

OFFWORLDERS



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WELCOME TO OFFWORLDERS

Offworlders is a science fiction roleplaying game about adventurers, outlaws, and guns for hire making their fortune on the rough end of the galaxy. It is designed to be straightforward enough to pick up and be ready to play in just a few minutes as a one-off game, but with enough meat to play a short campaign as well.

The player characters in Offworlders are the owners of a small starship in a time when humans have spread to many worlds. Together, they explore the universe, completing profitable jobs and overcoming dangers.

You'll fly between planets, taking on the dangerous work that no one else wants. You'll fight ruthless pirates, explore drifting derelicts, and go toe-to-toe with weird alien monsters, just to make enough credits to keep your ship flying. You'll overcome these challenges by the skin of your teeth and come out stronger on the other side. On long voyages, your characters will learn about each other and grow together.

The first part of this book describes the general rules that everyone at the table will use to play. The second part is addressed directly to the game master, and contains rules and guidelines for running Offworlders, either as a single session or as a campaign.

CREDIT DUE

Offworlders is a game by Chris Wolf.

Illustrations & book design by Olivia Gulin.

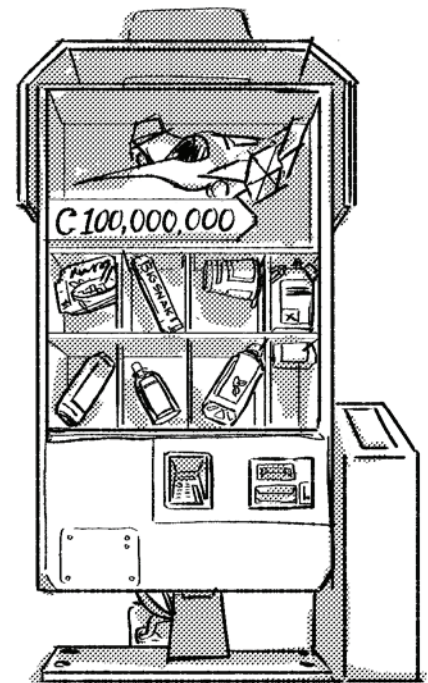
Offworlders is inspired by *World of Dungeons* by John Harper. It also owes inspiration to *Dungeon World* by Sage Latorra and Adam Koebel, as well as *Traveller* by Marc Miller and *Stars Without Number* by Kevin Crawford.

If you play *Offworlders*, please let me know what you think! Talk to me on Twitter at @chrisperrywolf.

Playtesters: Chris Darden, Cameron Farrell, Olivia Gulin, David Kenyon, and Steve Kilian

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PLAYING THE GAME

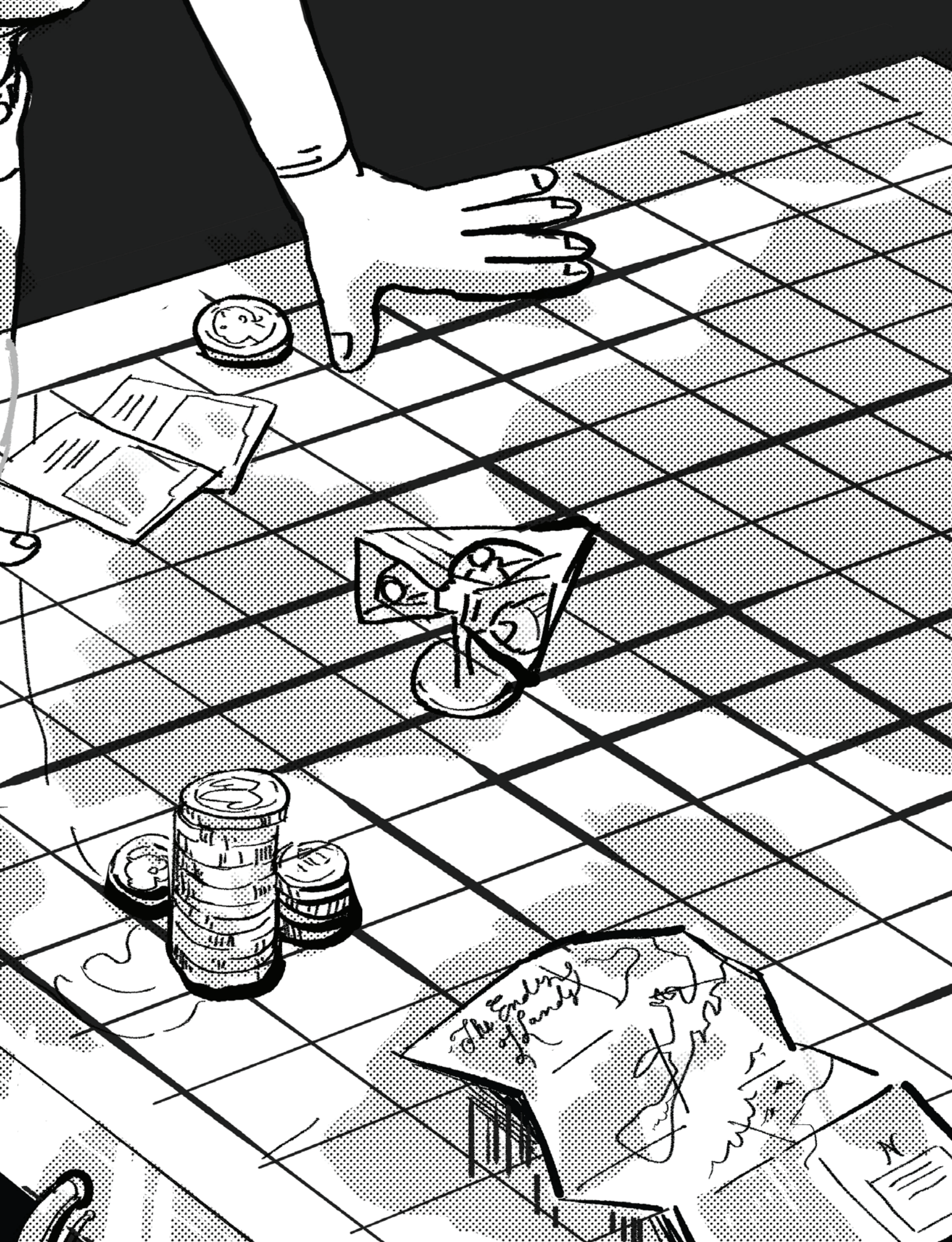
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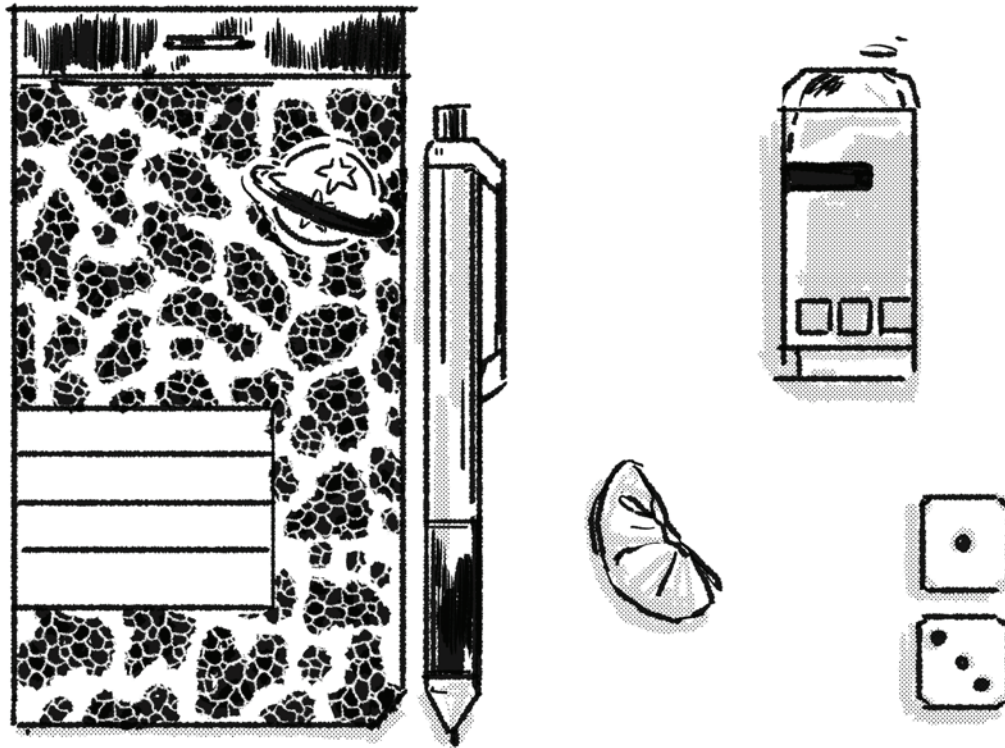
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PLAYING THE GAME





WHAT YOU NEED

To play *Offworlders* you'll need:

- These rules
- Two to four other people
- Some six-sided dice. You can play with just two, but two or three per player is best.
- Pencils and paper
- An *Offworlders* character sheet for each player, and one ship sheet. You can get these at chrispwolf.com/offworlders

THE CONVERSATION

A game of *Offworlders* is a conversation. The game master will describe the scene around the player characters, populating it with details and people. The players will respond to that world, describing how their characters interact with it, asking the GM about details, and saying what their characters say to each other and the NPC's.

You'll take turns, but you'll take turns like you do in a conversation. Sometimes you'll speak for longer to get something done, and often you'll step back to let someone else have the spotlight.

Unlike many other games, you'll never split up into a specific order to take formal turns. Just let things flow naturally, and let whoever the action is centered on describe what their character does. If you've been in the spotlight for a while, invite someone else to speak up.

BASIC TERMS

The following terms mean specific things within the game, and will be used throughout the rules.

Player: One of the people at the table, playing the game. This includes the Game Master.

Game Master, or GM: The player who takes on the role of the game world and everyone in it who isn't a Player Character.

Character: Any fictional person in the story, either a PC or an NPC.

Non-Player Characters, or NPC's: Characters controlled by the GM. The allies and enemies of the PC's, as well as the civilians and other tertiary characters of the world.

Player Characters, or PC's: The protagonists of *Offworlders*. Each player besides the game master controls one Player Character, describing that character's actions and thoughts.

Attribute: A number, usually between -1 and +3, that describes a PC's raw talent in a broad area. There are four attributes, detailed later.

Skill: One of the skills in the game, which a PC either has or does not. Skills represent training in specific areas of expertise. Each PC begins with two skills.

Health: A number representing how physically resilient a PC is. When a PC takes damage, it reduces their current health.

Ability: A special action or stunt that a PC can perform. Each PC begins with two abilities.

Rolling The Dice: When a PC does something dangerous, contested, or uncertain, their player must Roll the Dice, as described below. The GM never has to Roll the Dice.

D6: A single, 6-sided die. Usually you'll roll two of these and add them together, along with an attribute. Sometimes you'll roll just one.

XP: Experience Points. Characters earn XP during play, and can spend XP to gain new abilities, and to increase their attributes.

ROLLING THE DICE

When a player character does something dangerous, uncertain, or contested, use the dice to find out how well it goes. You'll roll the dice and add one of your attributes to get a final result, then use that result to figure out what happens next.

1. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, AND HOW YOU DO IT.

If the GM decides that it is risky or uncertain enough to warrant a roll, go to step 2. Otherwise, the GM will tell you what happens.

2. PICK THE MOST APPROPRIATE OF THE FOUR ATTRIBUTES.

Usually it will be obvious, but if it isn't, the GM makes the final call.

3. TALK ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OUTCOMES.

What might happen if you fail? What are some potential complications? If you want to turn back now, or try a different strategy, you may. The GM doesn't have to say exactly what will happen, but should always be honest about potential consequences beforehand so the player knows what they are facing.

4. ROLL THE DICE!

Roll 2D6, add them together, and add the relevant attribute. Use the total to determine how successful you are.

ON A 10 OR HIGHER: Success. You get what you want.

ON A 7-9: Complication. You get what you want, but at some cost, reduced effect, difficult choice, or harm. The GM will tell you what.

ON A 6-: A miss. You probably don't get what you want, and the GM will make your life more complicated. They'll tell you exactly what happens. The good news is you earn 1 XP.

IF BOTH DICE COME UP WITH 6'S, Critical Success! You get what you want, and something extra. You and the GM should come up with an appropriate bonus or extra effect.

If you have a skill relevant to the current situation, you may choose to reroll one of the dice, but you must take the second roll. Use the new total for your result.

The Game Master never rolls the dice. The players are always the ones that roll. The game is about them and the risks that they take. If an NPC attacks a player, the player is the one that rolls, either to avoid, counterattack, or something else. If a player takes damage, it is usually because they Rolled the Dice and got a complication or a miss.

Only Roll When It's Interesting.

Don't ever roll when a character does something that they could reasonably accomplish without trouble, or if there are no interesting consequences for failure. Conversely, don't roll if a character attempts something impossible. It just doesn't work. The sweet spot is when it's something the character could potentially do, but it's going to be tricky.

Nothing Never Happens. No matter what the outcome is, rolling the dice always changes the fictional situation. On a success, the PC accomplishes their goal and the game moves forward. On a complication or a miss, the situation escalates and becomes more interesting.

ATTRIBUTES

Every PC has four attributes, representing different ways they might address challenges. Each attribute has a rating between -1 and +3. The higher the rating, the more likely the character is to succeed when using it. You'll use these attributes when you roll the dice. The four attributes are:

Strength: Raw power, speed and aggression. Useful for climbing, sprinting, breaking things, and fighting in melee. Strength also determines how much punishment a PC can take.

Agility: Reaction time, control and coordination. Useful for balancing

on narrow beams, flying starships through asteroid fields, and shooting rifles.

Intelligence: Perception, logic and knowledge. Useful for analysis, messing with technology, and knowing pertinent facts.

Willpower: Force of personality, charisma and determination. Use it to bark orders and manipulate people, and resist the manipulations of enemy psychics. Willpower also might just keep you alive when all else is lost.

SKILLS

Each skill represents an area of trained expertise. Unlike attributes, skills do not have an associated number. You either have a skill or you don't. When you roll the dice and have an applicable skill, you may re-roll one of the dice. You must accept the second result.

Athletics: Running, climbing, jumping, swimming etc.

Culture: Knowledge of people, places, etiquette, and history across many worlds.

Manipulation: Getting others to do what you want, through lying, charm or coercion.

Pilot: Controlling vehicles, from starships and speeders to motorboats and bicycles.

Science: Biology, physics, chemistry, etc.

Sneak: Passing unseen, sleight of hand, picking pockets.

Survival: Finding food, air, shelter, directions, etc. in hostile environments.

Tech: Computer software and complex engineering.

ABILITIES

A player character in Offworlders starts with two abilities, and may get more as time goes on. An ability is a special trick, stunt, or talent that allows the PC to do something special or bend the rules. Each ability describes how and when it is applicable. The abilities are divided into four character classes, described in Making an Offworlder, on the next page.

Some powerful abilities require the player to roll the dice to be used successfully.

MAKING AN OFFWORLDER

Follow this process to create your PC:

1. PICK A CLASS

There are four classes: **Warrior**, **Outlaw**, **Geek**, and **Psychic**. Pick one.

Your class gives you a few unique **abilities** to choose from. Pick any two.

2. CHOOSE YOUR SKILLS

Choose any **two skills** for your character.

3. ASSIGN YOUR ATTRIBUTES

Assign each of these numbers to one of your attributes, in any order you wish: **+2**, **+1**, **0**, and **-1**. Think about your class, and what kind of things your character is likely to be doing as a guideline for which attributes you want to make high, and which you can afford to make lower.

4. RECORD YOUR HEALTH

Each PC has maximum Health equal to **12** plus their **Strength** and **Agility** attributes. For example, a PC with **+2 Strength** and **+1 Agility** has **15 Health**. A PC with **0 Strength** and **-1 Agility** has **11 Health**.

5. GET YOUR GEAR

You start with **3 Supply**. Supply is an abstract amount, representing any items you might be carrying. Gear is explained in *Money, Weapons and Gear*, on **page 11**.

- You start with **3 Credits**
- You start with one **light weapon**. Describe it.

Then choose either:

- An additional **7 credits**
- OR
- **Light Armor** worth 1-armor and a second weapon of any type.

6. NAME AND DESCRIBE YOUR CHARACTER

Come up with a name for your character, and share it with the other players. Also come up with at least one distinct visual detail that describes them. It can be a clothing item, or something about their body or possessions. Anything that will help everyone start getting a picture of your character in their imagination.

CUSTOMIZING CLASSES

Experienced players may want more flexibility when it comes to making a character. If everyone agrees, players may ignore the listed classes entirely, and make a character simply by choosing any two skills, and any two special abilities. Players should communicate to make sure they don't overlap too much.

ALIENS

Offworlders doesn't have specific rules for alien species. As a group, you should decide amongst yourselves if intelligent aliens exist in your universe. If a player really wants to be an alien, let them. Maybe all Psychics are from the same species, or the Warrior learned their skills because they are a member of a clannish, warlike species. Often, humanoid aliens in science fiction are fundamentally just people that fit into specific tropes and archetypes.

PLAYER CHARACTERS: THE CREW OF THE QUICHE LORRAINE

KAY, WARRIOR

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Athletics, Pilot</i>
<i>Abilities</i>	<i>Brute, Unstoppable</i>
<i>Strength</i>	+2
<i>Agility</i>	+1
<i>Intelligence</i>	-1
<i>Willpower</i>	0
<i>Health</i>	15
<i>Gear</i>	Brass knuckles (light). No additional armor.
<i>Credits</i>	10
<i>Appearance</i>	Broken nose from repeated breaking

RIYA, OUTLAW

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Sneak, Survival</i>
<i>Abilities</i>	<i>Cheap Shot, Smuggle</i>
<i>Strength</i>	-1
<i>Agility</i>	+2
<i>Intelligence</i>	0
<i>Willpower</i>	+1
<i>Health</i>	13
<i>Gear</i>	Snubnosed revolver (light), leather armor (1-armor), butterfly knife (light)
<i>Credits</i>	3
<i>Appearance</i>	Loves jewelry. Wears a rotating collection of band t-shirts.

IMANI, PSYCHIC

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Manipulation, Culture</i>
<i>Abilities</i>	<i>Scanner, Premonition</i>
<i>Strength</i>	-1
<i>Agility</i>	0
<i>Intelligence</i>	+1
<i>Willpower</i>	+2
<i>Health</i>	11
<i>Gear</i>	Stun glove (light). No additional armor.
<i>Credits</i>	10
<i>Appearance</i>	Body is covered in biomechanical implants.

TRIXIE, GEEK

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Science, Tech</i>
<i>Abilities</i>	<i>Hijack, Chemist</i>
<i>Strength</i>	0
<i>Agility</i>	+1
<i>Intelligence</i>	+2
<i>Willpower</i>	-1
<i>Health</i>	13
<i>Gear</i>	Laser pistol (light), small chemical grenades (medium), plasteel armor (1-armor).
<i>Credits</i>	3
<i>Appearance</i>	Carries large backpack with tech gear. Wears augmented-reality goggles.



GEEK

Geeks are doctors, scientists and technicians. Their abilities allow them to manipulate technology, heal their teammates and offer additional insight. Play a Geek if you want to be the smartest one in the room.

ABILITIES:

Analytical: When you encounter a new situation, area or character, you may ask the GM any one simple question about the objects, people, or surroundings. If the answer is something you could possibly perceive, the GM must answer you honestly.

Chemist: You may spend 1 supply to produce a single dose or use of a medicine, chemical, poison, or biological agent. Give it a name and purpose, and decide with the GM exactly how it works. The GM has final say on its effects and potential side effects or drawbacks.

Drone Controller: You have a small flying drone that you can control remotely and perceive through. If it is destroyed or lost, you can make a new one with a few days of downtime.

Hijack: You can attempt to remotely take over any electronic machine or computer that you can see. Roll the dice with Intelligence to do it.

Medic: When you perform first aid, heal an additional +2 Health. When others get a night's rest in your presence, they roll 1D6 and heal that much additional Health.

Polymath: Get a third skill

OUTLAW

Outlaws are smugglers, scoundrels, and jacks-of-all-trades. Their abilities revolve around being sneaky, lucky, or ruthless. Play an Outlaw if you want to get in and out of trouble.

ABILITIES:

Cheap Shot: If you attack an unaware or surprised enemy, you can roll the attack as though you were skilled, rerolling one of the dice if you wish. If successful, do maximum possible damage for your weapon, ignoring armor.

Ghost: If you hold still in a hiding spot, no one will find you until you reveal yourself.

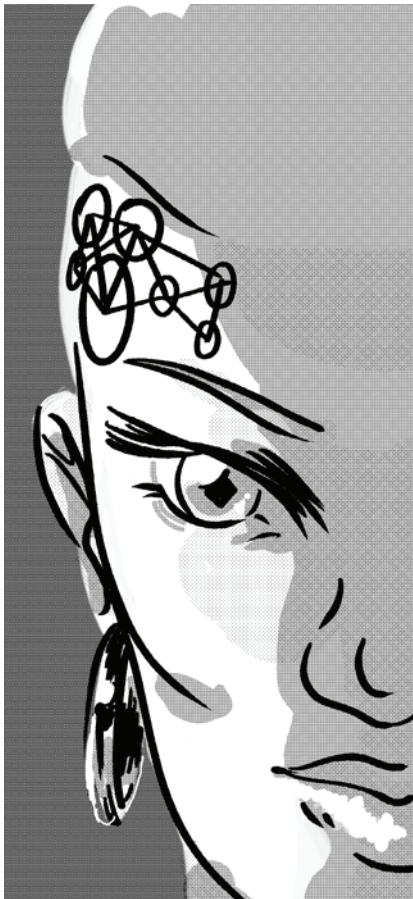
Reckless: When you charge into a dangerous situation without regard for your safety or the safety of others, get +1 to your next roll.

Lucky: Once per session, you may count any miss (6-) as a partial success (7-9), or a partial success as a total success (10+).

Shoot First: You cannot be surprised. If someone would surprise you, you get the jump on them instead. You always act first in a fight.

Smuggle: If you put any object somewhere it could reasonably be hidden, (a handheld object on your person, or a larger object on a ship, etc.) no one will be able to find it.





PSYCHIC

Psychics possess supernatural mental abilities. Their abilities allow them to manipulate their surroundings and read minds.

Play a Psychic if you want to be strange and powerful.

ABILITIES:

Blast: You can use your psychic powers as a ranged weapon, doing **1D6 +1** damage to a nearby target. You attack by rolling the dice with Willpower.

Force Wall : As long as you concentrate on nothing else, you can create a strong barrier of solid psychic energy up to 10x10 feet in size. If it comes under sustained stress, you may have to roll the dice with Willpower to maintain it.

Jump: Once per scene, you may teleport instantly to a nearby location that you can see.

Premonition: Once per day, ask the GM about the outcome of an immediate action. "What will happen when I open this door?" for instance. They will describe the likely outcome honestly.

Scanner: You can easily read people's surface emotions. You may roll the dice with Intelligence to try and access a character's deeper thoughts or specific information.

Telekinesis: You can easily move small objects with your mind. You can attempt to move larger objects, or move things very precisely, but it is difficult. The GM will tell you how.



WARRIOR

Warriors are soldiers and bounty hunters. All their abilities provide an edge in combat. Play a Warrior if you want to be straightforward and violent.

ABILITIES:

Brute: You deal +2 damage with melee weapons.

Dead Eye: You deal +2 damage with ranged weapons.

Hardy: Add 4 to your Health.

Heavy Lifting: You can move deftly and without penalty while using heavy weapons and armor.

Unstoppable: You have +1 armor at all times.

Veteran's Instincts: Once per battle, re-roll a damage die, either damage you are dealing or damage dealt to you.

FIGHTING & DAMAGE

Resolve fights just like any other risky situation. When a player attacks an enemy who is prepared to defend themselves, they should almost always be rolling the dice to do it. When an enemy opens fire on a player, the player will likely be rolling the dice to avoid the attack or counter it somehow. There is no formal structure of turns or rounds. Simply follow the action as it unfolds, shifting focus from character to character naturally and resolving their actions.

When a player takes damage, it will usually be because of a miss or a complication. Outside of a fight, a PC might take damage from other dangerous situations, like falling into a lake of acid, being in the vacuum of space without a suit, or being exposed to dangerous radiation.

When players damage NPC's, they inflict damage as indicated by the type of weapon they are using. For instance a heavy weapon does **1D6+2** damage. Meaning the player should roll a **D6**, add **2** to the total, and inflict that much damage to the enemy.

Enemies and hazards inflict damage against PC's in the same way. Roll for damage and subtract the result from a PC's health. In the GM section of these rules is a selection of enemies, including how much damage they should do.

HEALTH & DYING

Health is a measure of how much damage a character can take before they are in serious trouble. Both PC's and NPC's have a health score.

When an NPC reaches **0 health**, they are out of action. Either dead, seriously wounded, or unconscious, depending on the fictional circumstances and the desires of the attacker.

When a PC reaches **0 health**, they are in serious trouble. They must **Roll The Dice** with the results below. They add their **Willpower** to the roll.

10+: They are down for now, but with rest and care, will make a full recovery.

7-9: They will live, but the player must choose some part of the character that gets lost forever. For example the steadiness in their hands, their sense of security, or their left eye. This has no direct mechanical effect, but might make life difficult or complicate certain situations in the future.

6-: The PC is doomed. They might not die right away, and they might get a chance to do one last thing before they go, but they will not live to the end of the game session.

ARMOR

Armor mitigates incoming damage. In the Gear section, armor is listed as having **Armor-1**, **Armor-2**, etc. If a character is wearing armor, they subtract their total armor amount from any incoming damage. If the total damage is equal to or lower than the armor rating, all the damage is negated.

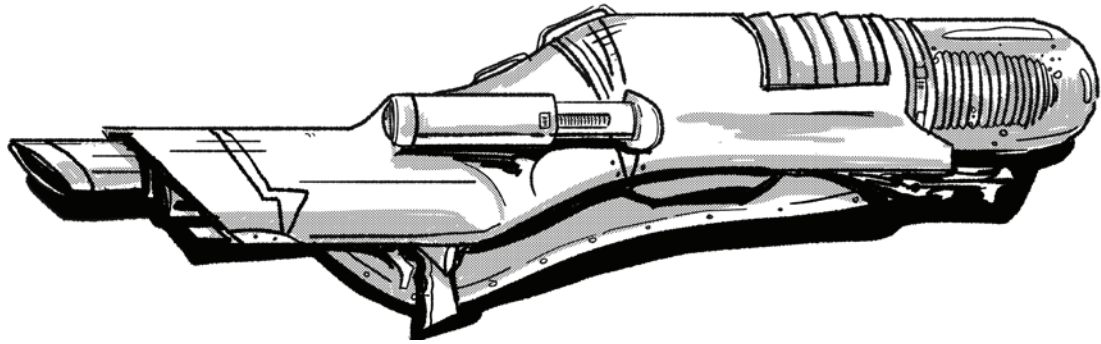
A character may not wear more than one type of armor.

RECOVERING HEALTH

There are two ways to recover health:

First Aid: If you have a few quiet minutes, you can spend **1 Supply** to heal another character **1D6** of **Health**.

Resting: If a character gets the equivalent of a good night's sleep, they recover **Health** equal to half their maximum **Health**, rounded up.



MONEY, WEAPONS, AND GEAR

In *Offworlders*, tracking every little piece of equipment and every penny spent by the characters is not necessary. Most equipment is covered by a character's **Supply**, which is an abstraction of the stuff they are carrying with them. The basic unit of currency in *Offworlders* is the **Credit**. One **Credit** represents a relatively substantial amount of money, and should be the smallest unit of currency you track. We assume that the characters can afford basic meals, cheap lodgings, etc, as long as they are not completely broke. Use the list below to determine general prices.

THINGS WORTH ONE CREDIT

- A light weapon
- A substantial bribe
- An opulent night out, including food, entertainment, and lodging
- A few weeks rent in a middle-range apartment

MORE EXPENSIVE ITEMS

<i>A new space suit</i>	3C
<i>A medium weapon</i>	2C
<i>A heavy weapon</i>	5C
<i>Passage to another world</i>	7C
<i>Passage to a nearby star system</i>	12C
<i>An average ground car</i>	25C
<i>A starship upgrade</i>	50C
<i>A simple helicopter</i>	75C
<i>A hover tank</i>	200C
<i>A new, bare-bones starship</i>	500C
<i>A small space station</i>	5,000C

SUPPLY

Characters in *Offworlders* are assumed to be carrying a variety of useful and necessary tools. Instead of choosing exactly what your character is carrying ahead of time, these tools are abstracted as **Supply**. You begin with **3 Supply**. You can spend **1 Supply** at any time to produce a mundane item from the list below, or an item of similar complexity if the GM agrees. You refill your supply whenever you have some downtime on board the ship, or wherever you currently keep all your stuff. Your maximum supply is always 3.

You can spend **1 Supply** to have one of the following or an item of similar complexity:

- 50 feet of cable
- A blowtorch
- A small explosive
- A multitool
- A motion detector
- An environmental scanning device

HEAVY ITEMS

Some weapons and items are "**heavy**." These items are large or clumsy, and it is difficult to move while carrying them. A PC must take **-1** any time they roll the dice to do something like run, jump, or climb while carrying a heavy item. A **heavy** item will also be very difficult to hide, and will attract attention.

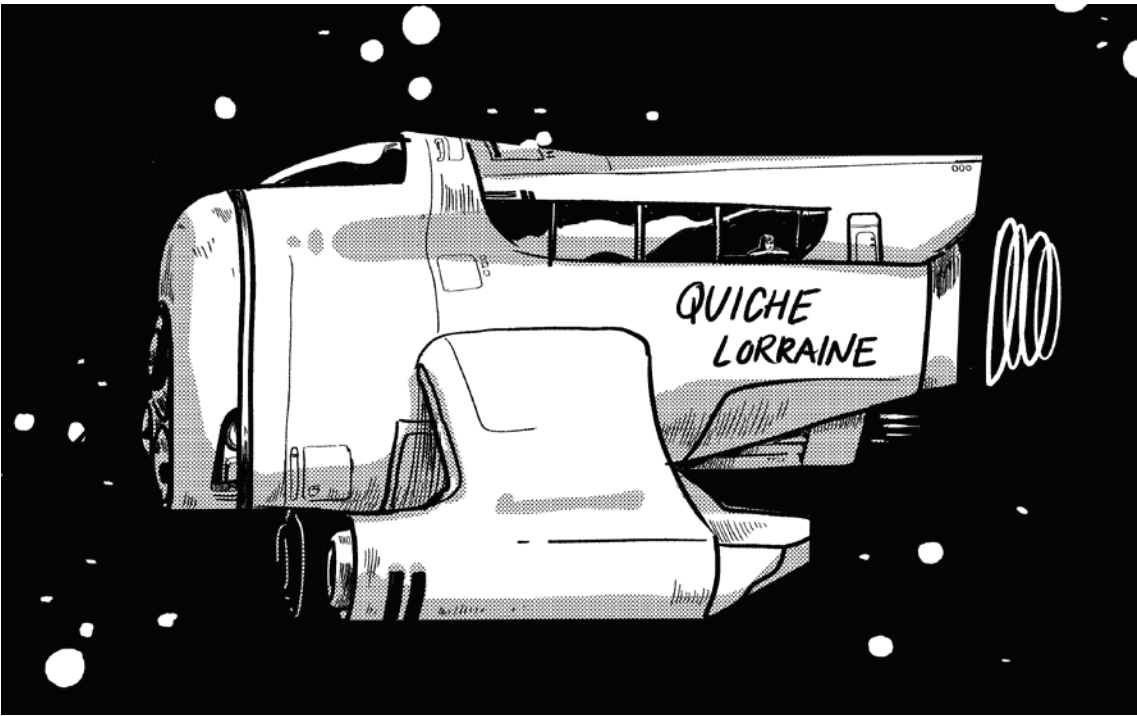
Heavy may cause other complications as well, at the GM's discretion.

GEAR

WEAPONS	C	DAMAGE	NOTES
Unarmed	0C	Lower of 2D6	Kicks, punches.
Light	1C	1D6	Pistols, knives. Easily hidden.
Medium	2C	1D6+1	Rifles, shotguns, swords.
Heavy	5C	1D6+2	Plasma cannons, sniper rifles, huge swords. Heavy.

ARMOR	C	DEFENSE	NOTES
Light	3c	1-armor	
Heavy	6c	2-armor	Heavy.
Assault	40c	3-armor	Heavy. Includes several hours' air supply and built-in heavy weapon.

SHIP ITEMS	C	NOTES
Starship drive fuel	3C	Per unit.
Starship upgrades	50C	
Hull repairs	1C	Repairs 2 Hull. Available in any port.



THE SHIP

The players begin with a small spaceship. It's just about big enough for all of them to live on, with a few additional passengers when necessary. The PC's control the ship using their attributes and skills.

The ship is capable of flying between planets in a few hours, and of flying faster than light to traverse the space between stars in a matter of weeks. It comes with a space suit for each PC.

CREATING THE SHIP

By default, the ship is a blank slate. It has a small cargo hold, does **1D6** damage, and has **15 Hull**. It has **0 Armor** and **4 Max Drive Fuel**. It begins the game fully fueled.

To make the ship, the players simply select two upgrades. All upgrades will open new opportunities for the players, and the type of jobs they get will reflect their choices. For example, a ship without **Luxury Passenger Quarters** will not attract wealthy passengers. A ship with a **Massive Cargo Hold** will get the PC's lucrative shipping jobs carrying large and unusual cargo.

These rules represent smaller starships like light freighters, frigates, and corvettes, about 50 meters in length. The ship is large enough for everyone to live in together comfortably, but no larger.

Of course, the players should choose a name for their ship. Something like *The Desert Rose*, *Good Grief*, or *Null Gravitas*.

SHIP UPGRADES

When you make your ship, choose 2 of the following. Upgrades marked with an asterisk (*) may be taken twice, providing a cumulative bonus. Otherwise each upgrade may only be purchased once:

Additional Armor: +1 armor*

Advanced Drive: For each interstellar trip, you can choose either to take half the time or use half the amount of fuel. Round up.

Advanced Electronics: High-end scanners, communicators, sensors, etc. They will provide detailed information about ships, places, and stations you encounter.

Afterburners: You may spend **1 Drive Fuel** to get +1 to a single roll to evade, outrun, or maneuver while piloting the ship.

Fuel Tanks: Max Drive Fuel +2.

High Maneuverability: If you don't have the **Pilot** skill, you count as having it in situations where maneuverability is relevant. If you already have the pilot skill, you may choose to reroll both dice in these situations, instead of just one.

Luxury Passenger Quarters: They come with gourmet nutrition options and beautiful decor. For the crew who wants to attract a certain class of clientele.

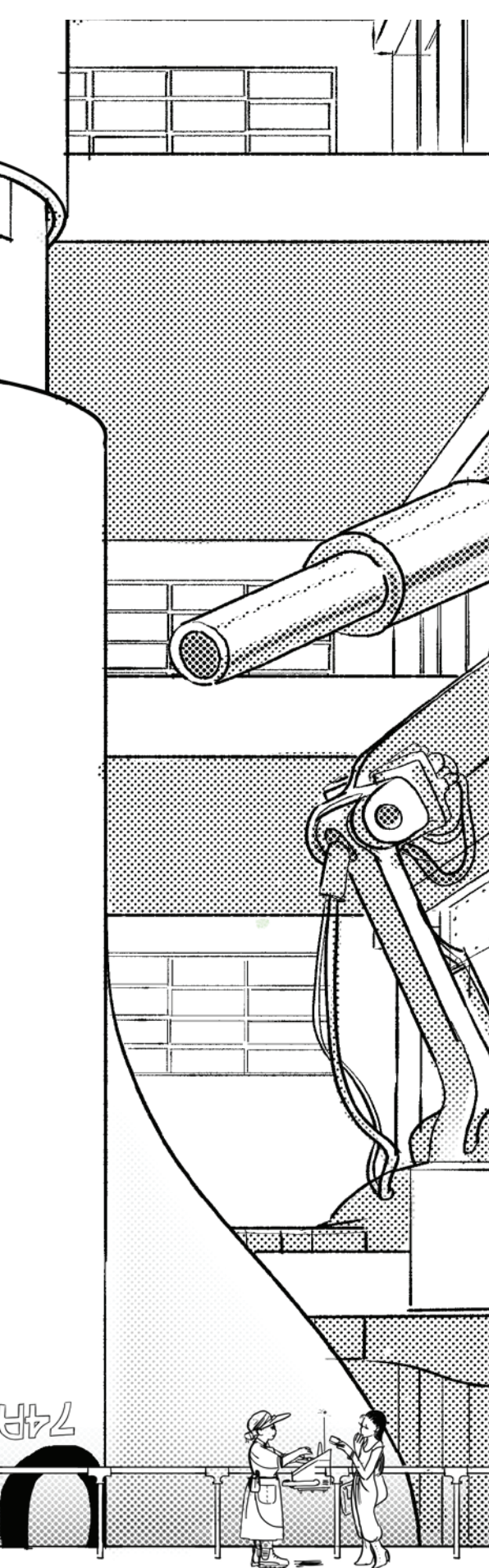
Massive Cargo Hold: Large enough to transport smaller vehicles or a huge amount of goods.

MedBay: Advanced automated medical equipment. Can put people into stasis and, with time, heal even the most grievous wounds. Characters resting in a medbay overnight heal all their **HP** instead of half their total. If a character falls to **0HP** they can choose to wait to **Roll the Dice** to learn their fate. If they make it to a **MedBay** within a few minutes, they get +1 to the roll.

More powerful weapons: +1 damage*

Shuttle Hangar: Comes with a small shuttle which can fly independently, but cannot travel between stars on its own.

Additional ship upgrades may be bought in play for **50 Credits** each while the ship is in port.



CONTROLLING THE SHIP

Other than **Damage**, **Hull**, and **Armor**, the ship does not have attributes of its own. Players control the ship with their own attributes and skills, rolling the dice in dangerous situations.

Ship combat works the same way as combat among individuals. When a ship is damaged, subtract damage from its **Hull**.

When a ship reaches **0 Hull**, it is disabled and at the mercy of its enemies or the elements. Critical ship systems may be dangerously malfunctioning. If a person is unlucky enough to be hit with a ship's weapons, multiply the total damage by 5. Small arms carried by people are incapable of inflicting significant damage to a starship's **Hull**.

TRAVEL

On your ship, you can travel between planets and other locations in the same star system easily. It takes a few hours, or days at most.

Travel between star systems takes longer, and uses drive fuel. When you travel to another system, the GM will tell you how much time and drive fuel it takes. It takes one week and one unit of drive fuel to travel between the closest neighboring star systems.

While stuck together on long journeys, PC's can also learn about each other and earn XP. See *Character Advancement*.

MAINTENANCE

At a suitable spaceport, Hull damage can be repaired at a cost of **1 credit** per 2 points of **Hull**. Damage to specific systems or critical areas of the ship may cost much more, at the GM's discretion.

Drive fuel costs **3 credits** per unit, and is available in any reasonably equipped port.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

If you play multiple sessions of *Offworlders*, your characters will become more powerful and effective. Characters earn XP each session, and may then spend XP on advancements.

EARNING XP

Characters earn XP in three ways:

ROLLING MISSES

Any time a player **Rolls the Dice** and the final result is 6 or less, their character earns **1 XP**.

END OF SESSION QUESTIONS

At the end of each session of play, answer the following three questions, as a group. For each question answered with a “yes,” every PC gets **1 XP**.

Did we earn a profit?

Did we discover something new and interesting about the universe?

Did we overcome a difficult challenge or dangerous adversary?

DURING LONG TRIPS

When the characters are on a long trip together through space, they tend to learn a lot about each other.

Each time the characters travel between star systems, or otherwise spend multiple days together in a small space, go around the table and give each player a turn, starting with the player to the left of the GM.

On their turn, each player must ask another player a question about their character. It could be about that character’s past, or their goals, or just something about their personality. If that player answers the question honestly, they earn 1XP.

Players should take care to ensure that everyone at the table gets a chance to answer a question.

The questions do not have to be asked or answered in character, but the players should discuss how their characters learned about each other on the trip.

The GM does not ask a question.

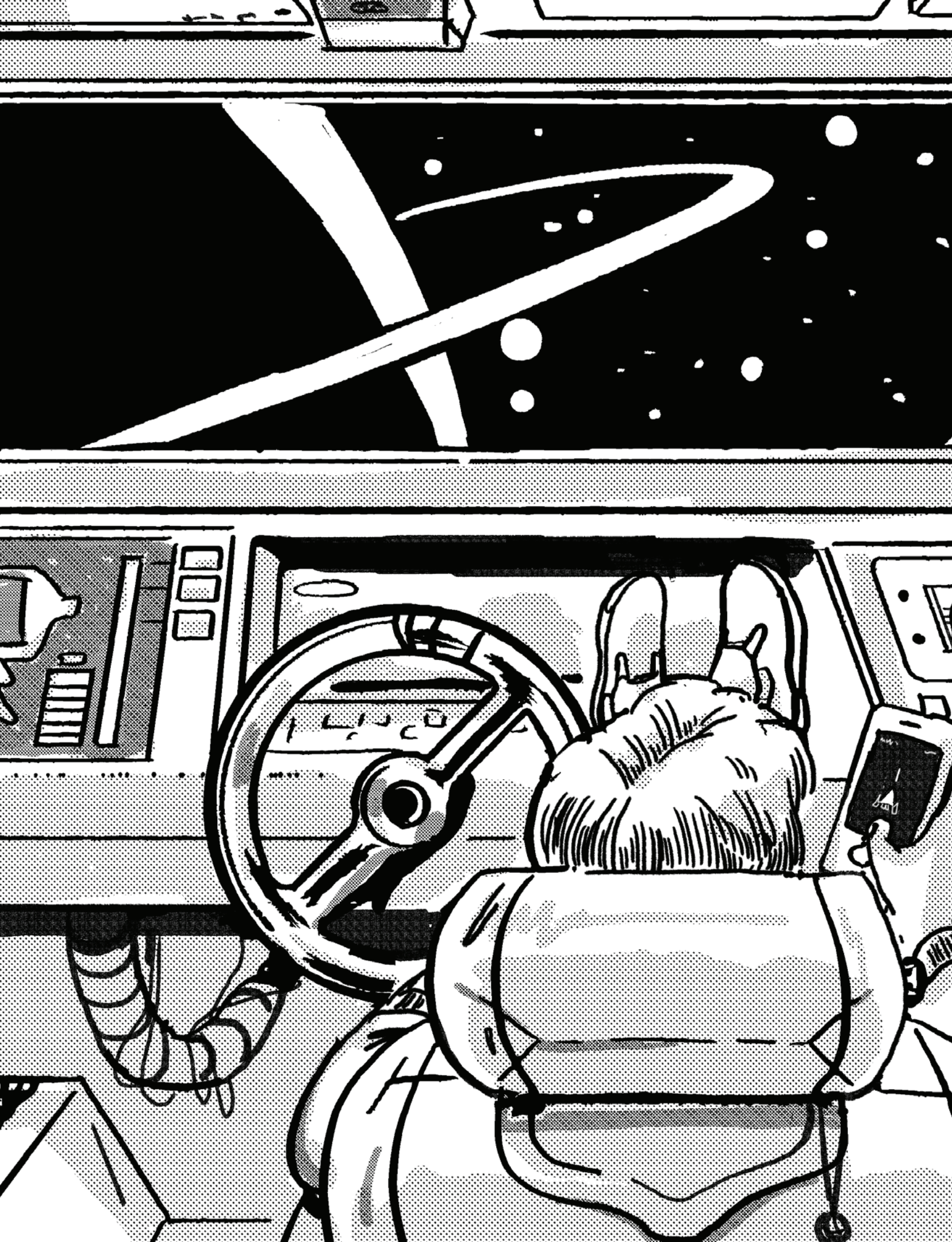
SPENDING XP: ADVANCEMENTS

When a PC has at least 10XP, and some downtime, they can spend XP to get one of the following advancements by paying its associated cost. Each advancement may only be taken once, but they may be taken in any order:

<i>Get a new class ability</i>	10XP
<i>Get a new class ability</i>	10XP
<i>Get a new class ability</i>	10XP
<i>Increase an attribute by 1 (Max +2)</i>	10XP
<i>Increase an attribute by 1 (Max +2)</i>	10XP
<i>Increase an attribute by 1 (Max +3)</i>	20XP

When the PC’s get close to maxing out their advancements, the players and GM should have a discussion about how to bring the ongoing campaign to a satisfying conclusion. Are the characters ready to retire? How have they changed the universe in their travels? Give yourselves enough time to tie up the narrative.

It can be fun to start a new campaign after the current one ends, playing a different crew in the same shared universe.





THE GAME MASTER

The the following sections are addressed to the game master. If you're planning on being the game master for your group, you should read it. If you're not planning on being a game master, you don't have to read it, but you might find it interesting.

YOUR GOALS

As the GM, you have three primary goals. Everything you do should be in service of one of them.

PORTRAY A DANGEROUS AND EXCITING SCI-FI UNIVERSE

Laser beams glitter in the darkness. Pirate Cruisers cut across the rings of a gas giant. A derelict vessel offers mysteries to be solved, but something dangerous lurks in its halls. Fill your imagination with images of starships, futuristic cities, and dangerous frontier worlds. Present the universe to your players with pointed details and evocative description. Make it feel amazing but real.

FILL THE CHARACTERS' LIVES WITH CONFLICT AND ADVENTURE

An outlaw in a smoky space station bar offers a job with a payout too good to be true. A customs vessel closes in, scanning for the contraband on board. In the alleyways of a world-spanning metropolis, a violent gang surrounds the characters. Keep things moving, keep pushing against the players. Give them things to do and people to interact with. Push them into action, then follow up with what they do.

PLAY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS

Don't come in with a whole story planned out. You might have a job outlined, and some NPC's ready to go, but get ready to change things and make things up as you go. When your players roll the dice they'll be creating complications and inviting chaos. Let them. If you try to wrangle them into a pre-planned story, the game will fight you. Let your players impact what happens. It's their story after all.

THINGS YOU SHOULD DO

ASK QUESTIONS AND USE THE ANSWERS

Offworlders leaves a lot unanswered. How does faster than light travel work? How do people treat psychics? Do weapons fire lasers or bullets? These are basic setting questions that you can decide with your players, or simply ask them to answer. Let the player playing a Warrior decide that their heavy weapon shoots bolts of super-hot plasma, or ask the Geek about drive fuel. This extends to specific questions about their characters too. Ask the Outlaw about the last crime they

committed, and the psychic about their place in society. Answering these questions as a group will create a universe you all own together.

As the GM, use the answers to these questions later. What happens when a bolt of superheated plasma burns through a barrel of drive fuel? Who's coming after the Outlaw? Moment to moment action and even whole sessions of play can come from here.

PROMPT THE PLAYERS AND LET THINGS SNOWBALL

Constantly present the players with pressure and danger, and opportunities for profit. Show them the coming danger, the money on the table, the barrel of the laser pistol, the asteroid barreling towards the ship, then ask, "What do you do?" The players will spring into motion, taking risky actions, and rolling the dice. The situation will tend to escalate and shift. Let it! Respond to player actions and carry the narrative through.

RESPOND TO THE DICE

Much of your work will be to take the results when the players roll the dice and interpret them into interesting narrative consequences. Your players will be hitting the 7-9 area a lot, and you'll have to come up with tradeoffs and consequences on the fly. That's why step 3 in Rolling The Dice is so important. If everyone has a good idea about potential outcomes before the dice hit the table, it will help things go smoothly. When your players roll 7-9, offer them tough choices and use up their resources (health, supply, etc.). Allow dice rolls to snowball and build on one another:

"You manage to blast the pirate with your shotgun, but not before he gets a hit in. Take 1D6 damage."

"You can repair the life support systems on the station, but you'll have to spend 1 supply to have the right tools on hand."

"The fixer agrees to get you the documents you asked for, but she'll need some credits up front to show you're good for it."

THE DIE OF FATE

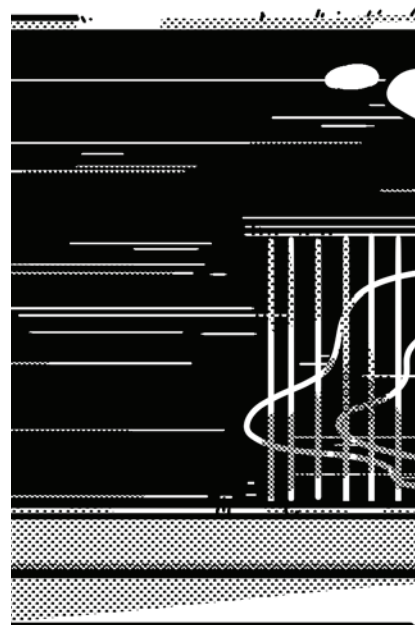
Sometimes a situation will come up that needs to be resolved, but you don't want to just decide yourself. For example when two NPC's are fighting each other and you don't know who will win, or if the PC's enter a dangerous system and you want to know if pirates come looking for them. In these situations, simply roll a D6. A high roll indicates a positive result for the PC's and a low roll a negative one. You can make this either a binary yes/no or use degrees of goodness and badness, depending on the situation.

On a miss, show the players how their actions complicate and escalate the situation, or put them directly in danger. Use misses to damage or destroy equipment, cause their ship to malfunction, or hurt the players directly. You have a huge amount of influence over the difficulty of any given situation. Play up damage and danger for a grittier game, or make the PC's feel more heroic by using less harsh consequences.

In all circumstances, use the stakes and the situation established in the fiction of the game to inform consequences.

ADJUDICATE ABILITIES FAIRLY

Some of the class abilities are quite broad in scope, and can even be a little vague. This is intentional. When there is a question about where and how an ability applies, you have final say, but it should be a conversation at the table. Try to be consistent, but flexible with the details. It's important to challenge the players, but don't try to cheat them out of their abilities. They are meant to be powerful, and the players should be able to use them to do awesome things.



JOBS: A FRAMEWORK FOR YOUR SESSION

When starting a session of *Offworlders*, you need to be ready with events that the players can respond to. Because the players are troubleshooters, mercenaries and freebooters, we call this the Job. A job is a simple list of events and facts, centered around a particular goal or problem. It should have just enough detail for you to know where you are going and keep things moving, but be flexible enough so that you can respond to the PC's actions too. Additionally, write down several questions about the job that you are interested in answering during play. Lastly, jot down some names, attributes, and any notes for NPC's the PC's are likely to encounter.

JOB: SPECIAL DELIVERY

JOB EVENTS:

The PC's are approaching Regolith, a mining colony built into an asteroid. Desperate for income, they've accepted a job from a mysterious contact to deliver a large crate, unopened, into the hands of a local rebel faction.

As they enter Regolith's security perimeter, a customs vessel hails them and asks to come aboard to inspect the vessel.

Their rebel contact is not waiting for them at the meeting point out on the surface of the asteroid.

The rebel headquarters, an abandoned mining station, is under attack, and the rebels are pinned down inside. If they want to get paid, the PC's will have to find a way to get them the crate.

NPCS

*Customs Officers:
Delilah & Hiro*

*Rebel Agent: Shasta
Rafaella*

HEALTH

3

6

ARMOR

1

1

JOB QUESTIONS:

- How will they circumvent customs?
- What's in the crate?
- Who hired the PC's?
- Will the PC's sympathize with the rebels?

DAMAGE

1D6

1D6+1

ABOUT

Thorough, but corruptible

A true believer with no sense of humor.

You can make the job as vague or detailed as you want. Some GMs are very improvisational, and some like to be very prepared. You can always flesh out additional details during play. What you shouldn't do is plan an exact story, or try to predict exactly how the PCs will solve the problem.

Start your first session with the first job event. Describe where the players are and what they are doing. Put an obstacle directly in their way, or show them an opportunity to engage with the world. Invite them to start making decisions and rolling the dice. See what happens from there. When the action

starts to stall, look at another item on the job list and bring it into play. Describe to the players how it manifests, and see how they react. Repeat this process until the job is resolved.

CASH REWARDS

The PC's are going to be looking for ways to profit, to keep the ship flying and to line their own pockets. As the GM, it's up to you to determine how much NPC's are willing to pay them for their work and for any valuable loot they might dig up. For a typical job that lasts one session of game time, 30-50

credits is a pretty good range. Particularly lengthy, dangerous, or important jobs might pay up to 100 credits. Making more than that from a single job is unlikely.

Remember that new ship upgrades cost 50 credits, and players will be

spending some credits on fuel and ship repairs as they travel. Also remember that the main reward in this game is XP, so giving your players a little extra money to throw around won't break anything too badly.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

It's easy to come up with NPC's and creatures on the fly in Offworlders. The most important thing for NPC's is to make them feel human. Give them names and goals, and describe them in detail to the players. Use the following guidelines to give them combat attributes, if necessary:

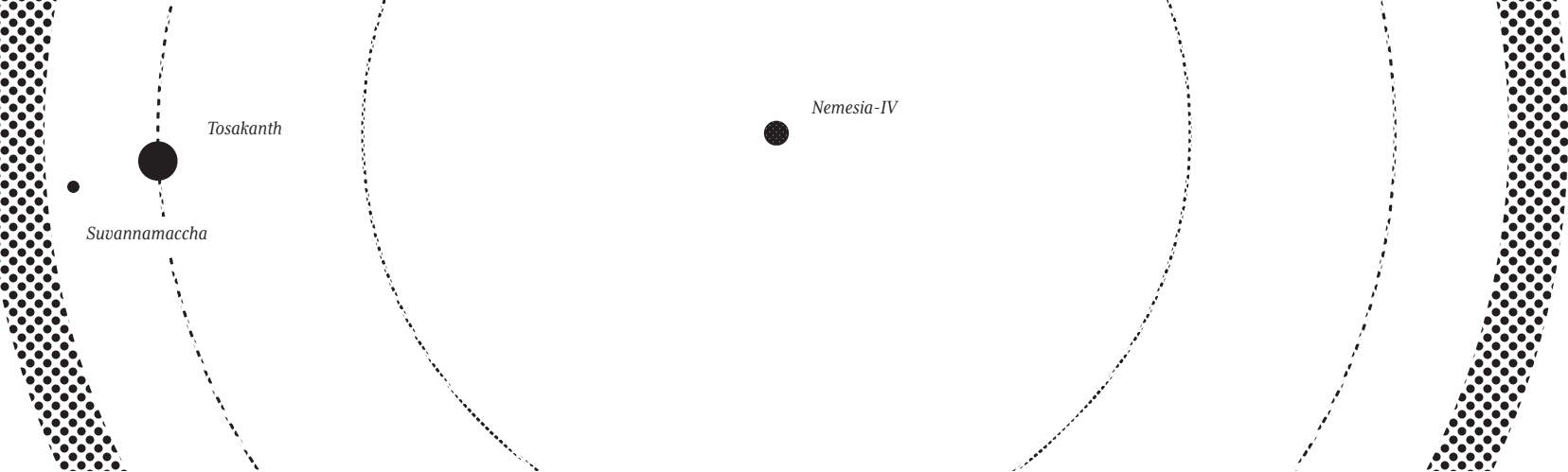
CHARACTER	HEALTH	ARMOR	DAMAGE
<i>Civilians, animals, generally untrained people</i>	3	0	<i>Lower of 2D6</i>
<i>Security guards and beat cops</i>	3	1	<i>1D6</i>
<i>Soldiers</i>	6	1	<i>1D6+1</i>
<i>Elite units, powerful aliens</i>	8	2	<i>Higher of 2D6+1</i>
<i>Huge monsters</i>	16	3	<i>2D6</i>

NON-PLAYER STARSHIPS

Use these attributes to improvise encounters and conflicts with other ships.

SHIP	HULL	ARMOR	DAMAGE
<i>Attack frigates</i>	8	1	<i>1D6+2</i>
<i>Science vessels</i>	4	0	<i>0 (Unarmed)</i>
<i>Capital ships</i>	16	4	<i>2D6</i>

Feel free to tweak and remix the attributes above to come up with new threats and characters. Remember that enemies will react intelligently to outwit the players, and will be unlikely to charge into a fight head on, or fight to the death without a good reason.



THE LONG GAME: THE STAR MAP, FACTIONS AND TIMELINES

If you play multiple sessions of *Offworlders*, you'll need to expand your game's universe beyond a single job and location. To keep track of places and events in the game, you'll create a star map and a timeline after your first session.

THE STAR MAP

To start drawing the star map for your campaign, follow these steps:

1 After your first session, get a blank piece of paper. Somewhere near the middle, draw a star. Draw it small enough so you leave plenty of space on the paper for other stars, but big enough that you can write some things around it without having to cram them in.

2 Next to the star, draw a dot. This is the location where the PC's first job took place. Is it a planet? A moon? A space station? Write the name of the location there too.

3 Give the star a name. Something like *Amaterasu*, or *Hertzprung* and write it down. Think about who rules this star system. Is it an interstellar megacorporation? A religious empire? A managed democracy? This is your first faction.

4 Consider other locations in the star system, and add one or two now. Maybe a highly populated planet, or a gas-mining station.

5 Does the faction ruling the star also rule any other stars? If they do, those are probably pretty close by. Add those stars and name them, too. You can add a location or two to each, if you wish.

6 Let your mind wander. Think about other factions that might come into conflict with the first. If they control star systems, add new stars to the map. You can draw political borders if it helps keep track. You can add as much or as little detail to these stars as you wish. Add any locations that come to mind.

Leave space to add to your map. It's never truly complete. You can expand it and add details as the players explore the universe.

Remember that the closest star systems take one week and one unit of drive fuel for the players to reach. Farther systems will take more time and fuel. Use this information to tune the scale and difficulty of travel between stars on your map.

FACTIONS

Factions are the major movers and shakers in the universe. Megacorporations, stellar empires, mercenary companies, crime syndicates and the like. The PCs are usually going to be too small to be able to take on a faction directly, but will encounter them through NPCs and jobs.

Note factions on your map and give them competing goals. You only really need two to start, and can create serious intrigue with three or four. When you create a faction, think about its leaders and members. How is it structured, politically? When it goes to war, what kind of soldiers does it have?

You'll use factions as the driving forces for your timelines, which will create opportunities for jobs. When the PC's are doing a job, they are likely to interact with agents of at least one faction.

TIMELINES

Much like a job is a framework for a single session, timelines are frameworks for your campaign. You should make one timeline after you first make your star map, and can add more as the universe gets fleshed out.

To make a timeline, think about the factions on your map, and the goals of each. What is happening in the universe? How do the factions act against one another? Who is doing what?

Then, write down a list of 3-5 events. These are events that will happen in the future, one after the other, barring some action by the players that dramatically alters their course. This is your timeline. A timeline should escalate towards instability, with the final event representing a fundamental change in the setting. For example:

Timelines start at the first event. Later events happen either between sessions, or as time passes. When the PC's spend a lot of time travelling, timelines will advance. Show the players how the universe is changing as they move through it. If event 4 in the example timeline takes place, drive fuel is likely to become more scarce and expensive within the UDW.

Use timelines as the basis for creating new jobs for each session. For example, if event 2 occurs, will people be willing to pay the PC's to smuggle them off of Hertzprung-9? Sounds like a golden opportunity for a job.

Timelines are flexible and uncertain. What if, in the course of job, the PC's prevent the terrorist bombing before event 2 takes place? The whole timeline is likely to change. Feel free to erase and rewrite timelines based on what happens during play.

THE FUTURE

Both your star map and your timelines are mutable and ever-growing. As you and your players find out more about the universe in play, new timelines will suggest themselves, and new locations will be fleshed out on the map. Between sessions, think about where things are going. Write new timelines, daydream new planets and draw them on the map.

Your players may develop specific goals and interests as the campaign moves forward. Encourage them! Allow them to give you ideas for new jobs, locations and characters. As you grow the universe, you can use the inspirational tables below to generate new ideas and situations. A job doesn't have to literally be a task done for money for an employer. If the PC's develop their own goals, you can use the job format to plan out relevant challenges on a session-by-session basis.

TIMELINE: DISUNION IN THE UDW

1. *Water riots on the mining colony Hertzprung-9 begin to escalate.*
2. *After a terrorist bombing, the Union of Democratic Worlds declares martial law on Hertzprung-9.*
3. *The UDW diverts fleet resources to the Hertzprung System as violence spreads.*
4. *Sensing weakness, the neighboring Tanagran Empire seizes a drive fuel production facility from the UDW.*
5. *War is declared between the Tanagran Empire and the UDW.*

INSPIRATIONAL TABLES

Use the following tables to generate names, places, and ideas for jobs. You can just pick what sounds interesting to you, or you can roll 2D6 on a table, using one die to determine the group and the second to determine the specific item. Items from the tables can serve as the starting point for jobs or even campaigns, or just as vibrant details the characters notice in passing.

WORLD TYPES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Archipelago	Dark	Forested	Hollow	Jungle	Temperate	1
2	Artificial	Dead	Frozen	Industrial	Oceanic	Tidally Locked	2
3	Burning	Desert	Garbage	Low Gravity	Radioactive	Toxic	3
4	Caustic	Diamond	Gas Giant	Mechanical	Ringed	Unstable Orbit	4
5	Collapsing	Earthlike	Global Metropolis	Moon	Sentient	Volcanic	5
6	Cracked Open	Eden	High Gravity	Phantom	Swamp	Wintery	6

THEMES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Abandoned	Diseased	Imperialism	Monarchy	Pacifists	Slavers	1
2	Anarchists	Dangerous Fauna	Kleptocracy	Militaristic	Piracy	Spies	2
3	Artificial Intelligence	Feudal Houses	Low Population	Mutants	Post-Apocalyptic	Theocracy	3
4	Anti-Psychic	High Population	Low Tech	No Children	Poverty	Trade Guilds	4
5	Clones	Hypercapitalist	Managed Democracy	No Elderly People	Quarantined	Tyranny	5
6	Corporal Punishment	Illuminati	Martial Law	Oligarchy	Science	Xenophobic	6

OBJECTS IN SPACE

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Abandoned Navy Ship	Cargo Container	Debris Field	Merchant Ship	Shipping Center	Ore Mine	1
2	Alien Wildlife Preserve	Carrier Strike Group	Derelict Civilian Ship	Military Fleet	Solar Array	Pirate Haven	2
3	Ancient AI Core	Cathedral	Escape Pod	Nomad Fleet	Superweapon	Private Station	3
4	Arboretum	Colony Vessel	Factory	Patrol Frigate	Trade Convoy	Refueling Station	4
5	Asteroid Field	Cryosleep Pod	Generation Ship	Science Installation	Listening Post	Transmission Buoy	5
6	Battle in Progress	Dead Body	Hotel	Secret Base	Luxury Liner	Unexploded Ordnance	6

CARGO

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Biological Samples	Cyber Prosthetics	Fuel	Medicine	Potable Water	Steel	1
2	Breathable Air	Data Records	Gourmet Food	Military Hardware	Refugees	Tea	2
3	Clothes	Diamonds	Ground Vehicles	Modular Housing Units	Seeds	Torpedoes	3
4	Coffee	Exotic Animals	Illegal Drugs	Nuclear Waste	Small Arms	Toys	4
5	Consumer Electronics	Farming Equipment	Liquor	Nutrient-Rich Paste	Solar Panels	Trees	5
6	Construction Equipment	Fine Art	Luxury Housewares	Organs	Spices	Unrefined Ore	6

NAMES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Albern	Corban	Horza	Laramie	Roobin	Talsorian	1
2	Ananya	Dajiel	Ingvall	Lora	Ridley	Torrin	2
3	Bodhi	Dunkenne	Karoleen	Olyffia	Serrah	Varin	3
4	Brindt	Forrest	Kerra	Othersh	Shail	Vasquez	4
5	Charles	Benry	Kion	Piqo	Sophia	Wei	5
6	Chelle	Garrick	Kotai	Prys	Steede	Xiang	6

NAME		STRENGTH		AGILITY	
CLASS		INTELLIGENCE		WILLPOWER	
HEALTH		ARMOR		SUPPLY	
MAX		MAX		MAX	

SKILLS

- ☐ ATHLETICS
- ☐ CULTURE
- ☐ MANIPULATION
- ☐ PILOT
- ☐ SCIENCE
- ☐ SNEAK
- ☐ SURVIVAL
- ☐ TECH

ABILITIES

- GEEK

☐ ANALYTICAL

☐ CHEMIST

☐ DRONE CONTROLLER

☐ HIJACK

☐ MEDIC

☐ POLYMATH
- PSYCHIC

☐ BLAST

☐ FORCE WALL

☐ JUMP

☐ PREMONITION

☐ SCANNER

☐ TELEKINESIS
- OUTLAW

☐ CHEAP SHOT

☐ GHOST

☐ LUCKY

☐ RECKLESS

☐ SHOOT FIRST

☐ SMUGGLE
- WARRIOR

☐ BRUTE

☐ DEAD-EYE

☐ HARDY

☐ HEAVY LIFTING

☐ UNSTOPPABLE

☐ VETERAN'S INSTINCTS

LOOK

GEAR

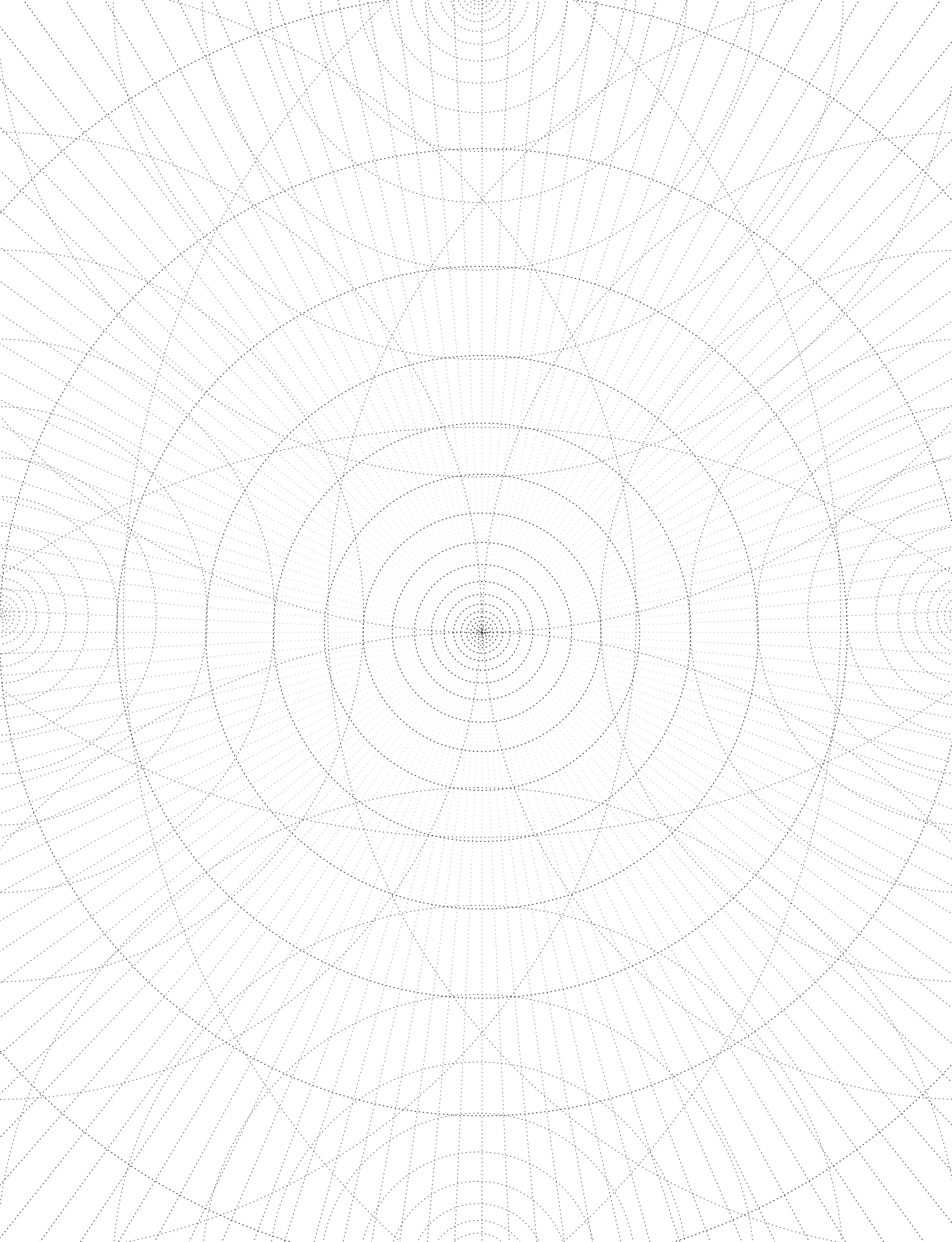
XP	ADVANCEMENT
	<div><div><input type="checkbox"/> GET A NEW CLASS ABILITY</div><div>10XP</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> INCREASE AN ATTRIBUTE BY 1 (MAX +2)</div><div>10XP</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> GET A NEW CLASS ABILITY</div><div>10XP</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> INCREASE AN ATTRIBUTE BY 1 (MAX +2)</div><div>10XP</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> GET A NEW CLASS ABILITY</div><div>10XP</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> INCREASE AN ATTRIBUTE BY 1 (MAX +3)</div><div>20XP</div></div>

SHIP NAME	HULL	ARMOR	FUEL
	MAX	DAMAGE	MAX

UPGRADES

- **ADDITIONAL ARMOR.....** +1 armor.
- **ADVANCED ELECTRONICS.....** High-end scanners, communicators, sensors, etc.
- **ADVANCED DRIVE.....** For each interstellar trip, you can choose either to take half the time or use half the amount of fuel.
- **AFTERBURNERS.....** You may spend 1 Fuel to get +1 to a single pilot roll to evade, outrun, or maneuver.
- **FUEL TANKS.....** Max drive fuel +2.
- **HIGH MANEUVERABILITY.....** If you don't have the Pilot skill, you count as having it in situations where maneuverability is relevant. If you already have the pilot skill, you may choose to reroll both dice in these situations, instead of just one.
- **LUXURY PASSENGER QUARTERS** For the crew who wants to attract a certain class of clientele.
- **MASSIVE CARGO HOLD.....** Large enough to transport smaller vessels or a huge amount of goods.
- **MEDBAY.....** Advanced, automated medical equipment. Characters resting in a med-bay heal all their HP instead of half their total.
- **MORE POWERFUL WEAPONS.....** +1 damage.
- **SHUTTLE BAY.....** Comes with a small shuttle which can fly independently, but cannot travel between stars on its own.

LOOK



BREAK THIS GAME

Offworlders is designed to be extremely open to interpretation, remixing, and hacking. Negotiating specific uses of abilities, and making smart rulings about dice rolls at the table is part of the fun. I encourage you to come up with new classes, abilities, aliens and weird gear for your game. Talk to me on Twitter at [@chrisperrywolf](https://twitter.com/chrisperrywolf), or join the Offworlders Discord server at chriswolf.com/offworlders and show us what you come up with!