartial and fair, like any good referee, to ensure that his players are enjoying the game and generally having a good time.

Game Masters are also responsible for providing the game's plot, or at least a general plot outline with which the players interact. In general, these plots are known as adventures or scenarios. Everything the players want or need to know about their world is created by the GM, and it is his responsibility to make the world and plot gripping enough to keep players' interest. Additionally, while the Game Master guides the players, provides them with worlds to explore, and rewards them for their efforts, he also stands against them in a way. Along with creating the world and acting as impartial judge, the GM is responsible for setting obstacles in the players' path, challenging them at every turn, and playing the role of every enemy from the lowliest hive-scum to the loftiest Imperial official. It is these dual roles, as both guide and antagonist, that give the Game Master his great challenges.

While at first glance taking on the role of Game Master seems daunting, his is perhaps the most rewarding task of all. For it is the Game Master who gets the satisfaction of bringing enjoyment to his players, and seeing his worlds come to life.

THE BASICS

As it is the Game Master's responsibility to shape and guide the story for the enjoyment of the players, he necessarily needs to be more prepared than the rest of the group. Before the GM takes on the responsibility of running a game, there are a few key things he should consider.

Know the Rules: The GM must know at least as much about the rules as the players, if not more. This means that the GM should read as much of this book as possible before running his first game. Knowing the rules is also important to the GM in his role as final arbiter in all rules and mechanics questions. Familiarity with the rules allows the GM to speak with authority on the subject, and can reduce out of game discussions of rules minutiae.

Know the Plot: In a **Black Crusade** game, the players and their characters are, essentially, the darkness eating away at the heart of the Imperium of Man in the waning years of the 41st Millennium. They are the subject of dark tales, parables used by the Commissariat to ensure fear and obedience among their troopers. However, while the players are indeed powerful, debased individuals with many grandiose plans, it is the Game Master who creates the world in which they live and the plots that they follow. As stated earlier, the GM also controls the group's enemies and allies, and keeps track of all the little details that immerse the players in the story. While roleplaying is largely a collaborative process, the GM is under no obligation to tell players everything that happens. Rather, he simply sets the scene and responds to the players' actions. This means that the GM isn't required to know every detail of the scenario, but he should know at least where it starts and where it's headed. Plots can be as simple as "kill the commander of the Highland Guard on Damaris," or as complex as "destabilize an entire Imperial system, corrupt its leaders, and prepare it for sacrifice to Slaanesh."

A more detailed plot tends to make the GM's life easier. If he has done all of his work on the front-end, creating NPCs, detailing locations, preparing various in-game rewards for the players, and plotting out a few contingency scenarios, he won't need to create things from whole cloth in the middle of a game session, therefore keeping the game running smoothly and at a good pace. Whether a scenario is complex or basic, however, preparation done by a Game Master rarely goes to waste. Game Masters can also use pre-designed and published adventures, such as the one featured in **Chapter XII**. The advantage of these pre-generated adventures is that the GM's work is largely done already.

Be Flexible: It's a well known fact that every plan is a good one up until first contact, and this certainly applies to roleplaying games. No matter how much time and effort a Game Master puts into his game, players will largely do as they please. This usually means chasing off after red herrings and spurious leads, killing

Delegating to Players

There is little doubt that the lion's share of the work of running a roleplaying game falls to the Game Master. He does not need to go it alone, however, when it comes to organising the adventure and gathering the ingredients for a successful game. This is where players can help out, doing things like bringing miniatures, dice, pencils and paper, snacks, and handling any of the other little details that make a night of gaming truly enjoyable.

One of the most important contributions a player can make to a game is in helping the GM add detail and depth to his setting. For example, rather than the GM creating the details of Cardinal Castille, an important part of a PC's background, the GM can ask the player to write up a brief description of this background. This means that the player is adding to the world, and gives the GM some extra detail that he can work into the story at a later date. By allowing players to create these kinds of background details, they become more invested in the story while making the GM's job easier and the group's playing experience richer.

Rule Zero

One of the most important rules for the GM is Rule Zero. Simply put, Rule Zero says that the GM is expected to exercise common sense and good judgement in his game. He is allowed to supersede the game rules in the interest of ensuring that the game runs smoothly, the stories are interesting, and everyone has a good time.

The GM should also remember that excessive or arbitrary use of Rule Zero usually results in an empty gaming table. Simply put, don't abuse it!

important NPCs at inopportune times, ignoring plot altogether, and generally running roughshod over the GM's careful work. While it is certainly their right to do so, and always enjoyable to test the limits of the Game Master's story, it can be quite difficult to handle for inexperienced or inflexible GMs. To deal with the vagaries of strong-willed players, Game Masters should always be flexible when it comes to their stories, ready to alter or even scrap a story or plot point if the players prove uninterested.

Be Prepared: It often falls to the Game Master to make sure that the group has access to the various materials (in addition to this book) needed for an evening of gaming. This usually means having on hand a supply of dice, pencils, scratch paper, and perhaps some miniatures for helping work out locations during combat. Some GM's also like to keep each player's character sheet between sessions lest they go astray. A list of basic roleplaying supplies can be found on page 34.

EMBRACING CHAOS: EVOKING THE SETTING

Black Crusade takes place in the Warhammer 40,000 universe, a grim and deadly place where the mindless and fanatical followers of an ancient, irrelevant corpse-god slowly grind the galaxy beneath an armoured boot heel. The average citizen of the million worlds of the Imperium of Man is a slave, bound not by chains but by ignorance, superstition, and fear. The Imperium of Man is at its final end, beset from without by vile xenos and crumbling from within thanks to mutation, entropy, and sheer inertia. Throughout all of these threats weaves the maddening dream of Chaos, its agents forever whispering from the shadows their message of truth, freedom, power, and everlasting glory.

The players are these messengers, insurgents, malcontents, apostates, heretics, and free thinkers from the worlds of the Calixis Sector, the Koronus Expanse, the Jericho Reach, and even beyond. They strive endlessly against one another and against the monolithic machine of the Imperium. They seek to uncover knowledge hidden away in the dark places of the galaxy for aeons, to deliver untold pain and suffering to their enemies, or to wade across the countless battlefields of the galaxy bathed in the blood of their foes. They have fled from Imperial tyranny, running to the one place of sanctuary they can find—the Screaming Vortex, a rift in reality itself. The Screaming Vortex is full of disunited factions, waiting for a strong leader to emerge and unite them under one banner. The Heretics must strive to grasp power and prestige amongst these myriad factions of the Vortex, unite them, forge them into a cohesive army, and lead a massive Black Crusade against the Imperium they despise.

It is ultimately the job of the Game Master to bring the players' world to life and allow them the opportunity to reach their final destiny. Part of achieving this, and of adding life and immersion to the **Black Crusade** game, is in understanding the underlying themes of this unique setting.

THEMES IN BLACK CRUSADE

Black Crusade, and the Warhammer 40,000 universe within which the game resides, is unique among countless science-fiction settings. To better evoke the feeling and atmosphere of the grim, dark future in which **Black Crusade** is set, the Game Master should familiarise himself with its key themes. Using these themes can firmly cement a game in the 41st Millennium and helps develop the game's characters.

Glory

What glory is there in the Imperium of Man? What glory can be found in following an ancient, corpse-god and his legions of mindless servants? Those who blindly follow the God-Emperor and conform to the capricious strictures of the Imperium of Man are forever doomed to be chattel. They are seen by the Lords of Terra simply as tools to be used, grist to be ground by its massive war machine. No one, not the most powerful Sector Lord or Imperial Navy Admiral, can escape his fate while still under the heel of the Adeptus Terra. Those who follow the path of Chaos, however, want more than the soul-crushing anonymity and brutal degradation that is daily life in the Imperium. They have cast off a world where initiative is frowned upon, creativity is punished, and questioning authority carries a death penalty for the freedom inherent in Chaos. It is through the powers of Chaos that they will make their mark on history, and their names will live forever on the lips of the cowering sheep within the Imperium.

Hedonism

Lust is mankind's most powerful motivator, and has been since its earliest days. Lust for power, for glory, for the flesh, and other, darker desires have driven men and women to the greatest heights and plunged them headlong into the deepest pits of sin and despair since time out of mind. The Imperium's people are bound by laws, both religious and secular, and by common morality. Outmoded ideas of piety, modesty, and moderation still plague Imperial worlds. Not so in the Realms of Chaos, however, for in Chaos lies total freedom. Only in Chaos are individuals able, indeed encouraged, to indulge themselves and to peruse their deepest and most heartfelt desires.

Power

True power, like true glory, is fleeting and illusory in the Imperium of Man. A powerful man in the Imperium may lead armies, fleets, or planets, but he is still mortal. Indeed, most Imperial citizens die without ever realising their true potential. Those that embrace Chaos, however, soon come to understand the true nature of power. It is in Chaos that ultimate power is found, for what is an Imperial Guard Regiment when compared with the raw and terrible power of a daemon prince

and his host of daemonic warriors? Who can stand against the might of the savage Traitor Legions? There are many types of power—indeed, as many as there are those who seek it. Some seek power through knowledge, others seek power over men, and still others seek power over life and death itself. Whatever their desires, those who seek power find it eventually in Chaos.

Vengeance

The Imperium has much to answer for in the eyes of many in the galaxy. An organisation so monolithic and so powerful that it considers the callous destruction of entire worlds an acceptable sacrifice has more enemies than friends, and indeed has made many enemies of its own people. Those who seek vengeance against the Imperium for some slight or crime, real or imagined, find numerous powerful allies among the adherents of Chaos. While it is a truly desperate avenue through which to seek vengeance, most who do are already so consumed with rage that they would burn the entire galaxy down to get their justice. For them the jump to Chaos is a very short one indeed.

How to Run a Black Crusade Campaign

"Only the strongest shall arise to lead the Black Crusade."

—The Prophecy of Ruin

In a **Black Crusade** game, players take on the role of disparate groups of Chaos adherents. While they have their own personal goals and desires, these Heretics are bound together in a common cause—the utter obliteration of the Imperium of Man. In the eyes of the Adeptus Terra and the citizens of the Imperium, the players are debased and wicked, men and women who would sell their services, their bodies, indeed their immortal souls for the chance of a glory or power. A select few may grasp the glory necessary to receive elevation and honour by the Ruinous Powers, and ascend to daemonhood. A *very* few may claim the power necessary to become a true Champion of Chaos and lead a **Black Crusade**—a massive war against the Imperium and the forces of Order.

While running a game wherein the players are not bound to the laws of the Imperium of Man leaves a Game Master with a plethora of plot options, it also presents some unique challenges not usually inherent in other "heroic" style games. As adherents of Chaos, the Heretics are the enemy of human civilization. They are the gibbering madness from behind the stars that Priests of the Ecclesiarchy preach against from their pulpits. As such, every respectable door is closed to them, and every man's hand is turned against them. They are constantly hunted, hounded from world to world and sector to sector by agents of the Inquisition and the Adeptus Astartes. At the same time, however, from their point of the view the Imperium is the ultimate enemy of mankind, and they are the few who stand against it. Of course, some may see themselves as utterly black-hearted as well.

Of course, no one would choose a life like this if there weren't fantastic rewards inherent in it. Aside from worldly wealth, glory, and power, the ultimate reward for an ardent follower of Chaos is nothing less than ascension to the ranks of the most powerful of the daemonic host. It is this apotheosis, above nearly all else, that drives an adherent of Chaos in his burning quest to see the Imperium burn. Every heretic knows that once his work is done, there is a chance, however small, that he will take his rest at his Master's side as a Daemon Prince where he will abide forever in the glories of Chaos.

Styles of Play

Black Crusade has within it a number of unique styles of play that focus on different aspect of the Chaos adherent's struggle against the Imperium and give the Game Master some guidance in deciding what sort of game he'd like to run. None of the following styles are exclusive, and Game Masters are encouraged to mix them, or create new ones, as he sees fit.

Militants

Armed conflict is a constant in the Warhammer 40,000 universe. Ork Waaaghs! consume whole systems, the Imperial Navy clashes endlessly with the fleets of treacherous xenos, crafty Rogue Traders swindle and cheat their way across the void and leave behind them the dried husks of exploited worlds, and the Adeptus Astartes wages bloody campaigns on countless worlds. Parts of the galaxy have been embroiled in nothing but war for decades or even centuries, and countless guardsmen are sent to fight and die on front lines that haven't changed for generations.

This galaxy full of endless blood, war, and suffering is the backdrop against which **Black Crusade** is set. Many in the galaxy have taken up arms and pledged to wage war against the monolithic might of the Imperium of Man. The battlefields of the Imperium teem with the disenfranchised, the mad, and the opportunistic glory hound, all claiming greater or lesser degrees of allegiance to the Ruinous Powers. Some serve in private military concerns, in the armies of fallen or independent worlds, or as the officers and crew of ravening pirate vessels. Others fight from the shadows, organised in loosely affiliated cells of insurgents and rebels, sowing terror and discord through sabotage and violence. Still others are the ancient and terrible Traitor Legionnaires, the fallen Chaos Space Marines who long ago followed their Primarchs into the Eye of Terror. This is the world into which the Heretics have been born. A universe of eternal war can only be defeated by responding in kind.

Corruptors of Men

While the sowing of terror and despair through force of arms is certainly the most expedient way of pursuing the goals of Chaos, there are times when assassinations or wholesale slaughter simply will not serve. There are situations that call for subtlety and guile, when a silver tongue and a dubious promise will do more damage than a dozen Traitor Legionnaires. The Lords of the Imperium of Man have become as neglectful parents, and they have abdicated their responsibility to care for and nurture their peoples. The galaxy is a place where even the most basic requests for food, shelter, and protection

Keeping Black Crusade On Track

On its surface, running a **Black Crusade** game seems a daunting task indeed. None of the typical motivations found in other games are present in Black Crusade. Selflessness is scoffed at, and heroism is derided. Nothing is saved, only perverted or destroyed by the players—Heretics who represent mankind's greatest and most insidious threat, Chaos. How, then, is a Game Master expected to keep everything together, maintain a fun and challenging roleplaying experience for his players, and prevent the game from devolving into mindless and senseless violence and other degenerate acts?

While it is true that the Heretics in a **Black Crusade** game are by no means paragons of light and virtue, this fact should not give the character carte blanche to simply act like a mindless pack of psychopaths and remorseless killing machines. They may consider themselves untouchable by any kind of law or morality and might simply go about their work killing anyone whom they encounter with no thought to the repercussions, under the guise of "playing in character." Along with game mechanics such as Corruption and the built-in lifespan limits of **Black Crusade** campaigns, the Game Master also has a number of roleplaying options for keeping players on track.

Tempting Fate

In **Black Crusade**, it's a simple fact that the players are always at risk of being discovered by those who would do them harm. By nature, much of the work of Heretics must be done in the shadows, and requires a certain amount of restraint and subtlety. While violence and brutality are part of life in the Imperium of Man, and even more so in the service of Chaos, players should not turn to it needlessly. Those players who flaunt their nature and engage in random acts of violence quickly draw negative attention to themselves. Imperial forces such as the Inquisition and the Arbites are very dangerous. However, even within the Screaming Vortex, there is always the risk of picking a fight with someone far more powerful.

Survival of the Fittest

It is always prudent to remind the players that no matter how mighty they are in sorcery, Infamy, or brute force, there is always something bigger than they are. Powerful enemies lurk everywhere, and it behoves players to remember that when their reach begins to exceed their grasp. The Imperium is indeed a vast, crumbling state on the verge of collapse, but like an old and cunning animal, its age and general lethargy should never be mistaken for weakness. The Imperium still has its teeth; the Inquisition, the Adeptus Astartes, The Imperial Navy and Imperial Guard, the Sisters of Battle, and even the Rogue Traders.

Honour Among Thieves

While for a player it may be fun to imagine oneself as a hard-charging, self-sufficient, independent operator who doesn't need the help of others to do the bidding of his masters, the brutal truths of the Heretics' existence quickly proves this idea wrong. Everyone, including the most debased adherents of the Ruinous Powers, needs colleagues, allies, contacts, and servants to get their work done. Stabbing other players in the back, selling out contacts or employers, or disobeying the wishes of their daemonic masters is an excellent way to fail in accomplishing larger tasks. In **Black Crusade**, where powerful enemies and treacherous allies plague the characters, the Heretics must hang together, for if they do not, they shall surely hang separately.

are met by either an uncaring, byzantine bureaucracy or by the iron fist of the Imperial war machine. Is it little wonder then that even the most faithful Imperial servant or the most ardent and loyal Space Marine could be tempted by simply the promise of a little freedom, charity, or luxury. Everyone, as they say, has his price. No one understands this better than Heretics in the service of Chaos.

Seekers of Proscribed Knowledge

There are many who claim that power, true power, comes from knowledge. No one is more acutely aware of this than the Lords of Terra. They have carefully ingrained in their populace not only a blinding ignorance, but a fierce pride in that ignorance. Whole branches of mankind's knowledge have been cut off or shut away by the thought police of the Imperium because it was considered "blasphemous" or "too dangerous" for the common populace to possess. Countless schools of political and philosophical thought have been erased. The sciences have either been lost totally or their understanding so diminished that they are reduced to little more than technological dogma and require baroque rituals to perform even the simplest of tasks. Soon, if the Imperium has its way, mankind will fully regress to benighted barbarism as the last vestiges of his great intellectual legacy are wiped away by fearful, small-minded fools. Heretics in **Black Crusade** live in a galaxy in which a closed mind is a cherished thing, and those who would think for themselves are regularly betrayed to the authorities by their friends, families, and neighbours. They have cast off the chains of their ignorance, however. They have removed their blinders and have rejected the lies that they were fed for so long. Many seek proscribed knowledge in the dark places of the galaxy so that it may be disseminated, shared among the peoples of the Imperium in an effort to enlighten them, to lead them from their darkness. Others are interested in knowledge for its own sake, and are content to simply collect secrets and facts as others would collect art or Ecclesiarchcal trinkets. Still more seek out hidden and forgotten secrets to further their power.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Among the various important jobs a Game Master must undertake, one of the most demanding and potentially rewarding is creating and controlling the various individuals,

allies, and enemies with which his players interact. These Non-Player Characters (NPCs) form an important part of any game. NPCs can include the players' contacts, close allies, suppliers, and fellow cultists, as well as all belligerents and enemies of the players such as the Adeptus Arbites, the Imperial Guard, and even the dreaded and indomitable Adeptus Astartes. Enemies are fairly easy to create and run, as they are largely encountered in combat and the combat rules adequately cover their reactions, which are typically violent. Details on common enemies, their tactics, and their capabilities can be found in **Chapter XI: Adversaries**.

While the players will typically encounter more than their share of enemies during a game of **Black Crusade**, not everyone they meet will be in violent opposition to them. Some will be friends, some simply contacts or allies of convenience, and some will fall into that dangerous grey area between friend and foe. It is in situations like these that the Game Master must think more carefully about how the NPCs will react to the players, and how the PCs' actions can affect the NPC's reactions either positively or negatively. For more information on NPC Dispositions and how the players can influence the reactions of NPCs, see Interaction on page 276.

Guidelines for Black Crusade NPCs

As is the case with players, every NPC is an individual and can and should be run with his own unique personality and motivations. That being said, there are some basic guidelines that the GM should bear in mind when utilising NPCs. These guidelines are intended to assist the GM in situations where he is unsure what an NPC would do or how he would react to the actions of the players.

NPC Motivations

The most important thing a Game Master can know about an NPC is what motivates that NPC. A captive Imperial Guard commander being held and tortured for information will react quite differently than a corrupt member of the Ecclesiarchy who is feeding the players information regarding Imperial Guard movements in exchange for daemonic favour. For the most part, an NPC's motivations need not be terribly complicated. They typically centre around a single selfish (or selfless) goal, such as a desire for wealth and glory or duty to the God-Emperor. What is important in this case is that the NPC's motivation gives the GM a clear guide for how the NPC will react in a number of situations.

Coming to a Bloody End

Just as in real life, very few people in the 41st millennium have a death wish. This instinct for self preservation means that most foes will flee from conflict when things aren't going their way (especially those without a great deal of worldly or combat experience). Others will surrender, throwing themselves on the mercy of the players rather than face certain annihilation. Even foes who have a reputation for fighting to the death, such as the tenacious and deadly Adeptus Astartes or the alien Tyranids, may surrender or retreat in the face of overwhelming force, especially if that force is backed up by a host of daemons.

Don't Steal the PC's Thunder

It is important to remember that the players are the stars of the story, not the NPCs. Not that NPCs can't play very important roles in the story as supporting characters or occasional saviours stepping in to save the day and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Indeed, knowing that there is a powerful benefactor that will sometimes render aid and succour can be a comfort to most players. In general, it is imperative that the responsibility for the success or failure of any given undertaking rests squarely on the shoulders of the PCs. A Game Master's over reliance on powerful and omnipotent NPCs who hog the spotlight, get all the action, and constantly step in to save the day can lead quickly either to resentment on the PCs who feel they are being cheated out of their playing experience, or to the players relying to heavily on the NPCs to rescue them when the going gets tough. Players should feel that their achievements are the result of their own actions and force of will, and that the glory that they win in the service of Chaos is theirs alone.

Naming NPCs

Having a list of generic names on hand can be of great help to a GM during a game session. Any game world is populated with countless secondary and lesser NPCs with which players may come in contact. Having a name for, say, a shopkeeper of middling importance or the commander of the local constabulary on hand is yet another way for the GM to keep the interest of his players and get them more fully immersed in the story.



Rewards

"My reward exists nowhere on this mortal plane. Instead, my everlasting reward lies in the warp."

—Talien Meers, Traitor Legionnaire.

Heretics toil away in the service of Chaos for a number of reasons. Indeed, the motivations of the fallen are as varied as the Heretics themselves. Like any other individual, however, Heretics are motivated by both corporeal and spiritual rewards. Aside from more mundane rewards like money, power, prestige, and glory, most Heretics are working toward an ultimate goal, and it is through their service to the Ruinous Powers that they seek to fulfil their wishes. Rewards are a way for Game Masters to give their players something tangible for their achievements while they work toward whatever epic destiny they've chosen. There are a number of different kinds of rewards that a player can receive through game play, including such things as Experience Points, Infamy, and Corruption.

Experience Points

The most basic type of reward in **Black Crusade** is Experience Points (xp). Experience Points are a measure of a character's personal power, even more so than Corruption or Infamy. Players gain xp through their actions during game sessions, and spend them to buy new Skills and Talents, as well as Advances. The more experienced a character is, the more xp he possesses, and the more xp he possesses the better he is at confronting and overcoming challenges within the game. Succeeding at challenges such as besting a foe in combat, solving a complex problem, or dominating a social situation through sheer charisma is all dependant on the careful spending of xp. Due to the fact that Experience Points relate directly to a character's power, how much xp and how often the Game Master doles it out determines how quickly his characters rise in power.

There are two primary ways for the Game Master to award Experience Points to his players: the Abstract Method and the Detailed Method.

Abstract Method

The Abstract Method is the easiest method of awarding xp, and therefore highly recommended for beginning Game Masters or those new to the setting. This method relies simply on the amount of time spent gaming and ensures a steady and smooth rise in power for the characters. For each game session, the Game Master should award each player 500 xp as a base, plus small bonuses for any exceptional roleplaying. This method assumes a game session lasts roughly 4 hours. For longer or shorter sessions, the GM can adjust the xp awards accordingly.

Detailed Method

A more complex method of awarding Experience Points is also available for those GMs who prefer a more hands-on and detail oriented approach to player awards. In the Detailed Method, each reward is broken down on a case-by-case basis, and players gain Experience Points for completing specific tasks.

Table 8-1: Encounter Difficulty

Difficulty	XP Award
Easy	50
Routine	70
Ordinary	100
Average	130
Challenging	170
Hard	200
Very Hard	250

For this method to work however, the GM needs to assign a value to each Encounter. For example, a gaming session may involve infiltrating a docked Imperial Navy frigate, making contact with the lower-decks death cult, deposing the ship's officers, and absconding with the ship. In this case, each of these Encounters would be worth a pre-determined amount of Experience Points that would be awarded once the players had successfully completed the Encounter.

Table 8–1: Encounter Difficulty gives examples of general Encounter difficulties and their value in Experience Points. To work out the difficulty of an Encounter, consider how much it taxes the players' resources, how dangerous the Encounter is, and what it costs in time and equipment.

When using the Detailed Method, it is important to remember to award Experience Points only for meaningful Encounters and obstacles. Relatively simple obstacles should award very little in the way of Experience Points, and trivial Encounters, such as a simple bit of haggling with a merchant, should award none at all. Giving Experience Points too willingly, or for trivial matters, cheapens the gaming experience and tempts players to embark on the wholesale slaughter of entire worlds simply for the "experience." Likewise, as the players gain power, some challenges will become so easily overcome that they will be worth little to no Experience Points.

Roleplaying Awards

Game Masters may also offer Experience Points to players for exceptional roleplaying. The amount of these awards is left up to the Game Master's discretion, and typically range from between 100 and 500 xp. The GM should be careful, however, only to give out those awards when he feels that a player is particularly deserving and usually only when the player has done something extraordinary, such as taking an action that puts his character in mortal danger because it is "what his character would do."

Infamy

Infamy, like Experience Points, is a measure of how powerful a Heretic is. It reflects how successful he has been in doing the work of the Ruinous Powers, how well known, or infamous, he is throughout the Imperium, and how easily he is able to gain the favour of the Chaos Gods and obtain aid and resources from other adherents of Chaos. Infamy can and should be doled out by the Game Master for the completion of Compacts and for any other work done in the service of Chaos, or it can be purchased with Experience Points when a character gains additional experience. More information on the specifics of Infamy can be found in **Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy**.

An Epic Destiny

While the ultimate goal of some Heretics is simply to ascend to daemonhood and take their rightful place in the pantheon of Chaos, there are those that have deeper, more ambitious desires. For most, the accumulation of Infamy and the possibility of Apotheosis, as discussed in **Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy**, are merely a means to an end. They are simply among the many steps taken to further their ultimate goal of leading a Black Crusade against the forces of the Imperium. A Black Crusade is a rare and frightful occurrence, a massive, sector-spanning campaign brought about when a particularly charismatic or powerful leader is able to unite the squabbling forces of Chaos and align them toward a common goal. They can blot out the stars themselves, killing, devouring, or corrupting everything they touch.

It takes a takes a group of truly powerful individuals to lead a Black Crusade. Heretics who would do so must put aside their differences and focus on the larger goal of uniting the disparate Chaos forces in the Screaming Vortex. They must be meticulous in their plotting and scheming. They must choose their companions and minions well. They must take the long view, plan for the worst, and wring every bit of monetary, military, otherworldly, or political gain from each Encounter. Only through pooling their resources and working together can a group of Heretics hope to gain enough Infamy, influence, and power to focus the energies of the Chaos adherents in the Vortex.

Motivations

If a character has chosen to pursue the goal of leading a Black Crusade, that character should choose from one of the following motivations to help flesh out his ideas. The following are a few more common motivations that might drive the average Heretic, but they are in no way an exhaustive list. If players don't find anything that appeals to them in the following list, they should be encouraged to create their own Motivation with the help of the Game Master. Ultimately, Motivations have no mechanical benefits within the game. Instead, they are roleplaying aids intended to give a player a deeper understanding of his character's goals and motivations, and to give the Game Master plot hooks tailored to an individual character.

Crusader

The Heretic seeks only to fight, and lead men into glorious battle. Through might and force of will, the player's ultimate goal is to become a powerful warlord, organise the disparate elements of Chaos in the Screaming Vortex under his banner, and to use this might to wage war on the Imperium by means of a Black Crusade. At his command will be countless willing soldiers and ranks upon ranks of daemons and twisted creatures of the warp. His name will be spoken in hushed tones throughout the Imperium, held in respect by those who adhere to Chaos and in fear by his enemies.

Beloved Leader

The Heretic who chooses Beloved Leader as his Epic Destiny seeks to carve his own realm out of the Imperium, to lord over whole vast stretches of space, and to be the ultimate ruler of billions of souls. It matters little how he goes about this, whether through military might or politics or sorcery or sheer duplicity, all that matters is that he is the unquestioned lord and master of his domain. A Black Crusade could be led by such an individual—though he may not be a military mastermind, he may certainly command armies none the less.

Complete Knowledge

Many who follow Chaos obsessively scour the galaxy for all manner of secret, lost, or proscribed knowledge. Some treat this knowledge as a commodity, as knowledge for its own sake. To others it is too precious, and must be hoarded and kept secret. The Heretic who chooses Complete Knowledge as his Epic Destiny may seem unlikely to lead a Black Crusade, but knowledge is power in the galaxy and thus is guarded more securely than mere riches. A Black Crusade could issue forth with such a seeker at its head (or perhaps safely behind a useful and disposable "leader") in order to conquer and gain such information.

Arcane Powerhouse

Often the ultimate goal of Psykers and Sorcerers is to become not simply a daemon, but the living embodiment of psychic or sorcerous power. They seek to become a physical conduit for warp energies, unlock secrets, and unearth teachings thought lost long ago. To become an Arcane Powerhouse is to become a being of pure psychic or sorcerous energy, a creature every bit as fundamentally alien and blasphemous as any daemon or xenos. Such an individual could easily lead a Black Crusade, for lesser beings would flock to his banner, certain that this individual was only one small step away from becoming a god.

I Am Become Legend

The Heretic seeks to become nothing less than a legend throughout the galaxy. Perhaps he desires that his enemies forever curse his name or that his actions and exploits are cemented in the mass consciousness of the galaxy and spoken of long after he is gone. Maybe he wishes to become a nightmare, a name to strike fear into the hearts of mortal men and a fabled bogey-man to cow unruly children. Whatever the case, the Heretic will not rest until his name is on the lips, or in the nightmares, of every soul in the Imperium. Those who lead the Black Crusades certainly fall into this category, as such a terror is the Imperium's most horrible nightmare.

The Final Fate

Mechanically, a Heretic's career is limited by the amount of Corruption Points he accumulates. Corruption Points are discussed in more detail in **Chapter IX**. However, it is important to note that a Heretic starts with 0 Corruption Points (though he may generate some during character creation). The chances for decreasing a Heretic's Corruption are few to none, and in general his Corruption Point total only increases. Once he accumulates 100 Corruption Points, his character retires. How the character retires is up to the amount of Infamy he's

accumulated during his career. If he gains a certain amount of Infamy, the Heretic's end is a glorious apotheosis. If he has not, it is ignoble spawndom.

In general, there are four fates that await each character. The three first and most likely fates are as follows:

- **Death:** The universe is a dangerous place, and many would-be Disciples of the Dark Gods will die in the attempt. If the character dies and this death reduces his Infamy total to 0 or lower (see page 307), he dies permanently. The player must begin a new character.
- **Spawndom:** If the character gains 100 Corruption Points before gaining the required total of Infamy, he is too infused with the Gifts and attentions of the Gods, and his flesh succumbs to their malign influence. His body mutates into something horrible and bestial, a Chaos Spawn. A Chaos Spawn is a disgusting, mindless mass of oozing flesh, mouths, tentacles, and eyes. In essence, the character is now dead (certainly he is unplayable). The player must begin a new character.
- **Apotheosis:** If the character does reach the required amount of Infamy by the time he obtains 100 Corruption Points, then his fame and glory have become so great that the Gods favour him with the ultimate reward. He becomes a Daemon Prince, an immortal daemonic dweller of the Realms of Chaos. Although he still exists, he is now more than mortal, with whims and goals far different from those within his fleshy, mortal form. Though some groups may want to continue playing their character as a daemon prince (and if the GM likes, he can certainly go down this path), in the standard game his character is now unplayable. The player should start a new character.

Some players might wonder if all the NPCs in **Black Crusade** (indeed, in the Warhammer 40,000 universe) are on this same track, and all can look forward to the same fates. In short, yes. Eventually one of these three fates comes to all, Disciples of the Dark Gods and Traitor Legionaries alike. However, most minor characters in **Black Crusade** continue their minor lives without attracting too many attentions from the Ruinous Powers, and without earning Infamy amongst their peers. Eventually they die, unknown and unnoticed. Other famous characters, such as Abaddon the Despoiler and Huron Blackheart of the Red Corsairs, are more fixtures in the setting than NPCs. Though they will indeed suffer some final fate, that is beyond the scope of this game.

This is different for the Player Characters, however. As the heroes (or villains, depending on your point of view) in **Black Crusade**, their path is vastly accelerated. That is why their characters may meet their final fate within the course of a few short campaigns.

INFAMY GOALS

The amount of Infamy a character must obtain before they reach their Corruption Point threshold is set by the GM. Before a campaign begins, a GM should set the threshold of Infamy he wants his players to reach. This is a set amount of Infamy they must earn before their characters max out on Corruption.

The threshold set determines how easy it will be for the characters to gain Apotheosis, instead of death or spawndom. In effect, this is setting the game's Difficulty level. Though the GM can select any amount of Infamy he likes, here are some suggestions for levels.

- 75 Infamy or higher: This is a fairly easy threshold for most characters to reach, and easy to maintain as well. Players should have little difficulty Ascending their characters to Apotheosis.
- 90 Infamy or higher: This is a more difficult threshold for characters to reach, and also more difficult to maintain once there. Characters are just as likely to fail and become Spawn as they are to reach Apotheosis.
- 100 Infamy or higher: This is a difficult threshold to reach. Just as importantly, this is a difficult threshold to maintain, as characters may lose Infamy as easily as they gain it. Only the strongest will reach Apotheosis in this game.

ULTIMATE DESTINY: LEAD A BLACK CRUSADE

One of the ultimate goals in **Black Crusade** is to amass the power and the authority to lead a Black Crusade, a massive army of Chaos that swarms through the Imperium of Man, destroying and pillaging all in its path. However, to lead a Black Crusade requires a singular force of will, and only the very strongest and most infamous characters can succeed.

In game terms, if a character earns 140 Infamy before reaching 100 Corruption Points, he had obtained the level of Infamy equalled only by the very greatest champions of the Ruinous Powers. He has the authority, the renown, and the reputation to forge a mighty army and lead a Black Crusade. At this point, the endgame of the campaign begins (see "The Endgame" sidebar).



The Endgame

Accumulating Infamy, rallying the forces of Chaos, and leading an actual crusade can be considered the endgame scenario of a **Black Crusade** game. By the time players have embarked on their Crusade, they will have either achieved Apotheosis or gathered together the Chaos forces within the Screaming Vortex under their banner (or both). They will have become, for all intents and purposes, living demi-gods with the full might of the Ruinous Powers at their beck and call. If a Black Crusade game reaches this point, the Game Master has essentially two choices as to how to proceed. One is to end the game on this note with the knowledge that the players have done their utmost to bring death and ruin to the hated Imperium. At this point, the game can end with the narrative account of the players' characters leading a mighty Black Crusade into the Imperium's heart, causing mayhem, destruction, and possibly even carving their own empire into what once was Imperial space. At this point, the game ends, and the group can begin a new Black Crusade game—perhaps switching GM duties so that the previous GM can have a go as part of the group, and one of the players can try their hand at running the game.

The second, and perhaps even more rewarding outcome, is to play out the entirety of the Crusade, perhaps having the players either stay with their characters or make new characters who are taking part in this new Crusade under the command of their old, retired characters. This could span weeks, months, or even years of real time and lead to countless epic adventures and Imperium-shattering consequences.

Running a Black Crusade

Of these, the most ambitious option is to run the Black Crusade with the existing characters. Such a goal is possible, though it requires a great deal of work on the part of the players and the GM.

The most important point to note is the transition between a relatively small warband consisting of the Heretics and a few notable NPCs, and a game in which the Heretics are directing entire armies and navies. At this scale, attempting to run combats that cover the actions of each individual becomes impossible. Instead, the GM should strive to approach combat narratively, describing the flow of action generally without specifically rolling for each soldier. In the midst of massive battles, he can have the Heretics fight specific battles (or combat actions within larger battles) that may have a critical outcome on the conflict around them. For example, the Heretics could be sent to destroy an enemy Titan, storm the opponent's command centre, or even engage the enemy general in an epic duel of honour.

The GM can also have the Heretics make Skill and Characteristic Tests which have an abstract effect on the combat as a whole. A series of successful Command Tests may determine whether a larger battle is won or lost, while a Common Lore (War) Test may allow an entire armoured column to flank an enemy position. A similar approach can be taken with naval conflicts.

Needless to say, earning this Infamy does not automatically grant a character a Black Crusade. Such an odyssey should never be simply a matter of reaching a threshold. The 140 Threshold simply provides a tangible mechanical goal to obtain. Once this goal is obtained, the GM can either end the game with an epic narrative or he can have the players play out the raising, organising and mustering of the Black Crusade (see "The Endgame" sidebar).

It is likely only one Heretic in an entire group will obtain the pre-requisite Infamy to lead a Black Crusade. However, it is possible that two or more of the Heretics may cross the threshold (or, if the game continues, that more of the group crosses the threshold in the course of the events). In this case, what happens next is up to the players. Two equally infamous Heretics working together could likely organise and lead and even more powerful Black Crusade than one could working alone. However, whether or not the Heretics can stand working together (each knows that they could be the sole leader of the Crusade if their erstwhile ally was simply removed), is up to the players. It's just as likely that the last couple of sessions are taken up by intrigues and plots within the warband, or even an orgy of figurative or literal backstabbing. The Heretics may even go their separate ways, each racing the others to rally as many forces as they can to their banner. Perhaps the Black Crusade begins with each leading his armies against the others, before the winner marches out to engage the Imperium.

Compacts

"A compact is only as good as the names that are signed to it."

– Orrin Peth, Mercenary.

When dealing with fiercely independent agents such as those portrayed in **Black Crusade**, it can sometimes be difficult for a group of player characters to reach consensus on a course of action. Therefore, in **Black Crusade** when the player characters assemble to form a group, one of the processes by which the group forms a concensus and a common plot for their game is the Compact. Compacts are game aids, not necessarily actual "in-game" documents, created by the GM and the players to guide and shape the game they are planning.

As a game mechanic, Compacts serve dual roles, both vitally important to a **Black Crusade** game. First, they provide a framework within which the players can undertake to pursue their final destinies. Second, they provide clear goals and a defined end point, giving every **Black Crusade** game convenient start, middle, and end points that allow a Game Master to suspend or end a game at appropriate times. Compacts are drawn up for everything from a simple assassination to the full scale invasion and corruption of a large Imperial-held star cluster, and the Game Master can string together as many as he sees fit to serve the needs of his story.

Compacts and Scope

Depending on the nature of the Primary Objective, the Compact falls into one of the following Scopes. Each Scope dictates how many Secondary Objectives need to be met to fulfil the Primary Objective, and spells out the Infamy rewards.

- Undertaking: The smallest Scope, **an Undertaking requires 4 to 6 Secondary Objectives, can take as little as a few weeks up to a few months, and grants 3 Infamy for completion**. Undertakings are typically something relatively straight forward, such as the assassination of a high-ranking military officer or the corruption of a hive overseer.
- Operation: Operations are the second largest Scope, and typically the most common. **They require 6-8 Secondary Objectives for completion of the Primary Objective, require months of planning and work to complete, and grant 6 Infamy for completion**. Operations can be quite complex, and can include destroying an asteroid mining operation that supplies a major Imperial World or sabotaging or stealing a particular warship from the Imperial Navy.
- Enterprise: Enterprises are usually grand, sweeping schemes that can take years to come to fruition. They are incredibly complex, requiring large amounts of skill, mettle, and resources to complete. **They require 8 to 12 Secondary Objectives to complete, and grant 12 Infamy upon completion**. Enterprises can include such things as corrupting a Sector Lord or invading a star cluster to gather more worlds and slaves for a Daemon Prince.

COMPACTS OVERVIEW

Compacts are drawn up in the following three broad steps.

Preparing a Compact

The initial step in creating a Compact typically happens in the downtime before actual play begins and represents the Heretics coming together for some nefarious purpose. It covers all the various minutiae that goes into planning a major endeavour such as choosing a leader, mustering resources, and making sure things will go as smoothly as possible once the action begins. The following are the steps to draw up a Compact.

Convene: One of the PCs or an NPC (the GM) will make a call to Convene for the purposes of a new Compact. Once assembled, the group must choose the Scope of the Compact, define the Primary and Secondary objectives, and elect the Anointed.

Choose the Anointed: At the beginning of the planning stages, each group of Heretics must choose, in their own way, one of their number to lead the group in the execution of the Compact. There are a number of ways the Anointed can be chosen, but it is ultimately up to the players. The Anointed can be either the character who convened the PCs or someone whose unique talents and abilities make him well suited to be the leader or primary mover of the Compact, and his responsibilities include making command decisions and making sure the Compact stays on track.

Muster Resources: With his own contacts and specialities, each PC will bring something different to the table. When the group musters resources, they essentially pledge some sort of resource (materiel, knowledge, contacts, etc.) to the Compact.

Dedicate the Compact: The PCs have the option of dedicating a Compact to either Chaos as a whole or one of the specific Chaos Gods. While not required, doing so will bring some sort of bonus to the Compact, but always with some sort of complication, stipulation, or penalty for failure.

Executing a Compact

Once the planning has been done, the Compact is Executed and gameplay begins. Compacts have a Primary Objective and a number of Secondary and Tertiary Objectives that are set by the players during the planning stages. Once each Objective is met, then the Compact is complete. Objectives are successful when the Game Master says so.

Primary Objective: This is the main thrust of the Compact, and can be something as simple as an assassination or the theft of an artefact up to the complete corruption of an entire star system. The Primary Objective is largely an end result, and is realised by completing a number of Secondary Objectives.

Secondary Objectives: The Compact will state a number of Secondary Objectives that will need to be completed for the group to succeed at the Primary Objective. Each Secondary Objective should be designed in such a way as to let each player have a hand in the completion of the Compact. For Example: The Primary Objective is to destabilise an Imperial Planet and turn it to Chaos. The Secondary Objectives could be Sabotage the Infrastructure (Hereteks), Foment Political Upheaval (Fallen Imperial Officials), Spread Terror through attacks/riots/invasions (Traitor Legionnaires/Fallen Imperial Officials).

Personal or Tertiary Objectives: Each player will choose a Tertiary or Personal Objective that is related to the completion of the Primary Objective and known only to themselves and the GM. This may or may not conflict with those of other players, and sets the stage for inter-party conflict and role-playing opportunities.

Complications: Complications reflect the fickle nature of Chaos. Each Compact will have one Complication that can either be chosen by the GM or determined randomly. Typical Complications include treachery, interference, and bad intelligence.

Rewards

When all Objectives have been met and the Compact is completed, the Heretics reap the fruits of their dark labours. Rewards for completing Compacts come in three forms; Experience Points, Infamy, and Secondary Rewards. No matter what their nature, all rewards are based on the success of the Compact, the execution of all Secondary and any Personal Objectives, and any other outstanding efforts on the part of individual Heretics or the group as a whole.

PREPARING A COMPACT

A fair amount of hard work goes into the preparation of a Compact. Along with the typical gathering of resources and extensive planning sessions, there is also the work of wrangling a disparate band of strong-willed Heretics and

getting them to agree on one course of action. The following section lays out the guidelines for building Compacts, and give both the GM and the Heretics the tools that they need to make truly spectacular and engrossing adventures.

CALLING TO CONVENE

Once the decision has been made to draw up a Compact, the first step is to convene the involved parties. A meeting to create a Compact can be the beginning of a new **Black Crusade** campaign, or could happen during an existing game at the behest of one of the Heretics or an NPC. Once the meeting has been called and the parties are gathered, the first order of business is for the group to choose the Scope of the Compact and set the Primary and Secondary Objectives.

The Scope of a Compact (see page 270) is a measure of the required outlay in time, resources, and effort for the it to be executed successfully. There are three Scopes: Undertakings, Operations, and Enterprises, and each comes with its own unique challenges and requirements for completion. The Scope of a Compact is largely dictated by the nature of its Primary Objective. The Primary Objective is the ultimate goal to which all the signatories of the Compact are working, and contains within it a number of secondary objectives that need to be met to complete the Compact. There are also Personal or Tertiary Objectives chosen by each Heretic, which are discussed further in the section on Executing the Compact.

CHOOSING THE ANOINTED

Once the Scope and Primary Objective has been established, the Heretics must then elect the Anointed. The Anointed is typically the Heretic who called to convene, but often times is another character whose unique talents, knowledge, and abilities make them more suited to be the leader for the Compact. Either way, the Anointed is the primary mover on the Compact, and is responsible for not only a large portion of the planning that goes into it, but also for negotiating compromises among the Heretics and breaking deadlocks in the event that no decisions can be made due to indecision or disagreement.

Choosing someone to lead them and be responsible for their success or failure should be left up to the Heretics. Typically, the role of Anointed is given to the player who conceived the Compact in the first place. There are times, however, when another PC is more appropriate for the role of Anointed, or the Compact was conceived by the GM. This is typically the case when the Compact is proposed by a player who doesn't possess the skills or experience needed to successfully complete the endeavour.

Alternately, the Anointed could be an NPC, perhaps a contact of the Heretics' or a mysterious stranger hiring them for some particularly dastardly deed. While this takes away a fair amount of the Heretics' freedom to plan their own endeavours, it also absolves them of a majority of the responsibility for the success or failure of the Compact. When an NPC is the Anointed, the players are only answerable to the NPC, who is generally answerable to a greater power, whereas when a PC is the Anointed, it is the Heretics themselves who are on the hook.

No matter where the Anointed comes from, it is important to remember—and it should be clearly stated by the Game Master—that he is not a tyrant, nor does he get to order the other players around and have them do his bidding with no questions asked. In this role he is more a facilitator. He brings the Heretics together and offers them a chance for some wealth and glory, and acts as a mediary and as the face of the group when dealing with major contacts, employers, or masters.

Example

The meeting to draw up the Compact was called by one of the PCs, a corrupt official of the Administratum. The Compact itself calls for the invasion and destruction of a poorly guarded Imperial world, a task more suited to someone used to martial ways. One of the PCs is a Traitor Legionnaire, and is chosen as the Anointed due to his military and war-making abilities.

MUSTERING RESOURCES

Even the simplest and smallest of Compacts requires resources and effort to bring it to completion. As part of his individual responsibilities toward the completion of the Compact, each signatory must dedicate some resource to the endeavour as a whole. What the resource consists of is left up to the Heretics, and can include such things as contacts, operating capital, weapons, unique and useful training or knowledge, allies who owe them, or anything else they believe will help their cause.

Duties of the Anointed

The role of Anointed is one that brings great power but also a fair amount of worry and responsibility to the Heretic who has been chosen for it. He is the leader of the group in all matters regarding the execution of the current Compact, and is largely answerable for its success or failure. In his capacity as the leader and responsible party, the Anointed has the following responsibilities related to the Compact:

- If at any point the Heretics are at loggerheads as to the best course of action, it falls to the Anointed to make the final decision. When deciding on a course of action, he should carefully weigh input from all the characters, as well as the current circumstances and any other information that the GM sees fit to provide. As stated earlier, it is important to remember that the Anointed isn't there to order the other players around; instead he is there to make sure that the Compact is executed successfully at all costs.
- Responsibility for successful completion of the Compact and the majority of contact with any and all superiors, employers, major allies, and Daemons falls squarely on the shoulders of the Anointed. It is up to him to keep any important NPCs apprised of the ongoing situation regarding the Compact, and he acts as the face of the group when it comes to negotiating and making new contacts within the auspices of the Compact.

Anything needed for the execution of the Compact that cannot or will not be provided by the signatories is the responsibility of the Anointed. Once a resource is pledged to the Compact, the Heretic who promised it is under strict obligation to deliver on his promise. Failure to provide the promised resource or a sufficient replacement results in the individual in question suffering –1 Infamy and gaining a general reputation among one's peers and superiors as unreliable.

DEDICATION TO THE GODS

Once the Objectives have been settled on, the Anointed elected, the resources gathered, and the Compact drawn up, the final step before the Heretics embark on their work is to dedicate the whole endeavour to the Ruinous Powers. Depending on the Scope of the Compact, Heretics can choose to dedicate the whole to one or more of the Chaos Gods or to nothing at all. Dedicating a Compact to the Ruinous Powers grants a Compact bonuses to the Infamy gained for completion. Of course, as with anything dealing with Chaos, the penalties for failure are swift and harsh.

In addition to the specific bonuses listed below, a Dedicated Compact grants an additional +1d5 Infamy on successful completion, plus +1d5 Corruption Points to each individual involved, whether the Compact succeeds or fails. However, failing a Dedicated Compact means each individual involved loses 1d5 Infamy instead. He still gains the +1d5 Corruption Points, but this is seen as gaining Corruption through a Failing (see page 290).

Blood for the Blood God

A Compact with marked martial Objectives can be dedicated to Khorne, and reap the favour of the Lord of Blood. All Heretics involved in a Compact dedicated to Khorne enjoy a temporary +5 bonus to either their Ballistic Skill or their Weapon Skill for the duration of the Compact.

Plague and Death

Any Compact drawn up to corrupt the pure, spread disease, or destroy something beautiful and beloved will greatly please Papa Nurgle. All who take part in executing a Compact dedicated to The Lord of Plagues enjoy a temporary +5 to their Toughness for the duration of the Compact.

Sins of the Flesh

Slaanesh is the ultimate hedonist, and enjoys all pleasures great and small. Any Compact dedicated to She Who Thirsts temporarily grants each Heretic involved in the Compact temporarily gain a +5 bonus to his Fellowship for the duration of the Compact.

Blasphemous Conspiracy

Tzeentch watches over those Heretics who fashion themselves as agents of change, and will sanctify any acts that deal with conspiracy, revolution, social upheaval, forced mutation, or sorcery. Any Compact dedicated to the Lord of Change grants a temporary +5 to either the Intelligence or Willpower Bonus of all Heretics involved for the duration of the Compact.

Execution of a Compact

Once all the fine details have been worked out, each Heretic has made his mark on the document and promised his support, and the entire endeavour has been dedicated to the Ruinous powers, the time comes to execute the Compact. The execution of a Compact is the meat of a **Black Crusade** game, for it is in carrying out the Compact and pursuing the Secondary Objectives that the actual roleplaying takes place. Every action that the players take is influenced not only by the agreements detailed in the Compact, but by their ever shifting allegiances to one another and to the Ruinous Powers.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives are the heart of a Compact, and give the document its shape and Scope. There is the Primary Objective which simply states the ultimate goal of the Compact, the Secondary Objectives which are steps that must be completed to fulfil the Primary Objective, and Personal or Tertiary Objectives that are private goals of each Heretic that, while related to the Primary Objective, may be at cross purposes with the goals of the other Heretics in the group and of the group at large.

Primary Objectives

No matter its Scope, every Compact is based around a single Primary Objective. The Primary Objective is the thrust of the entire document, and every action taken under the auspices of completing a Compact works to fulfil its ultimate goal. While it is the foundation of the Compact, the Primary Objective is more a mission statement or ultimate goal rather than something worked toward directly. Only in the completion of the numerous Secondary Objectives can the Primary Objective be completed and the Compact finished.

Secondary Objectives

Each Compact states a number of Secondary Objectives that need to be completed for the group to accomplish the Primary Objective. Each Secondary Objective should be designed in such a way as to let each player have a hand in the completion of the Compact. For Example: The Primary Objective is to destabilise an Imperial Planet and turn it to Chaos. The Secondary Objectives could be sabotage the planet's infrastructure (Hereteks), foment political upheaval (Apostates), sow terror through attacks/riots/invasions (Traitor Legionnaires/Renegades), and enlist the aid of any cults on the planet (Sorcerers and Psykers). This gives each Heretic in the group many possibilities for strong roleplaying as he is required to bring his knowledge and talents to bear to complete the Objective and allows him to have a direct hand in the completion of the Compact. It also gives him not only a chance to shine in a "starring role" in the story, but also a deeper investment in the story and the fate of the group as a whole.

Aside from the intrinsic value in completing the Primary Objective, the completion of Secondary Objectives also carries its own reward. **Completing a Secondary Objective**

gives each Heretic involved in the Compact +2 Infamy, on top of any more physical rewards gained during game play, the rewards from Personal and Tertiary Objectives, and the final reward from the Primary Objective.

Personal and Tertiary Objectives

Not every Heretic will be dedicated to the completion of the Compact on the same level. While successful execution of a Compact is vitally important to both the Heretics' survival and their ascension through Chaos, they still have their own personal motivations and loyalties that are often at odds with those of their colleagues. Once the Secondary Objectives are fleshed out, each player then chooses a Tertiary or Personal Objective that is related to the completion of the Primary Objective and known only to themselves and the GM. This may or may not conflict with those of other players, and sets the stage for inter-party conflict and strong role-playing opportunities.

Using the earlier example of a Compact based around the destabilisation of an Imperial Planet, one of the Secondary Objectives could be removing the planetary governor as a threat to the endeavour. While it is agreed that the governor must be neutralised, the Heretics may have differing ideas as to how this should be accomplished. Some believe he should be killed, others believe he should be corrupted and made a puppet, and no matter what the actual wording of the Secondary Objective says, the Heretics will each go about the task in their own way, possibly leading to much misunderstanding and inter-party tension.

Another example of how to use Personal Objectives is through the institution of what are essentially "side missions" called Tertiary Goals during game play. Situations like these can either be sketched out during the planning stages of the Compact, or they can come to the fore during the natural course of the game. This again allows for the characters to pursue their own goals which may or may not be in alignment with those of the Compact or the rest of the party.

No matter what their nature, Personal and Tertiary goals carry with them the potential for both great reward and crippling punishment. **The completion of a Tertiary or Personal goal nets the Heretic an additional 1d5 Infamy on top of all other rewards gained through the execution of the Compact.**

COMPLICATIONS

No plan, no matter how well crafted, is ever brought to completion as it was envisioned at the outset. This is doubly true for Compacts, which rely not only on fallible individuals but also on the fickle nature of Chaos for their completion. Unbeknownst to the players, the Game Master should pick one of the following Complications to occur at some point during execution of the Heretic's Compact. Alternately, if nothing here suits the Game Master, he should feel free to concoct his own complications as fits his campaign.

The Wrong Foot

Sometimes luck just simply isn't with the Heretics, and a Compact is over nearly before it begins. When a Compact starts out on the wrong foot, some misfortune has struck the Heretics even before they begin the bulk of their work. This complication means that one of the Secondary Objectives of the Compact automatically fails, and the Heretics will need to re-evaluate their plans and see how best to go forward. Perhaps a shipment of food that was slated to be tainted with disease was delivered early, or the asteroid mining operation targeted for destruction is being visited by a powerful Rogue Trader flotilla. Whatever the case may be, the Heretics are now left with a serious problem that could jeopardise the outcome of the Compact.

Cross Purposes

The adherents of Chaos aren't a monolithic, well-organised operation like the Adeptus Terra or the Imperial Navy. There is only a rough hierarchy, and certainly no coherent command structure. Instead, the agents of Chaos operate on their own or in small cells at the behest of numerous employers, masters, and Daemon Princes. Over the course of the game, it comes to the players' attention that there is another group of NPC Heretics working in the area on a Compact similar to their own. This can either mean allies (or patsies) for the PCs or rivals that need to be eliminated before their operation complicates the players'.

Logistical Nightmare

In Chaos nothing is certain, least of all regular deliveries of men and materiel. At some point during game play, the Heretics' logistical chain collapses, and some important resource fails to arrive in time, if at all. This could mean something as simple as a provided weapon for an assassination was not left in the proper drop area, or that a ship full of renegades gets lost in the warp and doesn't arrive in time for a planetary invasion. A Logistical Nightmare provides endless complications for the players, especially if the item or resource that is lost or doesn't arrive in time is something that an individual Heretic pledged to provide during the planning of the Compact.

Bad Intelligence

At some point during the planning stages of the Compact, the Heretics come into possession of some bad intelligence. Perhaps the Imperial Navy battlegroup that was supposed to be away on manoeuvres is, in fact, still in port and not ready to leave for another month, or a temple said to exist on a deathworld does not, in fact, exist at all. If a group of Heretics suffers bad intelligence, the Game Master changes the nature of one of the Compact's Secondary Objectives without the players' knowledge. Whatever the nature of the bad intelligence, this is sure to complicate the Heretics' work and require some quick thinking and good roleplaying on the part of the players.

Treachery

Someone, either a traitor in the Heretics' organisation or a rival cell of Chaos adherents, has tipped off the Imperial authorities to the players' plans. Imperial presence will be increased wherever the characters plan on going, they will be hounded by the Inquisition and the Adeptus Arbites (and perhaps even the Adeptus Astartes), and anything they declared as a target will be heavily guarded. The Heretics will need to quickly re-evaluate the situation, and not only deal with the increased difficulty of their endeavours, but also root out the source of the treachery and neutralise it.

Completing a Compact

A Compact is completed once all Secondary Objectives, and any Personal or Tertiary Objectives, are completed to the satisfaction of the Game Master. This brings about the end of a chapter in the lives of the Heretics.

It may be that the Heretics have reached their final destiny through the work of the Compact, whether spawndom, death, or apotheosis, and they can begin a new game. However, if the Heretics still have a ways to go before their final fate, the players should write up another Compact and continue their dark work together. This is typically the case when the players are still enjoying playing Heretics or are invested enough in their characters that they wish to see them through to their ultimate reward.

REWARDS

Rewards for bringing a Compact successfully to completion can be great indeed, and range from the intangible (Experience Points, power, and Infamy) to the very tangible indeed (wealth, weapons, and other physical trappings of success). All of these combined make joining in and completing Compacts a very tantalising prospect to the Heretics, and one whose rewards, at least in the eyes of those involved, greatly outweigh the penalties for failure.

Experience

Throughout the execution of a Compact, the characters will accrue their share of Experience as is typical in a **Black Crusade** game. Heretics are rewarded Experience Points for defeating enemies, successfully overcoming obstacles, and good roleplaying. Experience Points and how they are awarded is discussed at length on page 266.

Infamy

Infamy is the primary reward for completing Compacts, and the main motivation for those Heretics who are involved. Infamy is both currency and reputation among the adherents of Chaos, and Compacts bring it to the Heretics in great amounts. Depending on the Scope and the completion of Secondary and any Personal or Tertiary Objectives, a Heretic could gain dozens of Infamy Points, and be that much closer to his ultimate destiny. For more information on Infamy, its uses, and how it's awarded, see **Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy**.

Secondary Rewards

Aside from Experience Points and Infamy, players have the opportunity to acquire many more tangible awards through the execution of a Compact. These rewards could be anything from a Daemon weapon or the favour or a Mechanicus forge full of technology to the pure geneseed of a loyalist Space Marine or the favour of a Daemon Prince. Like Experience and Infamy, any secondary rewards gained by the players are at the discretion of the Game Master, and should come about through involvement in the game and good roleplaying.

Balance in the Game

"You humans are weak! See the strength of my arm, the might of my armour. How can you hope to match me?"

–Magnus Thrice-fated, moments before his death by plasma fire.

One issue unique to **Black Crusade** is that it encompasses two classes of characters with very different power levels, Human Disciples of Chaos and Chaos Space Marines. Unless the players' warband ends up being entirely one type of character or another, GMs must take into account that the two types of characters may be more or less proficient in certain scenarios.

The most obvious distinction is in combat. By virtue of their Unnatural Strength and Unnatural Toughness, plus beginning the game with Legion power armour and having access to Legion weapons, Chaos Space Marines gain some distinct advantages. First, on average their melee and ranged attacks deal 4-7 more damage than the attacks of their human counterparts. They are also able to absorb roughly 6-8 more damage than their human counterparts, although if the humans procure power armour this difference decreases slightly, down to a 4-6 damage difference.

Nevertheless, GMs should be aware that their Chaos Space Marine characters are going to come across as more proficient in straight damage dealing, and more survivable when being attacked back. This is not necessarily a bad thing—Chaos Space Marines are supposed to be brutally proficient warriors, after all! The GM should never be afraid to present a combat where the warband's Chaos Space Marines can wade into melee (or blast away at range), tossing enemies left and right with bloodthirsty abandon. This reaffirms the idea that the characters are superhuman when it comes to war, and also can give them an inflated sense of their own invulnerability—which a canny GM can play on later.

However, there will always come times when the GM wants everyone to feel like they're succeeding in combat. There are several ways to accomplish this without overly complicating the game or making anyone feel coddled.

USING HORDES

Hordes are a tool by which the GM can threaten powerful characters such as Chaos Space Marines with lesser enemies, such as large packs of beasts or platoons of human soldiers. This is why Hordes do additional damage and their attacks cannot be evaded (see page 340). However, this additional damage and inability to evade means that most Human characters find it impossible to stand up to their attacks.

However, if a GM wants to put a warband up against Hordes, there are several steps he can take to ensure the survival of non-Chaos Space Marine characters.

- When engaging human Heretics, Hordes do not roll additional damage based on its Magnitude. Instead, a Horde makes a number of attacks equal to the Horde's magnitude divided by 10, rounding up (so a magnitude 30 horde would make 3 attacks) against each human Heretic.



- A Horde's attacks can be Evaded by human characters.
- Human characters do not gain bonuses to hit the Horde based on its size.

This represents the human characters fighting a Horde slightly more cautiously, either only engaging several individual members of the Horde at a time, or standing clear and pelting the Horde with gunfire. In turn, the majority of the Horde do not bring their full attacks to bear against the characters, as much of their attentions are focused elsewhere (possibly on the Chaos Space Marines in the warband!).

It should be stressed that this is primarily intended to allow both Chaos Space Marines and Humans to fight the same opponents. If a warband is comprised entirely of Humans, the GM can simply avoid using Hordes altogether if he prefers. On the other hand, some Human characters may become so powerful and deadly that they are the equals of Chaos Space Marines in damage output and survivability, and should be treated as such.

High Penetration, Felling, and Target Priority

Another means by which the GM can threaten his Chaos Space Marine characters without devastating the Human characters are through certain types of weapons and attacks. For example, weapons with very high Pen (Armour Penetrating) abilities are proportionally more effective against Chaos Space Marines than Humans (provided those Humans aren't wearing power armour or Terminator armour, that is). A character wearing flak armour is going to suffer just as much damage from a hellgun with an AP of 7 as he is from a bolter with an AP of 4. However a character wearing power armour is going to be more worried about the hellgun than the bolter because he has more armour for the weapon to get through.

Likewise, the Felling Quality on specific weapons is notably dangerous to Chaos Space Marines because it ignores some or all of their Unnatural Toughness, which most other characters do not possess. These weapons help even the playing field.

Now, the GM should be cautioned against constantly pitting his Chaos Space Marine characters against an endless stream of enemies perfectly equipped to overcome their innate strengths. This will quickly become frustrating to the players and could even ruin a perfectly fun game, since the players are likely to have selected these characters specifically because of those strengths. However, he should also remember that his NPCs don't have to behave without common sense. If a group of adversaries have one weapon best suited for taking down a Chaos Space Marine, they are likely to recognise him as the biggest threat and use said weapon against him. Likewise, when using a group of mixed adversaries (such as another warband or even an Imperial force led by a loyalist Space Marine) it makes a lot of sense that the toughest enemies are going to go after the toughest players.

By sprinkling combats with a couple dangerous challenges for the Chaos Space Marines in a warband, the GM can enliven their experience, as well as make the players with Human characters feel their fellows are pulling their weight and dealing with threats they couldn't handle on their own.

Outside of Combat

Outside of combat, Chaos Space Marines may seem better, because of their +5 bonus in every Characteristic. However, this is not always the case.

First, the Human Archetypes begin play with more Skills and Talents than the Chaos Space Marine Archetypes, as well as a Characteristic bonus in the Characteristic most integral to their character. Humans also begin play with an additional 500 starting experience. Between these various sources, Human characters can have characters who have just as high Characteristics in the two or three Characteristics that matter most to their character concept, and have more access to Skills and Talents. This means Humans are more likely to excel outside of combat, just as Chaos Space Marines are more likely to excel inside of combat.

The GM should always keep in mind his characters' strengths and weaknesses, and try to plan his adventures with a variety of activities that play to each of them. As just one example, if the adventure begins with combat for the two Chaos Space Marine characters, it should follow with some investigative opportunities for the Knowledge-based Heretek, and finish with a climatic social confrontation for the Apostate to whip a crowd of Imperial citizens into a riotous frenzy against their oppressors.

Single Type Warbands

A final option for the GMs and the players is to play **Black Crusade** entirely as Chaos Space Marines or human Disciples of Chaos. Though this limits the choices of the players, it also may allow for some very thematic games, such as an all-human warband infiltrating an Imperial hive and starting a cult, or a group of Traitor Legionnaires fighting on the front lines of the Jericho Reach.

Interaction

"A silver tongue is often a better solution to a problem than a strong arm."

– Thalien Hax, Charm-master of the Reaving Triad

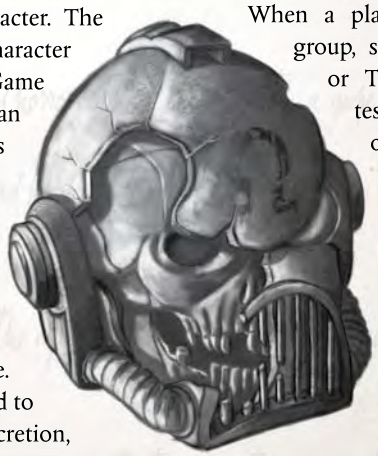
Not every Encounter Heretics have will be at gunpoint. In their day-to-day work undermining the Imperium, players come into contact with the full spectrum of scum and villainy operating in the underbelly of the galaxy, from the lowliest hive-scum to high-ranking officials and powerful Traitor Legion warlords. Knowing how best to deal with these individuals can make all the difference between success and failure. It is important to keep in mind that anyone could be a potential ally, contact, or co-conspirator, and treating them well can present a valuable resource to the Heretics' efforts.

Interaction Skills

Chapter III: Skills presents a number of Interaction Skills such as Charm, Command, Deception, and Intimidate. To make a good impression a character would use Charm; to issue orders he would use Command; to cheat or lie he would use Deceive; and to frighten he would use Intimidate. Together, these Skills offer the discreet tools for interacting with the people of the Imperium.

Using Interaction Skills

During a game session, a player doesn't need to make Interaction Tests every time he has a conversation or makes a transaction. For simple actions that carry little or no jeopardy, the player simply plays the role of his character. The outcome of these interactions between the character and the NPCs are then determined by the Game Master. However, a player should make an appropriate Skill Test if there are consequences for failure or if success would serve to advance the plot in a considerable way. Examples that would require a Skill Test include attempting to convince an NPC to do something that is dangerous to them in some way, or in direct violation of that NPC's morality or honour, such as accepting a bribe or murder for hire. Ultimately, when a player does or does not need to make a Skill Test is up to the Game Master's discretion, and he has final say on the outcome of the Encounter.



Example

Samshir is attempting to convince a low-ranking Imperial Guard officer to abandon his post and take his men with him. Because this would be incredibly harmful to the young officer, and completely against his training, the GM decided that Samshir needs to make a Deception Test to convince the officer that doing so would, in fact, be a good idea.

Dispositions

When making an Interaction Skill Test, there are a number of variables that dictate the final difficulty of the Test. Such situations can include atmosphere, situation, and an NPC's particular circumstances. Most important, however, is how the NPC is disposed toward the Player Characters—how the character regards the NPC and what feelings (or lack thereof) the NPC displays. The NPC's disposition, which is always set by the GM, determines the base difficulty of any Encounter. Other factors can adjust the difficulty up or down as the situation demands and as the GM sees fit. **Table 8–2: Dispositions** provides sample dispositions based on specific Tests and their corresponding difficulty.

With an Interaction Test, the target's disposition improves one step per Degree of Success. Likewise, the target's disposition worsens one step per Degree of Failure. Generally, a target's disposition must be Indifferent toward the players to do as requested. Even then, the target will only do what the players ask about 50% of the time if left unsupervised. Each step above Indifferent improves that chance by 10%. Under close supervision, the base chance increases by 20%.

Interaction and Groups

When a player uses an Interaction Skill against a group, such as when commanding a ship's crew or Traitor Legion warband, he resolves the test as described earlier with the disposition of the group set by the GM based on the group's overall attitude toward the players. The player makes the Test as normal, and with one Degree of Success he affects a number of individuals in the group equal to his Fellowship Bonus. Note that certain Talents can increase the number of individual targets a player can affect.

Table 8-2: Dispositions

Difficulty	Modifier	Charm	Command	Deception	Intimidate
Easy	+30	Infatuated	Fanatical	Gullible	Terrified
Routine	+20	Affectionate	Devoted	Trusting	Frightened
Ordinary	+10	Favourable	Loyal	Accepting	Startled
Challenging	+0	Indifferent	Indifferent	Indifferent	Indifferent
Difficult	-10	Disdainful	Resentful	Suspicious	Brave
Hard	-20	Contemptuous	Disloyal	Sceptical	Courageous
Very Hard	-30	Disgusted	Mutinous	Disbelieving	Foolhardy

Terror and Madness

The 41st Millennium is a dark and horrific place where countless billions of souls inhabit a universe that seems bent on their utter destruction. Hostile aliens ply the stars thirsting for the blood of mankind, cells of traitors, terrorists, and rebels fester in the dark places of the Imperium like boils, and things from out of nightmare gibber and claw at the very fabric of reality, their only goal to feast and corrupt. As adherents to the tenets of Chaos, Heretics embrace this terror. They husband fear and madness, nurture it, and visit it upon the agents and citizens of the Imperium of Man wherever they are found.

The following rules the many threats to the mind and soul that abound in the 41st Millennium, and how the Player Characters relate to them. Fear deals with how the constant terror of existence affects both the hardened Heretic and the more susceptible commoners that they deal with. Insanity deals with the long-term effects of constant exposure to the Ruinous powers and how this exposure affects the Player Characters. During combat Encounters, the only rules used from this chapter are those for Fear. The effects of Insanity are dealt with in the aftermath of battle rather than during it.

Fear

Fear comes into effect when a person or creature faces unnatural horrors and mind-bending foes, or when he is called upon to battle terrifying xenos, insane perversions of science, and the nightmarish entities of the warp. When a PC is confronted by such a terrifying event or adversary, he must make a Fear Test. A Fear Test is a Willpower Test modified by how frightening the event or creature is. If the PC succeeds on the Fear Test he may continue to act as normal. If he fails, he succumbs to Fear.

Table 8-3: Fear Test Difficulties

Degree of Fear	Test Modifier	Heretic Test Modifier
Fear (1) Disturbing	0	+10
Fear (2) Frightening	–10	+0
Fear (3) Horrifying	–20	–10
Fear (4) Terrifying	–30	–20

Table 8–3: Fear Test Difficulties shows the penalties to Fear Tests based on the level of the source of Fear (some things are more terrifying than others, after all!).

Harbingers of Doom

Heretics in **Black Crusade** do not process fear the way normal men do. As individuals who trucks with daemon princes and gibbering fiends from the warp on a day to day basis, mundane horrors have little to no effect on the PCs. Only something truly mind-breaking can shake a Heretic's hardened will and send him screaming. Therefore, Heretics gain a number of bonuses against Fear. Note, that there are two Columns of Test Modifiers. The first is for "normal" individuals. The second is for Heretic player characters only, unless specifically noted. The different modifiers represent a Heretic being inured against fear to a greater degree than his foes.

When facing numerous Fear-causing foes, the Heretic only counts the highest source of Fear each round. In other words, they must only make one Fear Test each Round. In addition, Heretics may modify any rolls on the Shock Table by their Infamy Characteristic, to a minimum of 1. The more infamous a Heretic is, the less he is effected by sources of fear.

Table 8-4: Shock

Roll a d100 and add +10 for every Degree of Failure.

Roll	Result
01–20	The character is badly startled. He may only take a single Half Action during his next Turn, but afterwards he may act normally.
21–40	Fear grips the character and he begins to shake and tremble. He is at a –10 penalty on all tests for the rest of the Encounter unless he can recover his wits (see Shock and Snapping Out of It, page 278).
41–60	Reeling with shock, the character slowly backs away from the thing that confronts him. The character cannot willingly approach the object of his Fear, but may otherwise act normally, albeit with a –10 penalty on all tests for the rest of the Encounter.
61–80	The character is frozen in terror. He may take no Actions until he snaps out of it. After snapping out of it, the character makes all tests with a –10 penalty for the rest of the Encounter.
81–100	Panic grips the character. He must flee the source of his Fear as fast as he can. If he is prevented from doing so he may only take Half Actions and is at a –20 penalty to all tests. Once away from the Fear, he must successfully Snap Out of It to regain control.
101–120	The character faints dead away, and remains unconscious for 1d5 rounds. Once he regains consciousness, he is still shaken and suffer a –10 penalty to all tests for the remainder of the Encounter.
121–130	Totally overcome, the character vomit uncontrollably for 1d5 rounds. During this time he can do nothing but retch and drops anything he is holding. Afterwards and after the Encounter the character may only make one Half Action per turn until he can rest.
131–140	The character laughs hysterically and attacks anything near him in a manic frenzy, firing wildly or using any weapon he has at hand. This effect lasts until the character Snaps Out of It or is knocked unconscious.
141–160	The creature or character slumps helplessly to the ground where he can do nothing but weep, gibber, and tear at his own flesh for 1d5+1 rounds. Even after he returns to his senses, he is a complete mess and suffers a –20 penalty on all tests until the end of the Encounter.
161–170	The character's mind completely breaks. He becomes catatonic for 1d5 hours and cannot be roused.
171'+	The character is so overcome with fear that his heart stops and he must make a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test. If he succeeds on the test he falls catatonic for 1d5 hours and cannot be roused. If he fails the Toughness Test he dies.

Fear Guidelines

Fear Tests in non-combat situations are very much the Game Master's call and should in no way be considered mandatory. They are best used to drive home the horrific nature of a location or artefact and even at important junctures to weaken the Players' allies. The following are some guidelines for setting Degrees of Fear outside of combat situations.

- Fear 1—Disturbing: Viewing the scene of a particularly gruesome murder, minor unknown paranormal or psychic phenomena such as strange lights, spectral voices, weeping statues and the like.
- Fear 2—Frightening: Meeting someone you know to be dead, being buried alive, major supernatural paranormal or psychic phenomena such terrifying storms summoned by the wrath of powerful psykers.
- Fear 3—Horrifying: Sudden, shocking, or inexplicable death (the man next to you on the shuttle suddenly dies, vomiting maggots), massive xenos creatures of fangs and tentacles, the dead rising across an entire planet.
- Fear 4—Terrifying: Encountering the dreaded Grey Knights of the Imperium, facing a Bloodthirster, staring unprotected into the warp.

Failing the Fear Test

If a character or creature fails a Fear Test in a combat situation, he must immediately roll on **Table 8–4: Shock**, adding +10 to the roll for each Degree of Failure. Once the roll is made, the effects are applied immediately to the character. If a character fails a Fear Test in a non-combat situation, he becomes unnerved and suffers a –10 penalty to any Skill or Characteristic Test that requires concentration. This penalty lasts as long as the character remains in the vicinity of the object of his Fear, and simply leaving for a moment and then returning doesn't negate this..

Shock and Snapping Out of It

Characters may be able to shake some of the lingering effects of their Fear off after the initial shock has worn off. Where specified on **Table 8–4: Shock**, a character may attempt to "snap out of it." To snap out of it, a character must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** at the beginning of his next turn. If the Willpower Test is successful, the character regains his senses, shrugs off the effects, and may act normally. If the character fails the Willpower Test, the effects continue and he may try again on his next turn.

INSANITY

The mere fact of his survival means that the mind of even the least experienced Heretic has been scourged by sights and knowledge so blasphemous and so horrific that they would have flayed bare the mind of a lesser man. Heretics in a **Black Crusade** game are considered to already have 100 Insanity Points, to have lost their minds, and to have come through the other side of madness a functional but fundamentally changed person. While Heretics do not accrue Insanity Points as characters do in other Warhammer 40,000 games, over time they do tend to acquire small mental tics known as Disorders.

Typically, disorders manifest in the aftermath of something horrific or emotionally traumatic for the character. **If a Heretic fails a Fear Test by more than four Degrees of Failure**, they must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** once the Encounter is over. If the character fails the Willpower Test, he acquires a Disorder related to the Chaos God to which he is dedicated by rolling on the appropriate table. If the character is not dedicated to a particular Chaos God, the Game Master chooses a table for the character. This could indicate that while the character has no affinity for a specific Chaos God, perhaps one of the Lords of Chaos has taken an interest in him. Game Masters may also, at their discretion, call for a Willpower Test to avoid manifesting a disorder, perhaps after a particularly challenging and arduous span of physical or mental exertion. This serves to further represent the fickle nature of Chaos.

Table 8-5: Followers of Tzeentch Disorders

Roll	Disorder
0–20	**Obsessive Cleanliness:** The character is terrified of filth, rot, and disease. He goes to great lengths to keep himself, his possessions, and his surroundings clean, and will avoid dirty things or places at all costs. Whenever confronted with such individauls or situations, he must make a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test.** Failure means that the character is overwhelmed by disgust and refuses to enter the unclean area or interact with the filthy object or person.
21–40	**Conspiracy Theorist:** The character sees conspiracies everywhere, even in the most mundane situations. Conspiracies seem to be the only subject he is capable of discussing, and he finds a way to work his theories in to every conversation. He suffers a –5 penalty to all Interaction Tests that do not involve others who agree with his theories or directly relate to "uncovering" his current pet conspiracy.
41–60	**Rule of Nine:** The character is obsessed with Tzeentch's sacred number, nine. Whenever he can, he will arrange items in groups or stacks of nine, considers naturally occurring instances of the number or a multiple (a flower with 27 petals, a ship with 18 decks, a system with nine worlds, etc.) to be especially portentous, as well as dates and times of day that contain nine or multiples thereof.
61–80	**Dark Magiks:** The character is convinced that he is a powerful sorcerer. While this is, in fact, occasionally the case, more likely the character has few or no powers at all. He is obsessed with all things arcane. He collects ancient and blasphemous tomes (whether he understands them or not), icons, and anything else related to sorcery or psychic power. The character suffers –5 to all Interaction Tests when dealing with normal individuals due to his boorish nature and need to let everyone know that he is a powerful sorcerer. When in the presence of *actual* psykers, he suffers a –10 penalty on all Interaction Tests, due more to the actual sorcerers losing patience with him.
81–100	**Self Improvement:** The character is driven to constantly change and improve himself. His clothing, his speech, even his loyalties are in flux. He is forever scarring, branding, tattooing, or modifying his body through cybernetics or forced mutation. Due to his constant and rapid evolution, the character suffers –5 to all Interaction tests, as those around him are unsure who they deal with on a day to day basis.

Table 8-6: Followers of Nurgle Disorders

Roll	Disorder
0–20	**Entropy:** This character's mere presence seems to cause the breakdown of anything within his possession. Weapons jam, vox systems malfunction, and vehicles become unreliable. Any items such as weapons, armour, gear, clothing, ammunition, vehicles, or anything else that has a Craftsmanship Rating has its rating reduced by one step while in the character's possession.
21–40	**Self-Mortification:** The character is constantly cutting, flagellating, scarring, and branding himself for no other reason than it seems the thing to do. He suffers a –10 penalty to all Interaction tests die to his mutilated appearance.
41–60	**Garrulous:** This character's entire life is an open book, he has no secrets and is eager and willing to share even his darkest dreams and desires with anyone who will listen. It is also nearly impossible for him to keep a secret and is not to be trusted with sensitive information, although he may claim otherwise. Whenever he is called upon to withhold information, the character needs to succeed on a **Hard (–10) Willpower Test** or give up the information.
61–80	**Slovenly:** The character despises art, grace, and finery. He is uncouth, filthy and unwashed, casually destructive, and generally unpleasant to be around. He goes out of his way to despoil beauty, despises art and music, and is generally proud in his shabbiness. This character suffers a –10 penalty to any Interaction Tests when dealing with high society, strict military hierarchies, or anyone considered refined or an aesthete.
81–100	**A Touch of Plague:** This character's body is consumed by some chronic disease. While it is not contagious, it slowly consumes the character from the inside. Thanks to his illness, this character sees his Toughness reduced by 5.

Table 8-7: Followers of Slaanesh Disorders

Roll	Disorder
0–20	**Unspeakable Urge:** The character has a deep and hidden desire so unspeakable it is absolutely perverse. The character must indulge in his desire once a week. If he has not satiated his hunger within the previous week, he suffers a –5 penalty to any Skill Tests that require concentration as his mind becomes distracted with thoughts of his desire. For every subsequent week he goes without, he suffers an additional –5 penalty to a maximum of –20. During this time he is irritable, distracted, distant, and generally unpleasant.
21–40	**Irenic:** The character disdains physical confrontation, and looks down upon those who do so as uncouth barbarians. When dealing with soldiers, mercenaries, Traitor Legionnaires, or other such individuals, the character suffers a –10 penalty to all Interaction Tests.
41–60	**Absolute Pleasure:** The character's sense of touch has been heightened, and he experiences both pleasure and pain much more intensely than a normal man. Unless he takes special care to distance himself from physical sensations, by wearing gloves or heavy clothes for example, he suffers a –5 penalty to any skill tests that require concentration, as even the slightest pressure or the lightest breeze distracts him with either delicious pleasure or exquisite agony.
61–80	**Secretive:** Even among a fellowship who values secrets, the character's obsessive need to hold secrets is remarkable. While this makes them generally trustworthy when it comes to protecting information, it also makes them nearly worthless in roles where communication and exchange of information are necessary such as Compact negotiations or even delivering messages. Characters with this disorder have a +5 bonus to any Willpower Tests made to resist giving information to interrogators or torturers, but must make a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test** to answer even the simplest questions, or pass on the most mundane information in regular conversation.
81–100	**Perfectionist:** The character is never satisfied with the state of himself, his surroundings, and his lot in life. He is forever fiddling and dithering, fixing, or attempting to fix, some perceived flaw in something that seems only to matter to him. Unless he can make a Challenging (+0) Willpower Test when required by the Game Master, the player suffers –5 to any skills that require concentration until he can make whatever flaw is distracting him "just right."

Table 8-8: Followers of Khorne Disorders

Roll	Disorder
0–20	**Blind Hatred:** The character has developed a burning hatred for a particular enemy. On the field of battle, the character will seek out this enemy and destroy it, even neglecting more obvious or powerful foes to pursue the target of his enmity. When his particular fixation is on the field of battle, the character must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** to fight any other foe until his chosen target is destroyed or driven off.
21–40	**Frenzy**: During combat, the character can become consumed by Khorne's rage and fly into a frenzy. Unless the character makes a **Hard (–10) Willpower Test**, he will attack whatever target is nearest at hand, including allies and inanimate objects, with whatever weapons he has at hand.
41–60	**Blood Soaked:** The character has developed a taste for blood and an overwhelming desire to drink it. The character must indulge in his thirst for blood once a week. If he has not satiated his hunger within the previous week, he suffers a –5 penalty to any Skill Tests that require concentration. For every subsequent week he goes without, he suffers an additional –5 penalty to a maximum of –20. During this time he will be irritable, distracted, and generally unpleasant to be around. As soon as he gets to a place where he can satisfy his need, typically on a battlefield, he seeks it out immediately, often recklessly and with little thought to any consequences.
61–80	**Abstemious:** This puritanical character follows a code of strict abstinence. He rejects most worldly pleasures, especially pleasures of the flesh, for the austere life of a warrior ascetic. He considers himself a a purist of combat and military matters, and when dealing with those who do not share his single-minded focus, he suffers –10 to all Interaction Tests.
81–100	**Dead Inside**: This character has seen things on the battlefield, unspeakable things, and they have seared his soul. The character is brooding, quiet, and withdrawn most of the time and tends to stare fixedly into space and speak in a flat, monotone voice. His presence is unnerving, and he suffers a –10 penalty to all Interaction Tests.

Using Black Crusade with other Games

"While vile mutants still draw breath, there can be no peace. While obscene heretics' hearts still beat, there can be no respite. While faithless traitors still live, there can be no forgiveness."

– Verse I of XXV of the Silver Skulls Catechism of Hate

The **Black Crusade** roleplaying game provides a wide range of possibilities, from insidious infiltration, to malicious schemes to epic battle, and every other endeavour that awaits a servant of Chaos upon the Path to Glory. A Heretic may face many enemies during his blasphemous endeavours, and while an assortment of foes can be found within this book and others in the **Black Crusade** line, a nearly limitless assortment of adversaries can be found within the other games in the **Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay** line, taking both from lists of NPCs, and using the character creation rules in those games to create entirely unique nemeses to confront a group of Heretics. Similarly, **Black Crusade** provides players of **Dark Heresy**, **Rogue Trader** and **Deathwatch** with a vast array of potential foes to overcome.

Additionally, these other games contain a wealth of setting material useful to a Black Crusade game, providing worlds of intrigue, the perils of wilderness space and blood-soaked warzones for Heretics to ravage and corrupt, which are touched upon elsewhere in this book and explored in greater detail within the **Dark Heresy**, **Rogue Trader** and **Deathwatch** rulebooks and supplements.

Players of one or more of these games will be familiar with the basic system used in **Black Crusade**, and will have noticed the changes between **Black Crusade** and the other **Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay** games. What follows in this section are some ideas for combining the various games and accounting for the differences between them.

BRINGING DARK HERESY INTO BLACK CRUSADE

Dark Heresy deals with the servants of the Inquisition, a common foe for the forces of Chaos. These lackeys of the false Emperor range from the faceless, expendable minions known as Acolytes, to the mighty and fearsome Throne Agents and Inquisitors who command them.

The lowest of Acolytes, many of whom are yet to truly prove themselves to their masters, are hardly the most dangerous of foes, but their presence and the nature of their masters is what makes them a threat to a group of Heretics—being discovered by such wretched creatures is amongst the swiftest ways to draw the lethal attention from deadlier and more powerful enemies.

Those more powerful enemies are described in the **Dark Heresy** supplement **Ascension**, covering Inquisitors, the Magi of the Adeptus Mechanicus, Adeptus Arbites Judges, Imperial Assassins and the like; these foes could pose a serious challenge

Psychic Powers in Dark Heresy and Black Crusade

The psychic powers rules presented in this book offer a different interpretation to the rules for psychic powers and sorcery found in **Dark Heresy**, and the differences between the two are considerable. Below are a number of notes and guidelines for transferring powers between the two systems.

Psy Rating is Psy Rating, regardless of the system. Anything that increases a power threshold in **Dark Heresy** increases the difficulty of the Focus Power Test in **Black Crusade**. A rough guideline is that every 5 points of increase in threshold worsens the difficulty of the Focus Power Test by one step (so from Challenging to Difficult, or from Hard to Very Hard).

Talents or other abilities that grant a bonus to Power Rolls (such as Discipline Focus) instead add to Focus Power Tests. Each +1 bonus to a Power Roll translates to a +5 to the Focus Power Test.

To use the Psychic Strength listed here, simply determine whether a given psyker is Bound, Unbound or Daemonic (the matter should, in most cases, be fairly simple to determine) and use the rules here accordingly.

Those wishing to convert material over from the **Dark Heresy** line will find that any of the psychic powers found there can be represented by taking a themed psychic discipline and its ancillary powers as appropriate psychic techniques centred on it. The Minor and Major Arcana in **Disciples of the Dark Gods** and **The Radical's Handbook** should, as Sorcery powers, all be considered Unaligned Psychic Powers in **Black Crusade**.

- Untouchables: An Untouchable reduces the Psy Rating of any psyker (within 5 metres) by 5. All other rules for Untouchables are unchanged.
- Sorcerers: The servants of Chaos have transcended such petty notions as the division between psychic power and sorcerous might; the techniques embodied by sorcery are covered by the normal Psychic Power rules in **Black Crusade**. Any **Dark Heresy** (or **Rogue Trader**) character with the Sorcery talent are treated as an Unbound Psyker of equivalent Psy Rating, with the Blasphemous Invocations talent.
- Daemons and Warp Entities: Such creatures are far more commonly encountered in **Black Crusade**, and their natures are already accounted for by the psychic power rules. All creatures with the Daemonic or Stuff of Nightmares Trait are, naturally, considered to be Daemonic Psykers.

As a final recommendation, any power converted from **Dark Heresy** to **Black Crusade** should, in the interests of scaling the effects properly, count any effect based on the psyker's Willpower Bonus as being based on Psy Rating instead.



to a group of Heretics both because of their personal prowess and because of the resources they have at their disposal.

In some cases, the blind fools who serve the Imperium dabble in the powers of the Ruinous Powers, believing that they can turn the tools of Chaos against it. The supplement **The Radical's Handbook** details such individuals. More importantly, since a Radical in the Inquisition is often willing to use the tools of Chaos to fight Chaos, the goals of a Radical Inquisitor and a Chaos warband may be very similar, whether they be to obtain proscribed knowledge, summon fell powers, or defeat more Puritan forces of the Imperium. **The Radical's Handbook** can prove to be a valuable collection of cults, proscribed knowledge, daemonic weapons, and so-forth.

This is merely the tip of the iceberg, with other **Dark Heresy** supplements providing a range of other characters to encounter and overcome.

The servants of the Imperium aside, the other major consideration when drawing upon **Dark Heresy** material is the setting. The Calixis Sector has long been a cesspit of murder and corruption, largely untouched by open war but ripe for infiltration by those who would undermine the Imperium. Indeed, cults and conspiracies are numerous within the Sector, which may pose a problem from those who seek to infiltrate it, unwilling to see rival heretics claim glory which is rightfully theirs. Being a realm of intrigue and conspiracy, most Traitor Legionnaires are often unsuitable, lacking the necessary subtlety to move amongst the masses of mankind, and far better suited to open warfare. However, some exceptional individual Traitor Legionnaires may be able to play the game of infiltration and deception.

Here are a few adventure seeds for **Black Crusade** groups adventuring within the Calixis Sector:

- The world of Tranch has long been at war, with mutant rebels still opposing the Imperium long after their leaders escaped or were captured or slain. The rebels are ripe for further corruption, requiring guidance from those enlightened to the glory of Chaos to turn Tranch into a corpse-choked monument to desecration and wanton bloodshed.
- Inquisitor Orten Hezail, a known Radical, has absconded from a cult purge on Malfi with a powerful artefact blessed by the Ruinous Powers. He must be found and shown the error of his ways – whether corrupted or slain, the Inquisitor cannot be permitted to keep the artefact.

BRINGING BLACK CRUSADE INTO DARK HERESY

Eliminating dangerous heretics is a common part of **Dark Heresy** campaigns, and **Black Crusade** provides an ample source of varied and deadly foes for Acolytes or Throne Agents to confront and overcome. However, the Heretics produced using the **Black Crusade** rules are typically powerful, too dangerous to be considered common foes, but rather champions of the Dark Gods, the vilest breed of heretics.

Transferring Characters

Black Crusade characters technically start at zero Corruption, but this is simply done for ease of bookkeeping. In fact, their Corruption Track begins where the other 40,000 Roleplay Games' end. So, when a character gains 100 Corruption Points in one of the other games, he can transfer over to **Black Crusade**.

To transfer a character, use the following steps:

- Reduce Corruption to 0, resetting to use the Black Crusade Corruption Track. This does not represent the character losing Corruption, simply starting afresh on the new Track.
- Remove any Malignancies and Mutations. For every three Malignancies or Mutations removed (rounding up), generate one Gift of the Gods by rolling once on **Table 9–1: Gifts of the Gods**.
- Insanity Points are no longer tracked and can be disregarded. Mental Disorders, however, can be maintained so long as they are thematic to the character in question.
- Characteristics remain the same. Each character generates an Infamy Characteristic by rolling 1d5 and adding 19. This is the character's new Infamy score.
- The character keeps one Skill at the the Trained level, and one Talent for which he has the necessary pre-requisites, for every 1000 Experience the character possessed when he reached 100 Corruption Points. He discards all remaining Talents and Skills. If he possesses a Psy Rating, he keeps it, as well as up to three Psychic Powers he already possessed.
- The character selects one Archetype. He does not gain the Skills, Talents, or Traits associated with that Archetype, but he does gain the Special Ability. A character may not select a Chaos Marine only Archetype unless his character was previously a Space Marine, and vise versa. Likewise, a character may not select the Psyker or Sorcerer Archetype unless he was already a character with Psy Rating, in which case he also maintains his current Psy Rating instead of adopting the one listed.

The new character then proceeds as normal.



For those of a more radical bent, **Black Crusade** provides an assortment of blasphemous tools to turn against the Dark Gods and their servants—sorcerous powers, daemonic and warp-touched weaponry, and profane rituals can be found within this book, and can as easily be used by dabblers in the vile arts as the true chosen of Chaos.

Finally, however, ambitious players and GMs can attempt to bring together a grand campaign, following the progression of a band of Acolytes as they become more and more Radical in nature. Eventually, they embrace the powers of Chaos, perhaps even unknowingly, and fall from grace to join the ranks of the damned.

The key to running this campaign is Corruption. All of the Warhammer 40,000 games track the Corruption Points a character obtains, and except in some very rare circumstances, Corruption can only be gained, it cannot be lost. In **Dark Heresy** (as well as **Rogue Trader** and **Deathwatch**), once a character reaches 100 Corruption Points he is retired, lost to join the Disciples of the Dark Gods and effectively unplayable. However, when merging **Dark Heresy** and **Black Crusade,** his career may have just begun. See the "Transferring Characters" sidebar.

BRINGING ROGUE TRADER INTO BLACK CRUSADE

Rogue Trader characters are swashbuckling explorers as much as anything else, but people who reach too far or delve too deeply can frequently encounter the influences of the Ruinous Powers. Warp-tainted cultures, and their dead remnants, can be found in the depths of the void, and the servants of Chaos are as likely to see out their lore, their treasures and their wealth as those explorers driven by greed and ambition.

Rogue Trader's biggest difference from the other **Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay** games is the presence of rules for ship-to-ship combat. The addition of these rules can add extensively to a **Black Crusade** game, granting powerful starships to savage and cruel Heretics and giving them the means to terrorise worlds and drown the stars themselves in blood. However, those who wage war amongst the stars may add the might of the Imperial Navy to the adversaries they may face.

The Koronus Expanse is a vast and haunted realm, filled with renegades, traitors, monsters and the ruins of warp-cursed civilisations. The slumbering power that can be found in the Expanse and the vulnerable colonies founded by the lackeys of the Emperor can both serve as a great incentive for Heretics to begin raiding and plundering the Koronus Expanse. What follows are a number of adventure seeds for **Black Crusade** groups adventuring within the Expanse:

- The cursed world of Iniquity calls to the black hearts of those touched by Chaos, piercing the veil and whispering secrets to their souls. What horrors lie beneath this foul world remain unknown, in spite of the great numbers of reavers, renegades and pirates that have flocked there, but whatever it is, it has power… and power exists to be claimed by the strong and the cunning.
- Port Wander, the last stronghold between the Koronus Expanse and the Calixis Sector, is a place filled with power struggles and squabbling factions. With traffic

passing into and out of the Expanse stopping at Port Wander, all manner of ideas and groups deemed contrary to the Imperium can lodge themselves within the depths of the station. To plant the seeds of discord and sedition within the gateway to the Calixis Sector would be a great boon indeed, allowing the Disciples of the Dark Gods to reach more easily into the False Emperor's domain.

BRINGING BLACK CRUSADE INTO ROGUE TRADER

Groups such as Karrad Vall's Reavers, the Saynay Clan and the many and varied pirates and renegades that roam the Expanse are a continual threat to attempts to colonise and exploit those uncharted regions. All are in constant need of cruel and dangerous men to bolster their ranks, and the **Black Crusade** rules can provide a limitless supply of dread reavers and malicious corsairs to complicate an Explorer's endeavours.

The nightmare realm of the Screaming Vortex is an unlikely setting for **Rogue Trader** games, but some Explorers may be brave or foolhardy enough to try and venture into the eye of the storm, whether to bring war to the hellish worlds within, or to find resources to exploit. The perils of voyaging into an ancient and enduring Warp Storm are great, but for many **Rogue Traders**, perils are frequently accompanied by great rewards.

BRINGING DEATHWATCH INTO BLACK CRUSADE

Amongst the mightiest and most terrible foes the servants of Chaos can face are the Adeptus Astartes, and this is what **Deathwatch** brings to the table. Ancient hatreds run deep between those Adeptus Astartes still loyal to the Emperor and those who have embraced Chaos. Few Space Marines, on either side of this divide, will pass up the opportunity to wage war against their hated brothers. This ancient conflict, ten millennia old, is known as the Long War, and so long as one warrior on each side still draws breath, it will continue, as fierce and savage as it was when brother first turned against brother during the Horus Heresy.

Table 8-9: Skill Changes

Black Crusade Skill	Previous Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay Skills
Acrobatics	Acrobatics, Contortionist
Athletics	Climb, Swim
Awareness	Awareness, Lip Reading, Search
Charm	Charm, Performer
Commerce	Barter, Commerce, Evaluate (with regards to an item's worth only)
Logic	Logic, Gambling, Tactics
Linguistics	Ciphers, Literacy, Secret Tongue, Speak Language
Medicae	Chem-Use, Medicae
Operate	Drive, Pilot
Parry	Not previously a skill; any character with cheap WS advances, or a WS of 50+ should have the Parry skill
Stealth	Concealment, Silent Move, Shadowing
Survival	Survival, Tracking, Wrangling
Tech-Use	Demolitions, Tech-Use
*Toughness	Carouse

†Carouse has been removed and should now be resolved with a Toughness Characteristic test.

Deathwatch characters are deadly combatants armed with the finest wargear, deadlier than all but their opposite numbers and the most blessed of Heretics, and their presence indicates that violence is a strong possibility. For Traitor Legion characters, a **Deathwatch** character is a hated foe and worthy adversary to face in single combat. For Disciples of Chaos characters, they represent a different obstacle, a thing to be avoided or circumvented, or even manipulated, rather than confronted directly.

The Jericho Reach is an ideal location for Heretics with a mind for slaughter, being on the front lines of an Imperial Crusade and with a seething Warp Anomaly at its heart. An entire portion of the Achilus Crusade's advance has grounded itself against the forces of Chaos, leaving many

Table 8-10: Talent Changes

Black Crusade Talent	Previous Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay Talent
Blood God's Contempt	Abhor the Witch
Cold-Hearted	Chem-Geld
Raptor	Death from Above
Never Die	Duty unto Death
Baleful Dirge	Feedback Screech
Demagogue	Master Orator
War Cry	Rite of Fear
Warp Lock	Rite of Sanctioning, Warp Affinity
Unshakeable Will	Unshakeable Faith
Weapon Training	Pistol Weapon Training, Basic Weapon Training, Heavy Weapon Training; individual Weapon Training talents in **Black Crusade** cover a different range of weapons than those in previous games.

Table 8-11: Trait Changes

Black Crusade Trait	Changes
Brutal Charge	This trait, rather than giving a flat +3 bonus to damage, adds (X) damage to attacks made on the same round as the charge.
Daemonic	The trait no longer multiplies Toughness Bonus, but rather increases it by a static value. A good rule of thumb is that a 3-5 point increase to Toughness Bonus is functionally equivalent to doubling the characteristic bonus.
Deadly Natural Weapons	Previously named Improved Natural Weapons
Multiple Limbs (X)	Previously known as Multiple Arms, this gave a flat modifier. Now it varies depending on how many additional arms the creature possesses.
Quadruped	This trait, rather than multiplying movement rates, adds a flat bonus of +2 for every pair of legs beyond the first. The movement values of creatures should be recalculated to take this into account.
Toxic	This trait now deals damage to anyone who successfully attacks the creature, and the Toughness test takes a penalty equal to ten times the number in parenthesis (X).
Unnatural Characteristics	These traits no longer multiply characteristic bonuses, but rather increase them by a flat value. A good rule of thumb is that a 3-5 point increase to a characteristic's bonus is functionally equivalent to a level of the 'old' Unnatural Characteristics rules.
Unnatural Speed	This trait no longer exists. Unnatural Agility now increases movement values where it did not before, rendering Unnatural Speed redundant

worlds ripe for slaughter. Against so massive a force as a Crusade, the forces of Chaos have many opportunities to gain glory and infamy. Below are a number of adventure hooks for **Black Crusade** campaigns focussed on events in the Jericho Reach:

- The fallen Magi of Samech seek the darkest of machine lore, and will pay handsomely for those who deliver it to them. Magos Kallikos has heard rumours of secret, ancient technology being concealed by the forces of the Imperium, locked away within one of the fortified stations of the Deathwatch, and will gift whomever brings these secrets to him with a mighty haul of ancient and powerful warp-cursed technology.
- Deep within the Jericho Reach, beneath the baleful crimson glow of the Hadex Anomaly, lays Varrus, once capitol world of the Jericho Sector. Upon this burning, Warp-scarred world can be heard the voices of untold billions of cultists and vat-slaves, prostrating themselves in devotion to the warp rift that dominates the skies above. From time to time, the leaders of this legion of devotees summon new Champions of Chaos to perform some foul and seemingly pointless task as part of some grand and vile plan.

Using Black Crusade to generate NPCs

Another way to use **Black Crusade** is as a source book to generate the ultimate villains and nemesis for other Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay games. Using the Character Creation rules in Chapter 2, GMs can build villains that will challenge and defy their groups, villains they could not create using standard sourcebooks. If a GM wishes to make an especially unique and notable villain, he should be sure to use the Infamy rules, and probably give said villain some Gifts of the Gods from Chapter 9. He can even provide him with some of the unique psychic powers from Chapter 6.

BRINGING BLACK CRUSADE INTO DEATHWATCH

While the Deathwatch are focussed primarily upon protecting mankind from the myriad threats posed by Xenos species, they are not ignorant of the danger presented by traitors and heretics, and as already noted, are frequently honour-bound by ancient oaths of hate and vows of loathing to combat the forces of Chaos.

To confront and slay a Champion of the Dark Gods in single combat is amongst the noblest and most honourable acts a warrior of the Adeptus Astartes can perform, a feat that shall earn him renown and the respect of his brethren. Few Adeptus Astartes would deny that the war against Chaos is a righteous one and each battle a sacred duty to expunge the taint of betrayal. The **Black Crusade** rules provide the means to produce a wide variety of accursed champions, deadly enough to threaten even the mighty Adeptus Atartes.

It would be unusual for Space Marines of the Deathwatch to venture deep into the nightmarish realms

Table 8-12: Weapon Quality Changes

Black Crusade Weapon Quality	Changes
Concussive (X)	Concussive previously had no variable value; Concussive weapons from previous books should be treated as Concussive (1)
Felling (X)	Felling weapons no longer simply remove levels of Unnatural Toughness. The change to Unnatural Characteristics means that a value of 3-5 is appropriate for a weapon from a previous game with Felling (1)
Flame, Spray	The old Flame quality has now been split into two – one covering the chance of igniting a target, the other covering the manner of attack. All weapons that had a chance of setting a target alight have the new Flame quality, while all weapons that previously had the Flame quality should now have both Flame and Spray.
Primitive	Primitive has changed from a weapon type to a Quality (Primitive weapons are now Primary weapons). Old Primitive weapons should, as a rule of thumb, gain Primitive (8) instead, unless there is some compelling reason for it to have a higher or lower value.
Reliable	Reliable weapons now jam on an unmodified roll of 00
Scatter	The change to this quality can be applied without difficulty to weapons from the previous games.
Shocking	The character is now stunned for rounds equal to degrees of failure on the Thoughness test, not half the Damage he suffered.
Snare	Snare previously had no variable value; weapons with Snare from previous books should be treated as Snare (1)
Toxic	Toxic previously had no variable value; weapons with the Toxic quality from previous books should be treated as Toxic (1)
Twin-Linked	The change to this quality can be applied without difficulty to weapons from the previous games.
Unbalanced, Unwieldy	Weapons with these properties can no longer be used to make Lightning Attacks.

such renegades call home, but the notion of several Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes seeking to purge the taint from a region like the Screaming Vortex with a punitive Crusade is not impossible, and could present an extremely unusual type of **Deathwatch** campaign.

DEATH TO THE FALSE EMPEROR

Some of the most common mechanical questions for integrating characters from different games are covered here, although this discussion is by no means exhaustive, and the finer points must always be up to the GM's judgement. When running a game using characters or other elements from more than one Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay game, the GM should select a primary game. In other words, is this a **Black Crusade** game involving radical Inquisitorial agents, or a **Dark Heresy** game that includes Traitor Legionnaires and other Heretics? The game should be run under the mechanics of the primary game. All game play follows the Playing the Game and Combat Chapters of the primary game and that system's rules for Psychic Powers.

However, characters from games other than the primary should use their own system's rules for character creation and progression. The character's access to Skills and Talents is therefore also based on their own system, though with any differences in the Skill or Talent's wording or rules, the primary game takes priority. This is particularly important with regard to **Black Crusade**, as many Skills, Talents, Traits and Weapon Qualities have changed in small but significant ways from the versions found in previous games. The remainder of this section covers in broad and simple terms some the biggest differences that may affect characters created from games other than **Black Crusade**.

Playing the Game: Two significant elements of note are the inclusion of Infamy, and a change to the way Degrees of Success and Degrees of Failure are calculated.

- Infamy represents the character's reputation, the fear that accompanies his name, and the attention of the Chaos Gods. While Infamy is an appropriate characteristic for **Black Crusade** characters, it doesn't as easily translate to the other, more Imperial-centric games, where characters instead have Fate Points, to represent the favour of the God-Emperor. In **Black Crusade** terms, characters not devoted to the Dark Gods have the Touched By the Fates trait, which grants them a number of Infamy Points, representing boons equivalent to Fate Points, luck, divine favour or other, similar advantages. If **Black Crusade** characters are used in other games, they should similarly be given the Touched by the Fates trait in place of their Infamy.
- Degrees of Success and Failure in the previous games begin at 0, for succeeding or failing by less than 10, with a single degree for every 10 by which the test was passed or failed. **Black Crusade** instead begins at 1 degree for the most basic level of success, adding an additional degree for every 10 as above. The overall difference is of



one degree in either direction, and elements converted across from other games should be adjusted to account for this change.

Skills: A number of skills present in previous games have been consolidated into a smaller number of broad skills in **Black Crusade**. In addition, the system for Skill Mastery has changed slightly, adding an additional level of mastery that didn't exist prior to **Black Crusade**. **Table 8–9: Skill Changes** summarizes these changes.

In addition, the Invocation skill has been removed.

With regards to Skill Mastery, any character with a +20 in a given skill and the Talented talent for that skill should be considered to have at the Veteran Skill Rank in **Black Crusade** terms. Players should notice that, in turn, there is no longer a "Talented" Skill that provides +10 to a chosen Skill.

Talents: A number of talents presented in previous games have been changed or renamed in **Black Crusade**, the main details of which have been summarised in **Table 8–10: Talent Changes**.

In addition, a number of abilities that were previously talents have now been redefined as bionic implants augmented by Talents, though the effects have largely remained the same.

Traits: A number of traits presented in previous games have been changed or renamed in **Black Crusade**, the main details of which have been summarised in **Table 8–11: Trait Changes**.

The change to Unnatural Characteristics is particularly significant when dealing with player characters, specifically Ascension-level **Dark Heresy** characters, all **Deathwatch** characters, and Xenos characters from **Rogue Trader.** The characteristic bonuses of all such characters should be recalculated when transferring them into **Black Crusade**.

Weapon Qualities: A number of weapon qualities presented in previous games have been changed or renamed in **Black Crusade**, the main details of which have been summarised in T**able 8–12: Weapon Quality Changes.**

In addition, the matter of Astartes and Legion equipment should be addressed; such items are not for the hands of mortals, and are essentially equivalent in background terms. For the purposes of compatibility, any item (especially weapons) denoted as being Legion or Astartes should function identically to its equivalent from the primary game – so a **Deathwatch** character in **Black Crusade** would use the rules for a Legion Bolter for his Astartes Bolter, while a Traitor Legionnaire in **Deathwatch** would use the rules for an Astartes Bolter when wielding his Legion Bolter.



IX

Corruption & Infamy

Corruption

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Gifts of the Gods

•

Rewards of the Gods

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Infamy

Chapter IX: Corruption and Infamy

"The Path to Glory is the path to destruction; yours, or your enemy's…"

—Magister Khalistim Bhewko

The central theme of **Black Crusade** is the journey the Heretics tread as they progress along the path to glory. None can predict exactly what will occur at the end of that journey; whether an aspiring champion will be found wanting or granted the ultimate reward of apotheosis to daemonhood. The character's progression along the path to glory is measured, in game terms, by two factors: Corruption and Infamy.

In the simplest terms, Corruption is a measure of the favour in which the Ruinous Powers hold the character, while Infamy describes his standing amongst his peers. The former can be thought of as a reflection of his status within the Realm of Chaos, and the latter as a measure of his status within the material realm. As a Player Character progresses along the path to glory, he amasses Corruption Points, which, among other effects, result in him gaining mutations. These are physical, mental, and spiritual changes wrought upon him by the Ruinous Powers, sometimes in recognition of some great service the character has performed, sometimes in answer to his prayers, and sometimes even as a punishment. Infamy is measured by its own score on the character's profile, and is used as a gauge of the character's temporal power, how much influence he holds over his allies, and how much awe he inspires in his enemies. Lastly, both measures count towards the character's ultimate fate, as described on page 267, The Final Fate.

Corruption

"The warp flows through my body like blood flows through yours."

–Algar the Blessed

Corruption is a measure of the favour the Ruinous Powers have bestowed upon a character, or how steeped in the dark energies of the warp his soul has become. For characters in the **Dark Heresy**, **Rogue Trader,** and **Deathwatch** games, Corruption is a bad thing. Once they reach a certain threshold of it, their souls are lost and who they are is destroyed, leaving the campaign to answer a new calling steeped in Chaos. But **Black Crusade** characters know the truth of it, for they have already crossed that invisible line. Their eyes are open to the truth of the universe. Where the deluded Acolytes, Explorers, and Battle-Brothers who serve the weakling Imperium see corruption, those who tread the Path to Glory see favour, power, and opportunity. In effect, a **Black Crusade** character has already crossed the line so feared by mere mortals and is now master of his own destiny. He will rise or fall, gain eternal power or damnation, become a mindless Chaos Spawn, or ascend to daemonhood, all by the power of his will, the strength of his arm, and the favour of the Ruinous Powers.



Corruption Points

Black Crusade characters aspire to the ultimate power granted by apotheosis—the ascension to daemonhood. Very few, however, ever attain such a fate, for the power of the warp and the favour of the Dark Gods is a terrible thing that no mere mortal soul can hope to contain. Most are overwhelmed by the power, body and spirit unable to bear the soul-searing vigour of Chaos. Their bodies are overcome with mutation and they devolve to mindless spawn—thrashing masses of tentacle and teeth. A very few do find sufficient strength of mind, body, and soul to resist the all-consuming energies and to wield them as weapons in the service of the Dark Gods. These are granted apotheosis, and they ascend to become daemon princes, the ultimate traitors to Humanity and champions of the Ruinous Powers.

As a character progresses through an ongoing campaign, he garners Corruption Points (CPs). Starting out at 0, these slowly rise until they eventually reach 100. At various points along the way the character earns the right to beseech the Ruinous Powers for their favour, or else he draws the unsought attention of one of the Dark Gods by his deeds alone. At that point, the character rolls on **Table 9-1: Gifts of the Gods** to determine which Gift of the Gods he has earned. But the powers of Chaos are often fickle, capricious, or downright cruel, and there is no guarantee the character will be gifted with a power he desired.

When the character finally reaches 100 CPs, his journey is complete. How it will end depends very much on the deeds he

Corruption and the Common Citizen

While Heretics tracking Corruption is a vital part of **Black Crusade**, minor NPCs track Corruption differently, as they are likely beneath the notice of the Ruinous Powers and warrant only a cursory damnation. This also has the added benefit of helping the GM with bookkeeping. Whenever a minor NPC suffers 10 Corruption, he is instantly killed (or transformed into a vile but harmless Chaos Spawn).

has performed in the name of the Ruinous Powers. One who has embraced the full power of Chaos, discarded the petty limitations of his mortal soul, defeated every foe, and steeped himself utterly in the darkling energies of the warp might—just might—earn apotheosis. More likely, however, he will be found wanting and condemned to the gibbering insanity of existence as a spawn. For more on this subject, see page 267.

THE CORRUPTION TRACK

The **Black Crusade** character sheet contains a section to keep track of how many Corruption Points the character has amassed. This is important because at certain points along the track the character must generate a Gift of the Gods, as detailed over the next few pages. A Disciple of Chaos character generates a Gift of the Gods when he reaches 10, 20, 40, 60, and 80 CPs. Traitor Legionnaires, having been created stronger in body and spirit than normal men, generate Gifts of the Gods at 10, 30, 60, and 90 CPs.

Corruption Points can either be awarded at the end of a game session with Experience or during a game session as events take place. However, any effects such as Gifts should be resolved at the end of the session.

SERVICES TO CHAOS

Corruption Points can be earned in many different ways and the GM is always free to issue them as he sees fit. There are some circumstances, however, that are sure to expose the character to the power of Chaos and for which Corruption Points will be earned. By undertaking these services to Chaos, the character is wantonly courting the attentions of the Ruinous Powers, deliberately seeking to indulge the passions associated with each, and gain some measure of dark benediction in return.

The following instances should result in the character gaining Corruption Points, as well as Infamy, at the GM's discretion. Note that all of these are guidelines, and if the GM decides that a Heretic does not receive Corruption or Infamy from a certain action, his decision is final. More information on Infamy can be found on page 304, but some examples of how it's gained is listed here.

Slaying a great hero of the Imperium in one-on-one combat earns the character 1d5 Corruption Points, plus, if the enemy had any Fate or Infamy Points (see page 363 for more information on Fate and Infamy), an equivalent additional ammount.

Leading or assisting in the performing of a Ritual (see page 228) earns the character 1d5 Corruption Points.

Defiling a sacred place of the hated Imperial Creed earns the character 1-2 Infamy plus 1-3 Corruption Points, depending on how sacred the location was.

Being present at the summoning of a Greater Daemon exposes the character to such baleful energies that he gains 1d5 Corruption Points. Additionally, gaining the services of the daemon may be worth 1-2 Infamy.

Sowing doubt in the hearts of a large number of the Emperor's followers by way of duplicity and blasphemy earns the character 2 Corruption Points and 1 Infamy.

Services to the Chaos Powers

Characters that have embraced one of the Dark Gods find their drives and passions aligned with those of their patron power, and so additional Corruption Points are awarded for performing the following dark deeds.

Characters Embracing Khorne

Defeating a superior number of dangerous enemies (at least as powerful as the PC) in close combat earns 1 Corruption Point.

Slaying a Champion of Slaanesh earns the character 1d5 Corruption Points and 2 Infamy.

Embarking on an enterprise of bloodshed and combat most would consider suicidal (such as single-handedly assaulting the walls of an Imperial Bastion) earns the character between 1 and 3 Infamy, depending on the odds stacked against the character (GM's discretion).

Characters Embracing Slaanesh

Killing a foe (one at least as dangerous as the PC) through torment, torture, or Slaanesh psychic powers earns 1 Corruption Point.

Slaying a Champion of Khorne earns the character 1d5 Corruption Points and 2 Infamy.

Indulging in acts of desecration and blasphemy above and beyond the norm (such as nailing an Imperial Saint to the gates of a burning basilica or corrupting a high official of the Administratum or member of the Ecclesiarchy) earns the character between 1 and 3 Infamy depending on the excess of the desecration (GM's discretion).

Characters Embracing Nurgle

Killing a powerful foe (at least as dangerous as the PC) with poison, disease, or Nurgle psychic powers earns 1 Corruption Point.

Slaying a Champion that has embraced Tzeentch earns the character 1d5 Corruption Points and 2 Infamy.

Wiping out or infecting large populations with disease or contagions earns the character between 1 and 3 Infamy depending on the depths of the deception (GM's discretion).

Characters Embracing Tzeentch

Slaying a powerful enemy (one at least as dangerous as the PC) using a psychic power is worth 1 Corruption Point.

Killing a Champion of Chaos that is Aligned with Nurgle earns the character 1d5 Corruption Points and 2 Infamy.

Seeding insanity and falsehood amongst the ranks of the foe with masterful deceptions earns the character between 1 and 3 Infamy depending on the deception (GM's discretion).

Excessive Infamy

Infamy is intended to be earned primarily through two means: purchase via experience and by accomplishing Compacts. The other means listed here are to encourage thematic and cinematic actions on the part of the PCs, not as a way to quickly ramp up Infamy. In general, a Heretic cannot gain more than 5 Infamy from these actions in a single session unless a GM specifically decides otherwise.

THE PRICE OF FAILURE

Just as it is possible to gain power by furthering the fell ends of the Ruinous Powers, so too is it possible to anger them and invoke their wrath. The path to glory is paved with the bones of those who aspired to power but fell short in some way, earning punishment in the form of all manner of curses, random mutations and afflictions. The price of failure is expressed by the gain of Corruption Points. This, of course, is not the Dark Gods granting favour to the Heretic. Instead, the Dark Gods are hastening his decent into spawndom by infusing him with the warp.

Whenever a Heretic passes a point on the Corruption Point Track by gaining Corruption via a failure, he still rolls on the Gifts of the Gods Chart. However, he only rolls once: he may not modify it with his Infamy bonus, he may not attempt to generate a Reward if he is Devoted to a specific God, and he may not roll twice if he is Unaligned. He is stuck with what he gets. Of course, this may turn out to be a beneficial roll—but it may not. It's all in the hands of the Gods.

When a GM grants Corruption Points through a Failing, he should always be sure to grant a random amount (1d5 or 1d10 being the most obvious choices). Gaining a mutation through a Failing is one of the most punishing outcomes, and it is better if there's a random chance of this happening, or not happening, depending on the dice and the will of the Gods.

- Being defeated in combat by a great hero of the Imperium is a Failing that causes the character to gain 1d5 Corruption.
- Failing to complete a Compact's Primary Objective is a Failing that grants 1d10+5 Corruption.

Failing the Chaos Powers

Characters that have embraced one of the Dark Gods gain many advantages by doing so, but they also run greater risks. Failing in the service of one of the four Chaos Powers results is a Failing resulting in the gain of Corruption Points, as detailed below.

Aligned to Khorne: Being defeated in a one-on-one duel in close combat is a Failing that causes the character to gain 1 Corruption Point.

Aligned to Slaanesh: Denying a desired excess or ignoring a unique chance to corrupt or desecrate a foe is a Failing that causes the character to gain 1 Corruption Point.

Aligned to Nurgle: Failing a Characteristic Test resulting from a Critical Injury or passing out due to Fatigue is a Failing that causes the character to gain 1 Corruption Point.

Aligned to Tzeentch: Being defeated by an enemy psyker or being incapacitated by psychic phenomena or Perils of the Warp is a Failing that causes the character to gain 1 Corruption Point.

Gifts of the Gods

"These fangs, this armoured shell, these are as much gifts as this fine blade I wield."

—Algar the Blessed

Eventually, a character will reach a point along the Corruption Track at which he becomes entitled and required to generate a Gift of the Gods. This should be done between adventures, during the 'down time' in which processes like advancement are dealt with.

Chaos is anything but predictable, and so Gifts of the Gods can take any number of forms. Some are changes to a character's appearance that clearly mark him out as devoted to the Ruinous Powers. Others cause shocking changes in the character's body or even to his mind.

Despite the unpredictable nature of Chaos, the strongest of its servants are sometimes able to impose their will on the shifting tides of the warp. **To represent this, a character may modify the result of his roll for a Gift Chaos by a number up to his Infamy bonus (the first digit of his Infamy score).** Thus, a character with a high Infamy score will be able to tailor his mutations to some extent, while those newly setting out on the Path to Glory must accept the blessings of the Ruinous Powers regardless of the forms they take.

Many Gifts of the Gods has two effects. The first describes those that apply to every character who receives the Gift, whether or not they are aligned to a specific Chaos God. The second effect is applied to those who have embraced a specific Dark God—these characters benefit from both effects.

Characters that are Unaligned may roll twice and choose the result they prefer, after which they may modify the result by their Infamy bonus.

Addiction

Exposure to the raw stuff of Chaos twists and alters the character's brain chemistry to such an extent that he develops an all-consuming addiction to one particular substance. The object of the addiction can be almost anything, from the last thing he ate to something he has never even heard of, so fickle are the effects of the warp.

The GM should choose a substance for the character to be addicted to (the more bizarre the better!). During any Encounter in which the character does not feed his addiction he suffers –10 to all Skill Tests until he does so. With the GM's consent, the addiction can be slaked before the Encounter begins, but this should not be abused.

Additional Limb

The growth of additional limbs is common amongst those who seek to wield the power of Chaos as a weapon, and such a gift allows the character to fight more effectively and carry more weapons. Some notable renegades receive the gift several times over, taking on the appearance of some multi-armed or many-legged spider god able to wield a small arsenal of guns or use their limbs to climb otherwise unscaleable heights.

The character gains the Multiple Arms Trait, with a value equal to the number of limbs he started out with, plus one for each time this gift is applied. He may choose what type it is and whether it has a hand, claw, or other appendage attached. Roll on **Table 9-2: Limb Table** to determine where the limb is located.

Khorne: The limb is bristling with bony spikes. Any unarmed attacks made using the limb have the Tearing Quality.

Slaanesh: The limb is unnaturally lithe and dextrous. Any unarmed attacks made using the limb are carried out at +10 to the character's Weapon Skill.

Nurgle: The limb oozes necrotic slime and terminates in a drooling orifice. Any unarmed attacks made with the limb has the Toxic (1) Quality.

Tzeentch: The limb writhes and darts in an unpredictable manner, granting the character the Disarm Talent, which he may use as a Free Action so long as he is making an unarmed attack using the limb.

Animal Hybrid

The character's body is fused with that of a beast, creating a bizarre hybrid combining the most lethal qualities of both. Far more than a cosmetic mutation, the character's very essence takes on something of that of the animal it merges with, altering his thought patterns to something other than a human's. However, his abilities to think and reason are largely unaffected, unlike those unfortunates who suffer the Bestial Gift.

Unless the character is dedicated to a Chaos Power, roll on **Table 9-4** to determine what type of animal the character fuses with. The character should be played in such a manner as to play up the characteristics of the creature, and the GM should award additional Experience Points to reflect this.

GM Guidance: Inventing Mutations

The Gifts, Rewards, and Afflictions described in this chapter provide an enormous amount of scope for creating some truly unique and memorable characters, but players and GMs should always feel free to invent more. Perhaps a player has a particular image of his character in mind, or the GM decides to bestow a unique mutation based on an event in the campaign. Inventing new mutations is a great way of individualising a character and driving the story forward. The only real consideration is that, having determined whether it is to be a Gift, Reward, or Affliction that is received, the new mutation fits the general category.

Khorne: The character takes on the characteristics of a feral bull, his face elongating to accommodate great horns and his skin growing a leathery texture.

Slaanesh: The character's features become disturbingly snakelike, his tongue becomes long and sinuous, and his skin becomes smooth and hard.

Nurgle: The character's features begin to resemble those of a slug, his mouth becomes lamprey-like, and his skin oozes foul slime.

Tzeentch: The character's body becomes bird-like, his legs becoming back-jointed while his jaw and nose fuse and stretch to become a sharp beak.

Table 9-1: Gifts of the Gods

D100 Roll	Gift Received	D100 Roll	Gift Received
1-2	Addiction	51-52	Infernal Will
3-6	Animal Hybrid	53-54	Inside Out
7-9	Bestial	55-56	Pseudo-daemonhood
10-11	Blood Substitution	57-59	Intelligent Cyst
12-13	Blasted Senses	60-61	Warp-Eater
14-16	Winged	62-63	Limb Loss
17	Blessed Fits	64-67	Magnificent Horns
18-19	Steel-hearted	68-69	Warped Appearance
20-21	Boneless	70	Mechanoid
22-23	Burning Body	71	Nerveless Ennui
24-26	Chaos Organ	72-73	Pervasive Miasma
27	Cyclops	74-75	Projectile Attack
28-30	Darksoul	76-77	Grossly Fat
31	Dimensional Instability	78	Slayer Limb
32-33	Emaciated	79-80	Strange Voice
34-35	Eye of Chaos	81-84	Additional Limb
36-37	Eye-stalks	85-86	Strange Walk
38-39	Centauroid	87-89	Tail
40-42	Featureless Face	90-94	Tentacle
43-45	Illusion of Normalcy	95	Vampiric Addiction
46	Flaming Skull	96-97	Warp-touched
47-48	Headless	98-99	Warpsight
49-50	Icon of Blasphemy	100	Wreathed in Chaos

Bestial

While the character does not completely mutate into a beast, he adopts the physical appearances and mannerisms of a certain type of animal. Unfortunately, while he is still capable of intelligent thought, his bestial mannerisms make it more difficult.

Permanently reduce the character's Intelligence by 1d10+5 and his Willpower by 1d10+5. However, increase his Strength by 1d5+1. Additionally, roll on T**able 9-4** to determine exactly what animal's traits the character's adopted, as the character will undergo cosmetic changes (scales, fur, or a forked tongue) from the mutation as well.

Blood Substitution

Something other than blood pumps through the character's veins, though the exact substance is dependent upon his own character or that of his patron. Ordinarily, the exact nature of the blood substitution has little relevance and may even be unknown to the character until he is wounded. When that happens, the warp-tinged fluid spews forth, forming a weapon in its own right.

Should the character ever be wounded and suffer Damage that leads to Blood Loss (see page 257), one randomly determined character within 1 metre immediately takes 1d10 Impact Damage unless he can pass a **Difficult (–10) Agility Test**.

Khorne: Lava courses through the character's veins. The Damage described above has the Flame Quality.

Slaanesh: The substance in the character's veins is highly corrosive. The Damage described above has the Tearing Quality.

Nurgle: Ravening maggots spill from the wound. The Damage described above has the Toxic Quality.

Tzeentch: Upon being wounded, the character's body emits a wave of warp energy. The Agility Test to avoid the damage is Hard (–20).

Blasted Senses

The raw power of Chaos blasts the character's senses—burning out nerve endings and searing the brain's ability to translate what his perceptions are trying to tell it.

The character is unable to use one randomly determined sense from the following list (sight, hearing, smell, or touch), with all the penalties that may apply. However, his body does compensate slightly for this deformity and he gains the Heightened Senses Trait for one different, randomly determined, sense. At the GM's discretion, the character can obtain cybernetic augmentation to partially overcome a loss of sight or hearing, although even then the character still suffers a –10 penalty to all Awareness Tests made with that sense.

Blessed Fits

The character is prone to bouts of severe seizures—shaking uncontrollably, frothing at the mouth, and thrashing about wildly. Many consider these fits to be special gifts from the gods, during which the afflicted is experiencing intimate communion with the Ruinous Powers.

Should the character ever declare that he is using an Infamy Point to reroll a failed Test and then fail on the reroll, he is struck by a seizure and Stunned for 1d10 Rounds. When he awakens, however, he does not count as having used the Infamy Point.

Boneless

Some of the character's bone tissue dissolves into his blood stream, weakening him while at the same time making his body more flexible. There are those who may be disgusted with his constantly shifting features.

The character permanently loses 1d10+10 Strength, but gains 1d5+2 Agility.

Burning Body

The character's body is wreathed in empyreal flames. While his own body is unaffected, others who approach too close may be burned or consumed entirely.

The character's body is constantly aflame and may damage his surroundings, betray his presence, and the like, as determined by the GM. In addition, any enemy landing a blow on him with their bare hands or attempting to grapple with him must pass a Challenging (+0) Agility Test or immediately take 1d10 E Damage. In addition, the character always has a light.

Khorne: The flames in which the character is wreathed are those of Khorne's forges. They inflict 2d10 Damage, but

Reversing Gifts and Afflictions

It is possible, indeed quite likely, that PCs will be bestowed with mutations they would rather not have. In some ways this is the price of walking the path to glory, but particular combinations of mutations might really inconvenience a character, while others might simply run counter to the vision the player had for how he wanted his character to develop. The GM is responsible for keeping his players entertained and engaged, and may have to take this into account as the campaign progresses.

So, what to do if a player is truly unhappy with the mutations his character has received? Here are a couple of suggestions.

Firstly, the character could petition the Ruinous Powers to rid him of some curse they have sent down upon him. This should take the form of a ritual of some sort, perhaps with the character trading something of value to him or performing some deed in the name of the Dark Gods. An Infamy test would be appropriate, modified according to how convincing the player's case is and by whatever offerings he has made. Of course, failing the test might result gaining additional Corruption as a Failing; the Ruinous Powers have taken exception to the character's presumption and ingratitude.

Another solution is to allow Gifts of the Gods attained later in the campaign to replace mutations gained earlier on. Thus, a player whose character has gained a less than desirable mutation can find some solace in the fact that it may be overcome later on, and he can work towards doing so. In fact, this should result in a far more engaging gaming experience as the character's long-term goals evolve over the course of the campaign.

make it all but impossible for the character to hide in any way (as is appropriate for a champion of the Lord of Battles!).

Slaanesh: Slaanesh has gifted the character with a wreath of invisible flames. They will not betray the character's presence, and unless an enemy is forewarned or has a special ability, he will not know of them until it is too late. In addition, the flames no longer count as a light source.

Nurgle: Corpse-gas flames release a choking scent. Instead of their normal effects, all living creatures in melee with the Heretic must pass an **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test** or take 1d5 Toughness Damage.

Tzeentch: Writhing multi-hued flames scar the soul as well as the body. In addition to the regular effects, enemies who take Damage from this ability also receive 1 Corruption Point.

Centauroid

The character's entire lower body has been replaced with that of a hoofed quadruped, creating a bizarre, centauroid form. In many cases the beast in question is entirely random, and may be drawn from some alien world never before witnessed by man. In other cases, the creature is one that strikes terror into the hearts of all who face it, or that grants some special ability drawn from its very nature.

The character gains the Quadruped Trait, and his body from the waist down is replaced by that of an animal determined by rolling on **Table 9-4**.

Khorne: The body with which the character is fused has skin as hard as brass, granting him an additional +2 Armour Points to attacks that strike his legs.

Slaanesh: The animal's body is especially lithe and agile, granting him +10 to all Acrobatics Skill Tests.

Nurgle: The skin of the animal's body oozes with necrotic slime, increasing his movement by a further +2.

Tzeentch: The animal's feet are replaced with splayed suckers, granting the character the Sturdy Trait.

Chaos Organ

This gift confers upon the character an organ or appendage normally only found attached to a daemon of one of the Ruinous Powers. Such a gift is sure to be regarded with awe by other mortals, who will regard it as a sure sign of the character's favour in the eyes of his otherworldly patrons.

The character gains some aspect of one of the many daemons of Chaos. This could take the form of unnatural eyes burning with daemonic fire, long grasping talons replacing hands, cloven hooves, or other, more insidious mutations. The Heretic may select one of the following Traits: Natural Weapons, Heightened Senses (any one), or Unnatural Characteristic (+1) (any one). He and the GM then determine what daemonic organ contributed this Trait—a Bloodletter's eyes, a Flesh Hound's nose, the rending claws of a Horror, or something altogether stranger.

Khorne: The character sprouts a set of horns resembling those of a Bloodletter. The character gains the Furious Assault Talent.

Slaanesh: One of the character's hands (randomly determined) is replaced by the razor-sharp crab claw of a Daemonette. The character gains the Natural Weapons (Claws) Trait, in addition this weapon has the Razor Sharp Quality. However, the Heretic may not hold or wield anything in that hand.

Nurgle: The character's belly swells with fetid corpse gas, his entrails pushing horribly through the distended rupture. The character gains the Regeneration (1) Trait.

Tzeentch: The character gains an additional arm, topped with a distended claw like those of a Horror of Tzeentch. The character gains the Multiple Limbs Trait, with the exception that this additional limb can melt into his body and vanish or reappear at the Heretic's whim (a Full Action in game terms).

Cyclops

The character has been cursed by the fickle will of Chaos. In return for one of his eyes, he is given the ability to see something of the future. Unfortunately, the only part of the future he is able to see is his own death, and he turns maudlin or enraged as he dwells upon his doom and seeks to plot how it might be avoided.

One of the character's eyes seals over or turns into a gaping socket. He permanently loses 1d5 Perception and counts as having the Conspiracy Theorist Disorder (see page 278).

Darksoul

The character radiates the power of the warp and his soul glows darkly with the blessings of the Ruinous Powers. His eyes flicker with the lambent energies of the warp and the air chills with his passing.

The character gains the Fear 1 (Disturbing) Trait or, if he already causes Fear, increases the level by +1, up to a maximum of 4 (Terrifying).



Khorne: Enemy warriors know that they are facing a champion of the Lord of Battles himself, and tremble in fear. Enemy warriors (Imperial Guardsmen, planetary defence force troops, Space Marines, etc.) count the character's Fear rating as one level higher.

Slaanesh: The character strikes especial terror into the hearts of those who worship the False Emperor of Mankind, for they know that no extreme of sacrilege is beyond him. Enemies such as Adepta Sororitas, Inquisitors, and members of the Ecclesiarchy count the character's Fear rating as one level higher.

Nurgle: The character is especially horrifying to those who consider themselves lost or abandoned. When facing renegades, lost colonists, or anyone else beyond the Imperium's boundaries, the character's Fear rating is counted as one level higher.

Tzeentch: Enemy psykers find the character especially disturbing, instinctively knowing that they are in the presence of a servant of the Architect of Fate. Enemies with psychic powers count the character's Fear rating as one level higher.

Dimensional Instability

The character's connection to the physical realm begins to slip, his consciousness segueing between real space and the Realm of Chaos. At times, he appears to fade away entirely as he walks the otherworld of daemons and fell gods.

Once per session, the character may choose to be subject to the Incorporeal Trait for a number of consecutive Rounds equal to his Corruption Bonus.

Khorne: So raw is the character's hatred that he can strike his foes from beyond the veil of reality. If the character passes a **Very Hard (-30) Willpower Test,** he may make melee attacks while Incorporeal.

Slaanesh: The servants of Slaanesh sometimes utilise this state to invade the dreams and nightmares of their enemies, whispering subtle lies at the edge of consciousness, or else they assume ethereally beguiling forms to bewitch their foes. If the character passes a **Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test**, he gains +30 to all Interaction Tests while Insubstantial.

Nurgle: If the character can pass a **Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test,** he gains the Fear 1 (Disturbing) Trait while Incorporeal or, if he already cause Fear, increase the level by +1 while Incorporeal (up to a maximum of Fear 4).

Tzeentch: If the character can pass a **Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test**, he may use Psychic Powers while Incorporeal.

Emaciated

The character's frame withers until he is all but skeletal and he becomes weak and frail. He is afflicted by an eternal hunger that can never be satiated as all but the merest fraction of the food he imbibes is claimed by the warp, never to strengthen his body.

The character suffers a –20 penalty from Fatigue, rather than a –10.

Eye of Chaos

If the eyes are the window to the soul, then what gazes out from behind the character's gaze is something far from mortal. His fell gaze is imbued with the weirdling light of the empyrean, and to fall under it is to have one's soul desiccated as if looking into the warp itself.



The character gains the Psyniscience Skill or, if he already possesses the Skill, advances it by +10.

Khorne: The rage of the Blood God himself radiates from the champion's eyes. The character gains the Intimidation Skill or, if he already possesses the Skill, advances it by +10.

Slaanesh: The character sees into the soul of his victim, recognising lies and deceit. The character gains the Interrogation Skill, or, if he already possesses the Skill, advances it by +10.

Nurgle: Nurgle promises deliverance from pain and suffering. The character gains the Charm Skill, or, if he already possesses the Skill, advances it by +10.

Tzeentch: The character's eyes shine with the multihued gaze of the Lord of Lies. The character gains the Deceive Skill, or, if he already possesses the Skill, advances it by +10.

Eye-stalks

The fickle nature of Chaos imprints itself upon the character, extending his eyes out of their sockets and causing them to wave above his head on elongated stalks. Though better able to see his surroundings, the danger to his exposed eyeballs should not be understated.

The character permanently gains 1d5 Perception, but whenever he suffers Critical Damage to the head (for any reason) he adds +1 to the result. Additionally, he may not be able to wear certain helmets, though the eye-stalks can coil up.

Featureless Face

The character's features fade away to nothing, leaving him without eyes, nose, or mouth. Despite appearances, the character

is left with his senses intact and, in addition, has no need to take in physical sustenance, gaining nourishment from the imperceptible ebb and flow of Chaos itself. The effect of this affliction varies, for while the character cannot speak in the conventional manner, he is both intensely disturbing and powerfully intimidating.

The character has no need to eat or drink to survive (and can see normally even without eyes), but he cannot speak (though he may be able to communicate in other ways, such as telepathically or with hand-signs). Any Interaction Tests (except Intimidation Tests) suffer a –20 penalty.

Flaming Skull

The champion's skin is seared away by unnatural flames that may never be extinguished.

The character gains the Fear (1) Trait or, if he already causes Fear the rating is increased by one level to a maximum of 4 (Terrifying). His Fellowship is reduced by 10+2d10, to a minimum of 1. This may also cause additional disorders depending on the character's temperament and personality.

Grossly Fat

The character's flesh swells and distorts, muscle turning to blubber before his very eyes and expanding until he is two or three times his previous mass.

The character permanently loses 1d10+10 Agility and 1d10+2 Fellowship, but does permanently gain 1d10 Toughness and the Size (Hulking) Trait (if he does not have it already).

Headless

The touch of Chaos causes the character's head to shrink into his shoulders, until his features are merged into his upper chest.

The character is slow to react in combat and always counts as rolling a 1 for Initiative Tests. However, any attacks that hit the head count as hitting the chest location instead.

Icon of Blasphemy

The character embodies all that is blasphemous to those who blindly worship the False Emperor of Mankind. His blasphemies take many forms, from iconoclastic scripts tattooed upon his skin to a mocking resemblance to a figure such as an Imperial Saint. Some are capable of channelling their very essence into their blasphemies, and these are truly a scourge on the weakling Imperium of Man.

Once per session, the character may unveil or unleash his blasphemy upon his foe. For one round, he gains the Fear 3 (Horrifying) Trait.

Khorne: By passing a **Hard (–20) Strength Test**, the character may extend the the effect for an additional Round.

Slaanesh: By passing a **Hard (–20) Fellowship Test**, the character may extend the length of the effect for an additional Round.

Nurgle: By passing a **Hard (–20) Toughness Test**, the character may extend the length of the effect for an additional Round.

Tzeentch: By passing a **Hard (–20) Willpower Test**, the character may extend the length of the effect for an additional Round.

Illusion of Normality

Perhaps the most bizarre of all Gifts of the Gods is that which lends the recipient the outward appearance of complete normality when he is, in fact, a seething mass of mutation and corruption. To most, the character appears to have the unaltered form he was born with, while to those touched by the warp the truth is more likely to be visible, and truly horrific.

The character gains the Unremarkable Trait, regardless of how many mutations he has, what weapons he is carrying, or even if he is a Chaos Space Marine. This gift is more than a quirk, it is an active power, and as such it may be detected by enemies using the Psyniscience Skill. For each Gift the character has, deduct 5 from the difficulty of the Psyniscience Test.

Khorne: The character's enemies are always Surprised (see page 233) when he attacks.

Slaanesh: The character gains +20 to all Deceive Skill Tests.

Nurgle: The character's range of Nurgle's Rot (either the mutation or the psychic power) is now 2 x his Corruption Bonus.

Tzeentch: The number of mutations the character has does not affect enemy Psynesicence Tests made to detect his presence.

Infernal Will

The needs and desires of the mortal realm hold no power over the character, and his drives and passions are entirely those of the warp. He is motivated by the will of the empyrean, and his deeds make little sense to mere mortals.

The character is entirely immune to the effects of Fear. Should the character fail any Skill Test by four or more Degrees, however, he must immediately roll on **Table 8–4: Shock** and apply the result.

Khorne: If the Skill Test was for a Skill aligned with Khorne (see page 93), the character may adjust the result rolled up to an amount equal to his Corruption Bonus.

Slaanesh: If the Skill Test was for a Skill aligned with Slaanesh (see page 93), the character may adjust the result rolled up to an amount equal to his Corruption Bonus.

Nurgle: If the Skill Test was for a Skill aligned with Nurgle (see page 93), he may adjust the result rolled up to an amount equal to his Corruption Bonus.

Tzeentch: If the Skill Test was for a Skill aligned with Tzeentch (see page 93) the character may adjust the result rolled up to an amount equal to his Corruption Bonus.

Inside Out

Occasionally, the dark things that lurk within the warp cause a man's innards to burst through his flesh so that his body appears clothed in a hideous skin of glistening organs—a fickle caprice that cannot be understood by mere mortals.

The character suffers a –30 penalty to all Interaction Skill Tests (except Intimidate Tests), but gains a +20 to Intimidate Tests.

Intelligent Cyst

A new, cyst-like organ grows inside the character's body, developing a mind and will of its own. Periodically, the cyst attempts to gain control of the character's body and, when it does so, it pursues its own ends, which may be entirely different from those of the character.

The cyst gains brief control whenever the host's concentration slips. Should the character ever fail an Interaction Skill Test, he fails it by two additional Degrees of Failure, as the Cyst momentarily causes him to do or say something contrary to his interests.

Limb Loss

The unknowable powers of the warp claim one of the character's limbs, leaving behind nothing but a healed stump. Most find that the lost limb still feels like it is there, while others claim to feel the pain of its slow dissolution somewhere in the depths of the Empyrean.

The character loses one randomly determined limb.

Magnificent Horns

The character is blessed with an impressive set of horns, which serve as both weapons and status symbols amongst the ranks of the lost and the damned.

The character gains +10 Loyalty with any Minions he may have. In addition, whenever he makes a Charge Action, his attack cannot be Parried.

Khorne: Only Minions dedicated to the Blood God gain the Loyalty bonus.

Slaanesh: Only Minions dedicated to the Dark Prince gain the Loyalty bonus.

Nurgle: Only Minions dedicated to the Lord of Decay gain the Loyalty bonus.

Tzeentch: Only Minions dedicated to the Architect of Fate gain the Loyalty bonus.

Mechanoid

The recipient's body is fused with the machine, his bone replaced with metal and his muscles with pistons. His psyche is absorbed into the new form, until nothing of the biological remains at all. The resultant machine is the ultimate blasphemy to the Tech-Priests of Mars, and an object of adoration to the Dark Mechanicus. Its function obeys no laws of the machine and its internal workings are anathema to logic and reason.

The character gains the Machine (+1) Trait.

Khorne: The character's skin is gleaming bronze, granting him the Natural Armour (3) Trait.

Slaanesh: The character's muscles are replaced with an impossibly fine mesh of micro actuators, granting him +1 to Initiative Checks.

Nurgle: The character's already-formidable frame is fortified still further by an array of mechanical callipers, granting him the Sturdy Trait.

Tzeentch: The character's senses are enhanced by a complex web of machine receptors, granting him +10 to all Awareness Tests.

Nerveless Ennui

The character is incapable of feeling physical stimuli, caring for neither the kiss of lips nor the caress of the blade.

The character's physical senses are so dulled that he feels little in the way of pain. The character ignores the –10 penalty when suffering Fatigue. However, any Awareness Tests based on sensing by touch are counted as one level of difficulty harder.

Khorne: Whenever the character suffers Critical Damage (after reduction for Armour and Toughness) reduce the amount by his Corruption Bonus (to a minimum of 1).

Slaanesh: The character may reroll any failed attempts to resist the effects of torture or seduction based on the application of physical stimuli.

Nurgle: The character's resistance is heightened even more. He must suffer a number of levels of Fatigue equal to 2 + his Toughness Bonus before he is knocked unconscious.

Tzeentch: While the character's physical senses are dulled, his supernatural ones are greatly heightened. He adds +20 to the result of all Psyniscience Skill Tests.

Pervasive Miasma

A drastic imbalance in the character's humours brought about by prolonged exposure to the baleful energies of the warp causes him to be surrounded by the creeping, noxious stench of brimstone and corruption.

When the character fails Stealth Tests, he gains an additional Degree of Failure.

Projectile Attack

The character is gifted with the ability to summon forth a stream of unreal matter brewed from the raw stuff of Chaos. The stream is generally projected from the recipient's mouth, and the exact nature this matter assumes upon leaving the character's body varies enormously.

The character may make a Standard Attack Half Action to unleash a projectile attack with the following profile; Range: 10m; Rate of Fire: S/-/-; Damage: 1d10+5; Penetration 3; Spray, Smoke. Obviously, the character may not make this attack if he is wearing an enclosed helmet!

Khorne: The matter forms a sheet of raging fire. The attack gains the Flame Quality.

Slaanesh: The stream of matter twists and writhes as incorporeal limbs entwine the victim. The attack gains the Shocking Quality.

Nurgle: The nature of the substance spewing forth from the character's innards is best left unsaid. The attack gains the Toxic Quality.

Tzeentch: The character vomits the raw stuff of the warp itself. The attack gains the Warp Weapon Quality.

Pseudo-Daemonhood

A gift held by many as both a curse and a blessing, the recipient's body is twisted and mutated until they come to resemble that of one of the myriad lesser daemons of the warp, such as the dreaded Ebon Geist, the mournful Dispayre, or the savage Manripper. The character's very nature becomes melded with the warp and his perception of the material universe fades while that of the unreal beyond is magnified a thousand-fold.

The character gains the Fear 4 (Terrifying) and Warp Instability Traits. If the character is ever banished to the warp, the GM will have to determine the length of time he is banished for and the conditions of his return. If not dedicated to one of the Chaos Powers, his appearance mutates to resemble a hideous, bestial fiend.



Khorne: The character assumes something of the appearance and nature of a Bloodletter. He gains the Brutal Charge Trait.

Slaanesh: The character's body and soul mutates so that it comes to resemble that of a Daemonette. The character gains the Unnatural Agility (+2) Trait.

Nurgle: The character changes so that he appears to be a Plaguebearer. The character gains the Undying Trait.

Tzeentch: The character's form twists so that it resembles a Horror. The character gains the Blessing of Tzeentch. This counts as a force field with a Protection Rating of 20, but it cannot be overloaded (see page 178).

Slayer Limb

One of the character's limbs fuses with a weapon, either one he already owns or a new weapon granted as part of the gift. The limb becomes a twisted mass of metal and flesh, mechanisms and muscles flowing together while blood vessels and ammunition feeds become as one. Any trigger mechanism the character had before is bypassed and it operates with but a thought. The character's metabolism hybridises with the working of the weapon, and the two become as one, such that it can even derive power or ammunition from his body.

The player must choose one weapon carried by his character to become fused with his body. The weapon conjoins with a single limb of the player's choice, replacing it from the elbow (or equivalent joint) down (and therefore replacing any hands). The weapon may be of any type, and henceforth never requires reloading or any other type of maintenance. If the character is Aligned to a God, his weapon may gain additional Qualities if it does not already have them.

Khorne: The weapon gains the Tearing Quality.

Slaanesh: The weapon gains the Crippling (1d5) Quality.

Nurgle: The weapon gains the Toxic (1) Quality.

Tzeentch: The weapon gains the Warp Weapon Quality.

Steel-Hearted

Some have seen into the depths of the warp and, know how trivial the concerns of mortals truly are. The character's heart is steeled to the terrors of the material universe, and only what lies beyond it concerns him.

The character counts Fear caused by enemies as one level lower than described in that enemy's profile. If the enemy causes Fear (1), then no effects are suffered at all.

Khorne: When facing Fear-causing enemy warriors (Imperial Guard, planetary defence troops, Space Marines, etc.), the enemy's Fear rating is reduced by a further level.

Slaanesh: When facing enemies dedicated to the worship of the corpse-god of the Imperium (such as Adepta Sororitas, priests, etc.) who cause Fear, their rating is reduced by a further level.

Nurgle: Fear effects caused by any other servants of Chaos are counted as a further Fear level lower.

Tzeentch: Any Fear effect caused by an enemy with any psychic ability is reduced by a further level.

Strange Voice

The character's vocal chords are twisted and distorted as Chaos ebbs and flows through his body. A lucky few find their voices have become deep and resounding, while the less fortunate are left sounding like a Grot with cranial distemper or merely incomprehensible. More likely, a character may find that his voice fluctuates depending on the situation.

At the beginning of the game session, roll 1d10. If the result is a 4 or lower, the character gains +10 to Intimidate Skill Tests, but suffers –10 to Stealth Tests. If the result is a 5 or higher, he suffers –20 to all Interaction Tests. These effects last until the end of the game session.

Strange Walk

Any number of afflictions could result in the character suffering from a strange walk—from a minor change in proportions to an acute imbalance of the mind. This may result in the character gaining a disturbing gait, perhaps appearing to slide across the ground, or something more debilitating, such as a crabwise shuffle or a rigid, straight-legged march.

The character's movement rate is halved.

Tail

The powers of the warp have granted the character the gift of an impressive tail. More than a mere status symbol, the tail makes a formidable weapon too.

The character gains an additional attack, made using the tail and counting as a normal, unarmed attack.

Khorne: The gift takes the form of a scorpion's tail and has the Toxic Quality.

Slaanesh: The tail takes the form of a writhing, darting tentacle, and attacks made with it add +20 to the character's Weapon Skill.

Nurgle: The tail resembles the gristly abdomen of a huge fly, the tip of which seeps a noxious gruel of vile liquid. The effect is to reduce the Initiative of all enemies within 20 metres by 20.

Tzeentch: The tail is prehensile and dextrous, and may be used to carry and operate a weapon, just like a normal arm.

Tentacle

One of the character's limbs shrivels and warps into a boneless tentacle or, in some cases, a writhing mass of them extending from where the limb once was.

Randomly determine which limb is affected. If it is an arm then the character may not bear any weapons with that limb (in effect, he can only wield one-handed weapons). If it is a leg then his movement rate is reduced by 1. However, having a tentacle does give him a +10 bonus to Grapple Tests and, may allow him to reach into tight spaces such as ventilation ducts.

Vampiric Addiction

The character is infused with a burning desire to partake of a particular substance and, soon becomes unable to function normally without doing so on a regular basis. Despite the drawbacks, the character is able to draw power from his addiction, which he utilises to propel himself further along the path to glory.

The character is addicted to a substance chosen by the player with the GM's approval. The substance should be something obtained from a living creature, such as the blood, marrow, or cranial fluid. In any session in which the character partakes of this substance, he counts his Infamy Points as one higher than normal for the remainder of the session. If he does not partake in the substance by the end of the session, he permanently loses 1 Toughness. Note that it is not necessarily vital that the victim "providing" the substance die in the process, meaning the character could theoretically use his minions as willing (or not-so-willing) donors.

Warp-Eater

Physical sustenance tastes as ashes to the character and, instead of imbibing normal food and drink, he must derive nourishment from the infinite fount of the warp. Doing so carries certain risks, however.

The character need never eat or drink, and so may survive for extended periods while others wither away and die. However, once per month he must take a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test**. If he fails, he gains 1d5+1 Corruption as if from a Failing.

Khorne: Followers of Khorne may assuage their warp hunger by slaying the foes of the Blood God. For every foe slain throughout the month, the character gains a +5 bonus to the Toughness Test.

Slaanesh: Those who serve the Dark Prince of Chaos may slake their thirst through acts of blasphemy and excess. For every such deed committed, the character gains a +10 bonus to the Toughness Test.

Nurgle: By gifting mortals with the delights of Nurgle, the character may keep his hunger at bay. For every victim he infects with disease, or kills with an attack with the Toxic Quality, the character gains a +5 bonus to the Toughness Test.

Tzeentch: To the followers of the Great Schemer, lies and deceit are more delicious than the finest wine. For every lie of consequence told to further one's own goals, the character gains a +10 bonus to the Toughness Test.

Warp-Touched

Those who pursue glory by walking the path of Chaos are all but immune to what mortals call madness, for they have already seen and done things that would shatter the frail minds of the Emperor's lapdogs. However, some are afflicted by such capricious or contrary natures that they appear all but insane to others, expressing themselves and pursuing goals all but impenetrable to many around them.

The character must roll on a Disorder Table (page 278) appropriate to the character's Alignment. If the character is unaligned, then the GM chooses a Disorder Table to roll on.

Warped Appearance

The character's appearance mutates and changes with the Immaterium's touch, making him utterly unmistakable.

The player and GM should work together to determine some way the character's appearance has warped, whether it be skin stained with coloured blotches, purple hair, black veins running beneath the skin, or something even more hideous. Whatever the cosmetic affect, the character suffers a –20 to any Tests made to disguise himself or cover up his appearance.

Warpsight

The character is able to see the world as it really is – the souls of mortals gutter like lanterns in the night while the predators of the warp circle all about like sharks scenting blood.

The character literally sees the souls of his enemy. All Awareness Tests gain a +10 bonus; however, any Scrutiny Tests suffer a –10 penalty as the character is less able to see such mundane things as facial expressions.

Winged

The Ruinous Power hear the character's pleas for aid and bestow upon him a pair of mighty pinions with which he is able to soar through the air and visit death from above upon the heads of his enemies.

The character gains the Flyer Trait at a movement rate equal to his Agility Bonus x 2.

Khorne: The character's wings are black and bat-like.

Slaanesh: Gossamer-thin pinions sprout from the character's back.

Nurgle: The character's wings are those of an overgrown fly.

Tzeentch: The wings are feathered, like those of a Greater Daemon of Tzeentch.

Wreathed in Chaos

The warp so infuses the character that it leaks from his very pores and coils from his eyes, nose, and mouth.

The character gains a +10 bonus to all Interaction Skill Tests with fellow Disciples of the Dark Gods. Against others, such as xenos or inhabitants of the hated Imperium, he gains a +10 to Intimidate Tests only.

Khorne: The heat of Khorne's infernal forges causes the air around the character to ripple and distort. When engaged in melee, his enemies suffer a –10 penalty to their Weapon Skill.

Slaanesh: The character is enveloped in a soporific musk, which distracts and confuses opponents. All enemies within 10 metres suffer –10 Willpower.

Nurgle: A cloud of disease-ridden flies constantly buzzes around the character. All enemies within 10 metres suffer –5 Initiative.

Tzeentch: Arcs of aetheric power crackle and seethe from the character's body, grounding through anything he touches. The character adds +2 to melee Damage rolls.

Table 9-2: Limb Table

Use this table when a Gift calls to determine a limb to be affected.

D100 Roll	Limb
01-16	Right Arm
17-23	Right Hand
24-31	Right Hand Fingers
32-47	Left Arm
48-55	Left Hand
56-63	Left Hand Fingers
64-71	Right Leg
72-79	Right Foot
80-82	Right Foot Toes
83-90	Left Leg
91-97	Left Foot
98-100	Left Foot Toes

Table: 9-3 Bodily Location Table

Use this table when a Gift calls to determine a location on a character's body.

D100 Roll	Limb
1-5	Head
6-9	Face
10-21	Neck
22-37	Right Arm
38-53	Left Arm
54-70	Torso
71-87	Right Leg
88-100	Left Leg

Table 9-4: Random Creatures

Use this table when required to randomly generate an animal, for example when a character becomes a hybrid or takes on the characteristics of a particular creature.

D100 Roll	Creature
1	Avian
2	Cattle (Grox, Bull, Ram, Goat, etc.)
3-4	Insect
5-6	Primate
7-8	Reptile
9-10	Vermin

Rewards of the Dark Gods

Those characters that are Dedicated to one of the four Dark Gods of Chaos are entitled to generate a reward of their patron god instead of rolling for a Gift of the Gods. To do this, the character must first pass a Challenging (+0) Infamy Test. Success means that he has gained the attention of his patron god, who bestows a reward upon him and he may roll on the relevant table. Failure means he must generate a Gift of the Gods instead.

Note that some of these Rewards are Marks of the various Chaos Gods. These work in the same way as the Marks found on page 78. If a character already has a Mark, then he must reroll this result. However, he can gain a Mark as a Reward without having 20 advances in that God—he need only have 5 advances (counting as Devoted). If he ever leaves the path of Devotion to that God, he loses the Mark as described on page 78.

REWARDS OF SLAANESH

To gain the fell attentions of the Dark Prince of Chaos, a would-be champion must drive his body and soul beyond every excess in the eternal quest for perfection. He must mould himself into a living embodiment of unremitting sacrilege and dark perfection. Few survive the quest, but for those who do, an entirely unheard of dimension of sensation and experience awaits.

Daemonic Name

The character is granted a secret name, derived from the impossible vowels and consonants voiced in the sibilant, lilting tongue of the servants of Slaanesh.

The character gains+1d5 Infamy. However, if the name is ever discovered by a foe the foe gains the use of an additional Infamy Point (or Fate Point) when battling this character. The most powerful servants of Chaos gain countless names, and so this gift may be taken multiple times.

Daemon Weapon

The character is gifted with one of the most cherished blessings a servants of the Ruinous Powers can ever receive—a Daemon Weapon, imbued with the essence of a daemon of Chaos.

The character may generate a Daemon Weapon, bound with the essence of a Daemonette, as described on page 192.

Face of Slaanesh

The visage of the Dark Prince of Chaos is, to most mere mortals at least, both utterly horrifying and achingly beautiful to behold. Neither male nor female, human nor alien, it transfixes the soul and obliterates all other desires. Having looked upon such a face, all others are mere empty husks. The character's face assumes the merest fraction of Slaanesh's countenance and all who look upon him are utterly enslaved by his dark allure.

The character gains the Fear 2 (Frightening) Trait (or increases his Fear Rating by +1 to a maximum of 4 if he already has it) plus the Peer (Mortal Followers of Slaanesh) Talent.

Hermaphrodite

Slaanesh is said to be both male and female, and neither, for mere mortal perception cannot begin to quantify its true nature and such terms are but pale shadows of the terrible truth. The character's body is changed to reflect something of this state, assuming the characteristic single breast so common amongst the servants of the Dark Prince of Chaos, as well as features that are disturbingly attractive yet ultimately sexless. The character becomes an object of adoration to all around him, whether male or female, and finds his own identity assuming an amorphous, genderless quality where such petty mortal qualities as masculinity and femininity become meaningless.

Whenever the character passes any Interaction Test, double the number of Degrees of Success by which it is passed.

Mark of Slaanesh

So driven is the character, so darkly does his soul shine in the stygian depths of the Sea of Souls, that he attracts the fleeting notice of the Dark Prince of Chaos. Slaanesh touches the character, bestowing upon him his mark and claiming his soul for all eternity. Having been touched in such a manner, the character is driven to such extremes of ambition and desire that entire worlds will tremble to hear his name, and no experience is forbidden to his dark desire.

The character gains the Heightened Senses (All) Talent and the Unnatural Fellowship (+2) Trait. In addition, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM, and may be a prerequisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp, etc.

One Thousand and One Senses

Those most touched by the power of the Dark Prince are driven to ever-greater extremes of experience, the sensations of the material universe growing duller by the year. Most find themselves prisoners of their own senses and unable to experience sensations beyond those perceptible to the mortal body they were born into. The character has been gifted with an entirely new and previously unheard of array of sensory perceptions, the merest of which makes those he was born with pale into insignificance. Armed with his new perceptions, he sets out into the universe once more, determined to experience each to the fullest extent possible.

Whenever the character passes an Awareness Skill Test, double the number of Degrees of Success by which it is passed.

Table 9-5: Rewards of Slaanesh

D100 Roll	Reward Received
01-16	Daemonic Name
17-32	Daemon Weapon
33-48	Face of Slaanesh
49-64	Hermaphrodite
65-84	Mark of Slaanesh
85-100	One Thousand and One Senses

Mutations and Time

It is assumed that any mutations a Heretic receives appear at some point during the campaign's downtime, some appearing in a flash of blinding light, others growing over the course of a few days. This is especially suitable when the PCs are assumed to have returned to their lair and there is no immediate threat or demand on their time. However, sometimes a Gift of Chaos might be earned after a gaming session that ended on a cliffhanger, in which case the player would not have time to go off and pray or perform any other ritual to call on the aid of the Ruinous Powers. The GM might delay the process to a more convenient time, or it could be assumed that the character utters a hurried request for aid in the midst of a battle and, amazingly, the Dark Gods answer. The Games Master might decide to award the Gift instantly, or it could take a few hours or days to "grow in," depending on the Gift and the situation in which the recipient finds himself. Depending on the nature of the mutation, the character might undergo some temporary disablement—an arm mutating into a tentacle might be entirely useless until the process is complete, for example.

Rewards of Nurgle

Unlike his brother the Blood God, Grandfather Nurgle is ever-willing to answer the pleas of the weak and the dispossessed. To the Plague God, such pathetic mewling is a joyful chorus and it is his greatest pleasure to grant eternal life to those on the verge of death. Even greater is the jest that in accepting his gift, they damn themselves for an eternity and become the means by which countless more contract Nurgle's glorious plagues.

Corpulent Immensity

The character's frame swells and distorts until he comes to resemble the massive form of Papa Nurgle himself. His innards bloat and swell, his skin sloughs off, and pus weeps from open sores, yet he is blessed with a vigour and strength entirely at odds with his appearance.

The character gains an additional +5 Wounds, but may not make a Run Action. He also gains the Size (Enormous) Trait.

Daemonic Name

Nurgle's tallymen know the name of every disease ever to beset the mortal realm and they know the true name of the character too. The name is revealed to the recipient and bestowed upon him, granting him equal status to the denizens of Father Nurgle's bountiful Garden of Decay.

The character gains +1d5 Infamy. However, if the name is ever discovered by a foe, the foe gains the use of an additional Infamy Point (or Fate Point) when battling this character. The most powerful servants of Chaos gain countless names, and so this gift may be taken multiple times.

Daemon Weapon
The character is gifted with one of the most cherished blessings a servant of the Ruinous Powers can ever receive—a Daemon Weapon, imbued with the essence of a daemon of Chaos.

The character may generate a Daemon Weapon, bound with the essence of a Plaguebearer, as described on page 192 in the Armoury Chapter.

Face of Nurgle
The character is blessed with the most disgusting visage possible—that of Father Nurgle himself. His flesh becomes swollen and great lumps of it slough off entirely, revealing putrescent corruption beneath. Despite his loathsome, deathly countenance, the character's eyes twinkle with Nurgle's mischievous humour and darkling beneficence, and tiny Nurglings prance and caper in the putrid phlegm drooling from his ever-grinning maw.

The character gains the Fear 2 (Frightening) Trait (or increases his Fear Rating by +1 to a maximum of 4 if he already has it) plus the Peer (Mortal Followers of Nurgle) Talent.

Mark of Nurgle
The character is branded as a servant of Grandfather Nurgle and a place in the eternal cavalcade through the Gardens of the Plaguefather is reserved for him.

The character gains the Stuff of Nightmares and Unnatural Toughness (+1) Traits. In addition to these Talents, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM and may be a prerequisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp.

Nurgle's Rot
Nurgle's Rot is the most virulent and pleasing of all of Nurgle's countless plagues, and the character is blessed to be its host. While the character himself does not fall victim to the rot, his very touch can bestow it upon another, consuming and destroying it.

The character may spend a Full Action and roll a d100. If he rolls equal to or under his Corruption Point Total (in effect, he Tests Corruption) everyone within a number of metres equal to his Corruption Point bonus suffers 1d10 Damage with the Tainted and Toxic (4) qualities. The Damage from this power ignores Armour unless it is environmentally sealed. Those Devoted to Nurgle are unaffected by this power.

Nurgling Infestation
The character's skin stretches and writhes as loathsome shapes gestate beneath its surface. Soon after, the shapes become boils and then seeping pustules from which tiny Nurglings are hatched. These tiny creatures live in the recesses of the character's body, finding warmth and sustenance in the most unlikely of places. They are fiercely loyal to their host and fight viscously to defend their home from attack.

Once per combat the character may spill its distended guts and, in so doing, instantly summon a number of Nurglings equal to its Toughness Bonus.

Table 9-6: Rewards of Nurgle

D100 Roll	Reward Received
01-14	Corpulent Immensity
15-28	Daemonic Name
29-42	Daemon Weapon
43-56	Face of Nurgle
56-72	Mark of Nurgle
73-86	Nurgle's Rot
87-100	Nurgling Infestation

Rewards of Khorne
Few indeed are the warriors who gain any notice from the Lord of Battles, but those who do are truly amongst the most potent of fighters in the entire galaxy. Many come to lead vast hordes of blood-hungry savages, conquering worlds, systems, and sectors using the power they have been granted. In truth, Khorne cares nothing for these champions, for the strongest are strongest alone and only the weak seek the aid of others.

Collar of Khorne
A brass collar, cruelly spiked and engraved with the sigils of the Blood God, materialises around the character's neck. Forged in Khorne's weapons-foundries, it may never be removed, but its blessings will protect the recipient from enemy sorcerers.

This gift works in the same manner as the Blood God's Contempt Talent (see page 120), except no Willpower Test is required to resist psychic powers.



Daemonic Name
The Blood God turns his vast consciousness towards the character for but the briefest instant, and recognises the mortal as one of his own. He bestows, or reveals, the character's true name, as he is known to the denizens of the Realm of Chaos.

The character gains +1d5 Infamy. However, if the name is ever discovered by a foe the foe gains the use of an additional Infamy Point (or Fate Point) when battling this character. The most powerful servants of Chaos gain countless names, and so this gift may be taken multiple times.

Daemon Weapon
The character is gifted with one of the most cherished blessings a servant of the Ruinous Powers can ever receive—a Daemon Weapon, imbued with the essence of a daemon of Chaos..

The character may generate a Daemon Weapon, bound with the essence of a Bloodletter, as described on page 192.

Face of Khorne
The Blood God bestows upon the character something of his own visage—or a manifestation of it that mortals might be able to perceive, at least. The face is the very essence of bloodshed, its eyes shining with the inner light of Khorne's bone-furnaces and the nostrils billowing the thick black smoke of every funeral pyre ever burnt.

The character gains the Fear 2 (Frightening) Trait (or increases his Fear Rating by +1 to a maximum of 4 if he already has it), plus the Peer (Mortal Followers of Khorne) Talent.

Flesh-Fused Weapon
The Blood God answers the champion's prayers by instilling one of his favoured weapons with a portion of his power and fusing it with the champion's own body.

One of the character's primary weapons fuses with one of the character's arms. This weapon may not be removed, but it counts as Best-Craftsmanship if it did not previously, never requires maintenance, cannot be destroyed, and never runs out of ammunition. This weapon may be made into a Legacy Weapon.

Hand of Khorne
One of the character's hands swells to two or three times its former size and the nails become distended and as hard as iron. The Hand of Khorne is the tool by which the Blood God's will is enacted, and that will is nothing less than the slaughter of every living soul in existence.

Attacks made with the Hand of Khorne do not count as Unarmed and deal 2d10 plus Strength Bonus Damage with a Penetration of 8. (see page 243).

Mark of Khorne
The fell skull rune of Khorne is branded on the character's flesh, claiming his soul for the Blood God for all time and marking him as one of Khorne's Chosen.

The character gains the Resistance (Psychic Powers) Talent, the Brutal Charge Trait, and Unnatural Strength (+2) if he does not already have them. In addition to these Talents, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM and may be a pre-requisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp, etc.

Purity of Aggression
The character is blessed with the utter clarity of Khorne's will, all emotions other than those that fuel bloodshed driven from his mind. No foe is beyond his hatred, and the feeling is mutual.

The character gains the Enemy (Everyone) Talent, as well as the Hatred (Everyone) Talent.

Table 9-7: Rewards of Khorne

D100 Roll	Reward Received
01-12	Collar of Khorne
13-24	Daemonic Name
25-36	Daemon Weapon
37-48	Face of Khorne
49-60	Flesh-Fused Weapon
61-72	Hand of Khorne
73-88	Mark of Khorne
89-100	Purity of Aggression

Rewards of Tzeentch
To attain the blessings of the Changer of the Ways, a mortal must demonstrate the ability to perceive something of his impossible schemes, see the nature of reality for what it truly is, and bend that reality to his own will. In accepting Tzeentch's gifts, the mortal is granted power and perspective that would shatter the minds of all but one in a million—even a billion—men.

Changing of the Ways
Exposure to the raw, unknowable will of Tzeentch causes the character to undergo a complete change in his outward appearance and he assumes a form more pleasing to the God of Change.

The character loses consciousness for d10 hours, and when he awakens finds that all of the gifts he has previously been granted are gone, and replaced with new ones. Randomly generate replacements for each gift, ensuring that the new gifts fall under the same categories as those they are replacing. If the character does not have any mutations, reroll.

Daemon Weapon
The character is gifted with one of the most cherished blessings a servant of the Ruinous Powers can ever receive—a Daemon Weapon, imbued with the essence of a daemon of Chaos.

The character may generate a Daemon Weapon, bound with the essence of a Horror, as described on page 192.

Daemonic Name
The character calls upon Tzeentch and Tzeentch recognises one of his own, revealing to the recipient the name by which he is known in the Realm of Chaos.

The character gains +1d5 Infamy. However, if the name is ever discovered by a foe the foe gains the use of an additional Infamy Point (or Fate Point) when battling this character. The most powerful servants of Chaos gain countless names, and so this gift may be taken multiple times.

Ecstatic Duplication

The character is granted a most bizarre reward—one that truly befits Tzeentch's inscrutable ways. Upon his death, the character's body dissolves and melts, running in greater shimmering rivulets until its mass reforms into two Blue Horrors, the lesser daemons of Tzeentch.

If the character dies, he is immediately replaced by two Blue Horrors (see page 354), which the player may control for the remainder of the Encounter. Don't forget that these two lesser daemons each become two Pink Horrors should they be slain. The character may still burn Infamy to survive, in which case he returns at the beginning of the next game session after congealing out of the remains of the daemons he became.

Face of Tzeentch

The God of Change grants the character a face resembling his own. His features pucker and take on something of the inscrutable visage of Tzeentch, they shift and change constantly, his eyes, nose, and mouth moving around his face in a most disturbing manner.

The character gains the Fear 2 (Frightening) Trait (or increases his Fear Rating by +1 to a maximum of 4 if he already has it), plus the Peer (Mortal Followers of Tzeentch) Talent.

Flaming Arm

One of the character's arms is replaced with the arm of a Flamer of Tzeentch, and he is able to project from its blunt tip a stream of mutating flame.

One randomly determined arm is replaced by that of a Flamer of Tzeentch, a twisting limb capped with a hand that can become a gaping, tooth-ringed mouth that belches flame. The Character may use it to make ranged attacks as if it was a weapon with the following profile: (10m; S/–/–; 1d10+Intelligence Bonus E Damage; Pen 0; Spray, Tainted, Warp Weapon).

Massive Intellect

Exposure to the will of Tzeentch gifts the character with a vastly swollen intellect, enabling him to perceive something of the God of Change's great scheme and align his own thoughts and deeds with it.

Whenever the character passes a Logic Skill Test, double the number of Degrees of Success by which it is passed.

Mark of Tzeentch

Tzeentch shares with the character but a minute portion of his grand scheme for the universe, just enough to empower the recipient without blasting his soul to a cinder. The character is marked forever, the arcane rune of Tzeentch burned into his flesh and his soul claimed by the God of Change.

The character gains the Unnatural Willpower (+1) Trait and the Psy Rating (+1) Talent. If he does not already have it, he also gains the Psyker Trait. He now counts as a Bound psyker, as the reward binds him to Tzeentch. In addition to these Talents, the Mark may grant further bonuses as determined by the GM, and may be a prerequisite when performing rituals and interacting with various beings of the warp.

Warpsmith

The character is rewarded with the ability to manipulate the tides of the warp as if he were born in its unknowable depths and not the mortal realm.

The character gains the Psy Rating (+2) Talent, plus the Psyker Trait if he does not already have it. He now counts as a Bound psyker, as the reward binds him to Tzeentch.

Chaos Can Be Pretty Chaotic Sometimes…

Chaos is a gloriously anarchic thing, and it is entirely unshackled by the petty laws of the material universe. It is anachronistic and illogical, and rarely makes sense. However, when it comes to character development this can present some issues, such as seemingly incompatible combinations of mutations. Obviously, a character whose legs and lower torso have been replaced with a maggot form can't develop cloven hooves, as he has no feet to mutate. Players and Games Masters should always strive to imagine how the characters' mutations actually manifest and, if a particular result appears not to make any sense and no justification for it can be imagined, simply reroll the result. This should never be used as an excuse to reject undesirable Gifts, however, and the GM's guidance and permission must be sought first.

In addition, players may find that many mutations alter the character's form to such an extent that they find wearing conventional armour or operating some devices difficult or impossible. A character who likes to wear power armour and who grows an additional head for example will have to have his armour altered by his heretek attendants. This issue should be borne in mind by players and GMs, and the Infamy system used to have the armour, weapon, etc. altered or replaced if necessary.

Table 9-8: Rewards of Tzeentch

D100 Roll	Reward Received
01-11	Changing of the Ways
12-22	Daemonic Name
23-33	Daemon Weapon
34-44	Ecstatic Duplication
45-55	Face of Tzeentch
56-66	Flaming Arm
67-78	Mark of Tzeentch
79-89	Massive Intellect
90-100	Warpsmith

Infamy

"My name is Crox, Warlord of Warlords. Look upon my works, ye mighty, and despair!"

–Inscribed upon a shattered monument on Ch'Kar

Infamy is the tenth Characteristic for characters in **Black Crusade** and is a Characteristic not all characters possess. In many ways, it follows all the rules for Characteristics as listed on page 34 and is very similar to Weapon Skill, Strength, Intelligence, and the rest. However, Infamy has additional rules as well, which sets this Characteristic apart from the others.

In **Black Crusade**, Infamy is the mechanical representation of a character's reputation and standing amongst his allies, enemies, and the dark and terrible powers that inhabit the warp. It is also a representation of a character's force of will, his legendary status. A character with a high Infamy Characteristic does not simply have a reputation as an infamous and powerful individual—his high Infamy means that in some ways he is a more powerful individual.

Infamy allows Heretics to perform amazing feats, accomplish herculean tasks, and even survive certain death.

However, just as Infamy can be gained, it can also be lost. Death, dishonour, and defeat can all reduce Infamy, leaving a Heretic unknown and unheralded, one more damned soul in a galaxy of ignoble failures. Such a fate is often worse than death, and can damn one as surely as a bolt shell to the brain.

Infamy is intertwined with Corruption, and both complement and interact with the other. The relationship between Infamy and Corruption is discussed later in this section.

Gaining Infamy

Infamy can be gained in several ways, and gaining Infamy is one of the principle goals of **Black Crusade** characters. A more accomplished, powerful Heretic is likely to have more Infamy, whereas new Heretics start with a much smaller amount.

All **Black Crusade** characters start with 19+1d5 Infamy. They gain additional Infamy through one of the following ways.

Purchase as an Advance

The first way to gain Infamy is the most typical for Characteristics. Heretics can spend experience points to purchase advancements in Infamy (see page 77). This follows all the rules for purchasing Characteristic advancements, with two differences. The first is that Infamy has a single experience point cost for each +5 advancement purchase, which is more expensive than most Characteristic advancement costs. The cost to purchase +5 Infamy is always **500 experience**. In addition, so long as a character's Infamy is 40 or higher, the character cannot purchase Infamy via experience points. The second difference is there is no limit to the number of times one may purchase an Infamy advancement (so long as his Infamy is below 40).

This represents a Heretic gaining Infamy (renown and reputation) through his actions, he is literally leveraging his experiences to gain fame. This is the easiest way to gain Infamy, but it's also the most expensive. A Heretic who spends all his experience to gain Infamy may find himself without other Skills.

Gain as a Reward

The second way to gain Infamy is through rewards. Just like spending experience points represents a Heretic leveraging his experience to gain renown, a Heretic's deeds often directly result in him gaining Infamy. In fact, a Compact's most common reward is additional Infamy (see page 274).

This is an appealing way to gain Infamy, as the Heretic does not have to spend experience points. However, a Compact's rewards can be hard to obtain and failure can result in harsh penalties. For most Heretics, the wisest course of action is a balance between purchasing Infamy and winning it through accomplishments.

Benefits of Infamy

Infamy offers a great many benefits, the first and foremost of which is a set of abilities similar to Fate Points (for more information on what Fate Points are, see page 363). Unlike other games in the Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay universe, **Black Crusade**'s PCs do not gain Fate Points. This is because Fate is a representation of the God-Emperor's favour, and Heretics in **Black Crusade** have strayed far from His light. However, Heretics make their own luck, through their own prowess and the capricious favour of their vicious gods.



Infamy Points

Instead of Fate Points, Heretics possess Infamy Points. Infamy Points are very similar to Fate Points. Heretics can spend them to accomplish certain exceptional abilities during games. The primary difference is how they are earned, and how they are lost.

Each Heretic has a number of Infamy Points equal to his Infamy Characteristic Bonus. Therefore, a Heretic with an Infamy of 38 would have 3 Infamy Points, as the tens value of his Infamy is 3. During a game session, a Heretic may spend Infamy Points to accomplish certain exceptional abilities. Infamy Points spent in this way are replenished at the start of the next game session.

Table 9-9 Infamy Abilities

CP Level	Infamy Bonus
0-20	• The Heretic immediately removes all levels of Fatigue he is currently suffering. • The Heretic immediately heals 1d5 Wounds, and any Critical Damage (though the effects of any Critical Damage or Critical Hits are not removed). • The Heretic may add a +10 bonus to a single Test before rolling.
21-60	• The Heretic immediately heals 1d5+1 Wounds and any Critical Damage (though the effects of any Critical Damage or Critical Hits are not removed). • The Heretic may reroll any failed Characteristic Test, using the same penalties and bonuses as the original Test. He must use the results of the second roll. Only one re-roll per Test is allowed. • The Heretic may add one Degree of Success to a successful Test.
61-100	• The Heretic immediately heals 1d10 Wounds and any Critical Damage (though the effects of any Critical Damage or Critical Hits are not removed). • The Heretic rolls a 10 for his Initiative Roll. • The Heretic immediately recovers from being Stunned.

Exceptional Abilities

The first benefit of Infamy is that each Heretic gains certain exceptional abilities. These abilities allow the Heretic to manipulate situations by mitigating bad results or turning mishaps into fortune, and Heretics with more Infamy can do this more often than Heretics with less. This may be because the Chaos Powers favour those more renowned and infamous for their dark deeds, or simply because those who have gained such infamy are more skilled and simply better than the average individual.

Table 9-9: Infamy Abilities lists the exceptional abilities gained through Infamy.

Notice that what exceptional abilities the Heretic may use depend on the number of Corruption Points the Heretic has accrued. At 0-20 Corruption, the Heretic's abilities are comparatively minor (though still useful), while at 21-60 and 61-100, the abilities become much more powerful. Therefore, a Heretic who wants to gain more from his Infamy's abilities must also increase his Corruption Point total, allowing the essence of the warp to permeate and change him.

It should be noted that a Heretic can always use the exceptional abilities of a lower tier, as well as the tier his Corruption Point total currently places him on. Certain abilities improve in higher tiers, however.

Finally, those who dedicate themselves to a specific Chaos Power (see page 74) find their exceptional abilities change as well, as to better represent the power they've dedicated themselves to. **Table 9-10: Infamy Abilities and Chaos Powers** lists these changes. In each case, one of the Infamy abilities is amplified, while others are decreased or lost. However, those who remain undedicated use the Infamy abilities listed in **Table 9-9** unchanged. They do not gain these special bonuses, but they do not sacrifice anything in return either.

Unless stated otherwise, (such as abilities that apply to making Characteristic Tests), a Heretic may use these exceptional abilities at any point during their turn.

As stated previously, each Heretic may use these special abilities up to a number of times equal to their Infamy bonus during a single game session.

Attaining Items

The second use for Infamy is attaining items. Unlike the Imperium of Man, the Realms of Chaos and the outcast worlds beyond the Imperium's light have no economy, little societal structure, and certainly no currency. A Heretic cannot simply purchase the items he needs at some sort of bazaar or store. Rather, if he cannot scavenge or pillage what he needs, he must obtain it from his fellow outcasts and renegades through a complex web of favours, bribes, influence, and outright extortion.

In **Black Crusade**, this is represented through Infamy Tests. Infamy, like every other Characteristic, can be Tested, and successful Tests may allow the Heretic to obtain items or services from the world around him.

The process can be divided into two parts. The first is determining what the Heretic wants to purchase and whether that

Table 9-10: Infamy Abilities and Chaos Powers

Chaos God	Infamy Bonus	Infamy Drawback
Nurgle	At all Tiers, when rolling to regain Wounds by spending Infamy Points, the Heretic always counts as rolling the maximum number.	The Heretic may not spend Infamy Points to reroll failed Characteristic Tests.
Khorne	At Tier 2, the Heretic may spend 1 Infamy Point to instantly succeed on a Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Characteristic Test with one Degree of Success. The Heretic may only do this if he has not already rolled the Test.	When rolling to regain Wounds by spending Infamy Points, the Heretic reduces the number of Wounds regained by 2, to a minimum of 1.
Slaneesh	At Tier 2, when suffering a Critical Hit, the Heretic may immediately spend 1 Infamy Point to ignore any effects generated by that hit, except for permanent limb or appendage loss, death, and becoming Stunned.	The Heretic may not spend Infamy Points to recover from being Stunned.
Tzeentch	At Tier 1, the Heretic may spend Infamy Points to add one Degree of Success to a successful Test. At Tier 2, the Heretic may spend Infamy Points to add 1d5 Degrees of Success to a successful Test.	The Heretic may not spend Infamy Points to gain a +10 bonus to a Characteristic Test.

is available based on their location. Essentially, certain locations are less likely to have certain items than other locations—a world of feudal tribes is unlikely to have lasguns and plasma weapons may be completely unheard of, while a corrupted Forge run by a Dark Mechanicus Magos may provide such tech-relics with ease.

The second step is to make the Test to acquire the item. The Infamy Test is modified based on the rarity of the item, the craftsmanship of the item, and the number of items the Heretic wishes. The following examines both of these steps in detail.

Determining Availability

Before obtaining an item or service, the Heretic must determine if the item or service is currently available in the location he currently occupies. This is done by following these steps:

- The player determines what item or service his character wants, and informs the GM.
- The player looks up the Availability of the item or service.
- The GM then determines whether the item is likely to be available in the Heretic's current location. When doing this, the GM should use his own judgement, but remember that a rare tech-relic might be available even on the most primitive worlds. It just may be much harder to get (see **Table 9-11**). However, if the GM decides the item is impossible to obtain, this is the last word on the matter. The Heretic will have to search elsewhere. If it is available, the player and GM proceed to the Test.

Acquisition Test

To obtain the item or service, the Heretic makes an Infamy Test. The difficulty of the Test is modified by four factors, and all modifiers (positive and negative) should be included before the Test is made. The four factors are as follows:

- The Availability Rating of the item or service.
- The quantity of the item(s) or service(s).
- The Craftsmanship of the item or service.
- The rarity modifiers based on the current location.
- Each of these modifiers can be found on **Table 9-11** Infamy Test Modifiers.

Once all modifiers have been determined, the Heretic makes the modified Infamy Test. If he succeeds, he obtains the item or service. If he fails, he does not. He may not try to obtain that item or service again unless his circumstances change—i.e., his Infamy increases, he travels to a different location, or he accomplishes something in game that would make obtaining the item or service he was looking for more likely.

If the total modifiers add up to more than 100, the Heretic obtains the item without having to roll. Clearly, such a trivial item is almost beneath such a powerful individual's notice. However, if the total modifiers add up to less than 0, then the item is completely unavailable and the Heretic may not roll for it at all.

Players and GMs should both note, however, that these are simply the bare mechanics for obtaining items and services. In the course of playing **Black Crusade**, this process should never be as simple (and frankly, boring) as a series of dice rolls. Instead, the GM and player should collaborate to narrate the process.

At its core, Acquisition Tests are a Heretic using his reputation to obtain what he wants. Therefore, one of the first things the GM should consider is where and whom this item might be coming from, since it's unlikely to appear from nothing. The options are practically unlimited, but could include:

The headman of a feral tribe on a warp-ravaged planet has hoarded a collection of items passed down amongst his people for generations. He may offer one to appease a powerful warrior of the Dark Gods.

A pirate reaver crew may make their plunder available to those of sufficient power and renown in exchange for something in return.

The Dark Mechanicus Magos of a corrupted Forge could offer an item to a renowned Chaos disciple, either to enlist his aid or to avoid bringing wrath and ruin upon his Forge.

The player, for his part, should consider whether his character is obtaining the items through charm and guile, promises of aid or trade, or even the threat of terrible retribution. The success or failure of the Test shows whether his tactics were successful or not, and also may provide future plot devices. If a rival warband denies the Heretic aid, he may return in the future for revenge, while a tribe that gifts the Heretic with an ancient power sword may be valuable allies in future efforts.

Finally, note that any attempts to use Infamy to obtain items on an Imperial world suffer a –10 penalty in addition to any other penalties.

Table 9-11 Acquisition Test Modifiers

Availability	Modifier	Example
Ubiquitous	+70	-
Abundant	+50	-
Plentiful	+30	-
Common	+20	-
Average	+10	
Scarce	+0	
Rare	-10	
Very Rare	-20	
Extremely Rare	-30	
Near-Unique	-50	
Unique	-70	

Amount	Modifier	Example
Single	+10	1 item
Minor	+0	2-4 items
Significant	–10	5-10 items
Vast	–20	11-100 items
Legion	–40	101-1000 items
Impposible	–60	1001+ items

Craftsmanship	Modifier	Example
Poor	+10	Bone weapon
Common	+0	Common robes
Good	–10	Heretek-crafted weapon
Best	–20	Finely-wrought weapon crafted by a Dark Mechanicus Magos



Obtaining Services

Sometimes a Heretic may require the services of individuals outside his warband. This could be anything from a daemonic familiar to a warband of Chaos Space Marines.

Obtaining services is accomplished following the same rules as obtaining items—through an Infamy Test. The GM should set an Availability for the service, using **Table 9-13** as a guide. The GM should also consider how long the service lasts. As a note, this method of obtaining services should only be used if those performing the service are subservient to the Heretic. If the Heretic is trying to convince his equals to perform a task, he should use an Opposed Infamy Test as dictated in "Manipulating Others."

Manipulating Others

Heretics may well find that they must convince others to do their bidding, either subtly or directly. This may be a power struggle between rival warbands deep within the Screaming Vortex or compelling a hive world cult. In this case, the GM can require a contested Infamy Test.

Using Infamy to manipulate others takes the form of an opposed Test between the Heretic's Infamy versus the Infamy of the individual or organisation he is trying to manipulate. Both sides Test against their Infamy characteristic. Whoever scores the greater number of successes (or less failures), wins the Test. If the individual or organisation does not have an Infamy Characteristic, the GM can grant it an appropriate Infamy Characteristic for the purposes of the Test, using **Table 9-12** as a guide.

Should the Heretic win, he can force his opponent to do his bidding or obey his commands on a single specific topic. This does not grant the Heretic complete authority to force his opponent to obey his whims forever, however, and depending on how the Heretic interacts with his opponent, he may well create an implacable enemy for the future.

Obtaining Items and Services for Others

As each Heretic possesses his own Infamy Characteristic, it may occur to warbands to "game the system" and designate one of their own (the one with the highest Infamy) as the Heretic who handles obtaining all items for the entire group. Though this is acceptable on occasion, persistent use of this tactic goes against the spirit of Black Crusade, where each individual should rely on his own resources and resourcefulness to succeed. Therefore, GMs have access to the following optional rule:

The Perils of Dependence

When a Heretic makes an Infamy Test to obtain an item or service solely to give it to another member of his warband, the recipient of the item or service must make his own Infamy Test, with no modifiers. If he succeeds, he receives the "gift" with no penalties. However if he fails, his own Infamy decreases by 1. By relying on the "charity" of others, he proves himself subservient to others, and unable to rely on his own infamous reputation. Of course, those who pass the Test are apparently infamous enough that a certain number of "gifts" is simply to be expected as tribute to their greatness!

Death and Consequences

The third way Heretics use Infamy is to survive death. It is common for particularly renowned or infamous individuals to be thrust into deadly situations, only to survive against the odds and return to plague the galaxy later. In **Black Crusade**, the Heretics accomplish this by permanently sacrificing Infamy.

When a Heretic is killed (whether he suffers Critical Damage that results in death or dies by some other means such as drowning or suffocation) in a game of **Black Crusade**, instead of dying he may permanently reduce his Infamy Characteristic by a set amount to avoid death. This represents the Heretic avoiding his fate due to the skills and abilities that made him so infamous in the first place (or perhaps the Chaos Gods taking an interest in preserving a particularly renowned champion of theirs). However, his Infamy is permanently reduced because death—even a narrowly-avoided one or temporary one—is a failure of sorts. After all, it means that the Heretic was defeated, even if that defeat was not permanent.

When the Heretic is killed and wishes to sacrifice Infamy to survive, he can choose to decrease his Infamy permanently by 10+1d10. If he does so, he is incapacitated for the remainder of any combat or scene that he was participating in, and any future combats or scenes in the session. He may be able interact with other Heretics and NPCs, but is basically crippled and bedridden for the remainder of the game session. However, he cannot be killed by any other events during that session.

Table 9-12: Example Infamy Scores

Infamy Score	Example
0	A lowly servant beneath contempt.
1-5	Gangers, Mercenaries or Thugs.
6-9	Gang Leader or Mercenary Sergeant.
10-19	Crime Lord of a Small City, ruthless Mercenary Captain.
20-29	Commander of a Cruiser-class vessel, Seer who is "right" most of the time, Daemonhost, minor warband leader.
30-39	General of an army, Master of a hive.
40-49	Commander of a grand cruiser, conqueror of a world, strong warband leader.
50-59	Commander of a flotilla, Greater Daemon.
60-75	Mighty warband leader, commander of a Fleet.
76-90	Enslaver of multiple worlds.
91-100	Sorcerer who can destroy a world on a whim, a powerful Daemon Prince.
101-129	An ancient and powerful Greater Daemon who has the favour of its diety.
130-139	Supreme Commander of a Black Crusade into Imperial space.
140-149	A powerful and near-immortal agent of a Dark God such as Kharne the Betrayer.
150+	Abbadon the Despoiler

Trade

Often, a Heretic may find it more advantageous to trade for an item or service, rather than demand it outright. This may also prove useful if the Heretic has items he has obtained in the course of his adventures that he no longer wants. As stated previously, trading should be part of the roleplaying narrative between the player and the GM. However, here are the rules for the mechanical benefits from trading when making an Infamy Test to obtain items.

First, determine the Availability of the item and its subsequent modifier, as listed on **Table 9–11**. If the modifier is negative, trading it grants a positive modifier to the current Infamy Test equal to the opposite of the negative modifier. So, for example, trading a Rare hellpistol (normally a –10 modifier) would grant a +10 modifier to the current Infamy Test. If the modifier is positive, trading it grants a flat +5 modifier.

Next, determine the Craftsmanship of the item and its subsequent modifier, as listed on **Table 9–11**. If the modifier is negative, trading it grants a positive modifier to the current Infamy Test equal to the opposite of the negative modifier. So trading a Good Craftsmanship sword (normally a –10 modifier) would grant a +10 modifier to the current Infamy Test. If the modifier is positive (i.e., the item is poor or common craftsmanship) it grants no bonus to the Infamy Test.

Finally, determine the quantity of the items the player wishes to trade and their subsequent modifier, as listed on **Table 9–11**. If the modifier is negative, trading it grants a positive modifier to the current Infamy Test equal to the opposite of the negative modifier. So, for example, trading a three grenades (normally a –10 modifier) would grant a +10 modifier to the current Infamy Test. If trading a single item (normally a +0 modifier), it grants no bonus to the Infamy Test.

At the GM's discretion, items may grant higher or lower bonuses for trading than they would normally depending on the circumstances of the trade. For example, a Common Craftsmanship sword will grant a greater bonus on a Feral world because it is incredibly useful but beyond the local populace's ability to produce, whereas a Forge will likely find it an amusing trinket as best.

Alternatively, he can choose to decrease his Infamy permanently by 8+1d10. If he does so, he is reduced to one Wound, but is still able to fight and continue participating in combats and scenes during the session. However, this also means he can be killed again, as well.

In either situation, he also gains +1d10 Corruption Points for his Failure. This counts as a Failing, so if it would push him over a Corruption Point Threshold, he must follow the rules for Failings laid out on page 290.

If, however, a Heretic is killed and sacrificing Infamy would reduce his Infamy characteristic to zero, he dies permanently and cannot be revived or recovered by any means.

Note that in some cases a decrease in Infamy may decrease a Heretic's Infamy Bonus, and thus decrease his Infamy Points. If this happens in the midst of a game session, the Heretic immediately reduces his number of Infamy Points **starting with unspent Infamy Points.** Such is the capriciousness of his dark masters!

Table 9-13: Example Service Availabilities and Modifiers

Service	Modifier
Arranging transport (voidship or "other") from one world in the Screaming Vortex to another world within the Screaming Vortex for up to 5 people.	Average
Arranging reasonably safe voidship transport from within the Screaming Vortex to a world in the Calixis Sector or Koronus Expanse.	Scarce
Purchasing the services of a cruiser for a year.	Near Unique
Gaining unfettered access to a library of warp secrets and prophecies.	Very Rare
Convincing a Greater Daemon to teach a Warp Ritual capable of transporting a small warband to any world within the Screaming Vortex.	Extremely Rare
Purchasing a slave.	Abundant
Purchasing a slave-gladiator.	Common
Purchasing the services of a skilled slave-trainer.	Rare
Utilizing a Skilled scholar or artisan.	Scarce
Utilizing basic, unskilled labour.	Plentiful
Acquiring the Head of an Imperial Commissar.	Scarce
Having damaged equipment repaired.	Penalty equal to Availability of equipment +10.
Hiring a thug as hired muscle.	Ubiquitous
Hiring a hive gang to attack a rival.	Plentiful
Hiring a trained mercenary.	Scarce
Gaining the services of a Traitor Legionnaire.	Extremely Rare
Hiring a trained assassin to kill a target.	– Target's Infamy Score



A Galaxy in Flame

The Hated Imperium

•

The Screaming Vortex

•

The Gloaming Worlds

•

The Inner Ring

•

The Lower Vortex

•

Inhabitants of the Vortex



Chapter X: A Galaxy in Flame

"Let the Galaxy Burn."

—Warmaster Horus.

Games of **Black Crusade** take place not in a single locale, but in several, depending upon the type of campaign the Games Master and the players are looking for. In essence, the type of game the group wants to pursue determines which setting is used, but of course games can change setting, and therefore tone, as a campaign progresses.

The core location for the **Black Crusade** game is the interior of the vast warp storm known as the Screaming Vortex. Here, reality and the beyond merge together and the characters interact with gods and daemons. They fight for power and glory, seeking to impose their will upon their surroundings and to gain dominance over their rivals. The Screaming Vortex has a host of shattered empires and squabbling warlords, each attempting to dominate their rivals in short-sighted struggle. Though there are powerful individuals at work within the Vortex, they have not yet emerged from the shadows to take control. Some are waiting to see if a rival might emerge, while others still work to amass power. Whatever the reason, however, this leaves a power vacuum within the Vortex. This, combined with the churning warp currents that surround the edges of the Vortex, are what keeps those within isolated and unnoticed from the galaxy at large. However, were someone able to unite the scattered forces within the Vortex, forging them into a cohesive fighting force, then they would have a force to be reckoned with. A force worthy of being called a Black Crusade.

Heretics in **Black Crusade** find themselves working amongst these scattered warlords and shattered worlds. Though they have few resources beyond their own ambition, they stand as good a chance as any other in rising to the heady heights of power within the Vortex—and then using that power to realise their ultimate ambitions in the greater galaxy beyond.

Outside of the Screaming Vortex is to be found three other settings, each of which are described in brief later on in this chapter, and in great detail in their own, dedicated line of rule books (more on this in the sidebar on page 311).

The Calixis Sector is a region of space rigidly controlled by the Imperium, yet seething with conspiracy and heresy. Whether infiltrating the courts of noble houses or rallying an army of disaffected mutant slave labourers, the player characters will be opposed by the agents of the Imperial Inquisition, and may even be confronted with one of the mighty Inquisitor Lords of the Ordo Malleus.

Beyond the Calixis Sector lies the Koronus Expanse, a region only recently opened up to exploration. As such, the Imperium holds no more power here than can be imposed by lance and broadside, and numerous petty empires and pirate kingdoms exist in the vastness beyond the Koronus Passage. However, other powers haunt the Expanse and countless dark secrets await discovery. Campaigns set in the Koronus Expanse see the player characters seeking out forbidden relics with the

power to level entire civilisations and treading ground denied to the gods themselves. Those who crave temporal power might strive to build an entire empire amongst the dead stars of the Koronus Expanse, but they will have to defend it, for covetous eyes will surely be cast their way.

The last setting is the distant, war-torn region called the Jericho Reach. Once a thriving Imperial sector, the Reach was long ago lost, first to warp storms and then to anarchy. Recently, a new passage through the warp has made the Reach accessible again, and vast armies have flooded in to reclaim the region. But the worlds of the Reach have long ago declared themselves masters of their own fate and many will not yield to the Imperium's conquering armies. Campaigns set in the Jericho Reach are all about war; the characters standing against the hosts of the Imperium and earning unheard of glory in the process.

But beware—the servants of the hated corpse-emperor ever seek to oppose those who tread the path to glory, but for those with the strength and the ambition, ultimate power awaits amongst the stars.

The Hated Imperium

"A million worlds, a billion battlefields, a trillion foes..."

—Angron, Daemon-Primarch of the World Eaters

The servants of the Emperor, in their supreme arrogance, claim to rule a stellar domain encompassing two thirds and more of the galaxy. They divide their realm into Segmentae, sectors, and sub-sectors, and delegate absolute power to the class of planetary governors called Imperial Commanders. Yet, the Imperium is not a solid bloc with discrete borders. Rather, it is a collection of autonomous, only loosely-aligned worlds spread impossibly thin across the vast expanse of the void. Countless other empires and realms exist in the same volume of space as is claimed by mankind, from isolationist human pocket states to entire sectors overrun by aliens such as the barbarous Orks. Thus, the Imperium's wars are not fought to defend its borders, for it has none. War is everywhere and a constant state of being, for enemies are to be found at every turn. Alien invaders loom from the stygian depths of interstellar space while rebels rise up from the underhive to overthrow hated planetary governments. Entire systems declare their independence from the Imperium, only to be brought brutally to heel by the overwhelming and endless tides of the Imperium's military forces.

For ten thousand years, those who see the truth of the universe have decried the Imperium's worship of their false god, preaching that only by embracing that which lies but a thought away, seething on the other side of the insubstantial veil, will mankind know its full potential. For ten thousand years, the servants of the corpse-god have prosecuted those who speak the truth. But those who embrace Chaos know that one day the mighty edifice of lies that is the Imperium will be torn down—the rubble crushed to dust and the entire mass set to the flame. Most care not what comes after. They care merely that the hated Imperium shall fall at their hand.

Dark Heresy, Rogue Trader and Deathwatch

Black Crusade is but one roleplaying game in the Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay line. In the **Dark Heresy** game, players take the role of Inquisitorial Acolytes as they battle the numerous conspiracies and intrigues that plague the Calixis Sector. In time, some may even ascend to become mighty Inquisitors and their peers. In the **Rogue Trader** game, players take the role of space-born explorers as they seek undreamed of wealth and power beyond the borders of the Imperium in the nigh limitless Koronus Expanse. In **Deathwatch**, the players are Space Marines, each drawn from a different Chapter and engaged upon the Long Watch against the hideous xenos threats that assail the Jericho Reach.

Needless to say, **Black Crusade** might take the characters to any of these places, and so Game Masters have a wealth of source material to draw upon. The other core rulebooks and their numerous supplements present reams of setting information, describing places and characters those who walk the path to glory might visit or encounter.

The Adeptus

The deluded servants of the Emperor segregate and categorise themselves based on an ancient and labyrinthine system of castes, many of which a man is born into and has no hope of ever escaping. In fact, the path to glory leading to the Realm of Chaos is one of the few routes out of this stultifying existence, and the voice of the beyond whispers into the heart of even the most outwardly-subservient adept. Many are driven to risk all for even a chance to escape the drudgery of their existence, selling their soul for the small chance of freedom offered by the Ruinous Powers.

The Administratum

Largest by far of all the institutions is the Administratum, a galaxy-spanning order of scribes, assessors, archivists, and administrators who seek, in their hubris, to impose order on the anarchic workings of the Imperium. Their task is an utterly impossible one, for the systems built up over ten thousand years and more teeter on the brink of total failure. The entire administration is rotting away from its hollow innards, countless millions of scribes engaged in entirely pointless tasks for their entire lives. Tithe assessors greedily collate the punitive charges they will levy for tithes unpaid for centuries, ignorant or uncaring of the fact that the worlds from which such demands are made have long ago fallen to invasion, rebellion, or decay. Bloodlines of archivists spend generations hunting down long lost documents, simply to complete an index that no one will ever have any reason to consult. Strategic-prognosticators pronounce what resources a given region will require in decades or centuries to come, and entire armies are raised to garrison fortress-cities long ago reduced to rubble. All such endeavours are pursued because they always



have been, and to consider otherwise is heresy of the very worst kind. The Administratum seeks order, but those who walk the path to glory know that only in Chaos is freedom truly found.

The Adeptus Astra Telepathica

Like many of the Imperium's institutions, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica is vital to its continued existence and, without it, the entire galaxy might be submerged beneath a howling ocean of Chaos. The Adeptus Astra Telepathica's main task is to recruit and train psykers, and they do so by gathering up those whose powers have become manifest, and transporting them in the bleak holds of the Black Ships to Terra. Those psykers judged strong enough to resist the whispers of the Dismal Depths are trained to use their powers in the name of the Imperium. Some are judged too weak to be allowed to practise their abilities in such a way, and these may be "soul-bound" to the Emperor, a ritual in which the psyker's body and soul are blasted, his senses burned away, and his spirit tethered to the dead thing that sits atop the Golden Throne of Terra. Most, however, are judged undeserving of life, and these are fed to the Emperor, millions every year, to feed his insatiable hunger and, ostensibly, to power the blinding beacon of the Astronomican that shines out from Terra and guide the vessels of the fleets through the depths of the warp.

The Adeptus Arbites

The Adeptus Arbites represents the face of Imperial justice upon countless worlds, the black-armoured "Judges" responsible for enforcing the tyranny that is the Pax Imperium. While planetary laws are the responsibility of local Enforcers, the Judges seek out heresy and rebellion, their spy-lens studded Precinct-Fortresses a hated symbol of oppression and often the first target of an uprising. These bastions of despotism are charged with standing long enough for an Astropathic plea for aid to be transmitted in the event of invasion or uprising, and so are often high priority targets of those seeking power of their own.

The Adeptus Ministorum

One of the most hated institutions of the Imperium is the Adeptus Ministorum, also known as the Ecclesiarchy. While the exact expression of this galaxy-spanning faith differs as much on a local level as the cultures of every one of the Imperium's million and more worlds, its central beliefs remain constant from one end of the galaxy to the other. The Imperial Creed dictates total submission to the so-called God-Emperor of Mankind to the exclusion of all other powers. Furthermore, the officers of the Ecclesiarchy see heresy and corruption wherever they look, preaching for their flocks to turn on even their loved ones should they suspect taint within their home or workplace. Thus, the Imperial Creed often sows the seeds of the heresy itself, and has only itself to blame when the entire false doctrine is proved a lie and set to the torch.

The Adeptus Ministorum has at its disposal an order of utterly dedicated warrior-women known as the Adepta Sororitas or, colloquially, as the "Sisters of Battle." The Battle Sisters are tasked with purging corruption and heresy from the teeming masses of humanity, a mission they fulfil with bolter, flamer, and melta. While the Sisters of Battle fight any and all threats to the Imperium, they reserve their most bitter hatred for those who have turned from the worship of their corpse-god, whether mutant, heretic, rogue psyker, or disciple of Chaos.

The Inquisition

Perhaps the most feared of the Imperium's institutions is the so-called "Holy" Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition. Inquisitors are free-ranging agents answerable only to the High Lords of Terra and empowered to use their judgement and nigh-unlimited powers to prosecute the enemies of the Imperium in any way they

see fit. The only practical limitations on an Inquisitor's powers are those imposed by his peers. In theory, and often in practise, they have the power to raze planets. Despite their unifying mission, the ranks of the Inquisitors are fractured and divided by a myriad of wildly divergent doctrines. Each presents a different means of defeating the Imperium's foes and, while countless different viewpoints exist, most are counted as falling on one side or the other of the divide between Puritan and Radical. It is the continuous struggle between these two opposing camps that maintains balance within the Inquisition, and the struggle frequently escalates to violence, bloodshed and outright war. Some Inquisitors, especially those of the daemon-hunting Ordo Malleus, even wield the tools of Chaos in their battle, believing they can turn the weapons of the Ruinous Powers against them. Such fools are ever welcomed into the ranks of the damned.

The Adeptus Astartes

The Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes are at once the Ruinous Powers' most implacable enemy and their most valued source of power. It was from the ranks of the Emperor's genetically engineered super human warriors that the first Traitor Legionnaires stepped forth, and ever since, the turning of a single Space Marine has been the equal to the servitude of a thousand mortal supplicants. Unlike most men, the Space Marines are told something of the truth of the nature of Chaos, and because of this they hold the Ruinous Powers in special contempt, their bodies and souls steeled against its gifts. Yet, when a Space Marine can be turned to the path to glory, he is fated to become a great champion of the Dark Gods, his superhuman potency entirely dedicated to the glory of the Ruinous Powers.

Most potent of all the Space Marine Chapters are the Grey Knights and the Deathwatch. The former combats those dedicated to the Ruinous Powers, while the latter comprises the most skilled alien hunters in the Imperium. In a galaxy of corruption and betrayal, it stands as a startling testament that no Grey Knight has ever turned from his duty to tread the path of glory. It goes without saying that were this to happen, the Dark Gods would find a servant nearly as mighty as Warmaster Horus himself.

The Imperial Navy

The Imperial Navy is the main means by which the Imperium projects its vast military power the length and breadth of the galaxy. Each of the five Segmentae into which the Imperium is divided has a Segmentum Fortress world, from which many hundreds of warships set sail across the void to prosecute the Emperor's wars. Even the lightest vessel has a crew of many thousands of souls, often press ganged to serve and doomed to die a painful death from immolation or exposure in the guts of a burning ship. For a great many Imperial worlds, a periodic visit from a long range patrol vessel is the only contact the world will have with the Imperium at large in an entire generation, and the event may be cause for great celebration or desperate lamentation, depending on the ship's mission.

The Imperial Guard

The Imperial Guard provides the Imperium with nigh-limitless reserves of common soldiery, from the drilled and disciplined Shock Troopers of Cadia to the savage and barbarous Skull Takers of Canak. Every world in the Imperium is required by ancient writ to provide one-tenth of its military for service off-world, and every planet with sufficient population levels, regardless of its technological base, must do so. Warriors clad in primitive chainmail fight shoulder to shoulder with men protected by shock-actuated carapace shell and, while neither may understand a word of the other's dialect, both fight ultimately for their desiccated corpse-god.

The Adeptus Mechanicus

In a galactic empire scrabbling amongst the ruin of its ancestors' long-lost glories, technology is akin to an arcane art and it falls to the Tech-priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus to maintain what little of the works of their ancestors remains. Based on the Red Planet, the so-called 'Priesthood of Mars' jealously guards its technological secrets and the common man is entrusted with barely enough knowledge of the machine to activate a lumen bulb. The Adeptus Mechanicus is, in essence, an entirely separate division of the Imperium with its own religious doctrines, its own planets, and its own armies. Just like the greater Imperium, the Tech-priests are riven with factionalism and there exists within its ranks those who have turned to the path to glory, utilising the power that only Chaos can grant to further their own ends. These "Hereteks" fuse the boundless power of the warp with technology forbidden to their peers on pain of death, and are amongst the most feared and dedicated adherents of the Ruinous Powers.

The Navigator Houses

The Navigator Houses of the Navis Nobilite are a race apart from the bulk of humanity, and without their services the Imperium would be nothing but a collection of isolated worlds with contact between systems all but impossible. Navigators are born with a unique mutation—the "Navigator Gene"—that allows them to look into the depths of the warp, and to steer a warp capable vessel by reference to the distant Astronomican that shines form Terra. Most mortals would be driven utterly insane in the blink of an eye were they to look into the Sea of Souls in this way; the Navigators are all but unique in their ability. Renegades dedicated to the Ruinous Powers utilise both rogue Navigators and sorcerers with analogous powers to steer their vessels through the shifting tides of the Empyrean, steering not by the sickly illumination cast by the Astronomican, but by other, more powerful beacons only they can look upon.

Rogue Trader Houses

For the vast majority of the Imperium, life is ceaseless toil and death the only release. Most labour every waking hour and many are forced to sleep beneath, or within a stone's throw, of the workstation they will attend for their entire lives. Many men never see beyond the labour hall in which they live and work, and the notion of leisure is entirely anathema. Those born into the Rogue Trader Houses are one of the few exceptions to this rule, for they represent an ultra-privileged class of explorers and merchant princes who, uniquely, are granted the right of conquest of worlds beyond the Imperium's control. Rogue Traders are often scoundrels or merciless warlords, their official Warrant of Trade granting them writ to deal with long lost human worlds and newly contacted xenos species however they see fit.


Iniquity
The Frozen Heart
Medrengard
Scintilla
Ruins of Caliban
Cypra Mundi
Port Maw
Kathalon
Vraks
Nemesis Tessera
Mordian
Halo Stars
Ocularis Terribus
Segmentum Obscurus
Xana II
Cadia
Valhall
Elysia
Segmentum Pacificus
Segmentum Solar
Chiros
Joura
Holy Terra
Ryza
Gates of Fire
Krieg
Luther Mcintyre
Segmentum Tempestus
Heil-Stars of th
Garon Nebula
The Screaming Vortex
Celestial Phenomena: Warp Storm
Name: Screaming Vortex
Bordering Regions: Calixis Sector
Koronus Expanse
Space Occupied: Unknown (size fluctuates)
Gravity Range: -3.2 G — 7,021,475,403G
Temperature Range: -274 C — 100,000,000+ C
Planets Present: Unknown
Tithe Grade: Aptus Non
Geography: N/A
Authority: None
Conventional wisdom by Navis Nobilite representatives on Scintilla states that nothing beyond warp entities can survive within the Screaming Vortex.
Imperial World
Inquisition Stronghold
Space Marine Homeworld
Cardinal World


.And in the 41st Millenium, the Imperium stands, a mighty bulwark of glorious Humanity against the myriad foes who would assail it. The Lords of Terra beat their breasts and dare all those who would think to assault this mighty fastness. "Our dominion stretches from one spiral arm of the galaxy to the other," they cry. "Who dares to stand against the numbers of our armies, the strength of our fleets, the fury of our Angels of Death?"
Yet, there are those who dare. For ten thousand years mankind has imagined itself ensconced within a mighty fortress, safe, warm, and protected. They ignore the truth; they are not so far removed from their primitive forbears, the savages who huddled around a flickering campfire and tried to ignore the hungry shapes that prowled just outside their feeble light. Far from a vast dominion, the Imperium is simply scattered lights against a vast and terrible void. And now, just as then, there are wolves in the darkness.
The enemies of the Imperium are legion. They howl in the night and scratch at the gates as the pitiful masses cower in their beds. They pray to their long-dead god that the gates will protect them, but no gates can hold forever. The Imperium will fall. And when it does, who then will survive? What of humanity will last against the ages? The defenceless, leaderless masses of mankind? Or those few who dared to become the most dangerous monsters of all?
-Excerpt from The Approaching Night, declared Hereticus Extremis 811.M41
Dimmamar
Ghoul Stars
Sable
Angelis
Gates of Varl
Desperation
Baal
Dominion of Storms
Ultima Segmentum
Maelstrom
Calderis
The Hadex Anomaly
Attila
The Blood Trinity
Venkrous
Mordant Zone
Samech
Bakka
Blackreach
"Most voidsmen, even the grizzled veterans of a thousand voyages, are wise enough to fear the warp storm. And with good reason, I assure you.
"Imagine, if you will, that you stand on the prow of an ancient sea-going vessel as it skims across the waves of a vast ocean. Behind you the sun lights up the waves, turning them all to shimmering sapphires and emeralds. But as you pull away from land, clouds gather on the horizon. Huge thunderheads that stretch as far as the eye can see, reaching from the tips of the waves up into the sky so high you can't see their tops. The clouds boil, angry, black, and shot through with blue crackles of lightning, and you realize that there's no going around this storm. You'll have to sail through.
"The waves whip up, turning into gaping hungry maws, each eager to swallow your ship whole. You're tossed and buffeted, as if the storm is trying to break the ship open, to get inside with you. And the devil of it is, the storm is trying to get in. It wants to crack your ship open and eat you whole. And just when you realize that, you hear the sounds of things, riding on the wind and coming for your soul.
"No, they're wise to fear the warp storm. The only mistake they make is calling it a 'storm' at all. The name implies something natural, and there is nothing natural about a warp storm."
-Navigator Araxis Tkal.
Gryphone IV
Imperial Navy
Imperial Guard
Forge World
Renegade World
Daemon World

While beyond the power of the Imperium, Rogue Traders are, quite literally, a law unto themselves, and many have difficulty acquiescing to the rule of the Adeptus Terra when they return to Imperial space. Through contact with strange cultures and alien empires, many Rogue Traders have a unique perspective on the universe, and many harbour doctrines they dare not speak of with outsiders. Many are epicureans and dilettantes of exquisitely refined tastes, having seen and experienced things out in the trackless void that very few others ever will. Through contact with the dark things that lurk in the black void, Chaos often creeps into a Rogue Trader's heart, who may believe themselves able to wield its power without paying the price. They are wrong, but few realise it before their soul is lost.

The Officio Assassinorum

Few are the enemies of the Imperium who gain such renown and infamy that they earn the ire of the High Lords of Terra—the council that rules in the name of the Emperor. Those who do so are warlords and conquerors with the power to set entire sectors to the torch. The High Lords have a special weapon that they utilise only against such enemies—the agents of the Officio Assassinorum. Imperial Assassins are the most fearsome exponents of the arts of death, reared almost from birth to kill in the manner favoured by the Temple in which they are tutored. Some Temples favour killing by poison, others by a well-placed hyper-velocity bullet. Some utilise assassins able to change their very form and infiltrate their target's inner circle, while others are in effect living bombs, monsters powered by the warp. None outside of the Senatorum Imperialis know how many Temples exist, but Imperial Assassins are one of the very few foes who hold any fear for a champion of the Dark Gods, for the most powerful warlords must be ever watchful for the assassin's knife glinting in the darkness or the taint of poison in his victuals.

The Calixis Sector

"A chalice, brimming with corruption and brutality; it awaits but a strong enough arm to upturn it…"

—Lord Ingus Fell, Bringer of Decay.

The Imperium represents a vast swathe of space, all of it claimed by mankind in the name of its withered corpse-god, but in truth, only an infinitesimal fraction of systems are controlled, let alone settled, by the Imperium or even by humans. Since mankind first set out to dominate the stars, he has claimed small clusters of systems, and around these stable warp routes have been charted, so that each cluster is as a chain of islands in the midst of a vast ocean. The million or so worlds directly controlled by the Imperium are, therefore, to be found in fairly dense groupings called sectors, and the gulfs between each is known as Wilderness Space. Even amongst the two hundred or so settled worlds within the average sector, space is a deeply horrifying place and most of the Emperor's subjects turn their faces away from the dark night sky for fear of what horrors may descend to consume them body and soul.

The Calixis Sector is one such conglomeration of worlds cleaving to one another for warmth in the frozen depths of the void. A relatively young sector, Calixis was founded a little over a millennia ago by the Lord Militant Angevin, a celebrated Warmaster who conquered vast swathes of what was previously known as the Calyx Expanse in the name of the Imperium.

Calixis is located far from the Imperium's centres of power, out towards the halo zones of the galactic north. Like so many other sectors, it is vulnerable to attack from both within and without, but unlike the older sectors nearer to the Terran Marches and other heartlands, it does not have innumerable armies or fleets to call upon, nor are its worlds the fortified bastions of regions such as the Cadian Gate.

Calixis is comprised of over two hundred worlds, ranging in character from little more than frontier colonies to teeming hive worlds with populations in the billions. The sector is host to lethal Death Worlds on which every native life form is determined to consume any invader and the polluted, ironclad Forge Worlds of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Planetary populations exist in a staggering range of circumstances; some are feral barbarians capable of constructing no tools more advanced than sharp sticks, while some live out their entire lives in the artificial gravity of orbital space stations the size of cities. The capital of the sector is the hive world of Scintilla, its rulers meeting at the so-called Lucid Palace. Along with the war torn world of Iocanthos and the hellish mining world of Sepheris Secundus, Scintilla completes the triumvirate of worlds upon which the sector's fortunes are founded. Though a warzone over which the armies of numerous petty warlords continuously clash, Iocanthos



is a lynchpin world in the sector, for it is one of the few places in the galaxy where "Ghostfire" pollen can be found—a core ingredient in many varieties of combat drugs. The sector government is content to allow the planet's warlords to fight for dominance of the Ghostfire harvest, and every five years an Administratum tithe fleet sets in at Port Suffering to gather the Imperium's due from whichever warlord happens to be in the ascendant. Sepheris Secundus is the source of the majority of the sector's raw material, without which the foundries of the Forge Worlds and the labour halls of the Hive Worlds would fall silent. Sepheris Secundus is also of vital importance to the sector's agri-worlds, for it is capable of producing no foodstuffs of its own to feed its indentured workforce.

The Tyrant Star

To date, Calixis has avoided the all-consuming, total war that has lain waste to so many other regions, yet it is far from untouched by strife and wars and rumours of wars abound. The worlds of the Calixis Sector are riven with heresy and corruption and its stars are haunted by a stellar phenomenon that none can explain in the form of the Tyrant Star. Wherever this black sun manifests, madness and bloodshed prevail, with entire planetary populations surrendering themselves utterly to rampant anarchy at the merest hint of its appearance.

The presence of the Tyrant Star and the myriad of prophecies and cults that have developed around it has led to a disproportionate number of Inquisitors operating in the sector. While some sectors are entirely bereft of Inquisitorial presence, Calixis is host to hundreds of Inquisitors and, in all likelihood, thousands of their agents. The so-called 'Tyrantine Cabal' is ever vigilant for the next appearance of the Tyrant Star, and dedicated to rooting out the evil that inevitably follows in its wake. Savants of all castes meticulously collate what details they can of the star's appearance, though many are driven mad by their studies. To date, the so-called "Hereticus Tenabrae" has yet to give up any of its secrets, to the Inquisition or to its enemies, and the race to unlock its mysteries is cause for war between opposed parties, each jealous of the other's intentions. What the Tyrantine Cabal does not realize is that the Tyrant Star has a presence beyond the bounds of the Calixis Sector and may have an even greater impact than any suspect.

The Calixian Conclave

Given that the Calixis Sector is beset by such a massive weight of taint and corruption, some of it directly related to the Tyrant Star, much of it merely coincidental, the Inquisition represents a major power bloc amongst the sector's ruling institutions. Administrative power is vested in planetary governments, and the interests of the Imperium at large represented by the Sector Governor Lord Marius Hax, but the true masters of the Calixis Sector are the Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave, the body into which every Inquisitor operating in the sector is gathered. The Conclave is chaired by Lord Inquisitor Caidin, a shadowy figure only ever seen in public wearing a mask that obscures his features and his true identity. The Conclave maintains numerous holdings throughout the sector, both overt and secret, but the most visible sign of its power are the three bleak and imposing towers of the Tricorn Palace on the sector's capital world of Scintilla.

While the conclave seeks to battle the myriad foes that assail the Calixis Sector, its members are far from united in their vision of how this should be accomplished. Rival factions vie constantly for power within the Conclave, wars of words raging across the floor of the High Council while across the sector cells of Inquisitorial agents murder one another in the name of their masters. Radicals and Puritans denounce one another as deluded ideologues or dangerous heretics, while doctrines as divergent as those espoused by the dreaded outcast Phaeonites or the bombastic Thorians vie for dominance in the hearts and minds of the most powerful of men.

Chaos and the Calixis Sector

The Calixis Sector appears to those with the perspective to perceive such things to be seething with cult activity, each of its worlds tainted with countless heretical and blasphemous bodies. Some point to the spectral haunting of the Tyrant Star as the cause of this endemic corruption, while others have come to believe that the star might represent some form of stellar executioner drawn to the concentration of sin and ready to enact the final judgement upon the guilty. Some suspect that the entire region has always been tainted, even before it was settled by mankind. They hold that Lord Militant Angevin fought long and bitter wars against an empire of debased aliens whose name has been struck from all records and that some taint of them remains to poison the soul of man.

Of late, those who tread the path to glory have begun to flock to the spinward marches of the sector, drawn there by a new war that, if allowed to do so, might one day engulf the entire sub-sector. Warp-worshipping cults and heretic warbands are mustering on the verges, and some even claim to have sighted the Tyrant Star, its ghostly black halo shimmering in the void.

Most of those who tread the path to glory are to be found operating within the existing structure of the Calixis Sector's institutions. They exist at every level, from the Inquisitor who has strayed too far into heretical doctrine to the data-loom operator who harbours a murderous hatred for the overseer who denies him an hour away from his workstation to attend a loved one's funeral. A lay-tech denied access to the inner workings of the machine he operates may turn to the Logicians, an outcast splinter of the Cult Mechanicus, for knowledge otherwise forbidden to him. Idle nobles the sector over collect illicit xenos curios, any one of which might harbour some taint that poisons the soul and leads to damnation. Those born bearing the mark of the mutant might not have been created inherently evil, but many experience such brutal oppression that the Ruinous Powers offer the only means of survival in the galaxy of bloodshed and hardship.

Nowhere within the Calixis Sector is beyond the reach of the Ruinous Powers, from the sanctums of the Abbey of the Dawn on Iocanthos to the secret cloisters of the daemon-hunting Inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus. No planetary governor is immune to the whispers of daemons that haunt him by night, promising undreamed-of power in return for just a few "favours." No Judge enforcing the Emperor's laws on the cruel streets of the hive bottom is so zealous as to be able to ignore the desire to simply burn the entire city down, purging the guilty and the innocent at once. Chaos is everywhere, but a thought and a promise away, ever ready to consume the souls of the weak and empower those of the strong beyond mortal imagining.

The Koronus Expanse

"Such secrets lie waiting beneath cold, dead stars. To reach out and take them, to be tested body and soul and found worthy… that is the fate I crave and the path I chose to walk."

– Duke Lassarack Hass, reaver-seer of the outer Expanse.

With each sector in the Imperium representing little more than a cluster of settled worlds adrift and all but alone in the vast depths of the void, the majority of the galaxy is uncharted and unexplored. The star charts refer to those regions not directly controlled by the Imperium as "Wilderness Space," and such places are the subject of numerous voidfarers tales. Some are said to be haunted by the ghosts of long dead xenos species, others to be in thrall to dark alien empires. Many are no doubt strewn with human worlds colonised in lost ages and long since fallen to savagery. Most Wilderness Space zones are entirely uncharted, while some are slowly opening up to exploration, some previously legendary warp routes having been discovered or forged. Such regions form the ragged frontiers of the Imperium, where humanity vies with the xenos, the outcast, and worse for control of the stars. The laws of the Imperium do not apply in such places, except where they can be imposed by force of arms or force of will.

To the galactic northeast of the Calixis Sector lies such a region. Beset by the awe-inspiring Great Warp Storms, the area has been the subject of voidfarers myth and legend for millennia, since before the Calixis Sector was founded, in fact. Many have attempted to penetrate its mysteries over the years, following after whispered prophecies of a region of riches undreamed of tantalisingly close on the far side of the storms. Tales abound of "golden shores"—worlds where the treasures of long dead civilisations lay scattered all about just waiting to be gathered up by those with the wit and the courage to seek them out.

For centuries, the region beyond the Great Warp Storms was written off by many as a dream never to be fulfilled. Yet, despite the risks, there were ever those insane enough to attempt the voyage. Eventually, the Rogue Trader Purity Lathimon broke through the storms into the expanse beyond. The warp passage she discovered became known as the Koronus Passage, or "the Maw," and the region beyond the "Koronus Expanse." A flood of explorers followed in her wake. Many perished, their souls cast adrift in the ethereal currents of the Great Warp Storms. Cautious explorers established a number of waypoints along its length, the "Stations of Passage" that formed a string of stepping-stones through the raging tides. In time, Navigators serving the great Rogue Trader Houses learned something of the capricious nature of the Maw and plotted routes through it that could be made in a handful of warp jumps, or even a single, well-plotted leap.

At the Calixis Sector end of the Maw is Port Wander, a void station that represents the last bastion of Imperial rule before the traveller passes beyond the Imperium and into the lawless reaches beyond. Having made the perilous run through the Maw, the next stop is the void colony of Footfall. This vast space



station is a conglomeration of structures and a den of recidivism and anarchy where the laws of the Imperium do not apply. At Footfall, aliens who would be shot on sight on most Imperial worlds coexist with cold traders, mercenaries, slavers, and pirates. An Inquisitor might hold no more power there than a beggar and the only rules that apply are favour and firepower.

With the charting of the Maw and the establishment of Footfall, the Koronus Expanse was opened up for exploitation, yet for every treasure it yields a thousand lives are sacrificed upon the altar of hubris and ambition. The systems closest to Footfall are relatively well charted, yet the further one travels from the Maw the less trustworthy the charts become. No one has ever charted the full extent of the Koronus Expanse. The furthest systems exist as little more than names and associated legends, and beyond these lie the Rifts of Hecaton. What might lie within and beyond the rifts is a mystery for a future age, for far less than a tenth part of the Koronus Expanse itself has yet been charted.

Winterscale's Realm

Sebastian Winterscale was perhaps the most celebrated of Rogue Traders to have penetrated the Koronus Expanse and he set his name to a cluster of systems relatively near to the Maw. Winterscale was said to be the unwanted son of one of the powerful ruling houses of the distant Ophidian Sector, granted a Warrant of Trade as a means of ridding his clan of an inconvenient heir. The proximity of "Winterscale's Realm" to the guttering light of civilisation should not be confused with safety, for the region is the final resting place of more Rogue Traders than almost any other in the entire Expanse. Its worlds are said to be the fount of all the legends

of wealth ever to have been told of the Koronus Expanse, where treasures abound for the taking. Some claim that an entire system of paradise worlds orbits a bright, gem-like star deep inside Winterscale's Realm; worlds of stunning natural beauty where priceless jewels are scattered across the ground, where the oceans are pure, the air clean, and the rolling lands populated by herds of docile grazers. Needless to say, countless explorers have perished in the search for this system, and no doubt many more will.

Sebastian Winterscale himself is long passed, but his descendants are yet a power in the Koronus Expanse and jealous of any who would despoil the region named for their celebrated ancestor. Chief amongst these is the redoubtable Calligos, who constantly demonstrates his willingness to fight those who threaten his dominance—whether they fight under the Star of Chaos or the Aquila.

The Egarian Dominion

Deep within Winterscale's Realm is to be found a cluster of four systems known as the Egarian Dominion, each star of a similar type and orbited by worlds long cast to extinction by some cataclysm of stellar proportions. These arid, windswept planets were once the abode of the long dead Egarians, the only trace of the species' existence the cyclopean Maze Cities left behind in the blasted wastes. Precious little of the Egarians remain and they are the subject of numerous dark legends. Some claim the Egarians were corrupted by a species so fell that only a handful within the Calixis Sector even know their name. These are the Yu'Vath, a species of warp-worshipping aliens that occupied the Calyx Expanse before the coming of the Angevin Crusade and against whom the Imperium fought a long and terrible war. Perhaps, it is whispered, the Egarians were corrupted by the Yu'Vath, granted powers that doomed them to total extinction. Indeed, traces of such a terrible fate are to be found throughout the Koronus Expanse and some claim that the Rifts of Hecaton are evidence of the catastrophic devastation it wrought upon the stars themselves. What power might have caused hundreds of suns to gutter and die is a secret many have sold their very souls to discern.

The Rak'Gol

While the Yu'Vath are thought, or at least sincerely hoped, to be long extinct, their legacy is thought to be very much alive in the form of the marauding Rak'Gol. A species of eight-limbed aliens with an utterly insatiable appetite for wanton slaughter, the Rak'Gol haunt the depths of the Koronus Expanse and represent a major threat to explorers. These savage aliens cannot be reasoned with and exhibit few outward signs of intelligence other than the ability to construct and utilise extremely effective wargear. Exactly how they traverse the void has yet to be discovered, and an issue that greatly concerns many amongst the Adeptus

The Maw

The common factor linking the Calixis Sector, the Koronus Expanse, and the Jericho Reach is the warp conduit known as the Maw. Initially, the Maw consisted of the route connecting the Calixis Sector to the Koronus Expanse, but in latter decades it was found to be much more. Deep within the Koronus Passage, explorers discovered a huge, crescent-shaped structure of utterly alien origin floating in the deep void. Thanks to the actions of the courageous scouts, the object was found to be one terminus of a Warp Gate, a stable passage through the warp with the other end and an identical object situated thousands of light years away beyond the Eastern Fringe. Traversing this vast distance takes mere seconds. The passage made possible by the stable route is known as the Jericho-Maw Warp Gate, and its existence is of such strategic importance that travel through it is one-way for all but the most trusted individuals. While the strategic value of being able to ship entire armies from one end of the galaxy to the other is all but unsurpassable, so too is the risk of invaders attacking the Eastern Fringe penetrating into the Imperium's heartlands by way of this route. To reconquer the Jericho Reach, the Imperium has committed vast reserves of troops, dispatched in secret to a warzone that scant few know is not in the Calixis Sector, but on the other side of the galaxy.

The 13th Station of Passage

While the existence of the Jericho-Maw Warp Gate is known only to a select few within the upper echelons of the Imperium's ruling institutions, other secrets yet await within the churning passage. One such place is the legendary 13th Station of Passage, a location within the Maw known only to those who walk the path to glory. Who discovered it remains a mystery, though surely it must have been some mad renegade Navigator or perhaps a warp-lorn Rogue Trader whose soul he had sold in return for such terrible knowledge. Some link the discovery to both the Haarlock and the Winterscale lines, though no solid evidence exists for either assertion. The exact location of the station is unknowable to non-sorcerers, for it takes the form of an empty region in the void several hundred kilometres in diameter. Over the centuries, this empty space has come to be orbited by a dark halo of debris, countless frozen corpses from sacrifices dedicated to the Ruinous Powers.

The 13th Station of Passage represents a point of confluence, where the raging tides of the Maw and the tendrils of the Screaming Vortex meet. It is, in effect, a branch of the Koronus Passage, and the only route into and out of the Screaming Vortex its denizens routinely utilise (though there are certainly others). Other routes are too dangerous for most, and the 13th Station of Passage is only attempted after due obeisance and sacrifice has been made, as is born witness by the halo of twisted, bloodless corpses slowly orbiting it. In fact, so dense is the cloud of offerings that vessels moving into the confluence to make warp jumps must push through it while the frozen bodies thud against the outer hull.

Via the 13th Station of Passage, the denizens of the Screaming Vortex can access both the Calixis Sector and the Koronus Expanse. Furthermore, they can, if they are extremely cautious, pass through the Jericho-Maw Warp Gate, though most prefer secreting themselves on Imperial transports to sneak through the powerful Navy blockade.

Mechanicus and the Ordo Xenos. What is known of the Rak'Gol is that they appear to have some connection with the Yu'Vath, for they seek out and capture signs of the Yu'Vath wherever they may be found. Perhaps they are seeking to uncover long lost Yu'Vath weapons, or perhaps they share something of their dark, warp-worshipping character. Perhaps Chaos has touched the hearts of the Rak'Gol, and in their own way they are serving the Ruinous Powers as surely as any Traitor Legionnaire.

Chaos and the Koronus Expanse

The Koronus Expanse is the hunting ground of many enemies of the Imperium, from the barbarous Orks to bitter Imperial exiles, but greatest of these voidfaring predators are the Chaos Reavers. Pirates and slavers pledged to the glory of the Dark Gods, Chaos Reavers prowl the warp routes, eager for the blood of the foolish and the unwary. Agile and well-armed reaver vessels wait in ambush amongst the outer clouds of those systems that draw explorers, pouncing savagely before the prey can react. The reavers cripple their targets in short order and board them before repelling crews can be mustered. Once on board, the reavers unleash an orgy of bloodshed as they slaughter all resistance, working their way towards the bridge and the final confrontation with the vessel's master and his guards. Having gained control of the ship, the reavers put it and its crew to a range of uses. Useful vessels are captured as prizes and converted to pirate ships, while the best the captured crew can hope for is a quick death. Most are enslaved, to be sold into a cruel life of misery to one of the petty empires to be found in the expanse. Others are slaughtered in the name of the Ruinous Powers, or forced to serve in the pirate hordes, or press-ganged as crew.

Many different reaver groups prowl the Expanse. One such group are the damned hosts of Iniquity, under the control of Karrad Vall, the Faceless Lord. These debased brigands have, as their home, a world many believe to host beneath its blasted surface something utterly malign and born of the warp.

It is not only in the hearts of hunters and reavers that the touch of the Ruinous Powers is to be found in the Koronus Expanse, for like many regions of its type, the area is host to countless worlds settled countless millennia ago and subsequently lost to humanity. Such worlds are entirely ignorant of the greater galaxy, their ancestors having lost contact with mankind long before the birth of the Emperor and the rise of the Imperium. Yet, Chaos lurks in the hearts of men despite the specifics of their existence, and even the most isolated colonist is not deaf to its whispers. Indeed, the populations of many such worlds exist in such abject misery and ignorance that the Dark Gods are their only succour. Wilderness Space is strewn with worlds entirely in the thrall of the Ruinous Powers, some so steeped in the power of the warp that they are the hunting ground of daemons.

For those who tread the path to glory, the Koronus Expanse represents an opportunity to forge his own destiny according to his own vision. He might attempt to build an empire, or simply to satiate his bloodlust in endless attacks upon those who would stray beyond the borders of the Imperium. Others seek to uncover ancient secrets and, in so doing, gain immeasurable power. These are the most dangerous, for should they ever gain the power they seek they will plunge once more through the Maw and visit upon the Imperium of Mankind doom that it has not known in ten thousand years.

The Jericho Reach

"Let the Emperor send forth his zealous hosts. I have my own, blessed by the Lords of the Warp. Here I stand, and here they shall die!"

– Hordemaster Ghaneth.

It is commonly held that the Imperium is so beset by conflict and anarchy that there is only war, and for the vast majority of the corpse-god's subjects, this is quite literally the case. No world in the Imperium is immune to the touch of war, from the most isolated colony to the most overpopulated hive world. Xenos slavers prey on those worlds too weak to defend themselves, while billions-strong armies of the Lost and the Damned pour through the Cadian Gate to assault of the fortress worlds around the Eye of Terror. Those not doomed to a life of servitude bound to a data-loom or a cipher-lathe are instead swept up in the planet-wide raisings of the Imperial Guard. Regiment after regiment is tithed and shipped out to a distant warzone with no hope or expectation of ever seeing their home world again.

Although it is not always known by their planetary populations, many of the Imperium's worlds fall within the boundary of a warzone. In such regions, the military hierarchy of the Imperium has ultimate control, and any price will be paid to stem the tide of invasion or insurrection. Entire worlds can be depopulated at a single command, and turned into vast, planetary-scale bastions, weapons testing grounds or training facilities. A planet's entire industrial capacity might be ordered to be turned over to the production of war materiel, perhaps even billions upon billions of examples of a single item such as lasgun power packs or flak vests. Other worlds might be allowed to fall to invasion, their populations slaughtered by savage invaders so that the Imperium can launch a more effective counter-attack at some later time of its own choosing. The High Lords Militant care not that billions should perish as they sip vintage amesec while pouring over strategium holos representing entire sectors.

There exist a great many different types of warzone, from those fighting a desperate defence against overwhelming odds, to those engulfed in bitterly fought civil war. Perhaps the most all-encompassing type of war, however, is the Crusade, a vast undertaking in which uncounted armies and fleets go forth into the void to capture, or recapture, enormous swathes of the galaxy in the name of the Emperor.

The Achilus Crusade is one such war of conquest, launched in 777.M41 to reclaim a region of space long thought lost to the Imperium—the Jericho Reach. Centred on the old Jericho Sector, the region was lost to roiling Warp Storms and slipped from the Imperium's control millennia ago, but with the discovery of the Jericho-Maw warp passage, re-conquest became possible and the Achilus Crusade was launched.

The Jericho Reach is a region consumed by total war. The Imperium's vast armies are engaged on three fronts and the bold words of those who preached the crusade have long turned to ashes in their mouths as each front has ground to

a halt against a different enemy, all of which offer far greater resistance than any ever expected. The northernmost portion of the warzone is the Orpheus Salient, which is engaged in a desperate effort to hold back the alien bio-vessels of the Tyranid Hive Fleet Dagon. The southernmost area is the Canis Salient, where a grinding war of attrition is being fought against the expansionist Tau. In the centre is the greatest of the three—the Acheros Salient, where billions of warriors are committed to an effort to rid the central area of the Jericho Reach of the servants of Chaos.

The Acheros Salient

The Acheros Salient was launched with the intention of clearing out the main opposition to the conquest of the Jericho Reach—the numerous worlds in the thrall of the Ruinous Powers. When the Imperium first returned to the Jericho Reach, its leaders expected to find scattered and isolated worlds with populations that would welcome their liberators with open arms. Needless to say, the Imperium was caught unawares when this did not transpire and those populations rose up against it instead. Bogged down in the central zone of the Reach, the crusade was forced to commit ever-greater numbers to the Herculean effort of reclaiming these worlds from the clutches of those who tread the path to glory. Decades into the crusade, the Imperium has made scant progress against the numerous warlords opposing the Acheros Salient, though every year millions of lives are cast upon the pyres of fruitless war.

The Hadex Anomaly

At the centre of the Jericho Reach lies a raging warp phenomenon known as the Hadex Anomaly. Scholars, savants, and madmen have striven to classify the anomaly in line with others of its type, such as the Eye of Terror, the Maelstrom, and the Gates of Fire, yet it continues to defy all classification. Though clearly a warp/real space overlap like most other similar events, the Hadex Anomaly exerts an exotic effect not just upon the physical realm but on the temporal as well. In their vain efforts to understand the anomaly, Imperial savants have claimed it seems to "spew time" in to the surrounding region, disrupting the flow of events and occasionally reordering them entirely.

The Deathwatch

Throughout the long centuries during which the Jericho Reach was cut off from the greater Imperium, one body remained where all others had had fled. That body was a group of Space Marines drawn from the unique Chapter known as the Deathwatch. From its hidden and impregnable Watch Fortress in the Erioch system, and from dozens of smaller Watch Stations, the black-armoured battle-brothers, each a veteran alien-hunter drawn from another Chapter, engaged in the so-called Long Watch. Exactly what the Deathwatch are standing vigil against is unknown, perhaps even to themselves, yet they have continued to enact their missions even with the coming of the Achilus Crusade. Sometimes, the Deathwatch and the crusade cooperate, pooling their resources to fight their mutual enemies, but just as often they appear to be pursuing entirely different missions. Though the Deathwatch operate alongside



the alien-hunting Ordo Xenos of the Inquisition and comprise Battle-Brothers highly experienced in battling the xenos, they are an implacable foe of all who stand against the Imperium. They undertake missions of their own devising, as well as lending aid to other bodies such as the daemon-hunting Ordo Malleus, the witch-hunting Ordo Hereticus, and even partook of a joint operation with the ill-fated Ordo Chronos before that organisation's agents vanished.

Chaos and the Jericho Reach

The Jericho Reach is a region steeped in the fell energies of the warp, a place where the ambitious and the bold can earn true glory and power unheard of. A man could raise a millions-strong army dedicated to the Ruinous Powers and lead it in person against a similar number of the Emperor's deluded lapdogs. Few other regions offer such glory, for here the Imperium is the aggressor, rather than the defender, and its armies are being held at bay as ever-greater numbers are fed into the eternal meat grinder of war. Entire planets have been transformed into blasted battlefields, tattered banners bearing the fell runes of the Dark Gods fluttering proudly overhead. Death stalks such places in a myriad of forms and the servants of Chaos are manifold. Crazed cultists bellow their praises to the roiling skies while Chaos Titans make the earth tremble with their passing. The mighty Traitor Legionnaires fight side by side with renegades and mutants and the most powerful of sorcerers open gateways to hell through which the daemonic legions swarm. The stars around the Hadex Anomaly truly belong to the Ruinous Powers and their mortal servants are dedicated to holding them against any enemies.

The Fall of the Eldar

"We owe the Eldar a great debt of gratitude. If it were not for their voices, we could not have our choir. If it were not for their chisels, we would not have our blades. Remember to thank them when you run them through."

—Andrada, the Gore-Diva

Ancient and mysterious, the Eldar are enigmatic aliens who never speak openly of their terrible past. Before mankind, their empire spanned the galaxy. Their whims decided the fate of worlds and quenched the fiercest suns. Now, they are all but extinct—the last fragments of a shattered civilisation plunged into constant warfare. They have been reduced to a scattered and nomadic race, as those who had retained enough sanity to flee before the Fall did so on mighty vessels called Craftworlds. It is on these world-ships that the last remnants of the Eldar civilisation drift amongst the stars.

The Eldar will not describe their downfall to any member of a "lesser race," but much of the story can be gleaned from fragmented sources. The Eldar succumbed to extremes of experience, their senses so finely attuned they perceived the heights and depths of agony and ecstasy. Throughout a long period of decline, the intensity of emotion generated by the Eldar's excess began to coalesce within the warp. A new power was being formed, growing stronger with every indulgence. This entity dozed fitfully, its dreams fed by the Eldar's deeds. These dreams leaked back to the Eldar psyche and the race plunged into further extremes.



In time, the Eldar people sank to the lowest depths of depravity and the sleeping power awoke. The Chaos god Slaanesh was born and its birth cries decimated the race, drawing the spirits of billions of Eldar into the warp to be consumed by the newborn god. The worst destruction occurred at the heart of their galaxy-spanning empire, where the warp erupted into real space. An area almost twenty thousand light years across was engulfed in the very stuff of Chaos, known today as the Eye of Terror. The Eye is an area of warp/real space interface—a vast, open wound upon the very fabric of reality constantly weeping filth and corruption.

The Eye of Terror is known to be home to the darkest evils of the galaxy. At the height of the Horus Heresy the Traitor Legions were driven from Terra and naturally sought shelter within the Realm of Chaos. Some legions claimed new home worlds, moulding each to their own perverse designs. The followers of the different Chaos Powers fight one another in an eternal struggle for supremacy for the resources to be found within the Eye of Terror, but they are at their most deadly on the very rare occasions when they cease fighting one another and turn their attentions to the material universe outside the Eye. Few have managed to unite the disparate factions in this manner, but Abaddon the Despoiler, once the chosen lieutenant of Horus, is such a being, moulding the Traitor Legions, mutant armies, and daemon hordes into Black Crusades that pillage and destroy the sectors around the Eye.

The Eye of Terror provides the means by which the Traitor Legions terrorise the Imperium for ten thousand years, as time within that impossible realm is as distorted as it is within the warp itself. Ten millennia after the events of the Horus Heresy, the very same traitors who fled from the armies of the Imperium still embark upon their Black Crusades.

The Black Library

The Eldar know more of Chaos than mankind ever will, and still more was lost during the Fall. A single source of Eldar knowledge has remained untouched and inviolate since the Fall. In a hidden location, some say at the centre of the Webway—the Eldar's network of stable warp tunnels that crosses the galaxy—rests the tomes, books, scrolls, and codices describing the Eldar's knowledge of the warp. The forbidden lore of the Black Library describes the blandishments, influences, forms, creatures, perils, promises, and horrors of Chaos.

The existence of the Black Library is known to only a few and entry is allowed to even fewer individuals. The library defends itself against the weak and those who would misuse its knowledge by refusing entry to all except those who have acknowledged and tempered the Chaos within themselves. The immature, who are still vulnerable to the promises and seductions of Chaos, find that they are unable to pass through its gateway. As a result, only the Solitaires of the Eldar Harlequin troupes are allowed to come and go freely, although some say that a human, perhaps an Inquisitor, has also been allowed to do so.

The Screaming Vortex

"Listen! Listen, don't you hear? They sing to us, such a sad lament…"

—Last recorded words of the Navigator Sol Burgundus.

The Screaming Vortex is one of the zones within the region known as the Great Warp Storms. It takes the form of a vast, seething cauldron of empyreal energies which, while not as large, are every bit as intense as those spewing forth from the Eye of Terror, the Maelstrom, or any other such warp/real space overlap. As a warp storm, the Screaming Vortex is a region of space beset by the unreal forces of the warp, where the thin skein between reality and that impossible dimension has been torn viciously asunder. A volume of space far larger than the average Imperial sector is to all intents and purposes cut adrift from the physical universe, the laws of nature no longer applying within. Beyond the boundaries of the Screaming Vortex, the Ruinous Powers hold sway and for a mortal to even contemplate crossing into its weirdling energies is insanity of the very worst kind. The interior of the Vortex cannot be described in terms that even the greatest mortal mind could comprehend, and so descriptions are largely limited to the worlds on its verges and, when describing those places further in, to allegory and myth.

The Screaming Vortex is so named because the ebb and flow of its tides are accompanied by a concomitant wailing, audible to psykers and sorcerers. The most gifted of psykers can hear the ceaseless, discordant wailing that emanates from the Vortex from dozens, sometimes hundreds, of light years away, their dreams haunted by once beautiful faces turned ashen by fear and shrill, plaintive screams for mercy. The closer those gifted of the psyker's arts travel to the Vortex, the louder and more desperate the screaming becomes. Soon, it is not only in his dreams but in his every waking hour that the psyker hears the wailing, and most are driven to the very brink of sanity by the experience. On occasion, such as when the tides of the gibbous storm wax, the screams are so loud that even those born without the power of the psyker can hear them, scratching at the edge of their sanity and seeming to beg them for a mercy that none have the power to grant.

THE BIRTH OF THE SCREAMING VORTEX

The Screaming Vortex has existed in its present form for at least ten thousand years, though the use of the standard measure is of little relevance to such a region. Some places within its borders appear to have existed in their eternal torment since the very beginning of time, while others have endured aeons of pain in what to an outside witness might appear only the blink of an eye. Despite the difficulty in quantifying such a phenomena, some accounts of its beginnings do, in fact, exist. No single, definitive record describes the entire truth, and such accounts range from the jealously guarded heirloom data-dumps of the very oldest Navigator Houses to the mad gibberings of warp-touched hell-seers. Given the nature of these scattered sources, there is scant chance of any one scholar ever collating them into something resembling even a portion of the truth, unless some very highly placed agent of the Inquisition were to turn to the path to glory. What follows then is but one possible account, of one possible truth. Those who believe such accounts are to be pitied, for their souls are already lost to the dread powers of Chaos.

The zone now known as the Screaming Vortex was once, so one tale recounts, a bountiful region strewn with paradise worlds. These realms were so perfect in form and placement that they could only have been created by the deliberate will of beings as powerful as gods, perhaps as havens for the Eldar and the other beatific child-species that dwelled there. For aeons, the Eldar and others existed in a state of perfection and glory, at one with their creators and all of the dimensions of this universe and others. Then came what some called a plague and others a war, but may have been both at once. The perfect worlds were scoured and, while the creator-beings that had wrought them battled valiantly to protect them, all were lost. Those few that survived the war that had destroyed their heaven knew misery and deprivation.

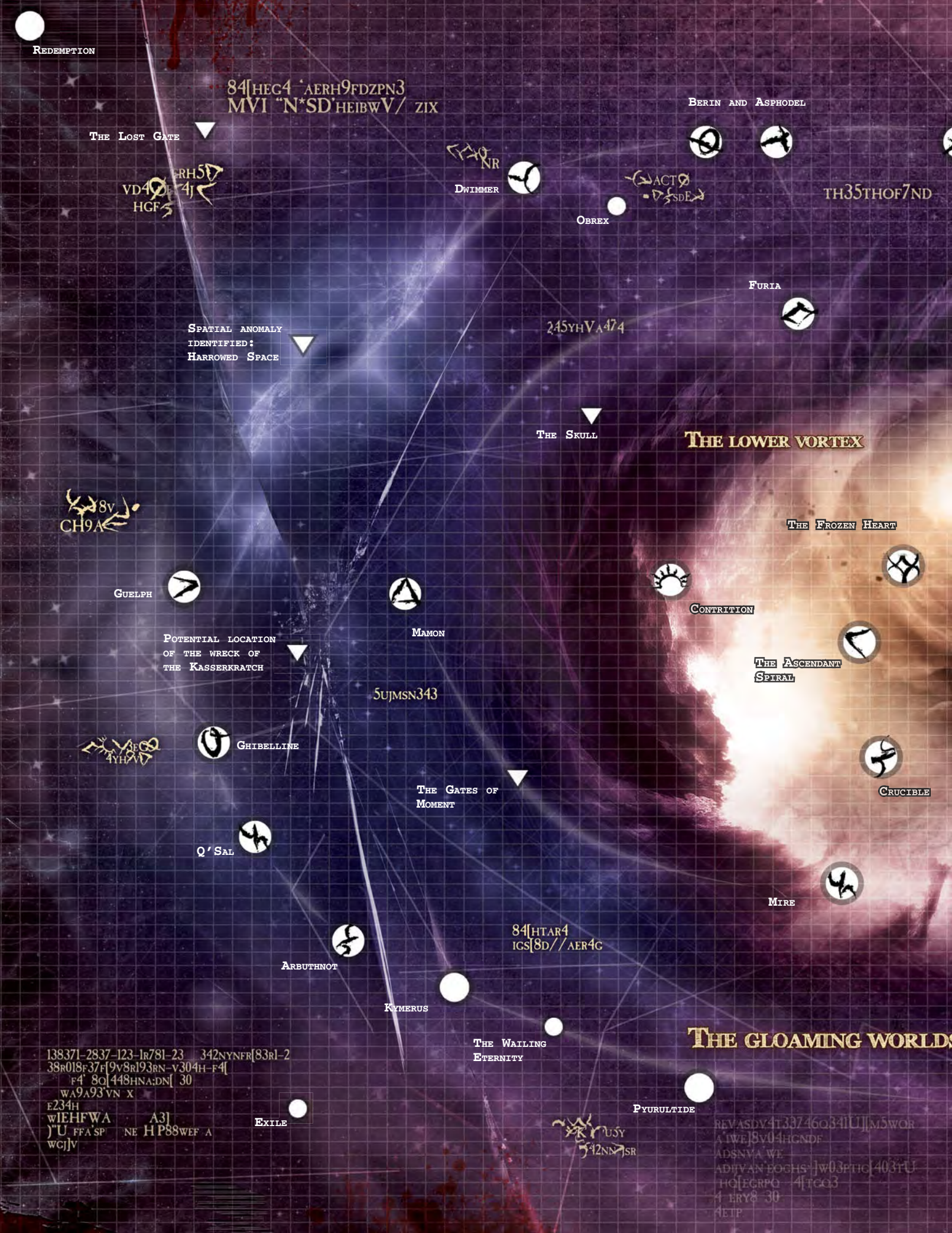
It is said that most of the survivors left in a great exodus, each of the species dispersing to a different corner of the galaxy. In time, they would forget the place of their birth and war upon one another until barely one one- hundredth of their number remained, all others slain by the hands of those with whom they had once shared heaven. But some Eldar stayed behind, resolved to rebuild their paradise by their own hands, though their creators had long ago disappeared from the galaxy.

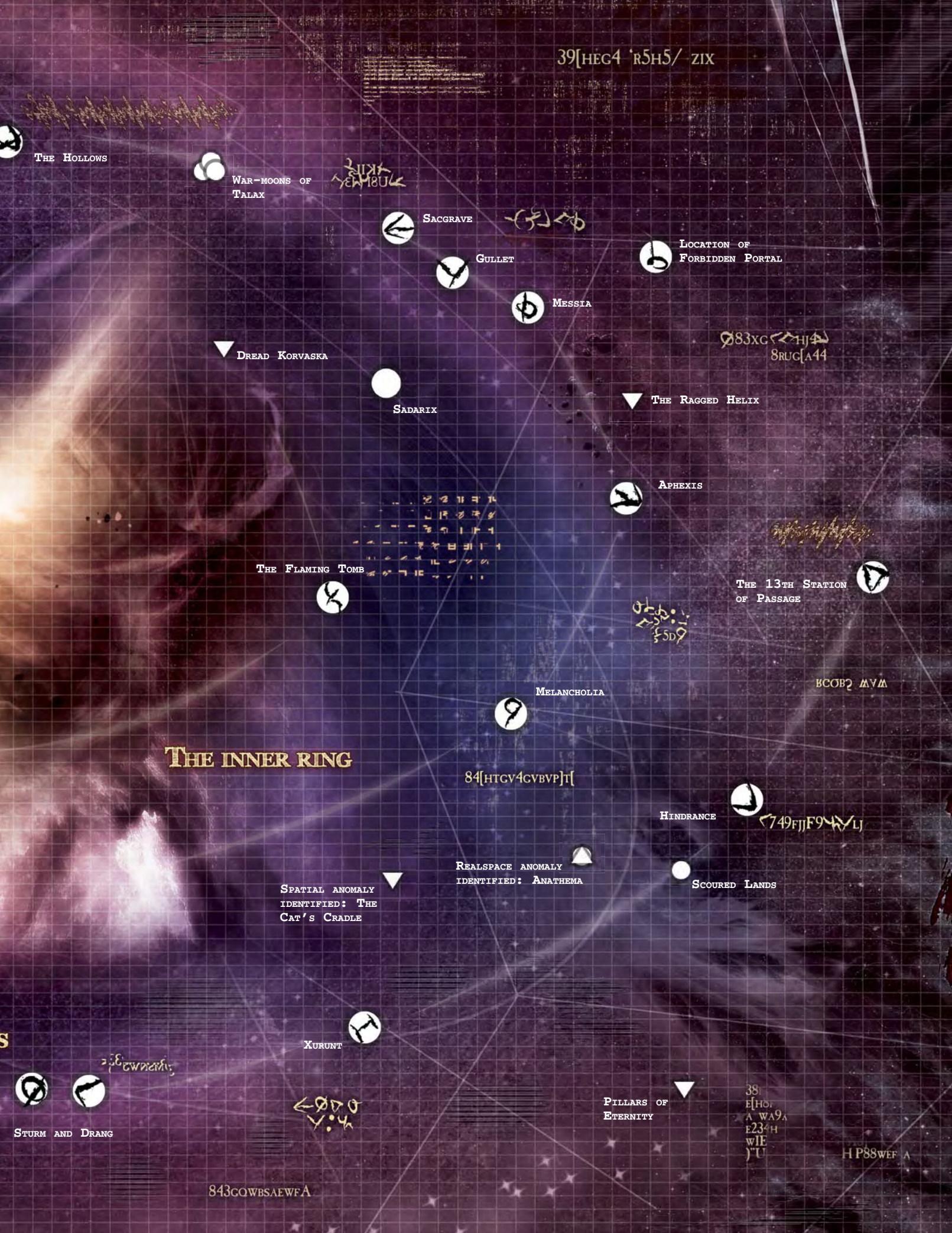
How long the survivors toiled to rebuild their heaven-worlds cannot be measured by any constant of the physical universe. Generation after generation gave their all in their labours, that children they would never know might one day dwell in heaven. Eventually, so it is told, these ancients stood ready to place the last stone, resplendent on the very brink of eternity.

Then the universe descended into a new hell, one that was an order of magnitude worse than the plague that had cast down the Heaven-worlds. The galaxy-spanning civilisation of the Eldar fell and, in a single moment, Slaanesh, the Dark Prince of Chaos, was born. The new god's birthing-cries resounded throughout eternity, and civilisations the universe over were cast down. The warp erupted as it never had before and the homeworlds of the Eldar were consumed. The epicentre of this cataclysm was the Eye of Terror, a seething warp storm of immense proportions occupying the former realms of the Eldar. Other worlds were consumed as well and other warp storms sprung into being around them.

At the very instant of heaven's reconstitution, the entire region was consumed in a seething cauldron of Chaos. The warp erupted into the material universe, creating a wholly unnatural storm as the stuff of reality and anti-reality flowed together. Those who had laboured to rebuild their heaven were obliterated body and soul, yet something of them remained, and would do so for all eternity. The cries of anguish they voiced at the very instant of their destruction would echo through the storm for all of eternity, cries born of unbounded torment at seeing all their works cast down by the sins of the greater Eldar civilisation.

Thus was born the Screaming Vortex. The storms unleashed at the moment of the Fall of the Eldar rage as


Redemption
The Lost Gate
Berin and Asphodel
Dwimmer
Obrex
Furia
Spatial anomaly identified: Harrowed Space
The Skull
The lower vortex
The Frozen Heart
Contrition
Guelph
Mamon
Potential location of the wreck of the Kasserkratch
The Ascendant Spiral
Ghibelline
The Gates of Moment
Crucible
Q'Sal
Mire
Arbuthnot
Kymerus
The Wailing Eternity
The Gloaming Worlds
Exile
Pyurultide


The Hollows
War-moons of Talax
Sacgrave
Gullet
Location of Forbidden Portal
Messia
Dread Korvaska
Sadarix
The Ragged Helix
Aphexis
The Flaming Tomb
The 13th Station of Passage
Melancholia
The Inner Ring
Hindrance
Realspace anomaly identified: Anathema
Spatial anomaly identified: The Cat's Cradle
Scoured Lands
Xurunt
Pillars of Eternity
Sturm and Drang

Daemon Worlds

Daemon Worlds were once planets created and ruled by the processes and laws of nature. Yet, through some cataclysmic incursion, they are now entirely claimed by the warp, forming permanent islands of the Immaterium in the midst of real space. A daemon can move unhindered from the warp to one of the Daemon Worlds and the four Great Powers continuously compete to possess them. Armies of daemons and their living allies fight huge and bloody battles to determine which of the Chaos Powers will hold sway. These battles often last for hundreds of years, so that the entire world becomes little more than a gigantic arena where the opposing forces are pitched against each other. They represent the eternal conflict between the Ruinous Powers, manifested in a very real way through the deeds and drives of those who would serve them. The generals of these armies are Greater Daemons and daemon princes, the latter because they were once alive and understand the nature of both the material universe and the immaterial Realm of Chaos. Once a daemon prince has conquered a world, he claims it as it own to rule in his patron's name as he wishes.

When a daemon prince takes control of his hard-won world he uses his mighty powers to reshape it to a form that pleases him. Because of this, every world is different and all are equally spectacular in their own way. Some are host to oceans bubbling viscera, while some are shaped into grinning skulls visible from millions of miles away. Some have landscape that could only be possible in the warp, such as mountains floating in the sky or volcanoes into which rivers of lava flow backwards.

The mortal population of a Daemon World serves Chaos in two equally important ways. Mortals provide the manpower for the armies of Chaos, especially for the armies that invade the material universe. Mortals worship the uncaring Chaos Powers and in so doing swell their presence in the warp.

Although the Eye of Terror seethes with almost perceptual war, not every mortal creature is necessarily harnessed to battle. Only those who are brave enough to fight their way to freedom from the slave-pits, prayer gangs, and black factories may fight in the name of Chaos and so draw power from it. The remainder serve through work and worship. Slaves are rewarded in the bitter way of Chaos, learning to love the lash. They become frenzied with pleasure as they approach extremes of self-sacrifice, trying to outdo their neighbours in their efforts to please their overlords. Many populations labour not in the daemonic foundries, but in planet-sized prayer-hordes. Countless millions are whipped into a fervour of devotion, the warp resounding to their frenzied prayers while the Ruinous Powers growing all the more powerful through their sacrifice.

wildly as ever, and the cries of those lost within resound just as loudly. Though the souls of the lost are gone forever, their bitter lament continues, an eternal warning of the fell power of the Primordial Annihilator and its unbounded potential to destroy all that is, or could one day be, good in the world.

Of the interior of the Screaming Vortex, the adepts and savants of the Imperium know next to nothing, except perhaps that which they discount as the ranting of madmen and heretics. To date, many of the warlords of the Screaming Vortex have concerned themselves with their eternal struggle for supremacy over the worlds entrapped within its boiling storms. Yet, there are those within who seek to infiltrate humanity for their own ends, just as there are those without who seek a way into the Vortex and to harbour its unknowable energies. It is only a matter of time before a warlord gains such power as to unite his fractious peers and lead them in a Black Crusade against the domains of the hated Emperor. This may be all it takes to make the Screaming Vortex as feared a place as the Eye of Terror, and the name of that warlord as dreaded as that of Abbadon the Despoiler or even Warmaster Horus himself.

THE DENIZENS OF THE SCREAMING VORTEX

The Screaming Vortex encompasses a vast region of the void, a far larger area than was originally occupied by the Heaven-worlds, if even the smallest part of that legend is to be taken as truth. As its currents wax and wane, so other worlds have been dragged into its depths and many still exist in a damned state, beyond the knowledge of the Imperium. The peoples of many of these worlds have never known the Emperor, their lands having been sucked into the Vortex long before the coming of the Imperium.

More importantly, the dimensions of the physical universe cease to apply within the Vortex. It's said that the outer storms that form the boundaries of the Vortex are "as thin as a curtain and as thick as a thousand generations," and that is the best description to be found of this region. Truly the worlds of the Screaming Vortex may be so close that a Heretic can jump from one to another, yet so far that such a leap may take a hundred years to complete.

No form of unified government can possibly exist amongst the denizens of the Vortex and, even if it could, very few would ascent to be ruled in such a manner. In the Vortex, men are either slave or master, for any other existence is anathema to a region ruled according to the whims of Chaos.

THE EMPYREAL REALMS

To the distant observer, the Screaming Vortex appears as an area of roiling, lambent energies flickering in the darkness of interstellar space. The voidborn know not to look too long at such things, for to do so is to invite insanity at best and damnation at worst. Some say the swirling energies coalesce into screaming mouths as large as entire star systems and terrified eyes open wide to implore the onlooker for mercy. Commonly, vessels navigating through real space in the vicinity of the Vortex and other, similar phenomena lower their warp-shutters as they would in the depths of the warp itself, so that none may become soul-tranced by the whirling energies. Were a vessel to close upon the Vortex, it would be buffeted by ever more violent tides until navigation became

all but impossible. At that point, the vessel would be cast upon the currents of the storm and washed up wherever the capricious and unknowable energies of the Immaterium willed (if it was not destroyed outright).

The arrangement of the interior of the Screaming Vortex is beyond describing in sane or rational terms and only the most warp-scathed Navigator would attempt to map its depths. Despite this, there are those steeped in forbidden knowledge who perceive patterns and forms in the roiling depths and who have come to understand something of the storm's ways. Over countless generations, insane astromancers and warp-readers have come to recognise certain features and pronounced names for the various regions within. The terms such men use to describe the inner workings of the Screaming Vortex are as rabid blasphemy to the scions of the Navigator Houses, who renounce them utterly. Such terms of reference include the "fluvial disjunctions," the "antecedent counter-configurations," the "paradolian observances," the "atemporal conjurations," and the "amalgam horizons." All of these features can be broadly categorised as belonging to one of the three zones within the Screaming Vortex—the Gloaming Worlds, the Inner Ring, and the Lower Vortex.

THE GLOAMING WORLDS

The Gloaming Worlds represent the outer fringe of the Screaming Vortex—a shell consisting of several hundred systems. Such worlds are well beyond the reach or the desire of the Imperium, for they are so steeped in the fell energies flowing from the Vortex that none save the most insane Lord Militant would consider invading them. The Gloaming Worlds hang trapped in the eerie, flickering glow of the storm, as precious but flawed jewels suspended in lambent amber. Those few Navigators who have dared cast their warp eye towards the Gloaming Worlds know of those closest to the Koronus Passage, yet the vast majority are entirely unknown, and indeed unknowable, to the Imperium.

None can say for sure how many of the Gloaming Worlds are inhabited, and such is the ebb and flow of the storm that a planet teeming with life on one sighting may show no sign of ever having harboured a single cell the next time it is seen. Some are fought over by insane megalomaniac warlords, while others are avoided at all costs. So unpredictable are the currents of the Screaming Vortex that even these outer worlds are isolated from one another and few warlords have ever managed to capture and control more than a handful at any one time.

Still more of the Gloaming Worlds exist in little more than name, including cursed Arbuthnot, hated Dwimmer, the bitter binary twins Sturm and Drang, murderous Guelph, jealous Ghibelline, and blasted Hindrance.



Xurunt

Xurunt is one of the more stable and populous worlds to be found in the Screaming Vortex. It takes the form of an extremely large, rocky planet orbiting the star Canares in the layer of seventh fluvial transgression. Despite the massive size of the world, the gravity on Xurunt exists within normal parameters due to its allegedly hollow core.

The surface of Xurunt is dominated by several great landmasses separated by small seas too acidic to support any but the most hardy and truculent forms of life. At some point the landmasses of Xurunt were civilized; the marks of ancient roadways cross the land, and faint traces of ruined cities still exist in some areas. Some great cataclysm evidently overtook the inhabitants of Xurunt—perhaps at the moment of being drawn into the Screaming Vortex, or more likely later as order broke down and terror stalked the streets. The current inhabitants of Xurunt do not speak of such times and regard the virtually obliterated ruins of cities with superstitious fear.

The population of Xurunt is made up of numerous fierce nomadic tribes, the Xur, that move ceaselessly over the wide prairies of the interior. In the long summer months when different tribes meet, they fight; each attempting to kill and enslave the other without any thought of parley. The way of the Xur is dominance and a powerful tribe can quickly amass a mighty thrall-train and great herds of Xurunsh, the Grox-like beast that the Xur use for mounts, food, and transportation. However, a tribe too overburdened with plunder soon has every other tribe attempting to steal any Xurunsh and slaves it can't protect in an endless cycle of conflict.

During the short, hard Xurunt winter the nomads studiously ignore one another unless provoked, some tribes withdrawing to fortified camps on mesas while others migrate to warmer climes in the world's equatorial belt. On a few celebrated occasions a warlord has emerged that was known for being especially formidable as he would campaign through the winter, being given the acclamation of Sacanta or "Frost Father."

Xur warriors admire flamboyant bravery in battle above all else and treasure the polished skulls of their enemies more than gold or jewels. The Xur are unruly and hard to command but make for skilled and fearless opponents. Xur combat is fast and furious, a swift exchange of missiles followed by a thunderous charge into close combat. Clever warlords try to fix their opponent's attention and then catch them with an unexpected charge from

flanks or rear. Such tactics are so well-worn that few Xur will fall for them, the fight devolving into a series of skirmishes as the flanking forces clash. Outlanders expecting only a primitive frontal charge can, and do, get caught out, however, as the burned wrecks of several ships on Xurunt's surface mutely testify.

In most tribes both sexes are trained to fight from the moment they are old enough to sit on a Xurunsh. They must become proficient with the three-meter long lance-goad used to control the hulking creature, as well as lead-weighted javelins and the powerful horn recurve bows favoured by the Xur.

Lethal as they are in the hands of Xur warrior, all of these weapons are secondary to the deadly power of the Xurunsh itself, a veritable moving mountain of muscle, scale, and horn. What little love Xur warriors have is reserved for their mounts. Especially quick and powerful beasts are lauded and pampered, bedecked with precious stones and finely woven cloth. Metal armour is more often seen worn by Xurunsh than by their riders—slitted eye plates, neck and belly armour being most common. Claw sheathes and impaling spikes add to the Xurunsh's already imposing profile. The most renowned Xurunsh are often remembered in legend and song long after their rider's legacy has faded.

Across the whole of the vast surface of Xurunt only eight structures remain that are greater than knee-high stumps. These are huge, pot-bellied idols to a bull-headed deity the Xur call Baphtar. These gigantic bronze constructions are several hundreds metres tall and of unknown origin, said by the tribesmen to be gifts of the gods. Each is different in details, but all portray the same figure squatting back on its hooves with fists clenched and head tipped back with jaws agape as if caught in a moment of bellowing rage. By ancient law, any combat that takes place within sight of one of the towering idols is dedicated to Baphtar's honour and no slaves or Xurunsh are permitted to be taken alive.

Each winter a tribe under a mighty warlord that has waxed powerful in the summer months will encamp themselves around an idol of Baphtar. The very fiercest battles will occur where two or more tribes arrive to claim the honour. Afterwards, in a succession of long, frenzied ceremonies, the warlord makes numerous sacrifices and dedicates his victories to Baphtar's name. Ritual combats occur between the tribes' warriors and adolescents are tested most stringently at this time. To become an adult within Baphtar's sight is felt to be an especially portentous sign and is marked with branding of the celebrants. Any show of weakness is met with immediate bloodshed to expunge the sin before Baphtar becomes wrathful.

By the arrival of spring the tribes that return from the idols can be reduced to just a handful of warriors. The Xur fear these 'chosen of Baphtar' for their battle fury and the legends that tell of chosen returning armed weapons of lightning or unstoppable brazen Xurunsh that neither ate nor drank. According to Xur myth the most worthy warriors are carried up by Baphtar himself to join his iron hosts and fight in the Long War. Often no one at all returns from an idol, and each is surrounded by a parched white plain made of the skulls of the unworthy supplicants.

The Xur have few metal working skills and hold labours like mining in contempt as a task fit only for slaves. The main source of their worked metal comes from hunting the great clanking creatures they call Onir, or dragons. The Onir burrow up periodically from beneath the surface of Xurunt, huge multi-limbed metal beasts covered in wheels and rods that are more reminiscent of crabs than reptiles. The Xur have learned how to hunt the lumbering constructs by vaulting on their backs and blinding them, a daring feat that wins high renown among the tribes for the survivors.

The Onir retaliate with gouts of flames and rotating blades but can seldom escape the tribesmen for long; once immobilised the great beast is stripped to its gleaming metal skeleton. Hull plates are beaten into blades and Xurunsh armour, rods are reshaped into lance-goads, wires made into halters, lariats, and garrottes. Every part of the Onir is used, with even the bones being dragged away by teams of Xurunsh to be incorporated in the tribe's winter camp. The Xur understand that Onir are not real creatures and maintain that they are made by beings that live in the hollow center of their world that they call Svartlings—a troglodytic race, possible the mutated survivors of the first city-builders or some other strange beings deposited on Xurunt by the caprices of the Screaming Vortex.

Most Xur view Svartlings with fear and mistrust but some among their number are said to have dealings with them by going deep beneath the earth into caves or fissures. Such Xur risk becoming sorcerers and outcasts in the eyes of their fellows if they are discovered, although the magical gifts to be won have tempted many. A Xur sorcerer is said to predict the weather and speak over limitless distances, summon lightning, and blind their enemies with a gesture.

Q'sal

At the juncture of the sixth and seventh anteciduals of the Screaming Vortex, a particularly persistent whorl of warp energy surrounds the sorcerer's world of Q'sal. Here the sorcerer-technocrats of the cities of Tarnor, Velklir and Surgub have held sway for over eight hundred centuries by their own reckoning, an almost inconceivable timespan in realspace terms. The high loremasters of Velklir maintain that Q'sal lay at the heart of the Screaming Vortex in the earliest days of is formation, but has gradually moved from the centre towards the periphery, the scrollwardens of Surgub counter that they have irrefutable proof that Q'sal began at the periphery and is moving to the center. The archivist-savants of Tarnor can add their weight to neither view, having been struck mute by decree of the arch qaestor of Tarnor for a period of not less than two centuries in censure for their outrageous utterances. So it goes on Q'sal.

Q'sal is a rich and prosperous world that would seem familiar to the inhabitant of a civilized world of the Imperium. The clean lines of its glass-towered cities overlook plains covered with well-tended agriculture, its air is alive with the movement of flying craft. In space, a docking ring and shipyards work constantly and a variety of sleek-hulled vessels can be found moored there. On closer inspection, all of this seemingly ordinary activity reeks of the most potent warp-spawned sorcery; everything from daemon-forged engines to voidships powered by rune-inscribed menhirs. Spells and cantrips are implicit in every kind of technology in an arcane fusion of magic and science.

A great many peculiarities append to the inhabitants of each of the three cities, but as a rule the people of Q'sal appear to be handsomely featured humans, neither young nor old, and with children and the infirm never to be seen. They treat all

outworlders with disdain and, for the most part, view them as errant slaves to be taken in hand as necessary. On occasion, machinations between the three cities lead one or more of them to open up trade with outworlders for an extended period of time—or to just as abruptly cease it. When trade is underway, the soulforges of Q'sal work day and night while demented choirs of captive daemons pipe spells of alteration and change.

The sorceror-technocrats will trade for only one thing—souls, living in the form of slaves or already captive in traps or stones. When available, the weapons and ships of Q'sal fetch astronomical prices and are easily recognised by their sinuous curves and deadly efficiency. The dark tales that cling to the artefacts of Q'sal do little to dissuade eager warlords and pirate kings, even though by some twist of fate they often lead to the meteoric rise and then fall of their owners.

The three cities of Q'sal are highly distinct from one another and frequently at war, covert or overt, over a variety of imaginary slights and antiquated territorial claims. Full war between the cities has not been visited upon Q'sal in several centuries for fear of the great terrors unleashed. In past times, fleets of sorcerous floating silver towers attended by squadrons of flying warlocks ravaged the landscape while legions of unleashed daemons fought to mutually assured destruction in an orgy of violence. A number of locations on the surface still bear the scars of such conflict, places where reality is worn thin and daemons are held in check only with the most stringent pacts and wards.

Some hold that the three current cities are only the survivors of an original nine, the remainder destroyed in internecine wars before the current reckoning of time began on Q'sal. A fragile peace has emerged with the three factions, carefully balanced by pacts stating that overt hostility by one of their number will be met forcefully by the other two together. The sorcerer-technocrats still find loopholes and exceptions in plenty to prosecute their schemes, but reality-cracking magics are kept in check.

The city of Surgub is built on an island in the bay of the great river Crelix and claims to be the oldest settlement of Q'sal—a claim hotly refuted by Tarnor and Velklir. Surgub is ruled over by fourteen Factors with palaces in the highest steeples of the city. They meet in a strict pattern according to lunar phases. By their decree, any action that might distract them from their deliberations at such times is punishable by death, banishment, or reward according to their whimsy-a decision ordinarily made according to the manner of business they were attending to. In the past, infractions have been recorded for a multitude of activities including whistling, not whistling, riotous public assembly, incontinent verbosity, unwelcome eruptions, and snark.

The measure of a Sorcerer's worth in Surgub is determined by the height of his tower, a law that has caused the city to grow vertically into a crown of crystalline spikes many kilometers high. The highest ranked sorcerers seldom descend from the heights, living out their lives in the clouds far beyond the grip of common mire beneath. The sorcerers of Surgub often weave warp-enchantments to levitate them several inches above the ground when they must go abroad, in keeping with a belief of their city that a sorcerer setting foot upon the earth loses his powers.

The city of Velklir lies at the southern extremities of a chain of mountains far to the north. Velklir is ruled over by a tyrant elected every forty-nine years and, by tradition, the features of past tyrants are carved into the rocks surrounding Velklir. Over the centuries this practice has covered the flanks of the

Harrowed Space

Beneath the second fluvial transgression of the Screaming Vortex a thick ribbon of warp-flow marks the location known as Harrowed Space. Legends say that the gods at play once grew frustrated with the confines of their pitch and flung a world out of the Vortex to make more space, dragging a gouge in the swirling currents of the warp that persists to this day. The high witch-scryers of Velklir on Q'sal maintain that such talk is nonsense and that their calculations clearly indicate the existence of an entity at Giant's Stride. They believe that the anomaly is created by the slow pulse of the sleeping power they call Mystolaramphary the Cardinal of Lost Hours. Certainly the normal psychic screaming of the Vortex dulls to a dull, regular throb in the vicinity of Harrowed Space, a pulse that grows more powerful the closer a ship comes to the anomaly itself.

In realspace Harrowed Space is seen as a bruise-coloured nebula shot through with gossamer thin veils of exotic matter ejected from transient warp rifts that plague the region. Strange entities flit between these rents in reality, gremlin-like sprites that try to lure ships to destruction with false signals and distress calls. The Giant's Stride is tumultuous and highly dangerous region to enter, with unpredictable crosscurrents and warp eddies always on hand to sweep an unwary vessel into the inescapable clutches of the Vortex.

A brave and determined captain armed with the correct star charts or the benefits of daemonic patronage might pass through these dangers to find the true entrance to the warp flow at Harrowed Space. Navigating successfully through this fast-moving cataract of energy can shrink a travel time of months or weeks down to days or even hours. Areas of the Screaming Vortex that would be completely impossible to reach otherwise can be reached via Harrowed Space for those with the courage to risk passage. Some whisper that at the right junctures it is even possible to slingshot through the flow and escape the Vortex completely. The pirate-seeress Zegule the Red is said to have led a fleet of ships through Harrowed Space to raid realspace on three separate occasions before suddenly vanishing without trace after an argument with her pact-bound daemonic guide.

Despite the potential rewards only the most desperate or overconfident slavers, pirates and smugglers will steer via Harrowed Space regularly. Many ships that make the attempt come to grief in its clutches and the region is littered with their wrecked hulks cast out of the tides of the warp for an hour, a day or a year. Swarms of scavengers are drawn the edges of the region to plunder the lost ships as they are often fat with goods from distant worlds. All too often the scavengers become victims themselves, their ramshackle ships caught in the vicious undertow and dragged to their doom.



The Islands of the Ragged Helix

At the very edge of the Gloaming Worlds, where reality bleeds away on the approach to the Inner Ring, is to be found a region known as the Ragged Helix. Entrapped within the impossible energies that mark the convergence of the two regions is what appears to be a chain of asteroids many millions of miles in length. Each asteroid has its own atmosphere—some breathable, others instantly deadly. Each rock, which can vary in size from a planetoid to a tiny island, is linked to the next by an invisible anchor and a tendril of atmosphere, allowing mortals to step from one to the next. While some of these wild islands of rock are mere metres apart, others are many miles, forcing travellers to cross unseen bridges through the void, never quite knowing what might await them on the next island.

The larger of the islands of the Ragged Helix are fought over bitterly, and many host mighty fortresses. A number have been turned over to the production of weapons and warships, attended by the fell minions of the Dark Mechanicus. These islands are an awesome sight indeed, mighty ships of war tethered to the slowly dancing rock islands in preparation for battle against their masters' foes, or the servants of the corpse-god of the Imperium.

mountains with hundreds of stern, hollow-eyed patrician faces, giving Velklir its more common name of "The City of Faces." Velklir's towers are squat, round-bodied structures of green glass often broader than they are tall.

Velklir's sorcerers show a great passion for astronomy and the tops of many of the towers are given to arcane observatories and gigantic astrolabes. The astronomer-scientists of Velklir strive to carefully track every heavenly movement and astral conjunction in the Screaming Vortex. They obsessively make complex calculations, plot horoscopes, and predict the flux of the warp to discover the most auspicious periods for their undertakings. It's said that a sorcerer from Velklir can guide a vessel through the Immaterium with astounding accuracy, rivalling even the mutant Navigators of the Imperium, and that the greatest warbands repay Velklir for their assistance with a great tithe of souls. Even a Velklir star-chart is a great aid.

The city of Tarnor occupies a region of irrigated desert west of Velklir. Seen from afar it appears as a mass of domes and spheres tinted a thousand scintillating colours; whorls of amber, vermillion, carmine shot through with bubbles of cobalt, puce, lavender, and sienna. The sight of Tarnor gleaming beneath the desert sun can strike the unprotected blind. At sunset, the innumerable hues of cityscape merge to make colours unnamed in ordinary reality. The shadows cast are not those of Tarnor, but other cities in other times and places, making a grotesque shadowplay of the future.

The sorcerers of Tarnor wear a variety of placid-seeming masks whenever in public, changing them several times daily in correspondence to chimes rung throughout the city. The spoken word is frowned upon and a complex system of ritualized gestures is used to undertake most transactions. A visitor that abides by

these strictures will find themselves feasted and entertained in great style by their silent hosts, though cautionary stories abound of guests causing offense by exclamations of delight.

Part of the Tarnor sorcerers' obsessive silence extends from their bizarre love of music. It is said that a sorcerer of Tarnor can't pass music being played without stopping to listen and that they will bestow amazing gifts on those that bring them a new kind of instrument or an unheard tune. By night, the curving streets of Tarnor echo with the weird strains of otherworldly melodies and alien harmonies. The mad profusion of instruments achieves a dissonance that can at times overwhelm the senses and blast the ears, or at others transport the soul on sublime breezes to a place of paradise.

Berin and Asphodel

The worlds of Berin and Asphodel orbit the poisonous star Velaj on the very fringes of ninth fluvial interstial. Both are comparatively new additions to the Vortex having been drawn inside it only a few centuries ago. Both worlds were ravaged utterly in the process and long since reverted to wild barbarism of the worst kind. Where these worlds were plucked from is impossible to say. They may have once lain at fringes of the Screaming Vortex and were absorbed in a slow expansion of its extent, or they may have been drawn into a vagrant funnel from just about anywhere in the galaxy.

The current inhabitants of Berin and Asphodel certainly keep no records of the times before their arrival in the Screaming Vortex. Two xenos species have risen to complete dominance on the planets; innumerable clans of Feral Orks infest Berin and countless Kroot Septs have overrun Asphodel. Primitive warfare is endemic to both planets and the inhabitants' energies are normally fully absorbed in fighting other Clans or Septs in vicious battles for survival.

Most of Asphodel is a dim, swampy morass completely overgrown by scum-sucking Nendya trees trailing long beards of burn-moss. Throughout this noisome, twilit environment lithe Kroot warriors stalk their foes, laying traps and setting ambushes. The tribes live a nomadic existence, weaving temporary villages in the treetops as they move from place to place. Horrid cannibalistic feasts take place before leaping fires and the night air is always alive with the angry grumble of distant drums.

The Kroot on Asphodel seem to have retained only the barest vestiges of technology in any form. The most complex devices they can make are primitive flintlock Kroot rifles. The swamps of Asphodel are rife with Krootox, Kroothounds, and other, much stranger divergent branches of Kroot evolution. It seems likely that the surviving Kroot are gradually devolving into a completely animalistic state, and in the long term, the last vestiges of their limited civilisation could disappear from Asphodel completely. Only in the mountains of Lun do the Kroot Master Shapers still retain the full memories of their craft. These strange beings spend their lives shaping even stranger progeny—great moon moths and sinuous aether wurms of great size. They wait and watch the skies for the return of Berin, the fiery heaven of their myths.

The Orks of Berin dwell on a planet dominated by parched deserts and pitiless dust storms. Water and metal ores are rare commodities on Berin, to the point where even the Feral Ork tribes are hampered by the lack of resources. The Orks themselves are gnarled and tough, their green hides burned almost black by the poisonous star Vejin and scoured by the relentless winds. Each tribe guards its own watering hole ferociously and makes constant attempts to seize others so that it can expand its numbers. With typical Ork ingenuity, all manner of vehicles are used to cross the waterless deserts and come to blows with one another—everything from stitched-hide airships to rocket sleds. Many of the tribes are notably proficient at mining the sands for chemicals to make crude explosives and exhibit a love of rockets that far exceeds all reason. Others tribes produce large numbers of the wild psykers known as Weirdboyz capable of unleashing unpredictable but deadly powers in battle.

When one tribe does succeed in conquering another and taking a second watering hole, the victorious Warboss can rarely keep both places under control thanks to the overweening ambitions of his underlings. The limitations imposed by Berin's harsh geography and climate make building a great empire impossible. At their worst, the deadly dust storms circling the planet can rage for weeks at a time and reach strengths that strip an Ork to the bone in minutes. Even tribal strongholds can be obliterated by the largest storms, like the great permanent tempests the Orks call Ulg, Bur, and Zzuk. These thousand kilometre wide circular storms sweep randomly across the surface of Berin, sometimes clashing and destroying all in their path. The Orks believe demons stalk the hearts of these great maelstroms, tearing Orks to shreds and etching their bones with curious, spiralling script.

On both Berin and Asphodel, only one event takes precedence over the eternal cycles of blood-debt and vendetta—the time when their sister-planet looms large in the sky. Then every Shaper or Warboss turns their thoughts to migrating to a new world. The erratic orbits of Berin and Asphodel bring them within just a few million kilometres of one another. From Asphodel, countless moon moths and aether wurms take flight, migrating across the void to the orange ball of Berin. Heavily adapted Kroot cling to their backs for the crossing, surviving the passage by burrowing into their flesh to suckle like giant ticks. From Berin, swarms of rockets blast skyward towards the grey circle of Asphodel in reply, and huge rocks tear free from the desert sands—propelled aloft by gangs of chanting Weirdboys to carry mobs of ecstatic warriors to battle.

The two streams of invaders meet and intermingle, the ferocity of both sides often driving them to do battle in the empty fastness between their worlds. Such battles usually mean death for victor and vanquished alike, with any survivors doomed to be taken by the ever-hungry void. War erupts across the face of both worlds when the skies fill with enemies from the other world. Only a handful survive the crossing and the subsequent (often disastrous) landfalls, but they are enough to make great gains at first. The bravest and strongest fighters from both worlds are so busy trying to invade the other that they leave their home defences woefully weak.

However, to date no force of invaders seems to have survived long enough to be found alive in a subsequent alignment. As their sister-planet wanes in the sky all of the tribes left behind invariably turn against any aliens to be found on their own world. In a quite exemplary display of unity, they prosecute a genocidal campaign against the interlopers, only returning

to the normal business of killing their own kind when every invading Ork or Kroot on the planet has been destroyed.

Pirates find Berin and Asphodel to be excellent recruiting grounds for bands of ferocious savages. The cult of travelling to the stars is so firmly embedded in both the Kroot and the Orks that they willingly serve anyone with a starship, crowning the captain of any passing tramp vessel as king, emperor, or god as takes their fancy. The buccaneer Clavis Moreff is said have employed entire squadrons of Kroot riding aether wurms in his attack on the living gardens of Endhriesh and much woe came upon the Arch-horticultralist thereby. The sixth Shadow-Margrave of Sacgrave had a company of Orks recruited from Berin much feared for their cannibalistic proclivities. Most captains limit themselves to a few bravoes recruited from either Berin or Asphodel (the two species fight incessantly if placed in the same crew). They make excellent first mates and boarding party leaders, with exceptional hand-to-hand combat skills and senses honed to perfection by life on their deadly homeworlds.

However, dealing with the natives is not entirely without its risks. A few ships have found themselves overrun by over-enthusiastic Orks from Berin and promptly crashed into the surface of their world with disastrous results. The Kroot of Asphodel can be apt to assail passing vessels and try to force their way aboard to demand passage from their unwilling hosts.

The Hollows

Within the Screaming Vortex lies a peculiar world that could not otherwise exist, taking advantage of the Vortex's unusual eddies and tides of warp matter. This world is known as the Hollows, and the name aptly describes its bizarre nature—from afar, the Hollows resembles a half-eaten fruit, little more than a single hemisphere with a thick stem of rock extending beneath it. Once, the Hollows was a relatively normal planet, but the rivalry between two Dark Magi has stripped enormous amounts of the planet's once-abundant resources until nearly half of it was fully consumed by massive-scale deep core mining. The planet's molten heart cooled and congealed long ago—were it not suspended in the reality-bending realm of the Screaming Vortex, the Hollows would have long since broken apart into asteroids.

On one side of the Hollows' remaining hemisphere lies Forge Castir. This is one of two Dark Mechanicus installations on the planet that constructs twisted devices that are often possessed by daemonic entities or are designed to manipulate warp energy as both weapon and power source. The undisputed lord of Forge Castir is a Dark Magos known only as the Exospectre, a towering creature of slithering mechadendrites wrapped in mouldering, ragged robes. Some claim that the Exospectre was once a trusted Archmagos, possibly one of the near-mythical Lords Dragon who police the Mechanicus from within.

Forge Castir is ever at war with its twin, a sprawling complex on the other side of the hemisphere known as Forge Polix. Designed and controlled by Magos Onuris, Forge Polix is a frenzied centre of heavy industry, creating finely-crafted suits of protective power armour, lumbering war engines, and various voidship components that are traded to numerous warbands and warp-entities alike.

No one is certain what began the conflict between the two forges, but the Hollows are constantly beset by battles erupting across its remaining hemisphere. Orbital strikes, tech-assassins, and teeming hordes of tech-renegades are among the most mundane of weapons wielded in this struggle for supremacy. For the last decade, the Exospectre has held the upper hand, and Magos Onuris grows ever more desperate to secure a gambit that will achieve victory over his rival.

The Writhing World

A number of legends surround the worlds of the Screaming Vortex, many of them cautionary tales or nightmarish parables of death and despair. Upon seeing the Writhing World for the first time, there are few who would dispute that this blighted planet has inspired many such dark stories.

From orbit, the Writhing World appears as a dirty-brown orb, its surface in constant subtle motion. The planet is seemingly composed of huge, continent-sized tendrils of worm-like flesh, perpetually slithering by small degrees in a bewildering pattern that has driven many strong men to madness.

There are no certain records of what may lie beneath the ever-squirming layers of the planet's surface, but there are dozens of theories that either describe the Writhing World as the birthplace of some ancient, malevolent god or the battleground for an apocalyptic battle, and that the planet itself is a long-forgotten weapon from that conflict.

Regardless of these speculations, the Writhing World has somehow become home to a number of scattered, feral human tribes, eking out a primitive existence amongst the tendril-ridges and flesh-mountains. Massive, mobile organic constructs called "crawling citadels" scuttle across the planet's surface, each a mighty tower controlled by a powerful sorcerer or biomancer. These sorcerer-kings sometimes approach wanderers and warbands with offers of safe passage across the treacherous worm-wastes in return for technology or secret knowledge.

Another minor mystery related to the Writhing World is the existence of four small moons in its orbit, each verdant with primitive plant and animal life forms. Although these moons are uninhabited, each is claimed by one of the sorcerer-kings as his private reserve, and there are many stories amongst the tribes that the moons are home to the souls of the damned and the source of the sorcerer-kings' power. Between these moons lies a thick chain of asteroids and a ring system. Those who fly within the rings find that each chunk and particle is also made of worm-like tendrils on a smaller scale, aping the planet they orbit.

Kurse

A baleful, guttering ember of a world, Kurse lurks like a canker within the Screaming Vortex as a common port-of-call to many warbands and Chaos pirates. Untold ages ago, Kurse was once a thriving civilised world, rich in machines and lore from the Dark Age of Technology. Ultimately, the world was embroiled in a firestorm of savage war, where unspeakable weapons were unleashed in search of a final victory. Thus, the world as it was had been cast down, its great cities and centres of learning smashed to rubble, its advanced civilisation reduced to brutality.

Ongoing toxic chemical reactions have created seas of simmering fire, and the remaining continents are marred by massive irradiated pits, many of which extend down to expose the planet's molten core. The majority of Kurse's environment



is completely uninhabitable, with only a few regions spared the ravages of cataclysm. The planetary population is mostly composed of mutants and cannibals, surviving on the remnants of their former glory, carefully hidden away before the planet's ugly fate or unearthed from the rubble afterwards.

A ring of asteroids in near orbit have been fitted to sustain life by the Dark Magi of Forge Castir, and a number of these habitats serve as crude gladiatorial pits where mutants and other survivors from Kurse are pitted against one another for bloody sport. Warp hounds, Ogryn brutes, and other such creatures are common amongst these makeshift arenas to add particular spice to the contests or to serve as slaves or bodyguards.

Kurse's true value to the denizens of the Screaming Vortex is as a breeding ground for warriors and mutants to fill the holds of Chaos pirate vessels or to serve in the armies of aspiring Champions of Chaos. Occasionally, some warbands make their way to Kurse in order to plunder lost archeotech or ancient data-vaults from the ruins on the planet's surface.

Malignia

Largely dominated by thick, temperate—and tropical-forest growth, Malignia appears at first to be a stable and welcoming planet that could easily be found in nearly any region of the galaxy. This appearance is a deceit, a lie to tempt and seduce the unwary into the lush, green hell of Malignia's ecosystem. Beneath the treetop canopy, Malignia is a twilight maze that rarely glimpses any sunlight. These forests are home to a vast variety of fierce predatory life-forms, so many that they have never been fully catalogued. Some of the more well-known creatures include the bloated sabre-lion, the cunning shade-mauler, and the utterly lethal poison of the crawling death. Malignia's plant life is no less dangerous; twisted growths of bone and ivory intertwine with waist-thick vines and sword-like, iron-hard thorns.

Many legends claim that the warlord Sikari the Vile constructed a pleasure-palace on the southern continent, a hunting lodge built from the bones of his enemies. If true, then the warlord's plentiful servants and wealth may abide there still, defended by ancient void-shields, automated defence guns, and the warlord's coterie of concubine-witches.

Sacgrave

From realspace, Sacgrave appears to be a fist-shaped gnarl of black rock barely the size of a small moon. Sacgrave's warp-shadow, however, is out of all proportion to its physical presence. It stands athwart the third fluvial extension where its anomalous presence breaks that comparatively calm channel into the raging fifth and sixth interstices. From this position Sacgrave dominates a large part of the Screaming Vortex as many vessels are pushed close by it as they battle the raging currents. The dense rock of Sacgrave has been seared across every inch of its surface by raging warp storms, leaving it black as soot and twisted into a thousand fantastically faceted pillars.

No one knows who originally settled on Sacgrave and built the first fortifications there, but they are constructed on a truly monumental scale. Thickly buttressed towers of basalt and onyx rise across its angular landscape, crowned with jagged battlements of adamantium and unbreakable crystal. In many places, the towers are clustered so thickly that they interlink, forming bastions and strongholds according to no logical pattern. A maze of vaults and tunnels are driven deep into the rock beneath them, so deep their furthest reaches have never been explored. The place was clearly not made for humans: its doorways gape wide enough for six men to walk abreast, its steps are knee high and its lofty ceilings disappear into shadows high above.

Later inhabitants adapted Sacgrave to their own purposes; studding the towers with weapon pits and augury systems, adding landing pads and docking booms, emplacing plasma furnaces and void shield generators in dark, silent vaults. For centuries, a succession of robber tyrants and pirate kings held sway over Sacgrave and its walls are soaked with the blood of innocents. The last claimant of the fortress were the enigmatic Shadow-Margraves who sought to clone a dynasty through the dark arts of gene-manipulation and heretek science.

Some reckoned the original Shadow-Margrave of Sacgrave to be a renegade from the Imperium. According to different tales, he was a Rogue Trader that became trapped in the Vortex, or a radical Inquisitor fleeing Puritanical opposition, or a rebellious nobleman avoiding Imperial justice. Others hold to darker tales, that the Margrave emerged from the depths of the Lower Vortex, and that he was a thing neither daemon nor mortal. It is a certainty that the Shadow-Margrave ruled Sacgrave with a rod of iron and extorted a heavy tithe from passing ships to pay for his obsession. Over time and after a great deal of bloodshed, the Shadow-Margraves succeeded in bringing order to the fractious pirate clans and bending them to his will.

Under the Shadow-Margraves' reign, the pirate fleets of Sacgrave swelled from a handful of ships to vast armadas. Bloodthirsty crews from all over the Vortex flocked to their banners for the promise of plunder and wanton slaughter they offered. Their raids escalated until whole worlds were ravaged by red-handed reavers, their miserable inhabitants enslaved or butchered out of hand. Some whispered that the Shadow-Margrave had pretensions of taking over the Gloaming Worlds and forging an empire, or even taking their armadas beyond the Screaming Vortex to confront the Imperium itself.

Perhaps that vow held the seeds of the Shadow-Margraves' destruction, their wishes being granted by some precocious daemon lord when a fleet arrived unexpectedly in the vicinity of Sacgrave. The pirates attacked without hesitation, squadrons of shark-nosed raiders blasting into space to assault the fleet while their heavier vessels hurriedly readied themselves for battle.

As the raiders closed, they were shocked to see that the vessels were not reavers. They were not even human. Instead, the sweeping solar sails of an Eldar battlefleet eclipsed the stars. A mighty Eldar warhost of the Craftworld Kaelor and a dozen corsair fleets bore down on Sacgrave. Against them, the hard-bitten renegades threw themselves into a fight to the death.

The Eldar blasted the first wave of pirates from the skies with mercilessly accurate gunnery even as they closed to bring their own weapons to bear. The darkness around Sacgrave lit with the dying agonies of countless vessels, falling to the terrible brightness of the Eldar macro-lasers. The immense Dragon ship *Un'Alash Denasal—The Fury of Dawn*—led the vanguard, its powerful pulsar lances burning a half-dozen raiders to cinders.

Finally, the larger pirate cruisers rose to engage and the battle became less one-sided. The Slaughter-class cruiser *Benediction of Vax* led the charge, its captain Indolous the Gorger directing a ferocious hail of fire against the Wraithship *Fate of Eternity*. Though his augurs were fooled by ghost-shapes, Indolous simply closed until he could see the vessel with his own eyes. Fiery explosions enveloped his prey, the elegant lines of the *Eternity* crumpling and burning under a terrible bombardment.

Indolous had little time to enjoy his victory as moments later the *Benediction of Vax* was sliced in two by a spread of torpedoes from the Shadow-class Cruiser *Forgotten Twilight*. As the *Benediction* disintegrated in a violent burst of plasma, the Eldar Corsairs hit the Chaos Reavers from the side, pummelling their ships with salvos of torpedoes.

The pirate captains that escaped the battle swore afterwards that it was lost in that moment, as first one ship then another turned away to escape the infernal cauldron of fire, their great armada unequal to the test of fighting opposing warships on even terms. The Eldar harried them relentlessly, releasing clouds of fast-moving attack craft to chase down the fleeing ships.

Sacgrave provided no protection for those that fled to it. The Eldar swept in to pound the fortress like the fists of an angry god. Mighty towers shuddered under the impacts of torpedoes and pulsar lances until they cracked, toppled and melted into lakes of slag. Elegant craft descended to the surface, disgorging troupes of brightly hued warriors whose grinning masks mocked those they slew. None could stand against the warrior dancers, or their allies. It is said that amongst the warriors strode four knights clad in silver armour. Even the most hardened Chaos Reaver crumpled against the fury of their bolt-rounds, or died from the reaping strikes of their swords and halberds.

In despair, the surviving pirates scattered in all directions as best they could. The Shadow-Margraves fled aboard their powerful grand cruiser, the *Kasserkratch*—its capacious holds crammed with looted treasure, if the legends are true. The Eldar and their mysterious allies vanished as suddenly as they appeared, caring not for the survivors of Sacgrave. Some wonder if their goal was to see the alliance of the Shadow-Margraves split asunder, so that they would be stayed from fell deeds in the distant future.

The Shadow-Margraves of Sacgrave vanished as well, though myths and rumours about them still abound. The bombardment ruined Sacgrave but it did not completely destroy it. Even the hellish fury of their warheads was not enough to topple all of the towers or penetrate the deepest vaults. Over time, scavengers and pirates have crept back in to Sacgrave to occupy the surviving towers. The scattered groups lack a single strong leader and skirmish incessantly as they pick through the chaotic landscape of tumbled basalt walls and shattered buttresses. Persistent stories of huge fortunes found buried in the rubble bring a steady influx of new hopefuls to Sacgrave, feeding a permanent community of weaponsmiths and ammo merchants in the upper vaults.

To date no vast fortunes have been unearthed on Sacgrave, although everyone knows a story about someone who really knew someone who struck it rich. Less-rewarding prizes have certainly been found—unstable warheads, autonomous battle constructs or ravening xenos from ancient and unpleasant menageries. Every single scavenger that has entered the lowest accessible vaults has failed to return, prompting yet more tales about how the vengeful ghost of the original Shadow-Margrave is down below guarding his last and greatest treasures. Some hold, rather, that the original builders of Sacgrave never left, and that the reverberations of the destruction wrought above have awoken them from their slumber in the deepest vaults. Now they stalk through the darkness and enact unspeakable punishments on any that dare to venture into their realm.

Whatever strange and deadly denizens lurk in the lower vaults, they have failed to quell the ardour of the treasure seekers and instead created a brisk trade in maps, guides, and protective charms for the entrepreneurs dwelling above.

The Anathema

Drifting on the very edge of the Gloaming Worlds is a small pinprick of icy reality called by the denizens of the Screaming Vortex the Anathema. For some unknowable reason, the energies that seethe and boil across the Vortex do not touch this small volume of space, seeming instead to flow around and recoil from it. What lies within the Anathema has never been determined, but some refer to it as a region of order in the midst of disorder, of hated purity amongst glorious sin, or as cold silence in an ocean of roiling cacophony. Some have even claimed it marks the final resting place of a great hero of the Imperium. Whatever the truth, those of the Vortex fear and hate it as much as those who dwell in the material realm hate the Screaming Vortex or even the Eye of Terror.

The wreck of the Kasserkratch

The *Kasserkratch* was once the most feared ship in the Screaming Vortex. According to myth, it was constructed by the sorcerers of Sugrub. A mighty Repulsive-class Grand Cruiser with powerful reactors and heavy armour in sloping facets of adamantine and ceramite scores of metres thick, the vessel carried a weight of armament and ordnance that could reduce a continent to ruins with a single salvo.

Sugrub eventually lost the *Kasserkratch* to the Tyrant of Larv in a game of regicide. To their great consternation, the Tyrant used it to raid Sugrub itself, seizing a great fortune in the glittering yellow diamonds. The Tyrant did not escape the outraged sorcerers' vengeance for long. He is said to have been found dead inside his locked quarters aboard the *Kasserkratch* the very next day. The tyrant's vizier, a tall sepulchral xenos called Fellhehiam, eventually took control of the vessel after forty days and nights of vicious battle against usurpers and traitors among his own followers.

Fellhehiam took the *Kasserkratch* on raids all across the Gloaming Worlds, even striking as far as the Inner Ring. He feared no warp-spawned horror and spurned the dangerous rip-tides of the Vortex with seeming impunity. His long and bloody reign as the captain of the *Kasserkratch* was ended by treachery when he was devoured by six of his own offspring. The leaderless ship plunged on through the warp as the crew warred amongst themselves to seize control of it, deluging the corridors and compartments with blood and gore. No faction could emerge victorious, before the vessel became caught by the whirling crosscurrents of the sixth interstitial and emerged at Sacgrave.

In respect for the ship's formidable reputation, the Shadow-Margraves forbore renaming it when they took control of the vessel, and the *Kasserkratch* remained a part of their armada for many centuries afterwards. In the fall of Sacgrave, the surviving Shadow-Margraves fled aboard the great ship and plunged into the furious tides of the warp. No one knows what happened to the vessel's crew, but it is said that the wreck of the *Kasserkratch* has reappeared several times within the Vortex, cast up for a time by the howling currents before dragged back into their embrace. The kilometres-long spearhead shape of its hull is unmistakeable, even crushed and torn by relentless tides. A ghostly halo of debris hangs about the dark hull of the *Kasserkratch* and its spires and steeples are split by a jagged rift where the spine of the ship has been broken, a crooked black grin etched across the crenellated ramparts by some unthinkable force.

No scavenger or pirate has ever returned from boarding the *Kasserkratch*. Some have been lost moments after setting foot aboard as the doomed wreck plunged back into the warp. Others have lived long enough to report back for a short time before communications fell ominously silent. Their frightened whispers described finding the remains of other adventurers grotesquely altered, followed by strange sounds and then only silence. The curse that hangs about the wreck of the Kasserkratch seems to have done nothing to dim the siren's call of its treasures.

Messia

Messia is a blasted, rocky world in the outer reaches of the Gloaming Worlds choked by a thick, poisonous atmosphere. The brightest day on Messia is a sepia-tinted twilight when its fierce white star, Xoson, burns its away through the pollutant streams in the air to scorch the earth. Acid-storms and storm-force winds scour the surface at regular intervals, forcing its hardy inhabitants to shelter below ground for extended periods. Messia's only slight redeeming feature is that it spins very slowly, taking more than a year to complete one rotation. Conditions on the cooler night side offer some relief from the burning glare of Xoson. On the nightside of Messia, chill mists cover a landscape that is rapidly overgrown with slimes and fungi growing from hardy spores lodged in the blasted rock. Larger creatures start to break out of their underground burrows to take advantage of Messia's long night to hunt and procreate before fleeing back beneath the rocks at the coming of the dawn.

Two great anular cities exist on Messia; Mekonta and Zanok, at the north and south poles respectively. In each place half, of the city is ruined through the long Messia day while its inhabitants remain in the other nighttime half of the city feverishly repairing damage on the dusk edge even as they are abandoning structures along the dawn edge. This gives both cities a decrepit, patchwork appearance, made up of conical roofs of iron plating covering rough walls of acid-eaten rock. Higher sciences are long lost on Messia, but the polyglot inhabitants of the cities still work with metal, building engines, vehicles, and firearms with passable skill. The demand for promethium to drive their engines and heat the cities during the long Messia night forces them to send frequent expeditions out into the wastes. Semi-nomadic "drill-barons" take their giant rigs out into the morass on the nightside or the blazing desert of the dayside.

Such expeditions are well armed and escorted with a variety of armour-plated land cruisers and stubber-armed attack bikes. In the wastes they might meet all manner of aggressive wildlife from swarms of hairless mole-rats to giant acid-spitting leeches. Clashes between the rival drill-barons over particularly choice sumps are not uncommon. Two of the hundred-meter-long drill rigs in battle is a sight to behold as they clash like prehistoric beasts, monstrous drill bits rending into one another as their outriders circle like dervishes. The stakes are high and the fighting desperate. The gang of a losing rig will be reduced to scavenging and piracy, desperately seeking another rig to capture before their own fuel runs out.

These skirmishes pale in comparison to the danger posed by Messia's ever-present mutant hordes. Whatever catastrophe originally blotted out Messia left horrifying contagions that create vast populations of feral wasteland mutants. On the cool night side the mutants walk slowly with a shambling gait. As the night wears on, they bulk out and mutate monstrously, soon banding together to hunt for blood and warm red flesh to feed their unspeakable hunger. A moving rig is relatively safe, crushing its way through the mindless crowds, but when the rig stops to drill, the outriders must form a constantly-moving protective ring to keep the mutants at bay.

Curiously, the mutant hordes seem to be most drawn towards the dawn edge of Messia and undergo a strange transformation as they emerge into Xoson's unrelenting glare. Their bloated flesh hisses and sizzles as the mutants wither into mummy-like scuttling things. Mutants found on the day-side are fast and ferocious, capable of using weapons and planning ambushes, and even of turning captured vehicles against their

former owners. On the day-side, a rig is most vulnerable while moving, and its escorting vehicles probe ahead constantly looking for traps or deadfalls set by the devious mutants.

The mutants migrate constantly towards the dusk edge where the fall of night drops. The day-side mutants must flee as chilling mists enwrap the land. After lying putrefying and insensible in the muck for a time their withered bodies rise again and the cycle continues as they begin their shuffling march towards the dawn.

The Tyrant Star

The Tyrant Star is a baneful phenomenon that appears randomly throughout the Vortex, bringing doom and destruction wherever it appears. The coming of the Tyrant Star signals catastrophe, its baleful appearance in the heavens a dire portent to sorcerers, shamans, and spirit talkers across the Gloaming Worlds.

The Tyrant Star may not be a true star at all, for it appears as an utterly black star, eclipsing actual stars that provide light to worlds, so that only their crackling corona appears around a perfect eclipse. However, the star emits its own, terrible light, a malevolent lambency that allows sight without illumination. Under the light of the Tyrant Star, worlds are ravaged by strange phenomena; time can run backwards, inanimate matter may become murderously animated or the dead may rise even as horrific plagues and waves of uncontrolled mutation beset the survivors. Slavers and scavengers often descend on worlds shattered beyond all recognition by the Devil Star's passage.

The reaver bands that plague the Calixis Sector tell stories about how the worlds there have also been beset on occasion by the Tyrant Star. They claim some of the Imperium suspect the forces of the Ruinous Powers at work in its manifestation. However, no champion or warband leader within the Screaming Vortex has boasted of this deed. To date, even the Choir on the Mountain in Q'Sal have not discovered the origins of the Tyrant Star (much less what it actually is), despite many sacrifices to their masters.

What impels the Tyrant Star along its course is unknown. Many believe the Tyrant Star to be a conscious entity, a god or daemon from the Inner Vortex travelling through the Gloaming Worlds. Some pray for their realm to be visited by this harbinger and given the true gift of enlightenment, or purgation or Chaos unleashed according to their creed. Some pray for their world to be spared and sacrifice their first born to appease the Tyrant Star when it shines black in the sky. For most, the Tyrant Star is only another terror in a lifetime filled with strange and terrible occurrences, they try to eke out their existence and survive its coming as best they can.

The Cat's Cradle

The Cat's Cradle lies at the innermost reaches of the Gloaming Worlds, a tortured region of space heavily influenced by warps, currents raging at the boundary of the Inner Ring. The laws of the physical universe break down completely so close to the worlds of the Inner Ring and are usurped by daemonically-driven whimsy. The region is rife with worlds, some orbiting stars, some drifting alone in space. Many of them are illusory, others bear glittering civilisations that rise, expand, and disappear like soap bubbles, and most are mired in a fey, superstitious medievalism and completely unaware of the existence of anything beyond their own realm.

Interstitial paths exist between worlds so its possible to literally walk from one to another. Possibly they are remnants of older paths rent from the webway in the Fall of the Eldar, or perhaps more naturally occurring fractures in reality that can be exploited to move from place to place. Some Aethermancers have speculated that the Cat's Cradle was formed by the collision of two star systems as they were drawn into the Screaming Vortex. They believe the death agonies of their inhabitants mired the area in its own complex set of reefs, calms and crosscurrents within the Vortex.

Strange, daemon-inspired enclaves of various sorts exist in the cradle, moving in some unknowable pattern from place to place. A few sorcerers of great power choose to make their homes in the region and are greatly feared by its inhabitants. Those seeking the Inner Ring must pass through the Cat's Cradle and the sorcerers try to entrap any such petitioners out of sheer spite and petty malice. Unable to muster the courage to seek the deeper truths of the Vortex, the sorcerers bar the route to others with webs of trickery and deceit.

THE INNER RING

Beyond the porous, outer shell of the Gloaming Worlds is to be found the zone referred to as the Inner Ring. This region of the Screaming Vortex represents a wildly fluctuating warp/real space overlap, the systems within it existing in a blasphemous hybrid where neither the laws of the material realm nor the anarchy of the warp fully hold sway. Reality in the Inner Ring is a malleable thing, a hybrid medium shaped by the whim of the denizens of the Empyrean, and by those few mortals with the strength of will to impose their own desires upon it.

There are six major inhabited worlds within the Inner Ring and numerous other planets; all are so beset by the raging storm they are beyond the ambitions of even the most insane warlord. These worlds all exist in a wild flux. At times they become so instilled with the raw power of the warp that daemons and other creatures can walk upon them freely and the mad whims of the Empyrean rule supreme. At other times, the warp appears to recede or recoil from them, and the inhabitants experience a painfully brief period of relative calm. In truth, however, the tides of the warp always return, and so the worlds of the Inner Ring exist in a kind of purgatory, standing on the very edge of the precipice. Perhaps one day the Inner Ring will collapse and the warp will claim its worlds for all eternity.

Some say that the planets of the Inner Ring and beyond were once a clutch of maiden worlds of the ancient Eldar, twisted beyond all recognition at the moment of the birth of Slaanesh and the creation of the Screaming Vortex. Countless warp-whisperers and arcano-prognosts have lost their sanity and their souls attempting to scry such things, and most with an ounce of insight avoid such knowledge at all costs.

Aphexis

The outer-most of the Inner Ring's major planets, Aphexis is a bleak world of grey, half-dead plains. Its skies know neither day nor night, and the star around which it orbits never quite rises above the horizon, no matter where on the

surface the observer might be. Aphexis is inhabited by a fairly large population, the people every bit as grey as their world. Seemingly devoid of individual character or will, the people of Aphexis lead half-lives, shuffling across the ashen plains of their world and barely interacting with one another at all.

Many warlords have imposed their will over bleak Asphodel, yet rarely found the effort worthwhile. On numerous occasions, the people have been rounded up and enslaved, made to work or fight in the names of new and uncaring masters. It seems the Aphexis people accept such turns of fate without comment, yet have such scant regard for their own lives that they soon invoke the wrath of their overseers. Those who have enslaved the Aphexisians have often resorted to flogging thousands to death as an example to the rest to work harder, yet always found such methods entirely unsuccessful.

Melancholia

The second major orb of the Inner Ring is a windswept planet beset by hailstorms and driving rains. Its peoples exist in a seemingly permanent state of misery, forced by the cruel whim of the denizens of the warp to live their lives bereft of even the barest necessities of life. By some unnatural law, no stone may be set upon another on Melancholia, and so the population may never find respite from the driving, freezing winds that assail them every minute of their pitiful lives.

Despite outward appearances to the contrary, the inhabitants of Melancholia harbour such desires as would make the most brazen of the Dark Prince's devotees blush. Inside, they seethe with lust and yearn to spill blood, yet their environs constantly dampen their lust and reduce their lives to cold misery and drudgery. It is said that to remove a man from Melancholia and take him elsewhere is to unleash the beast he has nurtured in his heart his entire life, and such men make the cruellest, most bloodthirsty, and most imaginatively blasphemous champions of the Ruinous Powers in all existence.

Mire

Beyond Melancholia is to be found the world of Mire—a fetid, clammy planet of swamps and endless plains of sucking mud. The inhabitants grub about the stinking depths of the mud flats for what little sustenance they can find, ever encrusted with layer upon layer of hard-packed filth. So scarce are sources of nutrition on Mire that when even the smallest grub or root is uncovered, entire tribes go to war with one another. Incoherent and barbarous, the savages brain one another with precious rocks or pull one another down into the cold depths where they share a hideous, mutual demise.

On several occasions, warlords have taken tribes of Mirens away, forcing them to serve as slave-warriors in their hordes. Mirens make brutally effective foot soldiers and are known for their propensity to rip open the bellies of those they have slain, plunging their arms inside the corpses in search of the choicest meats denied them on the world of their birth.

Mammon

The world of Mammon is a rubble-strewn wasteland, its surface blasted by a war that has raged since the beginning of time. Mammon is bereft of natural resources and its populace is divided into two opposed factions, each coveting what riches the other has managed to amass over the millennia. The war is fought with every possible means, from blunt clubs made of the bones of the fallen to arcane technologies traded from other worlds within the Vortex. Yet, no rouse or stratagem has ever amounted to any gain other than that measured in the lives of the fallen.

While the peoples of Mammon are amongst the most warlike and aggressive to be found anywhere in the galaxy, in outward appearance they are quite the opposite. Men and women go to war in the vestments of some debased clergy and bedecked with the symbols of the Imperial Creed. Their leaders are at once generals and demagogues, their glittering cloth of gold robes ragged and bloodstained. Clearly, some cruel jest of a truly cosmic scale must be at work on Mammon, for its inhabitants believe themselves true servants of the God-Emperor of Humanity. They offer praises to him on Terra even as they slay one another and rob the bodies of anything that can be carried away. The cities of Mammon are constructed of loot taken from the enemy, teetering fortresses, and unsound towers of riches undreamed of forming the residence of the cardinals-militant. Such places rarely stand for long, however, as the eternal tides of war sweep them away.

Furia

Furia is a world of black skies above even blacker, depthless oceans, the preternaturally calm waters haunted by creatures that most believe to be some vile hybrid of beast and daemon. The populace clings to existence on ramshackle floating shanty-skiffs made from the flotsam and jetsam of



the galaxy's countless wars. How such debris washes up on Furia none can rationally explain. The people of Furia are adept at fashioning everything from junker warships to shelter-arks from the shells of burned out tanks and the hulls of the wrecked starships that continuously bubble up from the depths.

The people of Furia exist on the knife-edge of oblivion, fighting a battle for survival against the vile daemon-leviathans that rise without warning from the glass-calm seas to drag entire floating towns to their deaths. Thousands of sucker-clad tentacles rear up from the waters and diamond-sharp beaks snap and rend. Only those floating communities that have managed to salvage and repair functional ranged weaponry have a chance of surviving such attacks, using rusted old heavy stubbers and guttering lascannons to keep the beasts at bay another day longer.

The Flaming Tomb

Beyond Furia, the boiling energies of the storm intensify on the approach to the so-called Lower Vortex. The last of the major worlds of the Inner Ring encountered before reaching that boundary is the Flaming Tomb, a planet of blackened rock islands afloat on oceans of flaming lava. The air is filled with clouds of noxious gas so dense in places they can kill with a single breath. Tsunamis of raging magma rise up to swamp what little solid ground exists and when the tides of the Vortex wax and the screaming obscures all other sounds, beings of solid lava are said to rise from the searing seas and stalk the land, their footprints glowing orange in their passing. Needless to say, life on the world known as the Flaming Tomb is a brutal and often short affair.

The population exists as feral refugees, each determined to hold on to what little territory they can win. The tribes of the Flaming Tomb are aided in their ceaseless battles by a caste of pyromancers able to manipulate fire in all its forms, and use it as a weapon against their enemies. The most powerful of these sorcerers are able to summon firestorms capable of razing the lands of their foes to ashes and calling blazing comets to crash down from the burning skies. The services of the pyromancers of the Flaming Tomb are highly valued by the warlords of the Screaming Vortex, who will pay any price to have one at their side when marching to war against their foes.

The Forbidden Portal

Upon the sides of a black and blasted mountain torn from the surface of some long extinct world lies an imposing gate, wrought in psychoplastic pseudo-bone by the fair hands of long dead artisans and sealed from within so that none may pass. Numerous are the warlords who have raised millions-strong armies of deluded mortals, and expended them upon that unbreakable gate inflicting no more than a scratch. What lies beyond the gate can only be guessed at, but there are tales that it periodically opens to allow the passage of small troupes of warriors utterly dedicated to the defeat of Chaos in all its forms.



The Lower Vortex

At the heart of the Screaming Vortex is to be found a region that defies all logic and explanation. Those steeped in warp-lore refer to it as a zone of icy calm, an eye about which the relentless energies of the storm ceaselessly rotate. They claim that there are numerous cursed worlds located within, worlds entirely consumed by the energies of the warp. The so-called Lower Vortex is a zone where the raw stuff of Chaos is—if the warp-seers are to be trusted—so densely packed as to exist in an almost solid state. In truth, mortal frames of reference cannot begin to conceptualise such a phenomena, and it is doubtful that any who have witnessed the place have survived to recount anything of their experience.

Only three of the worlds locked within the depths of the Lower Vortex are commonly known, though there are doubtless many more. All are what the Imperium's savants term "Daemon Worlds." They are not true planets so much as aetheric, otherworldly realms, existing at once within and beyond the area of real space occupied by the Screaming Vortex. They are entirely subsumed within the warp, as one with the Realm of Chaos, and, as such, subject to the whims of the Ruinous Powers. They are constantly reshaped according to eternal battles raging between the Dark Gods. One instant they may be planet-wide plains of dried bones, the next oceans of putrefaction. Time has no meaning whatsoever in the Lower Vortex, and even the subjective perceptions of the onlooker are twisted beyond all recognition. What seems a day might last an aeon, while a lifetime passes in the blink of an eye. The Lower Vortex is the abode of daemons and gods, and it is theirs' to do with as they please. Mortals have no place there, this side of death at least, and

The Gates of Moment

All across the Screaming Vortex lies small irregularities, rip-tides, and eddies through which countless souls have attempted to journey and subsequently been lost. A few of these are genuinely linked to other places and, in the case of the Gates of Moment, other times.

The Gates of Moment is actually a moon within the Screaming Vortex, one that orbits the worlds of the Inner Ring, randomly spinning from one world's embrace to another at a moment. It is a normally unremarkable worldlet, with a harsh atmosphere and scrubland climate. However, what makes it fascinating is that this world seems to exist in multiple locations at once.

Those wandering the surface of this world may randomly find themselves walking on the surface of the Gates of Moment deep within the Hadex Anomaly, across the galaxy in the Jericho Reach. Those within or near the Anomaly say the Gates of Moment has existed within the Anomaly for as long as they know and to walk across their moonlet's surface may pitch them into the Screaming Vortex. Some travellers also claim that they have walked across the surface of the world and ended up in other parts of the galaxy, or even in other galaxies entirely. Nobody knows just how many times and places the Gates of Moment are truly linked to.

It is said that the worlds swallowed up by the Hadex Anomaly exist in a time frame all their own and cause and effect follow no law there. Some travellers might find themselves visiting the ancient capital of the old Jericho Sector, Verronus itself, long before its fall. Others find themselves flung far into the future, into or beyond the final battle said to await the galaxy.

One legend states that an obscure and secretive group of Imperial Inquisitors were consumed attempting to close the Gates of Moment permanently, though most dismiss such stories as myth.

woe betide he who seeks to impose his will upon its denizens.

It is said that the boundary between the Inner Ring and the Lower Vortex is guarded by a cadre of Greater Daemons, and that any mortal seeking to cross over that rubicon must find a way around them. He must face the wrath of a Bloodthirster of Khorne and be tempted beyond mortal tolerance by one of Slaanesh's Keepers of Secrets. Following that, he must overcome the most virulent plagues one of Nurgle's Great Unclean Ones can concoct and, finally, resist the reality-splitting insanity of one of Tzeentch's Lords of Change. Such trials take a myriad of forms, and no two are ever exactly alike. Most end in the utter destruction of the intruder's soul, but a bare few are allowed to pass into the Lower Vortex and to tread the Realm of Chaos itself.

Crucible

The first of the known Daemon Worlds within the Lower Vortex is known to warp-seers and heretics as Crucible, and it is a realm of pain and torment beyond anything even the most debased of mortals can imagine. This pain, so it is said, is born of that experienced by the original denizens of the Heaven-worlds at the moment their existence was ended and, no matter which of the Chaos powers is in the ascendance, that pain is so relentlessly intense it can never be erased.

The nature of Crucible depends on which of the Dark Gods and their daemon legions has control over it. When Khorne is in the ascendance, it is a realm of crude violence and savage anger meted out on the souls of mortals who died in battle. When Slaanesh rules, the violence is enacted tenderly, as a gift between lovers. When Nurgle gains power over the Daemon World, the entrapped souls experience an eternity of decay and rebirth. When Tzeentch resides on Crucible, the pain is that of sanity torn asunder as the self is lost amidst seas of madness.

Contrition

Beyond Crucible lies what many believe to be the penultimate world of the Screaming Vortex: Contrition. The realm exists as a daemonic city, its structure continuously cast down and rebuilt as each of the Dark Gods gains and looses ascendancy. Daemons are said to hold court in the City of Contrition, concocting the most imaginative lies they whisper into the hearts of mortals. It is said that the entire daemonic metropolis resounds to the cacophonous lies of its otherworldly populace, the daemons vying continuously with one another to invent ever-more-preposterous schemes to ensnare the souls of mankind.

Those mortals entrapped by the daemons' duplicity are said to be dragged back to Contrition, to be imprisoned within the dungeons deep in its bowels. What fate awaits such entrapped souls in those grim oubliettes is beyond the imagining of even the most warp-touched heretic.

The Frozen Heart

At the very centre of the Screaming Vortex lies the Daemon World legend names the Frozen Heart. If Crucible and Contrition are beyond mortal experience, then the Frozen Heart is entirely unknown, though numerous, and often contradictory myths and visions make mention of its nature. Some say it is a realm populated by the shades of the most vile of traitors, once mighty heroes whose souls have been blasted by their fell deeds and who now exist as insubstantial and ever-fading remnants of all they once were. Others say that in the Frozen Heart the eternal struggle between the Dark Gods is in perfect balance, and as such the warp itself is eternally motionless. Some have even claimed the Frozen Heart is the graveyard of ancient gods, consecrated ground upon which none but the immortal may tread. In truth, all of these things and none of them may be true; and besides, mortal minds could never comprehend the truth and stay sane.

There is a legend concerning the Frozen Heart. It is said that within the centre of the world is the unknowable dynamo that keeps the Vortex in its perpetual raging state. It is even said that if someone could master this power, they could calm portions of the Vortex, allowing fleets and armies to escape its grasp and burst forth to conquer and plunder.

Those who Live Within

"Though the ground may open and devour you at any moment, that's a small price for freedom in my eyes."

—Cachek the Deranged of the Writhing World, now deceased.

Though it may seem impossible to the scribes and savants of the Imperium, there are those who live and even thrive within the Screaming Vortex. Many are the inhabitants of the aforementioned worlds and often they remain trapped on their lonely sphere (particularly the feral inhabitants of the many primitive worlds in the Vortex). These are described with their aformentioned planets.

However, there are also those who travel amongst the worlds, who have the power or resourcefulness to journey from planet to planet. Foremost amongst these are the warbands that wander the Screaming Vortex.

THE MYRIAD WARBANDS OF THE VORTEX

The warbands of the Screaming Vortex are a disparate and varied bunch, ragged warriors brought together by fate or chance, fighting together to further common goals or advance their own, private agendas. Just as the Vortex itself has no defined size, there is no counting the number of warbands that wander it.

There is no defining a warband, no archetypical mould that a warband springs from. However, there are several similar characteristics. Warbands are often small, ranging from several to several dozen members. Though a warband could easily become larger, this has seldom happened in the Screaming Vortex of late. This is because most warbands are brought together because the members share similar goals or ambitions, or see the warband as a chance to further their own goals. Such individuals are often prideful and independent. When their goals are met, the warband may well splinter and fracture, its members leaving according to their whims.

The Ascendant Spiral

This unpredictable tide within the Screaming Vortex has been described as a sub-current connecting the Lower Vortex and the Gloaming Worlds, and while travellers may pass through it, they may only do so in one direction-from the Lower Vortex to the Gloaming Worlds, and not the other way. Every now and then a mortal appears at the upper terminus of the Ascendant Spiral who has visited the Lower Vortex and looked upon its darkling face. While most of these individuals are little more than raving maniacs, a few are gifted of power and knowledge only granted to those who have conversed with the highest servants of the Ruinous Powers, and passed every test set before them. Such individuals harbour a special hatred for the denizens of the Imperium, and invariably seek to gather a Black Crusade and bring death and destruction to the Domains of Man in a galaxy-rending orgy of bloodshed.

Just as the warbands of the Screaming Vortex are infinitely varied, so are those who join them. Beyond their shared status as outcasts and renegades from the Imperium, the members may be anyone from a powerful Chaos Space Marine of one of the Traitor Legions to a feral chieftain of a barbarian planet. However, the one trait they all share is that they are exceedingly competent individuals. The cutthroat and dangerous life in a wandering warband sees anyone who cannot look out for themselves torn to bits (sometimes literally) by their peers.

However, on occasion an individual or select few will rise to lead a warband through force of arms or force of will. Such individuals must be charismatic leaders or dread warriors, but if they succeed, they may well see more warriors flock to join their warband. Eventually, entire warbands may pledge themselves to their cause, or even entire worlds and pirate fleets. Finally, should their power and reputation grow far enough, these leaders may have entire armies under their command, primed for bloody, full-scale war. Thus, a Black Crusade can be born.

WARBAND CONFLICTS

It appears to many citizens of the Imperium of Mankind that the armies of Chaos are a unified fighting force. This, however, could not be further from the truth, as the armies of Chaos are often a fractured and disorganized group, formed into warbands and held together by alliances of convenience.

The denizens of the Screaming Vortex cannot be herded, they must be lead. Occasionally, a leader will become powerful enough to call warriors to his banner. They rarely follow out of a sense of loyalty or devotion to chaos. Rather, they fight for their own glory and self-preservation. A powerful warlord may be fearsome enough that possible death at an enemies hands is far preferable to certain destruction at his.

The resources and glory a heretic may garner is also a potent lure. Many flock to his banner simply to further their own goals. A rogue admiral may lend his forces to a raid or long-term campaign for a price. His services purchased with a promise of profit and resources to further his own goals. Warriors may wish to pay homage to their masters, slaughtering in his service. The flag these rogues fight under is inconsequential, it is only the slaughter that is important.

It is this fact that make the forces of Chaos appear unified to the observers within the Imperium of Mankind. The traitors fight as armies, taking orders from commanders and operating as a unified force. They war, also, with each other.

Warbands within the Screaming Vortex often find themselves in conflict with each other. Resources are scarce and bloodshed may be the only means to acquiring such precious commodities. Rivalries and feuds are not uncommon amongst warbands on the same planet or operating in the same system. It is, in fact, far more uncommon that they would not make war against each other. Only the charismatic (or frightening) leadership of a powerful champion can force them to work together.

Piratical raids are not uncommon. A warband may assault another simply to steal from them, taking what they want and doing as much damage as possible in the process. Often, two or more warbands will come to blows over the rights to a resource, such as a manufactorium. These wars are often quick

and brutal, attacks directed towards leadership and defences. Less forward-thinking attacks have left many a resource mere smouldering ruins, useless even to the victor.

The desire to attain resources from a more powerful adversary is a common reason for a warband to form in the first place. Disparate groups and loners may require each other's aid to wage a long term campaign against a more prosperous (and better equipped) foe. While these alliance may be short lived, it may also be the beginning of a more permanent arrangement. A warband that rises to power through the exploitation of resources often relies on their wealth to wage war, promising mercenaries a share in their conquests or future aid. While petty squabbles over trinkets motivate some warbands, differences in ideology may also cause conflict. Those certain of their divine right to conquer are often opposed by those with the same goals. While those motivated by temporal power or resources can be forced to retreat or be cowed, an enemy who is pure of purpose must be utterly obliterated.

However, amongst the varied warbands there are those who even now struggle for supremacy amongst the Vortex. Any who wish to rise to control the Vortex must challenge them or perish.

The Warband of Sektoth

Sektoth the False Whisper is a master manipulator and leader of a rather piratical warband. He and the Thousand Sons at his command strike without warning against anyone who has resources he requires in his research of the Rubric of Arhiman. Dozens of lesser psykers have fallen under his sway, exchanging their martial utility for the honour of cowering at the hem of Sektoth's robe. His warband is large, with hundreds of elite warriors that report to him and thousands of lesser soldiers who die at his bidding.



When Sektoth desires the holdings of another warband he moves decisively and quickly. His light frigate, *The Unyielding*, arrives in orbit and hides behind a nearby astral body. He deploys his psykers into the local population to disrupt the daily operations of his target. His minions report to him telepathically, collecting information as they commit sabotage.

What happens next has never been the same twice. Sektoth tends to prefer tactics that turn his enemies on themselves. He once garnered enough power to drive an entire planet mad with a single word whispered in every citizens' mind. This preference is not absolute, as he is not afraid to use more direct methods. He reduced the Gardens of the Exquisite Delight to swampland by commandeering a hijacked Iconoclast Destroyer and crashing the kilometre-long warship into an ocean on the far side of the world, wrecking the planet's climate in the processes.

In the wake of this seemingly random act, Sektoth harvests what profit he requires and leaves the vultures to pick the bones. Often, the resources expended far out-strip what he could possibly gain. Unknowable as his actions are, however, he is guided by a dark resolve and is granted resources by an impossibly powerful benefactor.

Captain Korgin, The World-Reaver

Reaper of the Gloaming Worlds, Champion of the Dark Pits, The Shadow Duellist, The World-Reaver, Captain Korgin is known by many names, all feared throughout the Vortex. The dread pirate commands a squadron of warships that roam from world to world, warring and pillaging with whomever crosses his path. Thus far, his successes have been many and his riches have swelled accordingly. However, each victory only increases his thirst for conquest.

Korgin leads his squadron from the bridge of his Slaughter-class cruiser, the *Adversarius Aeternam*. However, the backbone of his fleet are a pair of Hellbringer light cruisers, specialist planetary assault vessels manufactured in Chaos-controlled worlds like Iniquity and the shipyards of the Ragged Helix. The *Rapere* and the *Praedus* are both well equipped for assaulting and plundering worlds, with powerful prow bombardment cannons, launch bays full of Swiftdeath fighters, and spinal mounted Dreadclaw drop pod bays full of howling berserker hordes of pirate reavers.

When the warlord arrives over a world, he offers one chance to surrender unconditionally. Should the cowering populace accept, Korgin honours their surrender. Though a devotee to the Blood God, he believes only the skulls of worthy adversaries should be sent to the throne of his master. Those who surrender are certainly not that, and he and his band merely plunder valuables, supplies, and slaves to fill their hold and leave. However, Korgin makes it a point to take something of great value from the world he plunders, whether an ancient artefact, a beloved leader as a slave, or even a famous document held in high regard. He does this in hopes of goading that world to fight the next time he arrives.

If a world does resist, Korgin unleashes the full forces at his disposal. With ruthless cunning he demolishes his opposition with quick, savage strikes to defences, then swarms across the world with his reavers. He grants his foes the highest honour in his eyes, a fighting chance and a noble death in combat. Often, that death is delivered at the point of his own blade. However,

at times Korgin comes across an especially accomplished warrior and offers him a chance to join his warband.

Korgin ceases raiding only to return to the Ragged Helix, where he has several fastnesses amongst the rocks. Ancient and terrible oaths bind him from plundering the Helix, so he enjoys a wary truce with most of its denizens. However, within his fortress-asteroids, he has the stockpiled wealth of many worlds.

Korgin imagines amassing enough wealth to draw a vast army to his cause within the Screaming Vortex, with which he can conquer anyone within who still defies him. With the unified Vortex at his back, he wishes to carve out his own dark empire amongst the vulnerable worlds of the Calixis Sector—the Empire of Korgin the World Reaver.

Soloria Half-Blind

A refugee of the Imperium, Soloria manifested her psychic powers at a young age. When the Inquisition came for her, her parents resisted, and were cut down before her eyes. She leapt on the killers, screaming with rage, but the Storm Troopers brutally subdued her with the butts of their hellguns. Soloria lost two things that day—her left eye, and any fealty she might have had for the Imperium of Man.

Through guile and her newfound powers, she escaped the Black Ship before it left Scintilla. Stowing away on vessel after vessel, she eventually found herself travelling aboard a tramp freighter in the Maw when the Screaming Vortex swelled and plucked the hapless vessel from its course.

However, death was not Soloria's fate. The transport crashed deep within the Vortex on the ocean world of Furia. She escaped the floundering wreck, to be rescued by one of the scum-barges that travels the oceans. Even then, her fate should have been sealed. The lives of those of Furia are usually measured in a few short years, but again Soloria proved destined for something more.

When the daemon-spawn leviathans came to devour her barge, she met them at the prow of her vessel. One's skull she crushed with a gesture. Another, she wracked with terrible lightning, scouring flesh from bones. The third lunged at her, only to stop as she dominated its puny mind. Soloria sent her new pet deep into the depths of the ocean, to lift the wreck of the transport to the surface. Her new-found servants aboard the barge gladly aided her in restoring a measure of its spaceflight and, after many years of work, they left Furia, never to return.

Soloria wanders the Vortex with only one goal in mind—vengeance on the Imperium that robbed her of her family and her life. She gathers fellow Imperial outcasts to her banner, with a focus on those who also fell prey to the Black Ships. Eventually, she will amass enough power to rip through the Calixis Sector. Her goal: Scintilla, for she wishes to see the Tricorn Palace of the Inquisition burn beneath her gaze.

Vorxec Calvarius

Within the ranks of the loyalist Adeptus Astartes, it is the Chaplain's duty to not only tend the souls of his chapter brothers, but to walk among them as a living reminder that they are the Angels of Death, that they are destruction made manifest. To stir the hearts of his fellow Space Marines a Chaplain recites the Catechisms of Hate, prayers and proverbs extolling the space marine and his role as death incarnate. For most members of the Adeptus Astartes, these directives are but a means to an end, their particular method of safe-guarding the Imperium of Man against the manifold threats of Xenos, Heretic, and Daemon. For Vorxec Calvarius, former Chaplain of the Silver Skulls Chapter, death and destruction are the ends for which he was made the means.

When he was but a Battle-Brother, Calvarius was a man dedicated to not only thwart the enemies of man, but to annihilate them wholly. His fervor made him a sure candidate for the Reclusiam and within the span of a few decades he was made Chaplain. However, during his second century of service, Calvarius participated in the purging of the Plague World of Horestis, commanding a half-company of Silver Skulls.

Horestis was a world infused by Chaos, dedicated wholly to the Lord of Decay. Fighting across the fungal-ridden Rot Fields, and purging the corroded spires of Hive Tortentus, Calvarius watched his fellow Space Marines drop around him, consumed by the virulent plagues. When the warp rifts opened, and the legions of Nurgle spewed forth, Calvarius fought them with Crosius and bolter, even as his brothers fell to the corroded blades of the foe. Finally, Calvarius stood alone, surrounded by masses of Nurgle's horde. As the chuckling bulk of a Great Unclean One approached, Calvarius finally went down on one knee. If the Daemon thought Calvarius was submitting, it was mistaken, for the Chaplain knelt to contact the warships in orbit.

The cloud-wracked sky shattered, sundered by a ferocious barrage of missiles. Each missile's warhead contained the tools of Exterminatus, the dreaded Life Eater Virus, and the epicentre of the strike centred on Calvarius and the Great Unclean One. The virus consumed all life on the world, releasing so much oxygen into the atmosphere that the very air caught fire and burned out.

The Imperial warships left Horestis, secure in the knowledge that nothing had survived. But they were wrong. Alone amongst an entire world, even amongst the daemonic legions that asailled it, Vorxec Calvarius somehow survived. He lay crippled and near death for forty-nine days, sustained by his own formidable will and by something else, some dark force that would not let him pass. As he lay there, the Reclusiarch was overcome by a glorious revelation. The Imperium and all life in the galaxy ultimately served the Lord of Decay. All life died, and if bringing death was his sacred calling, why should he not do so in the name of he who was responsible for the ultimate death of all?

Vorxec Calvarius knew from that moment onward that his loyalty lay not with the God-Emperor, crumbling on his Golden Throne, but with the Lord of Flies, Father Nurgle himself. At that moment he rose from where he lay, his body miraculously healed but a new fever burning within his mind. As if guided by fate, a renegade reaver vessel had recently arrived in orbit, hoping to salvage what they could from the dead world. Vorxec killed the landing party, then returned to their ship, demanding passage on pain of death. For several decades he wandered the galaxy, from one outbreak of pestilence to the next, collecting a multitude of plagues that he might spread their contagion throughout the realms of men and alien.

Vorxec has now gathered to him a small band of able warriors, each a host to innumerable afflictions. He has returned to his place as spiritual leader and his liturgies of pestilence and catechisms of infection stir in the zealous hearts of his followers. With his

devoted retinue in tow, he plies the stars, from world to world, system to system, miring the galaxy in vicious epidemics.

THE LEGEND OF THE NECRONS

In the deepest catacombs of the Temple of Lies on Kymeris, recorded prophecies of the oldest High Oracles tell of an ancient race that spanned the galaxy long before mankind stood upright on the plains of ancient Terra. This race fought a war in the heavens with another, even more powerful race, the mythical Old Ones. Who won and lost is not told by the prophecies, but it is said at the end of the war the first race sealed themselves across the galaxy in vast tomb-worlds. There they sleep, until a time preordained by their lord, at which point they will awaken to reclaim what once was theirs.

The prophesy only adds that the sleeping race has no truck with the warp, and despises its chaotic movements and influence on reality. It closes with a single word, written by a different hand than the remainder of the prophecy. Necron.

Aetehk the Watcher

Legends of the infamous are currency on many worlds within the Screaming Vortex. It is often unnecessary to differentiate truth from fiction, as the heralds of the Dark Gods may weave reality from lies. Rare is one who would wish his name to be spoken in whispers, instead fealty is demanded in endless tales of conquest.

Aetehk desires no notoriety. His armies of glimmering soldiers descend in silence to tear the matter from their victims. His name is spoken in fearful gasps by the downtrodden. No matter how cruel their masters, the arrival of Aetehk is a fate worse than anything their own lords could conjure. It is said that those devoured by the pale green light of his agents are not simply disintegrated—their souls are destroyed, shaved bit by bit from the whole.

When the Necron forces of Aetehk descend upon a planet they leave few survivors, but through a few eyewitness accounts and the divination of seers, the signs of his arrival are the backbone of many myths. Only one man has reported to have seen Aetehk himself, and his name is said to have been dredged from the prophecies of the High Oracle of the Temple of Lies on Kymeris and pieced together via the diligent studies of Armat'Hek, Sorcerer-Champion of the Thousand Sons Legion. However, this creature features heavily in prophetic visions and apocryphal legends of destruction and massacre.

The first part of every story begins the same way. A band of soldiers stop to rest and, as they do, the sands around them erupt. Iron skeletons with long flensing blades for fingers slaughter the warriors. One soldier manages to escape, running on foot to the nearest town. He expires from fear after delivering his last dire warning. "Beware the Flayed Ones."

The second act of the tale often involves a large city. As terrified refugees arrive from the outlying towns, the lords of the city begin to grow increasingly concerned with the attacks. As they prepare to defend themselves from an attack from the outlying territory, they are descended upon from above. Pyramids of living metal float down from the sky. Glowing portals open within their surface and hundreds of steel soldiers march forth from within, impossible numbers for the vessel's hold. The city is lost, those few who survive describe their brethren torn apart by blasts of energy, every molecule pulled one by one from their bodies.

The final part of the tale varies based on the location and the person telling the tale, though every version tells of insectile creatures moving amongst the ruins, hunting and gathering metals and other materials. The creatures described in the third act always vary in size, wildly switching from hordes of tiny scarab-like creatures that cover the ground in a skittering wave, to massive floating spiders with rending claws, to sinuous monsters able to move through solid matter.

Only one version of the legends has anyone communicating with these spectres. In this version, Lord Vorsk of the Dagger Tongues—and cunning schemer—fights the legions of metal warriors to a standstill before encountering Aetehk himself. It was said Vorsk was able to reason with Aetehk, the two joining forces to purge the space hulk *Last Damnation* of its secrets and riches.

The truth of the matter is possibly more and less sinister at the same time. Aetehk is indeed a Necron, a powerful and dangerous leader of his kind. Aetehk's motives are still unknown, as are the reasons he would operate within the Screaming Vortex in the first place, but he is simply harvesting resources. Many attempts to triangulate his armies location have proven fruitless. The only warnings of where he will strike come from the Choir on the Mountain, a cadre of warp-seers ensconced on Q'Sal. Their discording voices silence for a moment, and then in toneless cadence they speak an indecipherable set of co-ordinates. They then return to their endless maelstrom of tones, but exactly five verses (roughly six months) later, Aetehk's forces decimate a location. If the coordinate system sung by the Choir on the Mountain could ever be unravelled, it is possible that Aetehk himself could be defeated... or even bargained with.

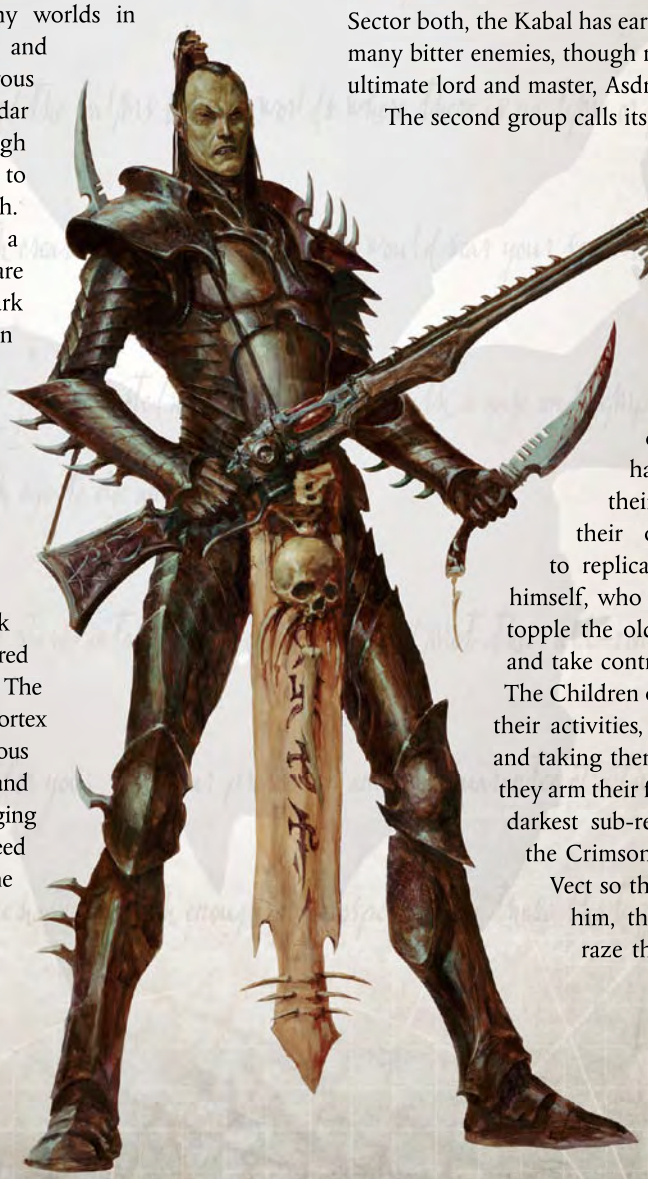
THE DARK ELDAR

The dark paths of the Eldar webway wind from one end of the galaxy to the other. While vast tracts of space are sealed behind runebound portals not even a god may pass through, other zones forbidden to the bulk of the galaxy are accessible by those with the means to do so. The Screaming Vortex is one such place, few Craftworld Eldar or Exodites would consider setting foot within its churning depths unless perhaps the fate of his entire species hung in the balance. However, there are other Eldar who have no compulsions about entering such places. The Dark Eldar of Commorragh, a cruelly beautiful people who exist in a time and place outside of reality, slip through the ragged weft and weave of reality to emerge wherever their vile whims draw them. The Screaming Vortex is one such place.

While no mere human has ever witnessed the process, it is surmised by the hell-seers of the Vortex that the Dark Eldar gain entry to the region not via the 13th Station of Passage, but by way of the place called the Forbidden Portal. Plenty of humans, as well as other sentient beings, have witnessed the process of the Dark Eldar passing from the Screaming Vortex—for they come to scour the worlds for slaves.

The feral peoples on many worlds in the Vortex are hearty, hale, and often competent and dangerous combatants. Those the Dark Eldar can enslave are dragged through the Forbidden Portal and back to the dark city of Commorragh. There, the lucky few gain a quick death. The majority are condemned to fuel the Dark Eldar's eternal thirst for pain and suffering, or thrust into the fighting arenas of the Wyches as entertainment for the wicked masses.

However, the Dark Eldar see the Screaming Vortex as far more than a fertile supply of slaves. To many of the decadent, jaded, and often incredibly ancient Dark Eldar, nothing thrills their withered souls quite like a *challenge*. The warbands of the Screaming Vortex contain skilled and dangerous warriors (and devious plotters), and hunting them down and bringing them to battle is likely guaranteed to thrill the rotting heart of the most decadent Archon.



Those Dark Eldar groups that routinely pass through the Forbidden Portal can be split into two main bodies. The first is the Kabal of Crimson Woe, a Kabal engaged in the ceaseless battle for power within the dark city. Outwardly, the Kabal swears fealty to Asdrubael Vest, the supremely cruel master of Commorragh, yet some have questioned their objectives in coming to the Screaming Vortex. Perhaps they seek more than the slaves the primitive feral worlds can provide. Perhaps, silvered tongues whisper while coal-dark eyes glint, the Crimson Woe seeks some weapon to wield against Vect. To date, the master of Commorragh has been content to watch the Kabal of the Crimson Woe from afar, infiltrating several of his agents into their midst to report back should any sign of treachery rear its head. The leaders of the Kabal are, of course, well aware that their ranks are compromised in this manner, for such is the norm in the deadly courts of the Dark Eldar.

The Kabal of the Crimson Woe is known to the servants of the hated Emperor, for they have ranged far and wide, including several realspace raids into the Calixis Sector. To date, these raids have been comparatively small scale, and certainly not anywhere as calamitous as those ordered by Asdrubael Vect and involving the forces of numerous Kabals. In their incursions into the Screaming Vortex and the Calixis Sector both, the Kabal has earned itself a cruel reputation and many bitter enemies, though none so dangerous as their own ultimate lord and master, Asdrubael Vect.

The second group calls itself the Children of Thorns, and represents a Kabal of outcast Wyches, Hellions, Reaver gangs and disgraced nobles. Instead of surrendering to the inevitable doom that Commorragh normally visits upon such dregs, the Children of Thorns have determined to reclaim their fate and strike back against their oppressors. The group aims to replicate the fete of Asdrubael Vect himself, who rose from the lowest station to topple the old noble order of Commorragh and take control of the dark city for himself. The Children of Thorns range far and wide in their activities, collecting slaves and weapons and taking them back to Commorragh, where they arm their followers lurking in the deepest, darkest sub-reality sinks of the city. While the Crimson Woe desires the overthrow of Vect so that they themselves may replace him, the Children of Thorns seek to raze the entire edifice to the ground, tearing down the

GM Guidance: The Screaming Vortex as Campaign Setting

The various regions within the Screaming Vortex provide a wide range of possibilities for GMs and players, and accommodate a variety of campaign styles. However, one of the primary ways in which the GM might use the setting is as a platform for the player characters to gain ascendancy over their many rivals, earning themselves the blessings of the Ruinous Powers before turning their attentions on the wider galaxy beyond.

The Screaming Vortex is divided into broad regions, which the GM can use to steadily advance the narrative as the campaign progresses. Initially, player characters will find themselves facing many others intent upon the same goal as themselves—power. The ideal place to start out is amongst the many and varied locations within the Gloaming Worlds. GMs can tailor adventures set in this region to the tastes of the players and the abilities of their characters, engaging them in all manner of power struggles, assassinations, dubious alliances, and outright wars, gaining the blessings of the Ruinous Powers as they go. As they proceed, the GM can introduce other NPCs who are also striving to gain control of the Screaming Vortex and raise a Black Crusade of their own. These are rivals who must be either crushed, dominated, or dealt with in some creatively cunning way.

Having received the attentions of the Chaos Gods and earned a few Gifts, ambitious characters might turn their gaze to the potentially more dangerous areas of the Vortex. The Inner Ring presents a number of locations more steeped in the raw power of Chaos, and GMs should ensure that encounters set here are an order of magnitude more dangerous, but potentially more rewarding, than those set in the Gloaming Worlds. By setting foot in the Inner Ring the Heretics are openly declaring their intentions and courting both glory and damnation in equal measures. Such encounters should pit the characters against the middle tier of foes—powerful sorcerers, daemonic Heralds, Chaos Space Marine champions and the likes, and should never be undertaken lightly.

The Lower Vortex should remain a distant and threatening place, at least until the characters have gained sufficient power to face its horrors. The exact nature of those horrors depends very much on the type of campaign the GM wishes to run, but he should always bear in mind that the planets within the Lower Vortex are outright Daemon Worlds—the Heretics should expect to face the most powerful of foes, including Greater Daemons, enormous Hordes of lesser daemons, and other such threats.

By then, of course, having walked the path to glory from the Gloaming Worlds to the Lower Vortex and faced all the horrors within, the Heretics will truly have gained the blessings of the Ruinous Powers. The secrets of the Lower Vortex, especially, can give them world-shaking powers, the kind that may allow them to guide fleets of ships out of the Vortex and have vast armies flocking to their banner. With such massive power and forbidden knowledge at their fingertips, they can begin a Black Crusade against their foes. Only then are they ready to enact their vengeance on the hated Imperium of Man!

old order and replacing it with their own. It is not known if Vect is yet aware of their activities, though it can scarce be imagined that one who rose to power in such a manner would not take every precaution to ensure that others did not attempt to imitate him.

And some say that another group utilises the Forbidden Portal, though not to make slave raids. Who these bright-clad and deadly graceful warrior hunters might be, none can say, for no Disciple of Chaos has ever faced one in battle and lived to tell the tale.

TRAVEL IN THE SCREAMING VORTEX

The regions of the Screaming Vortex present a unique challenge to space travel, for many regions and realms within it exist half-within the warp, and half-without. These twilight zones are merely one hazard, for the nature of the Screaming Vortex itself makes navigating a voidship through the region using conventional means sheer madness, a difficult proposition even under the best circumstances.

However, those who tread the path of glory and have the favour of the dark gods may often find their path through the treacherous tides of the Screaming Vortex. Some make pacts with creatures of the warp, guided by the seductive whispers of a daemon. Others employ crude witchcraft, reading the tides of the warp in the entrails of a ritual sacrifice. The truly desperate or insane trust entirely to fate and chart their course almost at random, believing that a safe passage indicates the dark gods have judged them worthy.

For those who prefer the mundane, if (mostly) reliable method of a starship, many warbands prefer to capture an Imperial vessel during a raid upon a nearby region such as the Calixis Sector or the Koronus Expanse (or claim one of the locally constructed vessels in the Vortex or the Koronus Expanse, such as the Iconoclast raider). Particularly aggressive or ambitious warbands often prey upon rival groups closer to their home ground, plundering the ship of those who dare to threaten their own rise to greatness.

However, voidships are not the only method to slake one's wanderlust within the Screaming Vortex. Treacherous warp portals exist that connect a number of regions in the Vortex, a most treacherous method that is nonetheless popular with many sorcerers and psykers. Additionally, one may make a pact with a creature of the warp, bargaining for a daemon to use some of its eldritch powers to whisk one away to another place in the blink of an eye. There are also bizarre machines constructed by the Hereteks of Forge Castir that tunnel through the warp via dangerously unstable technology created under the reality-bending properties of the Vortex. These examples are but a few of the means that disciples of the dark gods have wielded to traverse the materium.

This is not to say that all warbands have a burning desire to travel far; some are perfectly content to limit themselves to uncontested rule of a single world, or prefer the plentiful opportunities for glory such as those found in realms like the Ragged Helix.

Covenant X

A myriad of markets exist in the Screaming Vortex, from crude bazaars where slaves and precious resources are bartered and sold to more organised traders who exchange weapons and tech to stranger beings who deal only in souls and flesh. Speak to any one of these merchants, and one name is often heard whispered in common: Covenant X.

This is the name taken by a wolfpack of opportunistic pirate raiders who have banded together around a pair of dominant mutal traits: avarice and greed. The Covenant is primarily made up of captains who possess small voidships, mostly Iconoclast- or Idolator-class raiders. These captains have a loose alliance with many of the worlds of the Vortex and offer their services to warbands that are rich enough in wealth and slaves to attract their attention. However, most captains that are part of the Covenant are a selfish and untrustworthy breed, a lesson that many unwary warbands have learned to their sorrow when jettisoned out of a void-lock halfway to their destination.

The Golden Ships of Q'Sal

The ships that the sorcerer-technocrats of Q'Sal produce in their shipyards are prized within the Screaming Vortex; lithe, fast vessels of wondrously small stature (some so small that they need only a few thousand crew or less). These vessels can navigate the currents of the Vortex with prodigious accuracy and enviable reliability. However, the joke is that these vessels are unable to exist outside the Vortex, breaking up on the shoals of hard reality as the complex enchantments that animate them quickly unravel. Thus, many hardened void pirates prefer more "mundane" vessels. Though they may not be as fast, they are far less likely to fail one who wishes to travel beyond the 13th Station of Passage.

Skra'kalichaust the Schemer

Skra'kalichaust the Schemer is a mischievous Greater Daemon of Tzeentch who seems to take delight in the ongoing struggles for glory amongst the warbands of the Screaming Vortex. This daemon is one of the enigmatic Lords of Change who serve Tzeentch, a matchless sorcerer who appears to be using warbands in the Screaming Vortex as pieces in some greater game. Skra'kalichaust has made bargains with a number of Warbands within the Vortex, granting them power or passage from one world to another in return for seemingly innocuous services or favours.

However, these pacts should not be made lightly, a fact that is made clear in the tale of Skartos Blackskull. Skartos and his warband were once on the ascendant, and many predicted that he would soon gain the daemon princedom that he sought so passionately. However, Skartos made a badly-worded agreement with the Schemer in order to launch an ambush against a rival warband. At the end of the battle, the Lord of Change demanded his due... and promptly razed Skartos and his entire warband into oblivion.

The Brass Door

The constant shriek that gives the Screaming Vortex its name is heard most clearly by psykers and other beings closely attuned to the warp. Occasionally, the wailing seems to form words and phrases rather than simple noise, whispers that chant dire promises and dark supplications into the soul.

Many psykers and sorcerers who spend a great deal of time in or near the Screaming Vortex have witnessed such whisperings, and are left with the knowledge of how to summon the aid of the Brass Door by a silent act of will. The Door never appears the same way twice, but it often takes the shape of a monolithic structure of polished brass and gleaming bone—a gateway with a single, huge door in the centre. The Door has taken appearances as wildly different as a simple wooden gate or a huge, half-organic construction of venting steam, writhing flesh, and interlocking cogwheels.

Those who summon the Brass Door instinctually know the price for its aid. Always there is a price, and always it is different; one time, the Door may demand a pint of living blood, whilst another time the Door may merely require a memory of shared pain. If the price is paid, the Brass Door unlocks and swings open, forming a warp portal to the desired destination. So far as it may be confirmed, the Brass Door has never opened to any location other than those found within the Screaming Vortex, but some have claimed to have used the Door to travel as far as Gathalamor, a truly vast distance away.

The Prophecy of the Harrowing of the Screaming Vortex

One of the few mentions of the Screaming Vortex to be found within the canon of Malleus lore is an obscure prophecy, held in a stasis tomb deep beneath the Calixian Ordo Malleus facility of Treacher's Cloister. This prophecy describes a "Second War in Heaven," in which the Screaming Vortex will be subject to a harrowing, its worlds assailed by the hated armies of order. As Treacher's Cloister is currently in the hands of an outcast faction within the Calixian Ordo Malleus, the scroll on which the Prophecy of Harrowing is written is beyond the reach of those who would study it, its exact words lost until the cloister is reclaimed.



XI

Adversaries

- Hordes
- Daemons and Warp Entities
- Heretics
- Forces of The Imperium
- Xenos



Chapter XI: Adversaries

"Who can stand before the might of Chaos?"

–Darvenorax, Champion of the Word Bearers Legion

The way of Chaos is fraught with conflict and violence. Even the lowliest acolyte faces death with each passing moment. This is the way of things within the warp, where ambition runs high and power is the currency of trade. To survive the mutating eddies and rampant hostility of the warp is to embrace conflict for one's own gain. For beings of such unchecked aggression and rapacious greed, the vast expanse of real space offers little better conditions. Hunted as heretics and usurpers by the forces of mankind, the controlled space of the Imperium offers little succor to the hated devotees of Chaos. Likewise, though they are less numerous, the myriad cultures of the xenos races present an equally hostile opposition to the servants of the Dark Gods.

In **Black Crusade**, adversaries can be divided into three broad types: Troops, Elites, and Masters.

- **Troops** are basic soldiers and minor combatants. Alone they are not incredibly dangerous, but in large groups they are a threat. A human Disciple of Chaos can usually handle two Troops without a problem, and Troops generally only threaten a Traitor Legionnaire when in a Horde. Consequentially, Troops are the most common type of adversary to be formed into Hordes.
- **Elites** are more powerful foes, dangerous adversaries who can be a real threat to a warband member. An Elite is roughly an equal adversary for a Traitor Legionnaire, and it should take two human Disciples of Chaos to kill one unless they are particularly well armed or skilled combatants. Elites should only be formed into Hordes on rare occasions, and never against a warband that's primarily made up of humans. Some particularly dangerous Elites may require two or more Traitor Legionnaires to slay.
- **Masters** are incredibly dangerous individuals, powerful foes for an entire warband. They are either incredibly formidable combatants, consummate leaders who enhance the abilities of their minions, or in some cases both. A Master should require the attentions of an entire warband to defeat, and should never be formed into a Horde.

Hordes

"The Legionnaire that scoffs at a lasgun has not charged across an open field against a hundred of them."

–Maor the Scarred, Siege-Champion of the Scargivers

The enemies of Chaos can attack in vast numbers—howling zealots, skittering Hordes, and ranked warriors. Alone, such enemies would stand no chance against a Heretic. In large groups, however, they can pose an overwhelming threat. Hordes have the potential to harm Heretics by sheer weight of fire and numbers. The rules presented here are intended to help Game Masters reflect these massed forces that the characters may face in battle. It is important to note

that not every enemy is suitable to form a Horde. The GM should use his discretion to decide whether an enemy can form a Horde. For example, it is unlikely that 50 jungle snakes would be a threat to a Heretic, even as a Horde! However, 50 Tyranid Hormagaunts will certainly threaten a trained Cadre of Chaos Space Marines. When a creature has a Special Quality for its attacks (e.g., Tearing or Toxic), the default method is to apply that Quality to all of the attacks for a Horde made up of that creature. However, the GM should use his discretion for when the Quality should not apply (for instance, if over half of the creatures in the Horde do not possess that Quality). Also, certain Qualities for the Horde's attacks can make an encounter with a Horde particularly dangerous.

USING A HORDE

A Horde should be treated by the Games Master as a single vast creature. The Horde has the same profile as the base creature which makes up its numbers. A Cult Zealot Horde, for example, has the same profile as an individual Cult Zealot on page 360. The only exception to this is that a Horde replaces the individual creature's Wounds value with its Magnitude and location based armour with a single armour value.

Magnitude

A Horde is a vast number of one type of enemy or creature attacking in large numbers. The abstract number of enemies making up such a Horde are reflected in the Horde's Magnitude. This represents the Horde's determination and numbers as an abstract value: one point of Magnitude does not equal one individual enemy or creature.

Horde Traits

A creature entry may have a Trait listed that has (Horde) written next to it. These Traits represent the way particular creatures fight in large numbers and only apply when that creature is used as the basis of a Horde.

Attacking a Horde

A character can damage a Horde by shooting it with ranged weapons or attacking it in melee. These attacks are treated as if they are against a single creature even though they may represent mowing down ranks of enemies or scything through many foes.

Characters must still roll to hit a Horde, but a size bonus should apply to these tests based on the Horde's Magnitude.

Weapons that can fire on full or semi-auto cause additional hits. These hits must be allocated against the Horde and not any individual Lieutenants or Masters that may also be present.

Hordes do not normally Dodge or Parry Attacks. At the GM's discretion, a Horde can Dodge or Parry attacks just as a single creature does, representing the attacker still killing or wounding individual members of the Horde but not enough to affect overall Magnitude. A Horde's melee weapons are immune to being shattered by a weapon with Power Field Quality (see page 179) when Parried (this is an abstraction—in fact, the Horde's weapons are being destroyed, but there are plenty more where those came from). Multiple enemies attacking the same Horde do not gain the benefits of Ganging Up (see page 245).

Table 11-1: Example Horde Magnitudes

Magnitude	Descriptive Equivalent	Size and To Hit Modifier
30	A mob	Massive (+30)
60	A thronged phalanx	Immense (+40)
90	A massed assault	Monumental (+50)
120	A tide of foes	Titanic (+60)

Damaging a Horde

Each hit that causes any amount of damage reduces a Horde's Magnitude by one. Therefore, an attack that, after accounting for armour and Toughness Bonus, causes 15 points of damage reduces the Horde's Magnitude by 1. The deliberate consequence of this is that sustained fire and blast weapons are much more effective against Hordes than weapons which fire only one shot; a lascannon is a weapon for destroying tanks, not mowing down large numbers of infantry.

Weapons that inflict Explosive Damage (X) gain a bonus against Hordes and count as having inflicted one additional Hit per Attack after all other Hits have been applied.

Locations are not used when fighting a Horde. A Horde has a single armour value that is applied to all damage rather than different armour values for different locations.

Hordes may be Pinned as normal (with the entire Horde making a single Willpower Test). However, Hordes gain a bonus to their Willpower Tests to resist pinning equal to its Magnitude.

Melee

When fighting against a Horde in Melee, a Space Marine inflicts one hit for every two Degrees of Success on his Weapon Skill Test. Melee weapons with the Power Field Quality inflict one additional hit.

Blast Weapons

A Blast weapon that hits a Horde hits a number of times equal to its Blast value. So a grenade with Blast (4) will automatically hit four times if successfully lobbed into the Horde.

Flame Weapons

A flame weapon used on a Horde hits it a number of times equal to one quarter of the weapon's range (rounding up), plus 1d5. So a flame weapon with a range of 10 hits a Horde 1d5+3 times.

A Horde cannot be set on fire and does not suffer the lingering effects of fire (see page 257); instead, any damage and effects of fire are assumed to be included in the Magnitude damage.

Zealous Hatred and Hordes

Zealous Hatred has no additional effect on Hordes. This is because each hit is only affecting one individual in the larger Horde. No matter how brutal the kill, it has little effect on the dead individual's comrades.

Psychic Powers

Psychic Powers that do direct damage inflict damage against a Horde in the same manner as ranged weapons (particularly

powers with the Psychic Storm and Psychic Blast qualities). At the GM's discretion, certain psychic powers (such as Compel) that do not damage may still inflict "hits," meaning that portions of the Horde have been convinced not to attack, and so forth. In this case, the number of hits inflicted should equal the Degrees of Success on the Focus Power Test. Furthermore, the GM should take care to adjudicate the effects of certain psychic powers (such as Rain of Corruption) in specific situations against Hordes (such as a Horde tightly packed into a small space).

Breaking a Horde

When a Horde's Magnitude is reduced by 25% in a turn, it must make a Willpower Test when it is its turn to act again. If it passes, it may continue to act. If it fails, it breaks and flees at its highest move value.

If the Horde's Magnitude is less than 50% of its starting value, it suffers a –10 to the Willpower Test. If the Horde's Magnitude is less than 25% of its starting value, it will automatically break.

Hordes composed of enemies with the Fearless talent do not have to test to see if they break as their Magnitude is eroded: they have to be wiped out to the last.

Hordes Attacking

A Horde can make both melee attacks against enemies in close proximity and ranged attacks at enemies that are at a distance in a single turn as an attack action.

Melee: A Horde attacks all adjacent enemies, or enemies that are in close proximity (the GM is the final arbiter of determining if a target is in close proximity). A Horde that has multiple attacks from being armed with two weapons or the Swift Attack or Lightning Attack Talents may use its full number of attacks against every eligible target. Although a Horde represents a large number of attackers, a Horde does not gain the benefits of Ganging Up (see page 245). Instead, the Horde's sheer weight of numbers is represented by the fact that its target may not Dodge or Parry. Melee Attacks made by Hordes cannot be Parried or Dodged unless otherwise noted.

Ranged: A Horde may make ranged attacks equal to the first digit of its Magnitude. Thus, a Magnitude 25 Horde can make two ranged attacks. Any additional hits from sustained fire can be applied to any eligible target. Therefore, if the heretics hit Brother Silas well enough that they cause an extra hit with their stub autos, the additional hit will be applied to Brother Silas.

Modifiers of range and sustained fire apply as normal, but a Horde can never aim. Ammo expenditure and Jamming never applies to Hordes—they always have extra bullets.

Damage Caused by Hordes

Any attack from a Horde that hits has the damage it causes increased by a number of d10s equal to the Horde's Magnitude divided by ten, with a maximum bonus of +2d10. This is in addition to the normal damage dealt by the weapon that the Horde is armed with. It will also include the Strength Bonus added to damage caused by melee weapons. The damage is reduced by the target's Toughness bonus and armour as normal. Thus, a Magnitude 25 Horde of heretics armed with axes will add 2d10 to the normal damage that a heretic would do with its axe (1d10+5) and, therefore, causes 3d10+5 damage if they hit in combat. Likewise, the same mob armed with autopistols will cause 3d10+2 damage with its ranged attacks. This represents a Heretic being mobbed with enemies that strike it countless times or bullets striking like rain on a single target.

Generally, the attacks of a Horde may not be Dodged or Parried—this represents the Horde's sheer volume of firepower. At the GM's discretion, he may choose to allow certain attacks from a Horde to be Dodged as normal.

For example, a Horde of Imperial Guardsmen may possess a single missile launcher amongst their number. Since the entire horde is not firing missiles (they are instead firing lasguns), the missile launcher does not benefit from the Horde's abilities regarding ranged attacks, and therefore receives no bonus damage and may be Dodged normally.

Hordes cannot inflict Zealous Hatred unless specifically noted otherwise. The damage they could deal is taken into account with the extra dice they roll.

NPC Weapon Training

In the cases of all NPC profiles, the GM should assume that they are proficient in any weapon they are equipped with. There may be some NPCs where it makes more sense for them not to be able to use a weapon they are carrying, but in general any weapon an adversary possesses is one he's prepared to use.

Horde versus Horde Combat

Occasionally, there will be cause for two Hordes to face off against each other. Whether this is an army of renegades facing Imperial Guardsmen or two opposing factions of Chaos Zealots trying to prove whose Patron is superior, combat works similar to the basic Horde rules. Treat each Horde as if they were an individual character and follow the rules outlined above for calculating their Damage. When determining the bonus To Hit modifier for size, use the difference between them, with the smaller Horde receiving the benefit. For example, a Magnitude 30 Horde of Zealots is fighting a Magnitude 60 Horde of Guardsmen. The Zealots would receive a +10 To Hit modifier on all attacks made against the Horde of Guardsmen. Individual Player-characters involved in Horde versus Horde combat have the option of fighting as individuals or fighting as part of the Horde. If they choose to fight as part of the Horde, they will still act on their own Initiative, but they may only use Psychic Powers or Daemonic Gifts to differentiate themselves from the Hordes basic attacks. A character may choose to leave a Horde as a Half Action.

Creating a Horde

To create a Horde is simply a matter of taking a low level adversary (usually a Troops adversary, but sometimes an Elite) and replacing its wounds with a Magnitude value desired by the GM. Use **Table 11–1: Example Magnitudes** to determine the desired value.

The one exception is any creature with the Swarm rule. Swarms are similar to Hordes, but represent groups of even lesser enemies, and the rules do not combine.

Servants of the Dark Gods

"The creatures I have seen are glorious and vile in their own measure. Their form is a perfect vision of the Gods' dark will. None can match the majesty of these vicious beasts."

–Vexal Tav, Wyrd

The gods of Chaos are not forgiving masters, nor are they caring or generous. Despite this, the power they offer their supplicants is an enticing gift; a gift for which many willingly flock to the servitude of Chaos. Those who strive to earn these gifts are a dangerous lot, both to their victims in real space and to their supposed comrades in service. Few beings are as ambitious as those who throw in their lot with the destructive powers of Chaos and for the sake of their ambition they can be terrifying enemies.

Daemons & Warp Entities

The warp is a twisted place of pure emotion and passion, existing beyond the logic and reason of realspace. The beings spawned in the warp are twisted and illogical creatures, devoid of compassion or mercy and existing only to serve the whims of their dark masters, the gods of Chaos. These beings, or daemons as they are called by mortals, are nearly all shaped by the whims of the Dark Gods, given forms to suit their master's dark desires and wicked plans. However, there are those few daemons shaped by the violent and unpredictable winds of the warp itself. These are often the souls of mortals, lost in the depths of the warp thanks to the vile actions of the mortal being in life.

Daemons are creatures of the warp, only able to exist in realspace in rare circumstances, such as when summoned by supplicants of the dark gods through aeons-old arcane rituals or by tearing their way through the minds of unstable psykers. In these cases, the daemons wreak havoc on the universe around them, seeing nothing but stifling order and unchecked regularity about them and needing, by their very nature, to impose their own chaotic natures on their surroundings. The sheer malevolence of daemonic creatures is astounding to most mortals and such monsters are rightly feared.

Nether Swarm

There are those who believe that Furies are common daemons formed from the souls of those mortals who would use the power of Chaos for their own ends rather than serve any of the Dark Powers. It is said that these souls of lesser mortals are twisted and corrupted by the power of the warp until they are shaped into hellish figures of death and pain. It is said that the only respite for these wretched beasts are brief forays into realspace, where they might inflict their horrific torment on others. On rare occasions, a pack of Furies will become trapped in realspace, cut off from the warp and the terrible realm which sustains their existence. Usually in such cases the creatures would simply fade, screaming into nothingness. When caught outside the warp in the strange currents and eddies of the Screaming Vortex, however, something entirely inexplicable happens. In these rare cases, the pack of daemons slowly begins to wither and atrophy, their warp-infused bodies losing their vitality, yet they still live on, tormented by their separation from the warp but unable to simply vanish from existence. The only means by which the swarm of gargoyle-like beings may remain in existence is by feasting on the misery, pain, and torment of mortal souls. As such, these swarms of creatures from the nether seek out groups of living beings in desperate attacks. In combat these creatures are frenzied, driven mad by their metaphysical hunger and without heed of their own safety. They swarm as one, seeming to possess a single mind born of their desolation and consuming need to inflict agony. A blur of fang and claw, the swarm of warp-spawn tear their victims to pieces, flaying flesh from bone and gorging themselves on the resultant fear and torment.

Eventually these horrors, shrivelled and wizened, will cease to exist entirely, their forms devoured by the exertion of remaining in realspace. Should the nether swarm find a suitable locale to inhabit, where their depredations may continue unhindered indefinitely, this dissolution may take years to come to pass—though it is inevitable, as no amount of pain and agony inflicted can ever fully restore these vile creatures to full existence.

Nether Swarm (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
35	11	16	22[3]	52	11	38	21	0	9	-	-

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 60
Armour: None **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag) +20, Stealth (Ag) +20
Talents: Heightened Sense (Smell).
Traits: Bestial, Daemonic (+1), Flyer (5), From Beyond, Deadly Natural Weapons, Size (Puny), Swarm.
Weapons: Claws and Bites (2d10 R; Pen 1d5; Tearing).
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 5 metres of a Nether Swarm suffer a –5 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Withering Bites: The needle teeth of the Nether Swarm break, festering in the wounds they inflict. Anyone who suffers one or more Wounds from a Nether Swarm reduces their Toughness by 10 for 1d10 minutes as the teeth shards chew away at his veins.
†The Nether Swarm is intended to be used as a Horde, as one withered Fury is hardly a threat. If the GM needs to use an individual, each creature has 2 Wounds.

Bloodletter

Bloodletters are the lesser servants of the Blood God, forming the core of his vast Daemonic Legions. Peerless and deadly warriors, they are amongst the most skilled warriors in the galaxy. Armed with dreaded Hellblades, great two-handed weapons said to be as sharp as Khorne's own hatred, the can hew apart the stroutest adversary in a shower of steaming gore.

The body of a Bloodletter is a deep gore-red and their humanoid bodies are topped with bestial snarling faces, burning pupil-less eyes, and horned elongated craniums that seem reminiscent of great war-helms. Their long, sinewy limbs possess an infamous strength, as renowned as the

ferocity of their charges and the grim battle lust with which they tear apart anyone who opposes them. Everywhere they go, they are surrounded by the stench of blood.

Unlike other Daemons, Bloodletters march to war in regimented formations, for their creator is the Lord of Battle. Lines of the Daemons manoeuvre in ranks with supernatural precision, advancing in disciplined maniples. However, these echelons quickly break up after contact with the enemy, as each Bloodletter competes to slay as many of the foe as possible.

Bloodletter (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
50	12	42[7]	42[8]	40	30	30	34	1	4	-	-

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 22
Armour: None **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Athletics (S), Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) (Int), Intimidate (S) +10, Parry (WS) +20, Survival (Per).
Talents: Battle Rage, Berserk Charge, Blademaster, Combat Master, Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Frenzy, Furious Assault, Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (4), Fear (2), From Beyond, Size (Hulking), Unnatural Strength (+3), Warp Instability.
Weapons: Hellblade (1d10 + 13 R; Pen 10; Balanced, Power Field, weapon deals +2 damage for every foe it kills).
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 10 metres of a Bloodletter suffer –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Blood for the Blood God: Creatures of Khorne suffer no penalties from gore and blood—all critical hit effects involving gore and blood (such as requiring an Agility Test not to fall over) do not apply to creatures of Khorne.



Brazen Myrmidon

The martial legions of the Blood God struggle eternally, slaves to their own violent natures, revelling in slaughter, whether it be of mortal beings or of their own brethren. Of these warp-born soldiers, Bloodletters are the most well known, their discipline and ferocity legendary. Bloodletters compete with each other to garner the favour of their god; they possess a twisted code of honour among their own. This honour is based solely on personal prowess; those who display extraordinary martial ability are awarded the greatest glory. When one of these champions of slaughter is felled and their daemonic essence banished back into the warp, it is a great loss for the legions of Khorne.

On the Hollows, a planet-wide war has raged for centuries. In their drive to invent new and horrific ways to deal death, the smiths of Forge Castir have found a way to permanently steal a feared warrior from the ranks of the Blood God's armies. By forging a daemonic body out of brass and inscribing it with vile runes of power, the artificers are able to bind the wayward essence of a slain daemon to a new and terrible form. Brazen myrmidons are rare, as it is incredibly difficult to create these creatures, but those that are formed are renowned and feared in equal measure. The myrmidons appear as brass suits of hellish, baroque armour, capped with the elongated, horned skull of a powerful Bloodletter. The thick plates of the armour are etched with runes in the tongue of Chaos and the joints weep unnaturally with the blood of the bound daemon's victims. Prior to the binding process, the smiths seek to recover the Herald's massive Hellblade from the site of the daemon's destruction, that the myrmidon may carry their own sword. Should they be unable to obtain the blade, they instead equip the myrmidon with twin blades forged of warp-infused steel and wreathed in infernal flames.

These Myrmidons are bound within their warp-forged armour, turning them into utterly loyal and unquestioning followers of the Exospectre. Newly provided with their powerful, armoured forms, Brazen Myrmidons wade among the foul creations of Forge Castir, bringing death with every stroke.

Brazen Myrmidon (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
50	12	42	52[9]	30	26	33	20	1	4	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 30
Armour: Brass Armour (8 All) **Total TB:** 9
Skills: Athletics (S), Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Intimidate (S) +10, Parry (WS) +20, Survival (Per).
Talents: Ambidextrous, Battle Rage, Berserk Charge, Blademaster, Combat Master, Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Frenzy, Furious Assault, Lightning Attack, Swift Attack, Two-Weapon Wielder.
Traits: Daemonic (+4), Fear (2), From Beyond, Size (Hulking), Unnatural Strength (+3).
Weapons: Hellblade (1d10 + 15 R; Pen 0; Balanced, Power Field, Special†) or two Flame-blades (1d10+7, Pen 3; Flame, Razor Sharp).
†This weapon deals +2 damage for every death inflicted in combat, resetting after every encounter.

Cackling Abomination

The perverse nature of the Dark Eldar is legendary among both the thronged masses of humanity and the twisted hordes of chaos. Even among a people so twisted, torturous and feared, there are those who set themselves apart in such matters. The Haemonculi of the Dark Eldar are those specialists. Twisted figures of arcane science, the Haemonculi seek understanding and perfection through the infliction of pain and torture. To this end, they create vile monsters through wicked surgeries and flesh-melding, often shattering the minds of their victims in the process. From this awful practice, an abhorrent beast has been brought into being and become a fierce threat in the Screaming Vortex.

Seeking better understanding of the connection between his own people and the Lord of Dark Delights, a truly mad Haemonculi, whose name is lost to history, set about his work on the pseudo-real flesh of a daemonic being. For this experiment, he chose one of the servants of Slaanesh—a Daemonette. It was not long before he realised that the daemons of the warp lack not only mortality, but also lack fear. Its flesh made of incomprehensible warp-stuff and a mind in no way recognisable to mortal comprehension, the Daemonette was an impossible subject for the Haemonculi's sadistic experimentation. In a moment of desperate genius the Haemonculus used arcane magic to bind the spirit of the Daemonette to the body of an Eldar slave. The internal battle that raged within the terrified Eldar's soul killed the wretched captive, but not before the Daemonette took control of its body, warping it physically and devouring what was left of its broken mind. This new Daemonhost became the subject of experiments so bizarre that they defy description.

The creature that remained was a perverted horror, forever trapped in realspace—the very first Cackling Abomination. These twisted monstrosities look like nothing so much as contorted and stretched Eldar, their distended arms ending in long-fingered hands, tipped with slashing talons. The Cackling Abomination seeks only to spread its madness, which seeps from it like a foul odour. Its face drawn tightly into a terrifying jester's gin, the beast creeps with eerie silence, seeking to surprise and subdue its foes, not kill them outright. Once it has its victims secure, the beast cavorts madly, cackling with insane glee as it performs horrific torments upon them.

Cackling Abomination (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
56	12	34	53 (10)	51 (7)	13	14	28	0	8	-	-

Movement: 7/14/21/42 **Wounds:** 35
Armour: None **Total TB:** 10
Skills: Athletics (S), Dodge (Ag) +10, Intimidate (S) +10, Parry (WS), Survival (Per).
Talents: Ambidextrous, Combat Master, Die Hard, Disturbing Voice, Hard Target, Iron Jaw, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Preternatural Speed, Swift Attack, Two Weapon Wielder (Melee).
Traits: Daemonic (+5), Dark Sight, Deadly Natural Weapons, Fear (3), From Beyond, Multiple Arms (4), Unnatural Agility (+2).
Weapons: Spindle Claws (1d10+4 R; Pen 0; Felling (2), Tearing, Warp Weapons).
Aura of Insanity: Crazed laughter filled with mocking secrets fill the minds of all those around a Cackling Abomination. Anyone within 10m of a Cackling Abomination suffers a –20 penalty to all Perception and Willpower Tests.
Driven to Madness: Once per combat encounter, the Cackling Abomination may unleash the full horror of its warp madness, driving insanity into the very minds of its opponents as the raw light of the warp shines through its crazed grin. As a Free Action, it can force all creatures facing the Cackling Abomination to make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. For every Degree of Failure they gain 1 Corruption Point (if a Heretic) or 2 Insanity Points (if something that can suffer insanity). If a Heretic fails the Test by four or more Degrees of Failure, they generate a Disorder as well (see page 278).

Daemonettes of Slaanesh

Desire is universal. Desire is the single thing which drives every soul in the Galaxy—desire for position, for favour, for power, for glory, for physical gratification, for slaughter. The Lord of Dark Delights knows this and his power is bolstered by each and every greedy soul. Slaanesh is made stronger by each gluttonous excess, by each narcissistic perfection, by every pleasure experienced at the expense of one's soul. To this end, the Prince of Pleasure created the Daemonettes, beings of pure desire and temptation. Daemonettes are twisted mockeries of both male and female forms, combined into a hermaphroditic whole which is both alluring and revolting. Their large, opaline eyes burn with malicious lust and their cruel, fanged mouths water at the thought of another corrupted soul. Despite their obviously daemonic visage, mortals cannot help but be drawn to Daemonettes, whose unearthly features always appear irresistibly attractive to the viewer. Clouded by the heady musk which these beguiling daemons exude, mortals find themselves enthralled and driven mad by desire and passion.

Such is the allure of the Daemonettes that their victims find themselves overcome with longing, even in the midst of combat. Beings of Chaos and violence as much as passion and seduction, the Daemonettes fight with otherworldly grace and murderous bloodlust. The daemonic nature of these creatures becomes unmistakable when provoked, as their faces twist into terrifying snarls and cackling grins, their arms form wicked claws and their enticing voices become shrieks of sadistic glee. Dancing from foe to foe, packs of Daemonettes scythe through the battlefield, their enemies defenceless as stalks of wheat, entranced by their seductive movements and intoxicating musk.

Daemonette (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel		
37	22	38	44[8]	51	13	14	28	0	8	-	-

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 18
Armour: None **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag), Athletics (S), Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Parry (WS), Psyniscience (Per).
Talents: Heightened Senses (All), Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (4), Dark Sight, Fear 2, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Pincer Claw), Warp Instability.
Weapons: Pincer Claw (1d10+3 R, Pen 3, Razor Sharp, Tearing).
Soporific Musk: The tantalising allure of the Daemonette entrances and beguiles victims. Dodge and Parry Tests made against attacks made by a Daemonette suffer a –10 penalty.
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 10 metres of a Daemonette suffer –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.



Horror

Horrors are possibly the most bizarre of all Daemons. They have stubby, pink bodies with long, gangly arms and legs, and no head. Though their leering faces normally appear in the middle of their chest, they can vanish at any moment and reappear on some random part of their anatomy. They band together on the battlefield in cheerful, colourful mobs, dancing and cavorting erratically across the battlefield to the rhythm of their own cacophonous humming. As they cackle and laugh, they casually hurl a barrage of arcane missiles of ever-changing hues to pummel their foes.

Even though they are nearly useless at fighting in melee, Horrors are difficult to eliminate. They surround themselves with arcane protections and can regenerate missing limbs with nonchalant ease. When they are cleaved with a well-placed blow, they reveal a truly unique and bizarre defence.

The Daemon simply splits into two halves, which reshape themselves into smaller, blue-hued copies of the original. These two new Daemons change personalities as well as colours, becoming petty and morose, constantly whining and squabbling amongst each other about whose fault it was that they ended up Blue Horrors instead of Pink. However, they are just as dangerous as in their original form.

Pink Horror (Elite)

WS	BS		T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
23	35	35	33[6]	30	30	30	32	1	0	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 18
Armour: None **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (Any one).
Talents: None.
Traits: Daemonic (+3), Fear (2), From Beyond, Deadly Natural Weapons Multiple Arms (1d5)†, Strange Physiology, Warp Instability.
Weapons: Warpfire (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+10 E; Pen 6), Claws (1d10+5; Pen 2).
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 10 metres of a Pink Horror suffer a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Blue Horrors: When a Pink Horror is slain, it vanishes and is replaced by two Blue Horrors (the Blue Horrors appear within



1m of the Pink Horror when it was slain, assuming there is room). Blue Horrors act as independent creatures and have the same statistics as a Pink Horror with the following changes: reduce Wounds to 9, reduce Strength to 20, reduce the damage of the claws to 1d10+3. When using Pink Horrors as a Horde, this rule applies differently; reduce all damage dealt to the Horde's Magnitude by half, rounding up.

Blessing of Tzeentch: Pink and Blue Horrors are blessed by their patron. This has the same effect as a Force Field (page 178) with a Strength of 20 that does not overload.

†As the Pink Horror does not have Two Weapon Wielder, the value of its Multiple Arms does not matter, and often changes from Round to Round.

Juggernaut

The warforges of Khorne are hellish places of toil and flame, blood and death. These dread foundries have produced many of the vilest artefacts in the galaxy. The warp-gifted artisans who lay hammer to anvil and pump the brass bellows forge twisted mechanical augmentations and heavy armoured plates for the servants of Khorne's realm. These wicked artificers long ago mastered the binding of daemons to their creations, shackling warp-spawned beasts to new forms, creating powerful steeds and living engines of Khorne's fury.

The Juggernaut of Khorne is one such artefact. These brass behemoths pump burning blood and breathe ash and flame. Shaped in the vague form of a rhinoceros and a bull, these beasts stand over two metres tall at the shoulder and their daemon-fused brass bodies are so heavy that they are capable of smashing through buildings in unstoppable charges. Thickly armoured, Juggernauts can withstand even the most concentrated small-arms fire and are all but invulnerable to mundane melee weaponry. Their bulk is useful for more than just protection, as a charge from a Juggernaut has been known to topple tanks and decimate lines of infantry. Juggernauts are fierce melee combatants, goring with their horns, throwing their massive bodies violently to pulverise those around them, and devouring the enemy with their wickedly toothy maw. As constructs of Khorne, these beasts of the Blood God have been inscribed with runes to nullify magic and, as such, are even more resilient to the attacks of psykers and xenos witches.

Many a devotee of the Lord of the Skull Throne has sought to master a Juggernaut and to make it their daemonic steed.



To master a Juggernaut is no small task, as the rider must possess undeniable martial prowess. Some have chosen to subdue the beast in single combat so that they might reforge the armoured backs of the Juggernaut to form the saddle. The devotee of the Blood God must constantly overcome the insatiable lust for violence possessed by the behemoth. It is the greatest of Khorne's soldiers who know when and where to unleash this beast's violent hate. Matched together, rider and steed, their capacity for destruction is staggering.

Juggernaut (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
45	01	55	55	22	15	18	40	15	- -

Movement: 6/12/18/36 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: Natural Armour (6 All) **Total TB:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20.
Talents: Berserk Charge, Frenzy.
Traits: Bestial, Brutal Charge, Daemonic (+5), Dark Sight, Fear (3), From Beyond, Deadly Natural Weapons, Natural Armour (6), Quadruped, Size (Enormous), Unnatural Strength (+5), Warp Instability.
Weapons: Horn and Hoof (1d10+10 I; Pen 2; Concussive [2]).
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 10 metres of a Juggernaut suffer –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Blood for the Blood God: Creatures of Khorne suffer no penalties from gore and blood—all critical hit effects involving gore and blood (such as requiring an Agility Test not to fall over) do not apply to creatures of Khorne.
Furious Impact: Instead of performing a normal charge, the Juggernaut may use Furious Impact. When using Furious Impact, the Juggernaut moves its normal charge distance in a straight line towards a single target. If the Juggernaut engages the target, that target and anyone, friend or foe, within one metre of the original target suffers 1d10+10 Impact Damage with the Concussive (2) Quality. The target and any other targets hit by this attack may make a Dodge Reaction as normal to avoid the damage. The Juggernaut does not need to roll to hit in order to use Furious Impact. Furious Impact may only be used once per combat.

Plaguebearer

For some, the greatest terror is the failure of the mortal shell. Decay, pestilence, and rot are constants in a galaxy populated with an uncountable number of living souls. Life begets filth and plague, and in a twisted mockery of this fact, it is human life which begets the lesser daemons of the Lord of Flies. When Nurgle's ubiquitous Rot consumes the body of a human victim, the soul is likewise consumed. This process brings into being the wretched Plaguebearers. These one-eyed daemons appear as frail, wasted human bodies with bloated stomachs, long gangling arms, and broad mouths full of broken fangs and dripping with infectious spittle. Their foreheads are peaked with a single ivory horn, crusted with dried blood, mucus and pus. In their gnarled hands, they carry thick, rusty cleavers and broad slashing blades which they use on the battlefield to spread their virulent infections. Surrounded by a thick cloud of enormous black flies,

they are a horrific foe, even from across the field of battle, as their host buzzes with the wings of the flies and rumbling with a dolorous dirge. The body of a Plaguebearer appears weak and fragile, but their constant exposure to the vilest concoctions of Nurgle's cauldron has made them unnaturally resilient. Inured to pain, ignorant of the idea of injury, they fight on, even laughing at the sight of their own dismemberment.

The attitude of a Plaguebearer is often more frightening to mortals than their appearance. They solemnly drudge along, steady in the suffering and despair they cause. This is not some sadistic pleasure, like that of Slaanesh, but rather a determined appreciation of Nurgle's genius, a devotion of his art and an acknowledgment of eventual disintegration of all things. Their wish to spread disease is driven by their wish to share their Father's gifts with the galaxy. As they march, they chant out the list of poxes, plagues, and pestilence their Father has created, ever certain in their growing number and increasing virulence.

Plaguebearer (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
35	21	43 (5)	56 (10)	30	28	31	35	1	1	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: None **Total TB:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (Per), Scholastic Lore (Numerology) (Int), Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: Crippling Strike.
Traits: Daemonic (+5), Dark Sight, Fear 3, From Beyond, Natural Weapons, Unnatural Strength (+1), Warp Instability.
Weapons: Claws and teeth (1d10+7 R; Primitive (6), Tearing, Toxic) or Plague Sword (1d10+8 R, Pen 4, Balanced, Toxic [2]).
Infected Wounds: Whenever a target fails the Toxic Test from a Plaguebearer's attacks they also suffer 1d5 Toughness Damage. This takes into account the Plague Sword's rules.
Vomit: As a Half Action, a Plaguebearer can vomit on one victim within five metres. It must succeed on a Ballistic Skill Test to hit its foe. The target may Dodge the spew but may not Parry it. On a successful hit, the vomit deals 1d10+5 Damage. If the attack would deal Critical Damage, the vomit deals 2d10 points of Toughness Damage.
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 10 metres of a Juggernaut suffer –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.



Screamer of Tzeentch

The winds of Chaos carry many dangers—mutation, madness, and corruption. Unfortunately for the teeming masses of mankind, their immense Imperium relies on these warp-winds for its very survival. Careful plotting of a route through the warp is necessary to avoid the more well-known warp-storms. The Gellar fields present in all warp-capable ships protect against most other daemonic dangers which the ship would likely encounter. There is always a hole in even the best defence, however, a chink in any suit of armour. The beasts known by the common voidman as sky-sharks are drawn to these holes like moths to a flame.

These sky-sharks, or Screamers, sail through the warp in immense schools, seeking out warp-translated starships, on which they feed. Screamers look like nothing so much as long-bodied manta rays with viciously barbed tails, fanged maws, and comet tails of scintillating light. The jaws of these daemonic creatures are strong enough to cut through even the thickest areas of a starship's hull, though it is their instinctual cunning that makes them truly dangerous.

Occasionally, these beasts will be brought into real space by devotees of their master and creator, Tzeentch, to serve on the battlefield or to act as twisted and dangerous hunting beasts. In combat, Screamers earn their moniker by projecting powerful screeches, stunning their foes and sewing panic amongst enemy forces. They capitalise on these moments of disruption to swoop down into enemy ranks en masse, free from retaliation. Some devotees of Tzeentch bind these swift beasts to serve them as infernal mounts. Warping their graceful form, the magician stretches the creature's warp-spawned flesh onto a frame of wicked blades and burning steel. These daemonic constructs are known as Discs of Tzeentch and provide their riders with incredible speed and manoeuvrability.

Screamer (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
30	02	45	45 (8)	50	15	43	40	0	3	-	-

Movement: 8/16/24/48 **Wounds:** 15
Armour: None **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20.
Traits: Daemonic (4), Fear 2, Flyer (8), From Beyond, Deadly Natural Weapons (Warp Maw), Warp Instability.
Armour: None.
Weapons: Warp Maw (1d10+5 E; Pen 12; Felling [3] Razor Sharp, Tearing).



Great Unclean One

While the other three gods of Chaos create powerful daemonic subjects to serve them, fight for them, and lead their armies, Grandfather Nurgle's daemonic followers are his children, his beloved family. Delighting in their successes and playfully cajoling in their failure, the Father of Plagues is ever watchful of his offspring, encouraging them to ever greater antics in his name. As near-facsimiles of their putrid creator, the Great Unclean Ones are bombastic abominations of infection and decay. Despite their truly vile existence, Great Unclean Ones possess a near limitless capacity for joviality and morbid joy at the horrors they inflict. Wide, leering mouths filled with cracked, stained teeth dominate their thick, squat heads crowned with broken, ichor-covered antlers. Long, lolling tongues hang from their jaws, dripping with infectious saliva. Their immense bodies, often towering over a dozen meters, are rife with weeping sores and split flesh, spilling their bowels about their bloated abdomens. As they heft their colossal bulk about the battlefield, their fiery buboes split to disgorge giggling Nurglings, who tumble down the folds of their massive bellies.

Great Unclean Ones long ago became inured to pain, a result of their abundant infections, plagues, and virulent sores. Their truly massive size and their ability to withstand injury and pain make them dangerous adversaries, as they can withstand astounding amounts of damage before finally falling to the attacks of their foes. These daemon-lords possess a hellish prowess, which seems at odds with their bulk and squat stature. They barrel into their enemies, laughing boisterously, all the while laying about them with colossal rusty cleavers and seven-headed flails. The thick cloud of flies which feast at their open sores disrupt the attacks of their enemies and spread the putrid diseases of their host. All the while, the cooing Nurglings form a hideous vanguard for their Papa and in a playful gesture do all they can to help spread their Father's beloved plagues to those nearest him.

Great Unclean Ones conduct the affairs of Nurgle with tenacity and paternal guidance. They encourage their underlings to revel in Nurgle's decay and pestilence, while jumping on every chance to spread new plagues. When leading the armies of the Father of Plagues, Great Unclean Ones fight with a good-natured joy that suggests they know that their cause will eventually win out. They may even be right, for there is only one true constant in the galaxy: decay.

Great Unclean One (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
49	42	56 (10)	77 (22)	21	56	43	70	28	50

Movement: 6/12/18/32 **Wounds:** 232
Armour: None **Total TB:** 22
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Command (Fel), Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) (Int) +20, Intimidate (S) +20, Logic (Int), Medicae (Int), Parry (WS), Psyniscience (Per) +20, Scrutiny (Per), Survival (Per).
Talents: Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Demagogue, Disturbing Voice, Hammer Blow, Hardy, Swift Attack, Takedown, Thunder Charge, Unarmed Master.
Weapons: Giant Plaguesword (2d10+12 E, Pen 4, Balanced, Toxic [4]).
Traits: Amphibious, Daemonic (+5), Dark-sight, Fear (4), From Beyond, Regeneration (5), Size (Immense), Sturdy, Unnatural Strength (+5), Unnatural Toughness (+10), The Stuff of Nightmares.
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 20 metres of a Great Unclean One suffer –10 penalty to Willpower Tests and Toughness Tests (not, however, an enemy's Toughness Characteristic).
Touched By Nurgle: The Great Unclean One may use any Nurgle Psychic Power and passes the Focus Power Test automatically with 1d5 Degrees of Success. He counts as having a Psy Rating of 7.

Lord of Change

Constant change, mutation, and evolution are the physical hallmarks of the servants of Tzeentch. These beings, beholden to the God of ambition, magic and knowledge, rarely rest in any single form for long. They exist in an eternal struggle for perfection through change. For most, it is a material perfection they seek. For those truly devoted to the ways of Tzeentch, physical perfection comes as a distant second to mental and metaphysical perfection. Among all his servants, the Lords of Change have most closely attained this wholly unattainable notion of perfection. Beings of overwhelming mental acumen, commanding awe-inspiring magical powers and possessed of peerless skills of manipulation and deceit, the Lords of Change are rightly feared throughout the galaxy. Their reputation for twisting the ambitions of men and alien into contorted monuments of perversion is enough to drive even the most humble agent to paranoia and suspicion.

In realspace, these creatures appear as towering beings with gangling limbs, vast feathered wings, and a hook-beaked head resting on a long, crooked neck. Their hunched shoulders are often draped with what looks like the robes of a high priest or a court wizard from ages long-past. Their bent, bird-like legs are scaly and end in vicious talons; their lank arms terminate in broad, clawed hands. Their enormous wings sprout from their shoulders and are of an indeterminate colour, seeming to change their hue and tone with each passing second. Most Lords of Change carry long ceremonial staves, which they use to channel their considerable psychic power. These powerful daemonic

servants of Tzeentch carry themselves with a regal grace, though when driven to action their savagery is remarkable.

Few beings in the galaxy can claim to possess greater stores of knowledge than a Lord of Change, and this holds true on the battlefield as well. The greater daemons of Tzeentch craft strategies and tactics as though battles were game-boards and their forces were merely pieces. They utilise their great magic to steer the flow of battle and bolster their own forces as well as to annihilate their enemies. The battle plans of these beings of supernatural genius seem to script the engagements as much as anticipate possible events. Should a Lord of Change be confronted with a being with psychic powers comparable to its own, it is not unheard of for the greater daemons of Tzeentch to wade into close-quarters combat. Their incredible reach and sharp talons are the match of most mortals should these powerful psykers ever resort to such a confrontation.

Great Unclean One (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
54	63	45 (16)	63 (16)	54	99	72	81	4	5	5	0

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 180
Armour: None **Total TB:** 16
Skills: Awareness (Per), Command (Fel)+20, Commerce (Int), Common Lore (All) (Int) +20, Deceive (Fel)+20, Dodge (Ag), Forbidden Lore (All) (Int)+20, Inquiry (Fel)+10, Interrogation (WP)+10, Intimidate (S), Logic (Int)+20, Linguistics (Int)+20, Medicae (Int), Parry (WS), Psyniscience (Per), Scholastic Lore (All) (Int)+20, Scrutiny (Per)+20.
Talents: Combat Master, Resistance (Psychic Powers) Swift Attack, Strong Minded.
Traits: Daemonic (+5), Dark-sight, Fear (4), Flyer (5), From Beyond, Sturdy, Unnatural Strength (+12), Unnatural Toughness (+5), The Stuff of Nightmares.
Master of Plotters: All Daemons of Tzeentch are master schemers, their very essence a primal form of deceit and treachery, and the Lords of Change are the greatest masterminds of all. No matter the circumstances, a Lord of Change *always* has a plan. Once per session, the Lord of Change may add a number of Degrees of Success equal to his Intelligence Bonus to any one Test.
Supreme Sorcerer: The Lord of Change may activate any Tzeentch or Unaligned Power; he passes the Focus Power Test automatically with 1d5 Degrees of Success. He counts as having a Psy Rating of 9.
Weaver of Fates: Lord of Change can turn its gaze upon a mortal and alter their fate. Once per round, as a Reaction, the Lord of Change may force a target to pass a **Challenging (+0) Agility** or **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. If the target fails, it must immediately spend an Infamy Point as the Lord of Change sees fit. The target may be forced to heal themselves, reroll a failed Test or any other use they could normally make.
Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 20 metres of a Great Unclean One suffer –20 penalty to Willpower Tests.

DAEMON PRINCES

While the majority of daemons are created from nothingness by one of the gods of Chaos, or spring forth from the chaos-stuff of the warp unbidden, there are rare instances when a mortal is granted the gift of infernal immortality and formed into the vilest of abominations. These terrifying entities, examples of the worst mankind is capable of, are raised above the more common daemons and placed in positions of power by their patron deity. Earning the favour of the Dark Powers is no small task and the rewards for such deeds are rarely pleasant and are deadly as often as not. With each heinous act the mortal is granted a single gift. In time, these blessings either elevate the devotee to power or crush him under the weight of mutation and madness. Few have the willpower to withstand the overwhelming blessings of the Chaos gods, but those who do are horrors beyond mortal understanding.

Some daemon princes rise to power through military might, laying waste to the forces of the Imperium one planet at a time. Others are master corruptors, twisting entire systems to the sway of the dark gods. Still others spread malignant corruption, both physical and spiritual, to topple the most hardy souls. The most well known of the daemon princes are the Primarchs of the traitor legions from the time of the Horus Heresy. These god-like beings were the best of mankind and yet they turned to the will of Chaos. Those that remain lord over daemon worlds in the Eye of Terror to this day and their power is feared by all and jealously coveted by only the foolish. Whatever their methods, these masterminds, generals, and butchers represent the greatest achievement of the supplicants of Chaos, the highest form to which a devotee can aspire. There is no standard form of a daemon prince, as each is a monster truly and thankfully unique to the Galaxy.



Ax'senaea the Thrice-Possessed, the Executrix Primaris of Laodomida

Few beings in the Screaming Vortex can claim to have impressed the Lord of Dark Delights with their conceit, their vanity, and their hubris. Those who do typically earn the jealousy of Slaanesh, not admiration, as such things are beneath the god of indulgence and self-obsession. However, one being caught the eye of Slaanesh and received a nod of true admiration. In her struggle for self-perfection and vainglory, Ax'senaea, called the Thrice-Possessed, damned her people to eternal anguish and impressed even the Prince of Excess.

Long before the days of the Angevin Crusade, while the Calixis sector languished beyond Imperial control, the planet of Laodomida spun its lazy orbit around a star in what is now the Drusus Marches. A system far from any other, Laodomida was an isolated place of planetary intrigue and politics. A world consumed with its own extravagance, the intrigues of the ruling class were usually harmless enough, occasionally devolving into dynastic assassinations and scandals, but rarely all-out warfare. Into this world was born Ax'senaea, last born child of a minor noble family.

By her third decade, the woman who would end her world had spent her entire life among the courts and war-rooms of her powerful kin. Oft-ignored in favour of her more aggressive siblings, Ax'senaea was left to turn inward and ponder the darkest regions of her own soul. Seeing her position, forgotten among her rivals, as little more than a matter for self-improvement, Ax'senaea quickly rose to power by mercilessly removing her competition. In only a few years she had decimated her dynasty and seized control, while keeping its holdings intact. It was not enough for the newly-minted Executrix Primaris, though—she still had too little control over her world, her own psyche.

Believing them to be manifestations of her own skills and knowledge, she collected a court of learned sages and strategists, putting each to death after she mastered their knowledge. Among these men was a secret sorcerer of Chaos. Hoping that it would end in her death, the sorcerer taught Ax'senaea the process by which to bind a powerful servant of Slaanesh to her own soul. His plan—that the despotic woman could not hope to command such a creature—was foiled by her overwhelming will and self-obsession. Though the ritual was long and exhausting, Ax'senaea was able to crush the daemonic entity beneath the weight of her indomitable will.

Now possessed of the power of a Keeper of Secrets, the vain woman murdered the sorcerer and slew the remainder of her cabinet. She used her newly acquired warp-sorcery to exert more direct control over her subjects and her enemies, twisting their minds to her will, driving them mad with desire or jealousy, or eviscerating them with a thought. She continued to abuse the daemon within her for decades, draining its essence to fuel her ambitions and maintain her youth until she consumed its power, banishing it back into the Warp and binding a new Keeper of Secrets within.

Over the following century she consumed a second and third daemon entirely, and plunged her world into utter chaos and conflict. She corrupted the souls of the ruling class the world over and spurred the populace to acts of subservience and adoration, sacrifice and murder, all so that she might prove the control she had over what she saw as her own psyche, her own body and mind. When her world was entirely under her own control, she spread to the other in-system planets, conquering, dominating, and commanding the countless billions touched by her influence. When the third daemon-soul withered and vanished within her, Ax'senaea performed the ritual yet again, hoping to devour the power of a fourth greater daemon. It was then that Slaanesh granted the woman daemonhood, both out of disdain for his most powerful servants and in adoration of the woman who had twisted the minds and souls of billions with her dark perfection.

Pulled into the warp by the possessive jealousy of Ax'senaea herself, its puppet-populace living out her every wicked excess, Laodomida now spins aimlessly through the warp, a world re-formed daily by the fickle whims of its insane mistress. Despite the gifts of the Prince of Pleasure, Ax'senaea remains mad, consumed by her own self-obsession and solipsism. Her deranged mind has now turned to the beings of the warp, and to her mad eyes they are simply rebellious aspects of her nature, needing to be controlled as much as any world in realspace.

Ax'senaea (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
74	67	59 [11]	62 [14]	81 [12]	57	64	69	76	95

Movement: 14/28/56/112 **Wounds:** 105
Armour: Flesh-fused Power Armour (8 All but Head)
Total TB: 14
Skills: Athletics (S), Dodge (Ag) +10, Intimidate (S) +10, Parry (WS), Survival (Per).
Talents: Ambidextrous, Combat Master, Die Hard, Disturbing Voice, Hard Target, Iron Jaw, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Preternatural Speed, Psy Rating (6), Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (+3), Dark Sight, Deadly Natural Weapons, Fear (3), Size (6), Unnatural Agility (+4), Unnatural Strength (+6), Unnatural Toughness (+5), Warp Instability.
Weapons: Claws (2d10+8 R, Pen 0; Tearing), Whip of Perverse Agony (1d10+8 R; Pen 3; Flexible, Razor Sharp, Special†).
Favoured by Slaanesh: Ax'senaea has access to any Slaanesh psychic power, and may use them as a Daemonic psyker.
Subjugation at First Sight: Anyone who looks upon Ax'senaea is so taken with her majesty that they must defend her. Anyone who looks upon her must make an **Easy (+20) Willpower Test** or be unable to move as they stare upon Ax'senaea in dumbstruck awe. If they fail by more than two degrees of failure, they immediately move to defend Ax'senaea against any attackers. When attempting to fight Ax'senaea, it is advisable that one keep their eyes closed.

†The Whip of Perverse Agony makes Lightning Attacks at a +10 bonus, rather than a –10 penalty. Ax'senaea may make melee attacks against anyone within 3 meters using the whip.

Heretics

Among the masses of mankind there are those desperate enough, power hungry enough, or hopeless enough to turn away from all they are taught and beseech the Dark Powers for aid and succour. Many do so without ever realising the import of their actions, knowing little to nothing of the forces with which they truck. Others face the darkness with open eyes, fully aware of what they do and embracing their corruption. Indeed, there are even those who were touched by Chaos before they were even born, brought into the galaxy bearing the malignant mark of the warp.

Mankind as a whole fears these men and women and declares them traitors and heretics. Hunted by the Imperium and reviled by the masses of humanity, many of those who embrace Chaos shroud themselves in secrecy and deceit while others rise up against the forces of the Imperium and lead great rebellions and revolutions throughout human controlled space. Still others seek out the maddening tumult of the warp, so they might serve their gods directly. Only a rare few achieve greatness in the service of the Chaos gods, but those who do are beings to be feared. These power-hungry individuals are willing to do anything or sacrifice anyone to attain their goals and please their dark masters.

Cult Zealot

The lowliest of mortal worshippers of the Chaos gods, but also the most numerous, are the members of the secretive cults throughout the Imperium. Found among nearly every strata of Imperial society, few suspect their true motivations. These wretched cowards embrace the darkness inwardly while performing the duties of their regular life unchanged, refusing to make their twisted faith known for fear of torture and death. When discovered, their true devotion exposed for all to see, these vile souls are driven mad by the prospect of the purge which awaits them, doing whatever it takes to flee if possible or, if not, to silence those who know their secret.

Coming as they do from nearly any level of Imperial station, cultists bring a variety of arms to bear. When confronted directly, they use whatever they have at their disposal to protect themselves and fulfil the will of their gods. Many cultists possess a fanatical devotion to their patron deity and would rather sacrifice themselves than see their master's plans foiled.

Cult Zealot (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
26	24	28	31	27	22	31	24	2	2	-	-

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 8
Armour: Flak Vest (3 Chest) **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Deceive (Fel), Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) (Int), Forbidden Lore (Heresy) (Int), Intimidate (S).
Talents: Double Team, Unremarkable.
Weapons: Makeshift Sword (1d10+2 R; Pen 0; Unbalanced), Stub Automatic (Psitol; 30m; 1d10+3 I, Pen 0, S/3/-, Clip 9, Reload Full).
Gear: Small Charm, cheap clothes or unwashed robes, 2 clips.

Mutant Devotee

Despite their best efforts, the powers of the Imperium are unable to curb the forces of Chaos from acting on the masses of humanity. Throughout the whole of humankind, twisted creatures exist, the result of Chaos' manipulations. Primarily found in the lower levels of Imperial society, these mutants scrape by in an existence both reviled and tenuous. Many such "twists," as they are often called by their betters, embrace their warped form, believing themselves true children of Chaos and devoting themselves to the will of the dark gods out of desperation and despair. Many cults and traitor militia include mutants such as these, filling out the rank and file, as well as being utilised as shock troopers thanks to their hearty and resilient forms.

The majority of these mutants are little more than men with twisted and malformed limbs and visages, though some are truly horrific beings, blessed with the worst mutations the nightmare intelligence of the warp can offer. These creatures might possess snapping claws, thickened, chitinous hides, vestigial limbs and eyes, lashing, venomous tails and tongues, or worse. Rhyme and reason play no part in the shaping of these wretched creatures and the possible forms are limitless. Many bear arms in the service of their masters, though without exception these are makeshift and shoddy.

Mutant Devotee (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
36	22	42	5 34	21	18	23	22	1	3	-	-

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 12
Armour: Tough Hide (2 All) **Total TB:** 5
Skills: Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) (Int), Forbidden Lore (Heresy) (Int), Intimidate (S), Parry (WS).
Talents: Frenzy, Lightning Attack†.
Traits: Natural Weapons, Natural Armour (2 All), Unnatural Toughness (+2).
Weapons: Chitinous Appendage (1d10+6 I; Pen 0; Primitive [9]) or Venamous Barb (1d10+4 R; Pen 3; Primitive [8] Toxic), Shoddy Shotgun (Basic; 20m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 6; Reload Full; Innacurate; Scatter, Unreliable).
Gear: Foul meat, fouled clothing, rope belt, 2d10 shotgun shells.
†Note that a Mutant Devotee may not make a Swift Attack.

Cursed Oracle

The gods of Chaos are unpredictable with their gifts, and while some may seem the greatest of blessings, their reality may be a foul curse. It is well known that psykers possess abilities which both allow them access to the powers of the warp and put both their soul and sanity at risk. Occasionally, a chaos psyker will be given a truly magnificent gift, but one few mortals are capable of handling—glimpses into the strands of future fate. Such knowledge can unravel even the strongest mind and those blessed with this gift are often driven mad by it. Despite this, their insane mutterings come to pass with relative frequency and few can deny the power of their knowledge. If discovered by a more powerful source, these babbling mystics are often made into advisers and their powers channelled to direct the actions of their new master.

In addition to their foresight, being so blessedly open a vessel to the powers of Chaos grants these oracles impressive psychic abilities. In the rare case that an oracle masters his visions without being driven mad, they are a truly fearsome force, utilising their psychic powers to direct the course of entire empires.

Cursed Oracle (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
28	34	38	36	35	45	38	49	3	3	0	7

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 12
Armour: Reinforced Robes (3 All but Head) **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Forbidden Lore (Daemonology, Heresy) (Int), Intimidate (S), Parry (WS), Psyniscience (WP) +10.
Talents: Psy Rating 4, Strong Minded, Warp Sense.
Weapons: Sword (1d10+3 R, Pen 0).
Psychic Powers: Doombolt, Precognition, Precognitive Dodge, Glimpse.

Fallen Demagogue

Among the teeming masses of the Imperium, it is the rare man who walks a lighted path. Ignorance is a virtue and knowledge only breeds doubt. For citizens of the Imperium, the words of a powerful orator are worth far more than enlightenment and whole crusades have begun on the passionate words of a blazing zealot. That the populace of the Imperium is so easily swayed by such speeches is both a blessing and a curse, for such zealotry can easily be turned against mankind. When a great persuader of men falls from his standing within the Imperium to the worship of the dark powers, he becomes a powerful force for his new masters, fomenting rebellion and sedition throughout entire systems.

When bolstered by the powers of Chaos, these agitators become forces of change, infecting the minds of their listeners with visions of glorious anarchy and destruction. Demagogues command the fanatical loyalty of dozens, if not thousands, of devotees, each of whom would rush headlong into the flame should he merely suggest it. This level of control can be far more dangerous than even the most powerful weaponry or sorcery, and few of the great rebellions and heresies throughout Imperial history have come to pass without the igniting spark of such instigators. However, only the most cunning agitators can provoke the masses from behind the scenes, inspiring chaos and rebellion in their followers while remaining hidden from the burning gaze of the Inquisition.

Fallen Demagogue (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
32	41	40	40	36	45	33	47	5 (8)	2	3

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 35
Armour: Xenos Mesh (4 all) **Total TB:** 4
Skills: Awareness (Per), Commerce (Fel) +10, Charm +20, Command (Fel)+20, Common Lore (Daemonology, The Warp) (Int), Dodge (Ag), Intimidate (S) +10, Interrogation (WP)+10 Parry (WS).
Talents: Air of Authority. Demagogue, Inspire Wrath, Hatred (Any)
Traits: Unnatural Fellowship (+3), Fear (1).
Weapons: Xenos Altered Pistol (Pistol; 30m; S/3/–; 1d10+5 E; Pen 4; Clip 20; Reload 2Full), Barbed Neural Whip (1d10+5; Pen 4; Flexible, Shocking, Tearing).
Gear: 1d10x1000 Thrones, heretical tracts, countless followers, 3 clips for pistol.
My Dear Child: The Fallen Demagogue commands followers with unswerving loyalty, their obedience assured unto death. The Fallen Demagogue may gently rebuke those under his command with but a word, causing 1 Wound to each (roll once for all those affected, Hordes suffer 1d5 Magnitude damage instead). Those so rebuked are immune to Fear (3) and lower, and Pinning.
Defend Me!: Whenever the Fallen Demagogue is targeted by a ranged attack, he may make a **Challenging (+0) Fellowship Test.** On a success, one ally within 3 metres moves up to 3 metres to intercept the attack and becomes the target instead.
Minions: The Fallen Demagogue is always accompanied by 1d10+10 Mutant Devotees or equivalent Troops, as well as a Magnitude 50 Horde of Cult Zealots. The GM may provide more competent minions as the situation warrants.

Apostate Paragon

A fiery demagogue might turn the hearts of men from the commands of their masters and a powerful witch might wreak havoc throughout an entire system, but there are few men more able to demoralise an entire people than a hero turned traitor. The Imperium has its fair share of heroes—fighting men and women whose grit and daring have foiled evil, crushed rebellion, and spread the dominion of man through the stars. Stories of such figures are told throughout the Imperium, and local heroes gain the stature of saints among the people of their system. These heroes are often said to be without flaw, peerless in their devotion to mankind and above reproach. Despite the stories of their heroics, all men have weaknesses; all men have desires and dark dreams. It is just these sorts of men whom the powers of Chaos most enjoy preying upon, twisting their sense of pride and self-aggrandisement until they are little more than slaves to their own jealous ambitions. Figures such as Horus and Goge Vandire still stand in the minds of the populace, sewing doubt and paranoia to counter the hope and faith in such heroes.

Prior to their fall, figures of such reputation and standing are afforded every luxury. When they finally turn on their one-time allies, they often bring the full might of those resources to bear, wielding mighty weaponry and armour against their new foes. These paragons of war match skill and armament with the gifts granted them by their new masters.

Apostate Paragon (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
48 (2)	48	53 (7)	42 (5)	40	34	38	50	4	0	4	0

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 35
Armour: Light Power Armour (7 All) **Total TB:** 5

Skills: Athletics (S), Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Command (Fel) +30, Dodge (Ag), Intimidate (S) +20, Parry (WS) +20, Survival (Per).
Talents: Blademaster, Combat Master, Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Swift Attack.
Traits: Unnatural Strength (2), Unnatural Toughness (1), Unnatural Weapon Skill (2)
Weapons: Chainglaive (1d10+12 R, Pen 5, Tearing), Bolter (Basic; 100m; S/3/–; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 24; Reload Full; Tearing)
Gear: 5 bolter clips, any items of Extremely Rare scarcity or lower, as appropriate to the character. May possess a voidship.

Tech-Assassins

The tools of war crafted by the Adeptus Mechanicus vary wildly, including such extremes as tiny weapons the size of a single finger to massive Ordinatus engines capable of levelling entire mountains. Those Magi who have turned their backs upon the orthodox Cult Mechanicus are often even more inventive. The designs of these traitor tech-heretics often create bizarre fusions of technology and the corruptive energies of the warp. In the Screaming Vortex, one such invention is the Tech-Assassin. No two Tech-Assassins are alike; each one is an individual hand-crafted masterpiece, tuned and optimized for a particular style of murder. Because of their specialised nature, Tech-Assassins are subtle but significant factors on the battlefield. They scout ahead of the main force, ghosting into an enemy position to remove an important leader or sabotage a vital resource.

On the half-world of the Hollows, the Dark Magos known only as the Exospectre has spent centuries perfecting his preferred weapon of choice: the Maestro pattern Tech-Assassin. These swift and lethal servants are his most fiendish designs and are armed with all manner of unspeakably lethal weapons.

Maestro pattern Tech-Assassins are gaunt, spindly creatures, swathed in ragged robes and notable for the cruel gleam of their tripartite hunter-optics from beneath their hoods. Far more autonomous and capable than any servitor, Tech-Assassins ceaselessly hunt their prey once on the trail of their assigned target. A Tech-Assassin may lie in wait for weeks at a time, patiently motionless, until the chosen enemy is detected by inbuilt augur arrays. Only then does the creature explode into motion, its robes flaring like the wings of a raptor as it stoops to the strike. Gravity plates allow the Tech-Assassin to move effortlessly over nearly any terrain. Its torso contains a powerful quantum field generator that shrouds the creature from detection, confounding tech-sensors and confusing the naked eye with shifting patterns that blend with its surroundings.

The Maestro pattern's hands contain a series of serrated, retractable power-blades and it is usually equipped with an MIU-linked shoulder-mounted hellgun. However, the most dangerous weapon employed by the Maestro pattern is the tesseract bomb. When activated, this devastating weapon shunts a portion of its surroundings into a pocket dimension, violently disrupting the molecular structure of anything caught in the blast.

In addition, the Exospectre commonly installs a command circuit into the Maestro pattern and accompanies it with a pack of hell-constructs named Velocireapers. These beast-like creatures are a form of lobo-chipped servitor, built around



a sophisticated sentinel array and armed with razor-sharp fangs and claws. Savage and feral, the Velocireapers must be precisely controlled by the Tech-Assassin's command circuit lest they frenzy and attack anyone nearby.

Tech-Assassin (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
50	50	42 (8)	42 (8)	41	35	43	36	10	10

Movement: 6/12/18/36 **Wounds:** 35
Armour: Machine Trait (6 All) **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +20, Athletics (S) +20, Awareness (Per) +20, Common Lore (Tech, War) (Int), Dodge (Ag) +20, Forbidden Lore (Adeptus Mechanicus, the Warp) (Int), Interrogation (WP), Logic (Int), Linguistics (Techna-lingua) (Int), Navigation (Surface) (Int), Operate (Aeronautica) (Ag), Parry (WS), Scrutiny (Per), Security (Int) +10, Stealth (Ag) +20, Survival (Per) +10, Tech-Use (Int) +20.
Talents: Ambidextrous, Assassin Strike, Blade Dancer, Cold Hearted, Combat Master, Deadeye Shot, Disturbing Voice, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Rapid Reaction, Step Aside, Swift Attack, Total Recall, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee), Whirlwind of Death.
Traits: Dark-sight, Fear 1 (Disturbing), Hoverer (6), Machine (6), Mechanicus Implants, Unnatural Strength (+4), Unnatural Toughness (+4).
Armour: None (All 6).

Infamy, Fate Points, and Non-Heretics

In previous Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay games, the role of Infamy Points was taken by a similar mechanic called Fate Points. In **Black Crusade**, certain Imperial Characters do possess Infamy Characteristics (they are infamous to the Heretics, if nothing else!). However, instead of Infamy Points, they have Fate Points, signs of the God-Emperor's blessing. These work mechanically the same as Infamy Points, and may be used as if they were Infamy Points at level 2 (providing the +1 Degree of Success, 1d5+1 wounds, or re-roll failed Tests). In addition, NPCs with Fate Points may permanently lose one Fate Point (rather than burn Infamy) to survive otherwise deadly situations—although GMs should be wary of using this if it doesn't fit the plot!

Infamy for NPCs

Certain powerful NPCs possess Infamy, representing their particularly potent abilities and dread reputations. An NPC with Infamy has Infamy Points equal to his Infamy Bonus, and may be used as if they were Infamy Points at Level 2.

Weapons: Two Implanted power-blades (1d10+8 E; Pen 8; Balanced, Power Field), MIU-linked shoulder-mounted hellgun (Basic; 50m; S/2/–; 1d10+4 E; Pen 7; Clip 40; Reload Full; Reliable, Tearing), Tesseract Bomb (Thrown; 24m; S/–/–; 4d10+6 E; Pen 6; Clip –; Reload –; Blast [5], Concussive [2], Crippling [1d5]).
Cybernetics: Black blood, blade-tines, embedded auspex, interface port, flesh replenishment.
Gear: Ragged robes, multi-key, bandolier with three tesseract bombs, 1d5+2 Velocireapers, 4 clips for Hellgun.
Quantum Field: The quantum field makes the Tech-Assassin difficult to locate or target for ranged fire. The Tech-Assassin gains a +20 bonus to all Stealth Tests and may make a Stealth Test even whilst being directly observed. In addition, all ranged attacks against the Tech-assassin suffer a -20 penalty.

Velocireaper (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
45	-	50	45[6]	50	14	31	18	-	-

Movement: 10/20/30/60 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: Machine Trait (4 All) **Total TB:** 6
Skills: Athletics (S) +20, Awareness (Per) +20, Dodge (Ag) +30, Stealth (Ag) +20, Survival (Per) +20.
Talents: Assassin Strike, Hard Target, Lightning Reflexes, Swift Attack.
Traits: Bestial, Blind, Deadly Natural Weapons (Fangs and Claws), Quadruped, Machine (4), Unnatural Toughness (2).
Armour: None (All 4).
Weapons: Fangs and claws (1d10+5 R; Pen 4; Razor Sharp).
Hollows Pattern Sentinel Array: This device allows the user to "see" in all directions, and may detect targets through walls, undergrowth, trees, or other obstructions, or in darkness or other conditions when normal sight would be obscured. Solid walls at least one metre thick (and without openings) block the Array. This counteracts the Blind Trait, but the Array may be targeted with a Called Shot Action. If the Called Shot hits and deals damage, the Velocireaper reverts to being blind.

The user may also use the array to "lock on" to a specific target as a Half Action (or he may load a specific bio-metric readout into the Array beforehand, in which case the Array locks on automatically). The Array may track that target up to 100 metres away and always distinguishes between it and other targets.

Forces of the Imperium

"Long have the snivelling masses of mankind confounded our plans. Not today, my friends. Today the teeming billions of this world will be our instrument of victory!"

–Greval Truchalt, Cult Magos.

The Imperium of man is a behemoth of human achievement. The teeming hordes of mankind are so vast that it can appear that the xenos races and devotees of Chaos border extinction by comparison. Due to their numbers alone, mankind is a grave threat to the plots of the denizens of the warp. The forces arrayed against the acolytes of Chaos run the gamut from lowly civilian to mighty Grey Knight and the agents of the Dark Powers are beset on all sides within the Imperium.

Administratum Adept

A galactic empire as vast as the Imperium of Man is not a simple thing to manage. The Administratum exists on nearly all of the billions of planets under Imperial control, collecting taxes, managing resources, and conducting near-infinite number of other administrative duties each world requires for support and inclusion in the Imperial whole. For these tasks, there are hundreds of thousands of adepts in the employ of the Administratum on each planet. These adepts are largely collectors and counters and certainly not warriors. When confronted with violence, flight and panic are the most common response.

Administratum Adept (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
22	2	3	24	34	26	29	25	22	2	3	-	-

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 5
Armour: None **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Linguistics (Int)+10, Trade (any one).
Talents: None.
Weapons: Unarmed (1d5–1 I; Pen 0).
Gear: Robes, data-slate, 1d5 Thrones, auto-quill, parchment.

Imperial Guardsman

The largest military force in the Imperium, spanning the breadth of human-space, is the Imperial Guard. This behemoth of manpower and military might is responsible for countless military victories throughout the centuries. Employing massed infantry, armoured companies of battle tanks, and barrages of artillery, the Imperial Guard is deployed to grind the enemies of man out of existence. The Imperial Guard is not a precision military instrument; it is a blunt hammer with which the Adeptus Terra crushes its foes. The sheer numbers involved in an Imperial Guard engagement are often staggering, hundreds of thousands of soldiers and support personnel directed to one purpose in any given theatre of war.

Most Guardsmen are soldiers trained with a baseline of combat skills, though veterans of even a single campaign are treated with incredible respect by their peers. Many Guardsman platoons are made up of citizen-conscripts or even penal world inmates sentenced to years of service for their crimes. All told, the average Guardsman is a mediocre soldier at best, armed with the common lasgun or autogun and armoured in inexpensive flak armour. Their training affords them the bare minimum in battlefield manoeuvres and coordination, though when faced en masse, this is usually all that is needed for victory.

Imperial Guardsman (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
35	35	35	35	35	28	31	25	25	- -

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Armour: Guard Flak Armour (4 All) **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Awareness (Per), Athletics (S), Common Lore (Imperium, War) (Int), Dodge (Ag), Operate (Ground) (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Stealth (Ag).
Talents: Nerves of Steel, Rapid Reload, Takedown.
Weapons: Guard Issue Lasgun (Basic; 100m; S/3/—; 1d10+3 E; Pen 0; Clip 60; Reload Full, Variable Setting), Combat Knife (1d5+3; Pen 0), 3 Frag Grenades (Thrown; 9m; S/–/–; 2d10 X; Pen 0; Clip 1; Reload —; Blast [3]).
Gear: Guard Uniform, micro-bead, respirator, 4 clips for lasgun, Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer.

Bounty Hunter

The members of the Inquisition guard their secrets jealously for fear that the knowledge of what horrors they face may corrupt the hearts and distort the minds of lesser men. Despite this, there are those who have seen the darkness and faced corruption willingly and come out the other side unscathed. The threats faced by the Calixian Inquisition are beyond counting and there are vast stretches of void where the official agents of the Inquisition hold no sway. There comes a time when the services of such men is needed for the safety of the masses. When a rogue psyker or fugitive heretic flees the bounds of Imperial space into the frontier regions of the galaxy, the agents of the Calixian Inquisition, few as they are, are likely to employ an experienced bounty hunter to retrieve them.

There are a near-infinite variety of Bounty Hunters in the galaxy, from cold-hearted individuals who work only for Thrones and kill anyone who stands in their way, to doughty and reliable veterans who behave according to their own code of honour. They work for an equally varied assortment of clients, from the Imperial Adeptus and planetary nobles to merchant factors and even xenos agents. However, to be successful in a dangerous profession, each must have proven themselves capable of dangerous and potentially fatal tasks. The bounty hunters employed by the Ordo Calixis are often reliable and resolute, willing to use whatever means, methods, and tactics necessary to recover their prey and bring them to the fearsome punishments of their Inquisitorial masters within the Tricorn Palace on Scintilla. Existing on the fringes of Imperial law, bounty hunters of this sort may possess strange and fantastic technology, sometimes even of xenos origin. It is for this reason that the services of such men are typically employed by those Inquisitors of a more radical bent.

Bounty Hunter (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
41	48	41	41	45	36	39	38	36	- -

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 18
Armour: Light Carapace (5 All) **Total TB:** 4
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Dodge (Ag)+20, Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Inquiry (Fel), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S) +10, Medicae (Int), Parry (WS) +20, Security (Ag), Shadowing (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tracking (Int).
Talents: Deadeye Shot, Disarm, Hip Shooting, Quick Draw, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, Rapid Reaction, Sharpshooter, Swift Attack, Takedown, Unarmed Warrior.
Weapons: Chainsword (1d10+6 R; Pen 2; Balanced, Tearing), Semi-Auto Hand Cannon with amputator rounds (Pistol, 35m; S/2/–; 1d10+6 I; Pen 2; Clip 8; Reload 2 Full) or Splinter Rifle (Basic; 60m; S/3/5; 1d10+2 R; Pen 3; Clip 200; Reload 2 Full; Toxic [4]), 3 Stun Grenades (Thrown; 12m; S/–/–; —; Blast [3], Concussive [2]).



Gear: 3 clips for ranged weapon, respirator, manacles, data slate of bounties, Good Craftsmanship bionic eye.
Low Blow: Bounty Hunters are practiced in hitting their opponents in their vitals. Whenever they make a Called Shot Attack, their attack gains the Razor Sharp and Tearing Qualities (if it didn't have them already).

Grey Knight

As the Space Marines are angels of death, ready to face any threat to mankind, the Grey Knights are the shining paladins who defend the Imperium against the daemon, the stalwart bulwark against the darkness of the warp. Selected from only the most promising psykers taken by the Black Ships of the Inquisition, the Grey Knights are Space Marines said to have received their geneseed directly from the Emperor himself. Each is a holy warrior and psyker as far beyond the Space Marines as those mighty warriors are beyond mankind. To the common man, the Grey Knights are beyond legend, no folk tales are told to ease the cares of a fearful populace. Few ever have the chance to witness these mythic figures in the flesh and fewer still live to tell the tale. Amongst the tides of the Immaterium, the Grey Knight is a feared legend, terrifying those to whom fear is otherwise unknown.

Few can boast the arsenal of a Grey Knight, as they are provided with the finest equipment and supported by the multitude of Forge worlds throughout the Imperium. Each member of the Grey Knights wades into battle in the finest suits of Aegis Terminator Armour, each a masterpiece of armour-craft and a holy relic of the Inquisition. Each suit is adorned with holy amulets, anointed with sacred oils, carved with arcane runes of warding, and laced through with psycho-conductive latticework. In this way, the wearer is girded against the attacks of psykers and warp-spawn in addition to the incredible physical resilience offered by the ceramite and adamantine shell. The sacred incense which burns in the braziers hung from the armour's massive frame is cloying and heady, disorienting to daemons and witches alike. The Nemesis Force Weapons of the Grey Knights are nearly unique throughout the Imperium and feared throughout the warp. These psychically-attuned weapons are fashioned in all manner of shapes and vicious forms, and each glows with fierce light and is capable of cleaving through even the thickest daemon-hide. Each Grey Knight is also armed with a blessed storm bolter, often loaded with psycho-reactive shells which shred the resilient husks of daemonic entities.

Grey Knight Space Marine (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
55	45	75[11]	45[8]	40	43	42	56	40	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 25
Armour: Terminator Armour (14 All) **Total TB:** 8
Fate Points: 2
Skills: Athletics (S), Awareness (Per)+10, Common Lore (War), Dodge(Ag)+20, Forbidden Lore (Adeptus Astartes), Linguistics, Navigate (Surface), Operate (Surface), Parry (WS)+20, Psyniscience (Per) +20.
Talents: Ambidextrous, Bulging Biceps, Hatred (Daemons), Hatred (Chaos Space Marines), Heightened Senses (Hearing, Sight), Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Resistance (Cold, Heat, Poisons, Psychic Powers), Psy Rating 2, Swift Attack, True Grit, Unarmed Warrior.
Traits: Amphibious, Unnatural Strength (4), Unnatural Toughness (4).
Weapons: Astartes Storm Bolter (100m, S/2/4, 1d10+9 X, Pen 4, Clip 60, Rld Full, Reliable, Tearing, Storm), Nemesis Force Sword (1d10+13 R, Pen 8, Balanced, Force, Sanctified).
Gear: 5 Bolter Clips, Force Field (Field Rating 35).
Astartes Enhancements: Space Marines have all the organs and other enhancements of Chaos Space Marines found on page 49.
Grey Knight Psyker: Grey Knights are psykers, and have access to Psychic Powers from the Divination and Telepathy Disciplines as the GM sees fit. In general they do not use offensive Psychic Powers from these Disciplines, relying on their Force Weapons and Nemesis Hammer Hand.
Nemesis Hammer Hand: The Pysker hardens his muscles and brings down the wrath of the God-Emperor of Mankind in powerful strikes with his melee weapon. This is a Psychic Power that requires a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**, requires a Half Action to manifest and is a Free Action to Sustain. While active, this power adds 4 to the Unnatural Strength trait of any Grey Knight allies within 10 metres.
†The Grey Knight's Strength includes the +30 Strength from the Grey Knight's Terminator Armour.



Ministorum Cleric

Throughout the Imperium, men and women toil in the service of the corpse-emperor, committing themselves to lifelong tasks which inwardly they know to be meaningless. The despair and contempt this futility causes among the masses is only blunted by the vain words of hope and immortality preached by the members of the Ministorum, the monolithic institution devoted to the worship and praise of the Emperor of Man. Tending the souls of so many billions of Imperial citizens is no easy matter and the Ministorum is a spiritual and administrative juggernaut as a result. The clerics who perform the daily rites and prayers in the name of their corpse-emperor are devoted slaves to their church, men and women whose faith is unwavering and contagious. These clerics fill a number of roles from planetary minister, to guard or naval chaplain, to frontier missionary. Their theological rhetoric can stir the masses from the desperate toil of Imperial life and reassure them of the purpose of their work and the glory of the Emperor. Their prayers in battle are a blow to the forces of Chaos, and their faith makes them fearless before the darkness.

Ministorum Cleric (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
38	24	30	41	29	29	25	22	4	0	-	-

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 14
Armour: Chain Reinforced Robes (3 All except Head)
Total TB: 4
Skills: Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Parry (WS) +10, Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Air of Authority, Demagogue, Hatred (Chaos Space Marines, Daemons, Heretics, Mutants, Psykers, Renegades, Xenos [All], Unshakable Faith (counts as Unshakable Will).
Weapons: Chainsword (1d10+5 R; Pen 3; Balanced, Tearing), Shotgun (Basic; 30m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 8; Reload 2 Full; Scatter).
Gear: Ecclesiastical robes, prayer book.

Confessor

On the field of battle, the soldiers of the Imperium are faced with horrors which can drive a jaded mind mad, twist a courageous heart to cowardice and wrench a faithful man to heresy. To guard against such terrors, the servants of the corpse-emperor employ men and women whose devotion to the Ecclesiarchy is fanatical in the extreme. Though they are also clerics of the Adeptus Ministorum, these champions of the faith inspire their charges to acts of incredible daring and fervour, their righteousness acting as a beacon of hope to those around them. Their prayers gird their followers against physical harm from the creatures of the warp and the psychic lashing of errant witches.

As a sign of their courage and faith, these spiritual soldiers of the Imperium wield powerful melee weaponry, rushing headlong into the enemy, firm in their belief that the Emperor will guard them from harm. Indeed, the prayers and rites of these blessed warriors spell doom for the daemons of the warp, their blades wreathed in holy flames and their souls armoured with words of faith. Believing battle to be an act of true faith, these faithful servants anoint their weapons with the shed blood of the enemies of mankind and lay low those who would harm the men and women in their care.

Confessors are Elite foes that use the Ministorum Cleric Profile, with the following changes:

- Increase WS and S by +10.
- Add Dodge (Ag) +20 to their Skill List.
- Add Blademaster, Crushing Blow, Frenzy, Iron Jaw and Resistance (Psychic Powers) to their Talent List. The bonus for Crushing Blow is included in their weapon profile.
- Replace their weapons with a Chain Greatsword (2d10+8 R; Pen 3; Sanctified, Tearing, Unwieldy).

In addition, Confessors gain the following special ability:

Litany of Hate: The Confessor's loud condemnation of all things Anti-Imperial allow him to share his Hatred with those around him. So long as he is able to speak, all allies within earshot count as possessing all of his Hatred Talents.

Space Marine

The most impressive fighting force of the Imperium of Man, these Angels of Death are the most feared warriors in human-controlled space. The corpse-emperor created the Space Marines to take his Great Crusade to the farthest reaches of the galaxy, to push the boundaries of human-space far beyond anything attempted previously. To lead these soldiers in their eternal warfare, the Emperor created the Primarchs, clones of his own genetic material and warriors of mythic proportions. The Space Marines themselves are genetically modified super-soldiers whose genes have been enhanced by those of the Primarchs. As a result, Space Marines possess incredible strength, vigour, and reflexes. In addition, they have endured rigourous psycho-conditioning to make them fearless shock troops, merciless and unquestioningly loyal to their Imperial masters. Now the Space Marines, bereft of their Primarchs and their Emperor, their legions fractured into mere chapters, hopelessly guard the floundering masses of humanity from the teeming threats of the Void.

In addition to their training and genetic modifications, the Space Marines are outfitted with the finest wargear, weaponry, and armour. Their iconic power armour is the epitome of Imperial armour-craft. Worn as a second skin, the Space Marine moves swiftly and comfortably in his armour, as if it were little more than sackcloth. The reverence with which the Space Marines hold the boltgun is a sign of their intensive training. The boltgun is an indispensable tool in the hands of the Space Marine, used to protect mankind from the manifold dangers of the galaxy, without as well as within. The Angels of Death are skilled in all manner of warfare, in every theatre of war, in every style of engagement. They toil endlessly within their fortress monasteries and battle barges to prepare themselves for every possible combat scenario. As a result, the Space Marines are adaptable in the extreme, capable of changing their tactics at a moment's notice to overcome any situation. There are few threats more dangerous to a Heretic than a Space Marine.

Space Marine (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
45	45	65 (10)	45 (8)	40	40	42	44	40	-	-

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: Power Armour (8 All, 10 Body) **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Athletics, Awareness, Common Lore (War), Dodge, Forbidden Lore (Adeptus Astartes, War), Linguistics, Navigate (Surface), Operate (Surface), Parry.
Talents: Ambidextrous, Bulging Biceps, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Sight), Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Resistance (Cold, Heat, Poisons), True Grit, Unarmed Warrior.
Traits: Amphibious, Unnatural Strength (4), Unnatural Toughness (4).
Weapons: Astartes Bolter (100m, S/3/–, 1d10+9 X, Pen 4, Clip 24, Rld Full, Reliable, Tearing), Astartes Bolt Pistol (100m, S/2/–, 1d10+9 X, Pen 4, Clip 8, Rld Full, Reliable, Tearing), Astartes Combat Knife (1d10 +8R, Pen 0).
Gear: Four Bolt Clips.
Astartes Enhancements: Space Marines have all the organs and enhancements of Chaos Space Marines found on page 49.
†Strength includes the bonus from the Space Marine's Power Armour.

Inquisitor Victoria Aldrich

Victoria Aldrich has never been a woman to take her work lightly. Even as a lowly acolyte, Aldrich was well known for her verve and vigour. Her master, a venerable and cunning Ordo Hereticus Inquisitor named Yusuph Trevar, brought Aldrich under his wing specifically for the enthusiasm with which she approached the job of rooting out heretical and daemonic infestation. Trevar had spent his centuries-long career battling the horrors of the warp with his wits, outsmarting his foes, and annihilating them with arcane sciences and his immense psychic power. A zealot like Aldrich was the perfect counterbalance to his methodical trickery. After years in Trevar's service, the bombastic and learned acolyte had learned much of her master's ways and tempered her enthusiasm with cunning and planning, while retaining the gusto which was her hallmark. Aldrich is now an Inquisitor in her own right with over a century of service to her credit. She continues to hound the spawn of Chaos with energy and ardour, bringing the full weight of her Inquisitorial position and her substantial personal prowess to bear on the enemies of man.

As an upfront sort of Inquisitor, avoiding the secretive tactics of the skulking investigators among her brethren, Aldrich enjoys the full support of her Ordo and regularly avails herself of their armouries. While only rarely necessary, Victoria will not shirk from invoking the Malleus Remit to conscript the aid of whatever military forces and requisition whatever armament necessary to halt a warp incursion or lay waste to a daemonic beachhead in realspace. Though she spends much of her time pursuing and eliminating cults and foul plots against the forces of the Ruinous Powers on Imperial worlds, she has never shirked from battling the malefic and daemonic directly. On the battlefield, Aldrich is an intimidating figure. A tall woman, just under two metres, she wears her characteristic storm-coat (concealing protective mesh armour and other, more esoteric defences) and wielding a broad power-spear—a powerful relic of a bygone age—Aldrich moves with confident purpose in battle. Snapping orders over the hiss of her plasma pistol, she charges into the ranks of Hellblade-wielding Bloodletters or cavorting Horrors of Tzeentch with abandon, sending them back to the hellish pit from which they were spawned.

Aldrich has survived countless battles against the lesser minions of Chaos, engagements which many say she had no business winning. Aldrich has come to rely on this good fortune, hurling herself into conflicts which seem hopeless, trusting in the Emperor to protect her as she sets about the enemies of the Imperium. Against the more powerful servants of the Dark Powers, Aldrich takes a more pragmatic approach, learned from her one-time master, Trevar. She treats each as a true threat to mankind and gathers as much information as possible about her target, that she may face her foe as well prepared as possible, confronting them with sacred chants, holy weapons, and prayers sure to contain or banish the hellish entity.

Victoria Aldrich (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
58	58	45	45	31	56	57	54	42	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 35
Armour: Concealed Mesh (5 All) **Total TB:** 4
Fate Points: 4
Skills: Athletics (S), Awareness (Per)+10, Command (Fel)+20, Common Lore (War, Imperium, Ecclesiarchy) (Int), Dodge (Ag)+20, Forbidden Lore (Warp, Daemons, Psykers) (Int), Interrogation (WP) +20, Linguistics (Int), Parry (WS)+30, Psyniscience (Per) +20.



Talents: Air of Authority, Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Hatred (Daemons), Iron Discipline, Into the Jaws of Hell, Lightning Attack, Nerves of Steel, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Psy Rating 4, Swift Attack, True Grit.
Weapons: Anointed Plasma Pistol (Pistol; 40m; S/2/—, 1d10+8; Pen 8; Clip 20; Rld 4 Full; Proven 4, Maximal, Sanctified, Never Overheats), The Twice-Blessed Spear (1d10+10 R, Pen 12, Balanced, Force, Sanctified).
Gear: 2 Plasma Pistol Clips, Sanctified Field (Field Rating 50, Overloads on a 01), Inquisitorial Rosette
Psychic Powers: Victoria Aldrich possess all of the psychic powers from the Telekinesis Discipline (see page 225). In addition, she possess the Nemesis Hammer Hand Psychic Power.
Nemesis Hammer Hand: The Pysker hardens her muscles and brings down the wrath of the God-Emperor of Mankind in powerful strikes with her melee weapon. This is a Psychic Power that requires a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**, requires a Half Action to manifest and is a Free Action to Sustain. While active, this power adds 4 to the Unnatural Strength trait of any ally within 10 metres.
Inquisitorial Mandate: Harsh and powerful is the Inquisition, and Victoria Aldrich wields that power as deftly as she wields her spear. As a Free Action or Reaction she may spend one Fate Point to allow all allies benefiting from her Into the Jaws of Hell Talent to make an additional Attack Action during their turn (they may still only make two Half Actions or one Full Action).

Xenos

"Something slumbered in the darkness of that world, something abhorrent, something anathema. That something has stirred; that something has arisen..."

–Harda'al, of the Prophets of the Blighted Path

The galaxy is vast, and filled with far more life than simply humans. Strange races walk beneath alien suns, and terrible xenos assault the Imperium from all sides. One might think that those who have forsake the Imperium may make common cause with the xenos that oppose it, however they would be wrong more often than not. Capricious and unknowable are the ways of the xenos.

Necrons

The Necrons are an immortal legion of metal soldiers, the result of the vilest betrayal and a force of unmitigated destruction. The Imperium as a whole is still ignorant to the threat that looms beneath the surface of worlds dotting the galaxy. These abominations have existed since before mankind and even before the Eldar Empire; it is possible that the Necrons predate any race living today. It is thought that these metal soldiers act under the guidance of more powerful forces and vague reports and pict-recordings have shown enormous ethereal beings of godlike power or tall, stern Necrons bearing long staffs or wearing ragged cloaks.

Stories tell of an ancient race, desperate and dying, which made pacts with these god-beings to ensure their immortality. It is said that among the god-beings there was a peerless trickster, and through his machinations the dying people were trapped in their immortal shells. Since that time, the race lay dormant on their tomb worlds, awaiting a time when they might once again rise to eminence. The few reports which have circulated of attacks by these grave-silent legions depict a foe entirely without mercy or morality. They kill without hesitation and few know the fate of the unfortunate victims who are taken alive. The Disciples of Chaos have long suspected a forgotten force slumbered beneath the surface of worlds scattered throughout the galaxy. To gain command over the secrets of these ancient terrors, some Champions have delved into the silent tombs. None of these ambitious warriors have ever returned.

Scarab

The tiny worker drones of the Necron legions, these metal constructs swarm about the ranks of Necron foot-soldiers, a hovering carpet of living metal ready to rebuild their fallen or reduce their foes to little more than slag. Carried aloft on miniature anti-grav generators, Scarabs are made of the same living metal as the rest of their kind and, as a result, are incredibly resilient for their size. They constantly gather and repair the fallen, including their fellow Scarabs. Combined with their incalculable numbers, this ensures that they are all but impossible to permanently destroy. Their tiny mandibles contain a miniaturised disrupter field which they use to carve their way through enemy armour and dismember their fallen comrades, that they might be reassembled easily. While rather inconsequential individually, their sheer numbers make them a force to be feared on the battlefield, should they turn their attention from repairs.

Scarab (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP		Inf
35	05	10	20	35	05	20	20	05	-	-

Movement: 4/8/16/32 **Wounds:** 40
Armour: Machine Trait (4 All) **Total TB:** 2
Skills: Stealth (Ag) +20.
Talents: Swift Attack
Traits: Hoverer (4), Size (2), Machine (4), Deadly Natural Weapons (Disruptor Field), Swarm.
Weapons: Disruptor Field (2d10+1 R; Pen 1d5, Gauss).
Repair: Scarabs can swarm over Necrons, assisting their reconstruction efforts. Any Scarab Swarm may choose to assist all Necrons within 8 metres in this way as a Full Action, raising the Necron's Regeneration Trait by +5.

Flayed One

While the Necrons themselves may be cold, emotionless warrior machines, they certainly seem to understand the havoc fear can wreak among their enemies. Flayed Ones share a similar chassis to the Warriors, though hunched and fitted with vicious combat blades rather than skeletal hands. They make use of stealth and infiltration to strike deep into enemy lines and commit horrific atrocities among the support and non-combatants, using their bladed fingers to skin their foes. They drape these fresh hides over their living-metal frames, and their ghoulish appearance often breaks the morale of their enemies before the bulk of the forces even arrive. These masters of stealth and close-quarters combat display an agility which seems at odds with their heavy metallic shells, giving credence to the notion that Necron constructs are as much arcana as they are engineering.

Flayed One (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
45	30	45 (8)	45 (8)	25 (4)	15	30	40	15	-	-

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: Machine Trait (6 All) **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Intimidate (S)+10, Logic (Int)+20, Stealth (Ag) +20, Tech-Use (Int)+20.
Talents: Swift Attack.
Traits: Size (5), Machine (6), Unnatural Agility (+2), Unnatural Strength (+4), Unnatural Toughness (+4), Regeneration 5
Weapons: Blades (1d10+8 R; Pen 4; Razor Sharp).

Immortal

The god-beings of the Necrons did not bestow their perverse gifts without forethought and purpose. The legion of living metal they created was shaped with direction and design, each body crafted to a specific end, each soul entombed in steel for a known fate. In this way, the deific creators of the Necrons made an unstoppable army, eternal and devastating. To fill the ranks they made the Warriors. To sustain their forces indefinitely they tasked the chittering Scarabs. To render their enemies little more than lifeless dust on the battlefield they engineered the Immortals. Housing the souls of their favoured devotees within their most brutal constructs, the artifice of the Necron gods created the perfect shock trooper, avatars of devastation and invulnerability.

These towering soldiers of silent death are monuments to the destructive technologies of the Necron legions. Standing over two metres tall, Immortals resemble enormous Necron Warriors with armour and armament to match their incredible size. Their armoured frames can withstand volleys of small arms fire and, given their living metal composition, can shrug off even the mightiest artillery. They carry gauss blasters, large twin-barrelled models of the Warrior's gauss flayer, which can lay waste to entire formations of enemy troops and easily rend the heaviest armour useless. Immortals are also fearsome melee combatants. Armed with cleaving axe-blades mounted at the end of their gauss blasters, their strength, size, and resistance to all but the most vicious killing stroke make them the match of any combatant.

Weapon Quality: Gauss

Gauss weapons are terrifying examples of advanced technology. Gauss weapons generate Zealous Hatred on a 9 or 10, and if they would not deal damage when generating Zealous Hatred, they deal 1d5 Wounds instead of 1 (see page 242). In addition, they generate Zealous Hatred against vehicles on a 9 or 0, even if they do not deal damage.

Immortal (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
30	45	55 (10)	55 (10)	35	40	30	40	15	-	-

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 30
Armour: Machine Trait (8 All) **Total TB:** 10
Skills: Intimidate (S)+10, Logic (Int)+20, Tech-Use (Int)+20.
Talents: Crack Shot.
Traits: Size (5), Machine (8), Unnatural Strength (+5), Unnatural Toughness (+5), Regeneration 5.
Weapons: Guass Blaster (100m, 2d10 E, Pen 5, S/4/—, Gauss). Weapon Blade (1d10+10 R; Pen 2; Unwieldy).

Warrior

The glinting metal skull and skeletal chassis of a Necron Warrior is a bone-chilling sight on the battlefield. The basic trooper of the Necron legions, these warrior-machines are the most ubiquitous Necron form. They are simple in function, but the technology to which they owe their existence is beyond even



the most skilled tech-savant. It has been reported that each individual Warrior is shaped from some sort of self-repairing metallic substance. This material, dubbed "living metal" in official records, is entirely unknown outside the Necrons themselves. This substance is capable of repairing even the most grievous damage, given enough time, and it is not unknown for disabled Necron soldiers to return to a functioning state several times over the course of a single engagement. If entirely disabled, the remains of a Necron construct phase from reality using some sort of powerful teleportation technology. It is postulated that these remains return to a safe location aboard a Necron Tomb Ship for repairs. It is for this reason that no actual remains of Necron technology have ever been found for study.

Another aspect of Necron technology that has been heavily speculated upon is their gauss weaponry. The mainstay weapons technology of the Necrons, the gauss flayer and its derivatives, use arcane sciences to magnetically strip their target of its armour, flesh, and bone, one atom at a time. These horrific devices leave no trace of their victims, literally vaporising them, and work as well on the thick armour of vehicles, buildings, and even bunkers as they do on human flesh—devastating weapons against which there is little protection.

Necron Warrior (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
30	45	45 (8)	45 (8)	25	25	30	40	15	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: Machine Trait (6 All) **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Intimidate (S)+10, Logic (Int)+20, Tech-Use (Int)+20.
Talents: Crack Shot.
Traits: Size (5), Machine (6), Unnatural Strength (+4), Unnatural Toughness (+4), Regeneration 5.
Weapons: Gauss Flayer (Basic; 100m; 1d10+8 E; Pen 3; S/2/—; Clip —; Reload —; Gauss), Weapon Blade (1d10+8 R; Pen 2; Unwieldy).

Tomb Stalker

During their epochs-long dormancy, the god-masters of the Necrons left their sepulchres guarded by silent, tireless machines. Of these great engines, the most fearsome known to the unfortunate masses of mankind is the Tomb Stalker. The Tomb Stalker is an enormous mass of living-metal carapace teeming with flashing legs and possessed of a murderous will. Easily the size of a dozen men, this centipede-like construct makes use of arcane phase-generators, allowing it to stalk the tomb-worlds of its slumbering lords, burrowing through solid ground. It uses its powerful senses to trail its prey from miles away and can sense the frenzied rhythm of a panicked heartbeat through hundreds of metres of solid stone. The Stalker's immense size combines with its natural capacity for regeneration to create a nearly indestructible creature. Even beyond the more common warriors of the Necron legions, these insectoid creatures continue to thrash and fight with deadly ferocity despite damage or dismemberment. The individual segments of the killing-machine seem drawn to one another and will reconstitute themselves to reform the whole should they come back into contact.



Erupting from the earth itself, the Tomb Stalker attacks without warning, barrelling into its prey and bringing its mass and multitude of limbs to bear. Should its targets escape its terrifying grasp, the tomb stalker possesses two gauss-flayers, making it a fearsome combatant at range as well as in close-quarters. Only encountered on the tomb worlds of the Necrons, these constructs are the fearsome guardians of their sepulchres. The stalkers have been likewise tasked for the battlefield. Their phasing capability pairs with their unerring sensor-array to make them fearsome hunters of important personnel. Given its massive size, the Tomb Stalker is capable of rending tanks to little more than shrapnel, and overwhelming all but the most immense xenos creature or daemonic entity.

Tomb Stalker (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
55	30	60 [12]	60 [14]	55	30	30	30	05	- -

Movement: 4/8/16/32 **Wounds:** 90
Armour: Machine Trait (8 All) **Total TB:** 14
Skills: Intimidate (S)+10, Logic (Int)+20, Stealth (Ag)+20, Tech-Use (Int)+20.
Talents: Ambidextrous, Gunslinger, Independent Targeting, Swift Attack, Two Weapon Weilder, Whirlwind of Death.
Traits: Crawler, Dark Sight, Size (6), Regeneration (5), Machine (8), Sturdy, Unnatural Senses (150), Unnatural Strength (+6), Unnatural Toughness (+8).
Weapons: Brutal Blades (2d10+12 R; Pen 12; Razor Sharp), Crushing Legs (1d10+12; Pen 6), Two Gauss Flayers (Basic; 100m; 1d10+8 E; Pen 3; S/2/—; Clip —; Reload —; Gauss).
Phase Tunneling: Tomb Stalkers can erupt from anywhere, attacking from walls or the ground. Tomb Stalkers can move through solid, inert (unliving) matter at their regular speed, burrowing and boring holes even in solid rock and collapsing the tunnel behind it. It never suffers penalties for difficult terrain.
Multi-target Protocols: The Tomb Stalker has advanced targeting routines, and may use both Gauss Flayers with Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic) as if they were pistols. It may also target any two targets in range, as per the Independent Targeting Talent.
A Thousand Legs: As a Half Action the Tomb Stalker may make one attack with its Crushing Legs against every target in melee. These attacks follow all the rules for Standard Attacks except they gain a +0 bonus instead of the standard +10 bonus. It may still make an attack with its Brutal Blades as a second Half Action (an exception to the normal rules to multiple attack actions).

ELDAR HARLEQUINS

Among the inscrutable Eldar race there exists a troupe of masked warrior-dancers called the Harlequins, devotees of their Laughing God and driven foes of Chaos. These mysterious entertainers travel the Webway between the folds of space, constantly moving from craftworld to fleet among the Eldar people. They bring with them the epic tales of their race, passing them on to each dwindling generation of the Eldar with their exquisite dance and evocative mummery. Of these stories the greatest, though most rarely repeated, is the Dance Without End, the story of the Fall. In this dark morality tale, the Harlequins re-enact the Fall of the Eldar Empire and the creation of Slaanesh—the dark result of their own decadence. With their dance, the Harlequins aim to keep the moral fresh in the minds of their audience and by so doing, combat the darker influences on the Eldar soul. Few beings in the galaxy are as single-minded in their opposition to Chaos as the Harlequins. Fierce combatants all, their performances turn to death-dances on the field of battle. Seeming to appear from nowhere, troupes of these enigmatic warriors bring only terror and death to the servants of the Dark Powers.

Harlequins

Acting a variety of parts, including the ancient Eldar people, within the Dance without End, troupers make up the bulk of a Harlequin troupe. While the most numerous, these performers are nevertheless potent combatants against the forces of Chaos. Their supernatural grace and skill on the battlefield surpasses that of all but the most highly-trained Imperial soldier or xenos menace, and few men will ever live to see such a glorious and terrifying sight as a Harlequin troupe in the midst of their Dance of Death. In addition to their own innate skill, all Harlequins make use of technology beyond even the rest of the Eldar people. Their costumes, each a gaudy and colourful motley patterned with stripes and cheques, are known as holo-suits, each causes their image to burst into a cloud of innumerable colourful crystals which dance and swirl violently as the Harlequin moves. They wear anti-gravity "flip-belts," which allow them to perform feats of acrobatics on the battlefield far beyond their already impressive natural ability.

When dealing death on the battlefield, the Harlequins make use of a limited number of impressive weapons, mainly focused on close combat to better make use of their extraordinary agility. Troupers most often wield the shuriken pistols common to many Eldar warrior, alongside keen, slender blades. Many will supplement this armament with the horrific Harlequin's Kiss. This innocuous-looking weapon rests on the back of the forearm and consists of a sharp tapered tube backed by a compact casing filled with monofilament wire. This wire is vomited forth into a victim after the tube has pierced the armour or hull of the intended target. It takes only a split-second for the filament to flail around the innards of the intended target, liquefying them from the inside out.

Harlequin (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
60	45	38	36	57 [8]	42	54	59	56	- -

Movement: 8/16/24/48 **Wounds:** 15
Armour: Xenos Mesh (3 All) **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag)+30, Athletics (S)+20, Awareness (Per) +20, Charm (Fel)+10, Command (Fel), Deceive (Fel)+20, Dodge (Ag)+20, Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) (Int), Parry

(WS) +20, Scrutiny (Per), Slight of Hand (Ag)+10, Stealth (Ag)+20.
Talents: Ambidextrous, Blade Dancer, Combat Master, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Sidearms, Step Aside, Swift Attack, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ranged, Melee).
Traits: Unnatural Agility (+3).
Weapons: Harlequin's Kiss (1d10+8 R; Pen 10; Tearing), Shuriken Pistol (Pistol; 30m; S/3/5; 1d10+2 R; Pen 4; Clip 40; Reload 2 Full; Razor Sharp; Reliable).
Flip Belt: The flip belt allows the user to manipulate gravity, moving with astounding grace. The user ignores penalties for Difficult Terrain and can reroll failed Dodge Tests.
Holo-suit: The holo-suit generates multiple images of the user. This is treated as a Force Field with a field rating of 35 that cannot be overloaded.

Shadowseer

Shadowseers are the dreaded psykers of the Harlequins, specialists in manipulation, disorientation, and fear. During performances, Shadowseers act as the storytellers of the troupe. They take on the role of fate, subtly influencing the emotions of the audience with their psychic abilities in order to engage them in the experience fully. Their part in the Dance of Death is little different, though the purpose is far more sinister. They make use of their psychic powers to terrify and disable their foes and protect their own against attack.

It is said that the smooth, mirrored surfaces of the featureless masks worn by Shadowseers reflect back the worst nightmares of those who look into them. Psychic amplifiers intensify this effect, preying on a victim's own fears to incapacitate them. Shadowseers wield powerful hallucination grenades, called creidann, which produce hellish visions in the minds of those caught in their blasts. The Shadowseers enhance these phantasms to reduce their adversaries to trembling heaps, consumed by their own terror.

Beyond these simple pieces of equipment, Shadowseers possess incredible psychic talents. They use these powers in concert with their masks and creidann to dishearten their foes completely, that they might be dispatched all the more easily by the troupe. In addition, Shadowseers employ their psychic might to augment the distracting and disorienting nature of their troupe. The troupe's holo-suits are made all the more potent by the Shadowseer's ability to confound their opponents, projecting thousands more scintillating forms about the band as they leap and dance across the battlefield.

Shadowseer (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
62	47	42	41	59	55	59	62	61	-	-

Movement: 9/18/27/52 **Wounds:** 28
Armour: Xenos Mesh (3 All) **Total TB:** 4
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag)+20, Athletics (S)+10, Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel)+10, Command (Fel), Deceive (Fel)+20, Dodge (Ag)+20, Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) (Int)+20, Parry (WS),



Scrutiny (Per), Slight of Hand (Ag)+20, Stealth (Ag)+20.
Talents: Talents: Ambidextrous, Blade Dancer, Blademaster, Combat Master, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Psy Rating 8, Sidearms, Step Aside, Swift Attack, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ranged, Melee), Warp Lock
Traits: Fear (2)†, Unnatural Agility (+4).
Weapons: Witchblade (1d10+14; Pen 8; Power Field, Balanced, gains Pen equal to Shadowseer's base Psy Rating), 4 Creidann (Thrown; 12m; S/—/—; —; Pen 0; Clip 1; Blast [5], Hallucinogenic [4]).
Equipment: Rune stones.
Psychic Powers: The Shadowseer is a prodigious psyker and knows all powers from the Telepathy, Divination, and Telekinesis Powers found on pages 223-228. In addition, the Shadowseer knows the Veil of Tears Psychic Power as noted below.
Veil of Tears: This is a psychic power with the subtype of Concentration. It requires an **Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test** to manifest, and may be manifested and sustained as a Free Action. While this power is active, any enemies wishing to make a ranged attack or ranged Psychic Attack at the Shadowseer or any ally within a radius equal to the power's Psy Rating must pass a **Very Hard (–30) Awareness Test**. If they fail, they must still attack but their shots go wild and miss completely (they cannot hit no matter what they roll). This power may not be Pushed, but using it never generates Psychic Phenomena.
Flip Belt: The flip belt allows the user to manipulate gravity, moving with astounding grace. The user ignores penalties for Difficult Terrain and can reroll failed Dodge Tests.
Holo-suit: The holo-suit generates multiple images of the user. This is treated as a Force Field with a field rating of 35 that cannot be overloaded.
†The Fear Trait only affects those in melee with the Shadowseer, and does not take affect if for some reason the target cannot see.

Dark Eldar

Wicked slavers and pirates, the Dark Eldar traverse the galaxy through their hidden Webway, striking without warning and leaving only terror and destruction in their wake. Knowing little of either, few people recognise the difference between the Dark Eldar and their tamer cousins, but those that do know what terrible fate lies in store for the ignorant souls who regard the Dark Eldar as anything other than pure evil. The Dark Eldar represent the worst tendencies of the Eldar race from before the Fall. Unwilling or unable to abandon their vile ways, the Dark Eldar live in constant terror of Slaanesh. The Lord of Dark Delights claims a tight hold on the soul of every Dark Eldar, forever draining their essence to feed his own wicked thirst. To stave off this draining, the Dark Eldar indulge in deeds of the vilest sadism imaginable, performing acts of terror and pain on others so that their victim's suffering might, for a time, replenish their own withering souls.

For those dedicated to the Dark Gods, the Dark Eldar represent tempestuous neutrality. Sometimes allies, sometimes bitter rivals, the servants of Chaos and the Dark Eldar keep a watchful eye on one another, neither ever truly trusting the other, but occasionally working to the same ends. Among the devotees of Chaos, it is whispered that a few of their number have even lived among the fallen Eldar and learned the secrets of their tortures and flesh-shaping, though it is certain that even these daring souls only ever scratched the surface of the Dark Eldar's vast well of arcane knowledge.

Kabalite Warrior

Dark Eldar society is made up of clans of fierce warriors, known as Kabals. These Kabals gather together around an Archon, a particularly cruel and heartless marauder who can promise his followers frequent slaughter and the continuous spread of misery and pain. Given their desperate need for such sadism, those warlords most able to live up to this promise often gather about them enormous fleets of piratical Eldar.

Within these Kabals, the bulk of the forces are made up of vicious Eldar raiders. These warriors prefer armaments which enhance their already supernatural speed and grace. They wear lightweight, flexible armor, leaving them unhindered in their lightning raids. The majority carry a cruel weapon known as the splinter rifle. Utilising anti-grav technology, this sadistic weapon fires thin shards of poisoned crystal at phenomenal speeds, piercing armour with ease and inflicting horrifically painful wounds on their targets. Many splinter rifles bear wicked mono-blades at the end of their long barrels, making them useful for close-quarters fighting. For raids on starships or hive-cities, where combat is likely to take place in tight corridors, many Warriors carry mono-knives and splinter pistols, miniaturised versions of the common splinter rifle. Kabalite Warriors are also known to carry specialist weaponry in certain circumstances. Through a process unknown to any outside their own, the Dark Eldar have mastered a volatile and dangerous substance known as dark matter. When necessary, warriors use large weapons known as dark lances, which fire a massive, focused stream of dark matter that rips through even the most heavily-armoured target. To clear massed infantry, the Dark Eldar employ a weapon called the disintegrator, which hurls large globs of impure dark matter into the air, engulfing entire formations with the devastating material.

Kabalite Warrior (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
46	41	34	39	57 (8)	33	45	31	44	- -

Movement: 8/16/24/48 **Wounds:** 12
Armour: Kabalite Armour (4 All) **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +10, Awareness (Per) +10, Command (Fel), Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag)+10, Intimidate (S) +20, Parry (WS), Scrutiny (Per), Slight of Hand (Ag), Stealth (Ag).
Talents: Combat Master, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Reflexes, Pity the Weak.
Traits: Unnatural Agility (+3).
Weapons: Splinter Rifle (Basic; 100m; S/3/5; 1d10+2 R; Pen 3; Clip 200; Reload 2 Full; Toxic [4]), Poisoned Blade (1d5+3 R; Pen 2; Toxic [0]).

Mandrake

Few beings inspire fear among a race so cruel and perverse as the Dark Eldar, but there is a creature whose black soul frightens even the most jaded Archon, and it is one with which the fallen Eldar are intimately familiar. The Mandrake is a creature of pure hatred and shadow, come from another dimension to slake their avarice for souls and the intangible manifestations of pain and suffering. Beings of inky blackness, their vaguely humanoid forms are mantled with swirls of cold light, which seem to burn brighter as they gorge on misery and pain. While Mandrakes appear mostly humanoid, their movements belie their unnatural nature and those who see them find them unsettling in the



extreme. When viewed up close, the face of a Mandrake is a smooth slate, which only occasionally manifests a pair of eyes or a mouth, each burning with cold light from within. Wreathed in a rime of frost, the otherworldly creatures are able to channel this cold fire to wrack their foes with icy blasts. In battle, these beings of darkness wield hellish cleavers, serrated blades, and sickles, the rusty armaments of a daemonic butcher.

These beings of ineffable darkness work alongside the Dark Eldar under pacts of loyalty and service sworn between themselves and the Kabal's Archon, in exchange for payments of slaves or other, more esoteric costs. A Mandrake may ask for a shadow, a heartbeat, or a true name as payment. While they are notorious liars and betrayers, few Archons fail to honour their pacts with the Mandrakes, as it is believed that the tattered skins the Mandrakes wear about their legs are the flayed flesh of those who have broken faith with them. The Dark Eldar tell tales of Mandrakes clawing their way through the shadows of the living to enter reality and drag their victims back to their dark hell.

Mandrake (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
52	32	45[6]	32	58[8]	31	32	36	28	- -

Movement: 8/16/24/48 **Wounds:** 18
Armour: None **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag), Awareness (Per), Command (Fel), Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag)+20, Intimidate (S), Parry (WS)+10, Scrutiny (Per), Slight of Hand (Ag), Stealth (Ag)+30.
Talents: Combat Master, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Reflexes, Pity the Weak, Swift Attack.
Traits: Phase, Unnatural Agility (+3), Unnatural Strength (+2)
Weapons: Sickle Blade (1d10+9 R, Pen 3, Razor Sharp, Tearing).
Balefire: Mandrakes have the power to syphon their enemy's life force to empower their own fell arcane prowesses. If a Mandrake has killed a sentient creature within the past 24 hours, they may use their Balefire attack. Balefire is a ranged weapon with the following profile (Basic; 50m; S/3/—; 1d10+6 E; Pen 4; Clip —; Reload —; Flaming). In addition, the pseudo-living flames of the balefire force any target struck by it to make a Pinning Test. If they would already be forced to make a Pinning Test, the difficulty increases by 10.

Incubus

Among the Dark Eldar, an Archon holds his position only by his ability to defend it; loyalty and trust are entirely alien concepts. The only sure way to ascend the ranks of the Dark Eldar hierarchy is to assassinate the one who holds the position above you. As such, no Archon would dare trust his own followers to guard him in battle. For those in power, there is only one recourse for protection beyond their own personal skill: the peerless warriors known as Incubi. Loyal only to their own caste, these cold killers have no need for political manoeuvring and advancement. The Incubi are paragons of martial skill, trained in every possible form of melee weapon, though unwavering in their preference of the klaive, a brutal weapon of perfect form and balance. Only the Klaivex, the most skilled members of their caste, deviate from their dedication to the klaive, and even these wield a variation of the exemplar blade. These demi-klaives are a matched pair of blades, which can be used separately or linked together to form a truly massive blade. The Klaivex may also carry a bloodstone, an artefact forged from the shattered soulstone of an Eldar Exarch, brutally stripped from a vanquished foe.

Incubi master the art of death for one simple reason: killing. Murder is the only thing that drives the Incubi, as their lust for death has overcome all other thirsts, even their need for pain and misery. Their dedication to martial excellence is only a means to an end, and they have no reverence or respect for it as an ideal; it is merely the tool with which they harvest their crop of fallen adversaries.

Incubus (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
53	32	40	42	58[8]	31	32	36	28	- -



Movement: 8/16/24/48
Wounds: 23
Armour: Incubus Warsuit (8 All)
Total TB: 4
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag), Awareness (Per), Command (Fel), Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag) +10, Intimidate (S), Parry (WS)+10, Scrutiny (Per), Slight of Hand (Ag), Stealth (Ag).
Talents: Ambidextrous, Blademaster, Combat Master, Counter Attack, Crippling Strike, Disarm, Hammer Blow, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Reflexes, Pity the Weak, Sure Strike, Swift Attack.
Traits: Unnatural Agility (+3).
Weapons: Klaive (1d10+12 E, Pen 8, Power Field,). If one of the Incubi is the Klaivex (a squad leader), he may be armed with two Demi-Klaives (1d10+8 E; Pen 6; Power Field) which can be joined together to form a two-handed weapon (1d10+16 E; Pen 8; Unwieldy, Power Field) and a Bloodstone (Basic; 10m; 1d10+3 E; Pen 7; Spray).



False Prophets

The Temple of Lies

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NPC Appendix

Chapter XII: False Prophets

"And so they descended, the Daemon-Gods. They gathered warped metals from the battlefields of Nissen with which to shape his flesh. They procured flame from the funerary pyre to give him life. But, in their infinite wisdom, they gathered the fruit of the Tree of Demitre, that which all man covets, and placed it where otherwise would be a heart, that he may desire dominion over the souls of man…"

–The birth of Tor from the *Torestus*, author unknown

False Prophets is a short adventure to unify a newly formed group of Heretics and bring them together. Within the Screaming Vortex is the world of Kymerus. A veritable wasteland, Kymerus is known for its intense temperatures, continent-sized, wind-scoured plateaux, and lifeless landscapes. Besides the breathable air, Kymerus contains few features that encourage life.

Here, many years ago, the vessel *Light of Ascension* came to its final rest after being battered by the storms of the Halo Margins. Why it escaped from certain destruction in the grips of the storms, none can say. Those corpses found in the wreckage displayed visages of such pain and despair that the Acolytes of Tzeentch who live on Kymerus named the place defiled and erected a temple upon the ruins—the Temple of Lies.

In False Prophets, the Heretics arrive at the temple, on invitation, to receive a reading of their destiny from the temple's Mendacious Oracle, the infamous Renkard Copax. After ascending the labyrinthine central tower (perhaps taking a moment to explore a lore-filled chamber on the way), Renkard receives them. He asks strange questions of the Heretics to ensure that his predictions are correct and concern them directly. When satisfied, rather than dispensing his prophetic visions to the Heretics, he instead delivers them into the hands of a detachment of deadly warriors and psykers—his invitation to the temple is a trap. If they survive, the Heretics must escape the Temple and find Copax, confronting him as he meets with powers more deadly than even him. Should they defeat Copax, they can make their way to Carrion Corpse, the planet's one space port and the Heretic's only hope to escape Kymerus, before making way toward new adventures.

This short adventure provides Game Masters with a means to unify—if tenuously—an otherwise disparate group of individuals through a shared destiny of galaxy-shaking importance. Additionally, False Prophets has leading material for future adventures ideal for a long running campaign but that can be easily modified or outright changed to suit other ideas GMs might have. Before running False Prophets, GMs should prepare with an eye toward certain factors. The design of this particular adventure leaves abundant space for Heretics of every kind to shine as individuals. GMs should get to know the backgrounds of each of the Heretics and their past as a group (if they have one) in order to fill in what the *Torestus* has to say about their destiny.

The Temple of Lies

Since its founding, the Temple of Lies serves as a repository of truths, a site for supplicants seeking favour from the God of Change and Master of Sorcery, and a bastion for those in search of knowledge beyond mundane grasp. The land encompassing the base of the Temple embraces its sacred sights: the warped metal holds of the destroyed *Light of Ascension* scattered across miles of foothills and the preserved remains of the unfortunate crew, both of which serve as shrines and occasional living quarters for temple functionaries. Built upon the largest portion of the wreckage are the main halls of the temple itself, a structure of twisting metal encircled by Screamer-drawn chariots.

Within, vast stores of knowledge fill shelf after shelf in cold, voluminous chambers, lightly populated with studious devotees and servitor caretakers. Tomes and data slates on various and sundry topics enlighten scholars within the labyrinthine tower, organised in such an unintelligible way that it requires an experienced guide to find anything. Of note is the Akrinus Chamber, named for the founder of the temple itself, where the most valuable texts are stored. Among them are tomes of stories, few with any reference to historical context, that are thought to have prophetic value and are only ever examined by special guests and the temple's masters. As a rule, the higher a chamber is positioned within the temple, the more important the content hoarded therein and therefore the more tightly it is secured. Beyond the lowest sections of the Temple, special permissions must be granted for explorers to gain access to the vast stores of information.

TEMPLE LAYOUT

Surrounding the temple, reaching five kilometres in every direction away from the tower at its centre, is an arid and wreckage-strewn wasteland known simply as the temple gardens. Devoid of all but the hardiest plant life, the place can hardly qualify as a garden. Left in much the same condition as when it came to rest, the temple ordered sections of metal pealed away from the hunks of wreckage that make up its frame to serve as entrances when the damage from the landing did not create openings on its own. Rarely seen patrolling the gardens (and then only at a distance) are strange, amorphous guardians wrought from daemomic flame. Their twisted visage is enough to make even a man seasoned in the mysteries of the warp cringe and, thus, even as they choose to remain unseen, a wise man behaves himself in order to avoid a potential encounter.

The gates at the entrance to the temple grounds are immense steel monstrosities, towering over even the tallest who enter. Like the barrier that surrounds the garden itself, the gates are composed of a series of vertical bars covered in woody, dead vines. The barrier stands fifty feet tall, but at the top of each bar is a wicked spike to deter trespassers from getting in too easily. Six guards make up the daytime gate watch, reduced to two in the evening hours.



The main gates of the temple tower open into a large room that once served as a command bridge, now gutted, reconstructed as an entrance hall, and decorated with paintings and sculptures of the deeds and visages of those whose destinies were foretold there. Beyond the gates, the rare invitee privileged with the opportunity to draw knowledge from the debased tower walks a short hall at the end of which emerges an immense conical room—the Chamber of Stairs. A quarter-kilometre at its base, the chamber comes nearly to a point at its apex. Flights of randomly-arrayed stairs fill the room. Some ascend in straight trajectories, suddenly turning in another direction when blocked by a wall, while others spiral or wind freely. The chaotic knotted structure leads to sudden collisions between different stairs, providing shortcuts to different sections of the tower. Some of the stairways do not even obey the laws of physics, spiralling sideways or looping upside down. Those who walk them can find it utterly disconcerting.

With a significant amount of time and the freedom to explore, a Heretic might become sufficiently familiar with the tower to navigate it on his own and even memorise a shortcut or two. Otherwise, the Heretics must rely on the temple's guides: robed, hunchbacked figures who speak in sibilant whispers and sometimes lead Heretics astray for their own ends.

The temple lacks floors. Instead, doorways to the various storerooms of lore appear wherever the stairs meet with the walls or, in some cases, are held in mid-air by the stairs themselves through the same warp-spawned magiks that hold the stairs aloft. Collapsed stairways leave some doors inaccessible and the confusing architecture only complicates the process of repairing such damage. Though the doors appear to be scattered across the walls without logic or order, rooms of lore still manage to fill every metre of space between the Chamber of Stairs and the temple's outer walls.

At the very top of the Chamber of Stairs is set a simple trap door, leading up through the ceiling and into the Akrinus Chamber. The floor of this room is covered with a cacophonous array of rugs, tables, stepladders, and stacks of tomes. The room is capped by a glass cone revealing a sky cluttered with clouds and heat lightning. Normally the room stores the temple's most sacred texts, but—unknown to the Heretics—most of the tomes currently present are not those normally housed in its profane shelves. Rather than risk the sacred texts amid the carnage that the High Oracle has planned, he has had them replaced with worthless replicas.

Occasional guardians patrol the maze of passages throughout the temple, armed and armoured warriors bound to servitude and bearing the insignia of Tzeentch. Additionally, wyrd-thieves, chaos rogue psykers with telepathic abilities, steal about the shadowed recesses of the temple, probing the minds of visitors to insure that their intentions are benign, if not sympathetic, to the temple's aims. These individuals appear as nothing more than caretakers themselves, making them an integral and clandestine element of the temple's defence. Additionally, bound lesser daemons patrol the periphery of the temple, their presence alone enough to warn the uninvited to keep clear.

The Temple's Purpose

In the centuries after its construction, the temple has come to serve a rare oracular purpose. Those men whose futures enter the prophetic visions of the temple's High Oracle, whether noted for their great deeds or those events yet unseen, have on rare

Speculations

Given the tremendous power the temple wields, rumours concerning the veracity and role of its prophecies abound. Many assume that the prophecies are accurate, if vague, and a testament to the temple's power. Others believe that the temple uses its reputation for credibility to dispense lies and manipulate the powerful toward its own ends. Whatever the case, investigations into the matter have met with no success.

Be that as it may, many of those invited and who survive the ordeal to see their destinies come to fruition, have led lives noted in the annals of the Screaming Vortex.

Captain Theofus Kreeli

This pirate was a mere boy when the temple summoned him from his home on Q'sal. The temple foretold that his life would end in the void but not before achieving greatness as master of a tremendous and powerful ship. Such are the hearts of men that he chose to fulfil his destiny by becoming one of the most despicable pirates ever known. Now a part of Covenant X, he is a powerful force in the Screaming Vortex and a potential contender to unite the Vortex under his banner.

Binding of the Xur

Several centuries prior to the current High Oracle's tenure at the Temple of Lies, High Oracle Selanai left Kymerus on a mission to Xurunt. His arcane musings led him to believe that a great warrior among the Xur would band the warring tribes together and form the basis for a rapidly developing and expansive civilisation. As it turns out, this never occurred—though the seeds of the prophecy may still be at work. The warrior managed to band an unprecedented number of tribes together but fell in battle. Though his legacy fell apart, a small number of tribes remained together in a tight confederacy, perhaps forming the basis of a new civilisation.

Factions of Q'sal

Without any reference to final outcomes, the many episodes of political and military activity on Q'sal make their way into the premonitions of the High Oracles. This includes predicting the leadership of several dozen factors, tyrants, and sorcerers as well as wars, assassinations, and other plots. Why exactly does Q'sal show up so often in the predictions of the High Oracles? Some believe that the planet's powerful technological resources have led the temple to meddle for its own gain. Whether its predictions are mystical or political in nature, their veracity is unparalleled.

occasions been invited to the bowels of the temple to receive knowledge of the future and their place in it. These invitations draw the attention of powerful forces and individuals, sometimes leading to opportunity and sometimes to adversity. Regardless, once such an invitation has been sent, the recipient's name spreads across the Screaming Vortex. In addition to possible assassination attempts and conflicts, a number of interests may freely provide shelter, transportation, supplies, and protection to such individuals; although such gifts are offered with the understanding that a return favour is in order. Only invited guests may receive the attention of the temple's oracle, although this has not stopped many pilgrims from trying.

The GM's Brief

The following is a brief summary of the plot of False Prophets, plus the plot and background of the adventure that has happened before the Heretics get involved.

The Story Thus Far...

High Oracle Renkard Copax administers the temple's business indirectly through a legion of functionaries and underlings. His chief ceremonial duty is to dispense prophetic proclamations as they come to him in his studies of the texts within the Akrinus Chamber. These proclamations are few and far between at best; his arcane studies require forging connections between the content of seemingly unrelated tomes and painstaking research to distinguish which texts are purely fictional and which contain enough truth to be useful. While channelling the warp with psychic power and anchoring his mind in these texts, visions present themselves as portals to the future. These visions contain both direct images of real people and events as well as metaphors drawn from the anchoring texts themselves.

Copax recently sent missives to the Heretics. An ancient tome, once discarded as mere fiction, came to Copax's attention and upon considering it, he received a vision: he foresaw an event of revolutionary but cataclysmic proportions. Unknown to the Heretics, he has summoned them, not to divulge their place in the future of the Screaming Vortex, but instead to alter the course of history by destroying them before this prophecy can be fulfilled. Wishing to prevent any mishap by sending assassins and potentially losing track of his marks, he has chosen to summon them directly into the temple where he can be sure they are properly taken care of. Though renowned for his wisdom, Copax may have underestimated the Heretics. Now, his overreaching hubris may prove his downfall.

The tome from which this prophecy was derived is called the *Torestus*, an epic saga detailing the life of Tor, a half-god hero, and his trials to save his people. Tor's adventures lead to political upheaval and revolutionary change. Analogous events relevant to the Screaming Vortex and the mystical visions it inspired set the Mendacious Oracle on edge. He believes that the current era is drawing to an end and that the Heretics have a place in the coming times of change and upheaval. Additionally, his prophecy has shown his own

downfall and destruction, linked to the rise and success of the Heretics; thus, his selfish interest in seeing the Heretics dead.

However, the situation has grown even more dangerous for Copax. The Temple of Lies has long attracted the attentions of powerful allies. Chief amongst them is a warband comprised solely of Word Bearers Chaos Space Marines known as the Prophets of the Blighted Path. These frightening warriors have long maintained their presence within the Screaming Vortex. The Prophets maintain a powerful strength within their fastness, an orbital fortress trailing the world known as the Flaming Tomb, as close to the Inner Vortex as any have gone. However, under the guidance of the Dark Apostle Naberus they have abstained from the constant warfare that grips the many warbands of the Vortex. Instead, it is said they desire to see the rise of a great leader in the Screaming Vortex, one who can lead a war of destruction on the Imperium and allow them to follow in its wake, converting the survivors to the worship of Chaos.

Naberus maintains spies within the Temple and the Prophets know that Copax has foreseen the rise of a powerful new warband in the Vortex (though he is unaware of the details of the prophecy, including Copax's eminent doom). He hopes that these may be the "great leader(s)" he has been waiting for. To that end, he has dispatched four of his warband to the Temple. These four are to meet with Copax and, more importantly, meet and evaluate the Heretics during their prophecy. If these Heretics prove to be whom the prophecy claims, Naberus wants to establish ties with them now.

The impending arrival of the Prophets of the Blighted Path means that Copax feels he's running out of time. He wants the Heretics eliminated before the Word Bearers arrive and has set plans in motion to do just that.

The Torestus

A leather-bound tome, noted to have been copied by scribe several times in order to preserve the integrity and artistry of the piece, rests in the Akrinus Chamber and has done so for more centuries than any can remember. The vellum pages reek with age but boast such feats of calligraphy as to be considered a masterpiece. The literature takes the form of an epic poem that oscillates between direct narrative and verses of complex depth and polysemy.

Tor, the hero of the poem, is a homunculus of a man, forged from materials that would both serve to protect him and defile his enemies. A pantheon of daemonic patrons, an alliance of the malefic, planned his life out as the hero of his people, the Darisians. Enemy city-states surround Daris, populated by cultists of false gods who see the pantheon of Daris as a threat to the world itself. The deamon-gods of Daris value the strong, the cunning, and man's will against the righteousness, piety, and meekness touted by the false gods. Tor stumbles upon the lairs of mythological monsters, sails hostile seas beset by storm, and conceives plots of cruel conquest in the arenas of human politics and desire in the many cities he encounters on his journeys. These adventures read more like a collection of stories than a chronological narrative and at times it is hard to follow where one ends and another begins. In the end, though, Tor succeeds in extending the dominion of Daris over the defiled lands of his enemies.

The daemon pantheon was wise when crafting Tor's half-mortal soul, however. In order to prevent him from becoming so powerful that he should threaten their sovereignty, they forged in him a seed of desire that would grow over time, a desire for tyranny over men. The eventual corruption of his soul led to a means of destroying him. As a being of great power that could otherwise rival the daemonic fathers, he would instead focus on taking power over man and ultimately die a puppet of his very own creators. Interestingly, much of this manuscript is missing, leaving the copy of the *Torestus* incomplete, a compilation of stories rather than a conjoined narrative. For example, the explanation of this seed of corruption occurs at the beginning of the text and the last several pages are missing, leaving the story—and details of Tor's fate—a mystery.

Until recently, the text remained on a high shelf out of the Oracle's view. It was by chance that he decided to search that part of the chamber to revisit some other tomes and stumbled across the tome. His readings initiated a series of powerful visions that concern the Heretics directly as major players in the fate of the Screaming Vortex. However, a portion of the epic suggests that a great seer would fall from his high station but it leaves no specific details as to how. Thinking of himself as the great seer, Copax has foolishly decided to cheat fate and destroy the Heretics before destiny claims him.

ADVENTURE PLOT

The primary objective of False Prophets is straightforward—escape the Temple of Lies after securing the *Torestus*. The adventure begins with the Heretics travelling to Kymerus and arriving on the planet's surface. There they must journey to the Temple, receiving the opportunity to explore it. During this time, they are also ambushed by a rival warband—petty warriors angered that the Heretics are receiving this prophecy instead of them.

Prior to the main action, Heretics have ample opportunities to further their individual or selfish goals while developing relationships with one another. Some individual goals can cause conflict within the group. GMs should play this up, making the most of character development while keeping the importance of the main plot at the forefront so that potential conflicts do not get out of hand.

After getting a chance to explore the temple, Mendacious Oracle Renkard Copax invites them to the Akrinus Chamber under the pretence of discussing his visions. He uses this meeting to ensure his guests are indeed those the prophecy refers to. Once satisfied that they are who they claim to be, he closes the *Torestus*, leaves it on a table, and exits the room as guards and renegade psykers enter the chamber and attempt to finish the Heretics off.

Only Renkard and the few guards present in the Akrinus Chamber are aware of the clandestine operation to destroy the Heretics. Renkard wants no hint of his plans to be made available to anyone who might bleed them out. However, before he springs his trap, the Word Bearers Chaos Space Marines of the Prophets of the Blighted Path arrive at the Temple. Copax cannot afford to ignore such powerful allies, and thus when he springs his ambush he must leave the chamber to meet with them, trusting in his henchmen to finish the Heretics off.

Assuming they survive the betrayal, the Heretics take the *Torestus* from the table and begin their escape. They have to navigate their way down the stairs (avoiding or engaging Inevitable Guards on the way), then arrive at the Temple

The Oracle's Visions and Tor's Adventures



The specific contents of the Mendacious Oracle's visions and the adventures of Tor and the Darisians are up to the GM to decide based on the backgrounds and goals of the Heretics in his group. These visions should both tie the Heretics together and involve them in such a way as to make this adventure of personal interest to each of them. For players who have not come up with goals for their Heretic, use the *Torestus* to plant some suggestions. After all, this is their grand destiny.

GMs should invent city-states in the *Torestus* narrative that serve as analogies to places of interest in the Screaming Vortex and the Imperium beyond. Such analogies should never be clean and direct but require some interpretation on the part of the Heretics. Use these analogies as sources of potential exploits, making the Heretics feel as though the *Torestus* is an analogy of their own adventures. The *Torestus* should mainly foreshadow events and provide vague clues but never directly state how an objective should be achieved. Additionally, the connection between a story in the *Torestus* and an event in the Screaming Vortex may remain far from obvious before the event starts taking place. This means GMs don't need to come up with every story at once but instead can come up with a story when, in game, it becomes apparent that there is a relation.

The details of the revolutionary change the Heretics are supposed to undertake are left intentionally vague so that GMs can put together grand plans for the Heretics in their games. However, an obvious place to start concerns the current power vacuum and struggles for supremacy between the rival warbands in the Screaming Vortex and could play into the concept of organizing and leading a Black Crusade. Players may also come up with interesting interpretations of stories that do not fit perfectly with a GMs plans. When that is the case, it does not hurt to reward them by changing the story a bit to fit their interpretation. This gives players a more direct role in a major aspect of a roleplaying game—collaborative storytelling.

Another interesting aspect of the *Torestus* is that it's incomplete. Great chunks of it are missing and the GM can have his players discover sections throughout their adventures. This way, the GM does not have to introduce the entire *Torestus* at once, but can dole it out as needed to further the adventures of the players.

Sample Story: The Barbarians of Maul

Tor came upon a haphazard collection of shacks and hovels after completing a long journey, desperate for food and shelter. He discovered, to his dismay, that the thieves and wretches that settled here were in as poor a shape as he. As it turned out, the band had experienced regular visitations from its own dead—walking corpses from a battle that took place on the land many years ago. They haunted the countryside and attacked travellers, forcing travellers to seek shelter within the settlement's walls. Tor agreed to rescue them in exchange for nothing more than shelter and food—and a promise of fealty should he become king of Daris later. They agreed to his demands.

After he discovered that the dead could not rest because the rival band's ancestors had recently been restored to power and controlled the very lands the deceased once protected, Tor challenged the ruling descendant to mortal combat. Though he nearly died after being tricked into giving the ruler the upper hand, Tor finally won the battle. The victory came with a cost, however: the defeated rival became an enemy that challenged him, even after he became the ruler of Daris.

An adventure based on this section of the epic poem might involve the Heretics when times are hard, wandering into a war between rival warbands. They join up with the one and make some demands in exchange for their help. The true reason the opposing warband is encroaching on the others turf is because of a local despot, recently returned to power, who desires the conflict for his own ends. The canny villain realises that the Heretics are a threat and leads them into a trap, but eventually they win the battle. As a consequence, they gain respect but also make an enemy of the rival warband.

entrance, where Copax is informing the Word Bearers that the Heretics were tragically killed before arriving, making it unlikely they were the ones foretold in the *Torestus*. The Heretics' appearance puts the lie to his claims, at which point he desperately attempts to call on Daemonic allies and Inevitable Guards to eliminate the Word Bearers and the Heretics.

Whether or not the Heretics realise the Prophecy immediately by killing Copax, they must flee the Temple of Lies and Kymerus as they are pursued by the vengeful warriors of the Temple. Should they escape, they may have earned a dubious ally in the Prophets of the Blighted Path. They also now possess a strange tome that could hold the key to their ascension—the *Torestus*.

PLOT HOOKS: BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The following are several suggestions for beginning the adventure—hooks that can get the Heretics interested in the Temple of Lies and the prophecy. As this is an adventure intended for beginning or low experience (less than 2,000) characters, the GM may approach the beginning of the adventure in several ways.

For a completely new group of Heretics, the GM can choose to have them begin in completely different parts of the Screaming Vortex, each according to their backstory. In this case, the GM can have the Temple's agents approach each Heretic individually, bringing them each to Kymeris seperately and having them assemble at Carrion Corpse before travelling to the Temple as a group. This works well within the plot of the adventure and allows the GM to assemble the entire warband without such actions seeming forced.

On the other hand, it is possible the warband is already assembled as a group. The GM may have even already run his group through a short adventure. In this case, the GM can have the Temple approach the Heretics as a group, likely using the Invitation to Greatness General Hook. This works the same way as the first option, simply with less time waiting in Carrion Corpse for the rest of the group to assemble. (Of course, if the GM needs to introduce a new player character, he can have them summoned separately and meet the group at Carrion Corpse).

In either situation, the Temple of Lies spares no expense in making sure that the missive arrives at its intended mark and is hand delivered by a temple demagogue even to the most remote reaches of the Screaming Vortex. The various demagogues responsible for striding the span of the Screaming Vortex in search of the Heretics may take months to find them and, once they are found, must make the long journey back to the temple. In any case, Covenant X owes the temple several favours and has taken as its mission the transport of the Heretics to and from their meeting with the Mendacious Oracle.

The demagogue in charge of administering this invitation is Elika The Seer, the Mendacious Oracle's second in command, though depending on the GMs plans and how organised the Heretics are as a group, several demagogues may be working under her and deliver the invitations in her stead. If the GM needs the name of a ship to transport the Heretics he should use the *Bloodscent*, an Idolator-class raider starship that has been furnished by the Covenant X. Such is the nature of the Screaming Vortex that wherever the Heretics are currently, the voyage takes a week.

Some of the plot hooks contain different demegogue characters. These characters can be mixed, traded, or replaced entirely amongst the hooks as the GM sees fit.

Some hooks provide Tertiary Goals as well that work better for specific individuals than others. Use these hooks to provide individuals with incentive to go off on their own and achieve personal goals while visiting the Temple. Some are specifically at odds with others: Heretics may have to work together to succeed, but that doesn't mean that they should not compete over the details. Even if the GM uses the Invitation to Greatness Hook for all the characters, he can still use the other hooks to give certain characters Tertiary Goals.

Invitation to Greatness (General Hook)

For an established group of Heretics, this hook provides a hook for the entire group. Elika the Seer hands the Heretics the invitation and offers a detailed explanation of the temple's history to those interested. Her skills of observation serve her well, as does her social acumen: if the Heretics seem suspicious, she obliges by being reassuring. If they seem not to care, she keeps things short, smoothly facilitating the journey to the temple. In any case, she treats them in a friendly and deferential manner. All arrangements have been made to transport the group to Kymerus. Apparently, the Mendacious Oracle has done some research on his marks and knows them well enough that his demagogue can provide for them accordingly.

When Elika arrives and hands the Heretics their respective invitations, read the following:

> *"Please excuse my intrusion, masters," begs a markedly stout, middle-aged woman dressed in robes of animal hide. She bows quite low as if to show she were not worthy of your presence, but the act reeks of manipulation and false flattery. "I've been sent on a mission by the Mendacious Oracle of the Temple of Lies—surely you've heard of him? He begs you accept his invitation; so important is it that he threatened me with death were I not to impart these precise words: 'the future of the Screaming Vortex depends on it.'"*

She then hands the Heretics their invitations (page 392) and explains the details concerning the Covenant X's transportation methods and other arrangements. It is not unlikely that they have heard of the Temple, as it has a place in the history of the Vortex as either a site of great religious significance or as a player of political games. In any case, the Temple is a famous store of texts both ancient and recent. Rarely do folk of common birth have the opportunity to peruse the shelves of lore. Given the breadth of knowledge to be gained from a visit, provide the Heretics with the following tertiary objective.

Tertiary Goal: The Temple of Lies provides an opportunity for Heretics to delve into lore normally too arcane or rare to access otherwise. Anyone willing to do some digging and spend some time in research during their brief visit may purchase one Common, Forbidden, or Scholastic Lore Skill at half the current cost.

Find Damon's Third Treatise on Matters Rare (Psyker, Sorcerer, or Apostate Character Hook)

Over ten thousand years ago, a man now only known as Damon wrote the theoretical treatise on psychic matters of his time, *Damon's Third Tretis on Matters Rare*. Access to the remnants of the tome require a chaperone and a special invitation to one of the highest chambers of the Temple of Lies. Even then, some portions of it remain off limits to any other than the temple's highest magisters, barred from even the most important of guests.

A missive arrives—the Mendacious Oracle's invitation—hand-delivered by a demagogue named Onaeus the Strange. Perhaps a bit overly formal, Onaeus appears no stranger than any other cultist of the God of Change. He answers any of the Heretics' questions though provides only mundane details such as the location of the temple, the name of the Mendacious Oracle, and, of course, the importance of the invitation. It just so happens that an invitation of this nature provides access to the chamber where the text is stored. Upon receiving this invitation, a successful **Routine (+20) Scholastic Lore (Archaic, Legend, Occult, or Philosophy) Test** or a **Routine (+20) Forbidden Lore (Daemonology, Heresy, Mutants, Psykers, or Xenos) Test** allows the Heretic to "remember" that this rare grimoire is rumoured to exist in the Temple. The GM should emphasize that this is incredibly valuable and something the Heretic would like to take for himself. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

> *A robed figure approaches you as though he were a familiar friend and nods pleasantly. "I am most pleased to make your acquaintance, I am Onaeus from the Temple of Lies. I realise this is a most strange occurrence, but I must deliver you this message from my master, the Mendacious Oracle Renkard Copax. Do oblige us and accept." He hands you a small missive, sealed in dark red, crusted wax.*

Tertiary Goal: Steal the remains of *Damon's Third Treatise*. A Heretic who successfully does so receives 2 Infamy and 250 Experience.

Destroy Despicable Sorcery (Khorne Character Hook)

The Heretic receives the invitation from a lowly coward of a demagogue, Tristam Denieri. He fears the recipient of the missive and would prefer to move on as quickly as possible. He uses contempt and sarcasm as a means to cover his insecurity in the Heretic's presence. Once the invitation is delivered and the Heretic's questions have been answered, Denieri arranges for the trip to Kymerus. Read the following:

> *A short, snivelling man with a nose not unlike a swine's approaches you. He looks hardly up to the task to speak with you in the way he gathers his robes in sweaty palms and grits his teeth. "It is to my dismay that my station in life leads me to the task of errand boy but as I am sure a person like you must understand, I have little choice," he sneers. "The master of the Temple of Lies bids me give you this," he hands you a missive sealed in dark red, crusted wax.*

Either the Heretic himself remembers (or perhaps an ally informs him) that the temple houses a number of artefacts, some of significant value. One such artefact, *Damon's Third Treatise on Matters Rare*, would surely win the Heretic a name in history as well as strike a blow against the cowardly, weakling followers of Tzeentch.

Tertiary Goal: Destroy the treatise. This objective may take longer than the adventure itself, especially if another Heretic has taken it for himself. Once successful however, the Heretic receives 2 Infamy and 250 Experience.

Sacred Flesh (Nurgle Character Hook)

The sole privilege to study the twisted flesh of the crew of the *Light of Ascension* has been left in the hands of the minions of Tzeentch. An interested party, the daemon-possessed savant Gresh, recently learned that the Mendacious Oracle of the Temple of Lies has sent an invitation to a devotee of Nurgle and approaches that Heretic in hopes of hiring him to secure a sample or two of the tainted Imperial flesh stored on display in the temple's garden shrines. Past attempts to secure such a sample have failed. Gresh is known as the Plaguehunter of the infamous Vorxec Calvarius (see page 342), and believes the flesh is something he could bring to his master. Given the Heretic's potential as a man of destiny in the Screaming Vortex, the Gresh has decided to give it another try.

The temple's invitation is delivered by Elika The Seer (see the read-aloud text from the "Invitation to Greatness" section). She approaches and invites them. At a later point, when the Heretic finds himself alone, Gresh approaches him. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

> *The air around you suddenly chills and you catch the whiff of rot and decay. A hunched figure in tattered robes steps out from the nearby shadows, shadows you could have sworn held nothing.*
>
> *The figure holds up its hands. "Please, master, I mean you no harm." When it speaks, it sounds as if two mouths are speaking at almost the same time and, when it raises its head, you see why. Under the hood is an elderly man, with another face grown into the side of his head and neck. The face apes his speech in a high-pitched voice.*
>
> *"I am Gresh, emissary of the Dread Calvarius. I have learned you are travelling to the Temple of Lies. While you are there, I was wondering if you would be interested in carrying out a task? My master would be...most grateful."*

Tertiary Goal: Attain and deliver a sample of twisted flesh to Gresh. If successful, the Heretic receives 2 Infamy and 200 Experience, as well as a favour from a powerful warband leader in the Screaming Vortex (which is partially where the Infamy comes from).

Arrival: Carrion Corpse



Carrion Corpse is the planet of Kymerus' sole spaceport, and thus the lifeline for those meagre few who scratch a living on the planet's surface. This is where the Heretics land upon the *Bloodscent's* arrival. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

> *Your travels aboard the* Bloodscent *were generally unnotable. The ship's Captain, one Volin De'Trax, kept to himself during the journey and most of his several thousand crew did likewise. In fact, they treated your presence as if it was both auspicious and dangerous in equal measure and avoided you accordingly. Such is the stigma associated with the Mendacious Oracle's summons.*
>
> *Once in orbit over Kymerus, you descended to the surface via one of the starship's landers, a boxy, ungainly craft. From the air, the spaceport of Carrion Corpse is a desolate and unappealing location. A few scattered buildings dug into rocky hillsides, along with three landing bays hollowed into a nearby cliff face. Your shuttle lands in the central bay, and no sooner have you left the ship than it takes off, headed back into orbit.*
>
> *Elika The Seer leads you from the deserted bay. "I must travel ahead to announce your presence at the Temple," she informs you.*
>
> *Approximately five miles separate the village and the temple itself and only two or so miles between the port and the temple's shrine garden. Temperatures range to the extreme, reaching below freezing at night to well over 110 degrees during the day. What diversity the climate has in temperature it lacks in seasons—over the planet's entire surface, the year is dry and follows consistent, daily oscillations of heat and cold. The sky ranges from a reddish-orange to a sickly pale green between dawn and dusk and a dark blue to black after sundown. One moon, Elorum, orbits the world followed by a trail of meteoroids that occasionally shower through Kymerus' atmosphere. The soil is dry, supports only weeds that seem to thrive on the rotting flesh of the few animal species to call Kymerus home, and ranges in colour between brown, amber, and brick red.*

The port provides a place for the Heretics to assemble, and, also, to wait if the GM is using the Mendacious Oracle's invitation to assemble the group of player characters for the first time. Depending on whether or not the group has any interest in Carrion Corpse, the GM can have them simply stay the night, before proceeding to the Temple during the next day. Alternatively, he can have the wait take several days. While the wait takes place, the Heretics are afforded access to the Temple grounds, just not the Mendacious Oracle himself. This gives the Heretics a short time to try and accomplish some Tertiary Goals, but also gives the Mendacious Oracle time to plot his ambush.

Accommodations have been set in the shattered remains of a Halo heavy lift barge and the hillside it crashed into. Theon is a vile wretch who laid claim to the barge so that he could swindle those in desperate need of shelter of their goods and coin. Theon received a great many juvenat treatments and, though he does not reveal his age, appears to be no more than twenty years old. He surrounds himself with youth as best he can and shows an obvious discomfort with the aged. In fact, he is seriously deranged and has a pathological loathing of those his senior that on occasion has led him to commit debauched and clandestine murders against aged patrons. Any Heretics who appear old are likely to receive little warmth from Theon, though they are safe enough as they have arrived under the Temple's protection.

Still, if not friendly, he at least treats patrons in a businesslike fashion and leaves them to their own devices. Private rooms have been reserved for the Heretics to help avoid possible intrusions from any who may plot against the Mendacious Oracle's guests.

In the port, the Heretics may search for information related to the temple, Kymerus, and the local gossip with little effort. **With a Routine (+20) Inquiry Test**, the Heretics can secure any piece of the following information. The more successes on the Test, the more information the GM can reveal:

- Carrion Corpse, composed of no more than 200 occupants at any time, subsists off of modest importation from other worlds in order to feed and maintain its inhabitants. These include preservative-laden and non-perishable foodstuffs, water rations (since most of the water on Kymerus is in its atmosphere), and basic supplies to support the world's few functioning corpse-starch vats. In exchange, most settlements on the planet mine ores to be exported. More costly imports come in the form of delicacies and finery for the Temple, delivered via ancient compacts with nearby worlds.
- The port exchanges services with the Temple for its main source of income, but makes little profit after importation costs. Renkard Copax, though formally only in power over the temple, has significant influence over the port, which is "run" by a loose and shifting alliance of several port elders.
- The same families have populated the port and served the temple for generations—birth defects and peculiar behaviour abound, as do minor and disturbing mutations brought on by the Vortex itself. In most cases, they cannot afford to hire a ship to take them off of Kymerus and find that there are worse trappings than living in the temple's shadow. Even still, Mendacious Oracle Renkard Copax is known for his excesses and though ports interact with him personally only on rare occasions—he disappears for months at a time when exploring texts of lore and other curiosities—when he demands entertainment, death, dismemberment, and humiliation follow. If it were not for his tremendous power in the Screaming Vortex and his considerable defences—at least compared to the capabilities of the port's inhabitants themselves—they would do away with him post haste.
- Many villagers distrust Theron, but none are willing to say why. This information is inferred from observation rather than carousing with the locals. His small staff is youthful, and many seem unnaturally so. His guests range in ages,

however, though he shows a preference for the younger among them and treats the others with outright disdain when he knows he can get away with it. The port offers no other accommodations and, given the extreme nature of the environment, most elect to stick it out at the lift barge regardless of the way they are treated.

A Challenge of Arms (Optional Encounter)

The Heretics' arrival in the Carrion Corpse does not go unnoticed and, once they are settled, the GM can use this encounter to reinforce the lawless and chaotic nature of the Screaming Vortex, as well as the inhabitants' worship of the Ruinous Powers.

A warrior who calls himself the Disciple of Crox lives just outside Carrion Corpse, scratching a meagre existence in the barrens of Kymerus. So blessed with the Gifts of the Blood God Khorne that he is barely human, he wanders the world seeking fellow warriors to challenge to single combat. Thus far, he has not been bested, and he dedicates each kill to Khorne. He is a wandering berserker without the sanity to leave this planet.

Now, having seen the shuttle land at Carrion Corpse, he travels into town to seek a new foe. The locals have learned to avoid the Disciple, and his own code of honour means he does not kill those who do not accept his challenge. However, the Heretics may be another matter.

From outside of the barge, you hear a roaring bellow, echoing around Carrion Corpse. "I am the Disciple of Crox," a deep voice shouts. "Who will challenge a champion of the Lord of Skulls?"

Looking outside, you see a massive giant of a man, clad in plates of ceramite armour heavily caked in blood and dust. His face is hidden behind a steel mask, worked into the snarling visage of a dog. He carries one weapon: a long, two-handed chainaxe.

After a long moment, the giant shouts again. "I am the Disciple of Crox! Who will challenge a champion of the Lord of Skulls?"

The Disciple remains outside the tavern for the entire night, shouting his challenge. If none answer by that point, he gives up and wanders away (the tavern's patrons inform the Heretics of this). However, the Heretics may decide to answer the Disciple's challenge.

The guidelines of the challenge are simple. Single combat, melee weapons only, and no quarter given. The profile for the Disciple is provided on page 390:

If a devotee of Khorne, Nurgle, or an unaligned Heretic challenges and defeats the Disciple, they gain +1 Infamy. The Disciple is well known on Kymerus and beyond (via the supply ships that regularly stop here) and such a feat earns respect.

If a devotee of Slaanesh or Tzeentch challenges and defeats the Disciple, they gain +1 Infamy and +2 Corruption Points, as their dark patron delights in the slaying of a rival's champion.

However, if the Heretics attack the Disciple en masse, or try to kill him with ranged weaponry or offensive psychic powers, the Disciple goes berserk and tries to kill as many of them as possible before falling. The Heretics gain no Infamy and, in fact, gain +2 Corruption Points due to Khorne's disfavour. This counts as earning Corruption Points through a Failing.

To the Temple of Lies

Until the Mendacious Oracle summons the Heretics, they have full and free access to the temple's dark libraries, shrines, and attendants. This is a rare gift, an honour accorded only to individuals of high stature and power within the Vortex (the Heretics being some of these individuals). A half-track groundcar operated by a surly individual named Orick takes them back and forth from the temple and its garden of shrines. Unlike those few malcontents who live at Carrion Corpse, he is a servant of the Temple and has even travelled a bit around the Screaming Vortex. He despises the temple's atmosphere and prefers the company of the locals to the demagogues, library servitors, and faceless guards that haunt the place, and relates best with those who tell tales of battle and stellar travel to dry talk and dusty archives. When not carting the elite back and forth between Carrion Corpse and the temple, he brings supplies, slaves, and the occasional sacrifice to the Temple.

Orick may prove to be a potent ally of the Heretics towards the end of the adventure. Orick lets on that he would like to lead another life but feels burdened by his work on Kymerus and is unable to raise the necessary funds to board a ship and leave for good. The Mendacious Oracle's dominance and eccentric tastes takes its toll on Orick's spirits. This may prove useful at the adventure's climax.

Orick, like the port's inhabitants, is aware that the Heretics have been summoned for the Mendacious Oracle to read them their fate. He can provide cautionary tales to dissuade them from snooping around where they don't belong—namely the Akrinus Chamber prior to being called in by Renkard Copax. He serves as a good source of information regarding the temple's defences (see **The Temple of Lies** section above for more details) and might volunteer that information to someone willing to reward him with an interesting story or two. Furthermore, he is very familiar with the gardens and shrines around the temple itself and suggests the Heretics visit what he terms "the preservatories," where the remains of the *Light of Ascension*'s crew are kept.

The Heretics trip to the Temple is uneventful, unless the GM wishes to add in the Death on Small Wings encounter.

Death on Small Wings (Optional Encounter)

This encounter is designed to be added almost anywhere in the first part of the adventure, but is likely best used the first time the Heretics travel to the Temple of Lies. At the GM's discretion, it can either be a brief but memorable combat encounter to emphasise the bizarre nature of the worlds in the Screaming Vortex, or it can be one facet of the Mendacious Oracle's plots.

When the *Light of Ascension* crashed, most aboard died. Some, however, did not. Among them were the majority of the ship's sizeable Cherub population. The tiny mechanical minions swarmed from the wreck, into the wilds of Kymerus. Through means unknown, their population has swelled since

then and their feral and spiteful natures have changed them from flying nuisance to winged menace. Stranger still, they have mutated significantly, gifted by the God of Change with additional tiny limbs, poison drenched fangs, or scaly flesh. Now large flocks of the little terrors wait amongst the rocky outcroppings of the wilds, ready to swoop down on lone travellers or small groups and tear them to bloody bits.

When the Heretics venture outside the town (the Feral Cherubs won't attack anyone within Carrion Corpse or the Temple, as they are somewhat cowardly and frightened of large groups), they can make a **Difficult (–10) Awareness Test** to note that they're followed at a great distance by a strange-looking winged creature. At some point, the GM can require them to travel through a steep-sided ravine (it doesn't matter where this ravine is, but ideally it can be on the road between Carrion Corpse and the Temple). At this point the Heretics can make an **Opposed Challenging (+0) Awareness Test** versus an **Ordinary (+10) Stealth Test** by the Feral Cherubs to see the creatures creeping around the rocks, preparing to strike. Anyone who passed the previous Awareness Test gains a +10 bonus to this Test. Those who fail the Opposed Test are Surprised for the first Round of Combat.

The Cherubs swarm in as a Horde, attacking until they fall below Magnitude 10, at which point the survivors flee madly in all directions. If the warband contains no Chaos Space Marines, 10 individual Cherubs attack instead.

If the horde attacks when the warband is travelling to the Temple with their guide, Orick, he hides under his truck squeezing off random and ineffectual shots with a pump action shotgun until they're gone. The GM can choose to have this simply be a random encounter with Kymerus's "wildlife." However, if he prefers to play up the conspiracy aspects of the game, he can have Copax summon the Cherubs, unable to resist the chance to try eliminating the Heretics before they get to his Temple. If the GM wishes to go this route, a **Difficult (–10) Psyniscience Test** after the conflict reveals the stench of psychic manipulation and gives the Heretic an idea that someone was pushing these things to do his or her bidding.



ARRIVAL

When the Heretics first arrive to the Temple, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

> *You crest the last hill and finally see the Temple of Lies. A vast field of wreckage and rubble stretches out before you, many square kilometres across. In the centre of the field, dug deep into the ground, is a starship. Long ago, a titanic voidship crashed into Kymerus's surface. The impact broke the vessel, though it was not destroyed entirely, leaving the monolithic ruins amidst a vast plain of debris.*
>
> *You can see that in the centuries since, someone has built on the vessel, adding double doors in the side so large that you can make them out from several miles away. You can also just make out the tiny shapes of Screamers of Tzeentch, daemonic flyers circling around the Temple. Some even appear to be pulling disk-shaped chariots through the air.*

Members of the Inevitable Guard escort the Heretics on their visit to the gardens in order to prevent any mishaps with any of the other patrons. The grounds are also patrolled by Screamers of Tzeentch, barely kept in check by the powers of the Oracle. They sometimes obey the commands of the Guards, though they are murderous and likely to hunt and kill anyone they find alone near the Temple.

The preservatories number four in total and are arrayed somewhat evenly about the temple grounds inside some of the larger pieces of *Light of Ascension*'s hull. Specimens include crushed, incinerated, and impaled bodily remains, preserved as though just killed. Each specimen is kept in a sphere of multi-coloured sorcery, preserving the item indefinitely. Among the most interesting sights are the visages of members of the bridge crew. Studied by an anatomist from the temple many centuries ago, it was determined that the musculature of the crew's faces has been reconfigured somehow, causing the faces to be contorted into expressions otherwise impossible in a human face but still quite obviously expressions of pain and despair. Eyelids pulled open beyond sanity, tongues literally twisted, and muscles anchored on teeth or to other parts of the face entirely rather than on the jaw are a few examples. These unpleasant displays are considered to be the touch of a daemon of some skill and malicious ability, possibly even the hand of a Greater Daemon of Tzeentch itself.

INSIDE THE TOWER

Once the Heretics have had their fill of the various sites about the gardens, Orick brings them to the temple tower and directs them to the gate. He remains outside but keeps a vox bead set to a channel to receive messages from the Heretics should they decide to communicate with him or require assistance. Just inside, guides await to assist the guests and prevent uninvited individuals from entering the tower at all. Heretics may take personal guides or go as a group, depending on their goals, and may request access to almost all tower libraries.

As a rule, the rarer the knowledge, the greater the ascent up the stairs is to reach it. Heretics who climb to any significant height and show an interest in the architecture or the possibility

Securing a Sample

A mission during daytime to attain a sample of the perverse flesh is likely impossible. Still, with all the crowds and guards present, a Heretic could examine the space to determine how thorough the preservatories' security systems are. A successful **Ordinary (+10) Awareness Test** reveals patterns in the guard's movements as well as areas occluded from their view.

A series of obstacles must be overcome to gain a sample of the crew's flesh. First, the Heretic must get through the gates or over the fence and into the gardens themselves. The gates are closed during the evening dark. A canny Heretic might hide until that time, making an Opposed Stealth Test against the guards Awareness (assume the guards have a 45 on this Test). If he tries to get in by climbing the fence, he has to make a **Challenging (+0) Athletics Test** to climb up the bars and a **Difficult (–10) Acrobatics Test** to get over the bars without suffering any damage from the spikes while doing so. The Athletics Test is straightforward—if he passes it, he climbs the fence. If not, he must try again and, if he fails by three or more degrees, he draws the attention of a guard. Success on the Acrobatics Test results in the Heretic climbing over the fence without harm. For each degree of failure on the Acrobatics Test, the Heretic suffers 1 damage not reduced by armour or Toughness bonus from the spikes above the gate. The spikes are ensorcelled and twist to dig cruelly into the Heretic's flesh—if he takes damage he counts as being damaged by a Crippling (2) weapon until he can find medical attention and the wounds strangely refuse to heal.

Finally, he may decide to attack the guards at the gates, but this obviously means altering his relationship with the temple in a significant way. The guards let no one into the temple grounds under any circumstances in the late hours of the night unless they belong to the temple in some official way, and such an occurrence is a rarity. The guards hold a key to the gate which may be won by either killing or incapacitating one of them. Should this happen, unless the Heretic can conceal his tracks and keep his antics a secret, the Inevitable Guards capture him as soon as they are able. It is possible the Mendacious Oracle may take this opportunity to dispose of the Heretic secretly, but only if he feels his companions will not learn of his treachery.

Otherwise, the Seer leads the Heretic into the Temple and summons a floating disk. She offers them a stark choice. Step onto the disk and await the Prophecy or die. She explains the Oracle does not want them dead, but if they resist they have no choice. Should the Heretics accept the disk, they will not be harmed, but will not be able to take any actions until the Prophecy.

In reality, Copax would love to kill off the Heretics, but is afraid of arousing the suspicions of any companions and would rather kill them all at the same time.

Once inside the gardens, the Heretic must then sneak into one of the preservatories, again making a **Challenging (+0) Stealth Test** opposed by a **Challenging (+0) Awareness Test** made by a single guard patrolling the garden. If he fails, the guard attempts to arrest the Heretic and, if he resists, calls for help from the two guards at the gate (assuming they are not yet slain). Once successfully in one of the preservatories, the Heretic must then succeed on a **Challenging (+0) Security Test** or, if not trained in the Security Skill, a **Hard (–20) Tech-Use Test** to deactivate a casket and gain a sample of the flesh.

of having to navigate the labyrinthine stairs themselves may make a **Very Hard (–30) Awareness** or a **Difficult (–10) Navigation Ground Test**. Success allows them to navigate the Chamber without a guide, getting where they want to go. Furthermore, Heretics trained in the Psyniscience skill may make an **Ordinary (+10) Psyniscience Test** to reveal infrequent attempts to probe visitors' minds for ill intent.

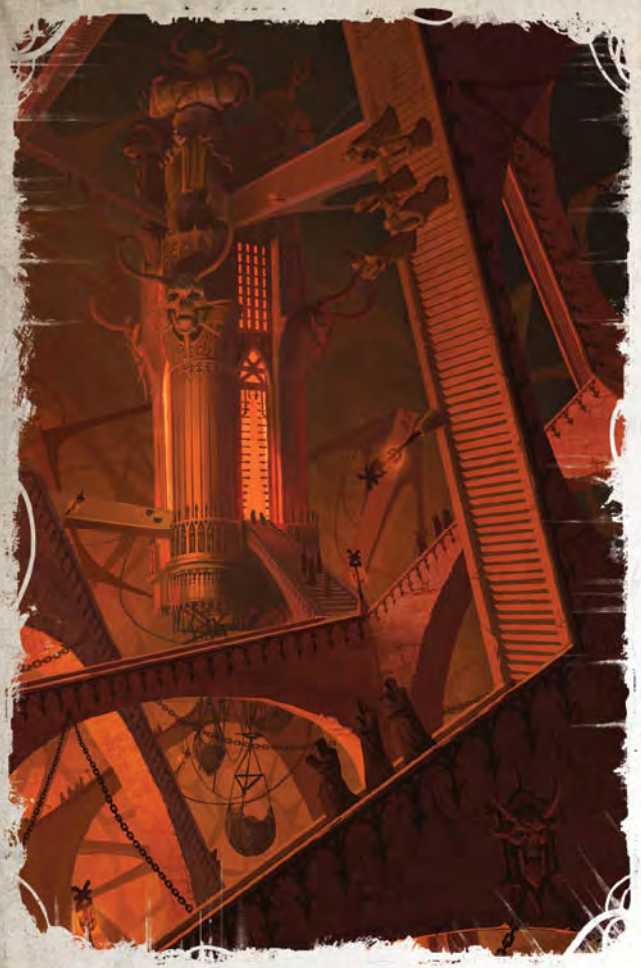
If the Heretic is attempting to take something or destroy something in the libraries, he should make a **Hard (–20) Willpower Test**, opposed by a **Challenging (+0) Psyniscience Test** by the Temple Psyker. If he is aware of the psyker's intrusion (i.e., via a successful Psyniscience Test of his own) the Willpower Test becomes **Ordinary (+10)** instead. If the Heretic wins, his thoughts and intentions are hidden from the psyker. If he loses, his plots are revealed. Guards follow the Heretic and noticeably hold him in suspicion. This is done to dissuade him from causing trouble whilst not discouraging him from remaining long enough to meet with the Mendacious Oracle. If the Heretic attempts to vandalise, steal, or otherwise harm the temple's property, the Inevitable Guards interfere and kill (or at least imprison) him.

Successfully detecting the mental probes allows the Heretic to subvert them and, if he wishes, subvert attempts to probe the minds of his allies as well. Only one success is necessary, even when crossing the path of other temple psykers—the probes are neither potent nor subtle, and their prevention is quite easy as long as one is aware they are at work.

Each individual chamber is a repository of forbidden and lost knowledge dedicated to a specific set of topics ranging from bestiaries and medicae libraries to asteroid geology, daemonology, and Imperial history. Knowledge concerning most any subject lurks here on a shelf or left on one of the various crystalline plinths that strech across the centre of the room. Each room is guarded, two armed men at the door, and attended by at least one temple official. No space is spared and walls are covered from floor to ceiling with texts and more; floor space equally well covered with tables, chairs, carts, and servitors who perform menial tasks. Depending on the nature of the room, more than tomes may be found. For instance, there are rooms full of voidmaps and anatomical specimens alongside tomes on geography and anatomy. Though the rooms are arranged in some arcane order, their portals bear no marks to distinguish them. The rooms also shift and warp subtly, and if one tarries on a room too long, they may look up to find the layout completely different than before.

THE SUMMONS

At a point convenient for the GM, the Mendacious Oracle summons the Heretics to the Akrinus Chamber through his demagogue, Elika the Seer. She collects them one by one if necessary, requesting that they interrupt their activities in the temple and make haste, for the Mendacious Oracle is not a



patient man. On the way up, she explains how honoured they should be to receive this audience but warns them to watch how they conduct themselves in his presence. Her warnings come from personal experience; the Mendacious Oracle takes his position seriously, suffers no insult, is known for his volatile temper, and is not one to be trifled with.

The Seer lifts a large, square trapdoor fitted into the ceiling of the Chamber of Stairs leading to the Akrinus Chamber. The scent of dust and old paper lingers on the still air. Renkard sits at a table near the centre of the room, at first so engrossed in the text before him—the *Torestus*—that he is unaware that his guests have arrived. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

> *"Leave us, slave," the Copax mutters as he closes an old tome before him. Elika steps down through the adamantium trapdoor and locks it closed. "It's a shame to think that the future of the temple lies in that pathetic thing, don't you agree? It seems disgraceful that this illustrious place should be left in her quite incapable hands. Fortunately, that will not have to be the case... and that is part of the reason I have summoned you here. Make yourselves comfortable in this retreat of mine. Come, we have much to discuss."*

After this introduction, the High Oracle begins to question the Heretics about their past. If they appear defensive or unwilling to answer his questions, he assures them that this is merely a matter of protocol, to make sure that he is dealing with the right individuals. The GM should make use of the information his players gave him, including all the dirt the Heretics want to keep from one another. Renkard Copax's goal here is to ensure that the Heretics are the men and women he is looking for. They are, of course—he simply needs to dig through their biographies for a short time to ascertain that for himself. As they speak to him, he consults the *Torestus*, seemingly to verify what they are telling him. Make a point of this as the Heretics talk with the Mendacious Oracle, the text should become important and they should be curious about what it has to do with them by the time the conversation is over with. He's aware that they may have secrets to keep from one another and would prefer to not rouse their emotions unduly and create any conflict before the process is done. Even still, he can ask questions that reveal glimpses of their past without revealing his true motives. Individually, the Heretics should suspect one another—when their backgrounds are truly suspicious, that is —by the end of their encounter with the Mendacious Oracle without knowing any gory details.

Partway through the Mendacious Oracle's questioning, he is interrupted by a wisp of multi-hued warp-stuff that drifts through the floor of the chamber, appearing to be a cloud of smoke that twists and writhes constantly. This is a daemonic familiar belonging to the Mendacious Oracle. In a rasping and whispery voice, it informs him that his "other guests" have arrived. Copax looks surprised and a bit distraught before recovering his poise and dismissing the familiar. If the Heretics ask him about these "other guests," he mutters something about other supplicants and insists they should proceed to the Foretelling of the *Torestus*.

Finding the Third Treatise

Working on his own, a Heretic who knows of the text must spend several hours or even days to locate it in the upper reaches of the temple tower. GMs should allow the Heretic sufficient time to access the tome and attempt to steal or destroy it, whatever his goal might be. This search requires a series of Awareness Tests, each followed by a Logic Test to process the strange system of organisation used to arrange the temple's libraries. A successful **Difficult (–10) Awareness Test** shows that after five hours of careful searching, some headway has been made and the Heretic may attempt a **Challenging (+0) Logic Test** to locate the text itself. Failing this Awareness Test means that his searching has been frustrated by dead ends, wrong turns, and five hours lost. Once access has been gained to the Chamber that holds it, some sleight of hand and stealth—represented by a **Challenging (+0) Stealth Test**—is required to take a look at or even steal it.

If, on the other hand, the Heretic asks a guide to take him to the text, the guide leads him to the librarian specifically in charge of the text who then supervises the Heretic until he completes his viewing—even if that should take several hours or several visits. Stealing or destroying the text under these circumstances proves to be quite difficult without attracting a direct confrontation with a number of Inevitable Guards. Some very careful social manoeuvring is required and even then, the librarian knows that losing the text means significant consequences, perhaps even death, and is unlikely to let it out of his sight.



Of course, these "other guests" are actually the Prophets of the Blighted Path. Copax now knows his time has run out—he must spring his trap and dispose of the Heretics, while he goes to deal with the Word Bearers.

The Conversation Dies

The Mendacious Oracle smiles upon deciding that the information he gathered sufficiently identifies the Heretics as the men he seeks. He thanks them for their time and tells them that he is ready to provide an explanation and the Foretelling they have been promised. He closes the tome after reading a line or two. Read the following:

> *The Mendacious Oracle gathers stray hairs behind his ear with a fungus infected fingernail and begins to laugh, at first a chuckle and then uproariously. "Fools!" he laughs at you, and thrusts his open hands into the air, gesturing toward the storm-ridden sky. The glass ceiling shatters, sending shards out into the wind as chariots pulled by ray-like monstrosities wheel overhead. In the same instance, Copax makes a vicious swiping motion downwards with his outstretched finger, drawing a glowing line in mid-air. He steps behind the line, vanishing as if the line represents some invisible corner. In his wake, a complete, unnatural silence blankets the room.*

From overhead, a number of men leap into the room as the Screamer chariots pass close by. The five guards and two psykers (plus one additional guard per Heretic in the group) intend this battle to go quickly and smoothly without attracting the attention of others in the tower. Regardless of what they intend, the guards do not get the massacre they are looking for, but give the Heretics a good fight. Using his sorcery, the Mendacious Oracle puts a barrier against sound up, deadening all noise within the Akrinus Chamber. The chamber is thirty metres in diameter, leaving plenty of space for everyone to manoeuvre. The periphery is lined with tome-shelves that extend out sideways into the room like the spokes on a wheel. Tables can be flipped for cover and offer some protection as they are heavy and made of twisted metal (a more common element on a world nearly bereft of wood). The GM should use the Cursed Oracle profile on page 360 for the Temple Psyker. The Inevitable Guard profiles are provided on page 391.

As the battle rages, wind whips around the exposed room, tossing tomes and knocking people about. However, the battle is completely silent. Copax's charm against sound stills any noise generated within the room. The Screamers continue to fly overhead, letting out terrifying screeches, but these are the only sounds audible.

The silence imposes a –20 penalty to all Awareness Tests and, at the GM's discretion, Talents like Heightened Senses (Hearing) do not provide their usual benefits. In addition, if the GM feels it will not unduly frustrate his players, he can require them to abstain from planning any strategy during the battle, instead only announcing what their characters do during their turns. (Although if a Heretic has a means of communicating other than words, such as telepathy, this is a perfect opportunity to use it!)

Halfway through the battle (if half or more of the assailants are eliminated), Copax's final insurance against the Heretics strikes. A phase-assassin, a silent killer imbued with warp-sigils that grant her exceptional stealth and strength, attacks from behind the Heretics. Copax has one of these fiendish killers on retainer from the Sorcerers of Q'Sal. She attacks the closest

Moderation in all Things, Even Encounters

Descending the tower is something of a free-for-all, requiring GMs to think on their feet and make plans based the Heretic's wound totals and what the Players seem to be enjoying. If the group enjoys the risks and glory of combat, feel free to throw in as many encounters as is prudent and keeps the fun coming. If the Heretics fared poorly against the initial group of guards, cut back the combat and focus the challenge on navigating out of the tower itself. Utilise their wit and skills at stealth, deception, and physical endurance (after all, descending story after story of shifting stairs is no mean task). Finally, the most challenging combat scene comes near the end of the adventure. GMs should pace the descent with that in mind—nothing kills the fun more than jumping into the big fight broken, bruised, and out of firepower.

Heretic, attempting to cripple more than kill—if she generates Zealous Hatred she moves on to the next Heretic. Her goal is to disrupt the Heretics so the remaining guards can kill them.

After battle, if the Heretics decide to keep one guard for interrogation—they should have a number of questions at this point—the guard knows little. A successful **Very Hard (–30) Intimidation or Interrogation Test** reveals that the Mendacious Oracle offered this particular group of trusted guards a significant reward for both killing the Heretics and staying their mouths at the drinking dens including in the company of the temple's followers.

The *Torestus* sits at the table where the Mendacious Oracle left it just prior to the battle. Though exposed like the rest of the debris in the room, the tome sits calm as though in the eye of a storm. If the Heretics need a reminder after the fight, GMs should give it to them. After all, it is the key item of this adventure and the gateway to many more.

In addition, the Phase-Assassin wields a true Daemon Weapon, a short stabbing sword with a flat black blade shot through with red, glowing veins. It contains a spiteful but unnamed warp spirit, with a Willlpower of 38 and three Attributes (Vicious twice and Wounding), giving it the profile found in the Phase-Assassin's stats.

THE DESCENT

Assuming the Heretics survive the attack, they now need to decide on what to do next. What they likely are unaware of is that besides the Mendacious Oracle and the Chaos Space Marines currently at the temple entrance, no one from the temple is aware of their predicament. Should they decide to descend the tower without firing bolter and brandishing sword, they should run into few problems. That said, significant and obvious injuries also signify that something is amiss just as well as drawn weaponry. If, on the other hand, they exit ready for battle, guards and temple psykers move quickly to apprehend them and investigate the Akrinus Chamber.

Several factors from early scenes are important to this descent. If the Heretics paid attention during their explorations of the tower—and succeeded on either their Awareness or Navigation Tests—they can make their own way down with little backtracking or dead ends. Also, if the Heretics succeeded in stalling the efforts of the temple psykers with a Psyniscience Test, psychic powers used to track them are equally thwarted.

In either case, failure on these checks should result in an escalation of the challenge to escape. Unsuccessfully studying or memorising the passages and winding stairs leads to dead ends, more time trying to get out, and, if the Heretics let on that they killed the guards in the Akrinus Chamber, combat encounters in precarious places. If the Heretics failed to protect their minds from the temple psykers and their continual scanning, their thoughts are plain to see, meaning they can be tracked and identified as foes of the temple regardless of mundane attempts to mask this.

Alerted guards shoot without talking. If the Heretics make a point of trying to talk their way out of the situation, the GM can give them a chance, but more likely than not, the guards act as if the Heretics are armed and dangerous—which, of course, they are. Feats of deception or intimidation are required at least, and may provide additional time to escape, but little more.

TO COPAX'S SURPRISE…

If suffering a surprise attack and having to navigate stories of labyrinthine stairs, possibly while being chased by a number of hostile guards and psykers were not enough, the Heretics must now deal with the Mendacious Oracle himself.

Copax has just met the four Word Bearers Chaos Space Marines at the entrance to the Temple. The only other occupants are ranks of Inevitable Guards, drawn up in an escort formation.

The Oracle, with his back to you, is triumphantly discussing something with a group of four Chaos Space Marines clad in crimson armour and wearing the insignia of the Word Bearers. One looks with surprise at you and the Oracle turns. Shock drains the blood from his face and he staggers backwards.

"What is this, Copax?" one of the Word Bearers growls. "If the prophesied ones never reached the Temple as you claimed, then who are these?"

Copax opens his mouth to speak, but one of the other Chaos Space Marines cuts him off. "They are proof of his treachery!" he snarls, reaching for his bolter. "The Prophets of the Blighted Path will see you dead, Copax!"

At this, Copax realizes he has nothing to lose. He slams his staff to the ground and, as one, the guards fall on the Word Bearers, striving to kill them. With them distracted, he turns on the Heretics, attempting to finish them off himself.

Copax has one final trick up his sleeve, and it is possibly his most deadly. Long ago, he acquired a Tesseract Box from the infamous Hereteks of Forge Polux. Inside the labyrinthine twists of the pocket dimension, he trapped a Cackling Abomination traded from a Dark Eldar Haemonculus. His first action in combat is to draw and throw the Tesseract Box to the floor, where it breaks open and the Abomination bounds forth, diving on the Heretics. The combat proceeds with the Heretics fighting Copax and the Abomination, and the Word Bearers fighting the Guards.

Using Copax

Copax is surprisingly tough for his withered frame, a tribute of his dark masters. However, he is not a front-line combatant. He relies on his minions or his Cackling Abomination to handle that, while he hangs back and fights from afar.

Copax uses Foul Cage to pin his opponents in place, then Gholam Curse to use his enemies against themselves. He reserves Precognitive Dodge for his enemies' most dangerous attacks and, if reduced to few wounds, uses Flicker to go incorporeal (at which point he relies solely on Gholam Curse). The GM should only use Bolt of Change once per combat, as it's a horrifying power.

The combat involving the Word Bearers and the Inevitable Guards can happen cinematically without the GM playing it out. Basically, so long as the Heretics win against the Abomination and Copax, then the Word Bearers clean up the Guards, losing one of their own in the process. After the battle, they do not attack the Heretics, but approach them cautiously, asking if they are the individuals summoned by Copax to hear the prophecy. If the Heretics acknowledge this, they stow their weapons.

"I see," the Word Bearer says. "Then Copax sought to avoid his fate. He has long been an ally of my master, the Dark Apostle Naberus. However, my master suspected the prophecy may contain the whispers of Copax's own demise in addition to the ascension of new powers within the Vortex. Perhaps he sought to eliminate you to avoid his own entwined fate."

"Regardless, it is my master's will that you survive this day. My name is Corvis. If you ask our favour, myself and my brethren will see you off Kymerus."

Though they are likely not needed, if a GM requires stats for the Word Bearers he can use the Space Marine profile found on page 367 (though the Word Bearers are actually Chaos Space Marines, they share enough similarities with their loyalist counterparts that they can be used for this adventure).

ESCAPE THE PLANET

Having successfully escaped death at the hands of a murderous oracle, the Heretics must find a way to the Carrion Corpse before being hounded by forces from the Temple of Lies. The Temple is full of guards, psykers, and seers, all of whom wish the Heretics dead once the Mendacious Oracle falls.

There are two ways for the Heretics to get to the port (unless they either want to walk or get creative, such as hijacking one of the Screamer Chariots). If they allied with the Word Bearers, they have their own transportation: a Chaos Rhino APC waiting outside. The Word Bearers and the Heretics mount the vehicle (one of the Word Bearers as the driver) and drive off. One of the Heretics can even man the pintle-mounted combi-bolter up top, spraying down the Inevitable Guard in the Gardens around the Temple. This shouldn't be run as a full combat, just as a harrowing escape.

Once in Carrion Corpse, the Word Bearers have a shuttle waiting in the mountain landing bays. (The Word Bearers could not summon the shuttle to pick them up, as only the four of them travelled here and none wished to stay with the spacecraft). The shuttle takes them into orbit, and rendezvous with a slave-ship passing by Kymerus on the way to Q'Sal (or wherever the GM needs the ship to go to further the Heretics' adventures.)

If the Heretics did not ally with the Word Bearers, the GM can have Orick waiting in the Gardens with his transport. Unless the Heretics are bluntly diabolical and outwardly offensive, they should have little difficulty in swaying him toward their own ends. The second that Orick suspects that the Heretics are at odds with the temple, he lets on that they can negotiate with him for help, with no love lost for the Mendacious Oracle.

OFF PLANET

At this stage, the Heretics are left with unknown allies and powerful enemies. They've angered the Temple and the Heretics should assume that they seek retribution. The new Mendacious Oracle, Elika the Seer, does not know why the Heretics murdered her predecessor. It is up to the GM to decide whether she finds out and how she responds if she does. On the other hand, the Dark Apostle Naberus and the Prophets of the Blighted Path take an interest in the Heretics. For now, they will leave them to their own devices (and Corvis and his fellows leave the Heretics as soon as they reach another port), but they undoubtedly will be showing up again in the future.

Finally, there is the *Torestus* itself. As the Heretics delve into the epic poem, they find a story that begins with Tor narrowly escaping death or worse. What does it say happens next?

NPC Appendix

The following is an Appendix of the notable NPCs and Adversaries found in the adventure False Prophets. Certain NPCs are also found in **Chapter XI: Adversaries.** In this case, a page number is provided instead of a full stat block.

Cackling Abomination

The Cackling Abomination is found on page 353.

Disciple of Crox

The Disciple of Crox is a brutal and mindless warrior wandering Kymerus.

Disciple of Crox (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
50	03	56	53 (8)	38	17	46	60	08	05

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 20
Armour: 6 All **Total TB:** 8
Skills: Awareness +20, Dodge, Parry +10.

Talents: Berserk Charge, Blademaster, Fearless, Rapid Reaction, Swift Attack, Weapon Training (Chain).
Traits: None.
Weapons: Two-handed Chainaxe (2d10+5 R; Pen 2; Tearing, Unbalanced).
Armour: Blood-caked plate (6 All).
Blood God's Favour: The Disciple is protected by the Lord of Skulls against Psychic Attacks. Any Focus Power Tests made to target him with Psychic Powers suffer a –30 penalty. *If the challenger is a Chaos Space Marine, the GM can improve the Disciple by giving him Unnatural Strength (+3) and Unnatural Toughness (+3), and increasing the AP provided by his armour by +2. This makes the challenge more reasonable for a Chaos Space Marine.*

Feral Mutated Cherub

Twisted little terrors, these are the mutated descendents of the *Light of Ascension's* cherub population.

Feral Mutated Cherub (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
25	05	12	20	30	03	24	11	07	-	-

Movement: 6/12/18/36
Wounds: 5 (Magnitude 40)
Armour: 1 All **Total TB:** 2
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Dodge (Ag) +10, Stealth (Ag) +20.
Talents: Lightning Reflexes.
Traits: Deadly Natural Weapons, Flyer (6), Machine (1), Size (Puny).
Weapons: Claws and tiny needle fangs (2d5+2 R; Pen 0)
Armour: None.
Swarm Attack: Feral Cherubs attack from all directions, swarming their opponents. When in a Horde, the Horde gains a +5 bonus to hit for every point of the Horde's Magnitude bonus.

Inevitable Guard

The Inevitable Guards are imposing individuals, their faces entirely enclosed in eyeless helms. When they speak, their voices always sound like they're coming from behind the subject they are speaking to. They carry two-handed glaives encrusted with strange runes and crackling circuitry and large-bore pistols strapped to their hips.

Inevitable Guard (Troop)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
45	35	44	46	30	20	35	35	20	-	-

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Armour: 4 All, 6 Head **Total TB:** 4
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Dodge (Ag), Intimidate (S), Parry (WS) +10, Scrutiny (Per) +10.
Talents: Disturbing Voice, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Weapon Training (Shocking, Primary, SP).
Traits: None.
Weapons: Ensorceled Glaive (Melee; 1d10+6 E; Pen 3; Shocking, Felling (2)†), Hand Cannon with Ensorceled Rounds (Pistol; Range 30m; S/–/–; 1d10+5 I; Pen 4; Clip 5; Rld 2Full).
Armour: Reinforced Plate (Body 4, Arms 4, Legs 4, Head 6).
†The Ensorceled Glaves have a disconcerting habit of crushing the toughness of the most resolute foe. If the Inevitable Guard hits with at least 3 Degrees of Success, the weapon becomes Felling (4) instead of Felling (2).

Mendacious Oracle Renkard Copax

Midnight blue and deep yellow robes kept fastidiously clean adorn the Mendacious Oracle's otherwise poorly-maintained, aged, and skeletal frame. He keeps what is left of his thin grey hair long and allows it to drop over either side of his face. Occasionally, he gathers a few strands with a narrow finger to remove them from where they settle in front of his inquisitive, augmetic eye—he has only one, the other lost in a conflict some long time ago. His tongue, lips, and forefingers are discoloured from the hours spent daily turning the pages of illuminated texts. Occulted from view by his robes are strange protrusions and malformations of the torso, remnants and scars of his experimentation with the sorceries of Tzeentch. In homage to the God of Change, Copax has defiled his own form in an attempt to ascend it toward an ideal of chaotic structure and continual mutation.

His importance in the Screaming Vortex extends well beyond Kymerus and the more religiously-minded devotees of Chaos. The various powers that struggle in ceaseless wars for control benefit from good relations with the Mendacious Oracle and, thus, an alliance made with him can shift the tides of these conflicts or put an end to one altogether.

When interacting with others, his expression suggests that his mind is off elsewhere and he even mumbles to himself while others are speaking and interrupts them to interject with his own thoughts. Still, his memory is eidetic—he can repeat verbatim exactly what he hears and analyse it with keen insight into human character. He prefers listening to speech, however, and rarely displays this interesting capacity. Due in equal parts to his psychic ability, hermeneutic talents, and social awareness, lies rarely get the better of the Mendacious Oracle and regardless of how a statement is framed he deftly hears it for what it is.

Renkard Copax (Master)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
22	29	21	34	23	54	45	56	37	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 40
Armour: None **Total TB:** 3
Infamy Points: 3
Skills: Common Lore (Imperium, Koronus Expanse, Screaming Vortex) +20, Deceive (Fel) (+20), Forbidden Lore (Int) (Daemonology, Heresy, Mutants, Psykers, the Warp, Xenos) +30,

Inquiry (Fel), Linguistics (Int), Logic (Int) +30, Psyniscience (Int) (+30), Scholastic Lore (Int) (Legend, Occult, Philosophy) +20.
Talents: Air of Authority, Cold Hearted, Foresight, Paranoia, Psy Rating 6, Sacrifice, Strong Minded, Warp Lock.
Psychic Powers: Bolt of Change, Foul Cage, Flicker, Gholam Curse, Precognitive Dodge, any number of divinatory powers not applicable in combat.
Armour: None
Weapons: Staff of Office: (1d10+2 E; Pen 0; Balanced, Primitive (7))
Gear: Ornate Robes, trinkets, charms, ensorcelled ward†
†Ensorcelled Ward: This trinket is empowered by Copax's psychic powers, and provides him with a Field Save of 45 that cannot overload.

Phase-Assassin

One of the warp-enhanced killers of mysterious Q'Sal, this Phase-Assassin is utterly loyal to Copax and obeys orders without question.

Phase-Assassin (Elite)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel	Inf
55	55	35	35	50	40	40	52	21	-	-

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 18
Armour: 3 All **Total TB:** 3
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Dodge (Ag)+20,Parry (WS) +20, Scrutiny (Per), Sleight of Hand (Ag) +10, Stealth (Ag)+20.
Talents: Ambidextrous, Combat Master, Hard Target, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Swift Attack, Sidearms, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ranged and Melee).
Traits: Phase.



Weapons: Phase-assassin Daemon-blade (1d10+4 R; Pen 3; , Crippling (3), Tearing, Razor Sharp), Bolt Pistol (Pistol; Range 30m; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 8; Reload Half; Tearing).
Armour: Augmented Body Glove (All 3).

Temple Psyker

Use the Cursed Oracle on page 360.

Invitation to the Temple of Lies

I am pleased to inform you that a mysterious and rare event has recently occurred and though it is not yet apparent, it is an event which involves you directly. I am the Mendacious Oracle of the Temple of Lies. My forbearers and I have, for many centuries, foretold the destinies of a great many fortunate souls-and some unfortunate ones. It is our responsibility to receive visions from the Dark Gods and dispense them to those worthy of the knowledge the gods have chosen to impart. Consider yourself one such individual.

A vision, unlike any other I have received in my great years, has been given me and cannot be ignored. I would even go to so great a length as to demand you come to me on Kymerus, rather than merely extend my invitation. I say this because to fail to impart my vision would be to damn the both of us in the eyes of the great Master of Magic and Fate, Tzeentch, and the other Ruinous Powers as well. Were I able to tell you on this parchment what I have to say, you would readily understand, but it is only safe to speak to you here.

Your transportation and living expenses have been arranged for. Furthermore, you will be granted access to the entirety of the temple's services and vast libraries after you arrive and forever after.

Be assured, what you will learn from me greatly outweighs any concerns you may possess. I look forward to making your acquaintance.

'Til We Meet,
Reinhard Copax

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Fantasy Flight Games would like to thank the following for their hard work playtesting **Black Crusade**:
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Character Name _____ Player Name _____

Archetype _____ Rank ____ Warband Name _____

Pride _____ Disgrace _____

Motivation _____ Description _____

CHARACTERISTICS

Weapon Skill (WS)	Ballistic Skill (BS)	Strength (S)	Toughness (T)	Agility (Ag)	Intelligence (Int)	Perception (Per)	Willpower (WP)	Fellowship (Fel)	Infamy (Inf)

SKILLS

	Trained	+10	+20	+30
Acrobatics (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Athletics (S)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Awareness (Per)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Charm (Fel)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Command (Fel)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commerce (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Common Lore	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deceive (Fel)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dodge (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Forbidden Lore (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inquiry (Fel)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intimidate (WP)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Linguistics (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
Logic (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Trained	+10	+20	+30
Medicae (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Navigation (Surface) (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Navigation (Stellar) (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Navigation (Warp) (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Operate (Aeronautica) (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Operate (Surface) (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Operate (Voidship) (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parry (WS)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Psyniscience (Per)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Scholastic Lore (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
Scrutiny (Per)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Security (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sleight of Hand (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stealth (Ag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tech-Use (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tracking (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trade (Int)	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐

†denotes Skill Group

TALENTS & TRAITS

_____

【SPACE MARINE ABILITIES】

Secondary Heart/Ossmodula/Biscopea/
Haemastamen: You gain the Unnatural Strength and Toughness (+4) Traits.
Larraman's Organ: Only 5% chance of dying from Blood Loss.
Catalepsean Node: You suffer no penalties to Perception-based Tests when awake for long periods of time.
Preomnor: You gain +20 to Toughness Tests against ingested poisons.
Omophagea: You may gain a Skill or Skill Group by devouring a portion of an enemy.
Multi-Lung: You may re-roll any failed Toughness Test for drowning or asphyxiation. In addition, you gain a +30 to Toughness Tests made to resist gases and may re-roll failed results.
Occulube and Lyman's Ear: You gain the Heightened Senses (Sight and Hearing) Talents, +10 to relevant Awareness Tests.
Sus-an Membrane: You may enter suspended animation.
Oolotic Kidney: You may re-roll any failed Toughness Test to resist poisons and toxins, including attacks with the Toxic Quality.
Neuroglottis: You may detect any poison or toxin by taste with a successful Awareness Test. You gain a +10 to Tracking Tests against a target you have tasted.
Mucranoid: You may re-roll any failed Toughness Tests caused by temperature extremes.
Betcher's Gland: You may spit acid as a ranged weapon with the following profile: *Range: 3m; Damage: 1d5; Pen 4; Toxic. If you hit your target by 3 or more degrees of success, you have blinded him for 1d5 Rounds.*
Progenoids: These may be retrieved with a successful Medicae Test.
Black Carapace: While wearing Power Armour, enemies do not gain a bonus to hit you due to your size.

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CHARACTERISTICS

Weapon Skill (WS)	Ballistic Skill (BS)	Strength (S)	Toughness (T)	Agility (Ag)	Intelligence (Int)	Perception (Per)	Willpower (WP)	Fellowship (Fel)	Infamy (Inf)

WEAPON

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

WEAPON

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

WEAPON

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

WEAPON

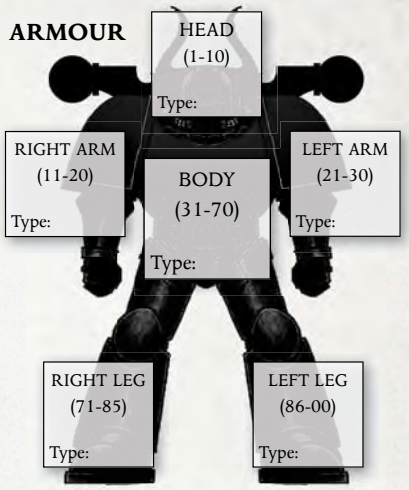
NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

MOVEMENT: Half ( ) Charge ( )
Full ( ) Run ( )

PSYCHIC POWERS

Psy Rating: ( )

ARMOUR



GEAR

WOUNDS:

Total
Current
Fatigue

Critical Damage: _____

Mental Disorders: _____

INFAMY POINTS: Total ( )
Current ( )

CORRUPTION POINTS: Total ( )

GIFTS OF THE GODS

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ADVANCEMENTS AND ALIGNMENT

	Total XP Earned	Total XP Spent	Unspent XP
EXPERIENCE:	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

The combined values of Total XP Spent and Unspent XP should equal the value of Total XP Earned.

ADVANCEMENT	COST	ALIGNMENT	ADVANCEMENT	COST	ALIGNMENT

TOTAL ALIGNMENT ADVANCES

KHORNE: [ ] **SLAANESH: [ ]**

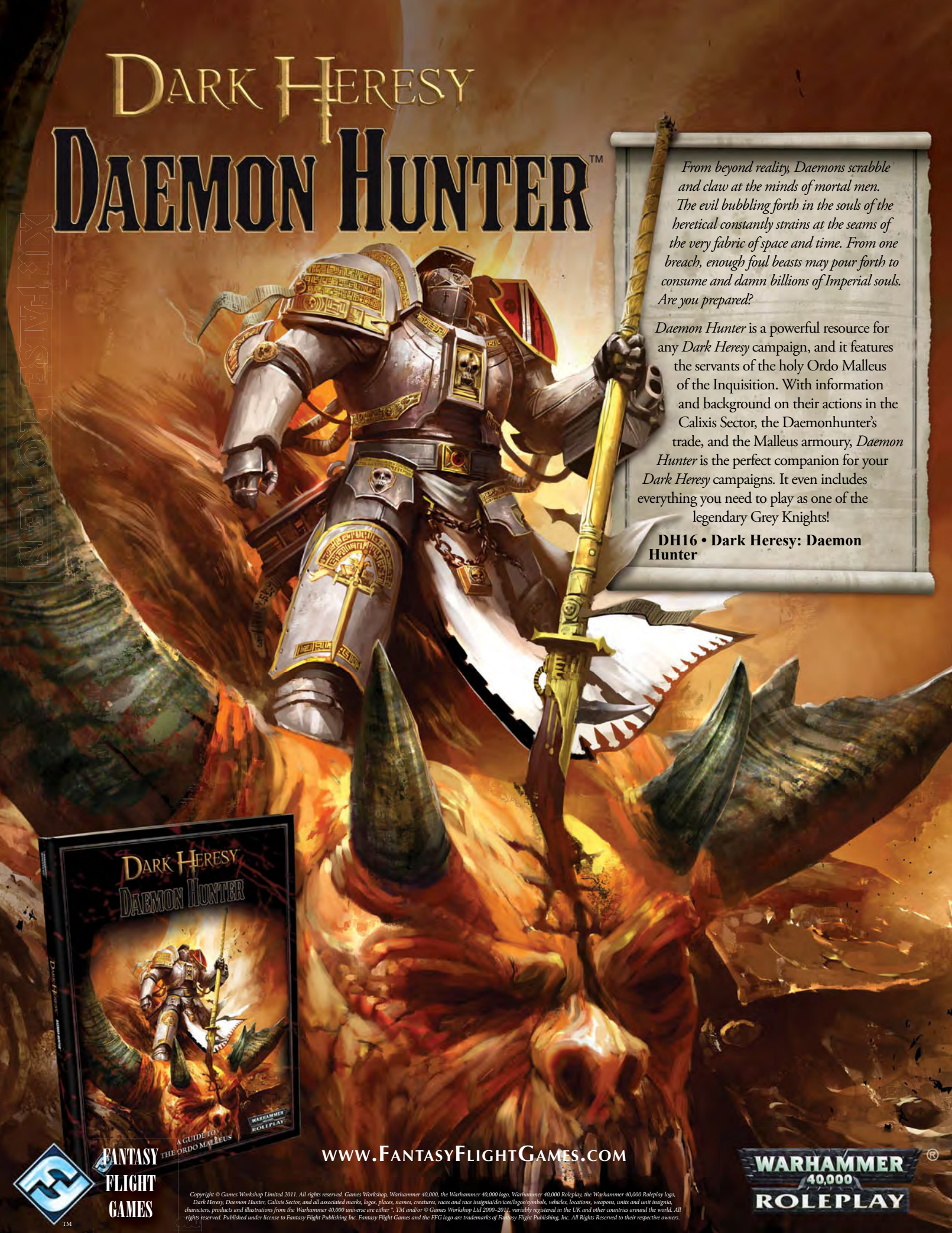
UNALIGNED: [ ]

NURGLE: [ ] **TZEENTCH: [ ]**

CURRENT ALIGNMENT:

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