

**THE LAST**  
**PARSEC**  
**PRIMER**







## PRIMER

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This document is a free preview of *The Last Parsec* roleplaying game setting by Pinnacle Entertainment Group for use with the Savage Worlds system.

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# PRIMER

*The Last Parsec* is a story of exploration in a limitless universe of mystery and adventure. Unlike most *Savage Worlds* settings, the background is very light—a “sandbox” of stars, planets, and stranger celestial bodies, all waiting to be explored by intrepid beings from across the galaxies.

Information on making characters of various races, weapons, ships, vehicles, and other technology can be found in the *Savage Worlds Science Fiction Companion*. With few exceptions, Ultratech does not exist.

The only Arcane Background available to characters in *The Last Parsec* is Psionics, which works exactly as described in *Savage Worlds*. How psionic characters are viewed varies from world to world. Some revere them, some view them with suspicion, and some hold them in contempt as unwelcome thought stealers.

Setting books for *The Last Parsec* focus on places of interest the player characters might go. Some might zero in on a system and the internal politics going on between its warring worlds. Others might detail a single large city, a bustling space station, or a lonely mining colony.

The background common to all these locations is spelled out on the following pages and will be explored in further detail as *The Last Parsec* line continues to expand—like the swirling cosmos itself.

## THE KNOWN WORLDS

The volume of space most thoroughly explored by the various races spans the width of the Milky Way galaxy’s Orion Arm. The thousands of inhabited worlds are scattered among the billions of star systems within, most of which have never been explored. Billions of other galaxies and millions more inhabited planets, races, flora, fauna, and other phenomena lay beyond.

## GOVERNMENT

There is no central government in the Known Worlds. Most interactions between civilizations are conducted through local diplomacy, trade agreements, and treaties. Most inhabited worlds maintain at least a small navy to enforce their laws. It is possible to be a wanted criminal in several systems while utterly free in others, which has led to the existence of the lucrative, though oft-scorned profession of bounty hunter.

A number of system-spanning empires exist, such as the United Confederation in the Milky Way or the rakashan Tazanian Empire, but even these are tiny compared to the vastness of the Known Worlds, and certainly to the last parsecs of space far, far beyond. Between the stars, what law exists is usually enforced at the end of a blaster.

## CURRENCY

Most individual systems maintain their own system of currency. Occasionally, a closely aligned group of worlds shares a single type of currency for trade purposes. A



few of the large corporations also issue scrip backed by their own resources. JumpCorp scrip in particular has become a sort of de facto interstellar currency and is often referred to as simply 'credits,' denoted C\$.

## SPACE TRAVEL

Travel within a system is generally done under conventional power. More distant points must be reached by "jumping" into hyperspace. Jump- or hyperdrives are readily available on the consumer market throughout the civilized worlds. Although the large conglomerates control the majority of bulk trade contracts, there's plenty of cargo, passengers, and even contraband to support vast numbers of independent merchant, travel, and exploration vessels.

Jumps are usually conducted between registered astronavigational beacons. Beacons can only guide ships to systems—the trip to the individual planet or other destination must be travelled conventionally (see the *Savage Worlds Science Fiction Companion*).

Heavily populated worlds grant codes to their astronav beacons with trusted trade partners, allies, and travelers willing to pay their fee. Codes to more isolated beacons—such as those in systems with valuable mining colonies or other exploitable resources—are extremely valuable and closely guarded by those who own them. Of course, astronav beacons can also be destroyed, held hostage, or hacked as well.

Ships can fly "blind" to observable locations without nav beacons, but this requires its astrogation system to perform trillions of calculations on the fly, based on ever-shifting echoes, pings, and other data relayed from every open source it can find. More than one ship has gone missing in hyperspace this way. See the **Jumping Blind** sidebar on page 5 for more information.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Transmissions can be beamed through hyperspace via relays and astronav beacons, allowing near instantaneous communication as long as the network is available.





Without astronavigation beacons, communications are relatively instant within a system, delayed for 2d6 weeks between systems, or 2d6 years between galaxies.

## LANGUAGE

Millions of languages are spoken across the universe, but within the Known Worlds, *Lingua Universal* is the standard. Most traders, travelers, and explorers are fluent in it, and most ship consoles and other electronics are labeled in “uni.”

## JUMPCORP

In *The Last Parsec*, the player characters work for the galaxy-spanning corporation called JumpCorp.

JumpCorp operates across the cosmos, dealing in everything from trade to mining, security, and exploration.

## COMPENSATION

JumpCorp exploration team and other “all hours” members live and work aboard their vessel or station. Salary starts at C\$5,000 for 30 standard days service, plus room and board. Average employees receive a 3% bonus every year after their first three. Some missions command bonuses or hazard pay as well.

## ASSETS AND AID

JumpCorp has regional offices in many star systems and sectors throughout the Known Worlds, as well as research stations, trade and travel offices, and independent operatives in many far-flung corners. While these can sometimes offer some material assistance, clarification of instructions and advice, they are seldom in a position to lend direct aid to their team members, who they consider to be independent and self-reliant contractors.

## JUMPING BLIND

Jumping between systems with astronavigation beacons works exactly as described in the *Savage Worlds Science Fiction Companion*.

“Jumping blind” to systems without a beacon requires the same Knowledge (Astronavigation) roll with the same modifiers, but time spent in hyperspace is much longer.

Jumping to a different system in the same galaxy takes 2d6 months. Jumping to a different galaxy takes 2d6 years. Reduce time by one month (or year) for each raise on the Knowledge (Astronavigation) roll, to a minimum of 1—this cannot be reduced by burning extra energy.

Note that one can only jump to a location that can be observed and scanned in significant detail, which is why the Known Worlds are a relatively tight cluster in the Milky Way. So far.

On arrival to the system, the crew must still travel 2d6 additional days to their specific desired location as usual.

Ships can communicate in hyperspace normally, and crew can go “extravehicular” to make repairs and the like along the way if needed. Should a crewman become detached from his vessel, however, he is lost somewhere in the boundless reaches of space, never to be seen again.

## DANGERS

A vessel locked in hyperspace for such a long period is subject to many strange events outside its control. Each month spent jumping blind after the first, draw a card from the Action Deck. If the result is a Joker, the ship drops out of hyperspace into a random location.

What the crew finds there is entirely up to the Game Master, but astronavigational systems can take years to determine the current location and compute a new and viable route.

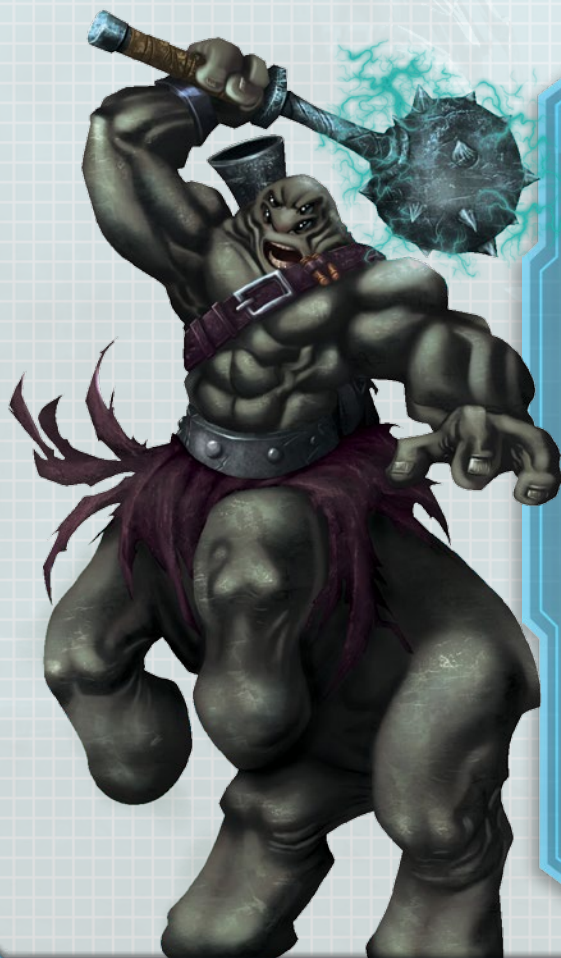
Jumping blind is a very hazardous endeavor.



# PRIMARY RACES

There is a near endless variety of sentient life in the universe, but a few are relatively common in the world of *The Last Parsec*. The profiles on the following pages contains more detailed information about some of these species, their origins, and how they are most often seen by others. These are iconic stereotypes but every individual is different, of course. There's no reason a yeti can't be a gentle scholar or a Serran a crude barbarian.

To create a character based on these races, refer to the *Savage Worlds Science Fiction Companion*.



## AURAX

Aurax look something like a cross between a humanoid and a terrestrial elephant seal or hippo. Iconically, the burly, six-limbed, four-eyed beings are both ferocious warriors and tender poets. They are renowned for their great feasts where they recite epic tales of wars, comradeship, and love.

Aurax bodyguards prefer powered melee weapons, particularly maces and mauls. Fighting and violence are commonplace among them, but killing is considered a last resort.

Aurax evolved on a massive world of rolling hills and great, golden plains called Auran. They are nomads and not a technological people, having been uplifted to space travel by other races, but a rare few are curious and gregarious enough to travel to the stars—something most aurax shun vehemently.





## CONSTRUCT

There are millions of constructs throughout the Known Worlds, from battle droids to pleasure bots to miners designed to work in conditions organic beings couldn't hope to survive.

The vast majority of constructs have no self-will and are true robots. They follow instructions from their sentient owners and masters, or conduct themselves according to artificial intelligence programmed with a specific purpose in mind.

Some constructs have free will and even emotional simulators. Most struggle with these advanced concepts, though some show it more than others.

Constructs designed to look like humans are generally called androids. Those that are obviously machines are robots. Throughout the Known Worlds, it is expected that constructs are property that must be licensed and registered with the authorities, and their owners are legally responsible for their actions. It is illegal to build a robot without protective 'Asimov' programming against harming sentient beings.

## DEADER (PARASTEEN)

Parasteen, more commonly called 'deaders' by other races, are six-inch long parasites that occupy and animate organic corpses. They do this by connecting with the nervous system and reactivating the electrical systems to the various organs and muscles. The host's form is then sealed inside an air-tight suit and constantly pumped with chemicals to preserve it.

Deaders call their body donors 'celebrants,' organic beings who sold the rights to their corpse before death for lucrative fees. Some see this as taking advantage of those in need—most see it as a perfectly viable business transaction.

Parasteen can occupy most any organic being, but humanoids are most common due to their particular nervous system and body chemistry. Even then, a deader's movement is always slow and clumsy.

Parasteen are intelligent, sentient beings, and become even more so once they tap into their host's brain for additional storage and processing power. They are emotionally remote, however. They don't understand the pleasure and pain of most other beings, though many strive constantly to do so. Because of their intelligence and emotional detachment, they are highly prized as science officers.





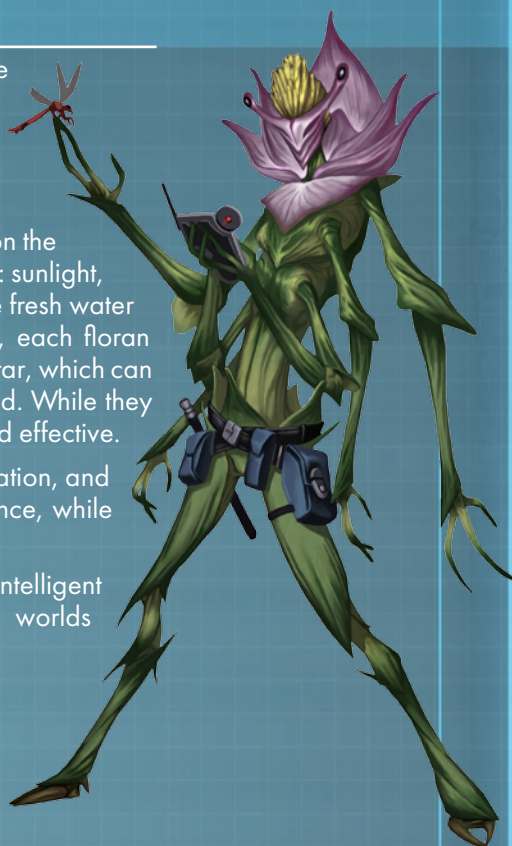
## FLORAN

The Known Worlds' sentient plant-based life forms are called florans, though those from particular worlds prefer those monikers instead. Florans encompass a variety of separately evolved species, ranging from sentient succulents to moss-like swamp dwellers.

All free-moving plant creatures like florans still rely upon the three primary components of photosynthesis to survive: sunlight, water, and soil nutrients. Civilized florans enjoy ample fresh water and consume their nutrients in pill form. For sunlight, each floran requires regular exposure to the spectrum of its native star, which can vary widely from the infrared to ultraviolet and beyond. While they prefer natural sunlight, suitable lamps are common and effective.

Most florans reproduce through seed creation, germination, and growth; some sprouts emerge with instinctive intelligence, while others must be nurtured to maturity.

Many florans view agriculture practiced by other intelligent races suspiciously, even disapprovingly, preferring worlds where the native flora grows lush and wild.



## HUMAN

By far the most ubiquitous race among the Known Worlds is humanity. All humans trace their genetic origins to Earth, though many consider their home world to be one of the hundreds of colony planets seeded by slower-than-light spacecraft from Earth many millennia ago. Those humans born on heavy gravity worlds may be stronger and more stout, while those from low- or zero-gravity environments are slight and thin, but their physiology—and foibles, it seems—are otherwise universal.

Humans are an adaptable and varied species, with stereotypes based more on specific planetary or national origin than race. Some humans are considered barbaric and warlike because they come from war-torn worlds, while others are seen as academics if they come from some well-known bastions of peace and learning. Like all stereotypes, individuals vary, of course.

Humanoid is an all-encompassing term in the Known Worlds that includes humans and many other independently evolved bipedal beings of similar size and basic physiology. All humans are humanoids, but not all humanoids are humans.





## INSECTOID

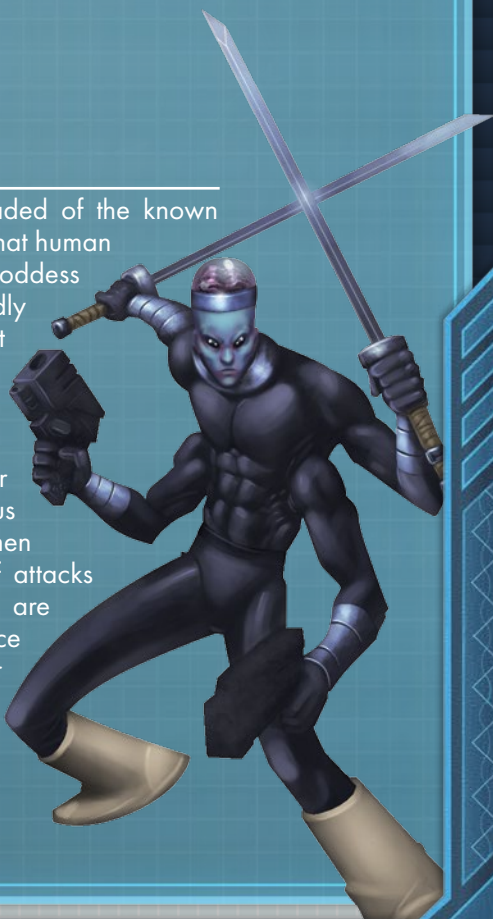
One of the most varied and widespread racial groups in the Known Worlds are collectively called the insectoids. In fact, insectoids are many different races that evolved on different worlds who share two primary defining characteristics: exoskeletons and self-aware intelligence. When categorized by humans, they are often compared in appearance to terrestrial insects, from mantises to beetles to ants, though they have no genetic connection or shared behavior with any of these. Some insectoids are very large, strong, and well-armored, some are frail, and some seem to have psychic links to others of their kind.

Other races often find insectoids strange or off-putting. Sometimes it's because of their diets—some consume other, non-sentient insects, sometimes alive, while others consume only carrion. Some also lack typical vocal cords and can only communicate via arcane clicks or hand motions.

## KALIAN

Few would deny that Kalias are the most hot-headed of the known humanoid races. They originate from a single planet that human explorers named Kali, after the four-armed Hindu goddess of destruction. Kalias grudgingly accept this outwardly imposed name when dealing with other races, but use a variety of other planetary and national names among themselves.

Kalian brains think very quickly, an adaptation stimulated on their primitive home world by their four agile limbs and the need to fend off numerous speedy predators. They make excellent swordsmen and marksmen, overwhelming foes with a flurry of attacks that few other species can hope to match. Kalias are technologically proficient, having mastered hyperspace travel almost simultaneously with humans; they prefer weapons and equipment of their own design and manufacture.



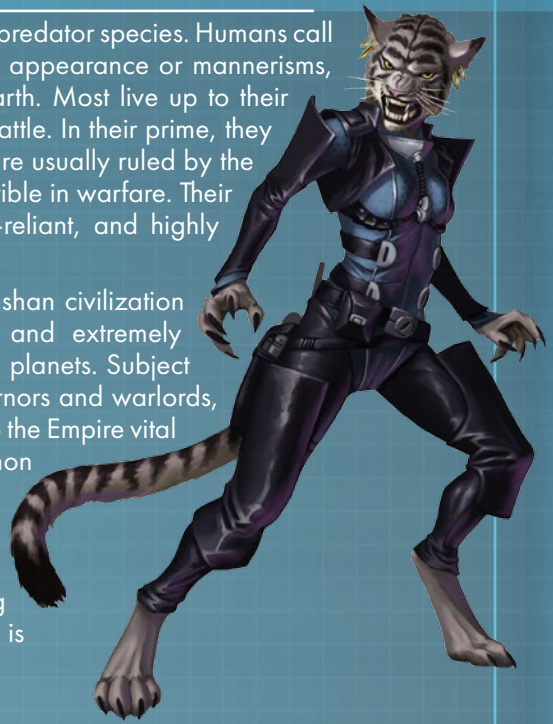


## RAKASHAN

A number of worlds have given rise to intelligent predator species. Humans call them rakashans, because of their shared feline appearance or mannerisms, after the cat-like humanoids of legend from Earth. Most live up to their heritage, being fierce and cruel opponents in battle. In their prime, they are strong, agile, and cunning. Their militaries are usually ruled by the strongest of the pride and are relentless and terrible in warfare. Their armies consist of fearsome, independent, self-reliant, and highly motivated warriors.

In the Known Worlds, the most prominent rakashan civilization is the Tazanian Empire, a large, powerful, and extremely efficient dominion with thousands of conquered planets. Subject populations toil beneath the lash of local governors and warlords, surrendering vast wealth and materials that keep the Empire vital and its space fleets strong. Rebellions are common but most often brutally suppressed.

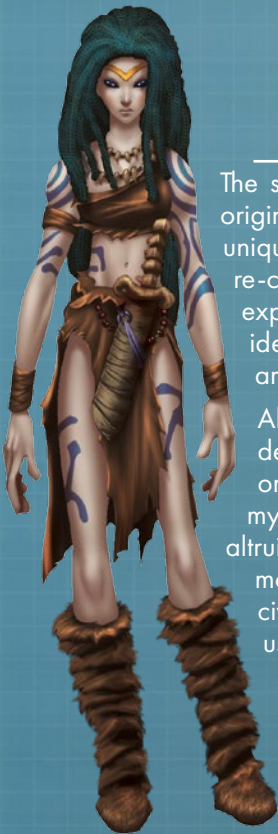
While most space-faring rakashans are omnivores, at heart they embrace their carnivorous roots; they have numerous hunting planets, and on some the sentence of the prey is simply not a consideration.



## SERRAN

The so-called 'elves' come from a lush, green world they call Serra, originally colonized by a slower-than-light ship launched from Earth. The unique civilization that spawned there flourished there independently until re-connected to the wider human community by hyperspace-capable explorers just three centuries ago. Serrans are humans, genetically identical to their terrestrial brethren, and any physiological differences are due only to more than 200 generations on an alien world.

All Serrans have at least some latent psychic ability. Most have developed much stronger abilities, such as precognition, telepathy, or even pyrokinesis. Their psychic talents are rooted in meditative mysticism, and accepted practices dictate that such powers be used altruistically rather than selfishly. Dishonesty is a difficult concept for most Serrans, since telepathy has rendered it ineffective in their own civilization for many centuries; those exposed to dishonesty find it useless and baffling.





## SAURIAN



Reptilian-looking creatures are referred to as saurians. They come in many shapes, sizes, and colors—from camouflaged brown or grey to brilliant orange and violet—though each species is separately evolved from a variety of worlds. Some even have the chameleon-like ability to change skin color. Most have spines and tails of some sort, and a few can regenerate and grow new limbs should misfortune deprive them of one. All are cold-blooded, reliant upon external heat sources to maintain optimum body temperature, and become much more lethargic on cold planets or the typically frigid halls of space stations and ships.

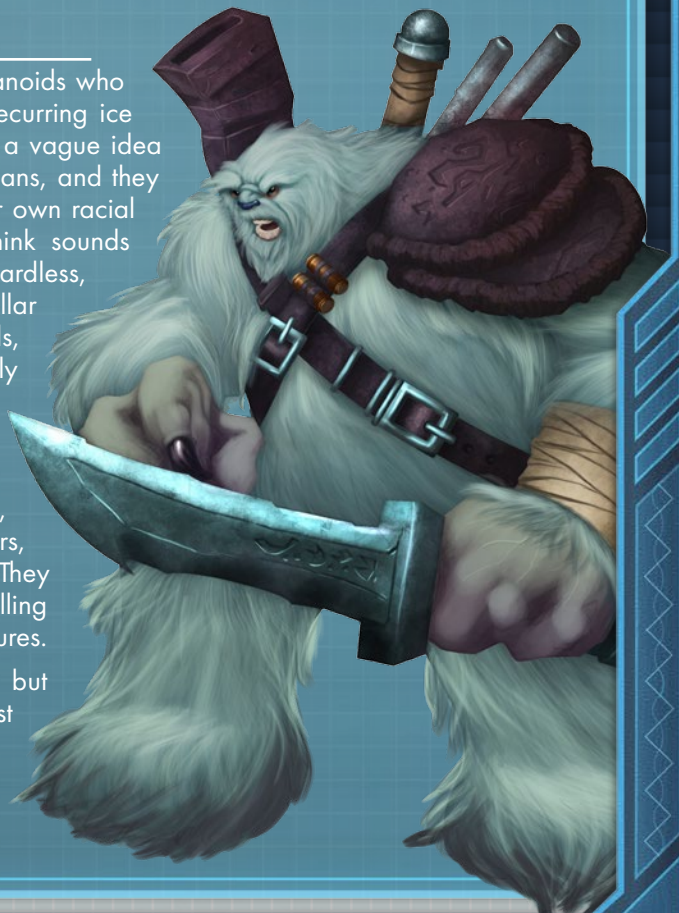
Saurians are not slow witted, as one might expect; when properly stimulated and warmed they can be as intellectually adept as any humanoid. Most reproduce by laying eggs, often in clutches, which they vigorously hide and protect.

## YETI

Yetis are enormous, fur-covered humanoids who evolved on a world of perpetually recurring ice ages. The yetis themselves have only a vague idea what the Earth term 'yeti' actually means, and they bristle at that moniker, preferring their own racial name K'ho (which many humans think sounds more like a cough than a word). Regardless, yetis joyously embrace the interstellar community of the Known Worlds, so much so that they have virtually depopulated their home world, shunning its harsh rigors to spread out among the stars.

Yetis are often seen as gruff warriors, but just like any other race breed scholars, academicians, and other sophists. They tend to be eager and enthusiastic, willing students of new experiences and pleasures.

Yetis are fascinated by technology but aren't typically as adept with it as most others. Their digits aren't well-suited to keyboards or touch screens (which they break with alarming frequency).





## TO THE LAST PARSEC AND BEYOND!

There are places far beyond the familiar bounds of Earth. Some lie twinkling in the distant starfields, waiting to be discovered by intrepid explorers or conquered by legions of space marines. Others are just around the corner in time, a near future where hovertanks race across blasted battlefields, cyberware replaces organic limbs, and robots serve humanity—or attempt to annihilate it.

The *Savage Worlds Science Fiction Companion* contains new races, Edges and Hindrances, Setting Rules, gear, cyberware, and numerous strange creatures from across the galaxy. It also includes detailed but simple rules for players and Game Masters to create their own robots, power armor, vehicles, starships, walkers and more to travel to the stars...and beyond!

*The Last Parsec* requires the [Science Fiction Companion](#) and the [Savage Worlds](#) core rules to play.

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