Dark Heresy

Black Industries

CORE RULEBOOK

WARHAMMER 40,000 ROLEPLAY

Totus laus immortalis Imperator super suus rutilus per ~ Nex pro ebinco
Fides non Alienus, Bacterium, Veneficus
Morior in Suus munera est scio eternus vita
Astronomicon laudum tetor nos per ii ~ Mars Deus-Imperator misertorbia
THE HALO STARS
Meridian Saturnus
Meridian Jupiter
Meridian Mars
Meridian Venus
Meridian Mercury
Meridian Sol
Meridian Luna
Meridian Terra
Meridian Neptune
Meridian Uranus
Meridian Pluto
Meridian Eris
Meridian Haumea
Meridian Makemake
Meridian Ceres
Meridian Vesta
Meridian Pallas
Meridian Juno
Meridian Hygiea
Meridian Interamnia
Meridian Europa
Meridian Davida
Meridian Sylvia
Meridian Cybele
Meridian Eunomia
Meridian Psyche
Meridian Thisbe
Meridian Iris
Meridian Hygiea

Beatus est mens ut est quoque vegrandis dubito
Fides
Imperator mors resolvo nos totus ~ Magnus ornamentum nunquam detessus
Paris est tussor somnium
Permissum flamma exsisto sentio ~ Veritas
Coreward
Spinward
Trailing
Rimward
Galaxy Sector I
Scale
Ixaniad Sector
Josian Reach
Fenksworld
Zalmant's Domain
Iocanthus
Golgen Reach
Mkl of the Hecht Cluster
Grayhold
Lehyde Ten
Rantis Nebula
Baraspine
Closter
Kestilus
Wee
Hazeroth Abyss
Markaxan Markches
Deeh
Heed
Kleybo
Acrage

DARK HERESY

ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM
DARKNESS OF THE 41ST MILLENNIUM

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Undying thanks
Chris Pramas and Green Ronin for getting us started on this epic journey, Max Bottrill & the Games Workshop Design Studio, Dave Allen, Robert Clark, Richard Ford, David Gallagher, Mal Green, Stuart Jeckle, Nick Kyme, Caroline Law, Karen Miksza, Dylan Owen, Lindsey Priestley, Rob Schwalb, all who worked on *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, & all playtesters (see p.395)

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A Black Industries Publication
First published in 2008 by Black Industries, an imprint of BL Publishing

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ISBN 978-1-84416-435-6

Product Code 60040183001

Printed in EEC

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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 Astronomican, 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. 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 darkness of the far 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.

The War for the Soul of Mankind

Welcome to Dark Heresy, a roleplaying game full of danger, mystery and brutal violence, set in the decaying far future of *Warhammer 40,000*. You are about to embark on perilous adventures into the dark heart of the 41st Millennium. You stand on the front line of a great and secret war. As an Acolyte of the powerful Inquisition, you will root out threats to the Imperium of Man. You will engage in deadly combat against heretics, aliens and witches. You will face Daemonic possession, and battle for your very survival amidst a web of conspiracy and betrayal. But perhaps the biggest threat you face is your fellow man, for the human soul is such fertile ground for corruption. It is your duty to shepherd mankind from the manifold paths of damnation, with a smoking boltgun if necessary.

Do not shrink from your noble calling, hard as it might be. Desperate times call for desperate measures, and these are the darkest times that humanity has ever known. The Imperium is beset by enemies, both from within and without. It is up to you to stand tall and make a difference.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

Right about now you might be wondering just how a roleplaying game works, and what you need to jump into the action. Excellent. Such inquisitiveness is the mark of a fine Acolyte (of course, surviving what your curiosity uncovers is another).Well, rest assured, not only is roleplaying fun and exciting, it is also very easy to learn. This book contains all the rules and information you need to get started—so you're already halfway there. Of course, if you are merely reading this book in your local gaming store or bookshop, you should buy it immediately. Not only will it be a sign of your extremely good taste, you'll also be able to introduce your friends to a whole new world of compelling gaming.

You may well have already played a roleplaying game (or RPG) on your computer or games console, or indeed our companion hobby game, *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*. If you haven't, what you basically need to know is that a roleplaying game allows you and your friends to take the role of a hero at the centre stage of a dramatic story. You get to pick what your heroes, or Player Characters (PCs), get to do. From what they say, to how they fight and what they look like, you and your friends get to shape the action.

In concept, this all might seem rather chaotic. How is the story told? How do you decide what happens? What do you do if you and your friends disagree? That's where this book comes in. *Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay* presents you with the rules of play, and describes the dark and gothic world of the 41st Millennium. This book explains how to create your character, how to blast down aliens, how to uncover heretical secrets, and much more.

Before you can begin, you and your roleplaying group have to make an important decision: who is going to be the Game Master? The Game Master (referred to as the GM) is the referee and the lead storyteller, the person in charge of running the game. The GM does not play as others do; instead, he or she presents the stories and situations, describes the wonders and perils of the galaxy, plays other characters and adjudicates the rules. The GM is the most important member of your group, so choose wisely. The GM ought to be fair-minded, well spoken and imaginative. An eye for detail is also helpful.

What You Need To Play Dark Heresy

When you're ready to start playing Dark Heresy, you'll need the following items:

- This rulebook
- Three or more people to play the game
- A quiet place to play (around a table is ideal)
- Three or four hours of gaming time
- Some ten-sided dice (two or more per player)
- Paper
- Pencils and an eraser
- Snacks, drinks, etc

You should be able to find ten-sided dice in the shop where you bought this book, or failing that, there are many internet stores that sell these dice in a variety of different colours and finishes. If you have access to a photocopier you may like to copy the character sheet at the back of this book for each of your group to use, though this isn't essential. (You can also download free printable character sheets from our website at www.blackindustries.com.)

To help visualise the action, you may wish to use suitable miniatures to represent your characters and enemies during combat. Games Workshop's own Citadel range of *Warhammer 40,000* miniatures are ideal for this task. See www.games-workshop.com for more details and nearest stockists.

If you are the GM, you need to know the rules of this book quite well. You can learn more about your job in **Chapter VIII: The Game Master**, and you may head there now if you wish. If you have already played *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* you will find much of Dark Heresy familiar, but be aware that a few important details of the rules differ from that game.

If you are intending to be a player, keep reading. The next chapter will guide you through the process of creating your alter ego in the 41st Millennium. In less than half an hour, you can be ready to play. If you'd like to know a little more about the setting of Dark Heresy, have a read through **Chapter IX: Life in the Imperium** and **Chapter X: The Inquisition**.

If you're still not clear on what roleplaying is, be sure to read the **Example of Play** on **page 10**. This description illustrates what a game is like.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

Dark Heresy is divided into thirteen chapters. They are:

Introduction

The section you are reading right now. It provides an overview of Dark Heresy and roleplaying in general.

Chapter I: Character Creation

This chapter takes you step by step through the process of creating your character for the game.

Chapter II: Career Paths

Career Paths are the building blocks of your character. They both describe what you did before you became an Acolyte and your role within your investigative group. This chapter details all the various Career Paths, and also explains how you can improve and develop your character through game play.

Chapter III: Skills

From Interrogation to Tech-Use, every character has a variety of learned skills that they can employ. This chapter describes them all in detail.

Chapter IV: Talents

Whether it's Bulging Biceps or Unshakeable Faith, every character also has certain special abilities that make them unique. This chapter describes all of these talents.

Chapter V: Armoury

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

Chapter VI: Psychic Powers

From firing bolts of pyrokinetic flame or issuing telepathic commands, Emperor-gifted Psychic Powers are rare and dangerous. This chapter explains how they work and what happens when they go wrong.

Chapter VII: Playing the Game

In Dark Heresy you will be forced to fight for your life against a variety of heretical foes, and this chapter tells you how to do it. It also tells you how to make Skill Tests, spend Fate Points and perform other rules-related actions.

Chapter VIII: The Game Master

The GM has a special role to play in any roleplaying game and this chapter explains how to take it on. In addition to advice on how to run a Dark Heresy game and how to be a good Game Master, it also contains rules for corruption and experience.

Chapter IX: Life in the Imperium

This chapter describes the Imperium of the 41st Millennium in all its decaying, war-torn glory.

Chapter X: The Inquisition

In Dark Heresy you take on the role of an Acolyte of the Inquisition. This chapter provides key background details about the mysterious organisation of the Inquisition.

Chapter XI: The Calixis Sector

The Calixis Sector is the core setting for Dark Heresy. This chapter provides an overview of the sector and then zooms in on three key planets. This should give the GM plenty of material to work with when running games.

Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists

The galaxy is fraught with all manner of deadly creatures, and this chapter provides background and game stats for various adversaries that can be found in the Calixis Sector.

Chapter XIII: Illumination

Illumination is an introductory adventure that GMs can use to kick off their Dark Heresy campaigns. Be warned though—this chapter is for GMs only and should not be read by the players.

Reading and rolling the dice

Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay: Dark Heresy contains everything you need to get started except dice. Ten-sided dice (d10) are the only type of dice you need to play Dark Heresy. Everyone will need access to at least two d10s, preferably of two different colours.

Just like in a boardgame or table-top wargame, dice are used to inject an element of chance into Dark Heresy.

As you read through this book, you'll discover that there are various ways you can use your dice to produce results. The most common use of dice is the percentage roll (abbreviated to d% or d100). This roll produces a number between 1 and 100. To make a percentage roll, you'll need two ten-sided dice. Choose one to indicate the "tens" and the other to indicate the "units". You'll probably find it useful to have dice of different colours to differentiate between them. Roll the dice and observe the results. The "tens" die forms the first digit of your result, whilst the "units" die gives you the last digit of your result.

Example: *Steve makes a percentage roll. His "tens" die shows an 8 whilst his "units" die shows a 6. Thus, Steve has rolled 86.*

Sometimes you will be asked to roll a number of dice and add the results together. In these cases the number of dice you need to roll are clearly written before the d10 abbreviation. For example, 2d10 requires two ten-sided dice to be rolled and added together, 4d10 requires four dice to be rolled and totalled, and so on.

Example: *Steve wants to find out the amount of damage done by his lasgun. He needs to roll 3d10. He picks up five ten-sided dice and rolls them. He gets a 3, 4, 7, 7 and a 2. He adds these together to get 23 (3 + 4 + 7 + 7 + 2 = 23).*

Finally, on some occasions you will need to create a number between 1 and 5. This is known as rolling a five-sided dice, or d5. Though you can get actual five-sided dice, you can easily create the same effect by rolling a d10 and halving the result, rounding any fractions up.

Example: *Steve's character has been knocked unconscious for d5 hours. Steve rolls 1d10. He gets a 7 and halves this to get a result of 4. (7÷2 = 3.5. Rounded up, this is 4.) Unfortunately, Steve's character will now be comatosed for 4 hours.*

An Example of Play

If you are new to roleplaying, you may still be unclear on how it all works. What follows is an example of play. It doesn't explain the rules of the game (that comes later), but it does show the basics of roleplaying and the Game Master's job in setting the scene, relating what the players discover as they explore and interpreting the rules.

In this example, Jez is the Game Master. Lyra is playing Amosis Tem, an assassin trained by one of the Imperium's many noble houses. Rick is playing Vilmos Palvi, an Imperial Guardsman from Naval Security. Will is playing Sylus Ozdemir, an Adept from the Scrivener's Star of Prol IX. Steve is playing Lazaro Uridar, an Adeptes Arbites Arbitrator. The four Player Characters are all Acolytes serving under Inquisitor Hastor Whitlocke of Ordo Xenos. They have been sent to a research station on the fringes of the Calixis Sector to investigate a bizarre astropathic communication that Inquisitor Whitlocke received from an agent (Tomas) on the station…

Jez [GM]: You have yet to find a living soul on the research station. No one greeted you in the landing bay. No one guarded the entryway. No one has appeared in the shadowy, vaulted halls. Now you're approaching what you think is the command centre. What do you want to do?

Rick [Vilmos]: I'll sweep the corridor, shotgun ready.

Lyra [Amosis]: When I get the hand-sign from Vilmos, I'll approach the door and see if I can open it.

Steve [Lazaro]: "Sylus, you and I should hang back and cover them."

Will [Sylus]: "Agreed."

Jez [GM]: Okay. Vilmos, you sweep the corridor and find no threats. Amosis, you get up to the door and discover it's security locked.

Lyra [Amosis]: Thought so. I'll use my Security skill to try to open it.

Lyra rolls a Security Skill Test.

Lyra [Amosis]: I passed my test.

Jez [GM]: That's good enough, the lock was not hard to override. The rusting door slides open to reveal the command centre. The first thing you notice is that there's a lot of blood in here. Then the stench hits you like a blow to the face. The source of the smell and the blood soon becomes clear. There are three bodies inside the command centre.

Lyra [Amosis]: "Emperor preserve us…"

Rick [Vilmos]: Any enemies?

Jez [GM]: Not that you can see.

Will [Sylus]: I'll examine the bodies and check for survivors.

Steve [Lazaro]: I'll see if I can access the station's data logs. "Vilmos, cover us."

Rick [Vilmos]: "But of course. You don't want me fooling with the machinery."

Lyra [Amosis]: "No, we certainly don't. Weapons and cogitators don't mix."

Jez [GM]: Amosis is right, as is evident from the ruined cogitators. They weren't shot, but something smashed them to pieces. As for the crew, there are no survivors.

Will [Sylus]: Whitlocke said there might be renegade Eldar in the area. I've seen wounds caused by their foul weapons before. Can I tell if this is what killed the crew?

Jez [GM]: Good question. Make a Medicae Test.

Will rolls a Medicae Skill Test.

Will [Sylus]: I made it—just!

Jez [GM]: Good work. You can easily tell that these wounds were not caused by alien weaponry. Two of the corpses seem to have been slashed by a close-combat weapon or maybe some kind of sharp claw. The third corpse is headless. It appears as if his head exploded.

Will [Sylus]: A bolter shell maybe? They explode inside their targets.

Jez [GM]: You don't think so. There'd at least be some head left from a bolter shot. As you take a closer look at this corpse, you notice something else. Underneath the blood and gore, you can see he's wearing the robes of an astropath.

Will [Sylus]: "Lazaro, I think I found our missing astropath…"

Steve [Lazaro]: "An astropath whose head exploded? Emperor save us, that cannot be good."

Jez [GM]: The words are barely out of Lazaro's mouth when you hear a blood-curdling scream and the air turns chill. You hear heavy thuds from behind the closed door. Something is coming.

Will [Sylus]: "Throne protect us!"

Lyra [Amosis]: "Take cover!"

Steve [Lazaro]: "Stand firm and do your duty!"

The adventure continues on from here. Who or what is behind the door? Just what happened at the research station? And where is Tomas, the missing agent of Inquisitor Whitlocke? Rick, Lyra, Will and Steve will find out as their adventure continues. Your own game, however, is just beginning…

An Important Note About Reality

When you take part in a roleplaying game you set aside reality and literal truth for a world of imagination and adventure. The Game Master is there to create a world for the players. All the ideas and rules in this book are tools for the GM to use as they see fit. The GM is the ultimate arbitrator of the rules and may choose to modify, amend or even ignore certain rules to better suit the playing style of your group. Abide by your GM's decisions as they are the one doing all the work to keep you and your group entertained!

On a final note, it must be pointed out that Dark Heresy deals with mature themes and concepts. Daemons, insanity, death, corruption and despair are all integral elements of the *Warhammer 40,000* setting. Just because Dark Heresy deals with these things, it doesn't mean every game session needs to be a harrowing experience. Dark Heresy is a game and it's meant to enjoyable! Similarly, all the things depicted in this book do not exist. Don't get confused—just play the game and have fun!

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Chapter I: Character Creation

"What is your duty? To look the universe in the face and then spit in its eye. To die with a curse on your lips and your finger on the trigger. To know that you are doomed, but try anyway."
— Inquisitor Soldevan, Ordo Hereticus.

In Dark Heresy, you take the role of an Acolyte, a trainee investigator in the service of a powerful Inquisitor. You, out of the countless billions, have been chosen to play a part in a war so great and terrible that ordinary men must never learn its secrets. Your master will task you with all manner of missions, in which you will encounter witches, aliens and even Daemons. You will be tempted with power and exposed to corruption. You, your allies or even your master may fall under the thrall of the Dark Gods. Should this happen, it will be your duty to purge with fire and righteousness, for the Ruinous Ones, the Chaos Powers, are insidious in their evil and would destroy you and all of mankind if they could.

You and your fellow Acolytes must struggle to hold back the many threats that face humanity. You must do this knowing that your name will never be recorded in the annals of history. Power, fame and grandeur shall never be yours—but you do not fight for these things. You fight because you must. You fight because failure will mean the destruction of the Imperium… the destruction of all mankind.

It's not going to be easy. In the earliest stages, you are little better than anyone else of the 41st Millennium. You are merely one of the many scores of Acolytes recruited into the Inquisition. You'll need to use your wits, luck and the skills of your companions to the best of your abilities if you are to survive. The longer you last and the stronger you become, the greater the foes you will be asked to face. The war for the soul of mankind is unending, and even should you live long enough to become an Inquisitor, you will never know peace until the cold embrace of death.

When you die, you will not be missed, but then mere glory never made heroes. Your struggle, your triumph, your failure—these are the things that matter. They matter because, Emperor willing, you will have made a difference, however small. In the 41st Millennium, that is the greatest legacy a man may dare hope for.

Creating Your Acolyte

"You are not required to think, only to act!"
— Cadet Commissar, Jourian Eutar.

To get started on your mission, you need to make your alter ego, known as a Player Character (PC). Creating your Player Character is a simple process that many people find fun in itself. As you move through this chapter, you will find the tools to construct an interesting persona with a history, motivations and a clear idea about what the future will hold. Be aware, there may be unfamiliar terms, places and concepts within this chapter, but have no fear—all will be explained as you explore the rest of this rulebook and learn of the Dark Heresy.

Before you get started, you will need to gather some supplies. You will require two ten-sided dice (or 2d10 as they will be referred to throughout the rules), a character sheet, a pencil and an eraser. It is best to write everything in pencil to start with, as you may end up changing or adding to things as you go along. You may like to have some spare scraps of paper to make notes. It is also useful to get together with the group of people you'll be playing with when you make your PC. Not only is it more fun to compare things as you go along, you will also be able to make sure that your characters all complement one another.

There are six steps you should follow whenever you are creating a new Acolyte. Each step is relatively simple, consisting of making a few choices and recording your selections onto your character sheet. Each stage in the character creation process is as follows.

Stage One: Home World

The very first step in creating your character is to determine your Home World. The Imperium is a vast place, filled with innumerable worlds, cultures and civilisations. Dark Heresy contains four broad Home World archetypes common to the Calixis Sector: Feral World, Hive World, Imperial World and Void Born. Your Home World says a lot about you, where you came from, what you may look like, your mannerisms and your perspective on dealing with others.

Stage Two: Generate Characteristics

Many of the key things about your character are defined in terms of numbers. These are called Characteristics. They represent your Acolyte's capabilities, ranging from physical Characteristics such as Strength and Toughness, to mental ones like Intelligence and Willpower.

Stage Three: Determine Career Path

While your Home World and Characteristics are important for understanding your character, it is your Career Path that defines your character's function within the game. Dark Heresy has eight Career Paths: Adept, Arbitrator, Assassin, Cleric, Guardsman, Imperial Psyker, Scum and Tech-Priest. As you play the game, your Rank within your Career Path will increase. This opens doors to a host of new options, giving you the means to customise your Acolyte.

Stage Four: Spend Experience Points, Buy Equipment

This is where you can further customise your Acolyte. All characters begin play with an amount of Experience Points (xp) to reflect their lives prior to serving an Inquisitor. You may spend your starting experience to purchase new Skills and Talents or improve your Characteristics. See **Chapter II: Career Paths** for details.

Acolytes also receive some starting money, which you can use to buy additional weapons, armour and equipment from **Chapter V: Armoury** for your character should you so choose.

This is also the point where you add Fate Points and Wounds.

Stage Five: Bringing your Character to Life

Once all the numbers are finished with, it is time to flesh out your Acolyte. This stage helps you define your character's appearance, their past, temperaments, beliefs and more. This is an important step as it helps you portray the character during game play and makes your Acolyte a unique being, helping to set him apart from others who may fill a similar niche.

Stage Six: Play Dark Heresy

With all of this complete, you are now ready to play Dark Heresy!

Stage One: Home World

"Your home is no longer a place, but a people. The Imperium is yours, and you are the Imperium's."

— Catechism of the Founding, Gunmetallicus 104th.

Your Dark Heresy character may work for the Inquisition now, but that was not always the case. The type of world a character grew up on affects many things about them, from their physical abilities, skills and temperament to their appearance and the Career Paths they may choose. If you have an idea about the type of character you would like to play, you may select a Home World from any of the types described on **Table 1-1: Random Home World**. Otherwise, feel free to roll the dice and see what the Emperor has chosen for you.

Table 1-1: Random Home World

Roll (D100)	Result
01–20	**Feral World:** Feral worlders are big, strong and tough—perfect if you want to play a character that is good at fighting.
21–45	**Hive World:** Hivers are fast-talking, quick-thinking individuals, perfect if you want to play a character who can bluff their way out of anything.
46–90	**Imperial World:** Imperial citizens come from all sorts of different planets and cultures, so make great characters if you want to play someone who is a good all-rounder. Imperial citizens have the widest choice of careers available to them.
91–00	**Void Born:** Void Born are weirdly lucky and strong willed—perfect if you want to play a psyker or scholastic character.

When you have chosen your Home World, note down your starting Skills and Traits on your character sheet and move on to the next stage.

Feral World

"Most of your life has been spent among your people on a harsh feral world, where strength, courage and martial skill are valued above all else. You are big, strong and brave, but also superstitious. You almost certainly belonged to a warrior clan, and you are valued for your skill in battle."

Feral worlds are tough places in which to survive. Whether living in a steaming death-filled jungle or upon the burning sands of a desert planet, man has reverted to a more primitive existence, living in tribes, gangs or creeds without much care for technology or the soft living ways of the so-called "civilised folk".

Life on a Feral World

Feral worlds are among the most primitive of populated planets in the Imperium, partly due to the environment and partly because they have long been out of touch with the rest of the Imperium. These planets often have a technological base that is pre-black powder, even Stone Age in the most backward cases, and the inhabitants have often descended into savagery. When a feral world lies in a war-zone, the Imperial Guard may supplement the natives' armaments and train them in the use of lasguns, heavy stubbers and the like. Despite a rudimentary knowledge of such weapons, the feral worlders have no concept of how to manufacture or maintain them.

Some feral worlds are planets that are simply too dangerous to support widespread human settlement. These death worlds vary a great deal in type. Some may be covered in jungles, which harbour man-eating plants and fearsome carnivorous animals, or barren rock-scapes strewn with volcanoes and wracked by nuclear storms. Some lie close to a sun and mostly consist of parched deserts, which are sometimes home to small tribes of nomadic humans. Conversely, some worlds are covered largely in ice and arctic tundra, utterly inhospitable and inhabited only by the most resilient humans. Death worlds are almost impossible to colonise, but are often explored as they can harbour rich minerals, gas deposits or other attractive resources.

human settlers in these places, though uncommon, can take several forms. They could be remnants of an ancient colony, long since fallen into ruin. Perhaps they are the researchers and Imperial Guardsmen from an outpost gone feral, or perhaps the descendants of stranded spacefarers who have been forced to survive generations of terrible hardship. Whatever the case, feral worlders are likely to be primitive headhunters, beast-hunting nomads, axe-wielding barbarians or other such folk.

Like all worlds brought back into the bosom of the Emperor's rule, feral worlds are controlled by a planetary governor. In many cases, this ruler governs his planet from orbit, travelling to the surface only to establish purges of psychic talent and mutation. Religious deviancy is rife on feral worlds, especially amongst the warrior cults, and vigilance is a necessity. However, governors in charge of feral worlds are often under close scrutiny, frequently under suspicion of "going native". With some feral world tribes, people cling to the belief in deities other than the Emperor. These have often been modified by the Ecclesiarchy, or just brutally stamped out. Heretical cults are constantly hunted down by the authorities and feral worlds are a haven for such heretics.

Feral World Careers

Characters from feral worlds may take the following Career Paths:

Assassin

Feral world Assassins are usually plucked from their home world at a young age by Death Cults or Assassinorum schools. They soon begin a savage training regime which thins out the unworthy. Learning the art of the kill, they become fierce and merciless Assassins, much in demand on many worlds. Inured to pain and accustomed to death, they are deadly in the extreme.

Guardsman

Feral world Guardsmen are usually tribal warriors tithed to the Imperial Guard by the elders of their particular clan. They are sometimes trained en masse in vast drill camps or ship holds, whilst others are merely shown a lasgun and trusted to get on with it. Also, there are those instructed by members of their tribe, using rote-learned rites and religious rituals. They make tough and dedicated warriors—perfect for protecting a cadre of Acolytes.

Imperial Psyker

Imperial Psykers from feral worlds were once the shamans, witch doctors or cunning folk of their clan. Their talent is such that they have been sought out and taken away for sanction by the agents of the Black Ships of the Inquisition. They wield strange powers, from healing charms to deadly, unstoppable hexes. Some peer into entrails to perceive the future, whilst others can create blight dolls to strike down their foes. They are naturally tough and hard to kill, which can be both a blessing and a curse.

Scum

Feral world Scum are the scavengers and survivors of their peoples. Some hang around colonies and outposts, thereby becoming semi-civilised, whilst others have come from post-apocalyptic worlds where theft and gang warfare are the norm. Adept at thievery and tricks, they manage to survive by using a combination of wits, light fingers and barefaced cheek.

The inhabitants of feral worlds are strong, hardy people, who disdain weakness and often band together in tribal warrior clans. The survivalist mentality and physical prowess of feral worlders makes these planets good recruiting grounds for the Imperial Guard or even the Space Marines. Sometimes, removing a feral worlder from their familiar environment will be an unnerving experience for them, and their primitive mind will be unable to cope with the knowledge of basic concepts such as space travel. In these instances, madness ensues and the poor feral worlder must either be imprisoned or put out of his misery. Even those who make it into the wider Imperium retain many of their tribal traits and traditions. Sometimes this can be incredibly useful—the Catachan jungle fighters or the Space Wolves of Fenris are prime examples—but sometimes these traditions can appear to be strange affectations or social hindrances, such as an insistence on wearing the bones of dead comrades in battle, spitting whenever a psyker uses his powers, or applying war paint before a mission.

Feral World PCs

Feral World characters are those who have made it off-world and remained sane—for the most part. They are robust, straightforward characters, most usually following the Guardsman career, and they excel at close combat due to their size and strength. However, feral worlders are uncomfortable in any strange situation, and do not react well to psychic phenomena, extremes of technological accomplishment or the polite society of the Imperial nobility. They are born to fight and to survive, and they do it well.

Feral Worlder Skills

All feral worlders can converse in their regional tongue, unique to their world of origin. Feral worlders gain the Speak Language (Tribal Dialect) (Int) skill.

Feral Worlder Traits

Feral worlders gain the following Traits. Record all of these on your character sheet:

Iron Stomach

Food is often scarce on feral worlds and those born on such worlds learn to set aside their revulsion and eat whatever they must to survive.

Benefit: You gain a +10 bonus to Carouse Skill Tests made to resist the effects of ingested toxins, poison or tainted foods. This bonus applies to Tests made to consume unusual or unpleasant meals—rotting meat, Grox testes, corpse starch rations, to name a few—as well as Tests made to resist throwing up.

Primitive

Feral worlders have no time for the mysteries of technology or the rubbishy constraints of etiquette and social niceties.

Penalty: You take a –10 penalty on Tech-Use (Int) Tests and a –10 penalty to Fellowship Tests made in formal or civilised surroundings.

Rite of Passage

Life is harsh for a feral worlder, and blood spills all too frequently. Whether through surviving a brutal initiation ritual or through tribal teachings, feral worlders are adept at tending bleeding wounds.

Benefit: You may spend a Full Action to make an Intelligence Test to staunch Blood Loss (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** on **page 211**). This is a Full Action. On a success, you manage to stop the bleeding.

Wilderness Savvy

Feral worlders are accustomed to hunting their own food.

Benefit: Navigation (Surface) (Int), Survival (Int) and Tracking (Int) count as Basic Skills for feral worlders.

Hive World

"The great hives are not like other worlds in the Imperium, and you are not like the common man. Technology has surrounded you all your life, and you find its rarity elsewhere bemusing. You are an adventurer, an opportunist—more inquisitive than your fellows and certainly quicker on the draw!"

Hive worlds are home to countless teeming millions. The population is so dense that frequently the entire surface of the world is covered with enormous cities stretching from horizon to horizon. Many hivers labour in thankless obscurity, manning huge factories that churn out endless streams of weapons, chemicals or other vital goods. Others run with violent gangs in the dark of the underhives, living off their wits, guts and firepower.

Life on a Hive World

Hive worlds are vital to the welfare of the Imperium. They are industrial worlds, producing munitions for the Emperor's armies in vast factories, mining valuable minerals and refining fuel for the Imperial fleet.

These planets are usually barren and hostile with the much of the hive world's surface inhospitable, sometimes deadly to human life after centuries of pollution. The hives themselves are astonishingly large—massive urban conglomerations, spires of adamantium and rockcrete that can cover continents and stretch for miles into the sky. Each hive houses millions, even billions, of Imperial citizens, and is a nation in its own right, with noble houses ruling mini-empires, trading and sometimes fighting with other hives.

Palls of thick, acrid smoke cling to the lower portions of the hives below the upper sections—those gleaming spires that rise above the cloud cover. Only the wealthy can afford to live in the upper sections of a hive, and the working classes never see the light of the sun. Within the spires reside the noble houses—decadent, wealthy members of great Imperial families, or the richest merchant overlords. Spires contain broad, airy spaces and splendours unimaginable to those who dwell in the darkness below.

Below the spires, heavy gateways and security patrols regulate passage between the upper levels and the rest of the hive. Beyond this point lies the vast bulk of the working hive—the hive-city. The populations are often so large as to be unmanageable, and the hives rely on constant recycling and imports to provide food

Hive World Careers

Characters from hive worlds can take the following Career Paths:

Arbitrator

Hive world Arbitrators are usually skilled riot officers, adept at beating down uprisings and sedition in the tightly packed corridors of the hive. They may come from a family of traditional law keepers, or perhaps they joined out of a sense of hivic duty. Whatever the case, they learn to bring justice to those that would threaten the order of the Imperium.

Assassin

Hive world Assassins are usually prowling bounty hunters, skilled in finding and destroying their man. They might be hired by rivals to settle a difficult gang war or end a competing trade house. Others move amongst the glittering spire nobility, sowing poison and death in their wake—a deadly instrument in the cut-and-thrust world of politics.

Cleric

Hive world Clerics usually minister to the toiling masses of the middle hive, exhorting them to ever greater works in the Emperor's name. Others may tend to the spiritual needs of the upper classes, or even seek to save the souls of gang scum deep in the bowels of the hive.

Guardsman

Hive world Guardsmen are often from the ranks of the hive militia or Imperial Guard tithe—trained troops who act to defend the hive against rival cities, attacks by out-wall savages or internal strife. Others are "Privates", foot soldiers drawn from the ranks of the personal armies controlled by nobles or trade houses. Others still are brutal gangers, adept at dealing death and defending their gang territory.

Imperial Psyker

Hive world psykers are usually plucked from their birth class and dragged into the service of the nobility. Many endure a life of indentured servitude, truthsaying business dealings or reading fortunes for fashionable noble matrons. Others are recruited to dampen the psychic resonance of the millions of souls packed within the metal skin of the hive. Some soothe and numb the workers, whilst others hunt out the seditious, mutated or secretly psychic.

Scum

Hive world Scum are usually of the downtrodden lower classes of the hive. Some are vicious gangers, ready to murder at a moment's notice, whilst others are petty thieves and cretescreevers. Some may be middle hivers living a life outside the norm, whilst a rare few might be the children of noble families, driven to a life of disrepute by scandal, disinheritance or boredom. Whatever the case, they possess a reckless disregard for authority and law, living by theft, lies and chicanery.

Tech-Priest

Hive world Tech-Priests are usually recruited from hereditary castes dedicated to maintaining the fabric of the hive itself. Many Tech-Priests view other hivers as little more than organic components in the glorious machine-spirit of the city. Others delve into the deep and forgotten places to seek out the lost secrets of the hive's origins.

and basic materials for the teeming masses. For most people, life in the hives is tough. Conditions are squalid and unsanitary. The very air breathed by the countless hivers is recycled from the spire above and pumped through the rest, growing ever more bitter and poisonous the further down it filters. Even the water is distilled from the discharge of the upper hive, and food is factory-produced, sometimes algae-based or spun from corpse starch. Pollution and overcrowding are the least of the hivers' worries, as gang violence and outright anarchy is part of everyday life, particularly in the lower levels. Most hivers know only their own hive-city and do not leave it during their lifetime. They never see the sky or set foot on the surface of their own planet. Their life is one of servitude in a manufactorum, coupled with a struggle for survival in the increasingly crime ridden hab-levels. Those few that do manage to leave the hives are often of a nervous disposition, and suffer terribly from agoraphobia.

Beneath the hive-city is a lawless frontier known as the underhive. These underhives are creations of catastrophe—explosions, water pollution, power failure and collapsing access tunnels are common occurrences in the lowest parts of the hive-cities. Sometimes the damage is repaired, but more often than not the appeals of the refugees fall on deaf ears and the underhive expands. In this area, normal habitation is impossible, but the underhive still serves as a refuge for hive scum, outlaws and the mentally unstable, though in some rare instances entire sub cultures manage to develop and subsist in this inhospitable realm. It is a region outside the formal social structure of the hive, though some people are forced to live there as entire levels are accidentally cut off from the hive-city. Heavily barricaded settlements form the only havens of order in the underhive, though even here the law of the gun is the only recognised authority, and those who go unarmed are rare.

Underhives are frontiers in more ways than one, and are often seen as a necessary evil. They separate the hive-city from the hive bottom—a desolate, polluted waste, long since abandoned, and partially flooded by centuries of effluence and industrial waste. In the hive bottom, the only living things are the most monstrous mutants. Sometimes these foul creatures find their way into the underhive, and in a hive-city, parents scare their children with stories of sump spawn and plague zombies. Minor mutation is common in the underhive and is often overlooked by the desperadoes who reside there. However, sometimes fanatical cults, such as the Redemptionists, launch one of their crusades into the underhive to cleanse it of mutants. Some are never seen again.

Hive World PCs

Not all hivers are content to serve their world in the timeless fashion: some dream of better lives, driven by a desire for wealth, freedom, power or adventure, or just the urge to escape bludgeoning poverty. You are one such hiver—a young adventurer, willing to chance all for a taste of wealth, prestige and power. Hivers are resourceful and quick-witted, more likely to rely on gadgets and fast-talking than outright confrontation.

Hive Worlder Skills

All hive worlders can converse in the common cant of their home, each one unique to their hive of origin. Hive worlders gain the Speak Language (Hive Dialect) (Int) skill.

Hive Worlder Traits

Hive worlders gain the following Traits. Record all of these on your character sheet:

Accustomed to Crowds

Hivers grow up surrounded by immense herds of humanity. They are used to weaving through even the densest mob with ease.

Benefit: Crowds do not count as Difficult Terrain for hivers, and when Running or Charging through a dense crowd, hivers take no penalty to the Agility Test to keep their feet.

Caves of Steel

To a hiver, surrounded at all times by metal, machinery and industry, the arcane mysteries of technology are not so strange.

Benefit: Hivers treat the Tech-Use (Int) skill as a Basic Skill.

Hivebound

Hivers seldom endure the horrors of the open sky or the indignity of the great outdoors.

Penalty: Hivers take a -10 penalty to all Survival (Int) Tests, and while out of a "proper hab" (e.g. places without manufactured goods, solid ceilings and electrical power) the hiver takes a –5 penalty to all Intelligence Tests.

Wary

Hivers are constantly alert for the first hint of trouble, be it a gang shoot-out, hab riot, or hivequake.

Benefit: All hivers gain a +1 bonus to Initiative rolls.

Imperial World

"You hail from an Imperial world, one of a million planets united by a belief in the immortal Emperor. Soldier, fanatic, thief, mercenary, noble: these are some of your many possible backgrounds. Whatever your previous calling, you are now in the employ of the Inquisition, and your adventure has only just begun…"

A bewildering variety of worlds are known to the Imperium. From hyper-technological democratic societies to drudging medieval worlds, many planets offer their fealty and devotion to the immortal God-Emperor of Man.

Life on an Imperial World

The Imperium covers such an utterly vast area of the galaxy that it is almost impossible to conjure an image of a "typical" Imperial world. In truth, no such thing exists. Amongst the million worlds of man, there is endless variety. Agri-worlds, for instance, are little more than vast farms, producing food for the good of the Imperium. Similarly, mining worlds produce ore and raw mineral for use in the vast factories of the forge worlds. Cardinal worlds are ruled by the Ministorum and are given over entirely to the Priesthood of the Imperium—the mysterious Ecclesiarchy. Stranger still are the garden worlds, which serve as havens for Imperial nobles. Paradise, however, comes at a price, for temptation and heresy may be rife in these places. Some Imperial worlds are utterly remote, having had no contact with the rest of humanity for centuries. As a result, cultural and societal diversity is to be expected from planet to planet, sometimes even within the same solar system.

The closer a world lies to Holy Terra—the home planet of mankind—the more important, advanced and well governed it is likely to be. Those far-flung planets on the fringes, on the other hand, are likely to be frontier worlds, left to their own devices for much of the time, and lying under the constant threat of attack, both physically and spiritually. Many worlds have a technological base akin to Holy Terra, while many more have devolved into

Imperial World Careers

Characters from Imperial worlds can take any of the following Career Paths:

Adept

Imperial Adepts are the civil servants that run the Empire of Man: the Administratum. They ceaselessly work to record and archive the workings of the Emperor's dominion with nearly all information passing through their ink-stained fingers. Whether interpreting ancient tomes of lore, stamping Imperial Tithe orders or sending fleets to war, they administrate the vastest Empire mankind has ever known.

Arbitrator

Imperial Arbitrators are tasked with defending the rule of the Imperium. They might be part of an Adeptus Arbites precinct on some technocratic capital, or a law keeper upon an emerging colony world. Others still are stationed upon shrine worlds to watch for signs of Ecclesiarchy schism, whilst others itch for action upon peaceful paradise worlds.

Assassin

Imperial Assassins are often members of a minor death cult or else professional killers. Some may hunt criminals for money, whilst others may act for powerful nobles or even governments. Indeed, some are products of planetary or Imperium controlled Assassinorum schools, whilst others have merely found themselves as accomplished executioners due to war, persecution or other circumstances.

Cleric

Imperial Clerics are valued members of the Ecclesiarchy. They might hail from a shrine world or minister to the peoples of an agri-world. Some might be the orphans of war heroes, raised by the Ecclesiarchy to be fanatically loyal servants of the Emperor. Some work amidst the blood and gunfire of the battlefield, whilst others may seek to raise the spirits of frontier world colonists in the face of terrible hardships and ravening xenos.

Guardsman

Imperial world Guardsmen are usually warriors and troopers tithed to the Imperial Guard. Given up as part of their home world's obligation to the Emperor, these Acolytes have been trained and equipped with the best their world had to offer. Other Guardsmen may have been seconded from mercenary or private armies controlled by the rich and powerful.

Imperial Psyker

Psykers from Imperial worlds are sanctioned by the Throne of Terra, thereby gaining some measure of respectability and acceptance. Most are servants of some Imperial institution, camouflaged behind scholastic-seeming titles and almost Ecclesiastical robes. Largely indistinguishable from their fellow adepts, they advise, investigate and serve the Imperium as best they may. Their superiors, meanwhile, watch them closely for signs of corruption or betrayal.

Scum

Imperial Scum are the smugglers, thieves, deserters and desperados of the Imperium. Some hail from rogue worlds, where there is no government or law, whilst others have been plucked from the penal legions for their dubious skills. Many prey like parasites upon the society of their planet, perhaps trading in forbidden materials, or siphoning off food supplies.

Tech-Priest

Imperial Tech-Priests are often the children of a forge world. Some are brought up to be part of the Adeptus Mechanicus, whilst others join due to natural skill. They attend the rites of technology for their world, be it tending the harvester machines, spaceport cogitators, governmental vox mechanisms or colonial mining gear. Some do little more than contemplate the ancient Standard Template Constructs, whilst others actively search them out.

feudal backwaters with little more than black powder technology. Such worlds make excellent recruiting grounds for the Imperial Guard, the Space Marines and the Inquisition, as nothing assures obedience quite so well as fear. Upon such planets, the Imperial Cult is surrounded by an atmosphere of superstition, demanding fealty to the immortal God-Emperor who, for many citizens of the Imperium, is so distant as to be little more than a myth.

Most major scientific advances in the Imperium come from the rediscovery of forgotten secrets from the Dark Age of Technology. The reliance on these ancient templates creates a mishmash of tech-use on many worlds. For example, it is possible for a planet's industry to rely on gigantic steam-powered monorails for long-distance transport, yet still be unable to produce smaller versions of these aged devices, resorting instead to horse-drawn carts for commuting. Governmental organisation is equally as varied. Most Imperial worlds are ruled by a planetary governor, who assumes absolute control either by birthright or by election. The nobility frequently assume all positions of power and privilege on a planet, while the lower echelons of the class structure comprise workers, militia, fanatics, slaves and dregs. While many planets are free of the levels of scum that infest hive worlds, those closer to the Emperor's grace harbour countless numbers of crazed individuals—workers who have lost their place in a zero-tolerance society, or who have realised that the galaxy is not only unimaginably vast, but full of hate and hostility towards mankind. Such realisation often leads to paranoia or outright insanity, and Imperial worlds are rife with broken individuals, prophets of doom, criminals and gutter-trash.

The waifs and strays of society, however, also serve their purpose. The millions of orphans produced by constant warfare, within and without, are taken in by the Schola Progenium. Many Imperial Worlds are pocked with vast orphanages, where the strict drill-abbots of the Ecclesiarchy produce faithful servants of the Emperor. Those of noble blood may become officers in the Imperial Navy, or even commissars, while the rest will undoubtedly find employment with the Ministorum, the Adeptus Terra or one of the Emperor's armies.

With religion, superstition and fear dominating so much of society within the Imperium, deviancy is rarely tolerated. People place their faith in good, honest hatred to guard them against the manifold horrors of the universe. Man swarms in vast numbers working, praying, eating and sleeping in an endless cycle, each soul forming a faceless cog in the endless grinding machinery of the Imperium. Law and order within society is often kept by the Adeptus Arbites. Sometimes, however, more remote worlds employ civil militias instead. On such planets, mercenaries—sometimes even off-worlders—are hired to bulk out the standing garrisons that not only provide domestic security, but also form part of the Imperial Guard. If a world lies within a war zone, then often these fighters are the only thing that stand in the way of the destruction of an entire world.

Imperial World PCs

To have broken away from the dogmatic constraints of Imperial life, your character must either be of exceptional spirit or have real potential. Perhaps you are an adventurer or soldier, or a true believer beginning a long pilgrimage to prove your faith; maybe you are a mercenary, brought in to defend a planet during wartime. You have undoubtedly seen conflict, madness or perhaps even heresy, and now, for whatever reason, you are embarking into the unknown in the name of the Emperor.

Imperial Worlder Traits

Imperial worlders gain the following Traits. Record all of these on your character sheet:

Blessed Ignorance

Imperial citizens know that the proper ways of living are those that are tried and tested by the generations that have gone before. Horror, pain and death are the just rewards of curiosity, for those that look too deeply into the mysteries of the universe are all too likely to find malefic beings looking back at them.

Penalty: Your wise blindness imposes a –5 penalty on Forbidden Lore (Int) Tests.

Hagiography

Meditation upon the lives–and, more importantly, deaths—of the Emperor's blessed saints grants Imperial citizens a wide knowledge of the Imperium of Man.

Benefit: Imperial worlders treat the Common Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), and Common Lore (War) (Int) skills as Basic Skills.

Liturgical Familiarity

Surrounded as they are by folk of the faith, Imperial citizens are accustomed to the preaching of the Ecclesiarchy.

Benefit: Imperial world characters treat Literacy (Int) and Speak Language (High Gothic) (Int) as Basic Skills.

Superior Origins

Imperial citizens know that of all the worlds in the Imperium, theirs is, in fact, the most beloved of the Emperor.

Benefit: Increase your Willpower by +3.

Void Born

"You were not born on one of the Emperor's worlds, but instead on a vast ship in the depths of space—perhaps even in the warp itself. Why this sets you apart from your fellow man is unknown, but the way you look, act and think is somehow different. You have been raised in the company of psykers, and what other men fear or loathe is commonplace to you."

Born out in the darkness between the stars, the void born are an odd collection of misfits, strangers and ill-omened folk. Perhaps birthed in the belly of a pilgrimage ship, or aboard an ancient orbital satellite, these people are often considered to be somehow touched by the taint of the warp.

Life as a Void Born

The Imperial fleet is a vital factor in the maintenance of the Imperium; without it human worlds would be isolated from each other and from the protection of the Imperium. Trade could not exist, weapons could not reach the Emperor's armies and world after world would grind to a halt.

Space travel throughout the Imperium is dangerous and arduous. Most interstellar travel is undertaken using powerful warp engines. Within the warp, a ship can cover many thousands of light years within a relatively short time, dropping back into realspace far beyond its starting point. Some parts of the warp, however, act as power vortices—sucking helpless spacecraft to their doom. There is also the constant danger of turbulence, warp storms and loops. Ships can be sent thousands of light years off course, or trapped in stasis forever. In the warp there is no time and distance—only the constantly flowing stream of the immaterium. On board a ship in the warp, a single month of perceived time may pass, yet in the material realm anything from six months to several years may elapse. Fleets responding to distress calls, or supply vessels on long voyages, have been known to arrive months or even years too late.

Void Born Careers

Void born characters can take any of the following Career Paths:

Adept
Void born Adepts are often part of the adminisphere of the ship, acting to serve the officer caste by analysing data, attending the Navigators, recording the contents of various holds and so on. Others are tasked with more bizarre duties, such as keeping accurate maps of the vessel, preserving the integrity of the ship's bloodlines or engraving the names of every crew member into the hull of the craft.

Arbitrator
Void born Arbitrators stride the corridors of the ship ever alert for trouble and sedition. Some work at the behest of the captain, watching for signs of witchery and rebellion in the crew. Others maintain close links with the Adeptus Arbites, and instead watch the officers for signs of corruption.

Assassin
Void born Assassins frequently take orders from the high-ranking officers of the ship. These Assassins kill off troublemakers and suspected cult leaders before any corruption or sedition can spread through the ship. Others are members of strange death cults, mandated by the enginseers, plucking their victims seemingly at random to offer up to the Emperor.

Cleric
Void born Clerics often act as padre to the lower orders of the ship, walking the bunk-holds offering confession to the sleepless, or screaming blessings amidst the crash and thunder of the gun deck. Some lead choirs of bilge-scrubbers in litanies against the warp, whilst others ensure the Emperor icons are properly adored. Others act as spiritual advisors to the captain, while others still are part of the officer class.

Imperial Psyker
Void born psykers are prized and feared members of the crew. Some are employed to detect emerging psykers within the crew, hunting them out before they can become prey to some malefic horror of the warp. Others act to maintain defences against such intrusion, whilst others bleed out portions of their soul to aid the ships' Navigators, and some are trained to receive astropathic communications. Whatever their role, they are watched closely by everyone aboard their ship.

Scum
Void born Scum are the misbegotten and outcast members of the crew, perhaps spawned through some forbidden inter-caste liaison or maybe from a traditional class of untouchables. Whatever the case, void born Scum drive and control the black market aboard ship and are adept at scrounging, stealing or concocting all manner of illicit treats—from alcohol to fresh meat and worse.

Tech-Priest
Void born Tech-Priests are those given to care for the fabric and soul of their ship. Perhaps dedicated from birth, or recruited through natural aptitude, these Tech-Priests display an eerie connection with their vessel. Some specialise in knowing the ways and rites of particular systems, whilst others dedicate themselves to repair. Others still whisper into the captain's ear, their buzzing voices speaking of the desires of the ship itself.

Those who live their lives on spacecraft must become used to the reality-altering process of warp space, of living in low or even zero-gravity environments and of never knowing the feel of solid ground beneath their feet. Quite often a ship conducts its business in an endless cycle. Trade or mining vessels may never make berth, instead raising generations of families in the cold depths of space. Gravitational pressures, inbreeding and warp anomalies take their toll. What effect the warp has on these void born workers is uncertain, but there is something strange about them for all to see. Their features are drawn and their skin pallid. They may have some minor deformity, or oddness about their speech, gait or general appearance.

Some void born are raised on huge space stations—asteroid mining bases, battlefleet refit stations or research platforms. The rest come from a variety of backgrounds: the crew of merchant vessels or warships, miners, prison guards (or prisoners) or even the servants of a Rogue Trader. The largest ships are vast, city-sized constructions, many of which are thousands of years old. Lobotomised servitors and tech-adepts scuttle about their business, while menial crew, passengers and merchants co-exist in cramped corridors and tiny quarters. At the head of the ship's crew sits the Navigator, a strange breed of psyker who expertly guides the vessel through the immaterium, following the psychic beacon of the Astronomicon. Those void born raised in the service of the Imperial Navy or among the crew of a Rogue Trader know first-hand the horrors of space and the sheer multitude of the Emperor's enemies. This knowledge often forces ships' crew to form insular cliques, too afraid to look up from their duties or mini-societies for fear of what might stare back at them from the void.

Worst of all are the Black Ships of the Inquisition. These vessels are part of a large fleet travelling the Imperium in a huge circuit, visiting each Imperial world on their route once every hundred years or so. Their mission is to collect the psychic levy from each world—hundreds of psykers rounded up and handed over to the authorities for some unknown fate. Only when the vast holds of these ships are full of psykers do they return to Holy Terra. Some may display the strength and potential to serve the Imperium, however most are sacrificed to the God-Emperor, their gruesome deaths ensuring the survival of the Imperium. Life aboard these vessels is particularly harsh, for the psykers themselves are packed into huge holding cells, treated little better than cattle.

Void Born PCs

You have called the interior of a hulking vessel or space station home all your life. Now you have been thrust into the company of others—people completely unlike you—and the culture shock is akin to plunging head first into freezing water. You feel awkward in the company of anyone who is not void born. Your lack of social skills, unusual appearance, nervous disposition and inability to carouse like your comrades combine to make you feel like a loner, a fish out of water. You only come into your own when your expertise is required—unlike the rest of them, you are at ease around psychic phenomena, warp anomalies and spacecraft, and as such your kind make the best Adepts and Imperial Psykers. As long as the common man stands in awe of you, he'll leave you alone, and that's just how you like it.

Void Born Skills

All void born can speak a language unique to their home vessel. Void born gain the Speak Language (Ship Dialect) skill.

Void Born Traits

The void born gain the following Traits. Record all of these on your character sheet:

Charmed

The void born unconsciously channel the fickle powers of the warp, making them preternaturally lucky.

Benefit: Whenever you spend a Fate Point (though not if you burn one), roll a 1d10. On the roll of a natural 9, you do not lose the Fate Point.

Ill-Omened

Whether because of their strange looks, clannish ways or unwholesome air, the void born are shunned and mistrusted by most. In addition the void born are most likely to attract any negative attention that the party of Acolytes creates—accusations of curdling milk, disgruntled merchants, children with handfuls of Grox dung and so on.

Penalty: You take a –5 penalty on all Fellowship Tests made to interact with non-void born humans.

Shipwise

Birthed in the depths of a spacefaring craft, the void born have a natural affinity for such vehicles.

Benefit: Navigation (Stellar) (Int) and Pilot (Spacecraft) (Ag) are Basic Skills for you.

Void Accustomed

Due to their strange and unnatural childhood, the void born are used to the vagaries of changing gravity.

Benefit: You are immune to space travel sickness. In addition, zero- or low-gravity environments are not considered Difficult Terrain for you.

Example

Steve sits down to create his character. Since this is his first character for Dark Heresy, *he's not quite sure what he wants to play, so he leaves his choice to fate. He rolls percentile dice (d100) and gets a 06. Comparing the result to Table 1-1: Random Home World, he finds his Acolyte hails from an Imperial world. He reads over the description and makes a few notes about his life before serving an Inquisitor. Then he records all of the information on his character sheet and then applying the effects of his Traits to his Skills (Forbidden Lore, Literacy and Speak Language (High Gothic)). Finally he makes a note to increase his Willpower Characteristic by +3. Now that he's done with this step, he's ready to generate his Characteristics.*

Stage Two: Generate Characteristics

"Character is forged upon the anvil of war, hammered by circumstance and shaped by will."

— Warmaster Slaydo.

Characteristics represent your character's raw ability in a variety of physical and mental areas. Characteristics are rated on a scale of 0 to 100. Your character's Characteristics are important for a variety of reasons, but principally, they reflect your ability to succeed at certain actions. Since you want to roll under your Characteristic when attempting to do something in the game that has dramatic consequences, the higher your Characteristic the better off you will be.

Weapon Skill (WS)

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

Ballistic Skill (BS)

Ballistic Skill reflects your character's accuracy with ranged weapons, such as lasguns, crossbows and autopistols.

Strength (S)

Strength describes how physically strong your character is.

Toughness (T)

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

Agility (Ag)

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

Intelligence (Int)

Intelligence is a measurement of your character's acumen, reason and knowledge.

Perception (Per)

Perception describes how well your character perceives his surroundings. It reflects the acuteness of senses.

Willpower (WP)

Willpower demonstrates your character's ability to withstand the horrors of war, the terrors of space and the awfulness he is bound to encounter in his missions.

Fellowship (Fel)

Fellowship is your character's ability to interact with other creatures, to deceive, charm or befriend.

Table 1-2: Characteristic Benchmarks		
Score	**Significance**	**Examples**
10–15	Feeble	A small child's Strength
16–20	Poor	A Grox's Intelligence
21–25	Inferior	A feral worlder's Fellowship
26–35	Average	Average range of all humanity
36–40	Superior	A hive worlder's Fellowship
41–45	Great	An Ork's Strength
46–50	Magnificent	An Eldar Corsair's Agility
51+	Heroic	A Daemon's Willpower

Characteristic Bonuses

Each Characteristic has a corresponding bonus. A Characteristic Bonus equals the tens digit of the score. For example, a character with 41 Strength has a 4 Strength Bonus. Generally, Characteristic Bonuses are used to determine success in situations or tests that have variable results. See **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** for more details.

GENERATING CHARACTERISTICS

All Characteristics are generated by rolling 2d10 and adding the numbers on the dice together. This done, you add a modifier determined by your Home World. These modifiers can be found on the **Table 1-3: Generating Characteristics** table. Do this for each Characteristic until you have results for all nine. When recording your Characteristics on your character sheet remember to write the first digit of the number in the circle. This is so you can see what your Characteristic Bonuses are at a glance.

Since you are playing a character that is expected to be a cut above the rest of humanity, you may re-roll any one result. Should you choose to do this, you must keep the new result, even if it is worse than the old one.

Example

From our previous example, Steve's character is from an Imperial world, so when he rolls for his starting Characteristics, he uses the Imperial column. He rolls 2d10 and adds the Home World modifier nine times. Then he records the results on his character sheet. He rolls the dice, getting the following results:

Characteristic	*Dice*	*Roll*	*Total*
Weapon Skill (WS)	*2d10+20*	*10*	*30 (Average)*
Ballistic Skill (BS)	*2d10+20*	*6*	*26 (Average)*
Strength (S)	*2d10+20*	*9*	*29 (Average)*
Toughness (T)	*2d10+20*	*7*	*27 (Average)*
Agility (Ag)	*2d10+20*	*12*	*32 (Average)*
Intelligence (Int)	*2d10+20*	*15*	*35 (Average)*
Perception (Per)	*2d10+20*	*12*	*32 (Average)*
Willpower (WP)	*2d10+20*	*13*	*33 (Average)*
Fellowship (Fel)	*2d10+20*	*7*	*27 (Average)*

Steve gets one re-roll. Looking at his Characteristics, his worst score is Ballistic Skill. Since he hopes to be gunning down mutants and xenos, he decides to roll for Ballistic Skill again. He rolls 2d10 and gets a 15! He replaces his BS with 35, so his Characteristics now look like this.

WS	*BS*	*S*	*T*	*Ag*	*Int*	*Per*	*WP*	*Fel*
30	*35*	*29*	*27*	*32*	*35*	*32*	*33*	*27*

"As each warrior dies and is laid upon the mighty altar of battle, with toll of bell and scratch of quill we shall count his days in death as in life."

Table 1-3: Generating Characteristics					
		—Homeworld Modifiers—			
Characteristic	**Base**	**Feral**	**Hive**	**Imperial**	**Void Born**
Weapon Skill (WS)	2d10+	20	20	20	20
Ballistic Skill (BS)	2d10+	20	20	20	20
Strength (S)	2d10+	25	20	20	15
Toughness (T)	2d10+	25	15	20	20
Agility (Ag)	2d10+	20	20	20	20
Intelligence (Int)	2d10+	20	20	20	20
Perception (Per)	2d10+	20	20	20	20
Willpower (WP)	2d10+	15	20	20	25
Fellowship (Fel)	2d10+	15	25	20	20

Stage Three: Determine Career Path

"Be what the Emperor intended you to be, for then you shall succeed."

— Chant of Abrogation, *The Books of Solace.*

After generating your Home World and Characteristics, your next step is to determine your Career Path. A Career Path is a rough guideline to who you are, what you can do and your place in the Imperium. A Career Path helps guide your character's development, determining your starting gear, Skills, Talents and a variety of other factors, helping to build a place for yourself within your party of Acolytes.

To determine your Career Path you may either choose from those available for your Home World or, if you wish to trust your fate to the Emperor, you can generate it randomly. If you choose the latter, roll a d100 and compare the result under your Home World column on the **Table 1-4: Career Paths**. Once you know which Career Path your character is on, copy down all of the relevant information onto your character sheet—starting Skills, Talents and Gear. In some cases you will need to make a choice between one thing or another. If in doubt over which to choose, ask your GM for advice. In addition, some Talents require prerequisites, such as having a certain score in a Characteristic; for the purposes of starting Talents characters may ignore these prerequisites.

Before play begins, you will get the chance to make further improvements to your character (for details, see **Stage Four: Spend Experience Points, Buy Equipment, pages 28–29**).

"As the mind to the body so the soul to the spirit, as death to the mortal man so failure to the immortal; such is the price of all ambition."

Adept

"Knowledge is power. Do not waste it on the masses."

— Sector Governor Marius Hax.

Adepts are wise and learned scholars, at least they hope to be one day. They are skilled with languages, knowledge and often act as the brains of the group. They are not very good at fighting, and some are very poor at talking to people. When it comes to the realm of the mind however, they leave everyone else for dust.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Literacy (Int), Trade (Copyist) (Int) or Trade (Valet) (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Scholastic Lore (Legend) (Int) or Common Lore (Tech) (Int).

Starting Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive) or Pistol Training (SP), Light Sleeper or Resistance (Cold), Sprint or Unremarkable.

Starting Gear: Stub revolver and 6 bullets or staff, Administratum robes (Common Quality Clothing), auto-quill or writing kit, chrono or hour glass, data-slate or illuminated tome, backpack.

Starting Rank: Archivist—turn to **page 44** for more details on this Career Path.

Arbitrator

"No shield may stay the blade of justice."

— Meditations of the Adeptus Arbites.

Arbitrators are tough law-keepers and judges. They ensure that the Imperium's laws are maintained, whilst also acting as executioners for rebels, seditionists and trouble-makers. Arbitrators do not serve on any local planetary police force, rather they are members of a higher organisation: the Adeptus Arbites. Arbitrators are not very strong, and they sometimes lack social graces. When it comes to sheer ability to soak up damage and to track down their prey, however, they are certainly the ones you want on your side.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Literacy (Int), Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) (Int), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Inquiry (Fel).

Table 1-4: Career Paths

	—Home World—			
Career Path	**Feral World**	**Hive World**	**Imperial World**	**Void Born**
Adept	—	—	01–12	01–10
Arbitrator	—	01–17	13–25	11–20
Assassin	01–30	18–20	26–38	21–25
Cleric	—	21–25	39–52	26–35
Guardsman	31–80	26–35	53–65	—
Imperial Psyker	81–90	36–40	66–79	36–75
Scum	91–00	41–89	80–90	76–85
Tech-Priest	—	90–00	91–00	86–00

Starting Talents: Basic Weapons Training (SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Quick Draw or Rapid Reload

Starting Gear: Shotgun and 12 shells, club, brass knuckles, knife, chain coat or flak vest or mesh vest, uniform (Good Quality Clothing), 3 doses of stimm, injector, Arbitrator ID, chrono, pack of Iho-sticks or flask of amasec.

Starting Rank: Trooper—turn to **page 50** for more details on this Career Path.

ASSASSIN

"The Emperor wills all things, even death. Some deaths He wills swifter than others…"

— Asthrid, Assassinorum Priestess.

Assassins are skilled killers, adept at getting close to a target and ending their days. Some are cold-blooded executioners that revel in bloodshed, while others are consummate professionals who take great pride in their art. Whatever their motivations, they represent some of the most dangerous men and women of the Inquisition, each one a finely honed tool of murder.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag).

Starting Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Ambidextrous or Unremarkable, Thrown Weapon Training or Pistol Training (Las), Basic Weapon Training (SP), Pistol Training (SP).

Starting Gear: Shotgun and 12 shells or hunting rifle and 16 rounds or autogun and 1 clip, sword, knife, compact las pistol and 1 charge pack or 10 throwing knives, 3 doses of stimm, charm (corpse hair), black bodyglove (Common Quality Clothing).

Starting Rank: Sell-Steel—turn to **page 56** for more details on this Career Path.

CLERIC

"A man without faith is a man without a soul. Suffer not the soulless in thy ministry, for they make doors for dangerous forces."

— *Commandments to the Ecclesiarchy.*

Clerics are the priests of the Emperor, members of the vast organisation known as the Ecclesiarchy. They are charismatic and capable leaders, as well as respected figures of authority. Clerics are trained in a wide variety of abilities, and can turn their hand to pretty much anything. Most notably they know how to lead and inspire, preaching from the front line as they charge into battle.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Common Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int), Literacy (Int), Performer (Singer) (Fel) or Trade (Copyist) (Int), Trade (Cook) (Int) or Trade (Valet) (Fel).

Starting Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Basic Weapon Training (Primitive) or Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive).

Starting Gear: Hammer or sword, stub revolver and 6 bullets or autopistol and 1 clip, crossbow and 10 bolts or 5 throwing knives, chain coat or flak vest, aquila necklace, Ecclesiarchy robes (Good Quality Clothing), 4 candles, charm (skull), backpack.

Starting Rank: Novice—turn to **page 62** for more details on this Career Path.

GUARDSMAN

"Life is war. And I'm gonna win!"

— "Trench Head" Jones.

Guardsmen are the fighters, killers and warriors of the 41st Millennium. Some may be members of a formal army, or even part of the Imperial Guard. Others may be nothing more than mercenaries and thugs. Some may even be convicted criminals, fitted with explosive collars and sentenced to serve in penal legions to pay for their terrible crimes. Needless to say, Guardsmen are neither particularly smart nor sociable. They more than make up for this with their ability to make things die in loud and unpleasant ways.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag) or Swim (S).

Starting Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Primitive) or Pistol Training (Las) Basic Weapons Training (Las), Basic Weapon Training (Primitive) or Basic Weapons Training (SP).

Starting Gear: Sword or axe or hammer, flintlock pistol and 12 shots or las pistol and 1 charge pack, lasgun and 1 charge pack, bow and 10 arrows or musket and 12 shots or shotgun and 12 shells, knife, guard flak armour, uniform or stealth gear or street clothes (Common Quality Clothing), 1 week corpse starch rations, mercenary licence or explosive collar (still attached) or *Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer*.

Starting Rank: Conscript—turn to **page 68** for more details on this Career Path.

Imperial Psyker

"I have stood within the palace of the Throne on Holy Terra itself. There my soul was shattered and re-formed, a living weapon forged on the Emperor's will."

— Primary Psyker Thassail Kain.

Psykers are otherworldly individuals with supernatural powers, they have many and varied abilities, from reading minds to throwing bolts of bio-electrical energy. These strange powers come with a terrible price however, for each psyker is a doorway to the hellish dimension of the immaterium, the abode of Daemons, psychic predators and worse. Each Imperial psyker risks his very soul every time he uses his abilities, knowing that the cold edge of a mercy blade is the kindest fate the Daemon-possessed can expect to meet.

Starting Psychic Powers

All starting Psykers begin with Psy Rating 1, providing a number of Minor Psychic Powers equal to one-half your Willpower Bonus (round up) from those described in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Psyniscience (Per), Invocation (WP), Trade (Merchant) (Fel) or Trade (Soothsayer) (Fel), Literacy (Int).

Starting Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Weapon Training (SP) or Pistol Weapon Training (Las), Psy Rating 1.

Starting Gear: Axe or sword, staff, compact stub revolver and 3 bullets or compact las pistol and 1 charge pack, knife (psykana mercy blade), quilted vest, tatty robe (Poor Quality Clothing), book of Imperial saints or deck of cards or dice, Psy-Focus, sanctioning brand.

Starting Rank: Sanctionite—turn to **page 74** for more details on this Career Path.

Trait: Sanctioned Psyker

You have been taken aboard the Black Ships to Holy Terra. There you have been sanctioned by agents of the Golden Throne through a variety of solemn, profound and very painful rituals designed to test the strength of your soul against the psychic predators of the warp. Roll on **Table 1-5: Sanctioning Side Effects** to discover what mark this has left upon you. Your starting age is increased by 3d10 years see **page 30**.

Table 1-5: Sanctioning Side Effects

Result	Effect
01-08	**Reconstructed Skull:** Some part of your sanctioning fractured your skull. Perhaps it was a form of psycho-surgery, instructive beating or blast of untrammelled power that split your head like a Malfian pus-grape. You have large metal plates in your head, some of which are clearly visible. Reduce your Intelligence by 3, but gain 5d10 Throne Gelt in compensation.
09-14	**Hunted:** Your sanction-visions have induced a mild paranoia. You believe certain parts of your psyche, those amputated by the sanctioners, have gained sentience and are tracking you down. Whilst part of you realises that this is foolish, you still refuse to sit with your back to the door, just in case. Gain 1d10 Insanity Points.
15-25	**Unlovely Memories:** Such was your sanctioning, that you visibly twitch and grimace whenever Holy Terra is mentioned. Gain 1d5 Insanity Points.
26-35	**The Horror, the Horror:** Your hair is pure white, you occasionally gibber quietly to yourself and you endure terrible nightmares every night. Gain 1d5 Insanity Points.
36-42	**Pain through Nerve Induction:** The skin on the back of your right hand is horribly scarred. You are uncomfortable around bald, robed women.
43-49	**Dental Probes:** You no longer have any teeth in your head. Perhaps they were shattered, or removed, or simply fled your skull in protest at the psychic agony within. You have a set of carven dentures, formed from the teeth of dead pilgrims. They are of Good quality and, whilst they have inestimable sentimental value to you, on the open market they are worth approximately 50 Thrones.
50-57	**Optical Rupture:** Your sanctioning rituals have done great violence to your eyes. They have been removed and replaced with Common quality cybernetic senses. See **Chapter V: Armoury** for more details on these.
58-63	**Screaming Devotions:** Your ruined vocal cords have been replaced with a vox inducer. This thumb-sized implant gleams in the flesh of your neck. Other than granting you a rather mechanical timbre to your voice, this has no game effect.
64-70	**Irradience:** You have seen the true power of the Golden Throne. You have no hair anywhere upon your body, face or head.
71-75	**Tongue Bound:** Your lips, gums and soft palate are tattooed with hexegrammatic wards. You must make a **Hard (–20) Will Power Test** to speak the names of the Ruinous Ones (Khorne, Tzeentch, Slaanesh and Nurgle). Additionally, you stutter terribly when speaking of daemons.
76-88	**Throne Wed:** You cleave only unto the Emperor. You gain the Chem Geld talent, (see **page 113**) and a chattallium ring, worth 100 Thrones.
89-94	**Witch Prickling:** Your body is covered in thousands of tiny scars. You have a thorough dislike of needles. Increase your Toughness by 3.
95-00	**Hypno-doctrination:** Powerful conditioning causes you to chant the Litany of Protection in a whispered voice whenever you are asleep or unconscious. Increase your Willpower by 3.

SCUM

"Yeah, crime pays. Why else do you think I do it?"
— "Verbal" Boze, Fenksworld Hive Ganger.

Scum are the criminals, outcasts, conmen, gangers, thieves and desperados of the Imperium. They are the flotsam and jetsam of society. For all their dubious origins, they do have numerous skills that are highly useful for secretive, quasi-legal tasks. From picking locks to street stabbings, forgery and fencing illegal goods, Scum have what it takes to get dodgy things done. Whilst neither strong nor particularly tough, Scum are good at social skills, as well as being rather agile. Perfect for getting in and out of trouble.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Blather (Fel), Charm (Fel) or Dodge (Ag), Deceive (Fel), Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int).

Starting Talents: Ambidextrous or Unremarkable, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Basic Weapon Training (SP).

Starting Gear: Autogun and 1 clip or shotgun and 12 shells, autopistol and 1 clip, brass knuckles or club, knife, quilted vest or beast furs, street ware or rags or dirty coveralls (Poor Quality Clothing).

Starting Rank: Dreg—turn to **page 82** for more details on this Career Path.

TECH-PRIEST

"I am a Child of the Omnissiah, cultist of the Machine God. The rites of manifold applications, the liturgies of ignition and the songs of Engine-seeing are mine own to know. I speak to the spirits of ancient tech-machines, from the warrior heart of a battle tank to the secret wisdom of the cogitator."
— Vox Servitor Th3ta, on behalf of Cult Mechanicus Adept Manuel.

Tech-Priests are the guardians of machine-spirits and the preserver of the traditions of tech. They tend to incredibly arcane machines and learn many mysteries, such as the rites of ignition and the art of maintenance. As they learn of ancient science, they seek out lost technology, and also replace their frail flesh with gleaming steel or chattering circuitry.

Starting Skills: Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tech-Use (Int), Literacy (Int), Secret Tongue (Tech) (Int), Trade (Scrimshawer) (Ag) or Trade (Copyist) (Int).

Starting Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Basic Weapon Training (Las), Pistol Training (Las), Electro Graft Use.

Starting Traits: Mechanicus Implants.

Starting Gear: Metal staff, las pistol and 1 charge pack, las carbine and 1 charge pack, knife, flak vest, glow lamp, data-slate, Mechanicus robes and vestments (Good Quality Clothing), 1d10 spare parts (power cells, wires, chronometers etc), vial of Sacred Machine Oil.

Starting Rank: Technographer—turn to **page 88** for more details on this Career Path.

Trait: Mechanicus Implants

Over the course of many complicated rituals, you have been blessed and purified. You have been judged a suitable vessel for the following implants:

Electro-Graft

This is a small port that is grafted into your nervous system. Once you have been properly trained, this will allow you to interface with machine data ports, and certain types of data nets. Electro-grafts can take many forms, such as electoos, skull shunts, finger probes or spine jacks.

Electoo Inductors

These are palm-sized metal skin grafts that appear much like tattoos to the uninitiated. The electoos are wired into your nervous system, where they derive power from the bio-electrical emanations of the flesh. They can be used to emit or siphon power in many ways. Electoo inductors can be any colour, and can appear anywhere on the body—though hands or mechadendrites are the usual sites.

Respirator Unit

This implant covers the lower half of your face with a network of grilles and tubing. It purifies your air supply, granting a +20% bonus to resist airborne toxins and gas weapons. The respirator unit also contains a vox-synthesiser capable of transmitting your voice in a variety of ways. Respirators can appear as simple grille units or intricate mask-like carvings.

Cyber-Mantle

This is a framework of metal, wires and impulse transmitters that is bolted on to your spine and lower ribcage. As you gain further implants, this mantle will act as a sub-dermal anchorage point. Amongst some servants of the Omnissiah, this cyber-mantle is often referred to as 'the true flesh'. One would have to look beneath the red robes of a Tech-Priest to discover what a cyber-mantle looks like, and thus no one admits to having seen one.

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 salvaged from vehicle engines. Many a hunchback within the Adeptus Mechanicus is blamed upon a primitive coil.

Cranial Circuitry

This is a series of linked processors, implants and cortical circuits that augments your mental capacities. Most sit within housing bolted onto the skull, whilst others nestle within the brain itself. As you grow in the seriousness of your devotions, more and more of the brain that deals with useless things such as emotion and intuition can be scooped away to provide room for additional augmentations. Cranial circuits are often very crude-looking, and frequently rather aged.

Example

Steve is now ready to determine his Career Path. He rolls a d100 and compares the result to the Table 1-4: Career Paths. He rolls a 44, indicating he is an Imperial world Cleric. He records his starting Skills, Talents and Gear, but he has some choices to make. He may select Performer (Singer) or Trade (Copyist), Trade (Cook or Valet), Basic Weapon Training (Primitive) or Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive). Steve opts for Trade (Copyist) and Trade (Valet) for his Skills and selects Basic Weapon Training (Primitive) for his Talents—the latter since he has a good Ballistic Skill.

Steve has the following Skills and Talents:

***Skills:** Speak Language (Low Gothic), Common Lore (Imperial Creed), Literacy, Trade (Copyist, Valet).*

***Talents:** Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP)*

Steve also has a few choices about Gear. He chooses those that reflect his Talents and begins play with the following stuff:

***Gear:** Hammer, stub revolver and 6 bullets, crossbow and 10 bolts, flak vest, aquila necklace, Ecclesiarchy robes (Good Quality Clothing), 4 candles, charm (skull), backpack.*

Stage Four: Spend Experience Points, Buy Equipment

"If you knew back then, what you know now, you wouldn't ask 'Why, my lord?', but 'How?'"
— from *The Rhyme of the Ancient Acolyte.*

Once you have determined your Career Path, your next step is to note down your character's Wounds, Fate Points, Movement and starting Wealth. Finally you spend your starting Experience Points by referencing the appropriate Rank Advances in **Chapter II: Career Paths** before moving onto Stage Five.

Wounds

Wounds are a vital part of any character and represent how much punishment they can take before suffering serious injury. Roll on **Table 1-6: Starting Wounds** to determine your character's starting number of Wounds.

Table 1-6: Starting Wounds

Home World	Base	Modifier
Feral World	d5+	9
Hive World	d5+	8
Imperial World	d5+	8
Void Born	d5+	6

Fate Points

Acolytes are unique individuals that are destined to do the Emperor's work. Fate represents this special destiny that sets them aside from the teeming masses of humanity. Roll on **Table 1-7: Fate Points** to determine your charcter's starting number of Fate Points.

Table 1-7: Fate Points

	Dice Roll		
	1–4	5–8	7–10
Feral World	1	2	2
Hive World	1	2	3
Imperial World	2	2	3
Void Born	2	3	3

Movement

Characters may move at one of four speeds: Half Move, Full Move, Charge, or Run. The number of metres a character may move in his turn is determined by his Agility Bonus. Traits can modify some or all Movement speeds. Details on these modes of Movement can be found in **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**

Table 1-8: Movement in Metres per Round

Ag Bonus	Half Move	Full Move	Charge	Run
1	1	2	3	6
2	2	4	6	12
3	3	6	9	18
4	4	8	12	24
5	5	10	15	30

Starting Wealth, Monthly Income & Buying Equipment

All Acolytes begin play with some money, known in Dark Heresy as Throne Gelt or just Thrones. This starting wealth can either be saved for later or spent immediately on additional equipment. Players should generate their starting wealth using **Table 1-9: Starting Wealth** based on your character's Career Path.

Players receive all the listed starting gear for their career at no cost. As long as their GM approves, players may buy additional weapons, armour and gear from **Chapter VI: Armoury** at the listed prices. When buying items during character creation players do not need to worry about the availability of items.

Monthly Income

All Acolytes gain a monthly income while in the employ of an Inquisitor. Refer to **Table 1-9: Income and Social Class** on **page 124** to determine your monthly income.

Table 1-9: Starting Wealth

Career	Throne Gelt
Adept	100+1d10
Arbitrator	50+2d10
Assassin	120+3d10
Cleric	300+5d10
Guardsman	70+1d10
Imperial Psyker	50+1d5
Scum	10+1d5
Tech-Priest	150+1d10

EQUIPMENT

Players receive all the listed starting gear for their career at no cost. As long as their GM approves, players may buy additional weapons, armour and gear from **Chapter V: Armoury** at the listed prices. When buying items during character creation, players do not need to worry about the availability of items.

STARTING EXPERIENCE

With your basic information in place and recorded, it is time to spend your starting Experience Points (xp). All characters begin play with 400 xp which they may use to increase Characteristics, acquire or improve Skills, acquire new Talents, and so on. **Chapter II: Career Paths** describes the cost of these Advances as well as what Advances are available based on your Career Path. Be sure to note how much xp you spend as spent xp determines your character's Rank within his Career Path.

QUICK PLAY CHARACTERS

If you want to dive straight into the action, here are some starting Advance, Skill and Talent packages you can use, each worth 400 xp.

Adept

Intelligence Advance Simple (+5) 100
Drive (Ground Vehicle) 100
Common Lore (Administratum) 100
Sound Constitution 100

Arbitrator

Ballistic Skill Advance Simple (+5) 100
Awareness 100
Scrutiny 100
Sound Constitution 100

Assassin

Weapon Skill Advance Simple (+5) 100
Inquiry 100
Heightened Senses (Sight) 100
Sound Constitution 100

It's a Hard Life

A starting Experience of 400 represents the fact that your Acolyte is freshly recruited to the Inquisition, one amongst the hundreds conscripted by each Inquisitor. Surviving the 41st Millennium is going to be tough, but the challenge of surviving and rising above the common herd is a rewarding one. If your Game Master is running a campaign intended for more experienced characters, he may decide to gift your character with additional starting Experience and Money. If this is the case, simply spend the xp as if you had earned them through play. **Chapter II: Career Paths** describes this process in detail. For each 400 xp you are given, you receive a full month's wages (see **Chapter V: Armoury** for more details).

Cleric

Fellowship Advance Simple (+5) 100
Awareness 100
Inquiry 100
Sound Constitution 100

Guardsman

Weapon Skill Advance Simple (+5) 100
Ballistic Skill Advance Simple (+5) 100
Pistol Training (SP) 100
Sound Constitution 100

Imperial Psyker

Willpower Advance Simple (+5) 100
Forbidden Lore (The Warp) 100
Common Lore (Imperium) 100
Sound Constitution 100

Scum

Ballistic Skill Advance Simple (+5) 100
Agility Advance Simple (+5) 100
Fellowship Advance Simple (+5) 100
Sound Constitution 100

Tech-Priest

Toughness Advance Simple (+5) 100
Logic 100
Feedback Screech 100
Technical Knock 100

Example

Steve's character is now taking shape; the next step is to spend his starting Experience. He has 400 points and looking at the first Rank Advances for Clerics he decides to buy the simple advance for Fellowship, costing 100 points and increasing his character's Fellowship by 5. He then decides to buy a couple more Skills, purchasing both Awareness and Inquiry for 100 points each. Finally he chooses to make his Cleric a little more robust and spends his last 100 points on the Sound Constitution talent, increasing his character's Wounds by 1.

Stage Five: Bringing your Character to Life

"There is surprisingly less to most men than meets the eye."
— Lady Olianthe Rathbone, Inquisitrix Prima.

The numbers and words that you have written down so far are the nuts and bolts that define your character's capabilities. They say little about the character's appearance, age and other personal details that help you and others visualise your Acolyte. The following tables provide a randomised method for generating these details, but you need not roll on all of them; you may choose which features take your fancy if you prefer.

Gender

The wartorn 41st Millennium is not always an encouraging place to be for a female. Few get the opportunities of their male counterparts, but by the same token they also do not get exposed to the dangers out there in the wilder parts of the galaxy. Certain Imperial Guard regiments recruit females to fight alongside men; the Ecclesiarchy and the Inquisition likewise employ females at all ranks, but again their numbers are not in proportion to men. For Dark Heresy, players may pick whichever gender they wish to play, with no handicap. On some planets, however, as the GM determines, being a female will present its own extra challenges.

Note that in the text we refer to "he" throughout, but only as shorthand. This can equally be considered to say "she".

Appearance

Appearance encompasses all of your character's physical traits, such as build, age, colouration and physical quirks. Note down your quirks and history in the background section of your character

Table 1-10: Build

	—Feral World—			—Hive World—	
Roll	Description	Male	Female	Description	Male	Female
01–20	Rangy	1.90m/65kg	1.80m/60kg	Runt	1.60m/45kg	1.55m/40kg
21–50	Lean	1.75m/60kg	1.65m/55kg	Scrawny	1.70m/55kg	1.60m/50kg
51–80	Muscular	1.85m/85kg	1.70m/70kg	Wiry	1.75m/65kg	1.65m/55kg
81–90	Squat	1.65m/80kg	1.55/70kg	Lanky	1.80m/65kg	1.70/60kg
91–00	Strapping	2.10m/120kg	2m/100kg	Brawny	1.75m/80kg	1.65/75kg
	—Imperial World—			—Void Born—	
Roll	Description	Male	Female	Description	Male	Female
01–20	Slender	1.75m/65kg	1.65m/60kg	Skeletal	1.75m/55kg	1.70m/50kg
21–50	Svelte	1.85m/70kg	1.75m/65kg	Stunted	1.65m/55kg	1.55m/45kg
51–80	Fit	1.75m/70kg	1.65m/60kg	Gaunt	1.80m/60kg	1.75m/60kg
81–90	Well-built	1.90m/90kg	1.80m/80kg	Gangling	2m/80kg	1.85m/70kg
91–00	Stocky	1.80m/100kg	1.70m/90kg	Spindly	2.10m/75kg	1.95m/70kg

Table 1-11: Age

Roll	—Feral World—	—Hive World—	—Imperial World—	—Void Born—
01–10	Warrior (15+1d10)	Nipper (15+1d10)	Stripling (20+1d10)	Youth (15+1d10)
11–20	Warrior (15+1d10)	Nipper (15+1d10)	Stripling (20+1d10)	Youth (15+1d10)
21–30	Warrior (15+1d10)	Nipper (15+1d10)	Stripling (20+1d10)	Youth (15+1d10)
31–40	Warrior (15+1d10)	Adult (25+1d10)	Stripling (20+1d10)	Youth (15+1d10)
41–50	Warrior (15+1d10)	Adult (25+1d10)	Stripling (20+1d10)	Mature (20+1d10)
51–60	Warrior (15+1d10)	Adult (25+1d10)	Mature (30+1d10)	Mature (20+1d10)
61–70	Warrior (15+1d10)	Adult (25+1d10)	Mature (30+1d10)	Mature (0+1d10)
71–80	Old One (25+1d10)	Adult (25+1d10)	Mature (30+1d10)	Methuselah (50+1d10)
81–90	Old One (25+1d10)	Adult (25+1d10)	Veteran (40+1d10)	Methuselah (50+1d10)
91–00	Old One (25+1d10)	Old Timer (35+1d10)	Veteran (40+1d10)	Methuselah (50+1d10)

sheet. While it is fun to randomly generate your appearance, you should feel free to alter any rolls on these tables if you want to, or even make up your own results to suit your needs.

THE PAST

Your past has a strong influence on your character (unless of course, your maddened mind is choosing to block it all out). You may already have a great idea about where your character comes from, or what may have happened to them. If this is the case, go ahead and write it all down. If you would like a little inspiration, use the tables to figure out what happened before fate chose a greater role for your insignificant life.

Handedness

Whether your character is left- or right-handed can have an effect on the game. You can either choose the handedness of your character or roll a die. On a 9 you are left-handed, otherwise you are right-handed. Obviously characters with the Ambidextrous talent do not need to know which hand they favour.

Table 1-12: Colouration

	—Feral World—			—Hive World—		
Roll	**Skin**	**Hair**	**Eyes**	**Skin**	**Hair**	**Eyes**
01–30	Dark	Red	Blue	Dark	Brown	Blue
31–50	Tan	Blond	Grey	Tan	Mousy	Grey
51–70	Fair	Brown	Brown	Fair	Dyed (any)	Brown
71–90	Ruddy	Black	Green	Ruddy	Grey	Green
91–00	Bronze	Grey	Yellow	Stained (any)	Black	Lenses (any)

	—Imperial World—			—Void Born—		
Roll	**Skin**	**Hair**	**Eyes**	**Skin**	**Hair**	**Eyes**
01–30	Dark	Dyed (any)	Blue	Porcelain	Ginger	Watery Blue
31–50	Tan	Blond	Grey	Fair	Blond	Grey
51–70	Fair	Brown	Brown	Bluish	Copper	Black
71–90	Ruddy	Black	Green	Greyish	Black	Green
91–00	Dyed (any)	Grey	Lenses (any)	Milky	Auburn	Violet

Table 1-13: Quirks

Roll	**—Feral World—**	**—Hive World—**	**—Imperial World—**	**—Void Born—**
01–06	Hairy Knuckles	Pallid	Missing Digit	Pallid
07–13	Joined Eyebrows	Grimy Skin	Aquiline Nose	Bald
14–20	Warpaint	Outrageous Hair	Warts	Long Fingers
21–27	Hands like Spatchcocks	Rotten Teeth	Duelling Scar	Tiny Ears
28–34	Filed Teeth	Electoo	Pierced Nose	Spindly Limbs
35–41	Beetling Brows	Piercing	Nervous Tic	Yellow Fingernails
42–48	Musky Smell	Set of Piercings	Aquila Tattoo	Stumpy Teeth
49–55	Hairy	Hacking Cough	Faint Smell	Widely Spaced Eyes
56–61	Ripped Ears	Tattoos	Pox Marks	Large Head
62–68	Long Fingernails	Bullet Wound Scar	Devotional Scar	Curved Spine
69–75	Tribal Tattooing	Nervous Tic	Electoo	Hairless
76–82	Scarring	Large Mole	Quivering Fingers	Elegant Hands
83–87	Piercing	Pollution Scars	Pierced Ears	Flowing Hair
88	Cat's Eyes	Hump	Sinister Boil	Albino
89–95	Small Head	Small Hands	Make-up	Limping Gait
96–00	Thick Jaw	Chemical Smell	Slouched Gait	Stooped Stance

Feral World: Tribal Taboos

Life on a feral world is often short and bloody. Monstrous beasts, harsh living conditions, disasters and war cut short many a life. Feral tribes know all too well that the universe is a cruel and savage place, hostile to man and full of malevolent forces that must be placated at all costs. There are many strange and varied beliefs upon these worlds, and growing up in such a place, your character has undoubtedly been affected by them. **Table 1-14: Feral World Superstitions** provides examples of the sorts of taboos your character might believe in, though obviously these are just a few of the many and varied superstitions that exist.

Table 1-14: Feral World Superstitions

Roll	Belief
01–10	**Dirt Ward:** Bathing allows enemy spirits to smell you out. You must keep a protective layer of grime to ward their bad luck away.
11–20	**Unlucky Colour:** Orange is the colour of disaster and death.
21–30	**Hunter's Oath:** Never eat something you could not kill yourself lest fate punish you for your arrogance.
31–40	**Thirsty Blade:** The spirit of your weapon is a hungry ghost. It must taste blood every time it is drawn lest great ill befall you and yours.
41–50	**Spirit Shackle:** If you take a trophy from a vanquished foe, you own their soul.
51–60	**Warrior Death:** A glorious death honours your people, whilst a coward's death shames them. Your ancestors are watching; do not disappoint.
61–70	**Power of Names:** Never use the true names of your friends and loved ones, lest daemons hear and use them for evil.
71–80	**Lonely Dead:** Never utter the names of the dead, lest you summon them back from the void.
81–90	**Living Record:** Scar your victories into your skin, so that upon your death your flayed hide may be presented to the Emperor that He may read of your deeds.
91–00	**Nemesis:** The Emperor has decreed the time and manner of your death. Somewhere out there is the beast that will kill you. Your fate is to seek out this creature and face it head on. Until that time, you believe that nothing will harm you.

Hive World: Hive Class

Life within the packed spires of a hive is frenetic at best. A strong sense of place runs through many hives and it is frequently this alone that stops the untold masses from rising up and attacking their betters. Your character's position within the hive determines whether he was forced to struggle up from the hyper-violent filth of the underhive or had it easy as a high-living spire noble. **Table 1-15: Hive Class** will determine your position within hive society.

Table 1-15: Hive Class

Roll	Result
01–20	**Dross Hound:** You grew up in the dankest, darkest depths of the hive, scrabbling for food, light and warmth. You have had to be vicious to survive, and likely prize your possessions and comfort above all.
21–40	**Ganger Scum:** You ran with a pack of violent gangers to survive the squalid underhive. You have seen turf war, betrayal and outstanding loyalty—often in the same gunfight. You likely prize your pride, territory and gang mates above all.
41–60	**Factory Dregs:** Your parents toiled in the manufactorum, working themselves into the grave for the good of the hive. You were poor, but at least you were honest, unlike the ganger scum. You likely prize duty, honour and obligation above all things.
61–80	**Middle Hive:** You grew up in the middle hive, where things were cramped, but at least you did not have to work in the more dangerous manufactorum. You have always been part of a vast crowd—whether sleeping, eating or relaxing of an eve-cycle. You likely prize individuality, privacy and your personal rights above all things.
81–90	**Specialist:** Your family were of a special caste. Perhaps they knew the arcane workings of the air conditioning units or they cleansed the outside of the hive. You have grown up part of the hive, but apart from it all. You likely prize your area of expertise, opinions and individual merits above all things.
91–00	**Hive Noble:** Your family were of the privileged few at the top of the spire, living in luxury unimaginable to other hivers. You had everything you could ever want: space, privacy, sunlight—yet also the burden of leadership. You likely prize dignity, respect from your lessers and strength above all things.

Imperial World: Birth Planet

The Imperium sprawls across the galaxy, filled with a near-endless variety of planets. Mankind survives on all manner of worlds, living in all manner of societies. The type of planet your character grew up on will determine much about them. **Table 1-16: Planet of Birth** gives an idea of the sorts of worlds you may call home, and what that means for your character.

Table 1-16: Planet of Birth

Roll	Result
01–20	**Agri-world:** You were born on a world devoted to producing food. Perhaps your home world supported a nearby hive world, or the Imperial tithe inexplicably demands it. Your people likely seek excitement and the exotic to vary the dull routine of the farm.
21–40	**Backwater:** Your home world is largely forgotten by the Imperium. Lost from the Administratum scrolls and isolated from the universe, your people are likely to be self-sufficient and sceptical.
41–60	**Feudal World:** Your home world is a primitive planet, with but the simplest of technologies, such as swords, chariots and black powder. Your people are likely to be loyal, practical and highly superstitious.
61–70	**War Zone:** Whatever your home world once was, it is now a seething mass of bloodied ruins, struggling soldiers and whistling ordnance. Perhaps civil war rages, or maybe Orks seek to destroy all. Whatever the case, your people are likely to be grim, tenacious and dedicated.
71–80	**Dead Planet:** Your home world is little more than a habitat perched upon some blasted rock. Maybe a mining colony upon an airless moon, or perhaps an expedition to uncover some long-dead alien race, your people are likely to be thoughtful, melancholy types, with a curiousity for greenery and the outdoors.
81–90	**Shrine World:** Your home world is controlled by the priests of the Emperor. Perhaps it is covered in gleaming spires and vast temples, or perhaps it welcomes countless pilgrims to its holy battle sites. Whatever the case, your people are likely to be devoted servants of the Emperor, pious, dependable and honest.
91–00	**Paradise Planet:** Your home world is one of the rare and coveted paradise planets, where it is forever summertime, and the living is easy. Aside from being objects of envy and scorn for the rest of the Imperium, your people are likely to be somewhat bemused by the cruel nature of the universe, with a naive optimism that others find highly foolish.

Void Born: Ship Tradition

Reared aboard spacecraft travelling between the distant stars, the void born, like all ship crew, are intensely loyal to the vessel of their birth. Rather like those living within the protective walls of a city-state, the void born look to their craft for protection, employment and identity. Many go from cradle to coffin without ever leaving their ship, and often that suits them very well. The type of craft dictates much about the lives of the people aboard it, from their daily routine to their personalities and desires. Roll on **Table 1-17: Void Born Craft of Origin** to find ideas of how the ship of your birth might affect your character.

Table 1-17: Void Born Craft of Origin

Roll	Result
01–20	**Space Hulk:** You were born upon a ragged mass of flotsam and jetsam—space worthy, but only just. Probably the survivors of some terrible accident stuck aboard an abandoned wreck, you grew up in a world of leaking door seals, dark corridors, haunted decks and the knowledge that "things" were aboard ship just out of sight. You are likely to be cautious, superstitious and trigger-happy.
21–40	**Orbital:** You were born upon a vast and ancient satellite, orbiting some star, moon or planet. Likely part of a scientific mission, isolationist retreat or military stationing, you grew up in a world of routine and repetition, with endless orbital cycles, rituals of observance and maintenance rotes. You are likely to be very methodical, with a secret desire for rebellion and indulgence.
41–60	**Chartist Vessel:** You were born upon one of the great trading vessels of old. As part of a crew endlessly plying a traditional route, you grew up within the gloomy holds, packed with exotic riches you could never own. Fearfully accepted into port, yet welcomed at none, you are likely to be materialist in nature, with a great eye for deals and a cynical view of human nature.
61–80	**War Ship:** You were born amidst the crash and thunder of battle, and grew up amidst the gun crews and the troopers, crammed into rank-smelling bunks or the stultifying formality of the officers' quarters. You are likely to be a great respecter of authority, with a liking for procedure and a no-nonsense attitude towards slackers.
81–00	**Rogue Trader:** You were born on an eccentric craft that knew no authority other than the charismatic Rogue Trader at the helm. You grew up in a chaotic whirl of exploration, battle, flight and negotiation with all manner of aliens, nations and forces. You are likely to be rebellious by nature, with a dislike of routine and discipline.

Divination

Many folk look to the Imperial Tarot as an instrument of the Emperor's divine guidance. On entrance to the service of the Inquisition, many Acolytes take part in strange and terrible divination rites, in order to learn more of their part in the Throne's great plan. In smoke-filled rooms, blind robe-clad seers peer into their holorogic decks, proclaiming sage advice for those who would serve at the left hand of the Emperor. Sometimes these divinations point to the death and undoing of a soul, other times they are stout words to live by. In some cases, they have a bitter irony only discovered in hindsight. To discover what words of wisdom were bestowed upon your character, roll on **Table 1-18: Imperial Divination**. All divinations provide a mechanical effect that further alters your character.

Table 1-18: Imperial Divination

Roll	Result
01	"Mutation without, corruption within." Begin play with one Minor Mutation (see **page 334**).
02–03	"Only the insane have strength enough to prosper. Only those who prosper may judge what is sane." Begin play with 2 Insanity Points.
04–07	"Sins hidden in the heart turn all to decay." Begin play with 3 Corruption Points.
08	"Innocence is an illusion." Begin play with 1 Insanity Point and 1 Corruption Point.
09–11	"Dark dreams lie upon the heart." Begin play with 2 Corruption Points.
12–15	"The pain of the bullet is ecstasy compared to damnation." Increase Toughness by +1.
16–18	"Kill the alien before it can speak its lies." Increase Agility by +2.
19–21	"Truth is subjective." Increase Intelligence by +3. Begin play with 3 Corruption Points.
22–26	"Know the mutant; kill the mutant." Increase Perception by +2.
27–30	"Even a man who has nothing can still offer his life." Increase Strength by +2.
31–33	"If a job is worth doing it is worth dying for." Gain the Frenzy talent.
34–38	"Only in death does duty end." Gain 1 Wound.
39–42	"A mind without purpose will wander in dark places." Gain 1 Fate Point.
43–46	"There are no civilians in the battle for survival." Increase Toughness by +2 and gain 1 Wound.
47–50	"Violence solves everything." Increase Weapon Skill by +3.
51–54	"To war is human." Increase Agility by +3.
55–58	"Die if you must, but not with your spirit broken." Increase Willpower by +3.
59–62	"The gun is mightier than the sword." Increase Ballistic Skill by +3.
63–66	"Be a boon to your brothers and bane to your enemies." Increase Fellowship by +3.
67–70	"Men must die so that Man endures." Increase Toughness by +3.
71–74	"In the darkness, follow the light of Terra." Increase Willpower by +3.
75–79	"The only true fear is of dying with your duty not done." Gain 2 Wounds.
80–85	"Thought begets Heresy; Heresy begets Retribution." Increase Strength by +3.
86–90	"The wise man learns from the deaths of others." Increase Intelligence by +3.
91–94	"A suspicious mind is a healthy mind." Increase Perception by +3.
95–97	"Trust in your fear." Increase Agility by +2 and gain 1 Fate Point.
98–99	"There is no substitute for zeal." Increase Toughness and Willpower each by +2.
00	"Do not ask why you serve. Only ask how." Increase Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill each by +2.

Nature

The character creation process provides you with the skeleton of your alter ego, however these numbers and notes are not the sum total of your character—there is of course a vital fifth element: you! The background details of your character's life are largely up to you as is of course their personality.

Some people like to develop their characters during play and that is a perfectly reasonable approach. When you start to play, it may be enough to know that your character is hive world Scum who has left Scintilla to serve the Inquisition. Many players, however, prefer to work out background and personality before play begins. If you need some help fleshing out your character, try answering these six questions. They should allow you to focus your thoughts on your emerging alter ego.

What is Your Personality Like?

Perhaps the first thing to consider is your disposition. What are you like? Fiery and passionate or earthy and practical? Are you pessimistic or do you always believe the best will happen? Are you a people person or a misanthrope? How do you take to extremes of pressure? What makes you different to the other Acolytes in your group? Here are some traits that might get you started:

Bilious: Suspicious, angry yet very watchful and aware.

Cardinal: Seeks balance in all things, yet often cannot choose a path forward.

Choleric: Active, takes charge, yet easy to anger.

Fixed: Solid, unyielding and definitive in all things.

Melancholic: Thoughtful, introspective and prone to depression.

Mutable: Unpredictable, undisciplined and rebellious.

Phlegmatic: Practical, careful, yet very reserved.

Sanguine: Confident, optimistic, yet prone to dreams and whimsy.

Supine: Loyal, devout yet easily led.

How Did You Meet Your Inquisitor?

Your introduction to the Inquisition would have been a crucial moment in your history. Did you meet by chance, or did your Inquisitor seek you out for recruitment? Perhaps you saved your Inquisitor's life upon the battlefield, or maybe a chance ink blot on an Administratum scroll saw you chosen above another. Maybe you accused a stranger of heresy, only to discover the stranger was an Inquisitor. Perhaps you were sold upon the slave block in an exotic bazaar, or perhaps your shiv-crew gave you away as a blood debt. Perhaps you were hired to catalogue the ancient library of a noble, only to discover a secret cache of heretical tomes, and that your true patron was involved in dark conspiracies. Perhaps a great chariot arrived from the sky, in a mist of flame and smoke, and you were offered to its master as a way of appeasing the great Eagle of the Sun. Whatever the case, the circumstances of your initiation into the Inquisition will likely colour your opinions and beliefs for some time to come…

What Does the Inquisition Mean to You?

The Inquisition is a bastion of defence in a universe hostile to mankind. Threats are all around, and certain doom looms closer than folk know. The forces of Chaos, heresy, xenos and sedition would drag the Imperium into the blackness of oblivion, were it not for people like you… or so they say. Do you believe what you are told about the horrors of the universe and your role as a foot soldier in the great and secret game? Is your role as an Acolyte a holy one, ordained by the Emperor, or is it a chance to gain power, possessions or maybe even revenge? Will you work to defend the Imperium, or merely your own skin?

What Will You Sacrifice?

The Emperor will not judge you by your medals, but by your scars. How many are you willing to receive in the name of the Inquisition? How far will you go to do your duty? Death is certain, but does its manner matter? What methods are you willing to use in order to fulfil your obligations to your Inquisitor? Perhaps you are willing to sacrifice the flesh, but the thought of insanity turns your stomach. Perhaps you arrange things so that other Acolytes take the fall, and you are left with naught but a guilty conscience. Perhaps your zeal is so deep that you are willing to deal with dark forces to get results, no matter that it costs your very soul.

What Do You Desire?

You stand at the left hand of the Emperor, ready to give your life to defend all that humanity holds dear. What are the things that warm your heart through the long dark night of the soul? Perhaps a person or place, or a world destroyed? Perhaps you love the God-Emperor with great fervour, or perhaps you are very attached to your own hide. Maybe you love the muzzle flare of your boltgun and the satisfying smack of chainblade on xenos bone. Perhaps you love justice, truth or violence a great deal. Maybe you'll settle for a lho-stick and a measure of rotgut in a dirty glass…

What Do You Hate?

Hatred's flame burns long and cold, even when all hope is extinguished. What will sustain you through violence, horror and death? Do you seek to purge all mutants? Do you wish to lay low the vile aliens that slaughtered your colonist friends? Perhaps a loved one fell foul of the blandishments of the Dark Powers. Maybe you escaped the clutches of a cult, or perhaps you have seen the despair of war. Perhaps you hate the enemies of mankind with a passion. Maybe you simply cannot stand to be wrong, or to miss a shot. Maybe there is a secret weakness in your soul, a fault line of corruption that only you can see…

NAME

"What's in a name? An Ork by any other term would still see us as meat."

— Catuldynus, *The Once-Pure Hive.*

Choosing a name for your character can be very difficult. If you are lucky enough to have a name in mind, go ahead and write it down. If, like most of us, you have difficulty coming up with a name on the spot, this section will help guide you in creating a great name for your Player Character.

Names within the 41st Millennium are as varied as the many thousands of worlds that make up the Imperium. As mankind is an inventive and contrary creature, there are no standard or universal conventions that govern the names people give themselves. In some places, a single simple name might indicate low birth and ignominy, whilst in others it might act as a mark of extreme power, fame and good breeding. When deciding upon a name, feel free to mix and match any of the suggestions made by the naming tables. The idea, of course, is to create a name that suits your character, and no one knows more about your character than you do.

TYPES OF NAME

There are five types of name presented here:

High Gothic names are drawn from the ancient High Gothic tongue. They have an air of authority, seriousness and power to them.

Primitive names are short and brutal—often like the lives of their owners.

Low Gothic names trace their lineage to a High Gothic past, but have become much debased with centuries of use and abuse.

Archaic names herald from the distant past. They might be the names of mighty saints, heroes or other figures from Ministorum legends. Others are so incredibly old as to have lost all trace of their origins.

Informal names are just that—nicknames, terms and slang names that a person might earn through deeds (or misdeeds).

You may decide that a particular type of name is especially appropriate for your character. If this is the case, you should roll or pick from the appropriate list for your character's gender. If nothing immediately springs to mind, roll the dice, consult name tables and choose the name you prefer.

Table 1-19: Male Names

Roll	Primitive	Low	High	Archaic	Informal
01–03	Arl	Barak	Atellus	Alaric	Able
04–06	Bruul	Cain	Brutis	Attilas	Bones
07–09	Dar	Dariel	Callidon	Barbosa	Crisis
10–13	Frak	Eli	Castus	Cortez	Cutter
14–16	Fral	Enoch	Drustos	Constantine	Dekko
17–20	Garm	Frastus	Flavion	Cromwell	Dakka
21–23	Grish	Gaius	Gallus	Dorn	Frag
24–27	Grak	Garvel	Haxtes	Drake	Flair
28–30	Hak	Hastus	Intios	Eisen	Finial
31–33	Jarr	Ignace	Jastilus	Ferrus	Grim
34–37	Kar	Ishmael	Kaltos	Grendel	Gob
38–40	Kaarl	Jericus	Litilus	Guilliman	Gunner
41–44	Krell	Klightus	Lupus	Havelock	Hack
45–47	Lek	Lazerus	Mallear	Iacton	Jakes
48–50	Mar	Mordeci	Metalus	Jaghatai	Krak
51–54	Mir	Mithras	Nihilius	Khan	Lug
55–57	Narl	Nicodemus	Novus	Leman	Mongrel
58–60	Orl	Pontius	Octus	Lionus	Plex
61–63	Phrenz	Quint	Praetus	Magnus	Rat
64–66	Quarl	Rabalias	Quintos	Mercutio	Red
67–69	Roth	Reestheus	Raltus	Nixios	Sawney
70–72	Ragaa	Silvanus	Ravion	Ramirez	Scab
73–75	Stig	Solomon	Regis	Serghar	Scammer
76–79	Strang	Thaddius	Severus	Sigismund	Skive
80–82	Thak	Titus	Silon	Tybalt	Shanks
83–85	Ulth	Uriah	Tauron	Vern	Shiv
86–89	Varn	Varnias	Trantor	Wolfe	Sham
90–93	Wrax	Xerxes	Venris	Wollsey	Stern
94–96	Yarn	Zaddion	Victus	Zane	Stubber
97–00	Zek	Zuriel	Xanthis	Zarkov	Verbal

Table 1-20: Female Names

Roll	Primitive	Low	High	Archaic	Informal
01–03	Arla	Akadia	Atella	Aenid	Alpha
04–06	Brulla	Chaldia	Brutilla	Albia	Blaze
07–09	Darl	Cyrine	Callidia	Borgia	Blue
10–13	Fraka	Diona	Castella	Cimbria	Cat
14–16	Fraal	Deatrix	Drustilla	Devi	Calamity
17–20	Garma	Ethina	Flavia	Ephese	Dame
21–23	Grisha	Ephrael	Gallia	Euphrati	Dice
24–27	Graki	Fenria	Haxta	Inez	Flair
28–30	Haka	Gaia	Intias	Imperatrice	Gold
31–33	Jarra	Galatia	Jestilla	Jemadar	Gunner
34–37	Karna	Hazael	Kalta	Jezail	Hack
38–40	Kaarli	Isha	Litila	Joss	Halo
41–44	Krella	Ishta	Lupa	Kadis	Lady
45–47	Lekka	Jedia	Mallia	Kali	Luck
48–50	Marlla	Judicca	Meta	Lethe	Modesty
51–54	Mira	Lyra	Nihila	Mae	Moll
55–57	Narla	Magdela	Novia	Millicent	Pistol
58–60	Orla	Narcia	Octia	Merica	Plex
61–63	Phrix	Ophilia	Praetia	Midkiff	Pris
64–66	Quali	Phebia	Quintilla	Megehra	Rat
67–69	Rotha	Qualia	Raltia	Odessa	Red
70–72	Ragaana	Rhia	Ravia	Orlean	Ruby
73–75	Stigga	Salomis	Regia	Plath	Scarlet
76–79	Stranga	Solaria	Scythia	Severine	Spike
80–82	Thakka	Thyratia	Sila	Thiopia	Steel
83–85	Ultha	Thebe	Taura	Thrace	Starr
86–89	Varna	Uriel	Trantia	Tzarine	Trauma
90–93	Wraxa	Veyda	Venria	Venus	Trick
94–96	Yarni	Xantippe	Xanthia	Walperga	Trix
97–00	Zekka	Ziapatra	Zethina	Zetkin	Zee

Multiple Names

Man is a superstitious creature, and rightly so, for the universe is filled with beings that seem bent on his destruction. A surprising number of cultures believe that a person needs a selection of different names for different purposes. Many have a common or "use" name which is for everyday purposes. These are often debased terms, worn down with use into short, strong-sounding names. In contrast, a personal name with soft and pleasant connotations might be used with family and friends. Some cultures have a secret or "true" name which is believed to hold considerable power over a person. These names are said to be consumed should a person foolishly make some form of pact with a daemonic entity. If you would like multiple names for your character, feel free to roll several times on the name tables.

Stage Six: Play the Game!

With your Dark Heresy character created, you are ready to play the game. Before you start throwing dice around and getting into all sorts of trouble, you should probably take a good look at **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**, which describes what all of these numbers mean, how to fight and move about the worlds of the 41st Millennium. Once you have a handle on gameplay, it won't hurt to give a look at **Chapter IX: Life in the Imperium**, which explains the core setting concepts that define the world of *Warhammer 40,000*. Other than these two chapters, you are ready to embark on your new adventure into the darker corners of the Dark Heresy universe!

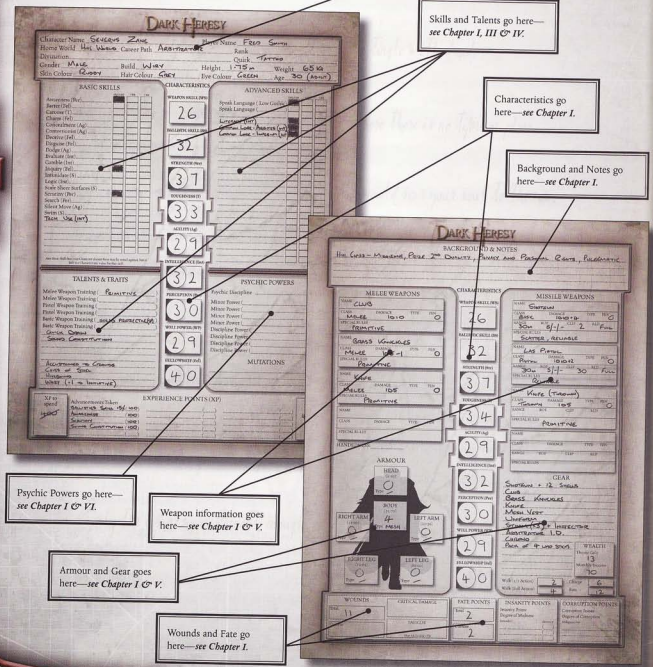
Example Character Sheet

As a player, the Character Sheet is your most important possession as it clearly details everything about your Player Character. One side of the sheet details all of your character's Skills and Talents—called the investigation side of the sheet. The reverse of the sheet details your equipment, weapons and armour—called the combat side. You'll refer to both sides throughout a game of Dark Heresy. Here are some tips for its upkeep:

Make a back-up: Every few gaming sessions, make a photocopy of your character sheet, or copy it onto a new sheet. If you don't, a spilt drink or pizza accident is all that it will take to spell disaster!

Share with your Game Master: Let your GM see your sheet from time to time. It's good for the GM to keep up to date with your character's abilities and Advances. Some GMs might want to take a copy of your sheet every few weeks for their reference.

Character Folio: You'll probably find that you go through a number of sheets as your character progresses. This is where the Character Folio comes in—a deluxe version of a Character Sheet, with more space and sections for fully detailing your character and their exploits in the service of the Inquisition. Printed in a small booklet form and on quality paper, the Character Folio is a more permanent option. Character Folios should be available wherever you bought this book.



II

Career Paths

Getting Started

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Character Advancements

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Adept

•

Arbitrator

•

Assassin

•

Cleric

•

Guardsman

•

Imperial Psyker

•

Scum

•

Tech-Priest

Chapter II: Career Paths

"There is no greater glory than a lifetime of dutiful service."
— Imperial adage.

As an Acolyte of the Inquisition, you are apart from everyone else in the Imperium of Man. Humanity toils and prays, forever ignorant of the great forces threatening to destroy the galaxy. Whilst they go about their lives, Acolytes like you wage a secret war against malefic beings whose names must never be spoken. Whilst the masses sleep at night, you are investigating secretive cults who meet in darkness to spill blood and pray to their obscene gods. As they slave in the manufactorum, you are bringing righteous fire to twisted mutants in the depths of a hive. As they peer fearfully at the blackness of space, you are plunging into the very darkness between the stars, uncovering ancient horrors upon planets long dead. You of all the teeming billions have been chosen to serve at the Emperor's left hand. Yours is a weighty duty, yet a vital one.

Not all Acolytes serve the Inquisition in the same way. Sometimes an Inquisitor has need of capable Guardsmen who can purge a nest of xenos cultists or an Arbitrator who can wring the truth from a petty thief. Sometimes an Inquisitor will need the services of an Adept to translate an ancient tome of knowledge or perhaps he must resort to dealing with Scum to get what he needs.

Your Career Path represents your character's abilities and potential—effectively, your role within an Inquisitor's retinue. It defines what you were before you joined the Inquisition, and how you will continue to develop. Your career will define how you are viewed, what new abilities you can learn, as well as the sorts of things you will be getting up to. Part of the fun of Dark Heresy is deciding exactly how your character will develop within your Career Path, for there are many choices available and no one "right" way of progressing.

Getting Started

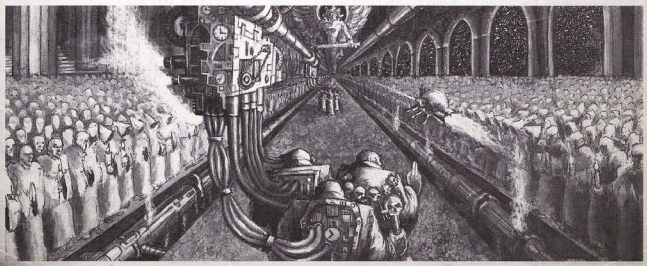
"Serve the Emperor today, for tomorrow you may be dead!"
— *Lexiconum Moralis.*

Your character's Career Path is decided during the character creation process. Your choice of Home World will determine what paths are available to your character. You may decide to pick your Career Path for yourself, or to use the random tables in **Chapter I: Character Creation** to choose for you.

Each Career Path has its own dedicated section within this chapter. Once you know what path your character is following, take the time to have a good read through the appropriate section. This will tell you all the important things you need to know about playing your character, and how you can expect them to develop over time.

Table 2-1: Careers

Career	Description	Page Reference
Adept	Knowledgeable scholars and logisters	44
Arbitrator	Investigators and lawmen	50
Assassin	Skilled killers	56
Cleric	Priests, diplomats and leaders of men	62
Guardsman	Warriors, soldiers and brawlers	68
Imperial Psyker	Practitioners of psychic disciplines	74
Scum	Thieves, outcasts and, well, scum	82
Tech-Priest	Keepers of mysterious technology	88



Career Path Format

Each Career Path uses the following format:

Description

In each Career Path section you can find a description and illustration to help give you some ideas about what your character might be like. This section tells you a little bit about the background for the career and how it fits into the Imperium as a whole.

Rank Chart

Each Career Path is divided into a series of Ranks. This chart tells you the name of each Rank, as well as the level of progression necessary to reach a certain Rank.

Characteristic Advance Scheme

Each Career Path allows you to improve your character's raw abilities, or Characteristics. Depending on the nature of the Career Path, some Characteristics are more difficult to increase than others. This chart lists the cost of each Characteristic Advance you can take.

Rank Advance Scheme

For each Rank within your Career Path you will find a table that shows you what new abilities your character can learn, and what you must do in order to learn them. You'll also find a short quote and description for each Rank.

Character Advancements

"Thought for the day: hard work conquers everything."
— The Gunmetallicus Primer.

As you adventure through the 41st Millennium, your character will have plenty of opportunity to improve. Your Game Master will reward you with Experience Points that you can spend to further develop your character. Each career has plenty of room for you to customise your character and make them unique.

There are three types of improvement that can happen to your character:

- Characteristic Advance—Increases your raw abilities
- Rank increase—Opens new training opportunities
- Skill or Talent Advance—Learn new Skills or Talents

In addition to the Advances listed for the Ranks within your Career Path, sometimes your GM will allow you to purchase an Elite Advance. See **page 43** for more on this.

Characteristic Advance

A Characteristic Advance is an increase to your character's raw abilities. When you buy a Characteristic Advance, you add +5 to the Characteristic on your character sheet.

Characteristic Advancements are divided into four progression levels. These are as follows:

Simple: A small fulfilment of your potential.

Intermediate: A significant improvement to your capabilities.

Trained: Active, focused effort upon improving one's prowess.

Expert: The limit of your natural capabilities.

As you set about increasing a Characteristic, you must progress through each of the progression levels in turn, starting at Simple and ending with Expert.

The costs for each career are listed in the relevant career section in a table, which looks like this:

Arbitrator Characteristic Advance Scheme

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
WS	250 xp	500 xp	750 xp	1,000 xp

As you can see, the first +5 increase to an Arbitrator's Weapon Skill costs 250 xp; the next +5 (the Intermediate progression level) would cost 500 xp; a further +5 improvement (the Trained progression level) would cost 750 xp; while the final possible improvement (Expert progression level) costs 1,000 xp.

The costs for Characteristic Advances are cumulative. So you couldn't just pay 500 xp for a +10 increase. Instead, you'd pay 250 xp for the Simple Advance, and then pay 500 xp for the Intermediate Advance.

Example

Steve decides he wants to improve his Arbitrator's Weapon Skill. His starting profile is 25. Steve wishes to increase it to 35. Looking at the Characteristic Advance Scheme for the Arbitrator career, Steve notes the cost of a Simple progression is 250 xp. He purchases this advance, and increases his Weapon Skill to 30 (25+5=30). Next, Steve notes the cost of an Intermediate progression, which costs 500 xp. He purchases this advance, increasing his Weapon Skill from 30 to 35 (30+5=35). In total Steve has paid 750 xp to increase his Weapon Skill by 10 (250+500=750).

Ranks

Your Rank is a general measure of your experience and capabilities. It represents the progression of your character's abilities as they try to prove themselves worthy of Inquisitorial status. Your Rank is determined by the total amount of Experience Points your character has spent. The Advancement Scheme for each Rank has a combination of Skills and Talents, which you may purchase with xp.

You may buy Advances from any Rank Advancement Scheme that you currently or have previously held.

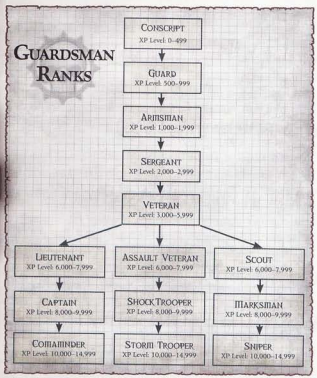
As your Rank rises, you have access to more and more Advancement Schemes, and therefore have more options on how to customise your character.

As with Characteristic Advances, it is easy to gain Ranks to start with, and becomes progressively harder throughout the life of your character.

Each Career Path has unique Ranks. As your character progresses in power, you may sometimes find yourself eligible for two or more Ranks. When this occurs, you must make a choice between the Ranks available to you.

Some of the greater Ranks have prerequisites attached to them. These are things like Skills, Characteristic levels, or previous Ranks that you must possess before you can choose a particular Rank.

Career Rank tables look like this:



Gaining Ranks

Characters automatically gain Ranks by spending xp. Once a character's total spent xp reaches the necessary amount, the character's Rank increases. Note, Rank increases always occur after an Advance has been taken.

Example

Steve's Guardsman character has spent 2,800 xp in total on advances. Steve decides to spend a further 500 xp to increase one of his Characteristics. Steve gains permission from his GM to take the advance, then crosses 500 xp off his current xp score. He then notes down the name of the advance, and alters his Characteristic profile. Finally, he adds the 500 xp he has spent to his total xp score. Steve has now spent 3,300 xp (2,800+500=3,300). Looking at the Guardsman Ranks, he sees he has now spent enough xp to earn a new Rank, Veteran. He removes his old Rank and notes "Veteran" on the Rank section of his Character Sheet.

Skill and Talent Advances

A Skill Advance teaches you a new Skill or improves an existing Skill to make it more effective. A Talent Advance gives you a knack or aptitude for something.

Depending on your career choice, some Skills and Talents are easier to learn than others. A scholarly Adept, for example, would have to spend far fewer Experience Points to learn Logic than a Guardsman would. The wide range of Skills and Talents allows you to customise your character as you would wish.

Prerequisites

If you take a look at the listed Advances for each Rank, you'll notice some require you to have a Talent or a Characteristic at a particular rating. You must meet all the listed prerequisites before purchasing the Advance. If you are ever in doubt about a prerequisite, ask your GM, who can overrule or change prerequisites as they wish.

Buying an Advance

Buying an Advance is simple. Once you have had a good look at your Advance schemes, and chosen what you want to buy, follow these steps:

1) Check with the GM to make sure the Advance you'd like is available (the GM may restrict certain Skills and Talents to meet the needs of the campaign, or he might offer a better option).

2) Deduct the Advance's cost from your current pool of Experience Points.

3) Write down the name of the Advance on the Advances section of your Character Sheet.

4) Apply any changes to Characteristics, Skills, Talents or Traits that the Advance brings.

5) Finally, add the spent xp to your total xp.

As you undertake adventures, you will earn more Experience Points as a reward for good roleplaying, completing missions and for coming up with clever ideas. These rewards allow you to buy further Advances for your character.

Deciding How to Advance Your Character

Figuring out which Advances you should take can be a little daunting at first. Whilst Characteristic Advances are expensive, they do have wide-ranging effects on your character's ability. Meanwhile, Skills and Talents are relatively cheap and do open a lot of new opportunities. You will need to decide if you want to focus on improving your core abilities, concentrate on gaining Skills and Talents or forge a compromise between the two tactics.

You can expect to gain around 200 xp with each session of play, provided you are reasonably successful and roleplay well. When planning your Advances you might find it handy to use this as a measure of how long it will take you to gain a certain improvement. For example, a Simple +5 Weapon Skill Advancement which costs 250 xp will take roughly two sessions to gain. Meanwhile, a new Talent which costs 100 xp could be gained after only a single session of play. If you get stuck, or simply aren't sure which would be a better Advance for your character, ask your GM to help you out.

Elite Advances

Your character is broadly described by their Career Path, however the Advancements listed are not the sum total of all that your character could learn. Sometimes your character will be exposed to certain Skills or Talents during play. For example you might spend an adventure living amongst the dialect-jabbering Yakzi nomad tribe, or riding strange xeno beasts. If you think that you have a good reason for learning a Skill or Talent not listed on your Advancement Scheme you can request an Elite Advance from your GM. To make a request you will need the following:

• Logical justification for the Elite Advance—e.g. "I've spent 3 months with the tribe, so it makes sense I would pick up the Speak Language (Yakzi Tribe Dialect) skill."

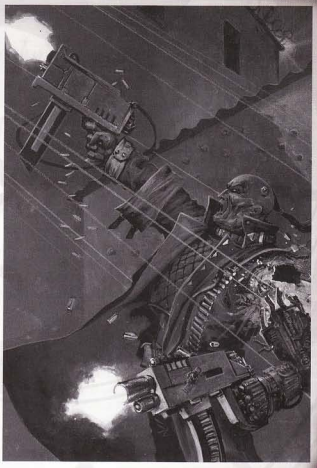
• In-character explanation for how you gained the Advance—e.g. "I was taught by one of the cauldron-maidens who took a shine to me".

• An offer of how many experience points you are willing to pay to gain the Advance—e.g. "I'll happily pay 200 xp to learn Speak Language (Yakzi Tribe Dialect) skill".

Your GM may decide not to grant you the Elite Advance, or request a higher Experience Point cost than you have suggested. In these cases, gracious acceptance of the GM's decree is the best course. Your GM may also rule that you need to pass a series of tests in order to successfully learn the requested Skill or Talent. This will usually tie into your explanation for how you gained the Advance; e.g. "Make a Charm Test to convince the Yakzi cauldron-maiden that you are worth teaching". The quest for an Elite Advance can be an adventure in and of itself.

Sometimes your GM will offer you an opportunity to take an Elite Advance as part of the reward for completing an adventure. For example, you may have encountered a powerful psyker during your investigations. Having defeated the witch, your GM might offer you the chance to purchase Forbidden Lore (Warp). Sometimes these Elite Advances will come with additional side effects, such as Corruption or Insanity points. Think carefully before taking up such an offer!

Occasionally, you can gain Elite Advances as the consequence of specific acts, such as making a pact with Daemonic forces. See **Chapter VIII: The Game Master** for more information on Elite Advances and Dark Pacts.



Creating Your Own Career Paths

Whilst the Career Paths detailed here are purposely broad in scope, once you've had some experience adventuring within the 41st Millennium, you might find it fun to develop something a little more specific. Perhaps you feel like making up an alien race, or maybe you've always wanted to be a Grox Herder. If this is the case, work closely with your GM to develop an Advance scheme that is balanced and sensible. Remember to make sure that your new career fits in with the other members of your group—after all, if Acolytes cannot work smoothly together, mutants, aliens, and the forces of darkness will be only too happy to exploit your weaknesses.

Completing all the Ranks

Through a combination of skill, caution and sheer luck, your character may survive the manifold horrors of the 41st Millennium long enough to progress to the top Rank within their career. In game terms, the character who has attained the top Rank of their career is considered to have completed their Career Path. The character has now passed beyond the scope of Dark Heresy, and into the realms of other *Warhammer 40,000* roleplaying games.

It might be that such a character is invited to become an Interrogator (after suitable purifying rituals of course) or that they might find a way to escape their master altogether. Perhaps they will be given a role within the Imperium as a planetary governor, Administratum official or Ecclesiarchy pontiff. Some might simply retire, whilst others might choose to plunder the farflung stars with a Rogue Trader crew. Some might become nothing more than whispered legend and infamy. There are many options, only limited by your imagination.

Adept

"It's simple really. If we place the signifier here in this position, the rest of the cipher solves itself."
— Scholar Gabel Troken, Librarium Centris, Scintilla.

The Administratum is a vast, monolithic organisation and the largest, most powerful of all the divisions that make up the Adeptus Terra. It is said the Adeptus Terra is the cogs and gears that drive the Imperium, and the Administratum is the grease and oil that smooths and coats the machinery. Without the Administratum, the gears of the Adeptus Terra would grind to a halt and the Imperium would fail.

Billions staff the Administratum, the majority of which are adepts of varying grades and specialties. Many are in hereditary positions, the titles passed down from generation to generation. Such is the immense size of the Administratum, it has been known for whole departments to become lost in a sea of complex bureaucracy only to resurface centuries later. Entire divisions have been founded and dogmatically continue to exist, even after their original intent has long since expired.

Most adepts labouring within the gargantuan vaults, forgotten archive halls or sitting at ancient, parchment-reading, logic engines are considered to be learned by Imperial standards. They range from studious librarians, who have spent their entire lives within the dusty confines of manuscript-filled archives, to younger, knowledge-hungry scholars ambitious to climb the multitudinous ranks of the Administratum.

Inquisitors and their agents frequently have need of such academics, archivists, curators, scribes, logisters, translators, and all manner of specialists in lore. Adepts become involved with an Inquisitor in many ways: some may already be in service within the Inquisition, others may unwittingly cross paths during an Inquisitor's investigation, but the majority of adepts are seconded from the Administratum. For an ageing scholar, used to a rigid and dogmatic routine, entering the employ of an Inquisitor is an intimidating experience. Some are reluctant, but see it as an important duty that must be fulfilled. Others can become resentful, making it clear they are only in service out of fear and loss of status rather than any idealist sense of saving the Imperium. Not all react negatively: Some, often younger, adepts see it as an opportunity, a rare chance to leave the overbearing structures of the Administratum and quench their thirst for curiosity, and study forbidden knowledge.

In the field, adepts are rarely armed with anything more than an autopistol; firepower is someone else's job. They are present to give sage tactical advice, unlock codes, confirm the existence of STC data or brief on local customs and rituals. Their role may not be in the forefront of a firefight but it is no less pivotal or dangerous. Whilst other Acolytes can secure a heavily defended data-crypt with firepower and psychic force, someone needs to download and decipher the data from the terminal in the midst of the combat.

Adepts may be thought of as meek when compared to other Acolytes, but they have access to one of the most powerful weapons in the 41st Millennium—knowledge.

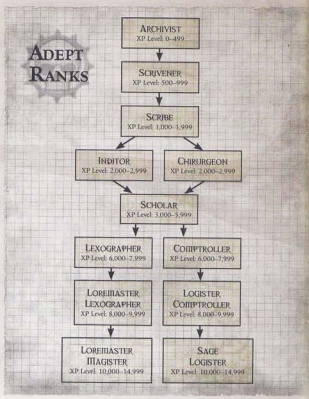


Table 2-2: Adept Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	500	750	1,000	2,500
Ballistic Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Strength	500	750	1,000	2,500
Toughness	500	750	1,000	2,500
Agility	250	500	750	1,000
Intelligence	100	250	500	500
Perception	100	250	500	750
Willpower	100	250	500	750
Fellowship	250	500	750	1,000

Archivist Advances

"Throne blind you boy, fetch those books before I use your hide for a binding!"

Archivists keep manuscripts and tend the needs of Sages, scurrying between tottering bookshelves and datacrypts, ever with an eye to escaping their servitude.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Drive (Hover Vehicle)	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	S	—
Trade (Cook)	100	S	—
Trade (Valet)	100	S	—
Resistance (Cold)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Sprint	100	T	—
Unremarkable	100	T	—
Swim	200	S	—
Melee Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	200	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—

Scrivener Advances

"Dharkins, your illuminations are positively Rabelian. You'll do well; just not here."

Scriveners have wormed their way into a position of trust, whence they may actually deal with scrolls, books and data-slates directly. Of course, they are the primary oppressors of Archivists, as is only right and proper.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness	100	S	—
Common Lore (Administratum)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperium) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium)
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Drive (Hover Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Hover Vehicle)
Forbidden Lore (Cults)	100	S	—
Inquiry	100	S	—
Literacy +10	100	S	Literacy
Logic	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft)
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend)
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Trade (Artist)	100	S	—
Trade (Cartographer)	100	S	—
Trade (Copyist)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Peer (Academics)	100	T	Fel 30
Blather	200	S	—
Peer (Administratum)	200	T	Fel 30

Scribe Advances

"A scribe is always useful. Knowledge can make the difference between life and death, particularly if you send the scribe in first…"

Scribes are vessels of knowledge, skilled in the byzantine art of extracting information from all manner of sources. Many secretly fear they will never rise further within the ranks of the Administratum, hence they are naturally keen to take risks to get ahead.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Common Lore (Administratum) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Administratum)
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperium) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium) +10
Common Lore (Tech)	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10
Drive (Hover Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Hover Vehicle) +10
Forbidden Lore (Cults) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Cults)
Forbidden Lore (Heresy)	100	S	—
Literacy +20	100	S	Literacy +10
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +20	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10
Scholastic Lore (Occult)	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Administratum)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Flagellant	100	T	—
Resistance (Poisons)	100	T	—
Blather +10	200	S	Blather
Electro Graft Use	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Ambidextrous	300	T	Ag 30

Inditor Advances

"If you've a mind to dig to the bottom of something, an inditor is invaluable. If they don't know it, they can find it out for you. If they can't find it… well, you're probably not meant to know it anyway."

Inditors are trusted members of the Administratum, having been initiated into some of its deeper secrets. Even the lore of other Adepta is not beyond their scrutinising gaze.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Common Lore (Tech) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Tech)
Common Lore (Machine Cult)	100	S	—
Evaluate	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	100	S	—
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Logic +10	100	S	Logic
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Numerology)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Occult) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Occult)
Secret Tongue (Administratum) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Administratum)
Tech-Use	100	S	—
Total Recall	100	T	Int 30
Swift Attack	100	T	WS 35
Barter	200	S	—
Blather +20	200	S	Blather +10
Navigation (Stellar)	200	S	—
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	200	T	—
Arms Master	200	T	BS 30 Basic Weapon Training (any two)
Marksman	300	T	BS 35

Chirurgeon Advances

"Them chirurgeons issa odd bunch. Watch it if they offers ta cut ya fer free. Iss the way they looks at yer as they're rummagin' in yer guts. Kinda like yera cross 'tween an esperiment anna pork lunch."

Chirurgeons investigate the secrets of the human form, studying the cryptic chambers of the heart, the enigmas of flesh and bone, and, of course, the moist grey mysteries of the brain.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Deceive	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	100	S	—
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Medicae	100	S	—
Medicae +10	100	S	Medicae
Master Chirurgeon	100	T	Medicae +10
Talented (Blather)	100	T	Blather
Talented (Medicae)	100	T	Medicae
Peer (the Insane)	100	T	Fel 30
Carouse	200	S	—
Carouse +10	200	S	Carouse
Decadence	200	T	T 30
Heightened Senses (Sight)	200	T	—
Heightened Senses (Smell)	200	T	—
Heightened Senses (Touch)	200	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	200	T	—
Charm	300	S	—
Sleight of Hand	300	S	—

Scholar Advances

"Scholar Dbarkins passes—bow your head! He cured the Seeping Cough and the Dread-Pox. Whisper has it he advises the hive council. 'Twernt for him, Throne knows where we'd be!"

A Scholar is in full bloom of his powers, wise, learned and skilled in getting results from the almighty machine that is the Administratum. Should they avoid peevish theoretical debate and infighting, Scholars become respected and mighty indeed.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Administratum) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Administratum) +10
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)
Common Lore (Tech) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Tech) +10
Deceive	100	S	—
Dodge	100	S	—
Drive (Walker)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy)
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)
Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants)
Scholastic Lore (Astromancy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Scrutiny	100	S	—
Armour of Contempt	100	T	WP 40
Binary Chatter	100	T	—
Navigation (Stellar) +10	200	S	Navigation (Stellar)
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Die Hard	200	T	WP 40
Pistol Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Step Aside	200	T	Ag 40, Dodge

Lexographer Advances

"Lexographers is so smart, dey get ta make up words an' no one says they's inedukated."

All the knowledge of the Imperium is hidden within the spidery High Gothic script of temples, shrines and archives. The Lexographer is the guardian and keeper of these sacred words.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore (Cults) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Cults) +10
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +10
Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +20	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic) +10
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Paranoia	100	T	—
Blind Fighting	200	T	Per 30
Pistol Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Quick Draw	200	T	—
Lip Reading	300	S	—

Loremaster Advances

"When you understand the secrets of the universe, you will understand yourself."

Loremasters have reached such a level of knowledge of the galaxy that they have now turned their attentions inward, looking into the very mysteries of the human soul.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Scholastic Lore (Occult) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Occult)
Lip Reading +10	200	S	Lip Reading
Minor Psychic Power‡	200	T	—
Peer (Astropaths)	200	T	Fel 30
Rapid Reload	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Psyniscience	300	S	Psy Rating 1
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol)	300	T	—
Psy Rating 1	300	T	—
Unshakeable Faith	300	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	400	T	—

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Comptroller Advances

"Stop staring, lad. It's not for the likes of archivists like you to look upon Comptrollers. Of course, he has an extra brain. You would too, if you had to work like that."

Comptrollers direct the ebb and flow of information that passes through the Administratum, plucking seemingly unconnected facts from the sea of know-ledge to construct masterful solutions and cunning plans of attack.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command	100	S	—
Common Lore (Machine Cult)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Machine Cult) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Machine Cult)
Deceive +10	100	S	Deceive
Evaluate	100	S	—
Evaluate +10	100	S	Evaluate
Inquiry +20	100	S	Inquiry +10
Scholastic Lore (Astromancy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Astromancy)
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Numerology)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Numerology) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Numerology)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Search	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Administratum) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Administratum)
Secret Tongue (Administratum) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Administratum) +10
Chem Geld	100	T	—
Disturbing Voice	100	T	—
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	100	T	—
Interrogation	200	S	—
Tech-Use	200	S	—
Tech-Use +10	200	S	Tech-Use
Blind Fighting	200	T	Per 30
Deadeye Shot	200	T	BS 30
Jaded	300	T	WP 30

Logister Advances

"The cogitation of Logister Veritas is that the city be razed. This solves both the crime and industry problems most elegantly. What? No, I'm afraid his plan is already in action. You did say you wanted a swift solution…"

Logisters apply their phenomenal powers of reasoning and logic to the toughest of problems, slicing through quandaries with the keen scalpel of their intellect.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +10
Logic +10	100	S	Logic
Logic +20	100	S	Logic +10
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Search +10	100	S	Search
Air of Authority	100	T	Fel 30
Orthoproxy	100	T	—
Peer (Government)	100	T	Fel 30
Pistol Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Talented (Logic)	100	T	Logic
Command +10	200	S	Command
Interrogation +10	200	S	Interrogation
Tech-Use +20	200	S	Tech-Use +10
Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)	300	S	Tech-Use +20
Nerves of Steel	300	T	—
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	300	T	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	300	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Magister Advances

"If there's one thing worse than a psyker, it's a psyker that knows everything."

Magisters possess an implicit understanding of the nature of the galaxy, and man's place within it. Through the study of this forbidden knowledge they unlock hidden powers.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Catfall	100	T	Ag 30
Interrogation	200	S	—
Psyniscience +10	200	S	Psyniscience
Tech-Use +10	200	S	Tech-Use
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Rifle)	200	T	—
Minor Psychic Power‡	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Psy Rating 2	300	T	Psy Rating 1
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	400	T	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	400	T	—
Psy Rating 3	500	T	Psy Rating 2

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Sage Advances

"They say even the mysteries of the Tyrant Star are not beyond the mind of a sage."

Few secrets remain hidden from the mind of a sage.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +20
Forbidden Lore (Cults) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Cults) +10
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +10
Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10
Mental Fortress	100	T	WP 50, Strong Minded
Peer (Nobility)	100	T	Fel 30
Command +20	200	S	Command +10
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	200	T	—
Quick Draw	200	T	—
Rapid Reload	200	T	—
Talented (Command)	200	T	Command
Concealment	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Archeotech) +10	300	S	Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	300	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution	300	T	—
Unnatural Intelligence	500	—	—

Arbitrator

"He demands? The demands of the law come first, even in Hive Tarsus."

—Regulator Hanz Rikennan, IV[th] Precinct, Hive Tarsus.

Throughout the millions of worlds of the Imperium, crime is rife. Not just the petty crimes of individuals for personal gain, but organised crime on a scale never even considered in humanity's past. Entire sub-sectors and planets have been in the thrall of illegal cartels and criminal organisations. There are even wayward planetary governors who shun the Imperium and treat the dominion as their own paltry fiefdom, claiming the planet's natural resources, labour and riches for their own.

In these dire situations it falls to the Adeptus Arbites to defend the Imperium's rights and prevent whole sub-sectors going rogue for generations, or even permanently. The Adeptus Arbites is not a galactic police force; it has little interest in petty crimes such as theft, murder or tax evasion, for these fall under the responsibility of the local planetary forces. The Adeptus Arbites is there to keep order on a far greater scale, to root out corruption, maintain the Imperial tithe and to guard against witchery.

From the Adeptus Arbites come the fearsome Arbitrators. Also known as Judges, these men and women are stoic in their duty and unquestionably loyal to the Imperium. Inquisitors often go to the Adeptes Arbites when in need of a trustworthy Acolyte, trained to think on their feet, combat-hardened and beyond reproach in their faith. Arbitrators are infamous for their prodigious stamina and zeal, and their ability to survive all manner of wounds and punishment in the quest to catch their quarry.

Arbitrators are resolute and fearless. They demand utter obedience from the citizens they come into contact with. Where civil unrest and crime threaten the stability of a world, the Arbitrators are in the field: unflinching, ordering the local enforcers, and hunting down the rabble-rousers, to restore law and order.

The Judges' methods are varied, not unlike the way Inquisitors go about their work. The means used can be different depending on their mentors, what Schola Progenium the individual attended and other such factors. However, unlike Inquisitors who have their own private agendas, all members of the Adeptes Arbites have the same goal and responsibility—to uphold the Emperor's justice.

Some Arbitrators openly investigate and make no secret who their quarry is, even if he is of noble birth or high rank. This can often lead to overt hostility between the Judge and his subject, although there is no question who off-world forces of the Imperium would side with should they be requested to attend. This is by no means the only mode of investigation; other officers of the Adeptes Arbites are quite methodical in their approach—meticulously sourcing evidence and questioning contacts and witnesses.

The relationship between the Inquisition and the Adeptes Arbites is often one of the more cordial within the Adeptus Terra. Arbitrators often see working with Inquisitors as a way of further enforcing justice. However, such arrangements have not always worked so well. It has been known for Judges to turn on the Inquisitors they have been seconded to serve if they perceive the Inquisitor to have broken sacrosanct Imperial laws. This means Inquisitors of the more Radical factions must be wary when recruiting members of the Adeptus Arbites to become their Acolytes.

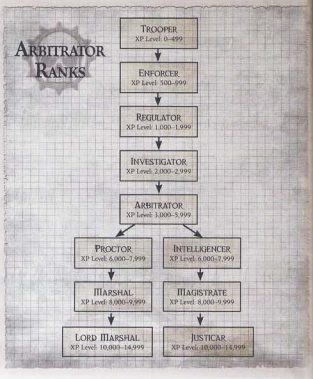


Table 2-3: Arbitrator Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Ballistic Skill	100	250	500	750
Strength	500	750	1,000	2,500
Toughness	100	250	500	500
Agility	500	750	1,000	2,500
Intelligence	100	250	500	750
Perception	250	500	750	1,000
Willpower	250	500	750	1,000
Fellowship	250	500	750	1,000

Trooper Advances

"Call yourself an arbitrator? You're not fit to wear the uniform."

A Trooper is drilled in combat and his duties to the Imperium: he is stout of heart and eager to enforce the Emperor's law.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness	100	S	—
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Drive (Hover Vehicle)	100	S	—
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Scrutiny	100	S	—
Swim	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	100	T	—
Rapid Reload	100	T	—
Sound Constitution‡	100	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Enforcer Advances

"Stand to, men, we'll break these scum on our shields and shock mauls."

An Enforcer is taught how to keep order in the most desperate situations, standing shoulder to shoulder with his fellow Arbitrators.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +10
Common Lore (Underworld)	100	S	—
Intimidate	100	S	—
Security	100	S	—
Tracking	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	100	T	—
Disarm	100	T	Ag 30
Double Team	100	T	—
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Light Sleeper	100	T	Per 30
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	100	T	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	100	T	Fel 30
Resistance (Cold)	100	T	—
Resistance (Heat)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Takedown	100	T	—
Barter	200	S	—
Ciphers (Acolyte)	200	S	—
Tech-Use	200	S	—

Regulator Advances

"I want you to hunt them down like the dogs they are."

Regulators take the law to the underworld, holding their own against any who challenge the Emperor's law.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Underworld)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperium)	100	S	—
Dodge	100	S	—
Interrogation	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	100	S	—
Search	100	S	—
Die Hard	100	T	WP 40
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Climb	200	S	—
Silent Move	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (SP)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Sprint	200	T	—
Street Fighting	200	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	200	T	BS 35, Ag 35
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	200	T	WS 35, Ag 35
Survival	300	S	—
Crushing Blow	300	T	S 40

Investigator Advances

"This is a tough one. Hit the hab-block, find out what people know."

Investigators learn the arts of inquiry, using contacts, charm and dirty tactics to uncover the truth.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Charm	100	S	—
Common Lore (Administratum)	100	S	—
Deceive	100	S	—
Inquiry +20	100	S	Inquiry +10
Search +10	100	S	Search
Security +10	100	S	Security
Tracking +10	100	S	Tracking
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Decadence	100	T	T 30
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Heightened Senses (Hearing)	100	T	—
Heightened Senses (Sight)	100	T	—
Iron Jaw	100	T	T 40
Peer (Underworld)	100	T	Fel 30
Pistol Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Rapid Reaction	100	T	Ag 40
Blather	200	S	—
Carouse	200	S	—
Evaluate	200	S	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Tech-Use +10	300	S	Tech-Use

Arbitrator Advances

"Took sixteen slugs to the gut, but he still got his man. Now, there's a real arbitrator for you…"

Arbitrators are guardians of order and the rule of law within the Imperium. Implacable, unrelenting, and nigh-on impossible to kill; they are the Emperor's justice, manifest.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Charm +10	100	S	Charm
Climb +10	100	S	Climb
Concealment	100	S	—
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge
Interrogation +10	100	S	Interrogation
Intimidation +10	100	S	Intimidation
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Scrutiny +10	100	S	Scrutiny
Secret Tongue (Gutter)	100	S	—
Ambidextrous	100	T	Ag 30
Hardy	100	T	T 40
Nerves of Steel	100	T	—
Peer (Government)	100	T	Fel 30
Sure Strike	100	T	WS 30
Step Aside	100	T	Ag 40, Dodge
True Grit	100	T	T 40
Forbidden Lore (Cults)	200	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants)	200	S	—
Logic	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Occult)	200	S	—
Shadowing	200	S	—
Silent Move +10	200	S	Silent Move
Sleight of Hand	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Combat Master	200	T	WS 30
Deadeye Shot	200	T	BS 30
Heavy Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution‡	200	T	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	300	T	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Webber)	300	T	—
Swift Attack	300	T	WS 35

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Intelligencer Advances

"There's low cunning, then there's Intelligencers. Saints help the scum if those boys are on the trail…"

Intelligencers are spymasters, tacticians and forensic experts. Their powerful intellect is matched only by their dedication to the Imperium.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Administratum) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Administratum)
Interrogation +20	100	S	Interrogation +10
Search +20	100	S	Search +10
Security +20	100	S	Security +10
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Tracking +20	100	S	Tracking +10
Resistance (Insanity)	100	T	—
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Total Recall	100	T	Int 30
Disguise	200	S	—
Lip Reading	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)	200	S	—
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Blademaster	200	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any one)
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Talented (Logic)	200	T	Logic
Talented (Shadowing)	200	T	Shadowing
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	300	S	—
Secret Tongue (Administratum)	300	S	Common Lore (Administratum), Peer (Government)
Counter Attack	300	T	WS 40
Crippling Strike	300	T	WS 50
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	300	T	—

Magistrate Advances

"Every crime has its price, and the magistrate collects that debt."

Magistrates rule upon intricate cases of heresy and sedition. By dispensing death, they keep the soul of the Imperium alive.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Charm +20	100	S	Charm +10
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Literacy	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Scholastic Lore (Occult) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Occult)
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)	100	S	—
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Blind Fighting	100	T	Per 30
Lightning Reflexes	100	T	—
Precise Blow	100	T	WS 40, Sure Strike
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Command	200	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Heresy)	200	S	—
Air of Authority	200	T	Fel 30
Arms Master	200	T	BS 30, Basic Weapon Training (any two)
Sound Constitution†	200	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Psykers)	300	S	—
Furious Assault	300	T	WS 35

†You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.

Justicar Advances

"Where Justicar tread, nobles tremble."

The Justicar brings the light of the Emperor's judgement to decadent nobles, corrupt officials and worlds brought low by dark worship.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Literacy +20	100	S	Literacy +10
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Forbidden Lore (Cults) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Cults)
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy)
Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants)
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers)
Scrutiny +20	200	S	Scrutiny +10
Basic Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Dual Shot	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Dual Strike	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Hip Shooting	200	T	BS 40, Ag 40
Independent Targeting	200	T	BS 40
Iron Discipline	200	T	WP 30, Command
Peer (Nobility)	200	T	Fel 30
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Talented (Command)	200	T	Command
Wall of Steel	200	T	Ag 35
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	300	S	—
Crack Shot	300	T	BS 40
Lightning Attack	300	T	Swift Attack
Sound Constitution†	300	T	—

†You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.

Proctor Advances

"Open fire!"

Proctors lead Adeptes Arbites riot squads and suppression forces against highly armed, and highly foolish, criminals.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Climb +20	100	S	Climb +10
Command	100	S	—
Interrogation +20	100	S	Interrogation +10
Intimidation +20	100	S	Intimidation +10
Survival +10	100	S	Survival
Tracking +20	100	S	Tracking +10
Arms Master	100	T	BS 30, Basic Weapon Training (any two)
Hip Shooting	100	T	BS 40, Ag 40
Ciphers (War Cant)	200	S	—
Secret Tongue (Military)	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Blind Fighting	200	T	Per 30
Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Las)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—
Marksman	200	T	BS 35
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Lightning Attack	300	T	Swift Attack
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Marshal Advances

"When a Marshal arrives, blood and gun smoke follow."

Marshals take the rule of law to the darkest dens of scum and depravity, dispensing justice in a bright arc of muzzle flare.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command +10	100	S	Command
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Security +20	100	S	Security +10
Bulging Biceps	100	T	S 45
Dual Shot	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Independent Targeting	100	T	BS 40
Iron Discipline	100	T	WP 30, Command
Resistance (Poisons)	100	T	—
Common Lore (War)	200	S	—
Gunslinger	200	T	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Heavy Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Peer (Military)	200	T	Fel 30
Crack Shot	300	T	BS 40
Sound Constitution†	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Lord Marshal Advances

"Such men are beyond mere mercy."

As the Imperium is mighty, so too is the Lord Marshal. His will is not blunted by the petty whims of circumstance. The cold rule of law is his only measure, and woe betide those that fall short.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command +20	100	S	Command +10
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Into the Jaws of Hell	100	T	Iron Discipline
Common Lore (Administratum) +10	200	S	Common Lore (Administratum)
Common Lore (War) +10	200	S	Common Lore (War)
Literacy +10	200	S	Literacy
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)	200	S	—
Cleanse and Purify	200	T	Basic Weapon Training (Flame)
Counter Attack	300	T	WS 40
Crippling Strike	300	T	WS 50
Dual Strike	300	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Heavy Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Mighty Shot	300	T	BS 40
Sound Constitution†	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Assassin

"When I kill, it is beautiful—an art form older than any painting or sculpture."

— Lyra Trix, Malfian Noble House Assassin.

In the Imperium assassination is a valued tool and it is used by all, from the agencies of the Adepta down to petty crime lords of the underhives—a professional killer is always in demand. Such individuals can range from freelancers, who are self-taught, to members of Assassin Orders and Guilds.

Assassins come in all shapes and guises, and it is often the person a potential target least expects that is their killer. These can range from unsubtle brutes, who will crush every bone in the target's body, to mundane-looking everymen who practise the use of potions and poisons, and are able to slip a deadly concoction into the unsuspecting target's next meal.

There are many Orders, Guilds and Death Cults that thrive in the Imperium. Though there will be an element of penitence to the Emperor, in the duties they perform the Orders are either a functioning off-shoot of some monolithic Adepta or may even have a commercial interest, so some sort funding or tithe would be required to gain their services. Unbeknownst to even the aspirants that belong to these semi-legal organisations and cults most, if not all, are fronts for the Assassin Temples that form the highly secretive Officio Assassinorum, for this is where the Temple Masters recruit and induct the most promising individuals.

The Assassins of such Orders are highly trained killers capable of feats far and above that of mere humans. Whether a Death Cultist or member of an Assassin Order, they are experts in exotic weaponry but they also have intimate knowledge of other lethal crafts, such as the use of poisons and the creation of fatal booby traps. The methods, demeanour and personality of an Assassin can vary as much as there are ways to kill, though this will be heavily influenced by the teachings and training, be it from a Death Cult or Order.

If an Assassin survives long enough into his career and his superiors deem him worthy, he will be unknowingly tested. The trials are likely extremely lethal, and so those who are found lacking are unlikely to survive. The few who do successfully make it through the trials become initiates in one of the Assassin Temples, although the Assassin is unaware of this even at this stage, such is the secrecy surrounding the Officio Assassinorum.

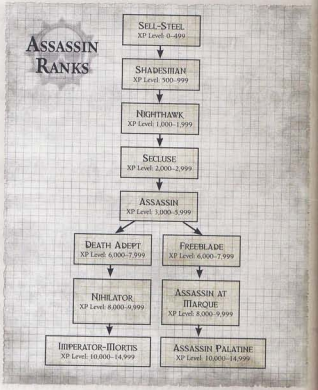


Table 2-4: Assassin Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	100	250	500	750
Ballistic Skill	100	250	500	750
Strength	500	750	1,000	2,500
Toughness	250	500	750	1,000
Agility	100	250	500	500
Intelligence	250	500	750	1,000
Perception	250	500	750	1,000
Willpower	250	500	750	1,000
Fellowship	500	750	1,000	2,500

Sell-Steel Advances

"Two in the head makes sure they're dead."

The Imperium is rife with killers, men and women who promise murder for a fee. Some even have the skills to deliver.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Climb	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Inquiry	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft)	100	S	—
Silent Move	100	S	—
Swim	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Catfall	100	T	Ag 30
Heightened Senses (Sight)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution†	100	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Literacy	200	S	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Shadesman Advances

"Killed 'em all with a single round: no waste, no fuss, then melted back into the shadows like he was never there."

Shadesmen are talented murderers whose skills extend beyond those of mere killers. They seek to turn their killing into an art form, honing their bloodletting skills and turning their minds to a passionless pursuit of death.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Acrobatics	100	S	—
Ciphers (Acolyte)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Underworld)	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Drive (Hover Vehicle)	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface)	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft)
Security	100	S	—
Shadowing	100	S	—
Swim +10	100	S	Swim
Tracking	100	S	—
Heightened Senses (Hearing)	100	T	—
Berserk Charge	100	T	—
Furious Assault	100	T	WS 35
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Speak Language (Low Gothic) +10	200	S	Speak Language (Low Gothic)
Wrangling	200	S	—
Sprint	200	T	—
Sure Strike	200	T	WS 30

Nighthawk Advances

"Never seen the sun, nor mercy neither. Figure a murderer like her ain't got much need for either."

Many cultures fear the night, and these killers are just one of the reasons why. Striking from darkness, with maximum effect, the Nighthawk leaves behind not only death, but fear also.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Chem-Use	100	S	—
Ciphers (War Cant)	100	S	—
Climb +10	100	S	Climb
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Underworld) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Underworld)
Common Lore (War)	100	S	—
Concealment	100	S	—
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +20	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10
Secret Tongue (Acolyte)	100	S	—
Silent Move +10	100	S	Silent Move
Swim +20	100	S	Swim +10
Crack Shot	100	T	BS 40
Heightened Senses (Smell)	100	T	—
Jaded	100	T	WP 30
Pistol Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Rapid Reload	100	T	—
Sleight of Hand	200	S	—
Survival	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (SP)	200	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	200	T	—
Mighty Shot	200	T	BS 40
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Swift Attack	200	T	WS 35
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	200	T	BS 35, Ag 35
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	200	T	WS 35, Ag 35

Secluse Advances

"We didn't even know he was there until the screams started, of course by then it was far too late…"

Accustomed to working alone, the Secluse is skilled at infiltration and stealth, able to go where others can't and willing to do what others won't.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Acrobatics +10	100	S	Acrobatics
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Chem-Use +10	100	S	Chem-Use
Ciphers (War Cant) +10	100	S	Ciphers (War Cant)
Common Lore (Underworld) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Underworld) +10
Drive (Hover Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Hover Vehicle)
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Scrutiny	100	S	—
Search	100	S	—
Security +10	100	S	Security
Tracking +10	100	S	Tracking
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Heightened Senses (Taste)	100	T	—
Lightning Reflexes	100	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Quick Draw	100	T	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	200	S	—
Lip Reading	200	S	—
Speak Language (High Gothic)	200	S	—
Tech-Use	200	S	—
Deadeye Shot	200	T	BS 30
Dual Shot	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol)	200	T	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Hip Shooting	200	T	BS 40, Ag 40
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Shock)	200	T	—

Assassin Advances

"I think Lord Varcus needs to be reminded of his place; perhaps it is time he was introduced to our mutual friend."

Assassination is a constant throughout the Imperium and an accepted political tool on countless worlds. The absolute rule of many planetary governors is often enforced at the tip of an assassin's blade.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Contortionist	100	S	—
Disguise	100	S	—
Dodge +20	100	S	Dodge +10
Inquiry +20	100	S	Inquiry +10
Interrogation	100	S	—
Intimidate	100	S	—
Search +10	100	S	Search
Ciphers (Acolyte) +10	100	S	Ciphers (Acolyte)
Security +20	100	S	Security +10
Shadowing +10	100	S	Shadowing
Tracking +20	100	S	Tracking +10
Heightened Senses (Touch)	100	T	—
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Rapid Reaction	100	T	Ag 40
Chem-Use +20	200	S	Chem-Use +10
Ciphers (Underworld)	200	S	—
Medicae	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)	200	S	—
Tech-Use +10	200	S	Tech-Use
Wrangling +10	200	S	Wrangling
Lightning Attack	200	T	Swift Attack
Marksman	200	T	BS 35
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Chain)	200	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Blademaster	200	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive)
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Rifle)	200	T	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Webber)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sharpshooter	200	T	BS 40, Deadeye Shot

Death Adept Advances

"Your screams are as music, and your blood is as wine to me."

The Death Adept pursues killing as an art form, training themselves into a perfection of martial grace and death. Many Death Adepts no longer kill for money or on the whim of their masters, but rather to indulge in the purity of death itself.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (War Cant) +20	100	S	Ciphers (War Cant) +10
Climb +20	100	S	Climb +10
Concealment +10	100	S	Concealment
Contortionist +10	100	S	Contortionist
Drive (Walker)	100	S	—
Intimidate +10	100	S	Intimidate
Silent Move +20	100	S	Silent Move +10
Survival +10	100	S	Survival
Ambidextrous	100	T	Ag 30
Assassin Strike	100	T	Ag 40, Acrobatics
Double Team	100	T	—
Blind Fighting	200	T	Per 30
Counter Attack	200	T	WS 40
Dual Strike	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Frenzy	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Las)	200	T	—
Nerves of Steel	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Step Aside	200	T	Ag 40, Dodge

Freeblade Advances

"I thought it was Ferstin coming to relieve us, at least until he shot Jyanus in the face. Turned out Ferstin had been dead for days."

A Freeblade is an infiltrator, skilled in disguise and deception. His tactics include confusing his enemies and leaving them jumping at shadows while he closes in for the kill.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Disguise +10	100	S	Disguise
Light Sleeper	100	T	Per 30
Resistance (Poisons)	100	T	—
Unremarkable	100	T	—
Blather	200	S	—
Charm	200	S	—
Deceive	200	S	—
Demolition	200	S	—
Scrutiny +10	200	S	Scrutiny
Secret Tongue (Acolyte) +10	200	S	Secret Tongue (Acolyte)
Talented (Charm)	200	T	Charm
Talented (Inquiry)	200	T	Inquiry
Talented (Shadowing)	200	T	Shadowing
Gamble	300	S	—
Ciphers (Secret Society)	300	S	—
Peer (Underworld)	300	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Nihilator Advances

"He killed and killed and killed, and all the time the bastard had that blood-soaked grin on his face."

A Nihilator takes the philosophy of the Death Adept a step further, embracing the act of murder, the almost religious moment when they wrest the life from their victims. Only the extinguishing of another's life fills the Nihilator with purpose, stirring his spirit and touching his soul.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Contortionist +20	100	S	Contortionist +10
Shadowing +20	100	S	Shadowing +10
Survival +20	100	S	Survival +10
Pilot (Military Craft)	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft)
Disarm	100	T	Ag 30
Combat Master	200	T	WS 30
Crippling Strike	200	T	WS 50
Hard Target	200	T	Ag 40
Precise Blow	200	T	WS 40, Sure Strike
Heavy Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—

Imperator-Mortis Advances

"I am death incarnate."

The Imperator-Mortis is an embodiment of graceful slaughter, an angel of death with few peers.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Acrobatics +20	100	S	Acrobatics +10
Concealment +20	100	S	Concealment +10
Intimidate +20	100	S	Intimidate +10
Pilot (Military Craft) +10	200	S	Pilot (Military Craft)
Sleight of Hand +10	200	S	Sleight of Hand
Battle Rage	200	T	Frenzy
Deflect Shot	200	T	Ag 50
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Wall of Steel	200	T	Ag 35
Arms Master	300	T	BS 30, Basic Weapon Training (any two)
Fearless	300	T	—

Assassin at Marque Advances

"Don't let her finery fool you. She looks like a delicate lady of the high house but for enough coin she'd have your heart on that dainty little fork she's holding."

Assassins at Marque move among the upper echelons of Imperial society, taking contracts and settling disputes between power groups. They work both in and out of the shadows, equally at home in the ballrooms of the high spires as they are in the hab gutters.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Search +20	100	S	Search +10
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Charm +10	200	S	Charm
Deceive +10	200	S	Deceive
Demolition +10	200	S	Demolition
Interrogation +10	200	S	Interrogation
Lip Reading +10	200	S	Lip Reading
Gunslinger	200	T	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Independent Targeting	200	T	BS 40
Talented (Chem-Use)	200	T	Chem-Use
Talented (Deceive)	200	T	Deceive
Talented (Interrogation)	200	T	Interrogation
Command	300	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	300	S	—
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Assassin Palatine Advances

"He is the master, the lord, the very god of assassins. When he says kill, you'd damn well better."

Where there are assassins, so too is there the Assassin Palatine. Often in control of vast guilds of killers, Assassins Palatine are both charismatic leaders and cold-blooded killers.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Disguise +20	100	S	Disguise +10
Blather +10	200	S	Blather
Carouse	200	S	—
Deceive +10	200	S	Deceive
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	200	S	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Talented (Blather)	200	T	Blather
Talented (Disguise)	200	T	Disguise
Talented (Scrutiny)	200	T	Scrutiny
Forbidden Lore (Cults)	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Psykers)	300	S	—
Logic	300	S	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	300	T	—
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	300	T	—
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Cleric

"By the Saints and the Sigillite himself? If you don't move, I'll take this hammer to your head!"

— Preacher Silon Constantine, Fenksworld.

The Adeptus Ministorum, or Ecclesiarchy, tends to the religious needs of the Imperium. It is completely separate from the Adeptus Terra, concerned with looking after mankind's spiritual needs rather than maintaining a galaxy-spanning empire. Nevertheless, the Ecclesiarchy is a vast and powerful institution comprising of millions of clergymen and hundreds of thousands of dioceses spread across the far reaches of Imperial space. In the past this has led the Ecclesiarchy into abuses of power and outright civil war, such as the Age of Apostasy. Yet the Ministorum endures, guiding humanity in its superstitious and dogmatic worship of the Emperor.

At the forefront of this vast church are the clerics, preachers, confessors and missionaries. Unlike the cardinals and pontifex that scurry around the ancient corridors of the great cathedrals of Ancient Terra and Ophelia IV, the spiritual homes of the Ecclesiarchy, the clerics and other such clergy live and work amongst the population. It is here that they preach the word, spread the faith and shepherd the human race, for if they were negligent in such duties Chaos would take hold.

Clerics are fiery individuals, who lead from the front. They are charismatic men and great orators, able to incite and inspire common folk with their speeches, commanding loyalty, respect and wonder in the Emperor and His ordained servants. On many occasions the Imperium has used such men to rouse populations to action at a critical moment of a foul xenos invasion or to flush out a deep-rooted Chaos cult.

A Cleric has many skills, he is an orator, can hold his own in combat and is wise. However, such a broad base of skills means that they rarely specialise. Still, there are those within the Ministorum that follow a path long after others have moved on to learn a new lesson. This breeds such diverse clergy from overly suspicious zealots, who see heresy around every corner and stir up entire populations to burn innocents on a burning pyre, to those who will steep themselves in ancient lore, spending years in great dusty catacombs studying ageing scrolls on pointless intricacies of ceremonies and rituals.

Despite many attempts by numerous Ecclesiarchs, the Ministorium has gained many disparate groups and ideals. Although all have the common theme of worshiping Him-On-Earth, it is in the details of how to pursue that faith where such disagreements and inconsistencies arise. Over the years, this has spawned numerous different orders within the Ecclesiarchy; the majority of clerics belong to one of the different orders and this has a profound effect on how the clergyman performs his duties and preaches to the masses. Although never acknowledged publicly, it has been rumoured that occasionally these orders have gone to war with each other, though open bloodshed is rare.

Inquisitors find Clerics useful Acolytes as their abilities to interact with, and influence, the local population have proved valuable on many occasions. From a Cleric's point of view his reasons for shunning the duties of the Ministorum and becoming an agent of the Inquisition can be manifold. Some see it as a form of penance; others view Inquisitors with awe and unthinkingly follow these most worthy of the Emperor's servants; the more zealous see service with an Inquisitor as a way of fighting heretics up close, the chance to purge the galaxy of foul deviants too much of an opportunity to ignore.

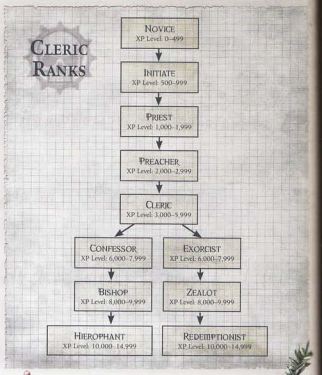


Table 2-5: Cleric Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Ballistic Skill	100	250	500	750
Strength	250	500	750	1,000
Toughness	250	500	750	1,000
Agility	250	500	750	1,000
Intelligence	250	500	750	1,000
Perception	250	500	750	1,000
Willpower	100	250	500	750
Fellowship	100	250	500	750

Novice Advances

"Do you think Saint Thrastus complained when he was strung up by his petard? No! Not one word! That's piety. Now get on with your work, you little ingrate."

Novices serve the Ecclesiarchy body and soul, looking to the examples of the Imperial saints to inspire acts of greatness. They also serve those higher than themselves in the Ecclesiarchy (which is quite a few people indeed).

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness	100	S	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Inquiry	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft)	100	S	—
Swim	100	S	—
Trade (Cook)	100	S	—
Trade (Copyist)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	100	T	—
Resistance (Cold)	100	T	—
Resistance (Heat)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution[2]	100	T	—
Performer (Singer)	200	S	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—

[2] *You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Initiate Advances

"Even the lowly initiate may become a martyr, if his will be strong enough."

Initiates are instructed to defend the Cult of the Emperor with more than simple words, so that the Emperor's light may be brought to the ignorant and truculent.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Barter	100	S	—
Climb	100	S	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)
Common Lore (Imperium)	100	S	—
Deceive	100	S	—
Literacy +10	100	S	Literacy
Performer (Singer) +10	100	S	Performer (Singer)
Swim +10	100	S	Swim
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Die Hard	100	T	WP 40
Flagellant	100	T	—
Hatred (Mutants)	100	T	—
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	100	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution[†]	100	T	—
Ciphers (Acolyte)	200	S	—
Performer (Musician)	200	S	—
Rapid Reload	200	T	—
Heightened Senses (Hearing)	200	T	—

[†] *You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Priest Advances

"Emperor's teeth! You half-witted fools wouldn't know a heretic from a hairy Grox!"

A Priest learns more of the things that seek to undo the Emperor's works, and the methods whereby such enemies may themselves be undone.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Blather	100	S	—
Charm	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed)
Common Lore (Imperium) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium)
Dodge	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Forbidden Lore (Heresy)	100	S	—
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Performer (Musician) +10	100	S	Performer (Musician)
Performer (Singer) +20	100	S	Performer (Singer) +10
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	S	—
Scrutiny	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Swim +20	100	S	Swim +10
Disarm	100	T	Ag 30
Hatred (Criminals)	100	T	—
Peer (Workers)	100	T	Fel 30
Sprint	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Tech-Use	200	S	—
Hard Target	200	T	Ag 40
Heightened Senses (Sight)	200	T	—
Quick Draw	200	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	300	T	—

Preacher Advances

"You hold within you the Emperor's own truth! Never forget we are right and they are wrong!"

A Preacher learns to lead men, to inspire and guide mankind, and to drive the word of the Ecclesiarchy home—upon the teeth of an eviscerator if need be.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Barter +10	100	S	Barter
Blather +10	100	S	Blather
Carouse	100	S	—
Command	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10
Deceive +10	100	S	Deceive
Forbidden Lore (Cults)	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft)
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend)
Scholastic Lore (Occult)	100	S	—
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Decadence	100	T	T 30
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Launcher)	100	T	—
Blademaster	100	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Hatred (Xeno—*choose one*)	100	T	—
Master Orator	100	T	Fel 30
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	100	T	—
Peer (Middle Classes)	100	T	Fel 30
Unshakeable Faith	100	T	—
Sound Constitution†	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Talented (Gamble)	200	T	Gamble
Disguise	300	S	—
Gamble	300	S	—

†You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.

Cleric Advances

"The Emperor guides with his knowledge. We are but blind men groping towards His light amidst the darkness of the universe."

The Cleric navigates the twisting corridors of power, learning the wisdom of the Ecclesiarchy in order to be a better leader. The Cleric may inspire upon the field of battle, in the halls of learning or the holdings of the Ministorum.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Charm +10	100	S	Charm
Command +10	100	S	Command
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +10
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy)
Forbidden Lore (Psykers)	100	S	—
Inquiry +20	100	S	Inquiry +10
Interrogation	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy)
Air of Authority	100	T	Fel 30
Hatred (Psykers)	100	T	—
Iron Discipline	100	T	WP 30, Command
Iron Jaw	100	T	T 40
Nerves of Steel	100	T	—
True Grit	100	T	T 40
Heavy Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (SP)	200	T	—
Navigation (Surface)	200	S	—
Scrutiny +10	200	S	Scrutiny
Tech-Use +10	200	S	Tech-Use
Crushing Blow	200	T	S 40
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	200	T	WS 35, Ag 35
Talented (Medicae)	200	T	Medicae
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Medicae	300	S	—
Secret Tongue (Gutter)	300	S	—
Swift Attack	300	T	WS 35

Confessor Advances

"We had to put more than half of them into the fire, but Father Kyrinov got his confessions in the end."

A Confessor watches his fellow man for weakness, heresy and doubt. Many take up the Hammer of Doctrine and the Blade of Piety as a sign of their dedication to humanity, and its master, the Emperor.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Barter +20	100	S	Barter +10
Common Lore (Imperium) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium) +10
Literacy +20	100	S	Literacy +10
Logic	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +20	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Peer (Administratum)	100	T	Fel 30
Rapid Reaction	100	T	Ag 40
Resistance (Insanity)	100	T	—
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Ciphers (Acolyte) +10	200	S	Ciphers (Acolyte)
Common Lore (Administratum)	200	S	—
Lip Reading	200	S	—
Navigation (Surface) +10	200	S	Navigation (Surface)
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)	200	S	—
Search	200	S	—
Silent Move	200	S	—
Tech-Use +20	200	S	Tech-Use +10
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Sure Strike	200	T	WS 30
Takedown	200	T	—
Talented (Search)	200	T	Search
Total Recall	200	T	Int 30
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	200	T	BS 35, Ag 35
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	300	T	—

Exorcist Advances

"Better the flesh should die clean than the soul become tainted."

The Exorcist learns of the forbidden, the corrupt and the Daemonic in order to better destroy that which would harm the Imperium.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers)
Interrogation +10	100	S	Interrogation
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)
Scholastic Lore (Occult) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Occult)
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Cleanse and Purify	100	T	Basic Weapon Training (Flame)
Hatred (Daemons)	100	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Orthoproxy	100	T	—
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	100	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Daemonology)	200	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants)	200	S	—
Intimidate	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Resistance (Fear)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Common Lore (War)	300	S	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher)	300	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Primitive)	300	T	—

Bishop Advances

"Heed the teachings of the God-Emperor, and your death will not be in vain."

The Bishop is a sage and charismatic leader, advisor and champion of the Ecclesiarchy. Close ties with the Administratum brings knowledge and power to the Bishop, and therefore, the Ecclesiarchy.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blather +20	100	S	Blather +10
Carouse +10	100	S	Carouse
Charm +20	100	S	Charm +10
Command +20	100	S	Command +10
Deceive +20	100	S	Deceive +10
Interrogation +10	100	S	Interrogation
Logic +10	100	S	Logic
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) +20
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Light Sleeper	100	T	Per 30
Peer (Adeptes Arbites)	100	T	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	100	T	Fel 30
Resistance (Poisons)	100	T	—
Security	200	S	—
Deadeye shot	200	T	BS 30
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sharpshooter	200	T	BS 40, Deadeye Shot
Concealment	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants)	300	S	—
Sleight of Hand	300	S	—
Secret Tongue (Administratum)	300	S	—
Ambidextrous	300	T	Ag 30
Wall of Steel	300	T	Ag 35
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Zealot Advances

"Doubt is a weakness that must be cut from the flesh."

The Zealot has learnt well the terrible lessons of the past, and knows only the deepest zeal can withstand the corrupting grip of Chaos.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10
Scholastic Lore (Occult) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Occult) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Fearless	100	T	—
Hatred (Cult—*choose one*)	100	T	—
Peer (Military)	100	T	Fel 30
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Forbidden Lore (Warp)	200	S	—
Intimidate +10	200	S	Intimidate

Zealot Advances (continued)

Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants)
Basic Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Insanely Faithful	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Talented (Chem-Use)	200	T	Chem-Use
Chem-Use	300	S	—
Ciphers (War Cant)	300	S	—
Battle Rage	300	T	Frenzy
Bulging Biceps	300	T	S 45
Crack Shot	300	T	BS 40
Frenzy	300	T	—
Lightning Attack	300	T	Swift Attack

Hierophant Advances

"Of course this is a matter for the Ecclesiarchy. Why? Because it involves the Imperium of course…"

The Hierophant whispers in the ears of governors and kings, counselling on matters spiritual, political and malefic. Wise, yet also deadly, Hierophants study the greatest enemies of mankind, to discover how they may be crushed beneath the armies of the nations they advise.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Carouse +20	100	S	Carouse +10
Common Lore (Machine Cult)	100	S	—
Interrogation +20	100	S	Interrogation +10
Logic +20	100	S	Logic +10
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +20	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic) +10
Wrangling	100	S	—
Combat Master	100	T	WS 30
Crippling Strike	100	T	WS 50
Peer (Astropaths)	100	T	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	100	T	Fel 30
Lip Reading +10	200	S	Lip Reading
Gunslinger	200	T	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Dual Shot	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Independent Targeting	200	T	BS 40
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Evaluate	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Daemonology)	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10	300	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers)
Forbidden Lore (Warp)	300	S	—
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Redemptionist Advances

"Burn the heretic!"

The Redemptionist leads the battle charge, spewing litany and destruction upon those that would seek to harm the Emperor, the Imperium and man.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Charm +20	100	S	Charm +10
Command +20	100	S	Command +10
Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore: (Daemonology)
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10
Interrogation +20	100	S	Interrogation +10
Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +20	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic) +10
Combat Master	100	T	WS 30
Independent Targeting	100	T	BS 40
Into the Jaws of Hell	100	T	Iron Discipline
Litany of Hate	100	T	Hatred (any)
Forbidden Lore (Warp) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Warp)
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Xenos)	300	S	—
Secret Tongues (Military)	300	S	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	300	T	—
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Guardsman

"We go in, kill anything that moves and then blow the structure with a demo charge."

— Eli Plex, Assault Veteran of the Secondus 21st.

No matter how subtle the Acolytes may go about their investigation, at some point talking, stealth, and the use of cunning cease and the need for sheer brute force will be called upon. This is the Guardsmen's role. They are a tough, ruthless bunch, experts in field craft and various ranged weaponry—anything from the humble lasgun to the sophisticated sniper rifle.

Known as the Hammer of the Emperor, the Imperial Guard is the largest fighting force in the history of the galaxy. It is made up of billions upon billions of soldiers, all recruited from the many worlds of the Imperium. The Departmento Munitorum is tasked with supervising, supplying and sourcing the regiments of the Imperial Guard but even this organisation has no idea of exactly how many troops are under arms as the continuous toll of casualties and influx of recruits will run into millions in a single day. The Guard regiments come from many different planets and their native cultures, style of dress, technological background and warrior traditions are all different too. The Guard does not even try to impose a standard uniform, preferring to exploit the unique strength of each company, be it a tribal warrior clan, or a highly drilled and regimented unit of Cadians. To this end there is no formal training; each regiment is trusted to instruct their own troops in the war craft they have developed in their own culture. In fact, the only kind of unity within the Imperial Guard is the use of standard equipment such as the lasgun.

It is from this vast army that Inquisitors will recruit the muscle they often need to go about their duties. Because each regiment is so different, a Guardsman can vary wildly—some are professional, elite stormtroopers; others could be hardened gangers from murky industrial worlds, most likely already killers before even being inducted into the Guard; others still could be axe-wielding, blood-drinking savages from a far-flung feral world.

Inquisitors will second Guardsmen mainly for their combat experience and expertise with weapons, although their choice may often be influenced if the would-be Acolytes have a secondary set of skills—albeit with a battlefield application. For instance, Guardsmen are frequently trained to be able to drive and maintain vehicles, may have triage and medical expertise or even be competent in the use of communications equipment.

Not all Guardsmen—or the role the Inquisitors define by that label—actually come straight from the Imperial Guard. Some may have crossed paths with the Inquisitor as hired thugs for another agency. Some are wayward mercenaries who have spent their lives as a hired gun, only to be pressed into service of the Inquisition. Others still are hive gangers that may have had the gall to ambush an Inquisitor on his rare travels into an underhive. No matter what the origin, a Guardsman's role within the cell is always that of combat and fire-control.

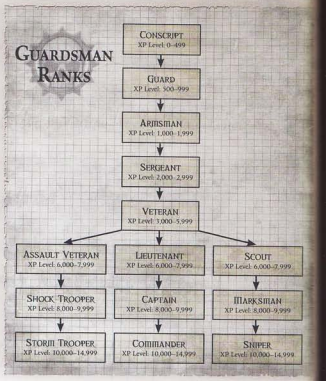


Table 2-6: Guardsman Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	100	250	500	750
Ballistic Skill	100	250	500	750
Strength	100	250	500	500
Toughness	250	500	750	1,000
Agility	250	500	750	1,000
Intelligence	500	750	1,000	2,500
Perception	250	500	750	1,000
Willpower	500	750	1,000	2,500
Fellowship	500	750	1,000	2,500

Conscript Advances

"If they can bleed and run, they can hold a gun."

Conscripts learn the raw basics of combat: the charge, the way of the gun and the blade. They may be fresh from an Imperial Guard founding, pressed into service or serving a penal sentence.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Swim	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution‡	100	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Guard Advances

"They left the drop pods as mere conscripts… they returned as men."

Guard have survived in battle long enough to learn that survival is often a case of speed and superior tactical knowledge.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Dodge	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Ciphers (War Cant)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Guard)	100	S	—
Survival	100	S	—
Swim +10	100	S	Swim
Basic Weapon Training (Launcher)	100	T	—
Quick Draw	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Common Lore (War)	200	S	—
Inquiry	200	S	—
Heavy Weapon Training (SP)	200	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	200	T	BS 35, Ag 35

Armsman Advances

"Without death, there are no heroes."

Armsmen increase their knowledge of the weapons they might wield against enemies of the Emperor. They are stout of heart, and strong in the arm—men to trust when the las bolts are flying.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10
Intimidate	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface)	100	S	—
Pilot (Military Craft)	100	S	—
Swim +20	100	S	Swim +10
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Crippling Strike	100	T	WS 50
Pistol Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Rapid Reload	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Common Lore (Imperium)	200	S	—
Gamble	200	S	—
Inquiry +10	200	S	Inquiry
Ambidextrous	200	T	Ag 30
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	200	T	—
Swift Attack	200	T	WS 35
Literacy	300	S	—

Sergeant Advances

"Get up and out of that trench before I come over there and make you!"

As proven warriors, Sergeants learn to finesse their attacks and widen their skills to encompass all manner of eventualities.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (War Cant) +10	100	S	Ciphers (War Cant)
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Demolition	100	S	—
Intimidate +10	100	S	Intimidate
Navigation (Surface) +10	100	S	Navigation (Surface)
Pilot (Military Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Military Craft)
Secret Tongue (Military)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	S 30
Dual Strike	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Takedown	100	T	—
Carouse	200	S	—
Interrogation	200	S	—
Tech-Use	200	S	—
Crushing Blow	200	T	S 40
Dual Shot	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Heavy Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—
Hip Shooting	200	T	BS 40, Ag 40
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	200	T	WS 35, Ag 35
Barter	300	S	—

Veteran Advances

"You think this is bad, kid? Just wait till the big guns start!"

Veterans hold their own upon the battlefield, inspiring others with their prowess, fearlessness and sheer killing power. Their battle wisdom is indispensable, and their luck proven by their continuing vitality.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command	100	S	—
Demolition +10	100	S	Demolition
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge +10
Pilot (Military Craft) +20	100	S	Pilot (Military Craft) +10
Secret Tongue (Military) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Military)
Survival +10	100	S	Survival
Basic Weapon Training (Melta)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Plasma)	100	T	—
Bulging Biceps	100	T	S 45
Die Hard	100	T	WP 40
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Heavy Weapons Training (Las)	100	T	—
Heavy Weapons Training (Launcher)	100	T	—
True Grit	100	T	T 40
Climb	200	S	—
Gamble +10	200	S	Gamble
Medicae	200	S	—
Search	200	S	—
Hatred (Xeno—*choose one*)	200	T	—
Iron Jaw	200	T	T 40
Sound Constitution†	200	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Assault Veteran Advances

"It's going to get close and messy lads, stay close to me and don't be afraid to get it on ya…"

Freedom is bought at the point of a blade, and Assault Veterans know this all too well. In the close press of fighting, they wield their chainblades with deadly efficiency.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed
Demolition +20	100	S	Demolition +10
Survival +20	100	S	Survival +10
Blademaster	100	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Combat Master	100	T	WS 30
Frenzy	100	T	—
Furious Assault	100	T	WS 35
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Chem-Use	200	S	—
Dodge +20	200	S	Dodge +10
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Lightning Attack	300	T	Swift Attack

Lieutenant Advances

"Watch your formation and stay sharp!"

Lieutenants lead their men into glorious battle. It falls to an officer to accept the weight of command and responsibilities for success or failure on the battlefield.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command +10	100	S	Command
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed)
Interrogation	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface) +20	100	S	Navigation (Surface) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Trade (Copyist)	100	S	—
Hatred (Mutants)	100	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Chem-Use	200	S	—
Literacy +10	200	S	Literacy
Medicae +10	200	S	Medicae
Scrutiny	200	S	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Blather	300	S	—
Charm	300	S	—
Deceive	300	S	—
Evaluate	300	S	—

Scout Advances

"I swear dead men make more noise than that bastard."

Scouts are adept at locating the enemy in all terrain. They are keen observers, and skilled in the art of stealth.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Navigation (Surface) +20	100	S	Navigation (Surface) +10
Deadeye Shot	100	T	BS 30
Climb +10	200	S	Climb
Concealment	200	S	—
Security	200	S	—
Silent Move	200	S	—
Heightened Senses (Hearing)	200	T	—
Heightened Senses (Sight)	200	T	—
Heightened Senses (Smell)	200	T	—
Leap Up	200	T	Ag 30
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

Shock Trooper Advances

"The heretics were still reeling from the door charges when the shock troopers hit them."

Shock Troopers know how to storm bunkers and lay down their life for the Emperor. They are well armed, well trained, and well feared.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Carouse +10	200	S	Carouse
Chem-Use +10	200	S	Chem-Use
Concealment	200	S	—
Cleanse and Purify	200	T	Basic Weapon Training (Flame)
Hardy	200	T	T 40
Heavy Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution†	200	T	—
Talented (Chem-Use)	200	T	Chem-Use

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Captain Advances

"Squad Five! I want suppressing fire on that blockhouse! Squad Seven, move into flanking positions!"

Captains command large formations and battle groups. The skill of a bold Captain is vital to any successful attack or defence.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Interrogation +10	100	S	Interrogation
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Secret Tongue (Military) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Military) +10
Air of Authority	100	T	Fel 30
Hatred (Psykers)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	100	T	—
Strong-minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	200	T	—
Iron Discipline	200	T	WP 30, Command
Nerves of Steel	200	T	—
Sound Constitution†	200	T	—
Talented (Blather)	200	T	Blather
Talented (Charm)	200	T	Charm
Logic	300	S	—
Lightning Attack	300	T	Swift Attack
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Marksman Advances

"I may not look much but I can take out your left eye with this baby from a thousand yards."

Most Imperial forces include a Marksman to support the rest of its members with accurate long-range fire support. They are adept at digging in and picking off the enemy.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Survival +20	100	S	Survival +10
Mighty Shot	100	T	BS 40
Chem-Use	200	S	—
Concealment +10	200	S	Concealment
Security +10	200	S	Security
Lightning Reflexes	200	T	—
Sharpshooter	200	T	BS 40, Deadeye Shot
Sound Constitution†	200	T	—
Talented (Shadowing)	200	T	Shadowing
Disguise	300	S	—
Shadowing	300	S	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Storm Trooper Advances

"Storm troopers? Them throne-groaning glory boys get all the prime action—and all the credit, too. Don't listen to the propaganda—it's us regular Guard that does all the grit-work."

Storm Troopers create utter destruction. Often regarded by the regular Guard as vain parade apes, they nonetheless have a well-deserved reputation for being the best of the best.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Intimidate +20	100	S	Intimidate +10
Berserk Charge	100	T	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	200	T	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Webber)	200	T	—
Fearless	200	T	—
Insanely Faithful	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution†	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Commander Advances

"Men of the Imperium stand tall, for you are the favoured of the Emperor!"

Commanders control the entire flow of battle, from planning to execution. Imperial Commanders have at their disposal the greatest armies in the known galaxy, and the cold, hard determination to use them.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command +20	100	S	Command +10
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10
Frenzy	100	T	—
Hatred (Cult: Choose One)	100	T	—
Talented (Deceive)	100	T	Deceive
Total Recall	100	T	Int 30
Unshakable Faith	100	T	—
Carouse +10	200	S	Carouse
Concealment	200	S	—
Into the Jaws of Hell	200	T	Iron Discipline
Leap Up	200	T	Ag 30
Litany of Hate	200	T	Hatred (any)
Master Orator	200	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution†	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Sniper Advances

"There's something really satisfying about making a man's head explode like a blood melon. All in the name of the Emperor of course."

Snipers are masters of their art, able to kill at a distance, then melt away from view. They are silent, skilled and often have a grim sense of humour. Many find them hard to understand.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Talented (Disguise)	100	T	Disguise
Talented (Tracking)	100	T	Tracking
Chem-Use +10	200	S	Chem-Use
Silent Move +10	200	S	Silent Move
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Tracking	300	S	—
Crack Shot	300	T	BS 40
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Rifle)	300	T	—
Lightning Attack	300	T	Swift Attack
Sound Constitution†	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Imperial Psyker

"Imagine knowing there was a door to the realm of Daemons, and the slightest inattention on your behalf would see them batter it down and rip you to shreds. Now imagine that door is inside your head. That's what being a psyker is like."
— Castus Lupa, Savant Adjunct.

No one knows when the first human psykers appeared; that information has been lost to the ravages of time, but one thing is certain, their emergence changed the fate of mankind forever. Psykers are both the greatest boon and curse that has afflicted humanity. The Emperor Himself is the most powerful psyker the human race has ever seen. Even ten thousand years after the Emperor was inducted into His sarcophagus, psykers continue to fuel the Imperium. Each day, innumerable souls are shipped to Terra in the Black Ships of the Inquisition. Once there they have the honour of becoming one with the Emperor's Golden Throne, thus allowing His light to spread across the galaxy that the Imperium may endure.

Despite the benefits they bring to the Imperium, an undiscovered or unsanctioned psyker can place entire populations and planets in danger. Psykers' essences glow brightly in the warp, like bait on a line, and they draw malignant entities to that glow. Psykers weak in mind or untrained in protective arts can be easily tainted, and in the worst cases possessed by Daemonic entities and used as a gateway between realspace and the warp.

The psykers who are traced and gathered upon the foreboding Black Ships of the Inquisition suffer one of two fates. The first, and most likely, is after meticulous mind-scanning they are found to be lacking the talent or strength of mind to serve in any other capacity and so are sent to worship at the Golden Throne. The minority who do pass the rigorous sanctioning tests are reprieved and selected to serve the Imperium in some other vocation. Some will serve the Adeptus Astra Telepathica as an Astropath. An even smaller minority—after close scrutiny—are sent out to fill numerous roles throughout the Imperium. This could be as indentured servants to high-ranking lords within the Administratum, battlefield psykers used to counter xenos mystics, or in the service of the Inquisition. Even at such an elevated state, an Imperial psyker, whether he is aware of it or not, is always monitored, for no matter how exhaustive the training, a psyker's soul flickers brightest in the warp.

Psykers have always been used as agents for the Inquisition. Their abilities vary from prognostication, to telepathy, to pyromancy and telekinesis, amongst many others. A psyker Acolyte is most likely still discovering his powers and as he progresses, so he can go deeper and unlock latent abilities and more fearsome powers. The Inquisitor and his fellow Acolytes are both the guide and possible executioner, because as more power flows to the psyker, so too does the lure of Chaos and the attention of Daemons who lurk hungrily in the warp.

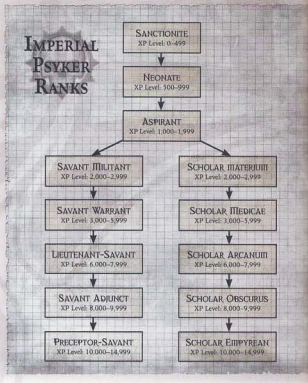


Table 2-7: Imperial Psyker Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	500	750	1,000	2,500
Ballistic Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Strength	250	500	750	1,000
Toughness	250	500	750	1,000
Agility	500	750	1,000	2,500
Intelligence	100	250	500	750
Perception	100	250	500	750
Willpower	100	250	500	750
Fellowship	500	750	1,000	2,500

Sanctionite Advances

"Throne knows what them sanctioneers do to 'em when they get to Earth, but I ain't never met a normal psyker yet."

Sanctionites are bound to the Emperor's will, yet even then, they must be watched for weakness of the soul. They have been tested upon Holy Terra, and found worthy… for now.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperium)	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Warp)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Occult)	100	S	—
Swim	100	S	—
Trade (Soothsayer)	100	S	—
Chem Geld	100	T	—
Flagellant	100	T	—
Hatred (Daemons)	100	T	—
Meditation	100	T	—
Minor Psychic Power	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	100	T	—
Quick Draw	100	T	—
Unremarkable	100	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

Neonate Advances

"I always thought he was aide to the Reeve, turns out he was a psyker all along!"

Neonates serve as apprentices, servants and bondsmen to elder psykers or such bodies as the Adeptus Astra Telepathica deems suitable. During this time, they learn humility, obedience and the true price of their powers.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Chem-Use	100	S	—
Deceive	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Psykers)	100	S	—
Performer (Musician)	100	S	—
Performer (Singer)	100	S	—
Performer (Storyteller)	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft)	100	S	—
Wrangling	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Light Sleeper	100	T	Per 30
Minor Psychic Power‡	100	T	—
Paranoia	100	T	—
Peer (the Insane)	100	T	Fel 30
Rapid Reload	100	T	—
Sleight of Hand	200	S	—
Psy Rating 2	200	T	Psy Rating 1

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Aspirant Advances

"If you're to join the Savant Militant, you better get used to blood, and lots of it."

Having proven themselves stable and humble, the Aspirant studies his future options carefully, petitioning the Adeptus Astra Telepathica for placement within the Imperial Guard, Scholastica Psykana or other such institutions.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Blather	100	S	—
Ciphers (Acolyte)	100	S	—
Dodge	100	S	—
Inquiry	100	S	—
Literacy +10	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Acolyte)	100	S	—
Tech-Use	100	S	—
Trade (Copyist)	100	S	—
Trade (Soothsayer) +10	100	S	Trade (Soothsayer)
Ambidextrous	100	T	Ag 30
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Blind Fighting	100	T	Per 30
Die Hard	100	T	WP 40
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	100	T	—
Minor Psychic Power[¥]	100	T	—
Peer (Academics)	100	T	Fel 30
Rapid Reaction	100	T	Ag 40
Unshakeable Faith	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

[¥] *You may take this Talent up to four times at this Rank.*

Savant-Warrant Advances

"I've seen some terrifying things in my time but none quite so chilling as the way a battle psyker kills his foes."

The Savant-Warrant has proved themself reliable in the face of fire, and is duly trained for a greater role.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Carouse +10	100	S	Carouse
Ciphers (War Cant)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Guard)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Tech)	100	S	—
Common Lore (War) +10	100	S	Common Lore (War)
Drive (Hover Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Hover Vehicle)
Drive (Walker) +10	100	S	Drive (Walker)
Gamble	100	S	—
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Pilot (Military Craft)	100	S	—
Search	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Military)	100	S	—
Tech-Use +10	100	S	Tech-Use
Trade (Cook) +10	100	S	Trade (Cook)
Trade (Technomat)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Battle Rage	100	T	Frenzy
Crack Shot	100	T	BS 40
Deadeye shot	100	T	BS 30
Hip Shooter	100	T	BS 40, Ag 40
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	100	T	—
Mental Rage	100	T	Frenzy
Minor Psychic Power	100	T	—
Nerves of Steel	100	T	—
Technical Knock	100	T	Int 30
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	100	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	100	T	—
Demolition	200	S	—
Security	200	S	—
Pistol Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Psychic Power	200	T	—
Swift Attack	300	T	WS 35

Savant Militant Advances

"Ignore the chantin' coming from their tents—it's when they fall silent that you've got to watch."

The Imperial Guard often use the Savants Militant, putting their destructive powers to good use upon the battlefield.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Barter	100	S	—
Carouse	100	S	—
Chem-Use +10	100	S	Chem-Use
Climb	100	S	—
Common Lore (War)	100	S	—
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Drive (Hover Vehicle)	100	S	—
Drive (Walker)	100	S	—
Logic	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface)	100	S	—
Survival	100	S	—
Trade (Cook)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Cleanse and Purify	100	T	Basic Weapon Training (Flame)
Corpus Conversion	100	T	Psy Rating 2
Crippling Strike	100	T	WS 50
Crushing Blow	100	T	S 40
Frenzy	100	T	—
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Iron Jaw	100	T	T 40
Minor Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Resistance (Cold)	100	T	—
Resistance (Heat)	100	T	—
Street Fighting	100	T	—
Power Well	200	T	Psy Rating 2
Psy Rating 3	200	T	Psy Rating 2
Psychic Power	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Scholar Medicae Advances

"He says he's solved the riddle of steel, sire, an' now he keeps muckin' about with lightning an' dead animals. Bloody messy it is too."

The Scholar Medicae has learnt well the lessons of base matter, and now turns his powers to understanding the mysteries of flesh, bone and the living being.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Barter	100	S	—
Carouse	100	S	—
Chem-Use +20	100	S	Chem-Use +10
Deceive	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants)	100	S	—
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Literacy +20	100	S	Literacy +10
Medicae +10	100	S	Medicae
Scholastic Lore (Archaic)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Scrutiny	100	S	—
Trade (Agri)	100	S	—
Trade (Apothecary)	100	S	—
Trade (Embalmer)	100	S	—
Crippling Strike	100	T	WS 50
Crushing Blow	100	T	S 40
Decadence	100	T	T 30
Jaded	100	T	WP 30
Master Chirurgeon	100	T	Medicae +10
Minor Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Street Fighting	100	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	100	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	100	T	—
Corpus Conversion	200	T	Psy Rating 2
Discipline Focus	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	200	T	—
Psy Rating 4	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Scholar Materium Advances

"E said sommat about levers an' movin' the universe, sire. Don't see that there's anythin' wrong with it where it is, but that's scholars for you, ain't it sir?"

As a full initiate of the Scholastica Psykana, the Scholar Materium studies the foundations of being, essence and immutable form.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Chem-Use +10	100	S	Chem-Use
Ciphers (Occult)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Tech)	100	S	—
Evaluate	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers)
Invocation +10	100	S	Invocation
Logic	100	S	—
Medicae	100	S	—
Psyniscience +10	100	S	Psyniscience
Scholastic Lore (Astromancy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Acolyte) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Acolyte)
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Tech-Use +10	100	S	Tech-Use
Trade (Prospector)	100	S	—
Trade (Wright)	100	S	—
Binary Chatter	100	T	—
Catfall	100	T	Ag 30
Deadeye Shot	100	T	BS 30
Iron Jaw	100	T	T 40
Minor Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Peer (Astropaths)	100	T	Fel 30
Sprint	100	T	—
Technical Knock	100	T	Int 30
Common Lore (Machine Cult)	200	S	—
Power Well	200	T	Psy Rating 2
Psy Rating 3	200	T	Psy Rating 2
Psychic Power	200	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Lieutenant-Savant Advances

"They call them officers, but I'll be damned if I ever take an order from one."

The Lieutenant-Savant enjoys an officer's rank and privilege, yet is under constant surveillance nonetheless.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Barter +10	100	S	Barter
Blather +10	100	S	Blather
Charm	100	S	—
Chem-Use +20	100	S	Chem-Use +10
Ciphers (War Cant)	100	S	—
Command	100	S	—
Common Lore (Administratum)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Guard) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Guard)
Common Lore (War) +20	100	S	Common Lore (War) +10
Deceive +10	100	S	Deceive
Demolition +10	100	S	Demolition
Logic	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface) +10	100	S	Navigation (Surface)
Pilot (Military Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Military Craft)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Scrutiny	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Military) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Military)
Berserk Charge	100	T	—
Blademaster	100	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Disarm	100	T	Ag 30
Furious Assault	100	T	WS 35
Jaded	100	T	WP 30
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Minor Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Precise Blow	100	T	WS 30, Sure Strike
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Sure Strike	100	T	WS 30
True Grit	100	T	T 40
Interrogation	200	S	—
Discipline Focus (*choose one*)	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol)	200	T	—
Peer (Military)	200	T	Fel 30
Psy Rating 4	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Scholar Arcanum Advances

"I ain't never seen so many books, whatever can he be doin'? All that paper ain't good for yer health. Still, least he ain't cuttin' up no dead Grox no more, sir."

Versed in the ways of matter and flesh, the Scholar Arcanum studies the sphere of the mind, the realm of theory, academic learning and philosophical conjecture.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blather +10	100	S	Blather
Ciphers (Occult) +10	100	S	Ciphers (Occult)
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10
Forbidden Lore (Warp) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Warp)
Forbidden Lore (Xenos)	100	S	—
Interrogation	100	S	—
Invocation +20	100	S	Invocation +10
Scholastic Lore (Astromancy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Astromancy)
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend)
Secret Tongue (Acolyte) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Acolyte) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Tech-Use +20	100	S	Tech-Use +10
Trade (Cartographer)	100	S	—
Trade (Copyist) +10	100	S	Trade (Copyist)
Crack Shot	100	T	BS 40
Foresight	100	T	Int 30
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Mimic	100	T	—
Minor Psychic Power‡	100	T	—
Peer (Void Born)	100	T	Fel 30
Power Well	200	T	Psy Rating 2
Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	100	T	—
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Discipline Focus (*choose one*)	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Favoured by the Warp	200	T	WP 35
Forbidden Lore (Heresy)	300	S	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Savant Adjunct Advances

"Watch the pale cove in the officer's gear. When he whispers in the commander's ear, that's it, we'll be sent over the top."

The Savant Adjunct has the power to bend flesh and metal, to send his mind forth amongst the enemy forces and to ken the nature of unnatural opponents. He is valued for his powers, yet greatly feared by those who command him.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Common Lore (Adeptes Arbites)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Guard) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Guard) +10
Common Lore (Tech) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Tech)
Concealment	100	S	—
Dodge +20	100	S	Dodge +10
Evaluate	100	S	—
Intimidate	100	S	—
Logic +10	100	S	Logic
Medicae	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Secret Tongue (Military) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Military) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Trade (Valet)	100	S	—
Charm +10	200	S	Charm
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers)
Invocation +10	200	S	Invocation
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Command +10	300	S	Command
Literacy +10	300	S	Literacy
Scrutiny +10	300	S	Scrutiny
Pistol Training (Plasma)	300	T	—
Power Well	200	T	Psy Rating 2

Scholar Obscurus Advances

"You talk to him, but he don't answer. You can feel him rummagin' in your thoughts right enough though. Put me off my gruel, it can."

Abandoning the petty realm of human knowledge, the Scholar Obscurus studies the wisdom and folly of the human spirit. Steeped in forgotten lore and constantly muttering catechisms and charms against the creatures of the warp, these psykers grow strange and distant.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Occult) +20	100	S	Ciphers (Occult) +10
Common Lore (Tech) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Tech)
Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants)
Inquiry +20	100	S	Inquiry +10
Lip Reading	100	S	—
Psyniscience +20	100	S	Psyniscience +10
Scholastic Lore (Archaic) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Archaic)
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)	100	S	—
Scrutiny +10	100	S	Scrutiny
Trade (Soothsayer) +20	100	S	Trade (Soothsayer) +10
Mental Fortress	100	T	WP 50, Strong Minded
Minor Psychic Power‡	100	T	—
Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Cults)	200	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	200	S	—
Dark Soul	200	T	—
Discipline Focus (*choose one*)	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	200	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Peer (Inquisition)	200	T	Fel 30
Psy Rating 5	200	T	Psy Rating 4
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Daemonology)	300	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Heresy) +10	300	S	Forbidden Lore (Heresy)

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*
‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Scholar Empyrean Advances

"Sire, success! He made three pounds of gold yesterday! Funny fish though, didn't look happy or nothing, just wanted be left to his proper studies— whatever that means."

The mind of the Scholar Empyrean ranges free, even whilst their will is securely chained to the immeasurable protection of the Emperor's own soul. Studying the deepest mysteries of psychic ability, the Scholar Empyrean care little for worldly goods or the petty demands of the corpus.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blather +20	100	S	Blather +10
Common Lore (Tech) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Tech) +10
Deceive +10	100	S	Deceive
Evaluate +10	100	S	Evaluate
Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Mutants) +10
Forbidden Lore (Xenos) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Xenos)
Logic +10	100	S	Logic
Medicae +20	100	S	Medicae +10
Scholastic Lore (Astromancy) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Astromancy) +10
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) +10
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	100	S	—
Scrutiny +20	100	S	Scrutiny +10
Trade (Artist)	100	S	—
Air of Authority	100	T	Fel 30
Armour of Contempt	100	T	WP 40
Discipline Focus (*choose one*)	100	T	Psy Rating 3
Fearless	100	T	—
Logis Implant	100	T	—
Master Orator	100	T	Fel 30
Minor Psychic Power‡	100	T	—
Nerves of Steel	100	T	—
Peer (Government)	100	T	Fel 30
Psychic Power†	100	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Cults) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Cults)
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +10	200	S	Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)
Psy Rating 6	200	T	Psy Rating 5
Good Reputation (Inquistion)	200	T	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Daemonology) +10	300	S	Forbidden Lore (Daemonology)

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*
‡*You may take this Talent up to four times at this Rank.*

Preceptor-Savant Advances

"You know how Commissars are strict? Well that ain't nothing to a Preceptor. Shoot his men as soon as blink—and a good job too."

The Preceptor-Savant is a psyker charged with manifold duties—to lead the Savant Militant, to protect key command staff and to instruct officers in the best deployment of psychic forces.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (War Cant) +20	100	S	Ciphers (War Cant) +10
Command +20	100	S	Command +10
Deceive +20	100	S	Deceive +10
Demolition +20	100	S	Demolition +10
Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Psykers) +10
Lip Reading	100	S	—
Logic +20	100	S	Logic +10
Medicae +10	100	S	Medicae
Navigation (Stellar)	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface) +20	100	S	Navigation (Surface) +10
Pilot (Spacecraft)	100	S	—
Psyniscience +10	100	S	Psyniscience
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10
Scrutiny +20	100	S	Scrutiny +10
Air of Authority	100	T	Fel 30
Armour of Contempt	100	T	WP 40
Binary Chatter	100	T	—
Foresight	100	T	Int 30
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	100	T	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Into the Jaws of Hell	100	T	Iron Discipline
Iron Discipline	100	T	WP 30, Command
Litany of Hate	100	T	Hatred (any)
Mental Fortress	100	T	WP 50, Strong Minded
Minor Psychic Power‡	100	T	—
Peer (Government)	100	T	Fel 30
Psychic Power	100	T	—
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Total Recall	100	T	Int 30
Forbidden Lore (Cults)	200	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Heresy)	200	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	200	S	—
Discipline Focus (*choose one*)	200	T	Psy Rating 3
Favoured by the Warp	200	T	WP 35
Pistol Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Psy Rating 5	200	T	Psy Rating 4
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

‡*You may take this Talent up to three times at this Rank.*

Scum

"You see, you've won again. I told you I was no good at cards. I'll play one more round, but only because you insist."
— Reetheus Orl, Barking Saint, Hive Sibellius.

As has always been the case, the flotsam and jetsam of humanity seems to attract each other and thrives in the darkest of places. The Imperium is a vast and unforgivably hard regime to subsist in, and so the unwanted and uncared for fester and even flourish in the most unlikely and inhospitable places. The underhives, deserted hab-blocks and even entire moons that are now robbed of any valuable resource, hold what the enforcers collectively call scum. They are mankind's detritus, who have no place in Imperial society—even the Ecclesiarchy seems to have given up on them, although some missionaries persist in trying to save their souls, even if their intercession is not requested!

Scum is a catch-all term that covers everything from thieves, Imperial Guard deserters, escaped penal convicts, confidence tricksters, fallen nobles, gangers, murderers, hab-rats and all manner of criminals and unsavoury characters. Despite the collective term, there are many who have skills Inquisitors find useful in their line of work. When an Inquisitor needs someone with low moral values, who will fire upon innocents when ordered or shoot someone in the back without a second thought, it is going to be the Acolyte who has spent his life on the fringes of the Imperial society.

As well as moral ambiguity, Scum often have more practical skills that come in use during an investigation. Breaking in to property unnoticed, finding black market goods, a mark that needs charming or a suspect intimidating are all talents that make the Acolytes' lives easier.

An Inquisitor does not pick just any felon he happens to stumble across to become his agent and to serve as an Acolyte the Scum must be trustworthy—to an extent—and their talents need to be considerable. He needs to be more than just a common ganger. Agents such as this can range from the nimble, double-jointed cat burglar, the fast-talking charmer who can play the long con, the card shark that never loses or the fence with contacts across the breadth of the sub-sector.

Having lived and survived in such tough conditions means that it will frequently be the Scum that is the source of some acrimony and he does not always get on with other Acolytes in the cell. His moral values and reasons for participating may be entirely different from the others and so make him a source of contention. Reasons why such a character may join the employ of an Inquisitor in the first place are manifold: some do it for the sheer thrill, some as sentence for some past crime, some are being paid, whilst others have the skills an Inquisitor needs and so are ordered or threatened to participate. For an Inquisitor it matters little what the motive is, as long as they fulfil their part in the mission. Inquisitors can, and will, use all tools necessary to carry out their duties, they do not care if that is using the highest-born noble or the most inhuman villain—it is the end goal that is important, not the method in achieving it.

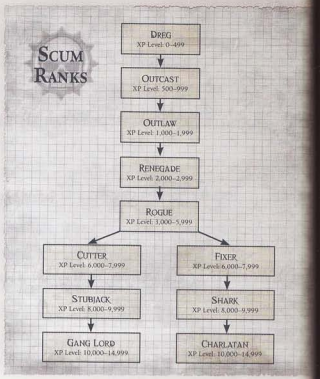


Table 2-8: Scum Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Ballistic Skill	100	250	500	750
Strength	500	750	1,000	2,500
Toughness	500	750	1,000	2,500
Agility	100	250	500	500
Intelligence	250	500	750	1,000
Perception	250	500	750	1,000
Willpower	250	500	750	1,000
Fellowship	100	250	500	750

Dreg Advances

"Don't look at the dreg, Tarquis, you'll only encourage them."

Beggars, thieves and base-born scum: the dregs of society are nevertheless hardy and surprisingly capable.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Barter	100	S	—
Charm	100	S	—
Dodge	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface)	100	S	—
Swim	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Las)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Ambidextrous	100	T	Ag 30
Unremarkable	100	T	—
Sound Constitution†	100	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Outcast Advances

"Them cretescreevin Outcast scum would swipe the chronometer off yer wrist as soon as look at yer."

An Outcast has survived long enough outside the bounds of society to develop a certain rapport with the seedier side of life—as well as an ability to slink into the background when trouble comes their way.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Acolyte)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Underworld)	100	S	—
Concealment	100	S	—
Inquiry	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Gutter)	100	S	—
Security	100	S	—
Sleight of Hand	100	S	—
Swim +10	100	S	Swim
Light Sleeper	100	T	Per 30
Peer (Workers)	100	T	Fel 30
Peer (Underworld)	100	T	Fel 30
Quick Draw	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Deceive +10	200	S	Deceive
Medicae	200	S	—
Wrangling	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Las)	200	T	—
Literacy	300	S	—

Outlaw Advances

"Hanging's too good fer 'em. Thrown him to the razehounds! See how he steals with his fingers bit off?"

A wary creature of questionable, if any, morals, the Outlaw has learnt to fight and run away, to better thieve another day. If society will not provide for them, they are happy to take what they need to survive and law be damned.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Barter	100	S	—
Blather	100	S	—
Ciphers (Acolyte) +10	100	S	Ciphers (Acolyte)
Ciphers (Underworld)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)	100	S	—
Evaluate	100	S	—
Gamble	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft)	100	S	—
Search	100	S	—
Blind Fighting	100	T	Per 30
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Hardy	100	T	T 40
Heightened Senses (Hearing)	100	T	—
Heightened Sense (Sight)	100	T	—
Resistance (Poisons)	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Double Team	200	T	—
Rapid Reload	200	T	—
Sprint	200	T	—

Renegade Advances

"Don't wanna be messing with Renegades m'boy, that's knockin' on trouble's door so as hell an' all will answer."

Slick, fast and violent, the Renegade knows the basics of the thieving trade, alongside all manner of other dirty tactics. Whether alone or with ganger friends, the Renegade is a dangerous piece of scum.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Carouse	100	S	—
Dodge +10	100	S	Dodge
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Secret Tongue (Gutter) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Gutter)
Silent Move	100	S	—
Catfall	100	T	Ag 30
Counter Attack	100	T	WS 40
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Rapid Reaction	100	T	Ag 40
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Street Fighting	100	T	—
Chem-Use	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Disarm	200	T	Ag 30
Heavy Weapon Training (SP)	200	T	—
Nerves of Steel	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Flame)	200	T	—
Sure Strike	200	T	WS 30
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	300	T	—

Rogue Advances

"There's some as is destined fer greatness... and some fer infamy. Either way, yer get yer face on the pict caster an' pretty young things will be wantin' ta make yer acquaintance."

Toughened by all that life can throw at him, the Rogue is a smart, skilled and dangerous foe, never to be underestimated, and always to be watched carefully.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Barter +10	100	S	Barter
Common Lore (Imperium) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium)
Common Lore (Underworld) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Underworld)
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10
Evaluate +10	100	S	Evaluate
Arms Master	100	T	BS 30, Basic Weapon Training (any two)
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Marksman	100	T	BS 35
Pistol Training (Bolt)	100	T	—
Sharpshooter	100	T	BS 40, Deadeye Shot
Intimidate	200	S	—
Scrutiny	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	200	S	—
Tech-Use	200	S	—
Tracking	200	S	—
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Takedown	200	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	200	T	BS 35, Ag 35

Cutter Advances

"Mark my muzzle, you go there and beg for forgiveness. If Lex sends a Cutter on you, there ain't a place in this hive or the next that'll take you in or save you."

A bladesman, enforcer and bounty hunter, a Cutter is a dangerous person to have at your heels.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Acrobatics	100	S	—
Ciphers (Underworld) +10	100	S	Ciphers (Underworld)
Climb	100	S	—
Common Lore (Underworld) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Underworld) +10
Demolition	100	S	—
Dodge +20	100	S	Dodge +10
Sleight of Hand +10	100	S	Sleight of Hand
Swim +20	100	S	Swim +10
Die Hard	100	T	WP 40
Resistance (Cold)	100	T	—
Resistance (Fear)	100	T	—
Resistance (Heat)	100	T	—
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	100	T	WS 35, Ag 35
Interrogation	200	S	—
Intimidate +10	200	S	Intimidation
Medicae +10	200	S	Medicae
Iron Jaw	200	T	T 40
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Step Aside	200	T	Ag 40, Dodge
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt)	300	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher)	300	T	—
Swift Attack	300	T	WS 35

Stubjack Advances

"They took everything, even my mother's deathring. Attacked my Goss-Sedan bold as blood! One of the Stubjacks even had the gall to wink and call me 'Lady'! Purcivus, I demand you have the entire block eradicated."

Savvy and brutal, Stubjacks specialise in ambush, robbery and turf war. Some lead gangs, others operate alone, but in all cases Stubjacks use strength, cunning and intimidating weapons to get what they want.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Acrobatics +10	100	S	Acrobatics
Ciphers (Acolyte) +20	100	S	Ciphers (Acolyte) +10
Climb +10	100	S	Climb
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)
Concealment +10	100	S	Concealment
Demolition +10	100	S	Demolition
Evaluate +20	100	S	Evaluate +10
Navigation (Surface) +10	100	S	Navigation (Surface)
Search +10	100	S	Search
Security +10	100	S	Security
Shadowing	100	S	—
Silent Move +10	100	S	Silent Move
Furious Assault	100	T	WS 35
True Grit	100	T	T 40
Ciphers (War Cant)	200	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	200	S	—
Tracking +10	200	S	Tracking
Decadence	200	T	T 30
Jaded	200	T	WP 30
Heavy Weapon Training (Flame)	300	T	—
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Gang Lord Advances

"The Robber-Monk they calls him, sleek as silver, twice as quick. Could steal your shadow while you're blinking, so they say. The Spire nobs are quaking in their boots. You mark my muzzle, there's more than one family safe that'll be cracked tonight!"

The Gang Lord is skilled in high-stakes operations, from assassination to cat burglary and data-heists. He can put together a crew, or simply awe the local underworld with his low cunning and high returns.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Acrobatics +20	100	S	Acrobatics +10
Ciphers (Underworld) +20	100	S	Ciphers (Underworld) +10
Climb +20	100	S	Climb +10
Concealment +20	100	S	Concealment +10
Contortionist	100	S	—
Demolition +20	100	S	Demolition +10
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Navigation (Surface) +20	100	S	Navigation (Surface) +10
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft)
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)	100	S	—
Search +20	100	S	Search +10
Security +20	100	S	Security +10
Shadowing +10	100	S	Shadowing
Silent Move +20	100	S	Silent Move +10
Sleight of Hand +20	100	S	Sleight of Hand +10
Tech-Use +10	100	S	Tech-Use
Blademaster	100	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Combat Master	100	T	WS 30
Crippling Strike	100	T	WS 50
Dual Strike	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol)	100	T	—
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Wall of Steel	100	T	Ag 35
Logic	200	S	—
Lightning Reflexes	200	T	—
Forbidden Lore (Archaeotech)	300	S	—
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Fixer Advances

"I know a fella… he could… sort you out. Course, he's mighty pricy, but you ain't in no place to bargain right now, are you?"

The Fixer knows the art of finding things, and people, no matter how illegal, hidden or dangerous. A skilled fence, and deadly shot, the Fixer prowls the hiveways and city streets with the easy grace of a predator.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Carouse +10	100	S	Carouse
Charm +10	100	S	Charm
Ciphers (Acolyte) +20	100	S	Ciphers (Acolyte) +10
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperium) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium) +10
Common Lore (War)	100	S	—
Disguise	100	S	—
Gamble +10	100	S	Gamble
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Secret Tongue (Gutter) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Gutter) +10
Decadence	100	T	T 30
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	100	T	—
Mighty Shot	100	T	BS 40
Total Recall	100	T	Int 30
Performer (Dancer)	200	S	—
Performer (Musician)	200	S	—
Performer (Singer)	200	S	—
Wrangling +10	200	S	Wrangling
Gunslinger	200	T	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Hip Shooting	200	T	BS 40, Ag 40
Peer (Military)	200	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

Shark Advances

"Father, I write to beg you reconsider. If I were to invest the full sum of my inheritance, Mr Curzon could guarantee a full one hundred per cent return in the first year alone! These are not the claims of a fraud—I have inspected the mine with my own eyes!"

Be it cards, cons or codes, Sharks prey on the foolish, proud and gullible. Masters of lies and misdirection, they fleece their targets with a smile.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Barter +20	100	S	Barter +10
Blather +10	100	S	Blather
Charm +20	100	S	Charm +10
Common Lore (Administratum)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Deceive +10	100	S	Deceive
Disguise +10	100	S	Disguise
Gamble +20	100	S	Gamble +10
Inquiry +10	100	S	Inquiry
Lip Reading	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft)
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)	100	S	—
Sleight of Hand +10	100	S	Sleight of Hand
Trade (Copyist)	100	S	—
Blademaster	100	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Pistol Training (Melta)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	100	T	—
Step Aside	200	T	Ag 40, Dodge
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Peer (Administratum)	300	T	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	300	T	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Classes)	300	T	Fel 30

Charlatan Advances

"He seemed like such a nice young man…"

The Charlatan is a master thief, who can bind even planetary governors to their web of elaborate deceit. Using sophisticated and long-term plans, they are architects of cunning subterfuges that put even the sharpest of lawmen on the back foot.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blather +20	100	S	Blather +10
Carouse +20	100	S	Carouse +10
Common Lore (Machine Cult)	100	S	—
Deceive +20	100	S	Deceive +10
Disguise +20	100	S	Disguise +10
Dodge +20	100	S	Dodge +10
Interrogation +10	100	S	Interrogation
Intimidate +10	100	S	Intimidation
Lip Reading +10	100	S	Lip Reading
Pilot (Civilian Craft) +20	100	S	Pilot (Civilian Craft) +10
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	S	—
Search +10	100	S	Search
Security +10	100	S	Security
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Air of Authority	100	T	Fel 30
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	100	T	—
Medicae +10	200	S	Medicae
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	200	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Tech-Use +10	200	S	Tech-Use
Die Hard	200	T	WP 40
Dual Shot	200	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Furious Assault	200	T	WS 35
Independent Targeting	200	T	BS 40
Master Orator	200	T	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	300	T	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	300	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution	300	T	—

Tech-Priest

"Bzzttt… our alliance must terminate here—your objectives are no longer compatible with mine."
— Quintass Delta III, Mech-Wright, The Lathes.

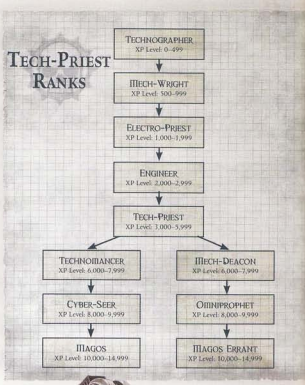
The Cult Mechanicus holds a virtual monopoly on technology. Its tenets and beliefs permeate through their rituals into the common superstition of Imperial citizens. The Adeptus Mechanicus is run by the Tech-Priests of Mars, an insular priesthood that worship the Machine God and whose goal is to harvest all the lost technology that has been missing since before the Age of Strife. The lowest ranks of Tech-Priests have mainly maintenance and construction duties, but as a Tech-adept progresses and acquires greater knowledge, he is relieved from the more trivial day-to-day tasks and allowed to study and learn of the greater mysterious and missing techniques that have prevented any kind of progressive development in the Imperium's technological base.

All Tech-Priests have an advanced grasp of how to maintain most of the standard technologies that are used throughout the Imperium. There are also many specialities a Tech-Priest can study, such as the biologius, xenology and the use of rediscovered weaponry to name but a few.

Tech-Priests are not confined to Mars or the numerous Forge Worlds that are scattered throughout the galaxy. Many are given leave to seek out lost technologies or investigate rumoured sightings of STC templates. It is on these missions Tech-Priests most likely come into contact with an Inquisitor or a cell.

The relationship between the Inquisition and the Priesthood of Mars has been a stormy one, ranging from outright hostility to merely strained in less tumultuous times. Nevertheless, the two powerful organisations have worked together many times especially when it is perceived to be in the common interest. In these situations a Tech-Priest may be present in a cell. His knowledge of Imperial, and even xenos, technology will always prove useful. A Tech-Priest may even have the means, via a neural plug, to communicate directly with the machine spirit of certain technologies, making him a very desirable ally. However, the Tech-Priests are fiercely independent and distrustful of others who do not worship the Machine God; they will be cold, methodical and terse. A Tech-Priest Acolyte rarely fits in well with a team of non-Mechanicus personnel.

The appearance of Tech-Priests can be frightening, even terror-inducing, to those who have never had contact with such beings before. As much as fifty to sixty per cent of a Tech-Priest's body may have been replaced with bionics and even the addition of extra limbs like mechadendrites or in-built weaponry. This proportion of organic to machine parts increases as the Tech-Priest gets older. The Tech-Priests themselves explain that these changes bring them ever closer to their Machine God, the Omnissiah, and away from the weak frailties of the flesh. It is not uncommon for the most senior Tech-Priests, known as Magos, to be almost entirely machine, the last piece of withered organic material losing what was left of its humanity centuries ago. An Inquisitor is always wary when allying with a Magos as chances are they are following their own agenda, which is often quite separate from that of the other Acolytes.



Tech-Priest Abilities In Game Terms

Whilst the abilities of Tech-Priests are a complicated blend of technology, mummery and religion, it is sometimes useful to know how to translate these seemingly miraculous powers into game terms.

As far as Player Characters are concerned, Tech-Priest powers are expressed in a very simple way. In Dark Heresy, each character in the Tech-Priest career starts play with the Mechanicus Implants trait. This represents the various augmentations that have been fitted inside the character. (See **page 27** for the full details on each of these implants.) By spending Experience Points on various Talents, the character learns to use these implants to generate all sorts of effects, from bolts of bio-electrical energy to powerful magnetic fields.

The augmentations described in the Mechanicus Implants trait are so closely intertwined with the Tech-Priest's body they are not considered to be equipment. They are indistinguishable from his mortal flesh. These implants are such an integral part of a Tech-Priest that he would not survive their wholesale removal—or even want to. Life without them is no life at all. To all intents and purposes, a Tech-Priest's Wounds represent damage to both his soft tissue and these trait-specific augmentations. As a Tech-Priest heals damage, he is considered to be repairing any damage to this machinery as well as to his body.

In addition to these "free" augmentations, Tech-Priest Player Characters can also purchase other cybernetic implants, such as auger arrays, mechadendrites and bionic limbs. Unlike the augmentations granted by the Mechanicus Implants trait, these are treated just like any other cybernetic implant. They can be targeted, damaged, removed, or improved—see **Bionic Replacement Limbs & Body Parts** on **page 153** for more details.

As ever, questions about the damage or removal of implants, and what this does to a Tech-Priest's Talents, should be adjudicated by the Game Master. No doubt this wise and august person will provide a common-sense answer, agreeable to all.

Table 2-9: Tech-Priest Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Simple	Intermediate	Trained	Expert
Weapon Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Ballistic Skill	250	500	750	1,000
Strength	500	750	1,000	2,500
Toughness	100	250	500	750
Agility	500	750	1,000	2,500
Intelligence	100	250	500	750
Perception	250	500	750	1,000
Willpower	100	250	500	750
Fellowship	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Technographer Advance Scheme

"If yer find owt with mystech properties, like, tek it t' Technographers. They'll diagnosticatearise it alright."

Technographers learn the many patterns of manufacture and formation that they might better comprehend the many mysteries of the Omnissiah. They can identify and catalogue technology with ease.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Machine Cult)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Tech)	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle)	100	S	—
Evaluate	100	S	—
Literacy +10	100	S	Literacy
Logic	100	S	—
Pilot (Civilian Craft)	100	S	—
Trade (Copyist)	100	S	—
Trade (Scrimshawer)	100	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (SP)	100	T	—
Binary Chatter	100	T	—
Chem Geld	100	T	
Feedback Screech	100	T	Tech-Priest
Light Sleeper	100	T	Per 30
Pistol Training (Primitive)	100	T	—
Pistol Training (SP)	100	T	—
Rapid Reload	100	T	—
Sound Constitution†	100	T	—
Technical Knock	100	T	Int 30
Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive)	300	T	—

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Mech-Wright Advance Scheme

"Explosive breech… bzzttt… shell gantry five… gzzkkkkttt… plete macro cannon failure… zzzzkkkk… mech-wright team immediately!"

Mech-Wrights learn the properties of metal, plasteel and many other materials. They conduct heavy repairs and tend dangerous manufactorum processes.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Tech) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Tech)
Demolition	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle)
Drive (Walker)	100	S	—
Medicae	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	100	S	—
Security	100	S	—
Tech-Use +10	100	S	Tech-Use
Trade (Miner)	100	S	—
Trade (Smith)	100	S	—
Trade (Technomat)	100	S	—
Arms Master	100	T	BS 30, Basic Weapon Training (any two)
Deadeye Shot	100	T	BS 30
Heightened Senses (Sight)	100	T	—
Iron Jaw	100	T	T 40
Luminen Charge	100	T	Tech-Priest
Mimic	100	T	—
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	100	T	Fel 30
Quick Draw	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Blind Fighting	200	T	Per 30
Luminen Shock	200	T	Tech-Priest

Electro-Priest Advance Scheme

"Dunno what he said but this red light started blinking under the electro-priest's hood, then it touched him, and Throne blind me if he didn't fly back across the room with an almighty thump! I knew there was a reason they guarded the generator-temple!"

Having mastered form and material components, Electro-Priests apply themselves to the sacred study of energy. Thence they learn the animating principles of machine spirits, and the means by which they may be propitiated.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Machine Cult) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Machine Cult)
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperium)	100	S	—
Drive (Ground Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Ground Vehicle) +10
Drive (Hover Vehicle)	100	S	—
Drive (Walker) +10	100	S	Drive (Walker)
Literacy +20	100	S	Literacy +10
Logic +10	100	S	Logic
Scholastic Lore (Numerology)	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Tech) +10	100	S	Secret Tongue (Tech)
Speak Language (High Gothic)	100	S	—
Trade (Wright)	100	S	
Crack Shot	100	T	BS 40
Electrical Succour	100	T	Tech-Priest
Heightened Senses (Hearing)	100	T	—
Heightened Senses (Touch)	100	T	—
Leap Up	100	T	Ag 30
Mechadendrite Use (Utility)	100	T	Tech-Priest
Nerves of Steel	100	T	—
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Ciphers (Acolyte)	200	S	—
Secret Tongue (Acolyte)	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Luminen Blast	200	T	Tech-Priest
Mechadendrite Use (Medicae)	200	T	Tech-Priest
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Bolt)	200	T	—

Enginseer

"Yes, sir, I know the engineer is annoyed, but we had to open the machine casing… yes, but we would have lost the Chimera if we didn't jury rig it… what? … demands penance? Front line you say? Throne… Well, if the Emperor commands…"

Enginseers draw together their knowledge of form, energy and material components into the art of tending complicated machines. Using the alchemy of prayer and ritual, they cajole machine spirits into life, finding faults and removing error from all manner of technology.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Chem-Use	100	S	—
Common Lore (Machine Cult) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Machine Cult) +10
Common Lore (War)	100	S	—
Demolition +10	100	S	Demolition
Drive (Hover Vehicle) +10	100	S	Drive (Hover Vehicle)
Drive (Walker) +20	100	S	Drive (Walker) +10
Evaluate +10	100	S	Evaluate
Navigation (Stellar)	100	S	—
Navigation (Surface)	100	S	—
Pilot (Military Craft)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Astromancy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)
Scholastic Lore (Numerology) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Numerology)
Trade (Technomat) +10	100	S	Trade (Technomat)
Trade (Wright) +10	100	S	Trade (Wright)
Ambidextrous	100	T	Ag 30
Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Concealed Cavity	100	T	—
Crippling Strike	100	T	WS 50
Ferric Lure	100	T	—
Heavy Weapons Training (SP)	100	T	—
Heightened Senses (Smell)	100	T	—
Mechadendrite Use (Manipulator)	100	T	Tech-Priest
Mechadendrite Use (Optical)	100	T	Tech-Priest
Pistol Training (Flame)	100	T	—
Resistance (Poisons)	100	T	—
Total Recall	100	T	Int 30
Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)	100	T	BS 35, Ag 35
Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)	100	T	WS 35, Ag 35
Awareness	200	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Guard)	200	S	—
Secret Tongue (Acolyte) +10	200	S	Secret Tongue (Acolyte)
Melee Weapon Training (Chain)	200	T	—
Resistance (Fear)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

Tech-Priest

"He stood before the fan cyclers barefoot and humble. In the language of the Tech-Priests he bid the engines start, that the hive breathe easy. He struck the sacred rune, donned his boots once more, and lo! The fans began."

Tech-Priests are initiated into the deeper mysteries of technology, and know many rites of maintenance, ignition and restarting. From simple door mechanisms to ancient tech dug from mouldering ruins, Tech-Priests seek out the many forms of the Omnissiah, to add yet more knowledge to the data crypts of the Adeptus Mechanicus.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Administratum)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed)
Common Lore (Imperium) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium)
Drive (Hover Vehicle) +20	100	S	Drive (Hover Vehicle) +10
Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)	100	S	—
Logic +20	100	S	Logic +10
Scholastic Lore (Archaic)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	100	S	—
Security +20	100	S	Security +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Secret Tongue (Tech) +20	100	S	Secret Tongue (Tech) +10
Tech-Use +20	100	S	Tech-Use +10
Trade (Technomat) +20	100	S	Trade (Technomat) +10
Trade (Wright) +20	100	S	Trade (Wright) +10
Blademaster	100	T	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Combat Master	100	T	WS 30
Disturbing Voice	100	T	—
Energy Cache	100	T	Tech-Priest
Independent Targeting	100	T	BS 40
Rite of Awe	100	T	Tech-Priest
Sound Constitution	100	T	—
Swift Attack	100	T	WS 35
Pilot (Spacecraft)	200	S	—
Basic Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Basic Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt)	200	T	—
Magley Grace	200	T	Tech-Priest
Melee Weapon Training (Power)	200	T	—
Mechadendrite Use (Gun)	200	T	Tech-Priest
Dodge	300	S	—
Command	300	S	—
Inquiry	300	S	—
Intimidate	300	S	—

Technomancer

"Minds sharp as knives, and know their way round the Administratum too. Don't cross a technomancer, especially if you work on a spaceship. You'll be reassigned to a leaky rig before you can sign the aquila."

Technomancers apply all their considerable mental powers to extracting information that may be of use to the Machine Cult. Be it currying favour with the Ecclesiarchy to interrogation of xenos prisoners, Technomancers conjure answers with ruthless logical efficiency.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Secret Society)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperial Creed) +10
Common Lore (Imperium) +20	100	S	Common Lore (Imperium) +10
Evaluate +20	100	S	Evaluate +10
Interrogation	100	S	—
Medicae +10	100	S	Medicae
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	100	S	—
Search	100	S	—
Speak Language (High Gothic) +20	100	S	Speak Language (High Gothic) +10
Armour of Contempt	100	T	WP 40
Autosanguine	100	T	—
Fearless	100	T	—
Gun Blessing	100	T	Tech-Priest
Jaded	100	T	WP 30
Master Chirurgeon	100	T	Medicae +10
Orthoproxy	100	T	—
Pistol Training (Plasma)	100	T	—
Deceive	200	S	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol)	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Shock)	300	T	—

Cyber Seer

"They ain't quite human no more. I mean, more than yer average Tech-Priest. No one could keep all that… you know… dangerous stuff in their skull an' stay normal."

Cyber Seers delve into the forbidden and occult matters of machinery with frightening zeal. From unnatural geometries to warp-touched autonoma, Cyber Seers do not shirk or sway from looking upon the damning and heretical in their quest for knowledge.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy) +10	100	S	Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)
Forbidden Lore (Archeotech) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)
Forbidden Lore (Warp)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Occult)	100	S	—
Search +10	100	S	—
Dual Shot	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic)
Foresight	100	T	Int 30
Lightning Reflexes	100	T	—
Marksman	100	T	BS 35
Mental Fortress	100	T	WP 50, Strong Minded
Rapid Reaction	100	T	Ag 40
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	100	T	—
Step Aside	100	T	Ag 40, Dodge
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Deceive +10	200	S	Deceive
Interrogation +10	200	S	Interrogation
Scholastic Lore (Numerology) +20	200	S	Scholastic Lore (Numerology) +10
Dark Soul	200	T	—
Ferric Summons	200	T	Ferric Lure, Tech-Priest
Maglev Transcendence	200	T	Tech-Priest, Maglev Grace
Peer (Administratum)	200	T	Fel 30
Prosanguine	200	T	—
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Chain)	300	T	—

Magos

"An Adeptus Mechanicus Magos is a creature of narrow, but exceedingly deep vision. Each chooses a realm of dominion, and sets about learning all there is to know about said subject. Be wary of them, of their cunning and their obsessions."

A Magos has perfected and refined his field of expertise to render him the master of a certain study. From the fleshwise magos biologis to the alien hunting magos xenologis, these huge individuals serve the Adeptus Mechanicus with their enormous accumulated knowledge.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore (Archeotech) +20	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Archeotech) +10
Forbidden Lore (Daemonology)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Heresy)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Psykers)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Warp) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Warp)
Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy) +10
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Legend)
Scholastic Lore (Occult) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Occult)
Scholastic Lore (Philosophy)	100	S	—
Dual Strike	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Iron Discipline	100	T	WP 30, Command
Lightning Attack	100	T	Swift Attack
Interrogation +20	200	S	Interrogation +10
Medicae +20	200	S	Medicae +10
Search +20	200	S	Search +10
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	200	T	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	200	T	Fel 30
Rite of Pure Thought	200	T	Tech-Priest
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Pistol Training (Melta)	300	T	—
Thrown Weapon Training (Power)	400	T	—

Mech-Deacon

"T'were Mech-Deacon Almightus that changed the forge-customs, an' the milling-engines, an' the distillation plant. We makes twice what we did back then. T'aint nothin' he don't know, I reckon."

The Mech-Deacon treads a broad path of knowledge, learning many ways of dealing with those ignorant of the Omnissiah. The Mech-Deacon also studies the art of self defence, to guard him in his wanderings.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Common Lore (Underworld)	100	S	—
Demolition +20	100	S	Demolition +10
Evaluate +20	100	S	Evaluate +10
Scholastic Lore (Archaic) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Archaic)
Search	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Military)	100	S	—
Sleight of Hand	100	S	—
Trade (Apothecary)	100	S	—
Trade (Embalmer)	100	S	—
Trade (Mason)	100	S	—
Trade (Tanner)	100	S	—
Autosanguine	100	T	—
Bulging Biceps	100	T	S 45
Cleanse and Purify	100	T	Basic Weapon Training (Flame)
Dual Shot (Ballistic)	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder
Dual Strike (Melee)	100	T	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder
Gun Blessing	100	T	Tech-Priest
Hard Target	100	T	Ag 40
Deceive	200	S	—
Inquiry +10	200	S	Inquiry
Scrutiny	200	S	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Las)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Primitive)	200	T	—
Iron Discipline	200	T	WP 30, Command
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

Omniprophet

"Hark unto the omniprophet! Get down on your knees and thank the air-recyks for their benediction. The very breath in your lungs is his blessing upon you! Pray, lest we cast you from the mine as a heretic!"

The Omniprophet speaks with all manner of Imperial subjects, from bejewelled merchant princes to ragged colonists. He spreads the ways of the Cult Mechanicus, and also watches for any items or matters of interest to the Tech-Priests of Mars.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (War Cant)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Secret Tongue (Administratum)	100	S	—
Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy)	100	S	—
Sleight of Hand +10	100	S	Sleight of Hand
Tracking	100	S	—
Trade (Prospector)	100	S	—
Armour of Contempt	100	T	WP 40
Decadence	100	T	T 30
Furious Assault	100	T	WS 35
Jaded	100	T	WP 30
Marksman	100	T	BS 35
Step Aside	100	T	Ag 40, Dodge
Barter	200	S	—
Deceive +10	200	S	Deceive
Trade (Merchant)	200	S	—
Ferric Summons	200	T	Tech-Priest, Ferric Lure
Heavy Weapon Training (Melta)	200	T	—
Heavy Weapon Training (Plasma)	200	T	—
Maglev Transcendence	200	T	Tech-Priest, Maglev Grace
Peer (Imperial Navy)	200	T	Fel 30
Sound Constitution	200	T	—

Magos Errant

"What we know of the Adranti Blood-Lighters is from the work of Abnighius, a magos errant attached to the Rogue Trader vessel, Luminol. The scroll is expunged of Adeptus Mechanicus matters, but still, we can infer much from what remains."

The master of many trades, the Magos Errant is expected to go forth on behalf of the Adeptus Mechanicus, to explore new frontiers, worlds and technologies. Privy to all manner of secret knowledge, the Magos Errant is prepared for all eventualities.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Underworld)	100	S	—
Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites)	100	S	—
Forbidden Lore (Archaeotech) +10	100	S	Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)
Forbidden Lore (Xenos)	100	S	—
Gamble	100	S	—
Interrogation	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Archaic) +20	100	S	Scholastic Lore (Archaic) +10
Scholastic Lore (Beasts)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	S	—
Scholastic Lore (Occult)	100	S	—
Deflect Shot	100	T	Ag 50
Die Hard	100	T	WP 40
Fearless	100	T	—
Master Chirurgeon	100	T	Medicae +10
Orthoproxy	100	T	—
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	100	T	—
Strong Minded	100	T	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Trade (Soothsayer)	200	S	—
Into the Jaws of Hell	200	T	Iron Discipline
Peer (Underworld)	200	T	Fel 30
Prosanguine	200	T	—
Rite of Fear	200	T	Tech-Priest
Sound Constitution	200	T	—
Barter +10	300	S	Barter
Deceive +20	300	S	Deceive +10
Performer (Musician)	300	S	—

III

Skills

Gaining Skills

•

Basic & Advanced Skills

•

Skill Descriptions

Chapter III: Skills

"It is likely that I have forgotten more about the Imperium than you will ever know, acolyte."

— Kyos Veeble, Autosavant.

Part of the fun of Dark Heresy is deciding which Skills to develop and learn during the career of your character. This chapter contains all the detailed information you might need to help you use Skills to their full effect. See **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** on **page 182**, for details on Skill Tests, Characteristics and how they are made.

Gaining Skills

"Foolish are those who fear nothing, yet claim to know everything."

— *Lexiconum Moralis.*

When you create your character you begin with a list of starting Skills based on your home world, as well as a selection of Skills from your Career Path. These Skills represent what you have learned in your life up to the point where you chose to serve the Inquisition. Over time, you will gain additional Experience, which you can spend to acquire new Skills or improve existing ones.

Skill Mastery

Sometimes you will have the opportunity to acquire the same Skill more than once. Each time you acquire a Skill a second or subsequent time, you gain Skill Mastery with it. Skill Mastery adds a +10 bonus to all Skill Tests made with this Skill. You can acquire the same Skill no more than three times (granting a maximum Skill Mastery of +20). This represents additional training and experience with the Skill you have gained during your career.

Example

Mordechai has the Interrogation skill. At a later date his Arbitrator Career Path gives him the opportunity to acquire the Skill again. As he already has the Skill, he gains Skill Mastery, granting him a +10 bonus to any Skill Tests made with Interrogation.

Basic & Advanced Skills

"Even the lowest trade is blessed, if it is done in the Emperor's name."

— Administratum Motto.

Skills are divided into two categories: Basic and Advanced. This distinction defines which Skills you can use without special training and which Skills you can't.

Basic Skills

Basic Skills are those common to citizens throughout the Imperium, and simply growing up on a world under Imperial rule exposes characters to the rudiments of the Skill. As a result, you can make Skill Tests using Basic Skills even if you don't have the Skill in question. Since you are relying on natural aptitude rather than any sort of formal training, you make the test at half (round down) your Characteristic.

Advanced Skills

Advanced Skills are those that require training and experience in order to master and understand. If you do not have an Advanced Skill, you cannot attempt it. No matter how intelligent you are, for instance, you will not be able to access an encrypted cogitator engine without some formal training.

Skill Descriptors

Some Skills are flagged with special descriptors such as combat, crafting, interaction, investigation, movement or operator. These Skills use special rules that are described in **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** and **Chapter VIII: The Game Master.** In summary, Crafting skills are those used to create items from scratch and spare parts. Interaction skills are those used when interacting with NPCs. Investigation skills are those used to ferret out additional information about a subject. Movement skills offer alternative means to get around your environment. And finally, Operator skills allow you to operate a vehicle.

Crafting Skills

Certain Skills enable you to create items from parts and materials. To do so, you must have the materials, as determined by the GM, available. You then test the appropriate Skill (e.g. Chem-Use or Trade (any)) applying any bonuses or penalties due to the quality of materials, environmental factors and anything else as determined by the GM. On a success, you generate the item. Note that the quality/finish/usefulness of the item improves for each degree of success gained. Failing by three degrees indicates you have ruined some of the materials. Failing by five or more

degrees indicates that you have completely ruined all of the materials and must start over from scratch. Note that the time it takes to create the item is determined by the GM.

Interaction Skills

The difficulty of the Skill Test depends on the target's disposition, which is determined by the GM. See **Chapter VIII: The Game Master** for guidelines. Note that this is a guide, and your GM may modify the difficulties based on the circumstances of the encounter.

SKILL GROUPS

Some of the listed Skills are actually groups of related abilities. Skill groups are listed under one entry for the sake of ease, but each one is a separate ability that must be acquired individually. For example: Scholastic Lore (Imperial Law) and Scholastic Lore (Imperial History) are different Skills. A character with Scholastic Lore (Imperial History) cannot make Scholastic Lore (Imperial Law) Tests and vice versa.

Table 3-1: Skills

Skill Name	Type	Characteristic	Descriptor
Acrobatics	Advanced	Agility	Movement
Awareness	Basic	Perception	—
Barter	Basic	Fellowship	—
Blather	Advanced	Fellowship	Interaction
Carouse	Basic	Toughness	—
Charm	Basic	Fellowship	Interaction
Chem-Use	Advanced	Intelligence	Crafting, Investigation
Ciphers†	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Climb	Basic	Strength	Movement
Command	Basic	Fellowship	Interaction
Common Lore†	Advanced	Intelligence	Investigation
Concealment	Basic	Agility	—
Contortionist	Basic	Agility	Movement
Deceive	Basic	Fellowship	Interaction
Demolition	Advanced	Intelligence	Crafting
Disguise	Basic	Fellowship	—
Dodge	Basic	Agility	Movement
Drive†	Advanced	Agility	Operator
Evaluate	Basic	Intelligence	Investigation
Forbidden Lore†	Advanced	Intelligence	Investigation
Gamble	Basic	Intelligence	—
Inquiry	Basic	Fellowship	Investigation
Interrogation	Advanced	Willpower	Investigation
Intimidate	Basic	Strength	Interaction
Invocation	Advanced	Willpower	—
Lip Reading	Advanced	Perception	—
Literacy	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Logic	Basic	Intelligence	Investigation
Medicae	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Navigation†	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Performer†	Advanced	Fellowship	—
Pilot†	Advanced	Agility	Operator
Psyniscience	Advanced	Perception	—
Scholastic Lore†	Advanced	Intelligence	Investigation
Scrutiny	Basic	Perception	—
Search	Basic	Perception	—
Secret Tongue†	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Security	Advanced	Agility	—
Shadowing	Advanced	Agility	—
Silent Move	Basic	Agility	—
Sleight of Hand	Advanced	Agility	—
Speak Language†	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Survival	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Swim	Basic	Strength	Movement
Tech-Use	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Tracking	Advanced	Intelligence	—
Trade†	Advanced	Intelligence	Crafting
Wrangling	Advanced	Intelligence	—

†Denotes a Skill Group.

Skill Descriptions

"Educate men without faith and you make them nothing more than clever devils."
— Kross Vorgt, Drill Abbot.

Descriptions of both Basic and Advanced Skills follow, presented in alphabetical order.

Acrobatics (Advanced, Movement)
Agility

The Acrobatics skill encompasses a variety of movement techniques unavailable to less flexible Acolytes. From performing somersaults to tumbling, from flipping through the air to daring leaps and jumps, this Skill expands your movement options.

Use this Skill to perform some spectacular feat of derring-do. The Difficulty depends on the desired action. The more complicated the manoeuvre, such as somersaulting over a group of enraged cultists to grab the skids of a Vulture as it takes off, the harder the difficulty. The more degrees of success you attain, the more impressive the result.

There are two special rules associated with this Skill:

Disengage: You may make an Acrobatics Test when attempting a Disengage Action to reduce it to a Half Action.

Jumping & Leaping: You may substitute an Acrobatics Test for an Agility Test when Jumping or Strength Tests when Leaping.

An Acrobatics Test is typically a Full Action.

Awareness (Basic)
Perception

The Awareness skill reflects your ability to perceive hidden dangers and to notice small details about your physical surroundings. You use the Awareness skill to notice ambushes, spot traps and discern other threats to you and your allies. Awareness is not tied to any one sense; it encompasses them all.

When using Awareness to detect a hidden enemy, the Test is always Opposed. Otherwise, the thing you are trying to detect applies a Difficulty based on how cunningly concealed it is.

An Awareness Test is usually a Free Action made in reaction to something.

Barter (Basic)
Fellowship

You can use the Barter skill to negotiate deals and get better prices on goods and services. When dealing with day-to-day affairs, like haggling in a bazaar over the price of a fine set of tarot cards, or trading lho-sticks for food in an arbitrator cell block, a single Test is sufficient. However, for important deals, such as those entailing risk to one side, carried out under dangerous circumstances or involving a large amount of Thrones (negotiating the bounty on the head of a dangerous alien, for instance), the GM may call for an Opposed Test, with both sides using their Barter skill. As a rough guide, a success will reduce the price of an item by 10%, with each additional success reducing it by a further 5%.

A typical Barter Test takes about five minutes, but delicate dealings and intricate negotiations may require more time, as decided by the GM.

Blather (Advanced, Interaction)
Fellowship

When you make a Blather Test, you stall for time by running off at the mouth, spewing a stream of words and nonsense in an attempt to confuse and distract others. A Blather Test is always Opposed by your target's Willpower (or Scrutiny). If you succeed and the target fails, the target is distracted by you and can do nothing for one Round, staring dumbfounded and wondering if you are drunk, crazy or both. For every degree of success, you dumbfound the target for an additional Round.

If your target succeeds and you fail, or if you both fail, your attempt at verbal acrobatics fails and the target may act normally. In the case where you both succeed, the character that had the most degrees of success determines the outcome.

You can also use Blather against multiple opponents. For similar opponents—those that have the same general Characteristics—make a Blather Test as normal, but the GM rolls just one Willpower Test. If you win the Opposed Test, you affect a number of targets equal to your Fellowship Bonus.

NPCs, while confused by your banter, are unaffected by your words if they are in obvious danger or if it is clear there are preparations being made to harm them. The target must understand the language you are speaking or the Test automatically fails—you cannot, for instance, use this Skill against animals.

A Blather Test is a Full Action.

Carouse (Basic)
Toughness

Whether consuming the finest amasec brandy or the cheapest stomach-stripping hive juices, you use the Carouse skill to resist the effects of alcohol and narcotics. Experienced carousers can build up quite a tolerance and remain clear-headed and lucid while those around them succumb to the effects of their amusements. Use this Skill whenever you must resist the effects of alcohol or similar intoxicants.

Each time you take a drink or some other form of intoxicant, make a Carouse Test. Failure indicates you have gained a level of Fatigue. Should you pass out as a result, you become unconscious for a number of hours equal to 1d10 minus your Toughness Bonus (minimum one hour). Your GM may incur further Test penalties as a result of intoxicant use as they see fit.

A Carouse Test is a Free Action. You use this Skill whenever you imbibe.

Charm (Basic, Interaction)
Fellowship

The Charm skill is used to befriend others. You make Charm Tests whenever you want to change the minds of individuals or small groups, to beg, or seduce. You need not make a Charm

Test every time you talk to an NPC; only when you want to change their opinions of you or convince them to do something for you, such as giving you a tip, a dance or a kiss.

A Charm Test can affect a number of targets equal to your Fellowship Bonus and your targets must be able to see and hear you clearly, and understand what you say.

A Charm Test typically takes one minute.

Chem-Use (Advanced, Crafting, Investigation)
Intelligence

You can use the Chem-Use skill to handle and prepare chemicals safely, especially toxins, poisons and drugs. Chem-Use covers the use and manufacture of toxins and it can also be used to identify a variety of chemicals (Investigation use).

To prepare or apply a chemical, you must succeed at a Chem-Use Test, with modifiers determined by the GM. On a failed test the chemical is wasted. If you fail by five or more degrees, you accidentally poison yourself or overdose. See **Chapter V: Armoury** for more information on chemicals and their effects.

When using a toxin wand or administering an antidote, the time taken to do so is halved with a successful Chem-Use Test.

A Chem-Use Test to administer a chemical is a Full Action.

Using Chem-Use to manufacture toxins utilises the rules for Crafting items as described on **page 96**.

Ciphers (Advanced)
Intelligence

Skill Group: Acolyte, War Cant, Secret Society, Occult and Underworld.

The Ciphers skill reflects an understanding of shorthand codes employed by certain groups to confer basic ideas, warnings, and information about a given area. This can be in the form of hand signals or as physical symbols inscribed on a surface, usually in a subtle place. Ciphers are not very sophisticated, mostly used to warn of danger, mark a target or indicate protection. Skill Tests are not required to read basic messages but may be necessary to decipher complicated communications or worn or damaged signs.

Acolyte: Used to communicate a private and prearranged code between given members of an Acolyte's cell. Note that this code is unique to each cell of Acolytes.

War Cant: Used to convey instructions to troops by means of hand signals, body language or musical code.

Secret Society: Used by members of a given secret society or cult to identify one another and convey simple messages. Note that this code is unique to each secret society.

Occult: Mystical gestures used to focus the mind during incantation, to identify fellow sorcerers and to supplicate or castigate Daemons.

Underworld: Convoluted systems of hand gestures, clothing styles, signs and other such chicanery used by criminal fraternities to communicate key information.

A Ciphers Test usually takes a Full Action to give or inscribe the sign, and a Free Action to comprehend it.

Climb (Basic, Movement)
Strength

Use the Climb skill to ascend or descend surfaces described as sheer. Sheer surfaces are walls without handholds, overhangs and other poor climbing conditions. Generally, a successful Test allows you to ascend or descend at half of your Half Move rate. Note that poor climbing conditions may impose a penalty to the Test. See Climbing in **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** for more details.

A Climb Test is a Half Action.

Command (Basic)
Fellowship

Command is used to make subordinates follow your orders. You may only use this Skill on those who are under your authority. A successful Command Test indicates that those whom you direct follow your instructions. On a failed Test, they either misinterpret the command or do nothing at all, or if you fail by five or more degrees, contradict your orders entirely.

A Command Test can affect a number of targets equal to your Fellowship Bonus and your targets must be able to see and hear you clearly, and understand what you say.

A Command Test is a Half Action for simple commands and a Full Action for more involved instructions.

Common Lore (Advanced, Investigation)
Intelligence

Skill Group: Adeptus Arbites, Machine Cult, Administratum, Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed, Imperial Guard, Imperium, Tech, Underworld, War. Other Common Lores may be available at the GM's discretion.

Use the Common Lore skill to recall the habits, institutions, traditions, public figures

and superstitions of a particular world, cultural group, organisation or race. This Skill does not represent scholarly learning (that is Scholastic Lore), nor obscure forbidden knowledge (that is Forbidden Lore), but rather the basics you learn by growing up or travelling extensively through a region.

When making a Common Lore Test, you recall basic information about the subject. Each degree of success reveals a bit more information as determined by the GM.

Adeptus Arbites: Knowledge of the various arms and sub-sects of the Arbites, including such things as their ranking structure and common procedures.

Machine Cult: A general understanding of the symbols and practices of the Mechanicus, as well as such things as formal greetings and identifying rankings.

Administratum: Broad knowledge of the inner workings, rules and regulations of the Administratum.

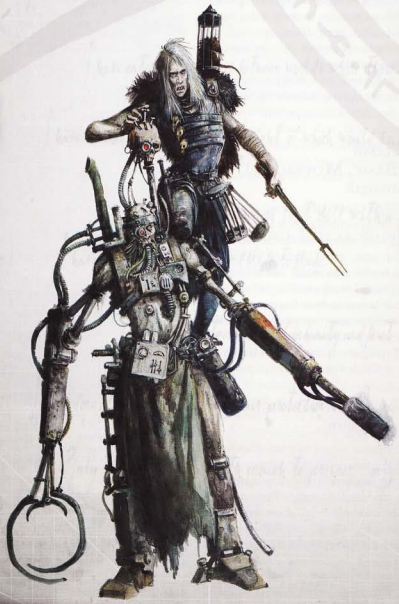
Ecclesiarchy: Understanding of the hierarchy of the Cult of the Emperor, its rankings, greetings and general practices.

Imperial Creed: Knowledge of the rites and practices of the Imperial Cult, the most common observances to the Emperor and the most well-known saints.

Imperial Guard: Basic information about the ranking systems, logistics and structure of the Imperial Guard as well as such things as their common practices, both tactical and strategic.

Imperium: Knowledge of the sectors, segmentums and most well-known worlds of the Imperium.

Tech: An understanding of simple litanies and rituals to sooth and appease machine spirits.



Underworld: Understanding of organised crime and sedition within the Imperium.

War: Knowledge of great battles, notable (and notorious) commanders and heroes, as well as famous stratagems.

Using Common Lore takes no time at all. You either know something or you do not.

Concealment (Basic)
Agility

Concealment is used whenever you want to hide from sight. To use this Skill, there must be appropriate terrain (trees, walls, buildings or some other obstacle) or some concealing effect like fog or darkness. Otherwise, the test automatically fails. Concealment is always an Opposed Test, in which you pit your Concealment Test against your opponent's Awareness Test (or half their Perception if they do not have the Awareness skill). You need not Test Concealment when you hide, only when someone is looking for you. If you succeed, you remain unseen.

If you remain perfectly still, you gain a +10 bonus to your Test.

A Concealment Test is usually a Half Action.

Contortionist (Basic, Movement)
Agility

The Contortionist skill is used to wriggle free from bonds, squeeze through a narrow opening, or slip out of chains.

Escape Bonds

Whenever you attempt to slip free from any kind of bonds, you make a Contortionist Test. The Difficulty depends on the Intelligence of the person who secured you in the first place. If their Intelligence exceeds your Agility Characteristic, the Test is Hard (–20). Other factors may worsen or diminish the Difficulty, such as whether simple manacles or complicated arbitrator restraint cuffs were used, or whether you were hastily secured or your captor took his time to ensure that you could not escape.

Escape Grapple
When you have been Grappled in combat, you may use the Contortionist skill to escape. Make a Contortionist Test opposed by the grappler's Strength Test. If you win you break free, otherwise you remain Grappled.

Squeeze through a Tight Space
You can make a Contortionist Test to squeeze through a tight space, such as between the bars of your jail cell, past a cave-in blocking your path or through the air vents of a space hulk. The difficulty of the Test is set according to how tight the space is. The GM is well within his rights to rule that a space is simply too narrow to squeeze through, and common sense applies as always. Success allows you to squeeze through unhindered, whereas failure means that the opening is too narrow after all. If you fail by five or more degrees, you become stuck until you can pass a subsequent Contortionist Test or until someone helps you out of your predicament by dragging you out, greasing the passage and so on.

Most Contortionist Tests take one minute, with each degree of success reducing this time by ten seconds. Escaping a Grapple is a Full Action attempted during combat.

Deceive (Basic, Interaction) Fellowship

The Deceive skill is used to lie and con others. You make Deceive Tests whenever you would convince others of something that is not necessarily true, want to dupe them or otherwise swindle and mislead them. You need not make a Deceive Test every time you lie to an NPC; only when you want to change their opinions of you or convince them of something.

A Deceive Test can affect a number of targets equal to your Fellowship Bonus and your targets must be able to see and hear you clearly, and understand what you say. Deceive is typically opposed by Scrutiny.

A Deceive Test typically takes one minute.

Demolition (Advanced, Crafting) Intelligence

You use the Demolition skill to blow things up without blowing yourself up at the same time! It is used to plant explosive devices and defuse bombs, as well as for the safe handling and manufacture of explosives. Demolition involves explosive devices that are planted or set, rather than those that are simply lobbed at the enemy.

Manufacture Explosives
Given enough time and resources you may use the Demolition skill to make an explosive device from scratch, or rig an otherwise normal device to explode. The Difficulty of the Test varies according to what ingredients you have available and how long you have to manufacture it. Rigging a frag grenade to explode when primed is a simple matter, but building a melta bomb from scratch is considerably harder. Generally, manufacturing explosives uses the rules for Crafting items described on **page 96**.

Planting Explosives
Explosive devices such as demolition charges, melta bombs and krak grenades are far more effective when planted on a target. To plant an explosive make a Demolition Test. Success indicates that you have successfully planted the explosive, with a trigger mechanism and condition of your choice. Possible triggers include timers, fuses, proximity sensors or remote controls. Failure indicates that you believe the explosives to be planted properly, but when triggered they fail to go off. If you fail by five or more degrees, you accidentally set the explosives off yourself! Boom!

You may voluntarily make the Test more difficult, for example increasing the time to plant a bomb in a more vulnerable location. By doing so, the Damage dealt is increased by +2 for each level of Difficulty increased or additional minute spent setting the explosive.

For every degree of success on the Demolition Test, the explosive is harder to detect and to defuse. Note the number of degrees of success down when you plant an explosive—it will be used in any Opposed Demolition Tests made to defuse or discover the bomb.

Defusing a Bomb
A character can also use the Demolition skill to defuse a bomb. To defuse a bomb before it explodes requires you to make an Opposed Demolition Test against the Demolition Test of the character who set the bomb in the first place. Success means that the bomb has been defused in time. Failure means that you have not disarmed the bomb yet, although in all but a catastrophic failure you can try again next Round, if you still have the time. Failing by five or more degrees indicates that you have accidentally set the bomb off by mistake!

A Demolition Test to plant or defuse an explosive is usually a Full Action. A test made to manufacture an explosive takes at least one minute, and usually considerably longer, depending on the complexity of the device.

Disguise (Basic) Fellowship

The Disguise skill is used to mask your true appearance. Appropriate clothing, props, make-up and prosthetics are often key to a successful disguise, as are more radical accoutrements such as plastic surgery, bionic implants or polymorphine. It is also possible to masquerade as a member of the opposite sex, a different race or a specific person, though these are more difficult to pull off. Often, Disguise is an Opposed Skill Test against your foes' Scrutiny.

The time it takes to create a disguise varies greatly depending on its complexity, but it usually requires a minimum of one minute to don a simple disguise.

Dodge (Basic, Combat) Agility

You may use the Dodge skill once per Round to negate a successful hand-to-hand or ranged attack. On a successful Test, the attack deals no Damage. See **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** for more information on Dodge.

A Dodge Test is a Reaction.

Drive (Advanced, Operator)
Agility

Skill Group: Ground Vehicle, Hover Vehicle, Walker

The Drive skill is used to control autos, trucks, landspeeders and other land-based or hover vehicles. Driving under normal conditions does not require a Test. However, Tests may be called for when navigating treacherous terrain, going at excessive speed or attempting dangerous manoeuvres. Opposed Drive Tests are made between pursuers and pursued during a chase.

A Drive Test is typically a Half Action, but certain manoeuvres may require more or less time.

Evaluate (Basic, Investigation)
Intelligence

You can use Evaluate to determine the approximate value of everyday objects, as well as valuables such as archeotech and other objects d'art. A successful Test reveals the item's market price and possibly a little bit about the item itself. Since a failed Test may result in the miscalculation of an item's true value, it is recommended that the GM rolls Evaluate Tests in secret and tells the player what his character believes to be true.

Evaluating an item usually takes at least one minute, although the GM may decide to give a bonus if the character takes more time or a penalty if he simply gives it a quick once over.

Forbidden Lore (Advanced, Investigation)
Intelligence

Skill Group: The Black Library, Cults, Daemonology, Heresy, Inquisition, Archeotech, Mutants, Ordos, Adeptus Mechanicus, Psykers, Warp and Xenos.

Forbidden Lore skills represent dangerous and often heretical knowledge gleaned from the myriad of unconventional sources an Acolyte often finds in his possession. This Skill represents a combination of scholarly learning and knowledge gained through practical experience. Simply possessing the Forbidden Lore skill is often sufficient to warrant termination at the hands of the Inquisition, and a character must tread carefully when revealing such knowledge.

When making a Forbidden Lore Test, you recall basic information about the subject. Each degree of success reveals a bit more information as determined by the GM.

A character that learns the Forbidden Lore skill in play, or who uses it to gain some insight into the mysteries of the galaxy, may also gain a number of Corruption or Insanity Points, depending on the danger the knowledge represents, at the GM's discretion.

The Black Library: Secret knowledge of the Black Library, its forbidden contents, strange industries and the unspeakable pale, hairless things that toil within its walls.

Cults: Knowledge of the most notorious Imperial Cults and some of their sub-sects and splinter cabals.

Daemonology: Terrible comprehension of some of the recorded warp entities and their various manifestations.

Heresy: Unpleasant appreciation for those acts and practices deemed heretical by the Imperium.

Inquisition: A general understanding (often based on hearsay and rumour) of that most terrible and secret of organisations known as the Inquisition.

Archeotech: Knowledge of the great tech devices of ancient times and clues to their function and purpose.

Mutants: Covering the study of both stable and unstable mutations and some of their more unfortunate results.

Ordos: Either Malleus, Hereticus or Xenos and granting some slightly more specialised knowledge of that particular ordo's practices.

Adeptus Mechanicus: An understanding of the followers of the

Vehicles in the Imperium

The Imperium is home to a dizzying array of vehicles, from rickety handcarts to mighty Emperor class battleships. Presented here are a few examples of the kinds of vehicles that Acolytes can expect to come across in Dark Heresy.

Riding Beasts

Across the galaxy there are innumerable creatures trained as riding beasts for mankind. The most common is the horse, which spread across the stars with mankind. Many planets are heavily dependent on such beasts, especially feral planets or low-tech agri-worlds.

Bikes

Bikes are common throughout the Imperium, ranging from a variety of civilian models to heavily armed and armoured vehicles designed for combat. Each can carry one driver and equipment, and a further passenger if room permits on the seat.

Guncutters

Guncutters are light aircraft, often capable of reaching low orbit. They are combat-ready and usually covered with heavy weaponry. As such, they immediately project an intimidating appearance, often useful for dangerous negotiations. Most can only carry a small crew and limited passengers.

Chimera

The Chimera Armoured Personnel Carrier is a staple transport and light support vehicle for military and paramilitary organisations throughout the Imperium. It has good armour, can mount a range of heavy weapons and has the capacity to carry up to twelve passengers along with a crew of three.

Aquila Lander

The Aquila Lander is commonly used by the Imperial Navy to carry dignitaries, officials and other high-ranking individuals to and from planetside to other orbiting vessels. The vehicle name comes from the distinctive double-headed "aquila" symbol of the Imperium embossed into its hull and wings. It has no interplanetary capability, but is an excellent light shuttle designed with style and comfort in mind for an official and his retinue, easily carrying seven plus a crew of one pilot.

Machine God, including such things as their observances, common beliefs and core philosophies.

Psykers: Skill in identifying the signs of psykers as well as the results of their powers and the extent of their capabilities.

Warp: An understanding of the ways of the warp, especially its interaction with realspace and how its tides and eddies can affect travel between the stars.

Xenos: Knowledge of the most commonly encountered species of aliens within the Imperium.

Using Forbidden Lore takes no time at all. You either know something or you do not, although the consequences for knowing such things can last a lifetime….

Gamble (Basic) Intelligence

The Gamble skill is used to participate in games of chance, such as card games or crude (and often violent) dice games popular amongst the lower classes. Each participant in a game wagers the same amount and makes an Opposed Gamble Test. The player with the most degrees of success (or fewest degrees of failure) wins the pot. You may, at your option, choose to throw the game, in which case you lose automatically.

You may also opt to use Sleight of Hand instead of Gamble to hide cards up your sleeve or palm dice. Success gives you a +20 bonus to your Gamble Test. However, failing by five or more degrees indicates that your ruse is revealed with predictably unpleasant consequences.

Making a Gamble Test can represent anything from controlling a single hand of cards to an entire day spent gaming.

Inquiry (Basic, Investigation) Fellowship

The Inquiry skill is your ability to pick up rumours, secrets and guarded information by asking questions, buying drinks and generally watching and listening for anything of interest that might bubble up. Inquiry can be used in one of two ways. The first and most common way is to pick up general information about local developments. A successful Test reveals basic information, with additional and higher-quality intelligence with each degree of success.

Inquiry can also be used as an Investigation skill, wherein you might be chasing after a particular fact or secret. For more information on investigation, see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game.**

Making an Inquiry Test usually represents an hour or so of activity, but may represent a much longer or shorter period as circumstances dictate.

Interrogation (Advanced, Investigation) Willpower

The key tool in an Inquisitor's arsenal is interrogation—the ability to extract quality information from an unwilling subject. There is a fine line between interrogation and crude torture. In the case of the latter, subjects tend to reveal whatever their tormenter wishes to hear, but in the case of the former, a skilled interrogator can tease out the darkest secrets by utilising a variety of devices, serums and techniques.

Gear, environmental conditions and circumstances can all apply additional modifiers at the GM's discretion. Make an Opposed Test, pitting your Interrogation skill against your opponent's Willpower. If you beat your opponent, you get one answer plus one other answer for each degree of success. If your opponent wins the Opposed Test, you get nothing of worth. On a serious failure, you botch the procedure and inflict 1d10 plus your Willpower Bonus in Damage. If you fail by five or more degrees, you deal Damage as before but your subject gains a +30 bonus to Willpower Tests made to resist Interrogation.

Each Interrogation Test inflicts one level of Fatigue on the target. An Interrogation Test consumes 1d5 hours of time.

Intimidate (Basic, Interaction) Strength

You make Intimidate Tests whenever you want to coerce or frighten individuals or a small group. You need not make an Intimidate Test every time you make a threat. Usually Intimidate is backed up by Strength, but more subtle threats such as blackmail may use Intelligence or Fellowship at the GM's option. The more degrees of success, the more frightened your opponent becomes.

An Intimidate Test can affect a number of targets equal to your Strength Bonus, Intelligence Bonus, or Fellowship Bonus, depending on the Characteristics you are using for your Test. In addition, your targets must be able to see and hear you clearly, and understand what you say.

An Intimidate Test is a Full Action.

Invocation (Advanced) Willpower

An Invocation Test allows you to boost your Power Roll when using Psychic Powers by an amount equal to your Willpower Bonus. An Invocation Test is a Full Action. During this time, you clear your mind through various means, such as muttering mantras, meditating, fingering psychic-foci and so on. A successful Test indicates that your mind is well prepared to touch the warp. On the next Round, you may add your Willpower Bonus in addition to any other bonus you add to your Power Roll.

Example

Doc Skul decides to visit the Inflict Pain Minor Psychic Power on his hated rival, Slippery Zim. He spends a full Turn shaking his bone rattle and muttering spitefully under his breath as part of his Invocation Test. He rolls to see if these preparations will help him Focus Power. He rolls 15—a success! On the following Round, he attempts to manifest Inflict Pain. He gets 4 on his Power Roll and adds his Willpower Bonus of 3 to this as normal. Because of his successful Invocation, he may now add an additional 3 points to this roll. In total, Doc Skul has made a Power Roll of 10 (4+3+3=10). His Focus Power Action succeeds, and Slippery Zim doubles over in pain!

Failure on an Invocation Test indicates that you are not composed enough to gain any benefits from your preparations. If you make a successful Invocation Test and then do not take the Focus Power Action on the following Turn, there are no side effects (aside from you possibly looking a little foolish).

Lip Reading (Advanced)
Perception

Use the Lip Reading skill to "listen in" on conversations that take place out of earshot. To use this Skill, you must have an unobstructed view of the speaker's mouth and you must also be able to understand the language spoken. Distance is the biggest factor. The further away the subject is, the harder the Test. The base Difficulty is Challenging (+0), but it worsens by one step for every ten metres of distance. Note that equipment that magnifies vision can be used to offset this penalty and even provide bonuses.

A successful Test reveals the general gist of the conversation, such as the person is talking about the weather, new tariffs at the space dock, and so on. Each degree of success reveals more specific details.

A Lip Reading Test is a Full Action, though it lasts as long as the target speaks.

Literacy (Advanced)
Intelligence

The Literacy skill enables you to read any language you can speak. You normally do not need to Test Literacy for everyday instances of reading or writing, but the GM may call for a Literacy Test when you attempt to read a challenging dialect, poor penmanship, decipher obscure phraseology, archaic usage or unusual idioms.

To read one page of text—approximately 750 words—a Literacy Test takes about a minute.

Logic (Basic, Investigation)
Intelligence

Logic represents your proficiency at mathematics and your ability at problem solving. Logic Tests might be made to decipher a code or to solve a particularly troublesome equation. Logic is also used by Tech-Priests to incant mathematical rituals on machinery. Note that Logic is a purely theoretical Skill—Tech-Use is its practical counterpart.

A Logic Test usually takes one minute of pondering and thinking, although especially difficult problems might require much longer.

Medicae (Advanced)
Intelligence

The Medicae skill is used to treat and repair injuries by closing wounds and restoring the balance of the body's humors. There are two general methods for using Medicae: First Aid and Extended Care. You can use the former to attend fallen or injured comrades, while the latter serves to hasten the removal of damage.

First Aid

Using the Medicae skill to perform First Aid offers a quick fix for injured or dying characters. A successful Medicae Test removes Damage equal to your Intelligence Bonus to Lightly Wounded characters, 1 Damage from Heavily Wounded characters and 1 point of Critical Damage from Critically Wounded characters. On a failure, the patient is not adversely affected and simply removes Damage at the natural healing rate. However, a failure by three or more degrees indicates that Lightly or Heavily Wounded take a point of Damage, whilst a character on 0 Wounds must make a Toughness Test or die.

First Aid may only be applied to each Wound once and is a Full Action by you and your patient.

Extended Care

Extended Care speeds the healing process. You can attend a number of patients equal to your Intelligence Bonus. Each patient above this number imposes a cumulative –10 penalty to your Medicae Tests to provide extended care. For Lightly Wounded patients make one Test at the end of each day. For Heavily or Critically Wounded patients, Test once at the end of each week. On a success, your patient removes twice the normal Damage (removing Critical Damage first then normal Damage), plus 1 Damage for each degree of success. On a failure, your patients are not adversely affected, removing Damage at the normal rates. A failure by three or more degrees indicates that all Lightly Wounded or Heavily Wounded characters take 1 Damage—use Sudden Death to resolve Critical Damage. Failing by five or more degrees indicates that all patients take 1d10 Damage—again, use Sudden Death to resolve Critical Damage.

For more information on Healing see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**.

Special: The Master Chirgeon talent expands your options with the Medicae skill, see **page 118**.

Navigation (Advanced)
Intelligence

Skill Group: Surface, Stellar.

You employ the Navigation skill whenever you want to use maps, technical readouts, innate knowledge and landmarks to chart a proper course and avoid becoming lost. A successful Navigation Test can also estimate travel times based on geography, cosmography, time of year, weather and so on. Under normal circumstances, a single successful Test each day is sufficient to keep you on track, though the GM may call for additional Tests if there are unusual conditions, such as fluctuating landmasses, swirling eddies of plasma or violent storms.

Surface Navigation is used to navigate across a planet's surface, using logi-compasses, map readouts and geographical knowledge.

Stellar Navigation is used to navigate in space between planets, using star charts and carto mantic rituals.

A Navigation Test usually represents several hours of charting courses, consulting maps and making heading corrections, but it may take one minute or less if its purpose is just to find out where you are.

Performer (Advanced)
Fellowship

Skill Group: Dancer, Musician, Singer, Storyteller. Others may be available with the GM's discretion.

Use the Performer skill to entertain and enthrall crowds of spectators. The Performer skill may be used to earn an income, much as with Trade. In addition, the Performer skill may be substituted for certain Skills under specific circumstances.

Charming Performance: You may make a Difficult (–10) Performer (Storyteller) or Performer (Singer) Test instead of Charm, to win round your audience, causing them to respond more favourably to you.

Enthralling Performance: You may make a Difficult (–10) Performer (Musician) or Performer (Singer) Test instead of Blather, utterly enthralling and distracting your audience for a moment. This use is subject to the normal rules governing the Blather skill.

A Performer Test can take a variable amount of time, and can represent anything from a short poem or song to an elaborate and long-winded opera.

Pilot (Advanced, Operator)
Agility

Skill Group: Civilian Craft, Military Craft, Spacecraft.

The Pilot skill is used to fly anything from small atmospheric craft such as ornithopters and landers, all the way up to spaceship-sized vessels. Piloting a ship under normal conditions does not require a Test. However, Tests may be called for when flying in conditions such as storms, going at excessive speed or attempting dangerous manoeuvres.

When chasing another vehicle, you and your opponent make Opposed Pilot Tests.

A Pilot Test is typically a Half Action, but certain manoeuvres may require more or less time.

Psyniscience (Advanced)
Perception

You can use the Psyniscience skill to become attuned with the ebb and flow of the warp and the immaterium. The most common application of this Skill is to detect the presence or absence of Daemons or other psykers. To do so, make a Psyniscience Test. On a success, you extend your senses out to a number of metres equal to your Perception Bonus plus 1d10. Each degree of success allows you to add 1d10+PB metres to your roll.

You can also Test to detect unusual psychic phenomena, areas where realspace has been "disrupted", areas where the immaterium seems to be blocked (or shielded against), and so on. The GM may wish to make the Test in secret depending on just what it is that the psyker may detect.

The results of any Psyniscience Test are summarised on the following chart:

Degrees of Success	Result
Standard	Awareness that success the immaterium is being disrupted.
One	General location from where the phenomena emanates.
Two+	Exact location of the individual channelling or blocking the immaterium.

Using Psyniscience is a Full Action.

Scholastic Lore (Advanced, Investigation)
Intelligence

Skill Group: Archaic, Astromancy, Beasts, Bureaucracy, Chymistry, Cryptology, Heraldry, Imperial Creed, Judgement, Legend, Numerology, Occult, Philosophy, Tactica Imperialis.

The Scholastic Lore skill grants you knowledge of a particular scholarly subject. A successful Test enables you to recall pertinent facts and—if you have access to the proper facilities or resources—to do research. Scholastic Lore represents a depth of learning far beyond Common Lore and it requires extensive study.

You make Scholastic Lore Tests to identify an object, creature or place that falls under your particular area of expertise. A successful Test about a subject related to your speciality reveals the basic information. Each degree of success reveals more information as follows:

Degrees of Success	Result
Standard success	Reveals basic information known to people of your training.
One	Reveals uncommonly known information, even among your peers.
Two	Reveals obscure information about the subject. Such information is known to but a few scholars.
Three+	Reveals extremely obscure information, known only to a handful of experts.

In some areas, Scholastic Lore overlaps with Common Lore and Forbidden Lore, but almost always represents a far greater—and more academic—level of study. A character with Common Lore (Imperial Creed) might understand the day-to-day rituals and prayers gained from living under the creed, whereas a character with Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) might be able to explain why such rituals exist and how they have changed over the millennia.

To recall a fact or titbit about the subject, a Scholastic Lore Test takes no time at all. You either know the fact or not. Researching, assuming you are in the proper environment to do so, takes far longer. You may make one Academic Lore Test every 1d10 hours. See **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** for details.

Archaic: An understanding of the murky past of the Imperium and how the long millennia have changed the face of mankind.

Astromancy: A knowledge of stars, heavenly bodies and the nature of worlds, as well as theoretical understanding of how to use telescopes, astrolabes and so on.

Beasts: An understanding of the classification of animals and familiarity with the properties of many types of semi-sentient creatures.

Bureaucracy: An understanding of how to deal with governments, particularly the Administratum, and their many and varied departments, forms and policies.

Chymistry: A knowledge of chemicals, their alchemical applications and their use throughout the Imperium.

Cryptology: An understanding of codes, ciphers, secret languages and numerical keys. This may be used to either crack a code, or create one.

Heraldry: A grasp of the principles of heraldry, as well as a knowledge of the most common liveries, seals and heraldic devices used in the Imperium.

Imperial Creed: An understanding of the rituals of the Ecclesiarchy, the construction of their temples and the finer points of liturgy. May be used to conduct rituals for others.

Judgement: Knowledge of the proper punishments for the myriad of crimes and heresies punishable by Imperial law.

Legend: A knowledge of the great histories of old, such as the terrible Horus Heresy and the Dark Age of Technology.

Numerology: An understanding of the mysterious properties of numbers, from Catastrophe theory to the Sadleirian litany.

Occult: An understanding of occult ritual, theories and superstitions, as well as the better known mystical uses of occult items.

Philosophy: A knowledge of the theories of thought, belief and criticism. May be used for debate and for creating philosophical works.

Tactica Imperialis: A grounding in the Tactica Imperialis, as well as other theories of war, troop deployment and battle techniques. May be used to plan a battle or deduce the likely flow of war.

Scrutiny (Basic)
Perception

Use the Scrutiny skill to make assessments about people you encounter, to determine if someone is lying to you, to sense ulterior motives and generally appraise the worth of another being. When trying to perceive a falsehood, or some other form of deception, you make an Opposed Test, pitting your Scrutiny against the target's Deceive. If you beat your opponent by achieving more degrees of success, you get a hunch that something is not right.

Note that Scrutiny does not confer telepathy and cannot be used to reveal all the secrets about a target. Rather, this Skill serves to counteract attempts to manipulate you through Interaction skills such as Charm, Deceive and Intimidate.

Search (Basic)
Perception

Use the Search skill whenever you want to examine an area for concealed objects, clues and anything else that might be hidden. Search differs from Awareness in that you Test Awareness passively, Testing whenever some hidden danger might appear or to notice a small detail as you move past it. Search, on the other hand, represents an active effort to check an area.

A single Search Test is sufficient to cover a small room or area. When an object or individual is deliberately hidden, a Search Test is resolved as an Opposed Test, pitting your Search Test against your target's Concealment Test.

A Search Test takes a minimum of five minutes, dependent on the area being examined.

Secret Tongue (Advanced)
Intelligence

Skill Group: Acolyte, Administratum, Ecclesiarchy, Gutter, Military, Tech. Other secret tongues may be available at the GM's discretion.

Secret Tongue is used to speak and comprehend a particularly obscure and arcane language known to only those of a specific profession, organisation or class. Secret tongues are more like codes than real languages. By the use of signifiers, body language and code words, users can speak in one tongue but use a secret language to impart deeper meaning or to relay a lot of information quickly. Under normal circumstances, Skill Tests are unnecessary if all speakers know the secret language. They may be required in adverse conditions such as communicating in a noisy venue, or during the chaos of battle. Groups of Acolytes may develop their own coded language, unique to their cell. This is represented by the Secret Tongue (Acolyte) skill.

Acolyte: A pre-arranged series of code phrases and inflections intelligible only to a fellow cell member. Note that each cell of Acolytes has a unique version of this language.

Administratum: A collection of acronyms, jargon and procedural formalities used by the Administratum. Note that this is an exceedingly long-winded language.

Ecclesiarchy: An allegorical language of devotion and politics, full of strange metaphors and specialised High Gothic.

Gutter: A pidgin version of Low Gothic spoken by the lowest levels of Imperial society, incorporating a mishmash of colourful slang terms.

Military: A selection of coded phrases, jargon, references to ancient battles and a surprising number of terms for death.

Tech: The Lingua Technis of the Adeptus Mechanicus, comprising of jargon, binary and in some cases low or high frequency sound waves.

A Secret Tongue Test is usually a Free Action.

Security (Advanced)
Agility

You can use the Security skill to bypass locks and other security systems. The Difficulty of the Test depends on the quality of the defence. Generally one Test is sufficient, but more complicated systems may require additional Tests or degrees of success.

A Security Test takes one minute, with each degree of success reducing this time by ten seconds.

Shadowing (Advanced)
Agility

The Shadowing skill allows you to follow another creature or vehicle without being seen. Shadowing differs from Concealment in that you are moving while masking your presence, often slipping from one place of cover to another or, if that is not possible, acting as if you are doing something else, such as reading through a data-slate, scrutinizing a wanted poster or anything else that makes you blend in with your environment. A Shadowing Test is always an Opposed Test, pitting your Skill against your opponent's Awareness skill (or half their Perception if they do not have the Awareness skill).

A single Shadowing Test is sufficient to follow your opponent unseen for one minute.

Silent Move (Basic)
Agility

Use the Silent Move skill whenever you want to creep about without making a noise. The Difficulty depends on the surface on which you walk—broken glass, twigs, gravel and so on, can all make extra noise. A Silent Move Test is always an Opposed Test, pitting your Skill against your opponent's Awareness skill (or half their Perception if they do not have the Awareness skill).

A Silent Move Test is usually a Free Action made as part of a Move Action.

Sleight of Hand (Advanced)
Agility

The Sleight of Hand skill is used to palm objects, pick pockets or perform tricks with small items like coins and cards. The smaller the object, the easier it is to pick up, which is reflected in the task's Difficulty as set by the GM. In most cases, a Sleight of Hand Test is an Opposed Test, pitting your Skill against your opponent's Awareness skill (or half their Perception if they do not have the Awareness skill).

You may also opt to use Sleight of Hand instead of Gamble to hide cards up your sleeve or palm dice. See the Gamble skill for more information.

Sleight of Hand is usually a Half Action. You may make a Sleight of Hand Test as a Free Action, but you worsen the Difficulty by –10.

Speak Language (Advanced)
Intelligence

Skill Group: High Gothic, Hive Dialect, Low Gothic, Ship Dialect, Tribal Dialect. Other languages may be available at the GM's discretion.

The Speak Language skill is used to communicate with others using a common tongue. Although the people of the Imperium are widely scattered, they are united by an official tongue—that of Low Gothic. However, every world has its own local dialects and peculiarities, and sometimes even its own language. Under normal circumstances, Tests are unnecessary if all speakers know the language.

High Gothic: The language of nobility, law and Ecclesiarchy liturgy.

Hive Dialect: A debased form of Low Gothic unique to a given hive.

Low Gothic: The common tongue of the Imperium.

Ship Dialect: Code, slang and idiom unique to a given vessel.

Tribal Dialect: The rough and primitive tongue spoken by the natives of a particular planet.

A Speak Language Test is usually a Free Action.

Communicating Without Language

In a place as vast as the Imperium, player characters are likely to encounter xenos that are not enlightened by the glory of the Emperor and are ignorant of the favoured tongue. Whilst many Acolytes may be inclined to purge the xenos with a well-placed shot from a bolter, there may be times when communication is necessary. In these cases, a character must use pantomime to get his point across. To do so, the character must make a Fellowship Test and the target must make an Intelligence Test. Obviously, phrases such as "he's behind you" are relatively easy to deliver, whilst more complicated comments might be very difficult, or even impossible to deliver. Each degree of success on the Fellowship Test grants the target a +10 bonus to its Intelligence Test to figure out what the character is saying. A failed Fellowship Test indicates that the message is incomprehensible. A failed Intelligence Test means the wrong message comes across, which may result in unfortunate consequences.

Survival (Advanced)
Intelligence

You use the Survival skill to subsist in the wild. This Skill encompasses such activities as fishing, game hunting, making fires, finding edible food, constructing improvised shelters, finding safe resting places, and so on. The Difficulty of the Test depends on the environment, with death worlds being much more difficult to survive on than an agri-world.

Failing a Survival Test usually indicates that you have failed to find what you are looking for, either because you are inept or because it is simply not there to be found. Failing by five or more degrees indicates that you fail spectacularly, usually by bringing trouble down on your head—perhaps by triggering a rockslide, or stirring up a den of angry silt-bears or foolishly consuming poisoned berries.

A Survival Test takes one hour, with each degree of success reducing this time by ten minutes. Under certain circumstances, like trying to find a crude shelter from a meteor storm, the Difficulty can be increased and the time taken reduced to one minute.

Swim (Basic, Movement)
Strength

The Swim skill is used to swim and dive. Swimming under normal conditions does not require a Test. However, Tests may be called for when waters are rough or when swimming for an extended period is required. For more information on the Swim skill, see Swimming in **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 214**.

The Swim skill assumes a character is attempting to swim in water, but on alien worlds a character might encounter unusual substances such as lakes of sulphuric acid. The Difficulty of the Test might be increased to represent particular conditions. Swim does not protect a character from harm when swimming in toxic or otherwise dangerous liquids, nor does it negate the need for protective clothing.

A Swim test is a Free Action made as part of a Move Action.

Tech-Use (Advanced) Intelligence

A character may use Tech-Use to repair mechanical items and to work out how unusual technical artefacts work. When using a basic, simple piece of mechanical equipment under normal circumstances, such as a vox or auspex, no Test is required. A Tech-Use Test is needed if the item is unusual, malfunctioning or conditions are especially troublesome, such as attempting to use an auspex during an electrical storm, or trying to get an ancient warp engine to start up after a thousand years' disuse.

Tech-Use may also be used to repair faulty or damaged items, the difficulty depending on the complexity of the item and the damage dealt to it.

Tech-Use might sometimes be used to build an item from scratch, although a relevant Trade skill is more commonly used.

A Tech-Use Test to figure out how an item works usually takes one minute, but might take less or more time depending on the complexity. A Test made to repair an item can take much longer, usually one hour but reduced by ten minutes for every degree of success.

Tracking (Advanced) Intelligence

The Tracking skill is used to follow prey, be it animal or otherwise. Following obvious tracks requires no Test and can be done without slowing down. However, any instance when climate, lighting or terrain conditions would interfere always require a Tracking Test. The Difficulty depends on the quality of the prints and the circumstances. For example, a recent snowfall would make tracking prints Difficult (–10) or even Hard (–20). When following obscure tracks, the tracker's Movement rate drops to half.

Sometimes you will be following quarry that has attempted to cover its tracks, in which case this becomes an Opposed Test made against the quarry's Concealment Test result.

You may also make Tests to deduce your distance from the quarry, their numbers and their racial type.

A Tracking Test is a Free Action made as part of a Move Action.

Trade (Advanced, Crafting) Various

Skill Group: Agri (S), Apothecary (Int), Armourer (S), Artist (Ag), Cartographer (Ag), Cook (Int), Copyist (Int), Embalmer (Int), Mason (Ag), Merchant (Fel), Miner (S), Prospector (S), Scrimshawer (Ag), Smith (S), Soothsayer (Fel) Tanner (S), Technomat (Int), Valet (Fel) and Wright (Int). Others may be available at the GM's discretion.

Having a Trade skill indicates that you know how to practice a trade or craft. With this Skill, you can make a living or create items suited to your trade. You can also make a Trade Test to identify the handiwork of a particular craftsman, or to know something about a particular item. See **page 96** for rules on Crafting.

A Trade Test normally represents a day's hard work. A Trade Test made to identify an item or craftsman is usually a Full Action, during which time the tradesman sucks his teeth and sighs before making his prognosis.

Agri: Used to grow, care and harvest crops and animals.

Apothecary: Used to blend and prepare herbal remedies.

Armourer: Used to create and maintain armour and weapons.

Artist: Used to create works of art.

Cartographer: Used to take accurate measurements and turn them into maps.

Cook: Used to create and identify food.

Copyist: Used to swiftly copy text, illuminate manuscripts and forge written material.

Embalmer: Used to prepare and preserve corpses.

Mason: Used to assess and construct stone buildings.

Merchant: Used to find, bargain and sell trade goods.

Miner: Used to extract minerals, maintain mines and identify common hazards.

Prospector: Used to find and identify valuable materials.

Scrimshawer: Used to inscribe patterns, text and imagery onto materials.

Smith: Used to forge metals into shape.

Soothsayer: Used to give the appearance of telling the future.

Tanner: Used to prepare and tan hides.

Technomat: Used to maintain mechanical and tech items, often without any understanding of a machine's true purpose.

Valet: Used to refine the appearance, give droll asides and tend to the needs of superiors in a gentlemanly fashion.

Wright: Used to assess, design and construct buildings, vehicles and the like.

Wrangling (Advanced) Intelligence

This Skill may be used in order to ride domesticated animals of appropriate size.

The Wrangling skill also allows you to care for and control domesticated animals, like bloodhounds, Spike Pigs, horses, Grox and the like. Routine care and feeding requires no Test. Tests are most commonly made to spot developing illnesses or signs of discomfort, or for special grooming (preparing a mount for a parade, for instance).

Wrangling can also be used to train animals to perform tricks and obey simple commands. Properly training an animal takes some time. Tests should be made once a week during training. A simple trick can be learned with one successful Test, a moderately difficult trick can be learned with three successful Tests and a difficult trick can be learned with ten successful Tests. Common tricks include guarding, fetching, attacking, and so on.

You may also use this Skill to befriend animals. Domestic animals are always friendly to you. Wild animals or those trained to be hostile (like attack dogs) can be calmed with a successful Test. GMs may impose penalties for particularly loyal or ornery animals.

Wrangling is of no use against cyber-animals such as familiars, even if they are built to resemble an animal.

A Wrangling Test takes a variable amount of time, depending on what the character is attempting to accomplish. Training an animal takes at least a week of hard work, whereas attempting to befriend an animal is a Full Action.

IV

Talents

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Chapter IV: Talents

"Use the talent that your toil has made, for what use a solar-cell in the shade?"

— Catuldynus, *The Once Pure Hive.*

An Acolyte's duties will see him performing all sorts of deeds in the name of the Inquisition. From fighting debased mutants to investigating ancient xenos ruins, Acolytes will need a wide array of abilities to survive in the 41st Millennium.

Just like Skills, Talents represent some of the things your character can do. These are often things your character has learnt through training, such as running faster or being able to shrug off near-fatal wounds. Sometimes they are special or unique powers, such as Psychic Talents, or miraculous Tech-Priest abilities. Unlike Skills, you usually don't need to test against Talents to activate them. Most are always active. In fact, there are many Talents that will give you bonuses to your Skill Tests, or even allow you to use Skills in different ways.

Deciding which Talents you would like to give your character is an enjoyable process, but it can be very hard to choose. Fortunately, the advancement schemes in **Chapter II: Career Paths** provide plenty of help.

Gaining Talents

During character creation you will automatically receive some Talents, and be asked to choose between others (see **Chapter I: Character Creation** for more information). Once you've started playing, you can use Experience Points to purchase new Talents from the various Advancement Schemes in your Career Path (see **Chapter II: Career Paths** for more information).

Talent Groups

Some of the listed Talents are actually groups of related abilities. Talent groups are listed under one entry for the sake of ease, but each one is a separate ability that must be acquired individually. For example, Basic Weapon Training (Las) and Basic Weapon Training (Bolt) are different Talents. If a character wanted to effectively use both a lasgun and a boltgun they would require both Talents.

Prerequisites

Some Talents may require the character to meet some form of prerequisite before they can be acquired. This is usually a certain level in a Characteristic or another Skill or Talent, though sometimes a Talent may require something more dramatic such as the character being able to use Psychic Powers.

Talents

"Choice is the one burden we need not suffer."

— Indentees of Gorgonid Mine.

Descriptions of the various Talents follow.

Table 4-1: Talents

Talent Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Air of Authority	Fel 30	Affect more targets with Test.
Ambidextrous	Ag 30	Use either hand equally well.
Armour of Contempt	WP 40	You are resilient to Corruption.
Arms Master	BS 30, Basic Weapon Training (any two)	Use non-proficient weapons at –10 penalty.
Assassin Strike	Ag 40, Acrobatic	On a successful Acrobatics Test after making a melee attack, you may move as a Free Action.
Autosanguine	—	Heal 2 Damage/day, always Lightly Wounded.
Basic Weapon Training†	—	Use weapon group without penalty.
Battle Rage	Frenzy	Parry while Frenzied.
Berserk Charge	—	Gain +20 bonus when Charging.
Binary Chatter	—	+10 bonus to control servitors.
Blademaster	WS 30, Melee Weapon Training (any)	Re-roll a missed attack, once per Round.
Blind Fighting	Per 30	Suffer half the usual penalties when vision is obscured.
Bulging Biceps	S 45	Remove bracing requirement for certain weapons.
Catfall	Ag 30	Reduce falling Damage.
Chem Geld	—	Immune to seduction, resistant to charm.
Cleanse and Purify	Basic Weapon Training (Flame)	Penalty to avoid being hit by your flamer attacks.

† *Denotes Talent group.*

Combat Master	WS 30	Opponents get no bonus for outnumbering you.
Concealed Cavity	—	You have a secret compartment on you.
Corpus Conversion	Psy Rating 2	Take Damage to improve Power Roll.
Counter-attack	WS 40	Gain free attack with a successful Parry.
Crack Shot	BS 40	Deal +2 Critical Damage with a ranged weapon.
Crippling Strike	WS 50	Deal +1d5–1 Critical Damage with a melee weapon.
Crushing Blow	S 40	Deal +2 Damage with a melee weapon.
Dark Soul	—	Take half the penalty on Malignancy Tests.
Deadeye Shot	BS 30	Called Shots are at –10 penalty.
Decadence	T 30	Gain uncanny resistance to drugs and alcohol.
Deflect Shot	Ag 50	You can Parry Primitive ranged attacks.
Die Hard	WP 40	Re-roll death chance incurred by Blood Loss.
Disarm	Ag 30	Force opponent to drop his weapon.
Discipline Focus†	Psy Rating 3	Gain +2 on Power Rolls to manifest discipline powers.
Disturbing Voice	—	+10 bonus to Intimidate and Interrogation, –10 penalty to Fel.
Double Team	—	Gain additional +10 bonus for ganging up.
Dual Shot	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder	One Ballistic Skill Test hits target twice.
Dual Strike	Ag 40, Two-Weapon Wielder	One Weapon Skill Test hits target twice.
Electrical Succour	Tech-Priest	+10 bonus to Toughness Tests to remove Fatigue.
Electro Graft Use	—	+10 bonus to Inquiry, Tech Use, Common Knowledge.
Energy Cache	Tech-Priest	Luminen Blast, Charge and Shock are Fatigue free.
Exotic Weapon Training†	—	Use an exotic weapon without penalty.
Favoured by the Warp	WP 35	Roll twice for Psychic Phenomena (see **page 162**) and take the better result.
Fearless	—	Immune to Fear and Pinning.
Feedback Screech	Tech-Priest	30m radius, Test Willpower or lose Half Action.
Ferric Lure	Tech-Priest	WP Test to call 1kg/WP Bonus of metal objects.
Ferric Summons	Tech-Priest, Ferric Lure	WP Test to call 2kg/WP Bonus of metal objects.
Flagellant	—	Injure self to gain mental fortitude.
Foresight	Int 30	Contemplate to gain +10 bonus on next Test.
Frenzy	—	Enter psychotic rage to gain combat bonuses.
Furious Assault	WS 35	On a successful WS Test, gain a free second attack.
Good Reputation†	Fel 50, Peer	You have a good reputation amongst a certain group.
Gun Blessing	Tech-Priest	Unjam a number of guns equal to Int bonus in a 10m radius.
Gunslinger	BS 40, Two-Weapon Wielder	Fighting with two pistols incurs only a –10 penalty.
Hard Target	Ag 40	Opponents take –20 to BS Tests when you Charge or Run.
Hardy	T 40	You always heal as if Lightly Wounded.
Hatred‡	—	Gain +10 bonus to attack hated creatures.
Heavy Weapon Training†	—	Gain proficiency with a heavy weapon group.
Heightened Senses†	—	Gain +10 bonus to a particular sense.
Hip Shooting	BS 40, Ag 40	Gain a free attack when you make a Full Move.
Independent Targeting	BS 40	Fire at two or more targets further than 10m apart.
Insanely Faithful	—	Re-roll the effects of Shock.
Into the Jaws of Hell	Iron Discipline	Minions gain immunity to Pinning and Fear whilst in your presence.
Iron Discipline	WP 30, Command	Minions can re-roll Fear and Pinning Tests.
Iron Jaw	T 40	Toughness Test to overcome Stunning.
Jaded	WP 30	Never gain Insanity Points from ordinary horrors.
Leap Up	Ag 30	Stand up as a Free Action.
Light Sleeper	Per 30	Count as awake, even when asleep.
Lightning Attack	Swift Attack	Attack three times with a Full Action.
Lightning Reflexes	—	Add twice AB to Initiative rolls.
Litany of Hate	Hatred	Extend benefits of hatred to allies.
Logis Implant	—	+10 bonus on WS and BS on successful Tech-Use Test.
Luminen Blast	Tech-Priest	1d10+WP Bonus Energy Damage Bolt. Causes Fatigue.
Luminen Charge	Tech-Priest	Toughness Test to power/charge tech. Causes Fatigue.

†*Denotes Talent group.*

Luminen Shock	Tech-Priest	1d10+3 Energy Damage Shock. Causes Fatigue.
Maglev Grace	Tech-Priest	Hover 1d10+TB minutes once per day.
Maglev Transcendence	Tech-Priest, Maglev Grace	Hover 2d10+TB minutes twice per day.
Marksman	BS 35	No penalties for firing at Long or Extreme range.
Master Chirurgeon	Medicae +10	Perform advanced medical procedures.
Master Orator	Fel 30	Affect 10 times the normal numbers with a Fellowship Test.
Mechadendrite Use†	Tech-Priest	You can use a type of mechadendrite.
Meditation	—	You may enter a trance to remove Fatigue.
Melee Weapon Training†	—	Gain proficiency with a group of melee weapons.
Mental Fortress	WP 50, Strong-Minded	Gain protection against psychic attacks.
Mental Rage	Frenzy	You may use Psychic Powers while in the throes of Frenzy.
Mighty Shot	BS 40	Deal +2 Damage with ranged attacks.
Mimic	—	You can copy voices.
Minor Psychic Power†		You gain a Minor Psychic Power.
Nerves of Steel	—	Re-roll failed Tests to avoid Pinning.
Orthoproxy	—	+20 bonus to resist mind control or interrogation.
Paranoia	—	You are alert for danger.
Peer†	Fel 30	Gain +10 bonus on Fel Tests to interact with organisation.
Pistol Training†	—	Gain proficiency with a group of pistol weapons.
Power Well	Psy Rating 2	Gain bonus to Power Rolls.
Precise Blow	WS 40, Sure Strike	No penalty for attacks against specific Hit Locations.
Prosanguine	—	Heal 1d5 Damage once per day.
Psy Rating 1	—	Gain powers, roll 1d10+WP bonus for Power Rolls.
Psy Rating 2	Psy Rating 1	Gain powers, roll 2d10+WP bonus for Power Rolls.
Psy Rating 3	Psy Rating 2	Gain powers, roll 3d10+WP bonus for Power Rolls.
Psy Rating 4	Psy Rating 3	Gain powers, roll 4d10+WP bonus for Power Rolls.
Psy Rating 5	Psy Rating 4	Gain powers, roll 5d10+WP bonus for Power Rolls.
Psy Rating 6	Psy Rating 5	Gain powers, roll 6d10+WP bonus for Power Rolls.
Psychic Power†	—	Gain an extra Psychic Power.
Quick Draw	—	Ready as a Free Action.
Rapid Reaction	Ag 40	Test Ag to negate Surprise.
Rapid Reload	—	Reduce reload time.
Resistance†	—	Gain +10 bonus to Resistance Tests.
Rite of Awe	Tech-Priest	50m radius, –10 to all Tests due to Fear.
Rite of Fear	Tech-Priest	Fear rating 1 for two minutes. 50m radius.
Rite of Pure Thought	Tech-Priest	You are immune to emotion.
Sharpshooter	BS 40, Deadeye Shot	No penalties for Called Shots.
Sound Constitution	—	Gain an additional Wound.
Sprint	—	Move more quickly in combat.
Step Aside	Ag 40, Dodge	Gain extra Dodge in a Round.
Street Fighting	—	Deal +2 Critical Damage with knives or unarmed attacks.
Strong Minded	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)	Re-roll failed WP Tests made to resist Psychic Powers.
Sure Strike	WS 30	Choose Hit Location on a successful attack.
Swift Attack	WS 35	Attack twice with a Full Action.
Takedown	—	Make a special attack to Stun your opponent.
Talented†	—	Gain +10 bonus to corresponding Skill Test.
Technical Knock	Int 30	Unjam a gun as a Half Action.
Thrown Weapon Training†	—	Gain proficiency with a group of thrown weapons.
Total Recall	Int 30	Remember trivial facts and minor details.
True Grit	T 40	Reduce Critical Damage you take.
Two-Weapon Wielder†	WS 35 or BS35, Ag 35	Attack twice when wielding two weapons.
Unremarkable	—	You are easily forgettable.
Unshakeable Faith	—	You may re-roll failed Fear Tests.
Wall of Steel	Ag 35	Gain an extra Parry each Round.

† *Denotes Talent group.*

Air of Authority

Prerequisites: Fellowship 30.

You exude a natural aura of command, instilling subservience in all around you. On a successful Command Test, you may affect a number of targets equal to 1d10 plus your Fellowship Bonus. Such is the authority in your voice that even those who are not in your service jump to attention when you speak. You may attempt to get non-servants to follow your commands by making a Command Test with a –10 penalty.

Ambidextrous

Prerequisites: Agility 30.

You can use either hand equally well. You do not take the normal –20 penalty for making attacks with your secondary hand.

Special: If you have the Two-Weapon Wielder talent, the penalty for making attacks with both weapons in the same Turn drops to –10.

Armour of Contempt

Prerequisites: Willpower 40.

You drape yourself in the armour of scorn and hatred. Whenever you would gain Corruption Points, reduce the amount you would earn by 1. In addition, you may Test Willpower as a Free Action to ignore the effects of your accumulated Corruption for one Round.

Arms Master

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 30, Basic Weapon Training in at least two groups of weapons.

Such is your skill with a gun that you are able to pick up an unfamiliar weapon and use it as though you had trained with it for years. You can use ranged weapons you do not have training in at –10 rather than –20.

Assassin Strike

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Acrobatics.

You are like a serene dancer when engaged in combat, leaping and spiralling between dismembered corpses like some butcher ballerina. Whenever you engage an opponent and make a melee attack, you may make an Acrobatics Test to move at your Half Move rate as a Free Action. Your opponent may not take the customary free attack.

Autosanguine

Ancient and blessed technology filters your blood. Handed down from generations past, your implants repair minor injuries. For the purposes of healing, you are always considered to be Lightly Wounded. In addition, you naturally heal at an increased rate, removing 2 points of Damage each day. Your autosanguinators also sooth the minor pains and sores caused by the blessed metal of your implants pressing upon your weak flesh. This has no game effect, but does make you slightly less irritable than before.

Basic Weapon Training

Talent Groups: Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP.

You have received Basic Weapon Training in a group of weapons, and can use them without penalty.

Battle Rage

Prerequisites: Frenzy talent.

Despite your frenzied nature, you remain in control when engaging in melee. You can spend reactions to Parry while Frenzied.

Berserk Charge

You hurl yourself at your enemies with reckless abandon, using the force of your Charge to add force to your strikes. When you make a Charge manoeuvre you gain a +20 bonus to Weapon Skill instead of the usual +10.

Binary Chatter

You are adept at controlling servitors. Gain a +10 bonus to any attempt to instruct, program or question servitors.

Blademaster

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 30, Melee Weapon Training.

Your mastery of sword and knife is unsurpassed and your blade always strikes true. When attacking with a sword or a knife of any type, including chainswords and power swords, you may re-roll a missed attack once per Round.

Blind Fighting

Prerequisites: Perception 30.

Through years of practice and heightening your senses, you no longer need to be able to see your opponents to be able to hit them. You take half the usual penalties when fighting in environments that obscure your vision, such as fog, smoke and darkness.

Bulging Biceps

Prerequisites: Strength 45.

Whereas a weaker man would be sent flying when using powerful weapons, your strong physique allows you to remain standing. You can fire a heavy weapon on semi- or autofire modes without first bracing.

Catfall

Prerequisites: Agility 30.

You are nimble and balanced, like a cat, and are able to fall much greater distances unharmed than others might. Whenever you fall, you may Test Agility as a Free Action. On a success, and for every degree of success, reduce the distance fallen by a number of metres equal to your Agility Bonus for the purposes of determining the Damage dealt by the fall.

Chem Geld

A variety of chemical and surgical treatments have rendered you immune to the temptations of the flesh. Seduction attempts against you automatically fail, and the Difficulty of all Charm Tests made against you increase by one step (a Challenging (+0) Test becomes Difficult (–10) and so on). When you take this Talent you gain one Insanity Point.

Cleanse and Purify

Prerequisites: Basic Weapon Training (Flame) talent.

Burn! Burn! Burn! None shall escape your fiery wrath! Targets exposed to your flamer attacks take a –20 penalty to avoid being hit.

Combat Master

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 30.

Through a combination of reflex and perception you are able to keep many more opponents at bay in melee than a lesser skilled Acolyte might. Opponents fighting you in hand-to-hand gain no bonuses for outnumbering you.

Concealed Cavity

You have a small compartment hidden upon your person. This might be a pouch within your flesh, or a chamber fitted into one of your cybernetic implants. You may conceal one small item, no bigger than the palm of your hand, within this cavity. The compartment may be discovered on a Difficult (–10) Search Test. If the searcher employs additional technology, such as a medicae scanner or chem-sniffer, this difficulty is reduced to Ordinary (+10).

Corpus Conversion

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 2.

You can siphon the health of your physical body to fuel your powers. For every 2 points of Damage you voluntarily take, you may add your Willpower Bonus to your Power Roll. Using this Talent is a Free Action.

Counter-attack

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 40.

You are skilled at switching from defence to attack in the blink of an eye. When you successfully Parry an opponent's attack, you may immediately make an attack against that opponent using the weapon with which you Parried. This attack takes a –20 penalty to the Test.

Crack Shot

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40.

You are able to target your shots at the places where they will inflict more harm. When your ranged attack deals Critical Damage, you deal an extra 2 points.

Crippling Strike

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 50.

You are able to land your blows in the spot where they will inflict the most harm. Whenever you deal Critical Damage to an opponent using a melee weapon, you may deal an additional 1d5–1 points.

Crushing Blow

Prerequisites: Strength 40.

Your melee strikes land with force enough to shatter bone. You add +2 to Damage you inflict in melee.

Dark Soul

Your soul is darkly stained, making you resilient to the effects of Corruption. Whenever you are called to make a Malignancy Test, you take half the normal penalty. See **Chapter VIII: The Game Master, page 238** for details on Corruption.

Deadeye Shot

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 30.

You always hit an opponent right between the eyes… or wherever else you intended to hit him. When making a Called Shot, you take only a –10 penalty instead of the normal –20.

Decadence

Prerequisites: Toughness 30.

Either through mental and physical conditioning or long years of abuse, your body has built up a tolerance to chemicals. When drinking alcohol or similar beverages, you do not pass out until you have failed a number of Toughness Tests equal to twice your Toughness Bonus. You also gain a +10 bonus to tests made to continue using drugs within 24 hours.

Deflect Shot

Prerequisites: Agility 50.

You are able to knock aside Thrown weapons and shots fired from Primitive weapons. You may spend a Reaction to Parry an incoming ranged attack so long as the attack is from a Primitive or Thrown weapon.

Die Hard

Prerequisites: Willpower 40.

It takes more than most to finish you off. When you suffer from Blood Loss, you may roll twice to avoid death.

Disarm

Prerequisites: Agility 30.

You are able to knock your opponent's weapons from their hands. When engaged with an opponent wielding a melee weapon, you may use a Full Action to disarm your foe by making an Opposed Weapon Skill Test. If you beat your opponent, he drops his weapon to his feet. Should you get three or more degrees of success, you not only disarm him but also take his weapon from him!

Discipline Focus

Talent Groups: Biomancy, Divination, Pyromancy, Telekinetics, Telepathy.

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 3

You devote a great deal of time and effort into mastering your Discipline. Choose one of your Disciplines. You gain a +2 to Power Rolls made to manifest any powers of this Discipline.

Disturbing Voice

You have a sinister and upsetting voice. This may be due to infrasonic cadences produced by a vox synthesiser, interrogation training or just an inborn air of malice. You gain +10 bonus to all Intimidate or Interrogation Tests when you use your voice. You take a –10 penalty to Fellowship Tests when dealing with persons who are likely to be off put by your manner (psykers, small children, nervous Grox and so on).

Double Team

You fight best shoulder to shoulder with a loyal ally. When ganging up on an opponent with an ally, you gain an additional +10 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests. If you both have this Talent you both gain an additional +10 bonus, for a total of +20. This bonus is in addition to the normal bonuses gained from outnumbering an opponent.

Dual Shot

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Two-Weapon Wielder.

You are able to focus the firepower of two guns to maximise the impact. When armed with two pistols, you

can fire both simultaneously as a Full Action. Make a single Ballistic Skill Test. On a success, you hit the target with both shots.

Dual Strike

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Two-Weapon Wielder.

You are able to focus your melee attacks to maximise the impact. When armed with two melee weapons, you can attack with both simultaneously as a Full Action. Make a single Weapon Skill Test. On a success, you hit the target with both weapons.

Electrical Succour

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil).

You call upon the sacred flow of energy to replenish your weak flesh. Whilst in contact with a functioning, powered machine, or fully charged battery, you may make an Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test. If you succeed, remove one level of Fatigue plus one additional level of Fatigue for each degree of success. This takes one minute of meditation and ritual incantation to activate.

Electro Graft Use

You have the ability to use an electro graft to access data points and commune with machine spirits. This grants you a +10 bonus to Common Lore, Inquiry or Tech-Use Tests whilst connected to a data point.

Energy Cache

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Potentia coil).

You have learnt how to focus some of the power stored within your potentia coil. You no longer gain Fatigue from using Luminen Charge, Luminen Shock and Luminen Blast.

Exotic Weapon Training

Talent Groups: All Exotic Weapons.

You have received Exotic Weapon Training in a single exotic weapon, and can use it without penalty.

Favoured by the Warp

Prerequisite: Willpower 35.

Whenever a Power Roll triggers Psychic Phenomena, you may roll two dice on that table and take the more favourable result.

Fearless

Whether through fervent loyalty or a derangement of the mind, you are impossible to frighten or unnerve. You are immune to the effects of Fear and Pinning, but to disengage from combat or back down from a fight you must first succeed on a Willpower Test.

Feedback Screech

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Respirator Unit).

By muttering illogical formulae under your breath, you are able to foment rebellion within your vox synthesisers. Your audio circuits protest in a screeching blast of noise, shocking and distracting others in equal measure. All creatures, except Daemonic and machine-based, within a 30 metre radius must make a Willpower Test or lose a Half Action on their next Turn as they shudder, swear, cover their ears or otherwise react to the horrid noise. This is a Full Action and may not be used again for 1d5 Rounds while your audio circuits reset.

Ferric Lure

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil).

You can call an unsecured metal object that you can see to your hand. You may summon objects of up to 1 kilogram per point of your Willpower Bonus. The object must be within a 20 metre radius. To use this Talent, you must succeed on a Willpower Test as a Full Action.

Ferric Summons

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil), Ferric Lure.

You can call an unsecured metal object that you can see to your hand. You may summon objects of up to 2 kilograms per point of your Willpower Bonus. The object must be within a 40 metre radius. You must make a Willpower Test and spend a Full Action to enact this rite.

Flagellant

You have dedicated your pain to the service of the Emperor. Each day, you must spend twenty minutes praying and inflicting 1 point of Damage upon yourself. You may not treat this Damage or allow it to be healed. Once you have castigated your flesh, you gain a +10 bonus to Willpower Tests made to resist mind control or Malignancy. Additionally, if you have the Frenzy talent, you may enter a frenzied state as a Free Action. Should you fail to flagellate yourself on any given day, you take a –5 penalty to all Tests due to shame and guilt.

Foresight

Prerequisites: Intelligence 30.

You are adept at identifying the consequences of any action. If you take some time to consider what you are doing, you can deduce the best action for success. You may spend ten minutes contemplating a problem to gain a +10 bonus to your next relevant Intelligence Test.

Frenzy

You can incite yourself into a frothing rage. You must spend one Round psyching yourself up (howling, beating yourself or injecting psychosis-inducing drugs). The next round you lose control and go berserk, gaining a +10 bonus to Strength and Willpower but a –10 penalty to Weapon Skill and Intelligence. You must attack the nearest enemy in melee combat and you may not flee, retreat or Parry. When possible, you must use the All-Out Attack Manoeuvre. You remain frenzied for the duration of the combat. Some creatures, particularly certain types of Daemon, do not need to spend a Round inciting the frenzy—they are either permanently Frenzied or can Frenzy at will. Unless you have a Talent that allows you to do so, you may not use Psychic Powers whilst in Frenzy.

Furious Assault

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 35.

Your blows follow one another in quick succession, raining down on your opponents like fiery bolts. Whenever you hit an opponent whilst using the All-Out Attack Manoeuvre, you may spend your Reaction to make an extra attack (this extra attack retains any bonuses or penalties of the original attack).

Good Reputation

Prerequisites: Fellowship 50, Peer.

Talent Groups: Administratum, Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Underworld

You are well respected within your social group or organisation. You gain an additional +10 bonus to Fellowship Tests when dealing with this group. This Talent is cumulative with the Peer talent, for a total of a +20 bonus.

Gun Blessing

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil).

With a wave you can unjam a number of guns equal to your Intelligence Bonus. You may bless any weapon in a 10 metre radius. To do so, make an Intelligence Test. A success indicates that you have rallied the spirits of the weapons. This blessing is a Full Action.

Gunslinger

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40, Two-Weapon Wielder.

You are ready for anything when you have a pistol in each hand. When so armed, you reduce the penalty for fighting with two weapons by –10. If you have the Ambidextrous talent, you take no penalty when firing both weapons.

Hard Target

Prerequisites: Agility 40.

The best way to stay alive is to keep on moving, no matter what might come your way. Whenever you Charge or Run, all opponents take a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit you with a ranged weapon. This penalty lasts until the start of your next Turn.

Hardy

Prerequisites: Toughness 40.

For the purposes of removing Damage, you are always considered to be Lightly Wounded.

Hatred

Talent Groups: Criminals, Cult (specific), Daemons, Xeno (specific), Psykers, Heretics, Mutants.

You have reason to hate one particular race or organisation, and your malice hones your melee attacks. Choose one race or group from those listed above. When fighting opponents that qualify as members of that group, you gain a +10 bonus to all Weapon Skill Tests made to attack them.

Heavy Weapon Training

Talent Groups: Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP.

You know how to use one particular type of heavy weapon, and can use weapons of that type without penalty.

Heightened Senses

Talent Groups: Sight, Sound, Smell, Taste, Touch.

One of your senses is better than average. When you gain this Talent, select one of the five senses. You gain a +10 bonus to any Tests involving this sense.

Hip Shooting

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40, Agility 40.

You are able to shoot whilst on the move. As a Full Action, you may simultaneously move up to your Full Move rate and make a single attack with a pistol.

Independent Targeting

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40.

You are skilled enough with firearms that you can fire in two directions at once. When firing two weapons at once, you may attack targets that are more than 10 metres apart.

Insanely Faithful

You take refuge in your madness. When rolling to determine the effects of Shock, you may roll twice and take the better result.

Into the Jaws of Hell

Prerequisites: Iron Discipline.

Such is the fervour and loyalty you inspire in your followers that they would follow you wherever you lead, even in search of the dread Tyrant Star. Whilst you are visible to them, your minions are immune to Fear and Pinning.

Iron Discipline

Prerequisites: Willpower 30, Command.

Not through mercy and kindness but through a stern demeanour and a sense of justice do you inspire loyalty in your followers. So long as you are visible to them, your minions may re-roll failed Willpower Tests made to resist Fear and Pinning.

Iron Jaw

Prerequisites: Toughness 40.

You are made of sturdy stuff and can weather minor blows. When you become Stunned you may make a Toughness Test to shrug off its effects.

Jaded

Prerequisites: Willpower 30.

You have seen the worst the galaxy has to throw at you to the point that you are acclimatised to the worst horrors. You never gain Insanity Points from the sight of blood, death or violence, or indeed any mundane horror. Supernatural terrors still affect you as normal, however.

Leap Up

Prerequisites: Agility 30.

You are hard to keep down. You may stand up as a Free Action.

Light Sleeper

Prerequisites: Perception 30.

You are a light sleeper and remain alert when most would be fast asleep. You are always assumed to be awake, even if you are asleep, for the purposes of making Awareness Tests, being Surprised or getting up in a hurry. The downside is that you often feel tired during the day and as a result are grumpy or distracted.

Lightning Attack

Prerequisites: Swift Attack.

As a Full Action, you may make three melee attacks on your Turn. This Talent replaces Swift Attack. You may not use the Dual Strike talent during a Lightning Attack Full Action.

Lightning Reflexes

You react like a flash of lightning. When rolling for Initiative, you add twice your Agility Bonus to the roll of 1d10.

Litany of Hate

Prerequisites: Hatred (any).

You are so impassioned in your hatred that you can rouse others to similar heights of emotion. As a Full Action, you may make a Charm Test to extend the effects of your Hatred talent to those around you. A successful Test grants a +10 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests to one target per point of your Fellowship Bonus when fighting your hated foes. The effects last for the duration of the encounter.

Logis Implant

You may utilise analytical circuits to calculate trajectory and reactions to a preternatural extent. Your ability to read possible outcomes lets you anticipate the movement of your opponents. As a Reaction you may make a Tech-Use Test to activate your Logis Implant. Note that this uses up your Reaction for the Round. Until the end of your next Turn, you gain a +10 bonus to all Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests. Each successful use of this Talent causes one level of Fatigue.

Luminen Blast

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil).

With the proper prayer and projection of will, you are able to strike at the enemies of the Omnissiah. Using your electoo inductors, you may create a crackling ball of bio-electrical energy that you may fling at your foes. On a successful Ballistic Skill Test, you may

direct this energy against a single target within 10 metres. The target takes Energy Damage equal to 1d10 plus your Willpower Bonus.

Each time you use this Talent, you gain a level of Fatigue.

Luminen Charge

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil).

You have learnt how to lend your life force to technology. On a successful Toughness Test you may use your bio-electrical field to recharge or power machinery. This takes one minute of meditation and ritual incantation to activate. The Difficulty of the Toughness Test varies depending on the nature of the technology, as follows:

Difficulty	Example
Ordinary (+10)	Chemical battery, glow globe.
Challenging (+0)	Las gun charge pack, data-slate, personal heater.
Difficult (–10)	Overcharge pack, air conditioning unit, servo-skull.
Hard (–20)	Land speeder engine, lascannon charge pack, servitor.
Very Hard (–30)	Industrial press, cogitator engine, xenos tech.

Note that at the GM's discretion, some technology is simply too arcane, broken or power-hungry for you to be able to activate. Each time you use this Talent, you gain a level of Fatigue.

Luminen Shock

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Electoo inductor/Potentia coil).

By focusing your bio-electrical energy through electoo inductors, you are able to damage your opponents. You must touch your enemy for this ability to work. In combat, you must either make a successful Weapon Skill Test or be Grappling to deliver the blast. Each Luminen Shock deals 1d10+3 points of Energy Damage. Each time you use this Talent, you gain a level of Fatigue.

Maglev Grace

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Potentia coil).

By long hours of rote learning, you have mastered one of the miracles of the Omnissiah. By spending a Half Action, you may hover 20–30 centimetres off the ground for a number of minutes equal to 1d10 plus your Toughness Bonus. You may move at your normal walking pace and must employ a Half Action each round to concentrate on maintaining the rite. You may activate this rite whilst falling to slow your rate of descent. Treat all falling Damage as 1d10+3 Impact Damage. Each Maglev Grace exhausts the power stored in your potentia coil, and thus you may only use this rite once in every twelve hour period.

Maglev Transcendence

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Potentia coil), Maglev Grace.

Devotion to the Machine God has granted you greater knowledge of miracles. As a Half Action, you may hover 20–30 centimetres off the ground for a number of minutes equal to 2d10 plus your Toughness Bonus. You may move at your normal running speed and must employ a Half Action each Round to concentrate on maintaining your rite. You may activate this rite whilst falling to produce a controlled descent. Provided that this rite is active when you reach the ground, then you take no Damage from falling. You may enact this rite twice in every twelve hour period.

Marksman

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 35.

Distance is no object with a gun in your hand, and you are just as adept at picking off far away targets as those nearby. You suffer no penalties for shooting at Long or Extended range.

Master Chirurgeon

Prerequisites: Medicae +10.

You are trained in the most advanced medical techniques known to man. You gain a +10 bonus on all Medicae Tests. If you are treating a Heavily or Critically Wounded patient, a successful Test heals 2 Wounds instead of the normal 1. If this character is in danger of losing a limb from a Critical Hit (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**), you also provide the patient with a +20 bonus to the Toughness Test to resist limb loss.

Master Orator

Prerequisites: Fellowship 30.

You are skilled at speaking to large audiences. Your Fellowship Tests and Fellowship-based Skill Tests can affect 10 times the normal number of people.

Mechadendrite Use

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Cyber Mantle/Cranial Circuitry).

Talent Groups: Gun, Manipulator, Medicae, Optical, Utility.

You have been given the appropriate training, initiation and hypnodoctrination to use a particular type of mechadendrite.

Meditation

By putting your mind at rest and entering a trance you can repair the hurts of your body. You must succeed on a Willpower Test. If so, for every ten minutes you remain in a trance, you remove one level of Fatigue.

Melee Weapon Training

Talent Groups: Primitive, Chain, Shock, Power.

You have received basic training in a group of hand-to-hand weaponry, and can use them without penalty.

Mental Fortress

Prerequisites: Willpower 50, Strong Minded.

You are trained to aggressively resist psychic attacks. Whenever you are the target of a psychic attack, you force the psyker to make a Willpower Test. On a failure, the psyker takes 1d10 points of Damage plus 1 Damage per point of your Willpower Bonus. This Damage is

considered Impact Damage, directed at the head (more specifically, the face). The psyker can reduce this Damage by an amount equal to his Willpower Bonus. This Damage bypasses armour and any Toughness Bonus.

Mental Rage

Prerequisites: Frenzy.

You channel your madness and hate into your Psychic Powers. You may use your Psychic Powers whilst in a Frenzied state,.

Mighty Shot

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40.

You know how to blast away with a gun to cause the most damage to a target. You add +2 to Damage you inflict with a ranged weapon.

Mimic

You have an extraordinary ability to copy another person's voice patterns. This may be due to implanted vox synthesisers, training or natural Talent. You must have listened to your target for at least one hour in order to study their voice properly. You must also understand their language and be of the same race (a human, for example, cannot convincingly copy an Ork). Listeners must succeed on a Difficult (–10) Scrutiny Test to realise that you are not the person you are mimicking. If you have based your voice patterns on anything other than "live" conversations where you are in the same room as your target (for example vox recordings, or comm-link conversations), the Difficulty of this Scrutiny Test is reduced to Challenging (+0). Note this does not make you look like your target; you merely sound like them. If a listener can clearly see you are not the person you are copying, your deception automatically fails.

Minor Psychic Power

Talent Groups: All Minor Psychic Powers.

You have acquired an additional psychic ability. You gain one Minor Psychic Power.

Nerves of Steel

You are able to remain calm, even when bullets fly past and bombs fall around you. You may re-roll a failed Willpower Test to avoid or recover from Pinning.

Orthoproxy

You have learnt to draw mental fortitude from a liturgical circuit buried deep within your skull. You may "tune out" mind control attempts by concentrating on the prayers recited by the proxy unit. This grants you a +20 bonus to Willpower Tests made to resist mind control or interrogation.

Paranoia

You are always on the look out for danger and secretly know that the galaxy is out to get you. You gain a +2 bonus on Initiative rolls. In addition, the GM may secretly Test your Perception to see if you notice hidden threats. Others, however, may find your constant muttering and twitchy looks unnerving.

Peer

Prerequisites: Fellowship 30.
Talent Groups: Academics, Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Mechanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Ecclesiarchy, Feral Worlders, Government, Hivers, Inquisition, Middle Classes, Military, Nobility, The Insane, Underworld, Void Born, Workers.

You know how to deal with a particular social group or organisation. You gain a +10 bonus to all Fellowship Tests when interacting with your chosen group.

Pistol Training

Talent Groups: Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP.

You have received training in a group of pistols and can use them without penalty.

Power Well

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 2.

Power suffuses your being, allowing you to manifest powers more easily. When manifesting powers, you gain a +1 bonus to your Manifesting rolls. You may select this Talent multiple times. Its effects are cumulative.

Precise Blow

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 40, Sure Strike.

You are skilled at making difficult strikes. When making a Called Shot with a melee weapon, you do not incur the normal –20 penalty.

Prosanguine

Prerequisites: Autosanguine.

By an act of will, you speed the workings of your autosanguinators. Once every twelve hours you may make a Tech-Use Test. On a success, you remove 1d5 points of Damage. If you roll a 96-100 however, in addition to failing, you overstrain your implants. They cease to function for one week. For that time you are unable to use this Talent, and gain none of the benefits of the Autosanguine talent. Once the week is over, both Talents are restored. Prosanguination takes ten minutes of meditation and ritual incantation to activate.

Psy Rating 1

You have unlocked your Psychic Powers. Select a number of Minor Psychic Powers equal to one-half your Willpower Bonus (round up) from those described in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**. You gain a Psy Rating of 1 and roll one dice and add your Willpower Bonus when manifesting Psychic Powers.

Special: If your Willpower Bonus later increases, you do not retroactively gain additional powers.

Psy Rating 2

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 1.

You have advanced knowledge of Psychic Power. Select a number of Minor Psychic Powers equal to your Willpower Bonus. You now have a Psy Rating of 2 and may roll up to two dice and add your Willpower bonus when manifesting Psychic Powers.

Special: If your Willpower Bonus later increases, you do not retroactively gain additional powers.

Psy Rating 3

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 2.

Your psychic abilities grow in power and proficiency. Select one Discipline. Gain one power from this Discipline. You also gain a number of Minor Psychic Powers equal to one-half your Willpower Bonus (round up). You now have a Psy Rating of 3 and may roll up to three dice and add your Willpower bonus when manifesting Psychic Powers.

Special: If your Willpower Bonus later increases, you do not retroactively gain additional powers.

Psy Rating 4

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 3.

You have distinguished yourself by your skill with psychic energy and the breadth of your knowledge of Psychic Powers. Gain a number of Discipline Powers in any Discipline that you know equal to one-half your Willpower Bonus and the same number of Minor Psychic Powers (round up). Alternatively, instead select one new Discipline and gain one power from this Discipline. You now have a Psy

Rating of 4 and may roll up to four dice and add your Willpower bonus when manifesting Psychic Powers.

Special: If your Willpower Bonus later increases, you do not retroactively gain additional powers.

Psy Rating 5

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 4.

You are among the most powerful psykers in the Imperium. Gain a number of Discipline powers in any Discipline that you know equal to one-half your Willpower Bonus (round up). Alternatively, instead select one new Discipline and gain one power from this Discipline.You now have a Psy Rating of 5 and may roll up to five dice and add your Willpower bonus when manifesting Psychic Powers.

Special: If your Willpower Bonus later increases, you do not retroactively gain additional powers.

Psy Rating 6

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 5.

You have reached perhaps the greatest human potential with psychic powers and few can compare with your mastery. Gain a number of Discipline Powers in any Discipline that you know equal to one-half your Willpower Bonus and the same number of Minor Psychic Powers (round up). Alternatively, instead select one new Discipline and gain one power from this Discipline. You now have a Psy Rating of 6 and may roll up to six dice and add your Willpower bonus when manifesting Psychic Powers.

Special: If your Willpower Bonus later increases, you do not retroactively gain additional powers.

Psychic Power

Talent Groups: All Psychic Powers.

You have acquired an additional Psychic Power. You gain one power of any Discipline you know.

Quick Draw

You are quick to the draw, able to have a weapon in your hand and ready for combat in the blink of an eye. You can Ready as a Free Action.

Rapid Reaction

Prerequisites: Agility 40.

You have a hair trigger and react to a change in any situation in an instant. When Surprised or ambushed, you may make an Agility Test to act normally.

Rapid Reload

You have spent so long practising weapons drills that you can reload a gun in an instant. All reload times are reduced by half (round down)—so a Half Action reload become a Free Action, a Full Action reload becomes a Half Action and so on.

Resistance

Talent Groups: Cold, Fear, Heat, Poisons, Psychic Powers.

Whether through past exposure, gruelling physical training or luck of genetics, you are highly resistant to a particular thing. When you pick this Talent select a group to be resistant to. You gain a +10 bonus when making a test to resist or avoid the object of your resistance.

Rite of Awe

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Respirator Unit).

You may recite an infrasonic liturgy that causes awe and fear. All humans within a 50 metre radius regardless of their ability to hear, feel a sense of dread and religious guilt. Alongside these emotional effects, all humans take a –10 penalty to their next Skill Test. Characters may make a Willpower Test to shake off these effects. Whilst incanting the rite, you may not talk on any additional frequency. The rite is two minutes long, and it is considered very bad form to break off incantations at any point within the liturgy. Note that humans without auditory implants cannot hear infrasonic sound, and thus will assume you are not speaking.

Rite of Fear

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Respirator Unit).

You may recite an infrasonic dirge, which causes terror within the weak. All humans, regardless of their ability to hear, within a 50 metre radius consider you to have a Fear Rating of 1. Whilst incanting the dirge, you may not talk on any additional frequency. The rite is two minutes long, and it is considered very bad form to break off incantations at any point within the liturgy. Note that humans without auditory implants cannot hear infrasonic sound, and thus will assume you are not speaking.

Rite of Pure Thought

Prerequisites: Tech-Priest (Cranial Circuitry).

You have replaced the creative right half of your brain with a cogitator. You no longer feel emotion, and are instead filled with the cold purity of logic. You are now immune to Fear, Pinning and any effects that cause emotional disturbance. Others now find you disturbing to say the least. Your GM will remove any Mental Disorders that are no longer relevant, and grant you new ones of equal severity.

Sharpshooter

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40, Deadeye Shot.

You are skilled at making difficult shots. When making a Called Shot you do not incur the normal –20 penalty. This Talent replaces Deadeye Shot.

Sound Constitution

You are able to absorb more damage before you die. You gain an additional Wound. If your advance scheme allows it, you may purchase this Talent multiple times.

Sprint

You are able to put on a burst of speed to get out of—or into—trouble fast. When taking the Full Move action, you may move an extra number of metres equal to your Agility Bonus. When taking the Run action, you may double your Movement for one Round. If you use this Talent two turns in a row, you gain one level of Fatigue.

Step Aside

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Dodge.

You are quick at getting out of the way of attacks. You may make an additional Dodge once per Round. In effect this gives a character a second Reaction that may only be used to Dodge, thus allowing them to make two Dodges in a Turn. Note they may still only attempt a single Dodge against any one attack.

Street Fighting

You are a master of dirty tricks such as the low punch and the knife in the gut. When dealing Critical Damage with an unarmed attack or knife, you deal +2 points of Damage.

Strong Minded

Prerequisites: Willpower 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers).

Your mind is like a fortress guarded against psychic attack. You may re-roll failed Willpower Tests to resist any Psychic Powers that affect your mind. Psychic Powers that have a physical effect, such as Telekinesis, are unaffected by this Talent.

Sure Strike

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 30.

You strike with precision, landing your blows wherever you intend them to hit. When determining where you hit an opponent with a melee attack, you may use the dice as you rolled them or reverse them, choosing the location you prefer. *For example, Beam rolls a 37 to hit an Ork. Ordinarily, Beam would strike location 73—the right leg—but because he has the Sure Strike talent, he could choose to hit the alien in location 37—the body.*

Swift Attack

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 35.

As a Full Action, you may make two melee attacks on your Turn.

Takedown

You are skilled at taking an opponent alive. As a Half Action you may declare that you are attempting to Takedown an opponent before Testing Weapon Skill. If you hit and do at least 1 point of Damage, this damage is ignored and your opponent must make a Toughness Test or be Stunned for one Round.

Talented

Talent Groups: All Skills.

Choose any one of your Skills. You gain a +10 bonus to Tests when using this Skill.

Technical Knock

Prerequisites: Intelligence 30.

With a honeyed whisper and ritual motion, you can awaken sleeping gun-spirits into furious action once more. You may unjam any gun as a Half Action. You must touch the gun in question to enact this rite. You may only perform this rite on one weapon per Round—any more would be disrespectful.

Thrown Weapon Training

Talent Groups: Primitive, Chain, Shock, Power.

You have received basic training in a group of thrown weaponry, and can use such weapons without penalty.

Total Recall

Prerequisites: Intelligence 30.

Through long years of mental conditioning and practice, your mind is like an archive, able to record and recall great amounts of information. You can automatically remember any trivial fact or piece of information that you might feasibly have picked up in the past. When trying to recall more detailed or obscure facts, such as the precise layout of a crime scene or a page you read in an ancient grimoire five years ago, the GM may require you to make an Intelligence Test.

True Grit

Prerequisites: Toughness 40.

You are able to shrug off wounds that would fell lesser men. Whenever you suffer Critical Damage, halve the result (rounding up).

Example

Drake has the True Grit talent and is shot for 12 points of Damage. He has a TB of 3, 2 points of armour and 3 Wounds remaining. This means that after reduction for TB, armour and Wounds, the Critical Damage he takes (i.e. damage suffered once a character reaches 0 Wounds) is 4 (12-3+2+3=4). Because he has the True Grit talent this Damage is then halved. Drake therefore only takes 2 points of Critical Damage.

Two-Weapon Wielder

Talent Groups: Ballistic, Melee.

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 35 or Weapon Skill 35, Agility 35.

When armed with two weapons of a particular type, you may spend a Full Action to attack with both on your turn. Each Test made to attack with the weapons takes a –20 penalty (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 197** for more details). You must take Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee) and Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic) if you wish to use a gun and hand weapon at the same time.

Unremarkable

You have a forgettable face and are able to blend in with a crowd. Attempts to notice you when amongst other people or anyone attempting to describe you or recall details about you incurs a –20 penalty.

Unshakeable Faith

Your faith that the Emperor will preserve you is so strong that you are unafraid of stepping into danger. You may re-roll any failed Willpower Tests to avoid the effects of Fear.

Wall of Steel

Prerequisites: Agility 35.

Your blades are so quick that they form a wall of impenetrable steel. You may make an additional Parry once per Round. In effect, this gives a character a second Reaction that may only be used to Parry, thus allowing them to make two Parries in a Turn. Note they may still only attempt a single Parry against any one attack.

V

Armoury

Money
•
Availability
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Craftsmanship
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Weapons
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Cybernetics

Chapter V: Armoury

"Place your faith in the Emperor, and always carry a big gun."
— Mordechai Voght, High Marshall.

The 41st Millennium is a dangerous place, rife with war and conflict, and if an Acolyte hopes to survive he must make sure that he is well armed and equipped. This chapter deals with some of the many types of weapons, armour and gear that exist within the Imperium. Equipment, especially weapons and armour, make up a vital part of an Acolyte's resources and the difference between success and failure on a mission can often come down to having the right gear.

A Dark Age of Technology

In the 41st Millennium most technology is a mystery to man and many of its secrets have been buried beneath countless centuries of ignorance and superstition. Acolytes may understand the rudiments of how their weapons and tech gear work, at least in principle, but more likely they know that if they mumble the right words and make the right motions and gestures (rubbing oil here, twisting that knob there) their equipment will work. Showing this respect for the spirit that dwells within a weapon is always wise and only those who want their gun to fail in the midst of battle would ignore such observances.

Money

"You might see a sky full of stars; I see money to be made."
— Mistress Katrina Zaat, Rogue Trader.

As Acolytes quickly discover, money is an essential part of what makes the Imperium tick. From the simple street hawkers of a grubby feral world up to the most powerful Rogue Traders, the flow of cash is a vital part of life.

Throne Gelt

Wealth and money takes many forms throughout the Calixis Sector. On some worlds Acolytes may find people trading with precious shell tokens or coins of rare metals, while on others they may encounter cloth trade scrits and currency tracked only in the circuits of cogitators. In Dark Heresy all of these kinds of currency are referred to as Throne Gelt or Thrones. A Throne is a measure of currency throughout the Calixis Sector, secured against the massive amounts of wealth generated by Imperial planetary tithes. In its most literal form, Throne Gelt refers to what is essentially the Emperor's money.

You can use Thrones to gauge the price of items from world to world as well as the Acolyte's own personal wealth, even though they may carry a myriad of different forms of currency.

Income

All Acolytes gain a monthly income while in the employ of an Inquisitor. This represents money they generate in their spare time doing other (sometimes shady) jobs, investments or trusts they might have or even a stipend from their illustrious employer. In game terms, however, a character always receives their income without having to specifically do anything. GMs of course are free

Table 5-1: Income and Social Class

Social Class	Thrones/Month	Rank Increase	Description
Outcasts (Scum)	20†	Special†	Those that have no rightful place within the structure of Imperial society, living below even the lowest classes.
Drudging Classes	30	3	Those that work in the fields, factoriums and hives of the Imperium, by far making up the bulk of mankind.
Military Class (Guardsmen)	50	5	Those that fight.
Supine Class (Arbitors, Psykers)	70	7	Those that serve classes better than themselves, benefiting from the wealth of their masters.
Learned Class (Adepts)	100	10	Those that make their way with knowledge.
Trading Classes (Assassins)	120	12	Those that buy and sell or have specialist trades with which to make their living.
Mechanicus (Tech-Priests)	150	15	Those that follow the Machine God are a class unto themselves.
Ministorum (Clerics)	200	20	Those of the Cult of the Emperor and benefit greatly from the uncounted wealth of His domain.
Nobility	500	50	Those born to wealth and power by right of blood.
Unbound Classes	<Expunged>		Those with the freedom to travel the Imperium as they wish, such as Inquisitors of the dreaded Ordos or elusive Rogue Traders.

†see **Table 5-2: Scum Income.**

to increase, decrease or halt an Acolyte's income should he decide the plot calls for it, or if they are not pleasing their master!

All income is based on social class. An Acolyte's starting Career Path determines his social class and consequently his starting wealth—see **Table 1-9: Starting Wealth** on **page 29**. All of this does not, of course, preclude a character from engaging in other moneymaking schemes during play.

Every time a character gains a new Rank in their Career Path their monthly income may increase, subject to the GMs agreement, by the amount indicated in the Rank Increase column of **Table 5-1: Rank and Social Class**. *For example, a Guardsman has a basic monthly income of 50 Thrones. This will increase to 55 Thrones after he achieves his second Rank in his Career Path.* GMs should feel free to change this Rank-based increase depending on such achievements as titles and honours which would not otherwise have any game effect.

Players with characters on the Scum Career Path should roll 1d10 and refer to **Table 5-2: Scum Income** in order to calculate the Thrones they "earn" each month.

Table 5-2: Scum Income

D10	Result	Earnings
1–3	Scrounge	10+1d10
4–5	Scam	15+FB d10
6–7	Steal	15+AB d10
8–9	Scheme	15+ IB d10
10	Luck	50+ FP d10

FB=Fel Bonus, AB=Ag Bonus, IB=Int Bonus, FP=Fate Points

Example

Pincher Smyth, underhiver Scum, calculates his income by rolling 1d10 and consulting the table. Pincher rolls a 6, so his income mainly comes from stealing. Now Pincher works out his income as 28 Thrones (rolls 3d10 (AB of 3), giving 3, 4, 6—a total of 13, adds this to 15 giving a total of 28).

Acolyte Stipend

As Acolytes prove their worth by successfully accomplishing missions and assignments, their Inquisitor may decide to provide further support. For example, this could include increasing the Acolyte's monthly income by a further 10–50 Thrones or more, or furnishing them with regular ammo supplies. Ultimately this will be decided by the GM, and it is an important indicator of the Inquisitor's regard for his Acolytes.

Availability

"Listen friend, where you come from every man and his grox might have a lasgun, but in my shop you can either buy a crossbow or get out."

— Greeb, Port Suffering Armourer.

Having the money does not always guarantee the desired goods or services are at hand. Squalid medieval worlds are a lot less likely to have expensive goods than the marketplaces of a hive city. Moreover, finding a high-quality weapon on a backwater planet is far more difficult than locating such a weapon in a teeming metropolis. To reflect availability, each piece of equipment or service has an associated Availability, ranging from abundant to very rare. GMs can use the following guidelines as a starting point for determining whether a place has such an item or not.

Characters searching for a particular item or service must make a successful Inquiry Test modified by the Availability of the item, **Table 5-3: Consequences of Availability on page 126** provides a baseline modifier for Inquiry Tests to find an item in a community of 1,000 people or less. For communities larger than 1,000 people, reduce the Difficulty for finding an object by one step for communities of 10,000 or less, or two steps for communities of 10,000 or more. If the community has 100 people or less, increase the Difficulty by one step. **Table 5-4: Availability by Population, page 126** shows how the Difficulty changes based on population size.

Calixian Currencies

While Thrones are a common term throughout the sector, most citizens continue to use local names for currency. These can vary widely from one planet to the next and may even differ within a world itself. Some of the more prominent terms for Thrones within the Calixis Sector include:

Credits, Florins and Scabs—These are all terms used in the hives of Scintilla, and have become synonyms with the most valuable denominations of Thrones, based in no small part on that world's excessive levels of wealth.

Scales—On the war world of Jocanthos many believe that their money is forever stained by the blood of mercenaries, giving rise to the idea of trading in the souls of fallen warriors.

Rounds—Used in the depths of Gunmetal City, where actual bullets are sometimes used as currency.

Chips or Lumps—In the mines and villages of Sepheris Secundus, life revolves around endless mining, to the point where chips and lumps of ore are synonymous with Thrones.

Lords and Ladies—On the medieval backwater of Acreage, each noble is responsible for minting his own coins, with the value of each make of coin being directly tied to the fortunes of the lord or lady whose likeness it bears.

Scales or Fins—On the water world of Spectoris, fish are found in all aspects of life, to the point where being particularly flush with cash is often referred to as having a shoal of fins or looking a bit scaly.

Example

Drake needs a new lasgun. A lasgun is a Common item, and so he gains a +10 bonus on his Inquiry Test to find it in an average settlement. If he looks in a farming outpost, with a population of 1,000 or less, the Difficulty is Average (no bonus) or if he looks in a city with a large population (say about 80,000 people), he could find a lasgun more easily (gaining a +20 bonus as the Difficulty lessens to Easy).

Availability and Technology

Some things are not just hard to find on certain worlds, but impossible. For instance, while a lasgun may be a common piece of equipment in most parts of the Imperium, you are unlikely to find one pretty much anywhere on a feral or medieval world. The GM can therefore decide to either make an item harder to find or even impossible to acquire because it uses technology not readily available to the world or locale.

Table 5-3: Consequences of Availability

Availability	Difficulty	Modifier
Very Rare	Very Hard	–30
Rare	Hard	–20
Scarce	Difficult	–10
Average	Challenging	+0
Common	Average	+10
Plentiful	Routine	+20
Abundant	Easy	+30

Time

Just because a large community actually has the item a character seeks does not necessarily mean that it is easy to locate. The larger the community, the more time it takes to track the item down. A community's size determines the base time it takes to find the item. Each degree of success reduces this time by a certain amount (minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months, depending on the base time). See **Table 5-5: Availability and Time**. The GM should make the roll in secret for particularly dangerous or costly items, to emphasise the struggle and possible risks entailed by such searching.

Craftsmanship

"You will treasure this weapon, you will use it wisely in battle and you will honour its sacred spirit with prayer, for after you are long gone this weapon's service to the Emperor will go on."
— Ergar Keer, Enginseer

Not all goods are of the same quality. In the vastness of the Imperium, and beyond, the craftsmanship of items can vary widely from crudely made, mass-produced materials to handcrafted masterpieces.

Normally, Craftsmanship has little effect on game play for regular goods and services. As a general rule items of Poor Craftmanship are more prone to failure and breaking while Good and Best Craftsmanship are more durable, though it is up to the GM how and when these effects might enter play. In the case of weaponry and armour, there are effects on the item's performance or weight (as detailed later), but in cases of general goods and services, differences of quality are merely descriptive. The GM may reduce the Difficulty of certain tests

Table 5-4: Availability by Population

	Difficulty by Population			
Availability	**Below 1000**	**Below 10,000**	**Below 100,000**	**100,000 or more**
Very Rare	GM's discretion	Very Hard	Hard	Challenging
Rare	Very Hard	Hard	Challenging	Average
Scarce	Hard	Challenging	Average	Routine
Average	Challenging	Average	Routine	Easy
Common	Average	Routine	Easy	Very Easy
Plentiful	Routine	Easy	Very Easy	Automatic
Abundant	Easy	Very Easy	Automatic	Automatic

Table 5-5: Availability and Time

	Difficulty by Population (Base Time by Availability)						
Population	**Very Rare**	**Rare**	**Scarce**	**Average**	**Common**	**Plentiful**	**Abundant**
Below 1,000	1d10 hours	1 hour	30 minutes	15 minutes	10 minutes	5 minutes	1 minute
Below 10,000	1d10 days	1d10 hours	1 hour	30 minutes	15 minutes	10 minutes	5 minutes
Below 100,000	1d10 weeks	1d10 days	1d10 hours	1 hour	30 minutes	15 minutes	10 minutes
100,000 or more	1d5 months	1d10 weeks	1d10 days	1d10 hours	1 hour	30 minutes	15 minutes

that it is entirely at his discretion. Unless specifically stated, the Craftsmanship of any object is considered Common.

Craftsmanship	Cost Multiplier	Availability
Best	×10	Drop 2 steps
Good	×3	Drop 1 step
Common	×1	—
Poor	×1/2	Increase 1 step

Example

Drake realises he cannot afford a brand new lasgun, so he decides to settle for a Poor quality one. The cost for such a weapon is halved, and there are plenty of them, increasing the availability from Common to Plentiful.

Weapons

"There is no arguing with the barrel of a gun."
— Ancient (pre-Heresy) Proverb.

Weapons are divided into several groups covering a plethora of ranged weapons, dealing with everything from crossbows to plasma cannons, and melee weapons covering all manner of close combat weaponry. Unless they are of Poor quality, all weapons come with the appropriate holster or carrying strap as part of their cost.

A Galaxy of Guns

The Imperium is vast, and amongst its billions of inhabited worlds there are countless forge worlds, factories, craftsmen, artificers and blacksmiths turning out weapons and armour. As can be imagined this produces a practically limitless variety of makes, patterns and brands. It would be impossible to detail each and every different make of weapon in the Imperium (or even a small fraction of them), so the weapons, armour and equipment in this chapter represent the most common designs and designations. You can, of course, create the makes and patterns for your weapons as you see fit; after all, having a Gorgon-Pattern H-12 Widowmaker is far cooler than just having a stub revolver.

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: What the weapon is called.

Class: Describes what class the weapon is, either a melee, thrown, pistol, basic or heavy weapon.

- *Melee* weapons can be used in close combat. When using a melee weapon you add your SB to the damage you inflict.
- *Thrown* weapons cover anything propelled by muscle power alone and covers knives, axes, spears and such 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 you add your SB to the damage you inflict (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.
- *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 equally it could be a windowsill or sandbag (or the firer's shoulder in the case of RPG 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.

Bracing

Bracing a weapon takes a Half Action and once braced the firer cannot move without losing the benefits of being braced. They can however traverse their weapon depending on the kind of bracing they have (i.e. a sill or pile of rubble would allow a 45 degree traverse as would simply lying on the ground, a bipod would allow a 90 degrees traverse and a tripod 180 degrees, while a pintle mounting could be turned in any direction).

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: Playing the Game, pages 198-199**). Weapons cannot be fired at targets more than four times their range distance.

RoF (Rate of Fire): Tells you if the 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 a weapon can be fired in. The first entry indicates whether the weapon can be fired singly (with an S). The second entry indicates whether or not 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 mode in which the weapon cannot be fired is indicated with a "—".

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 Criticals (as shown in brackets): (E) Energy, (X) Explosive, (R) Rending, (I) Impact.

Pen (Penetration): Reflects how good the weapon is at going 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 work out Damage as normal. So 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 2 Full Rounds.

Special: This tells you 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, normally in kg (kilograms).

Cost: Indicates the standard value of the weapon within the Imperium. Cost is always represented in Thrones.

Availability: This identifies the weapon's availability (see **Table 5-3: Consequences of Availability, page 126**).

Weapon Special Qualities

Some weapons possess special qualities to represent such things as special damage or unusual effects.

Weapon Craftsmanship

All the weapons detailed here are of Common craftsmanship. For weapons of better or worse manufacture use the following modifiers:

Poor: These cheaply constructed ranged weapons are more prone to malfunction. A ranged weapon of Poor craftmanship has the Unreliable quality. If the weapon already has this quality then it will jam on any failed rolled to hit. Melee weapons of Poor craftsmanship incur a –10 penalty to tests made to attack.

Good: More carefully constructed and finished, these weapons are consequently more reliable. Ranged weapons of Good craftsmanship have the Reliable quality. If it already has this quality there is no further effect beyond the obvious fine workmanship of the weapon. Melee weapons of Good craftsmanship add a +5 bonus to tests made to attack.

Best: A work of art as much as a weapon, these items are created by skilled artisans and are often centuries old. Ranged weapons of Best craftsmanship never suffer from jamming or overheating. If a roll would result in either of these occurrences, simply count it as a miss instead. Melee weapons of Best craftsmanship add a +10 bonus to tests made to attack and add 1 to the Damage they inflict.

Accurate

Some weapons are designed with precision in mind and respond superbly in skilled hands. They grant an additional bonus of +10 to the firer's Ballistic Skill when used with an Aim Action, this is in addition to the bonus granted from Aiming.

> "It is the savage beast of war that drives mankind on his course and pursues him to his destruction. It feeds upon his terror. It grows more hungry with each passing year and soon it shall consume him whole."

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 Weapon Skill Tests made to Parry.

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 Hit Location and Damage individually for each person affected by a blast.

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.

Flame

Flame weapons project a cone of flame out to the range of the weapon. Unlike other weapons, flamers have just one range, and when fired, cast fiery death out to this distance. The wielder does not need to Test Ballistic Skill; he simply fires the weapon. All creatures in the flame'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 flames and take damage normally. If they take damage, they must succeed on a second Agility Test or be set on fire. Cover does not protect characters from attacks made by Flame weapons.

Because Flame 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 his Damage dice (before adding any bonuses).

Flexible

Some weapons are made up from lots of loosely connected segments, such as chains or supple woven hides, such as whips. These kinds of weapons lash about when used to attack and cannot be Parried.

Inaccurate

Weapons with this quality are either badly designed or simply woefully made, and regardless of the care taken when used, offer little better than a lucky chance to hit. No bonus is gained froom the use of the Aim Action with such weapons.

Overheats

Certain weapons are prone to overheating, either because of poor design or they fire unstable superheated ammunition. An unmodified to hit roll of 91 or higher causes the weapon to Overheat. Roll 1d10 and consult **Table 5-6: Weapon Overheating** to see what happens.

Table 5-6: Weapon Overheating

Roll	Effect
1–5	The firer must make a Toughness Test or drop the weapon. The weapon cannot be fired for 1d10 Rounds.
6–8	The f irer takes 1d10+2 Energy Damage and must drop the weapon. In addition the weapon is too hot to pick up (anyone trying takes 1d10+1 Energy Damage) for 1d10 Rounds.
9–10	The weapon explodes and is destroyed. The firer and anyone within four metres takes Damage as if they had taken a single hit from the weapon.

Power Field

A field of power wreathes weapons with this quality, increasing its Damage and Penetration. Such modifiers are already included in the weapon's profile. When you successfully use this weapon to Parry an attack made with a weapon that lacks this quality, you have a 75% chance of destroying your attacker's weapon.

Primitive

Crude and basic in design, these kinds of weapons, while still deadly, are less effective against modern armour. All Armour Points are doubled against hits from Primitive weapons, unless the armour also has the Primitive quality.

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 you can only fire the weapon every other Round.

Reliable

Based on tried and true technology, Reliable weapons seldom fail. If a Reliable weapon Jams, roll 1d10 and only on a roll of 10 has it in fact Jammed, otherwise it just misses as normal.

Scatter

The standard ammunition of these weapons spreads out when fired, hitting more of the target. If fired at a foe within Point Blank range, each two degrees of success the firer scores indicates another hit (use **Table 7-6: Multiple Hits** on **page 190**). However, at longer ranges this spread of small projectiles reduces its effectiveness. All Armour Points are doubled against hits from scatter weapons at Long or Extreme Range.

Shocking

Shocking weapons can Stun their opponents with a powerful surge of energy. A target that takes at least 1 point of Damage from a Shocking weapon, after Armour and Toughness Bonus, must make a Toughness Test, though they receive a +10 bonus for every Armour point they have on the location hit. If they fail, they are Stunned for a number of Rounds equal to half the Damage they suffered.

Smoke

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 3d10 metres in diameter from the point of impact. This screen lasts for 2d10 Rounds, or less in adverse weather conditions (see the effects of Smoke on **page 210**).

Snare

Weapons with this quality are designed to entangle enemies. On a successful hit, the target must make an Agility Test or be immobilised. 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. The target is considered helpless until he escapes.

Tearing

Tearing weapons are vicious devices, often using multitudes of fast-moving jagged teeth to rip into flesh and bone. These weapons roll two dice for Damage and choose the highest.

Toxic

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 –5 penalty for every point of Damage taken. Success indicates there is no further effect from the weapon. Failure however deals an immediate 1d10 points of Impact Damage to the target with no reduction from Armour or Toughness Bonus.

"We endeavour in the darkness of battle who cannon with the fight. The time for peace is over and now it is time to die. It is the age of war and our lasts days must be lived amidst the sound of our own destruction."

Unbalanced

Heavy and difficult to ready after an attack, these kinds of weapons impose a –10% penalty when used to Parry.

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.

Unstable

Weapons with this quality use ammunition that is both volatile and unstable and can react unpredictably when detonated. When an Unstable weapon scores a hit, roll 1d10. On a score of 1 it inflicts only half Damage, on a score of 2–9 it deals normal Damage, and on a score of 10 it inflicts twice the normal Damage.

Unwieldy

Huge and often top-heavy, Unwieldy weapons are too awkward to be used defensively. Unwieldy weapons cannot be used to Parry.

Using Weapons Without a Talent

Many of the weapons described in this chapter require a Talent to use them effectively; lacking the necessary ability makes weapons particularly dangerous to employ. Still, there are bound to be circumstances when a character needs to use a weapon for which he does not have the Talent. Doing so imposes a –20 penalty on the relevant Test. If the weapon has the Flame special quality, the target is granted a +30 to his Agility Test to avoid being hit. In addition, when a ranged weapon is used untrained, it counts as having the Unreliable quality, increasing its chance of jamming.

Table 5-7: Ranged Weapons

Las Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Laspistol	Pistol	30m	S/–/–	1d10+2 E	0	30	Full	Reliable	1.5kg	50	Common
Las Carbine	Basic	60m	S/2/–	1d10+2 E	0	40	Full	Reliable	3kg	75	Common
Lasgun	Basic	100m	S/3/–	1d10+3 E	0	60	Full	Reliable	4kg	75	Common
Long Las	Basic	150m	S/–/–	1d10+3 E	1	40	Full	Accurate, Reliable	4.5kg	100	Scarce
MP Lascannon	Heavy	300m	S/–/–	5d10+10 E	10	5	2Full	—	55kg	5,000	Very Rare

Solid Projectile Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Autopistol	Pistol	30m	S/–/6	1d10+2 I	0	18	Full	—	2.5kg	75	Common
Stub Revolver	Pistol	30m	S/–/–	1d10+3 I	0	6	2Full	Reliable	1kg	40	Plentiful
Stub Automatic	Pistol	30m	S/3/–	1d10+3 I	0	9	Full	—	1.5kg	50	Plentiful
Hand Cannon	Pistol	35m	S/–/–	1d10+4 I	2	5	2Full	—	3kg	65	Average
Autogun	Basic	90m	S/3/10	1d10+3 I	0	30	Full	—	3.5kg	100	Average
Hunting Rifle	Basic	150m	S/–/–	1d10+3 I	0	5	Full	Accurate	5kg	100	Scarce
Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+4 I	0	2	2Full	Scatter, Reliable	5kg	60	Common
Pump-Action Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+4 I	0	8	2Full	Scatter	5kg	75	Average
Combat Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/3/–	1d10+4 I	0	18	Full	Scatter	6.5kg	150	Scarce
Heavy Stubber	Heavy	120m	–/–/10	1d10+4 I	3	200	2Full	—	35kg	750	Scarce

Bolt Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Bolt Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+5 X	4	8	Full	—	3.5 kg	250	Rare
Boltgun	Basic	90m	S/2/–	1d10+5 X	4	24	Full	—	7 kg	500	Very Rare
Heavy Bolter	Heavy	120m	–/–/10	2d10 X	5	60	2Full	—	40 kg	2,000	Very Rare

Melta Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Inferno Pistol	Pistol	10m	S/–/–	2d10+4 E	12	3	Full	—	2.5 kg	7,500	Very Rare
Meltagun	Basic	20m	S/–/–	2d10+4 E	12	5	2Full	—	8 kg	4,000	Rare

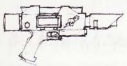
Plasma Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Plasma Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/–/–	1d10+6 E	6	10	4Full	Recharge, Overheats	4 kg	4,000	Very Rare
Plasma Gun	Basic	90m	S/2/–	1d10+6 E	6	20	8Full	Recharge, Overheats	11 kg	3,000	Very Rare

Las Weapons

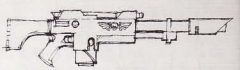
Laser or "las" weapons are the most numerous weapons found in the Imperium. Based on reliable technology, they are cheap to manufacture and easy to maintain. Las weapons work by emitting short, sharp pulses of laser energy emitted from high-storage fast-discharge capacitors, with a flash of light and a distinctive snap like the cracking of a whip as the trigger is pulled. To use the various classes of las weapons you must have the Pistol Training (Las), Basic Weapon Training (Las) or Heavy Weapon Training (Las) talents.

Laspistol



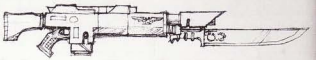
The laspistol is a light, compact and reliable weapon, common throughout the Imperium. Designs vary widely and can range from elaborate heirloom devices inscribed with ornate carvings and gold filigree, to simplistic but brutally robust weapons used by gangs and criminals.

Las Carbine



A lighter, cut down version of the lasgun, the las carbine has fewer shots and a shorter range but is easier to carry and aim, often coming with a folding stock. Las carbines can be fired in one hand with only a –10 penalty rather than the normal –20 for basic weapons.

Lasgun



Produced in a multitude of different styles and patterns, the lasgun can be found on almost every world of the Imperium, where its robust design and dependability make it a favoured weapon of both the Emperor's faithful and many of their foes.

Table 5-7: Ranged Weapons (cont)

Flame Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Hand Flamer	Pistol	10m	S/–/–	1d10+4 E	2	2	2Full	Flame	3.5 kg	200	Rare
Flamer	Basic	20m	S/–/–	1d10+4 E	3	3	2Full	Flame	6 kg	300	Scarce

Primitive Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Bolas	Thrown	10m	S/–/–	—	0	1	—	Primitive, Snare, Inaccurate	1.5 kg	10	Average
Hand Bow	Pistol	15m	S/–/–	1d10 R	0	1	Full	Primitive	1 kg	200	Rare
Flintlock Pistol	Pistol	15m	S/–/–	1d10+2 I	0	1	3Full	Primitive, Unreliable Inaccurate	4 kg	10	Common
Musket	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10+2 I	0	1	5Full	Primitive, Unreliable Inaccurate	7 kg	30	Common
Bow	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10 R	0	1	Half	Primitive, Reliable	2 kg	10	Common
Sling	Basic	15m	S/–/–	1d10–2 I	0	1	Full	Primitive	0.5 kg	10	Plentiful
Crossbow	Basic	30m	S/–/–	1d10 R	0	1	2Full	Primitive	3 kg	10	Common

Launchers

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Grenade Launcher	Basic	60m	S/–/–	*	*	6	Full	*	9 kg	500	Scarce
RPG Launcher	Heavy	120m	S/–/–	*	*	1	Full	*	15 kg	1,200	Rare

**Damage, Armour Piercing and Special Qualities are determined by the ammunition (i.e. the grenade) fired.*

Grenades

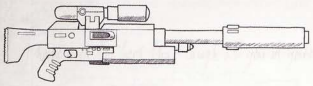
Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Frag	Thrown	SB×3	2d10 X	0	Blast (4)	0.5 kg	10	Common
Krak	Thrown	SB×3	2d10+4 X	6	—	0.5 kg	50	Rare
Blind	Thrown	SB×3	—	0	Smoke	0.5 kg	25	Scarce
Photon Flash	Thrown	SB×3	Special	0	—	0.5 kg	60	Scarce
Hallucinogen	Thrown	SB×3	Special	0	—	0.5 kg	40	Rare
Fire Bomb	Thrown	SB×3	1d10+3 E	6	Blast (3)	0.5 kg	5	Plentiful

Exotic Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Needle Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/–/–	1d10 R	0	6	Full	Accurate, Toxic	1.5 kg	1,250	Very Rare
Web Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/–/–	—	0	1	Full	Snare	3.5 kg	1,200	Rare
Needle Rifle	Basic	180m	S/–/–	1d10 R	0	6	2Full	Accurate, Toxic	2 kg	1,000	Very Rare
Webber	Basic	50m	S/–/–	—	0	1	Full	Blast (5), Snare	8 kg	1,800	Rare

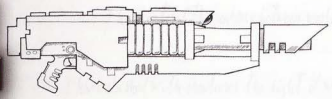
Long Las

Favoured by snipers, the long las is a specially modified version of the lasgun constructed for added range and accuracy. As its name implies, a long las also has a much longer barrel than a lasgun, sometimes being up to twice the length, making it unwieldy in close quarters.



Man Portable Lascannon

Built for war, lascannons use huge power packs that provide enough energy to punch holes in the thickest armour even at very long ranges. Lascannons also require separate power packs, which is why they are often crewed by two or more people.



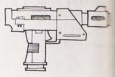
Recharging Power Packs

A reason for the large number of las weapons in the Imperium is the relative abundance of ammunition. Las power packs can be charged in the field from most power sources. Characters may make a Tech-Use Test to successfully charge any power pack if there is a suitable power source available. The time the pack takes to charge is determined by the power output of the source and is ultimately up to the GM, but typically takes several hours. Alternatively, power packs may be charged by placing them in an open flame. This however takes at least a day and permanently reduces the clip size by half (this only occurs the first time it is charged in this way) as well as removing a las weapon's Reliable special quality, or giving it the Unreliable special quality if it was not Reliable to start with. Each time a pack is recharged in this way there is a 30% chance it will be permanently rendered useless.

Solid Projectile Weapons

Solid projectile weapons, or slug-throwers, are almost as plentiful in the Imperium as las weapons. Popular with Imperial servants and renegades alike, they are prized for their ease of manufacture and versatility, not to mention the satisfying sound they make when fired. No other class of weapon boasts as many varieties. Slug-throwers can offer a weapon for all occasions. To use the various classes of SP weapons you must have the Pistol Training (SP), Basic Weapon Training (SP) or Heavy Weapon Training (SP) talents.

Autopistol



Compact and rapid-firing, autopistols are favourites of gangers and outlaws.

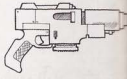
Stub Revolver

Based on an ancient and well-tested design, the stub revolver is an ideal backup weapon.

Stub Automatic

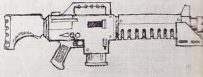
Just as common as the revolver variant, the stub automatic allows for a greater rate of fire and clip capacity, though at the cost of reliability.

Hand Cannon



A variant of the stub revolver, the huge hand cannon fires enormous rounds designed to not only take down a target but make a loud and intimidating noise when doing so. These weapons produce ferocious recoil, and unless fired two-handed, impose a –10 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests.

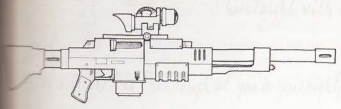
Autogun



Cheap and easy to produce on even the lowest-tech planets, autoguns are a staple weapon across the Imperium. Durable, rugged and easily stocked with readily available ammunition, these weapons are a common sight especially in the rougher parts of the galaxy.

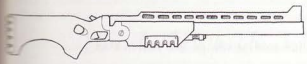
Hunting Rifle

Hunting rifles can be found in the hands of a frontier hunter, or carried by a wealthy sportsman in the pursuit of prey. Highly accurate in the arms of a trained user, even at extreme long ranges, a hunting rifle can bring down its target be it man or beast.



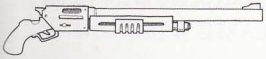
Shotgun

Even the lowest-tech factories can produce these weapons, making them a common sight in the galaxy. Favoured for urban and shipboard combat, where their short-range stopping power comes into play, shotguns have found their way into the arsenal of many Imperial organisations.



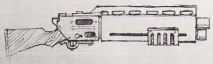
Pump-Action Shotgun

Favoured by enforcers, the pump-action shotgun has all the strengths of its double-barrelled cousin with the added benefits of increased clip capacity. There are also few things as distinctive (and frightening) as the sound of a pump-action shotgun chambering a shell.



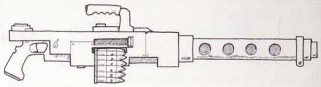
Combat Shotgun

These automatic shotguns, often fed from a drum magazine, are designed purely for warfare and are even deadlier than the normal shotgun. In addition to their short-range destructive power, they hammer out an intimidating racket when being fired.



Heavy Stubber

A mainstay support weapon on lower-tech planets, and also popular with outlaws and hive gangers, the heavy stubber is ideal for fighting off large numbers of enemies or even lightly armoured vehicles. Heavy stubbers can also be used with an ammunition drum (rather than belt fed), changing its clip size to 40 and increasing is cost by 100 Thrones but decreasing its reload time to a single Full Action.



Bolt Weapons

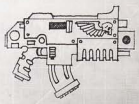
If there is one weapon type that defines the Imperium, it is the bolter. No other weapon combines high technology levels with deliberate brutality, and no other race would consider making it but mankind. Bolter weapons fire rounds of self-propelled mass-reactive shells called bolts, set to explode just after penetration. Overall they are superb, if temperamental, devices requiring skilled maintenance using the correct rituals and blessings. Furthermore, these are all very rare weapons, available only to the lucky or well-connected few. Many are centuries old, handed down from veteran to successor, and some have long legends attached to them of their great lineage. It would be a mistake to confuse these "civilian" issue weapons with those of the Adeptus Astartes.

Bolter ammunition is expensive and difficult to manufacture, and only the elite of the Imperium has ready access to it. The standard bolter round is .75 calibre and has a super-dense metallic core with a diamantine tip. To use the various classes of bolt weapons you must have the Pistol Training (Bolt), Basic Weapon Training (Bolt) or Heavy Weapon Training (Bolt) talents.

Bolt Pistol

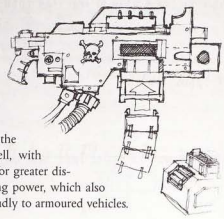
Carrying a bolt pistol is a sign of high status in the Imperium, one that only a minority can afford due to the high cost of maintenance and ammunition. However, few can argue with their destructive power in combat and after experiencing their potent capabilities, a man might beggar himself to own one.

Boltgun



Boltguns are known for the unique roar they make when fired, as the propellant in their shells ignite, followed shortly by the explosive detonation as they hit their target. It is an experience only slightly less satisfying than seeing the results of such a weapon in action.

Heavy Bolter

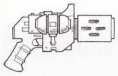


A larger support version of the boltgun, the heavy bolter is seldom seen outside military organisations. It uses a much larger version of the standard bolt shell, with more propellant for greater distance and stopping power, which also makes it more deadly to armoured vehicles.

Melta Weapons

Melta weapons (also known as cookers or melters) are a specialist type of weapon that have short ranges but are devastatingly powerful. Most work by combining highly pressurised gases into an unstable sub-molecular thermal state, which is fired out in an intense blast of heat that can turn even tank armour into molten slag. Targets are vaporised within seconds, usually accompanied by a distinctive hissing sound as the beam boils away the water vapour in the air. To use the various classes of melta weapons you must have the Pistol Training (Melta), Basic Weapon Training (Melta), or Heavy Weapon Training (Melta) talents.

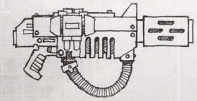
Inferno Pistol



The technology behind the inferno pistol is hard to reproduce, making these weapons exceptionally rare and expensive. Possessing an inferno pistol is a sign of status, and usually only powerful and influential individuals have the honour of owning one of these valuable relics.

Meltagun

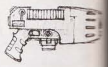
Meltaguns are the most common form of melta weapon, coveted by soldiers for their massive close-range destructive power. There are also few things as good at cutting through armour than a meltagun, and they are often pressed into service for breaching bulkheads. As an alternative to using a meltagun with attached canisters, you may instead have a backpack and feed line, which doubles the clip size, adds 6 kg to the weight and increases the cost by 100 Thrones.



Plasma Weapons

Plasma weapons represent an almost lost art for the Imperium. The secrets of their manufacture are now known to but a handful of the inner circle of the Adeptus Mechanicus Magos Munitorum and their tech-adept artisans. They function by using sturdy flasks of hydrogen suspended in a photonic state to provide the fuel needed for the plasma reaction. The photohydrogen fuel core gives off tremendous heat when fired and the firer often must wait for the core to cool and recharge between shots. To use the various classes of plasma weapons you must have the Pistol Training (Plasma), Basic Weapon Training (Plasma) or Heavy Weapon Training (Plasma) talents.

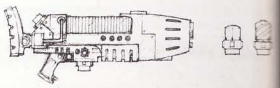
Plasma Pistol



Few pistols are deadlier than the plasma pistol, and those willing to take the risk of using one possess a weapon capable of taking down almost any foe at close range.

Plasma Gun

An uncommon weapon, even in the ranks of the Imperial Guard or illustrious Space Marine forces, most extant plasma guns are hundreds if not thousands of years old. However, as a testament to their design, they remain as deadly today as they were on the day of their fabrication. As an alternative to using a plasma gun with attached plasma flasks, you may instead have a backpack and feed line, which doubles the clip size, adds 6 kg to the weight and increases the cost by 100 Thrones.



Flame Weapons

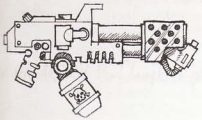
Flame weapons all operate in much the same manner by firing gouts of flame at the target. They use a fuel generically referred to as promethium, though it can also consist of home-made concoctions or other chemical brews depending on the local technology level. Once produced, the intense jet that spurts from the barrel creates a torrent of liquid fire, which spreads out in an inferno that burns even on water. Once set ablaze, enemies are hard-pressed to put out the fire. To use the various classes of flame weapons you must have the Pistol Training (Flame), Basic Weapon Training (Flame) or Heavy Weapon Training (Flame) talents.

Hand Flamer

Flame pistols or hand flamers are designed for personal combat at close range where their very short range and poor accuracy are not an issue.

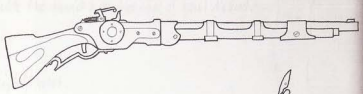
Flamer

Flamers are terrifying and indiscriminate weapons ideal for attacking enemies in cover or confined spaces. As an alternative to using a flamer with an underslung canister, you may instead have a backpack and fuel hose, which doubles the clip size, adds 6 kg to the weight and adds 100 Thrones to the cost.



Musket

These crude devices can only fire once before reloading, are prone to failure, and only the most low-tech savage or desperate renegade would generally fight with one. When they do strike, however, they are deadly against unarmoured foes.

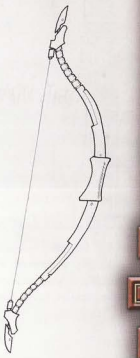


Primitive Weapons

Even in the 41st Millennium there is a call for low-tech weapons, found on feral, undeveloped planets or post-apocalyptic environments where technology has collapsed, or on vicious hive worlds that see combat take on all forms. Though these weapons may be hopelessly outdated by more advanced firearms, in the hands of a skilled user they can be just as deadly. To use the various classes of primitive weapons you must have the Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Primitive), Basic Weapon Training (Primitive) or Heavy Weapon Training (Primitive) talents.

Bow

Bows have changed little through their many countless centuries of usage, and can be found across the galaxy in a variety of designs and constructions. Even on high-tech worlds, these weapons, like hand bows, are a favourite amongst assassins and gangers for their silence and reliability.

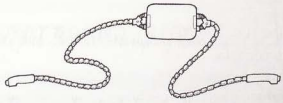


Bolas

Bolas are normally non-lethal and as such can be seen employed by bounty hunters or local law enforcement members, where the swirling balls (some styles use up to eight of these dense objects) can entangle a target with heavy cords or wire.

Sling

Slings are a difficult weapon to master, but can be used to throw anything from rocks picked off the ground, to specialised metallic balls, to even grenades. When using a sling to throw grenades, replace the sling's Damage with the effects of the grenade but retain the weapon's Range.

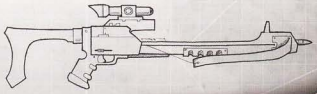


Hand Bow

This weapon offers the hitting power of a crossbow but in a pistol grip, suitable for one-handed operation but at shorter ranges. The ease at which they can be broken down and concealed, as well as their silent operation, makes them a favoured weapon of assassins.

Crossbow

Crossbows are less common than bows as they require more advanced mechanical fittings, but they are equally as deadly.



Flintlock Pistol

These primitive blackpowder weapons can take many forms, from finely crafted pistols constructed for the nobles of low-tech worlds, to simple pipe and powder affairs used by underhive scum.

LAUNCHERS AND GRENADES

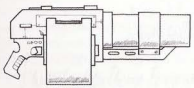
In a galaxy raked by war and disorder there is a high demand for extremely destructive ordnance. To that end the forge worlds of the Imperium send out a steady stream of explosives, grenades and similar weaponry, some of which may find its way into the hands of Acolytes and their foes. To use the various classes of launchers you must have the Pistol Training (Launcher), Basic Weapon Training (Launcher) or Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher) talents. Setting explosives requires the Demolition skill (see **Chapter III: Skills, page 101**)

Throwing Grenades

Throwing grenades requires no special training or Talents and is resolved using a Ballistic Skill Test just as if the character was firing a weapon, including any modifiers for range, visibility and the like.

Grenade Launcher

The standard grenade launcher uses compressed gas charges to launch a variety of grenade types at the enemy. These shots can be arced high into the air as suppressive fire at unseen targets as well as being used directly against foes.



Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) Launcher

More powerful than a standard grenade launcher, an RPG launcher is capable of accurately hitting a target hundreds of metres away.

Grenades

All of the grenades listed here can either be thrown by hand or used in a grenade launcher or RPG launcher.

Frag

These grenades use an explosive charge and special fillers of shrapnel fragments. Imperial frag grenades are roughly the size of a clenched fist and covered with a heavily notched shell, both to increase the shrapnel produced and provide a more secure grip for throwing.

Krak

Krak grenades have powerful concentrated explosives designed to punch holes in armoured targets such as vehicles or bunkers. While stronger than frag grenades, krak detonations do not produce a Blast effect and their more focused explosion makes them impractical for use against people.

Blind

Blind grenades explode with a burst of dense smoke, IR bafflers and broadband EM-spectrum chaff, all of which is designed to block detection through the cloud. Sensors and vision that would pierce normal smoke cannot see through haze created by a blind grenade. In calm conditions the cloud of smoke is roughly 3m wide and 2m tall and lasts 3 Rounds. In high winds this may be reduced.

Blindness

Blind characters are bereft of vision and consequently they have a much harder time surviving. Blind characters automatically fail all Ballistic Skill Tests and any other test that involves vision. Such characters take a –30 penalty to all Weapon Skill, Dodge and Parry tests. Finally, blind characters move at half their normal rates when in unfamiliar environments as they must feel around to make their way. Should they attempt to move faster, they must succeed on a Difficult (–10) Agility Test or fall to ground at the end of their Movement.

Hallucinogen

These kinds of grenades induce a variety of short-lived psychological states and delusions. Anyone within 10 metres of a detonating hallucinogen grenade must succeed on a Difficult (–10) Toughness Test or be overcome with delusions and hallucinations for 1d10 Rounds. Whilst affected, on the character's Turn, roll d100. On a 50 or less, the character may act normally. On a 51–75, the character runs around screaming in response to some

perceived weirdness. On a 76 or higher, the character attacks the closest creature to him, regardless of friend or foe, using whatever weapons he has.

Optional Rule: When the character is first affected by a hallucination grenade, you can roll on **Table 5–8: Hallucinogen Effects, page 137** to see how the character behaves for the next 1d10 Rounds.

Fire Bomb

A relatively primitive grenade, the fire bomb is normally a breakable canister of flammable liquid with a fuse made from cloth or other material that the liquid can soak into. Once the fuse is set aflame, the bomb is hurled at the enemy; the canister breaks open on impact to release the now burning liquid. A target struck by a fire bomb must make an Agility Test or catch on fire (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 210**).

Photon Flash

Photon flash grenades detonate like a small star, blinding anyone nearby and bright enough to overload cheap or primitive vision protection systems. Anyone within 15 metres of a photo flash grenade when it detonates must succeed on a Toughness Test or be blinded for 1d5 Rounds.

Explosive Mishaps

Whenever a jam results from throwing a grenade or firing a grenade, something unfortunate has happened. Roll on the table below to find out the results.

Roll	Result
1–5	**Dud.** The explosive or round fails to explode and, in the case of grenade launchers, the weapon must be reloaded before it can fire.
6–8	**"It might be ok..."** Nothing happens. Roll again on this table next round.
9–0	**BOOM!** The round or explosive detonates immediately. Centre the effect on the character. If this was the result of firing a grenade launcher, the grenade detonates in the barrel, having its normal effect as well as destroying the weapon.

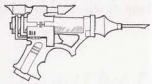
Table 5–8: Hallucinogen Effects

Roll	Effect
01–10	**Bugsbugsbugsbugs!** The character drops to the floor, flailing and screaming as he tries to claw off imaginary insects. The character counts as being Stunned.
11–20	**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. The character counts as being Stunned.
21–30	**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 (usually by assigning a number to a direction and rolling 1d10 to see where the character shoots—a 1 is at the ground and a 10 is in the air).
31–40	**Nobody can see me!** The character believes he is invisible and wanders aimlessly, pulling faces at those around him. He waddles about in random directions each round, using a Full Action to move. The character retains his Reactions.
41–50	**I can fly!** The sky looks so big and inviting, the character flaps his arms trying to imitate a ptera-squirrel. 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 most usual outcomes.
51–60	**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.
61–70	**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.
71–80	**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 116**) and attacks the closest opponent.
81–90	**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.
91–00	**The worms!** The character desperately tries to remove a massive fanged worm he thinks is slowly winding its way up and around 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 whatsoever, 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.

Exotic Weapons

Many weapons are not only uncommon in the Imperium, but also unimaginable to most of its citizens. These weapons are always expensive and beyond the reach of all but the elite or most resourceful. Because these weapons are so specialised, a character must have a Talent for each individual exotic weapon he wishes to use. For example, to use a needle pistol a character would need Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol).

Needle Pistol



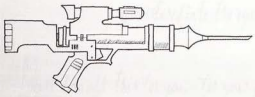
Needle pistols use a low-power laser beam to propel small slivers of crystalline coated in viral toxins. Enemies wounded by them are almost instantly paralysed or dead within moments. As they are virtually silent and have no muzzle flash, needle weapons are ideal for assassins.

Web Pistol

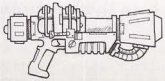
Web pistols fire masses of filaments, which expand in the air to form a web of sticky, near-unbreakable material. Targets are quickly entangled in a painful embrace; if they attempt to struggle the filaments constrict even more, further entrapping them. In addition to the normal effects of Snare weapons, each time an ensnared character fails a Strength or Agility Test to escape he imposes a cumulative –10 penalty on future tests. Should this exceed –30, the character takes 1d5+1 Damage for each future failed test. The webbing breaks down on its own and flakes away after 1d10 Rounds.

Needle Rifle

Prized by snipers, the needle rifle offers the perfect combination of range, stealth and deadliness. The only argument against these exquisite weapons is that they are next to useless against heavily armoured targets.



Webber



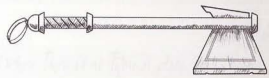
The most commonly used web weapon, it is often called into play to subdue those violating the Emperor's Law. They have a longer range and each shot can cover a small group of people, incapacitating entire crowds when used in large numbers. The webbing breaks down on its own and flakes away after 1d5 hours.

Melee Weapons

Close combat weapons are a common sight throughout the galaxy, and in many places it would be unthinkable to venture without at least one such weapon on your person. Depending on the planet's level of technology (and the wealth of the user), these can range from simple metal blades to high-tech weapons of plastic or exotic metals and can include swords, axes, pole arms, clubs, mauls, bludgeons and other simple devices. To use melee weapons you must have the Melee Weapon Training (Primitive) talent to use them effectively in close combat and the Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive) talent for ranged attacks.

Axe

An axe sports a brutal blade, used both as a tool and weapon. While they generally do not have the reach of a sword and lack its ability to parry away blows, a strike from an axe will generally create a more lethal effect when it lands, ripping apart flesh and shattering bone with ease.



Brass Knuckles

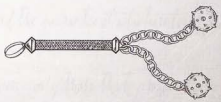
In their most basic form, simple knuckle dusters worn around the foremost fingers can turn a simple punch into a powerful hit, enough to break bones.

Club

Clubs, mauls and bludgeons are amongst the most primitive melee weapons, relying on weight and strength to cave in a foe's skull.

Flail

Flails consist of one or more heavy spiked balls attached to the weapon's pole (with lengths of chain or metal rods), and while difficult to wield, they are capable of inflicting terrible wounds.



Great Weapon

Most melee weapons can also be found in larger and heavier versions, usable only with two hands. Great weapons of this kind (such as huge axes, giant hammers, double-handed swords, and so on, including huge clubs) are massive, brutal weapons that can inflict serious damage with each blow.

Table 5-9: Melee Weapons

Primitive Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Axe	Melee	—	1d10+1 R	0	Primitive, Unbalanced	4 kg	20	Average
Brass Knuckles	Melee	—	1d5–1 I	0	Primitive	0.5 kg	5	Plentiful
Club	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Primitive	2 kg	5	Abundant
Flail†	Melee	—	1d10+2 I	0	Flexible, Primitive	4 kg	20	Scarce
Great Weapon†	Melee	—	2d10 R	2	Primitive, Unwieldy	7 kg	70	Scarce
Hammer	Melee	—	1d10+1 I	0	Primitive, Unbalanced	4 kg	10	Common
Improvised	Melee	—	1d10–2 I	0	Primitive, Unbalanced	—	—	—
Knife	Melee, Thrown	3m	1d5 R	0	Primitive	0.5 kg	5	Abundant
Throwing Star/Knife	Thrown	5m	1d5 R	0	Primitive	0.5 kg	5	Plentiful
Shield	Melee	—	1d5 I	0	Defensive, Primitive	3 kg	25	Average
Spear†	Melee, Thrown	10m	1d10 R	0	Primitive	3 kg	15	Common
Sword	Melee	—	1d10 R	0	Balanced, Primitive	3 kg	15	Common
Staff††	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Balanced, Primitive	3 kg	10	Plentiful

Chain Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Chainsword	Melee	—	1d10+2 R	2	Balanced, Tearing	6 kg	275	Rare
Chain Axe	Melee	—	1d10+4 R	2	Tearing	13 kg	450	Very Rare

Power Weapons

Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Power Blade	Melee	—	1d10+3 E	6	Power Field	1.5 kg	1,750	Very Rare
Power Sword	Melee	—	1d10+5 E	6	Balanced, Power Field	3.5 kg	2,500	Very Rare

Shock Weapons

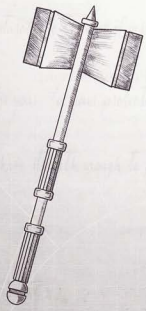
Name	Class	Range	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Cost	Availability
Shock Maul	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	Shocking	2.5 kg	150	Scarce
Electro-Flail†	Melee	—	1d10+2 I	0	Flexible, Shocking	4.5 kg	375	Rare

†This weapon requires two hands to use.

Note: Characters using melee weapons add their SB to the Damage they inflict.

Hammer

Hammers are heavier versions of the regular hand tool, using a large weighted end to inflict a harder and deadlier blow. Many Imperial servants favour the hammer as an enduring symbol of the Emperor's righteous justice.



Improvised

Improvised weapons can take many forms, but are generally any handy weighted object such as table legs, severed limbs or artillery shell casings. Hitting someone with the butt of a basic ranged weapon (such as a lasgun or boltgun) counts as an improvised weapon.

Knife

The knife is the ubiquitous back-up weapon for warriors all across the Imperium, be they lowly hive scum or the elite soldiers of a planetary governor. Some, such as the psykana mercy blade, are designed for a specific purpose, whilst others are more generic in nature.

Throwing Knife/Star

Throwing knives and stars are designed purely to be thrown; carefully crafted, their sharp cutting edges can inflict serious wounds.

Shield

Shields are a useful protective device, either in conjunction with armour or on their own. They can be made from a variety of materials, ranging from improvised wooden or plastic sheets to advanced metal or armourplas plates. Sizes can range from light bucklers to huge full-body shields as large as a man. As they are intended for defence, attacking with a shield imposes a –20 penalty.

Spear

Common on feral and medieval worlds, spears can equally be found in the hands of hunters as well as warriors.

Sword

Swords can range from short dagger-like models to longer elaborate duelling blades. The nature of the blade (single or double-edged, curved or straight, flexible or stiff, cutting or stabbing, and so on) varies with the intent of the sword and the taste of its user.

Staff

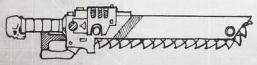
Longer basic weapons use a staff of wood or other material, with the longer reach useful for hitting an enemy before he can strike. The staff is just that, and is a common sight especially among pilgrims trekking throughout the galaxy to retrace the steps of the saints.

CHAIN WEAPONS

Chain weapons are popular amongst most warriors in the 41st Millennium, as most races and planets have the basic technology to produce these brutal weapons. They all have fast-moving chains of serrated metallic teeth running across what would normally be the weapon's bladed edge. Even the slightest hit can rip open flesh, and solid strikes can cut through armour. Most are loud and all are visibly dangerous, and the sight of one can demoralise even the most fanatical opponent. To use chain weapons you must have the Melee Weapon Training (Chain) talent.

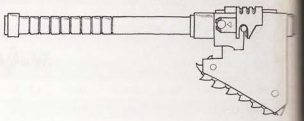
Chainsword

Chainswords are roughly sword-like in shape as the name suggests, with a large flat housing containing the chain. Generally only the forward curved section is open, and is thrust at the enemy where the spinning chain teeth can bite into flesh and bone.



Chain Axe

Chain axes are heavy, brutal weapons that deliver hideous damage with each blow. Like a regular axe, these can have one edge or be two-sided. Each open edge contains its own chain loop, meaning that the double-sided version can still operate if one side is fouled.

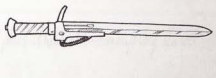


POWER WEAPONS

Power weapons work by projecting a disruptive energy field along the length of a blade or head of a weapon, allowing it to slice through most armour as well as limbs. Many of these weapons conceal their true nature via subtle power packs and energy projection veins, appearing as a normal weapon until activated when crackles of lightning run across the blade. Most can function as a simple weapon when powered down, a useful ability should their energy source run dry or become dangerous to use. To use power weapons you must have the Melee Weapon Training (Power) talent. If not activated, the weapon counts as a normal weapon and characters with the appropriate Melee Weapon Training (Primitive) talent can use it without penalty.

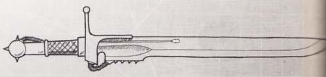
Power Blade

Power blades are dagger-sized weapons made infinitely more dangerous than their size would suggest by the addition of a power field. They are also easily concealed, making them popular with those who prefer to appear unarmed.



Power Sword

Power swords are rare and valuable weapons within the Imperium, often being passed down through generations as valued family heirlooms. In addition to being a potent status symbol, a power sword is also utterly deadly in the hands of a skilled swordsman.

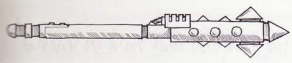


Shock Weapons

Shock weapons are designed to be generally non-lethal, attacking the subject with incapacitating force through electrical shocks released on impact. As shock weapons have little or no destructive impact on flesh other than burn marks, they are useful for crowd control and "encouraging" workers such as shipboard press gangs or other forced labour. To use shock weapons you must have the Melee Weapon Training (Shock) talent.

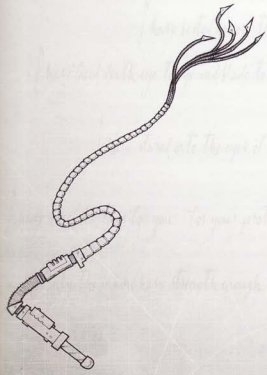
Shock Maul

Shock mauls are mostly commonly found in the hands of the Adeptus Arbites and enforcer squads on countless worlds to enforce the Emperor's Law. While they are intended for crowd control and riot suppression in the hands of an enthusiastic user they can also be deadly combat weapons.



Electro-Flail

Electro-flails are groups of tendril-like lashes, attached to a short staff or handle. These flails have a short reach, but as they strike in devastating masses of hits they can be extraordinarily effective at incapacitating a foe.



Weapon Upgrades

Weapons can be given upgrades to enhance their performance. Which weapons and how many upgrades can be applied are noted in the upgrade descriptions. A character with the Trade (Armourer) skill may upgrade weapons by making a successful test.

The cost and availability of each upgrade refers to the component and not the cost of attaching it, which characters must pay for separately. For weapons purchased with upgrades already attached, simply add the cost of the upgrade to that of the weapon. This does not change the availability of the weapon. Upgrades also modify a weapon's weight as noted below.

Table 5-10: Weapons Upgrades

Name	Weight	Cost	Availability
Compact	×1/2	50	Average
Exterminator	+1 kg	35	Common
Extra Grip	×1/3	25	Plentiful
Fire Selector	+0.5 kg	25	Scarce
Melee Attachment	+2 kg	25	Plentiful
Mono	0	40	Scarce
Overcharge Pack	+0.5 kg	15	Common
Red-Dot Laser Sight	+0.5 kg	50	Scarce
Silencer	+0.5 kg	10	Plentiful
Telescopic Sight	+1 kg	35	Average

Compact

Compact weapons are smaller versions of pistol and basic weapons that are favoured by those that prefer concealment over stopping power. This upgrade halves the weight of the weapon but also halves its clip size and range as well as reducing its Damage by 1.

Upgrades: Any Pistol or Basic Las, Solid Projectile, Flame, Bolt or Plasma weapon.

Exterminator

Many of the more zealous religious warriors of the Imperium use an exterminator cartridge on their regular weapons. This small device contains a small one-shot flamer weapon that shoots out a sheet of fire. Rather than firing the weapon as normal, the shooter may use the exterminator cartridge, working out the effects as if he was armed with a flamer. Exterminators are one-shot weapons and must be replaced once used.

Upgrades: Any weapon.

Extra Grip

Also known as a pistol grip, this allows the weapon to be wielded in one hand without the usual –20 penalty. However, it becomes more difficult to aim accurately and its Range is halved.

Upgrades: Any Basic ranged weapon.

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. At the start of the shooter's Turn, he can use his fire selector to choose which clip he wishes to draw ammo from that round.

Upgrades: (Bolt) and (SP) Pistols or (SP) and (Bolt) Basic Weapons.

Melee Attachment

Bayonets and 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.

Upgrades: Any Basic ranged weapon can have melee attachments.

Mono

Mono weapons have specially fashioned blades with superfine edges, which can easily cut through armour and never lose their edge. Mono weapons no longer count as Primitive and add a +2 bonus to their Penetration.

Upgrades: Any close combat weapon.

Overcharge Pack

This is an enhanced power pack for a las weapon increasing the strength of its fire. An overcharge pack adds 1 to the weapon's Damage. Unfortunately the increased output of damage reduces the number of shots and so the clip size is halved.

Upgrades: Any Pistol (Las) or Basic weapon (Las).

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.

Upgrades: Any Pistol or Basic Las, Solid Projectile, Bolt, Primitive or Plasma weapon. A red-dot laser sight counts as a sight and a gun may only have one sight.

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.

Upgrades: Stub revolver, stub automatic, hand cannon, autogun and hunting rifle.

Telescopic Sight

Telescopic sights magnify the target's image, 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.

Upgrades: Any Basic Las, Solid Projectile, Bolt, Primitive or Plasma weapon. A telescopic sight counts as a sight and a gun may only have one sight.

AMMO

Without ammo a gun is just a glorified club. Presented here is a selection of ammunition, including a variety of special types. Each type of ammo can only be used with certain weapons as detailed in its description. The table below details each type of ammo's cost in Thrones as well as the amount of shots this buys. Ammo weight is not listed; however, should it be important to know how much ammunition weighs, consider a weapon's full clip to weigh 10% of the weight of the weapon itself.

Table 5-11: Ammo

Name	Cost/Amount	Availability
Arrows/Quarrels	1/20	Common
Shot	1/20	Common
Bullets	1/20	Plentiful
Shells	1/20	Common
Charge Pack (pistol)	10/full clip	Common
Charge Pack (basic)	15/full clip	Common
Charge Pack (heavy)	30/full clip	Rare
Fuel (pistol)	8/full clip	Scarce
Fuel (basic)	10/full clip	Scarce
Bolt Shells	16/1	Rare
Melta Canister (pistol)	20/full clip	Very Rare
Melta Canister (basic)	15/full clip	Rare
Plasma Flask (pistol)	24/full clip	Rare
Plasma Flask (basic)	18/full clip	Rare
Exotic	20/1	Very Rare
Dumdum Bullets	5/6	Scarce
Hot-Shot Charge	15/1	Scarce
Inferno Shells	18/1	Rare
Man-Stopper Bullets	5/6	Scarce

Arrows/Quarrels

Arrows and quarrels come in a variety of shapes, sizes and materials ranging from crude wooden shafts with flint tips to steel darts with razor-sharp points.

Used With: Bows, crossbows and hand bows.

Shot

Shot is solid lead or stone balls and a powder charge used in primitive blackpowder weapons.

Used With: Flintlock pistol and musket.

Bullets

Hard rounds are common for many weapons within the Imperium and vary greatly in calibre and design. Bullets from one kind of firearm cannot be used in another unless they are very similar in make. So for example you could use bullets bought for a stub revolver in a stub automatic, but not in an autogun.

Used With: Autopistol, stub revolver, stub automatic, hand cannon, autogun, hunting rifle and heavy stubber.

Shells

Shells contain dozens of tiny balls and are designed to scatter over a wide area when fired, making them ideal for close-in work where accuracy is less important.

Used With: Shotguns, pump-action shotguns and combat shotguns.

Charge Pack

Charge packs are powerful batteries used almost exclusively by las weapons. The cost of a charge pack varies depending on the class of the weapon. In all cases, however, it provides shots equal to the weapon's full clip value.

Used With: Laspistol, las carbine, lasgun, long las, MP lascannon.

Fuel

Flame weapons use liquid fuel, which can vary greatly in composition and quality from purest promethium to crude flammable alcohols. The cost of fuel varies depending on the class of the weapon. In all cases, however, it provides shots equal to the weapon's full clip value.

Used With: Hand flamer and flamer.

Bolt Shells

The mass-reactive explosive bolt shell is among the deadliest kind of round in the Imperial arsenal. However the difficulty and cost of its manufacture restricts its use to all but the most wealthy or well connected.

Used With: Bolt pistols, bolters and heavy bolters.

Melta Canister

Meltaguns use specially refined chemicals injected into highly pressurised canisters. The cost of a melta canister varies depending on the class of the weapon. In all cases, however, it provides shots equal to the weapon's full clip value.

Used With: Inferno pistols and meltaguns.

Plasma Flask

Raw plasma weapon fuel consists of highly dangerous and volatile photonic hydrogen, compressed and contained within reinforced flasks. The cost of a plasma flask varies depending on the class of the weapon. In all cases, however, it provides shots equal to the weapon's full clip value.

Used With: Plasma pistols and plasma guns.

Exotic

There are many kinds of weapons in the Imperium that use unusual types of ammunition, from the viscous gel of a webber to the finely crafted darts of a needle pistol. GMs should feel free to increase the cost of exotic ammunition depending on its rarity.

Used With: Needle pistol, needle rifle, web pistol and webber.

Dumdum Bullets

These heavy blunt bullets are designed to 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, however Armour Points count double against them.

Used With: Stub revolvers, stub automatics and hand cannons.

Hot-Shot Charge

This is a single powerful charge pack for a las weapon. A weapon using a hot-shot charge adds 1 to its Damage, rolls two dice for its Damage and picks the highest, and gains an Penetration of 4. However the weapon loses its Reliable special quality, and its clip is reduced to 1 (basically hot-shots are one-use charge packs).

Used With: Laspistols, las carbines, lasguns, and long las.

Inferno Shells

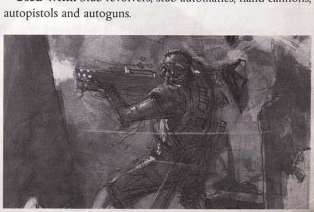
These shells contain a phosphorous gel that ignites on contact with the target. A target hit by an inferno shell must make an Agility Test or catch on fire, in addition to suffering damage as normal. Inferno shells may also be used to set things on fire besides people at the discretion of the GM.

Used With: Shotguns, pump-action shotguns, combat shotguns and all bolt weapons.

Man-Stopper Bullets

These densely tipped bullets are designed to punch through armour. A weapon using man-stopper rounds adds 3 to its Penetration.

Used With: Stub revolvers, stub automatics, hand cannons, autopistols and autoguns.



Armour

"Of course the Emperor protects! It's just that He protects me better when I'm in a full carapace suit."
— Licensed Bounty Hunter, Elron Zaph.

Given the numerous weapons available in the 41st Millennium as well as their sheer lethality, it is no wonder that personal armour and protective energy fields are commonplace. Most important civilians always wear some sort of body armour when in public, and some of the more paranoid (or well prepared) also use them in private. Military personnel and Imperial agents are always equipped with some sort of armoured protection, ranging from cheap layered padding to highly sophisticated armoured shells built to withstand almost any attack.

Armour provides Armour Points (AP) to various locations on your body. In addition, some kinds of armour have special properties that are 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 all four locations 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 armour weighs in kilograms, for information on how much a character can carry refer to **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 215**.

Cost: Indicates the standard price of the armour in the Imperium.

Availability: This identifies the armour's availability (see **Table 5-3: Consequences of Availability, page 126**).

Armour Craftsmanship

All the types of armour detailed here are of Common craftsmanship. For armour of better or worse manufacture use the following modifiers.

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. Against the first attack in any round, the armour increases its AP by 1.

Best: Finely wrought and perfectly fitted Best armour is like donning a second skin. Best armour weighs half the normal amount and increases the AP by 1.

Mixing Armour

You 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. For example, if a character wearing heavy leathers and xeno hides is hit in the body, the lower Armour Points of the heavy leathers (AP 2) are ignored and the Armour Points of the xeno hides (6) are used for the purposes of calculating damage.

Primitive Armour

Often made from basic materials such as hides and soft metals, this kind of armour is better suited to turning blades than stopping bullets. Armour with the Primitive quality only provides full protection against attacks made with weapons that also have the Primitive quality. Against all others, it provides half the normal AP (round up).

Flak Armour

Comprised of layers of ablative and impact-absorbent material, flak armour is effective against small arms, shrapnel and proximity blasts. Flak armour counts as AP 5 against any hit from a weapon with the Blast quality, provided the wearer was not on the spot where the blast originated.

TABLE 5-12: ARMOUR

Armour Type	Location(s) Covered	AP	Wt	Cost	Availability
Primitive Armour					
Gang Leathers	Arms, Body, Legs	1	5 kg	25	Average
Heavy Leathers	Arms, Body, Legs	2	7 kg	100	Common
Quilted Vest	Body	2	2 kg	10	Common
Beast Furs	Body	2	10 kg	5	Average
Grox Hides	Body	3	14 kg	60	Common
Chain Coat	Arms, Body, Legs	3	18 kg	50	Average
Feudal Plate	All	5	30 kg	120	Scarce
Xeno Hides	Body	6	22 kg	5,000	Very Rare
Flak Armour					
Flak Helmet	Head	2	2 kg	25	Average
Flak Gauntlets	Arms	2	1 kg	50	Average
Light Flak Coat	Arms, Body, Legs	2	4 kg	80	Scarce
Flak Vest	Body	3	5 kg	50	Average
Flak Jacket	Arms, Body, Legs	3	6 kg	100	Average
Flak Cloak	Body	3	8 kg	80	Scarce
Guard Flak Armour	All	4	11 kg	300	Scarce
Mesh Armour					
Mesh Cowl	Head	3	0.5 kg	100	Rare
Mesh Gloves	Arms	3	0.5 kg	120	Rare
Xeno Mesh	Arms, Body, Legs	4	2 kg	375	Rare
Mesh Vest	Body	4	1 kg	150	Rare
Mesh Combat Cloak	Arms, Body	4	1.5 kg	350	Very Rare
Carapace Armour					
Carapace Helm	Head	4	2 kg	250	Rare
Carapace Vambraces	Arms	5	2 kg	300	Rare
Carapace Greaves	Legs	5	3 kg	375	Rare
Enforcer Light Carapace	Arms, Body, Legs	5	15 kg	575	Rare
Carapace Chest Plate	Body	6	7 kg	600	Rare
Storm Trooper Carapace	All	6	17 kg	3,750	Very Rare
Power Armour					
Light Power Armour	All	7	40 kg	8,500	Very Rare
Power Armour	All	8	65 kg	15,000	Very Rare

MESH ARMOUR

Of alien design, and sometimes manufacture, mesh is formed from thousands of thermoplas cells linked together to create a fabric-like material. It is lightweight and can withstand most impacts or heat energy by becoming momentarily rigid, spreading and dissipating the attack.

CARAPACE ARMOUR

Carapace armour is made of densely layered plates of armaplas, ceramite or some other kind of highly durable material. It is heavy to wear and cannot easily cover flexible areas such as joints, but it offers significantly better protection than lighter kinds of armour.

POWER ARMOUR

The heaviest and most sophisticated kinds of armour use their own power source increasing the user's strength. Power armour adds +20 to the wearer's Strength Characteristic and increases his size by one step (so for example a human who is average size would become hulking). Power armour also requires a constant power supply, which must be carried by the wearer (usually as a backpack). A standard non-military power supply lasts for 1d5 hours before it needs to be replaced or recharged.

Gear

"Prepare for the worst, because that is where you are headed."
– Imperial Guard proverb.

In addition to weapons and armour there is a host of other equipment that Acolytes can make use of in the service of the Emperor.

Clothing

Table 5-13: Clothing & Personal Items

Name	Wt	Cost	Availability
Backpack	1 kg	10	Plentiful
Cameleoline Cloak	0.5 kg	500	Rare
Charm	—	Var	Average
Chrono	—	40	Abundant
Clip/Drop Harness	2 kg	25	Common
Clothing	—	Var	Abundant
Explosive collar	1 kg	55	Rare
Filtration Plugs	—	15	Common
Infra-Red Goggles	0.5 kg	275	Rare
Photo-Visors/Contacts	0.5 kg	100	Scarce
Re-Breather	1 kg	50	Scarce
Recoil Glove	0.5 kg	85	Common
Respirator/Gas-Mask	0.5 kg	25	Average
Void Suit	8 kg	100	Plentiful
Synskin	2 kg	2,500	Very Rare

Backpack

A personal carrying device can take many forms, but is usually some kind of bag with attached straps for ease of carrying. A backpack can usually carry approximately 50 kilograms.

Cameleoline Cloak

Cameleoline material is made up of mimic fibres that blend the coloration of the wearer into their surroundings. A character wearing a cameleoline cloak gains a +20 bonus to Concealment Tests. If the wearer remains stationary, he counts as being at Extreme Range (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 198**) when targeted by ranged weapons.

Charm

A charm is a keepsake, holy relic or good luck token that is intended to draw the benevolent eye of the Emperor to the wearer. They take a myriad of forms including such things as saintly finger bones, fragments of blessed bolter casings, water from holy rivers and even corpse hair woven into significant patterns. Throughout the Imperium, there is no shortage of folk that will sell such items to Acolytes, though discerning the true relics from the false is an almost impossible task (thus the cost of a charm is entirely up to the GM and how well the Acolyte can haggle with the seller).

Charms have no tangible benefits. However, when the adventure calls for something bad to happen to a random character, at the GMs discretion a character with a charm will be exempt. If all the characters carry charms (as all Emperor-fearing citizens should) then it is up to the GM to choose which charms are the most potent.

Clothing In The Imperium

Here are a few examples of the kinds of clothing that can be found on the various worlds of the Imperium.

Rag-Castings (Poor Quality Clothing)
Many folk within the Imperium have no choice but to clothe themselves in whatever bits of scavenged material they can. These kinds of tattered outfits are know as rag-castings and often give the wearer the appearance of being encased in rubbish.

Coveralls (Common Quality Clothing)
Often disposable and made from whatever cheap and plentiful materials are available, the coverall is standard clothing on countless worlds. In the same way as a bodyglove is designed to meet the extreme demands of an Imperial agent's job, so too is the coverall intended to offer the average Imperial citizen all he needs.

Bodyglove (Good Quality Clothing)
Prized operatives and physical adepts often wear form-fitting bodygloves. These can range from simple rubberised flesh sheaths to bodygloves made of enhanced materials with integral cooling coils. In all cases, they are designed for comfort and freedom of movement.

Billow Robes (Best Quality Clothing)
A sure sign of opulence, the billow robe is fashioned from a special lighter-than-air material that seems to float and drift around the wearer as he or she moves. Terribly impractical but impressive to behold, such clothing is usually restricted to those whose only task is to stand around and look pretty.

Chrono

Chronos are hand-held or wrist-worn timepieces, generally dependable and simple to use.

Clip Harness/Drop Harness

A compact spool-stored safety line, with a magnetic or hooked clasp. These are ideal for safety on rooftops or rappelling down buildings. A character using a clip harness to descend a vertical surface gains a +30 bonus to Climb Tests and cannot fall if he fails.

Clothing

The citizens of the Imperium wear a staggering range of clothing of all styles imaginable, and fashion is tied directly to the importance of the individual. For Acolytes, this represents such things as a suit of practical street wear, military uniform or religious garb. The cost of clothing is up to how much the Acolytes choose to spend on their apparel, from basic rags costing a few Thrones up to exquisite and expensive attire costing thousands.

Explosive Collar

These unpleasant devices are most often seen attached to penal legionnaires to serve as an additional incentive in fighting for the Emperor. Collars usually come with a remote trigger that can be used to detonate the collar up to, and sometimes over, ranges of 1,000 metres. When the collar explodes it instantly kills the wearer and inflicts 1d10 Explosive Damage on anyone within three metres. The remote trigger can also be used to remove the collar. Removing the collar without the trigger requires a Hard (–20) Tech-Use Test. A serious or worse failure indicates that the collar explodes.

Filtration Plugs

These are simple plugs 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 gas.

Infra-Red Goggles

Relatively simple devices, IR goggles allow the wearer to see thermal images from warm bodies, revealing hiding enemies at night. A character wearing IR goggles suffers no penalties due to darkness and gains a +20 bonus to vision-based Perception Tests at night. Advanced models can be disguised to appear as simple eyeglasses.

Photo-Visors/Photo-Contacts

Advanced lenses designed to enhance the low-level light available on even the darkest nights. Users can see in the dark almost as well as in daylight with them. Characters wearing these gain the Dark Sight trait (see **page 325**). Good Quality

visors also dampen the effects of photon flash grenades, making the wearer immune to their effects.

Re-Breather

Consisting of a mask or helmet, re-breathers contain their own air supply and are designed to preserve the user in even the most toxic atmospheres. A character wearing a re-breather is immune to the effects of gases and can even survive underwater. However, re-breathers typically have air canisters that last for about one hour and then must be replaced. Replacing a canister is a Full Action. Replacement canisters cost 25 Thrones and are scarce.

Recoil Gloves

These gloves have interlocking plates connected with memory wire. When the user grips a weapon, it locks together into a rigid strut around the hand and wrist, thus preventing 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. In addition, Pistol weapons that require two hands can be used one-handed without penalty.

Respirator/Gas Mask

This is a breathing mask that covers the nose and mouth or entire face, and offers much better protection than filtration plugs. A character wearing a respirator or gas mask gains a +30 bonus to Toughness Tests made to resist the effects of gas, and may re-roll failed results.

Void Suit

These sealed suits are intended to preserve the wearer in the most hostile environments. A void suit incorporates a re-breather and in addition allows the wearer to survive in vacuum.

Synskin

Synskin is a bio-reactive bodyglove with an inert non-reflective surface that moulds itself to the wearer's form. Synskin adds 2 Armour Points to all locations and the wearer gains a +10 bonus to Concealment and Silent Move Tests. In addition, synskin renders the wearer invisible to the effects of infra-red goggles and Dark Sight.

Drugs and Consumables

Table 5-14: Drugs and Consumables

Name	Wt	Cost	Availability
Amasec†	—	50	Scarce
De-Tox†	—	65	Rare
Frenzon†	—	95	Very Rare
Injector	—	5	Abundant
Lho-sticks†	—	10	Common
Medikit	2 kg	150	Common
Obscura†	—	285	Rare
Ration Packs†	—	10	Plentiful
Recaf†	—	5	Abundant
Rotgut Booze†	—	10	Abundant
Sacred Machine Oil†	—	150	Very Rare
Slaught†	—	75	Scarce
Spook†	—	395	Rare
Stimm†	—	20	Average

†Cost indicates 1 dose for drugs or 1 pack/bottle for rations/alcohol and lho-sticks.

Amasec

Amasec is a popular alcoholic drink distilled from wine. It can range from lesser brews barely fit for firebombs to well-aged and flavourful brands suitable for only the finest of the Emperor's servants.

De-Tox (Drug)

This drug can negate the effects of most dangerous gases and toxins if administered fast enough. A dose of de-tox 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, however, is both painful and debilitating, causing such unpleasant side effects as vomiting, nose bleeds and a great voiding of the bowels. 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 that the character suffers no ill effects.

Excessive Drug Use

When the same drug is used too often, especially in a short period of time, there is a chance for it to have no effect. This represents an Acolyte's body building an immunity. If you use more than one dose of a drug within a 24 hour period you must make a Toughness Test for each use after the first, with a cumulative –20 penalty. Should you fail, the drug has no effect and further doses do not affect you for a full 24 hours.

Frenzon (Drug)

A generic name for a variety of combat drugs most often used within penal legion units. Once administered, the subject becomes fearless and fanatical in combat. A character using frenzon gains the Frenzy talent and also gains immunity to Fear. A single dose of frenzon lasts for 1d10 minutes.

Injector

Injectors 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 a single dose of any drug which a character may administer as a Full Action.

Lho-sticks

Lho-sticks are common with Imperial Guard troopers and many menial workers. Each rolled paper tube contains a scented, mildly narcotic (and addictive) plant-derived substance, which is then lit and the resulting smoke inhaled through the tube.

Medikit

This is vital bit of equipment for any medic. A typical medikit contains various cataplasm patches, contraseptics and synth-skin. A character that has a medikit at hand when using the Medicae skill gains a +20 bonus to their test. Medikits also come with 6 doses of stimm, which must be replaced separately when used.

Obscura (Drug)

While prohibited and the subject of widespread crackdowns, obscura remains a widely used narcotic among many Imperial subjects. Smugglers can often make a good living importing and selling the drug to all classes of civilians and military personnel. Those taking obscura enter a dream-like state for 1d5 hours (if required to engage in combat consider them under the effects of a hallucinogen grenade (see **page 136**). Then for 1d10 hours after the effects wear off, they enter a deep depression, unless another dose of obscura is taken.

Ration Packs

Most food in the Imperium is packaged, processed and usually completely unrecognisable as anything edible. The quality of ration packs varies widely, from simple and poor fare such as compse starch (CS) rations and cultured algae up to flavoured strips of grox meat and finest nutrislurry.

Recaf

Recaf is a popular hot beverage, made from crushed and brewed leaves. The composition can vary from planet to planet, but most blends have a stimulant such as caffeine as a basic release agent.

Rotgut Booze

Alcohol comes in many shapes and sizes throughout the Imperium, and most cultures are noted for at least one kind of fermented liquid. The catch-all term for these more basic brews (especially by travellers) is rotgut booze.

Sacred Machine Oil

Machine oil blessed by the Omnissiah is much sought after for its mystical properties when applied to machines. If applied to a weapon (a Full Action) it becomes immune to Jamming (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 196**) for a number of shots equal to its clip size. If the weapon is Jammed and the oil is then applied, it immediately unjams, but there is no further effect.

Slaught (Drug)

Also know as onslaught, this drug heightens awareness and improves reaction time, literally speeding up the user but causing Fatigue and neural damage with prolonged use. Taking a dose increases the user's Agility Bonus and Perception Bonus by 3 for 2d10 minutes. When the drug runs its course, the user must Test Toughness or take a –20 penalty to Agility Tests and Perception Tests for 1d5 hours.

Spook (Drug)

This drug can augment and even produce short-term psychic abilities in the user. If a character without any Psy Rating takes a dose of spook he must successfully make a Willpower Test or gain 1d5 Insanity Points as his mind is filled with horrible visions of the warp. On a success, the user gains a power from **Table 5-15: Random Psychic Powers**—see descriptions in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**. The power lasts for 1d5 hours and the user manifests the power—if he does not have the Focus Power skill—by making a Hard (–20) Willpower Test.

If a character with a Psy Rating of 1 or more uses spook they must make a Willpower Test. If they fail they gain an Insanity Point and no further effects. If they pass they add 2 to all Power Rolls for the next hour. However, add +25 to any rolls made on the Psychic Phenomena table (see **Table 6-2: Psychic Phenomena, page 162**).

Stimm (Drug)

Stimm is a powerful drug that works to mask pain and drive fighters on when their bodies would otherwise give up. A dose of stimm lasts 3d10 Rounds. During this time a character ignores any negative effects to their Characteristics from Damage or Critical Damage and cannot be Stunned. When the stimm wears off, the character takes a –20 penalty to Strength, Toughness and Agility Tests for one hour.

Table 5-15: Random Psychic Powers

Roll	Minor Power
01–02	Call Creatures
03–05	Call Item
06–08	Chameleon
09–11	Déjà vu
12–14	Distort Vision
15–17	Dull Pain
18–20	Enhance Phenomena
21–23	Fearful Aura
24–26	Flash Bang
27–29	Float
30–32	Forget Me
33–35	Healer
36–38	Inflict Pain
39–41	Inspiring Aura
42–44	Knack
45–47	Lucky
48–50	Precognition
51–53	Psychic Stench
54–56	Resist Possession
57–59	Sense Presence
60–63	Spasm
64–67	Spectral Hands
68–70	Staunch Bleeding
71–72	Time Skip
73–74	Touch of Madness
75–77	Trick
78–80	Unnatural Aim
81–82	Wall Walk
83–84	Warp Howl
85–86	Weaken Veil
87–88	Weapon Jinx
89–90	White Noise
91–92	Wither
93–94	Roll twice, gaining both Powers
95–96	Pick any one Power
97–00	Gain 1 Insanity point and roll again

TOOLS

TABLE 5-16: TOOLS

Name	Wt	Cost	Availability
Auspex/Scanner	0.5 kg	145	Scarce
Auto Quill	—	55	Scarce
Combi-tool	1 kg	200	Rare
Data-slate	0.5 kg	25	Common
Demolition Charge	1 kg	250	Scarce
Excruciator Kit	1 kg	375	Very Rare
Glow-globe/Lamp pack	0.5 kg	15	Abundant
Grapnel	2 kg	30	Common
Lascutter	4 kg	65	Average
Magnoculars	0.5 kg	55	Average
Manacles	1 kg	35	Plentiful
Micro-bead	—	20	Average
Multikey	—	150	Scarce
Pict Recorder	1 kg	100	Average
Psy-focus	—	100	Rare
Screamers	2 kg	140	Scarce
Stummers	2 kg	25	Average
Vox-caster	4 kg	300	Scarce
Writing Kit	2 kg	20	Common

Auspex/Scanner

These devices are used to detect energy emissions, motion and biological life signs. A character using an auspex gains a +20 bonus to Awareness Tests and may make a Tech-Use Test to use an auspex to spot things not normally detectable to human senses alone, such as invisible gases, nearby bio-signs or ambient radiation. The standard range for an auspex is 50m, though walls more than 50cm thick and certain shielding materials can block the scanner.

Auto Quill

These arcane-looking scribing devices allow the user to copy text at an impressive rate with great accuracy. A character with the Trade (Copyist) skill can use an auto quill to gain a +10 to their Skill Tests.

Combi-Tool

Commonly found in the hands of member of the Adeptus Mechanicus, combi-tools are versatile if somewhat bizarre mechanical devices. A character using a combi-tool gains a +10 bonus to Tech-Use Tests.

Data-slate

Data-slates are commonplace in the Imperium, as the primary means of storing and reading printed text and other media such as video or audio recordings. They are so cheap and easy to make that many contain a single media recording, such as text, and can only play that single file. Others can re-record new information, and transmit and receive data from other devices.

Demolition Charge

A demolition charge is a simple explosive device, commonly used for blowing open doors, breaching walls and destroying bridges. The cost and weight for a demolition charge represents 1 kg of explosives, though it is possible to rig charges together thus increasing their destructive potential. When a demolition charge explodes, anyone (or anything) caught within its blast radius takes 3d10 Explosive Damage plus an additional 2 points of Damage for every kilogram used. The blast radius of the charge is equal to the number of kilograms used times 5 metres. For setting and defusing explosives see the Demolitions skill in **Chapter III: Skills, page 101**.

Excruciator Kit

These devices are used in the questioning of captured enemies of the Imperium, or in revealing to those who have turned away from the Emperor the nature of their sins. Each is a dazzling array of blades, needles, chemicals, drugs, thermal prongs, neural links and other devices any explicator would need in his duties. A character with an excruciator kit gains a +20 bonus to all Interrogation Tests.

Glow-globe/Lamp pack

A common source of light at night or in darkened areas, these handy devices can usually illuminate an area a dozen or more metres in diameter. A typical glow-globe or lamp pack lasts 1d5 hours before it needs to be recharged or have its power cell replaced.

Grapnel

Grapnels use a small launcher or gun to fire a hooked or magnetic grapnel, connected to the launcher with a thin but strong wire (100m). Once the grapnel attaches to the desired spot, such as a rooftop, the user can manually climb the line or activate a powered winch. In a pinch they can also be used as a crude (and messy) projectile weapon (counting as a single-shot crossbow).

Lascutter

When a door (or more commonly a bulkhead) cannot be opened normally, a lascutter comes into play. Originally used by miners, these short-range devices emit an intense laser beam, which can knife through hard, dense materials such as rock, steel and even armour plate with relative ease. As a general rule, a lascutter can cut through, or weld shut, 10 cm of metal a Turn (this length of time can be adjusted up or down depending on the thickness of the material in question). Lascutters are too unwieldy to be used in combat.

Magnoculars

These are powerful vision aids, which magnify distant objects. More advanced, higher-quality magnoculars can also do such things as give range read-outs, detect heat sources, calculate target location positioning and take image snapshots for later analysis.

Manacles

These are solid restraints often used by bounty hunters and enforcers, which can equally be found in the hands of more nefarious individuals for darker purposes.

Micro-bead

A micro-bead or comm-bead is a short-range communication device worn in the ear, good out to about one kilometre. Such things as bad weather, dense terrain and intervening rock or plasteel can greatly reduce this range, however.

Multikey

As it can open most standard Imperial locks, the multikey is not a standard item for most honest Imperial citizens. For the same reason though, they are widely sought after by criminals and other disreputable elements. A character with a multikey gains a +30 bonus to any Security Test when trying to open locks.

Pict Recorder

Pict recorders are relatively simple live-media recording devices, and some have holographic capabilities. Most also allow for playback as well as recording, and some are even built into special servitors so they can capture important archaeological tech-quests, weapons tests, alien interrogations and other possibly dangerous events.

Psy-focus

Psykers often use devices to help them focus their powers. A psy-focus could be sacred bones, carved wytch staves, blessed icons or crystals. When a Psyker with a Psy-focus makes an Invocation Test (see **Chapter III: Skills, page 103**) he gains a +10 bonus.

Screamers

Screamers are proximity alarms that detect motion or sound (depending on the model) and alert their users to incoming dangers by setting off a horrendous noise. To use a screamer, you must succeed on a Tech-Use Test. The GM rolls this test in secret so you are not sure of whether or not the device will work properly. 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.

Stummers

The reverse of a screamer, stummers generate sound waves to cancel out ambient sounds and noises made by moving personnel in a small area. A character carrying an active stummer gains a +30 bonus to Silent Move Tests. A stummer typically has enough power for 20 minutes of continuous use before needing to be recharged (taking about one hour).

Vox-caster

A vox is a simple communication device that can be used to send signals over great distances, up to and including ships in orbit from a planet's surface. Using a vox to receive or transmit signals requires a successful Ordinary (+10) Tech-Use Test.

Writing Kit

A writing kit contains papers, inks and quills.

SERVICES

Services indicate those things that are often essential to an Acolyte's life, such as finding a place to sleep, food to eat and some fool with a vehicle willing to transport them into carrion swamps, ash wastes or some other equally dangerous locale.

Because of the near limitless supply and variety of services on offer, GMs are encouraged to create prices for these things as they see fit. After all, the cost of a drink at a lower-hab bar will vary from street-to-street, let alone hive-to-hive or beyond. However, you may want to use the prices, availabilities and categories below as a guide:

Accommodation: Covering all manner of lodgings and rented shelters, from the crude tavern rooms of a medieval world to the glittering suites of a high spire.

Provisions: This includes any kind of consumables, such as foodstuffs and beverages.

Transportation: All manner of travel (though it should be noted that transportation is considered to cover only travel within a fixed local, such as a single world and not interplanetary or interstellar journeys).

The cost of a service, given in Thrones, indicates only a single night's accommodation or a single meal or trip. In the case of transportation, the GM is free to modify this rate dependant on such things as travel in dangerous regions and unusually long journeys.

TABLE 5-17: SERVICES

Type	Cost	Availability
Accommodation		
Low Grade (Hab Sleeper Capsule, Grox Pen, Bilge Berth)	5	Plentiful
Mid Grade (Down Cell, Single Lodge Room, Mid Cabin)	20	Common
High Grade (Grand Hall Lodgings, High Berth Quarters)	100	Scarce
Provisions		
Low Grade (Vermin Meat, Hydro-Fungus, Silt Ale)	1	Plentiful
Mid Grade (Proto Paste, Side of Grox, Round of Amasec)	5	Common
High Grade (Roasted Vex Worm, Liquid of Amberic)	40	Scarce
Transportation		
Low Grade (Dust Dog, Sub-level Conveyer, Silt Barge)	5	Plentiful
Mid Grade (Light Civ Ground Vehicle, Atmospheric Flight)	20	Common
High Grade (Low Orbit Flight, Sedan Chair)	150	Scarce

MEDICAL CARE

Acolytes are going to get hurt, often badly. When the unfortunate event occurs they need someone to patch them up. GMs can use **Table 5-18: Medical Care** as a guide for Acolytes seeking medical assistance.

Type: This indicates the level of medical care on offer, ranging from poor to excellent.

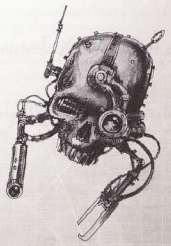
Cost: This is how much it costs for a doctor to make a single attempt to heal the character. For extended care, costs can be used as the cost per day, not including food and accommodation. Cost does not take into account charlatans and doctors who greatly overestimate their skills, nor those few honest souls that care for the sick and wounded out of the goodness of their hearts. GMs should feel free to adjust the price as needed.

Availability: Good doctors are hard to find and when looking for medical attention Acolytes must often check their availability (see **Table 5-3: Consequences of Availability, page 126**).

Effect: To work out the effects of medical care use the relevant information on the doctor administrating and make any Skill Tests as necessary. See **Chapter III: Skills** for information on medical attention.

TABLE 5-18: MEDICAL CARE

Type	Cost	Availability	Effect
Poor (feral world shaman)	50	Average	Int 30, Medicae skill
Average (trained medic)	75	Scarce	Int 40, Medicae skill
Good (trained doctor, med-servitor)	150	Rare	Int 50, Medicae skill +10
Excellent (skilled physician)	500	Very Rare	Int 60, Medicae skill +20, Master Chirurgeon



Cybernetics

"Your flesh belongs to the Omnissiah, that he may shape it anew in his own image."

– Excerpt from the *Mechanicus Rites of Bonding.*

Bionic implants and cybernetic augmentation are a fact of life in the Imperium. They are blessings of the Machine God, enabling damaged or diseased parts of the body to be replaced, improving on the abilities and powers of the human body and, in certain cases, extending life. There is a price to be paid for such improvements, and this cost is measured not simply in flesh but, it can be argued, in humanity and even sanity.

Thanks to superstition and the uneven level of technology across the Imperium, the sophistication and use of bionics varies widely (as does the reaction to those who display them). Each different kind of cybernetic grants the user different benefits (and sometimes penalties) depending on its craftsmanship (see Craftsmanship, **page 126**). The exception to this is Best quality cybernetics that provide no additional benefits beyond those of Good quality, but are more impressive in the construction and design. The cost and availability listed below represents Common cybernetics.

All mechadendrite cybernetics are considered to be of Good craftsmanship unless otherwise noted.

Table 5-19: Cybernetics

Name	Cost	Availability
Bionic Arm	1,000	Scarce
Bionic Locomotion	1,500	Scarce
Bionic Respiratory System	800	Rare
Auger Arrays	1,000	Rare
Ballistic Mechadendrite	600	Adeptus Mechanicus Only
Cortex Implants	5,000	Very Rare
Cybernetic Senses	2,250	Rare
Manipulator Mechadendrite	500	Adeptus Mechanicus Only
Medicae Mechadendrite	500	Adeptus Mechanicus Only
Mind Impulse Unit	1,750	Rare
Optical Mechadendrite	400	Adeptus Mechanicus Only
Utility Mechadendrite	500	Adeptus Mechanicus Only

"Strike fast and suddenly. Attack without warning. Secure victory before the foe is aware of his danger. Remember always, a war is easily won if your enemy does not know he is fighting."

Bionic Replacement Limbs and Body Parts

Bionic replacement limbs are assumed to operate at the same level of strength and dexterity as the body they are attached to (rather than risk ripping themselves out of their host through overpressure), though their robust construction does add +2 to the owner's Toughness Bonus against hits scored to the particular location. Damage taken to these locations counts towards Damage to the character, and Critical Damage dealt to these locations function as normal. However, any result that causes bleeding or some other inappropriate result renders the bionic limb useless. Critical Damage to a limb that results in death has the full effect as it can be assumed that the limb explodes into shrapnel, incinerates or discharges stored energy through its owner with lethal effect.

Replacement and additional limbs (such as mechadendrites) can only be used to perform tasks that the owner already knows how to do. So for example, a character with a medicae mechadendrite must have the Medicae skill in order to take advantage of the extra abilities the limb grants.

Note that bonuses and penalties relate only to tests made using the bionic limb, and characters that have two bionic limbs do not gain double the bonus, but rather they may apply the bonus regardless of which bionic limb they are using.

Attaching Bionics and Implants

Implants and bionics are only available if the character has access to both the resources and skilled labour to have them installed; commonly this is only available in substantial medicae facilities and worlds with a very high technological base.

If a character can find a doctor willing to install a bionic or implant then the process takes no less than 2d10 days, minus one day for each point of his Toughness Bonus (to a minimum of one day). How difficult it is to attach a bionic or implant is up to the GM. He may decide that given enough time, and in an advanced enough facility, it is automatic, or he may call on the doctor to make a series of Medicae or even Tech-Use Tests that could lead to such things as permanent crippling or Blood Loss (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 211**).

Bionic Arm

Common versions of these systems mirror the function of the human arm and hand exactly, retaining strength, dexterity and sense of touch.

Poor versions half the owner's Agility score where matters of fine dexterity are involved and Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests take a –10 penalty when using the limb.

Good bionic arms provide a +10 bonus on Agility Tests requiring delicate manipulation (such as Sleight of Hand) and add a +10 bonus to Strength Tests using the arm.

Bionic Locomotion (Legs, Hips, Pelvis, etc.)

Common locomotion bionics must be fully integrated into the spine and nervous system to function properly; basic models accomplish this without any loss of function over the human norm.

Poor versions halve the character's Movement Rates (round up), and such characters that attempt to run must succeed on an Agility Test or fall at the end of their movement.

Good versions of these systems grant the owner the Sprint talent. In addition they add a +20 bonus to Athletics Tests made to jump or leap.

Bionic Respiratory System

Common bionic lungs and implanted respiratory systems mimic the action of human lungs and keep the body supplied with oxygen. Such characters 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. However, they are raucously loud affairs and characters take a –20 penalty to all Silent Move checks. A generally poor oxygen supply to the body means all tests involving strenuous physical activity are increased by one level of Difficulty.

Good bionic lungs count as a full life support system (thus if for any reason the user's own respiratory system fails, his bionic lungs will keep his blood oxygenated), and their presence may be unnoticeable if designed to be so.

IMPLANT SYSTEMS

What follows are some of the more widely used bionic and cybernetic implants desired to improve or salvage the human body. Implants usually serve to grant a human some ability they did not already possess, or integrate external devices into their bodies.

Auger Arrays

These are implanted devices duplicating the effects of special sensors. In all cases their use requires concentration and a Half Action.

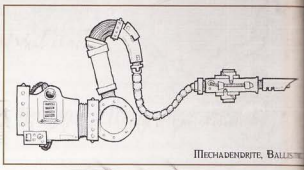
Common systems function identically to a standard auspex (see **page 150**).

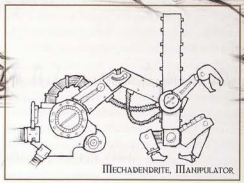
Poor systems possess only a single detection ability (either heat, radiation or electromagnetics) and only function within 20 metres.

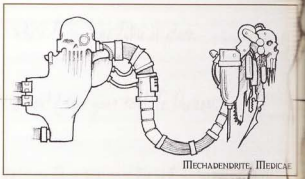
Good systems function as a full auspex but also allow re-rolls on all Perception based Tests when using its functions.

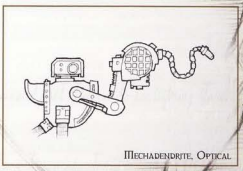
Ballistic Mechadendrite

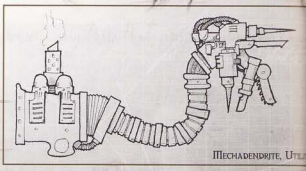
This solid, shoulder-mounted mechadendrite is designed for self-defence. This two metre limb is mounted with a sleek-looking laspistol of Adeptus Mechanicus design. This weapon counts as a laspistol with the Compact upgrade. As a reaction, the Tech-Priest may use this mechadendrite as if it were his off-hand, but suffers no penalties to hit. Note that this weapon has no optical targeting facilities built in. You must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use talent to operate this implant.

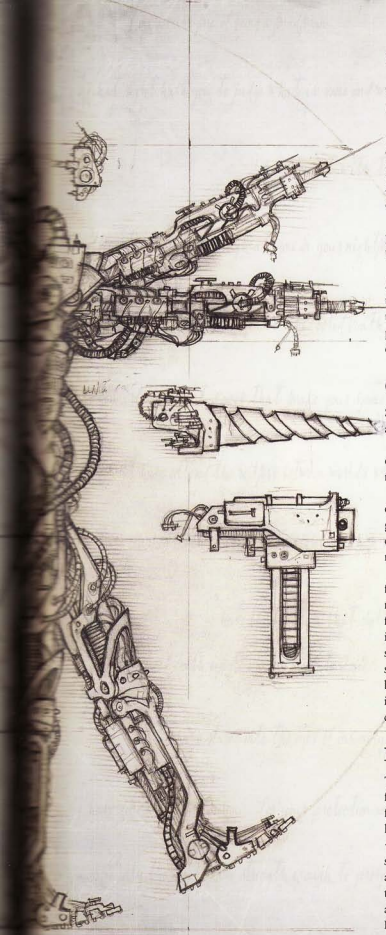

Mechadendrite, Ballistic


Mechadendrite, Manipulator


Mechadendrite, Medicae


Mechadendrite, Optical


Mechadendrite, Utility



Cortex Implants

These systems may be used to repair a severely damaged brain, or seek to augment its abilities.

Common cortex implants are used to restore paralysed and brain-damaged individuals to some semblance of normality. The best that can be managed by these systems is a permanent loss of 1d10 points from the character's Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Agility, Intelligence and Fellowship. In addition, such characters gain 1d10 Insanity Points.

Poor cortex implants restore brain function but destroy the personality and memories of the subject, effectively making them a servitor, and are obviously unsuitable for characters.

Good cortex implants are extremely rare even among the Mechanicus, and their creation is an almost lost art (therefore they cost ten times the usual cost for a rare item). They grant the trait Unnatural Intelligence (×2) (see **page 332**) and in addition perform all the functions of a cogitator system. However, characters with this implant gain 1d10 Insanity Points.

Cybernetic Senses

Sight, hearing and even touch and taste may be duplicated artificially, and more esoteric senses may be added.

Common systems, while usually very obviously artificial and often oversized, manage to more or less duplicate the approximate human range of senses adequately and have no further game effects.

Poor cybernetic senses are troublesome and poor imitations of the real thing (hearing may be troubled by static, vision glitches or rendered in low-resolution monochrome, and so on). A character with this system takes a –20 penalty to Tests made involving the cybernetic sense.

Good cybernetic senses grant the Heightened Senses talent for that particular sense, and a +20 bonus to Tests made to resist attacks on the sense itself (deafening noises, blinding flashes and so on). Basic and advanced cyber-eyes may also incorporate telescopic sights (counting as a telescopic sight, see **page 142** for more details), a full photo-visor, and/or a system allowing the Dark Sight trait (see **page 329**). 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 cost.

Manipulator Mechadendrite

This powerful shoulder-mounted mechadendrite is designed for heavy lifting and manipulation of industrial gear. Built of fire-hardened ceramite and steel, this limb may extend to a length of 1.5m. When using the arm, the character gains a +20 bonus to Strength Tests. This limb is tipped with two sets of gripping and crushing pincers. These may be locked around a suitable anchor point as a Free Action to safely tether the Tech-Priest to lifting gear, high gantries and so on. Finally, a character may use the manipulator as a club. It counts as a Primitive weapon that deals 1d5+2 Impact Damage.

The manipulator may not be used for any task requiring fine manipulation (typing on a key pad, handling delicate objects, doing up a zip and so on). You must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use talent to operate this implant.

Medicae Mechadendrite

This two-metre long, flexible limb is designed to provide medical and surgical assistance in the field. It grants a +10 bonus to Medicae Tests. The mechadendrite houses six injector pistons, each of which may be filled with one dose of a drug. These must be supplied and replaced separately. In addition to providing first aid, the mechadendrite's flesh staplers may be used to staunch Blood Loss as a Half Action. A small chainscalpel attachment reduces the difficulty of limb amputation to Challenging (+0). This blade may be used as an improvised weapon, and on a hit it deals 1d5 Rending Damage. Finally, the medicae mechadendrite may be used to gain a +10 bonus to Interrogation Tests. This mechadendrite may be shoulder or sternum-mounted. You must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use talent to operate this implant.

Mind Impulse Unit

These devices, also known as sense-links, allow the owner to directly interface with a machine or technological device, and see very widespread use among the Adeptus Mechanicus who regard them as objects of divine communion. A basic or crude 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 spinal plug.

Common models impose no modifiers to machine spirit communication and add a +10 bonus to Tech-Use, Pilot or Drive Tests used in conjunction with devices capable of MIU linking.

Poor MIU systems require a successful Willpower Test to use and impose a –10 penalty to interact with machine spirits.

Good models grant a +10 bonus to communicate with machine spirits, and with Tech-Use, Pilot, Drive, Logic, Inquiry and Weapon Skill Tests when interfaced with MIU systems.

Optical Mechadendrite

This highly flexible, camera-studded mechadendrite is designed to assist in inspection and detection. This mechadendrite may extend to a length of three metres, and can reduce its width to pencil thickness. It grants a +10 bonus to all Perception-based Tests. The optical feed allows the user to examine surfaces at a microscopic level and may also be used as a telescopic sight. The mechadendrite is also mounted with an infra-red torch and sensors. A character using the mechadendrite suffers no penalties due to darkness and gains a +20 bonus to vision-based Perception Tests at night. Finally, the mechadendrite is fitted with a light that may be tinted a variety of different colours, depending on the controller's whim. This mechadendrite may be shoulder or sternum-mounted. You must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use talent to operate this implant.

Utility Mechadendrite

This two-metre long limb houses a variety of tools and attachments designed to assist a Tech-Priest in the course of his holy duties. This mechadendrite counts as a combi-tool, granting a +10 bonus to all Tech-Use Tests. The limb also houses six injector pistons, each of which may be filled with one dose of sacred machine oil. These must be supplied and replaced separately. In addition to this, the limb contains an electrically powered censer, which can gust incense fumes over particularly troublesome faults. The censer generates one "blast" of smoke every fifteen minutes. This 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 made to detect the Tech-Priest that rely on a sense of smell gain a +10 bonus. Finally, the mechadendrite contains a cutting blade. This counts as a knife with the Defensive quality and monofilament upgrade. You must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use talent to operate this implant.

VI

Psychic Powers

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Chapter VI: Psychic Powers

"My blade can shear through adamantium as if it were paper, but it is a blunt club compared to the edge of my will."
— Inquisitor Kaede, Ordo Hereticus.

Within the Imperium of man, some people are born different. Some fickle turn of fate or chance twist in the genome has seen them join the growing ranks of psychic individuals within the human race. These psykers labour under a blessing and a curse. They have the rare talent to draw power from the warp, the hidden dimension of Chaos that lurks beneath the fabric of reality, and shape it into all manner of strange and supernatural effects. Using such power, however, comes with a terrible risk.

Whether they know it or not, the mind of each psyker shines brightly within the otherworldly dimension of the warp, or immaterium as it is also known. This psychic realm is home to unspeakable beings, hungry predators that look upon such soul-fires with great anticipation. The denizens of the immaterium—warp beasts, Daemons and worse—find great sport in weak and unprotected minds. An unwary psyker is easily attacked, consumed or used as a gateway from the warp to the physical realm.

Psykers are regarded in many different ways across the Imperium's countless worlds. On the more primitive planets, they are thought of as shamans, witches and sorcerers. More sophisticated societies are usually aware of psychic abilities and refer to psykers by other titles such as "gifted" or "the touched". But in almost all cases, and on all worlds, they are feared for the darkness and chaos they can bring down on those around them.

There are many that believe psykers represent a gross perversion of all that humanity is, and a constant reminder of the terrible powers of the warp. This idea seems to hold some weight as the majority of psykers succumb to madness and ruin, often at the cost of countless other lives. Those that can master psychic power, however, become a prized, if somewhat dangerous, commodity to the Imperium. The Inquisition, especially, makes great use of psykers in rooting out the enemies of mankind, fighting fire with fire as it were.

"The dominion of Man the Animal is done. The age of Man the Psyker has just begun!"
— Heretic Thaylon Sol, final words.

"Man only spoke of it once. He say bein' psyker not so unlike us spine-divers. Spend all your time with your parts in sea-dark, awaitin' the day when d' fang-fish bite."
— Spectoris Agri-hand, Dermay.

"If the worst happens, and your Savant-Warrant falls to corruption, pray the Psykana conditioning holds. If you're lucky, he'll fall upon his mercy blade before anything too terrible can manifest. If he doesn't open his veins… well, that's a whole other lecture."
— Officer Training, Gunmetallicus 104th.

Types of Psyker

There are many roles within the Imperium that utilise psykers in some way or another. Some of these roles are revered and valued whilst others are reviled utterly. However people feel about psykers, they are as much a part of the vast Imperium of Man as the Imperial Guard, the Administratum and even the Emperor Himself.

Astropaths

These psykers are capable of transmitting messages across the vast distances of space. Though frequently inexact, arriving too late, and occasionally lost all together, these psychic transmissions are the best means the Imperium has of communicating across its enormous volume of dominions. Astropaths are part of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, an Imperial organisation dedicated to recruiting and training psykers. Most astropaths are blind, a side effect of the agonising Soul Binding ritual which forms part of their initiation.

Imperial Psykers

These psykers are individuals deemed strong enough to serve the Imperium without significant dangers to others. These psykers serve in many parts of the Empire of Man, nominally as vassals to the Adeptus Astra Telepathica; from the Administratum to the Imperial military, within merchant houses or even for planetary governors. Imperial psykers often blend into their seconded posts with surprising skill. Clad in monkish robes or secure behind scholarly titles, they often appear indistinguishable from the vast ranks of Administratum scribes. That is, until they must call upon their eldritch powers. Others serve within carefully constructed roles such as the Savant Militant of the Imperial Guard. Sanctioned psykers follow various schools of training, known collectively as the Scholastica Psykana. Much like the Imperial Creed, the exact teachings of the Scholastica Psykana may vary from sector to sector (or even planet to planet) yet the intent remains the same—training dutiful psykers to serve the Imperium.

Navigators

These unusual mutants have the ability to navigate the precarious tides of the warp with the aid of third eye that allows them see into the immaterium. Vital to space travel, Navigators have close ties to the Imperial Navy, Rogue Traders, and many powerful houses. Not so much an organisation as a series of bloodlines and families, the Navis Nobilite are closely watched by the Imperium, for every warp-capable Navigator is sorely needed.

Sacrifices

The Black Ships of the Inquisition sweep up great tides of psykers as they ply their way across the Imperium. The vast majority of the psykers gathered in this way are found to be too weak and pliant in soul to stand against the corruption of the warp. They are passed to the care of the Adeptus Astronomica. This august body helps the Emperor maintain the Astronomicon, the great psychic beacon of Terra. By burning the very stuff of their souls, the Astromonican's martyrs power the Emperor's

Golden Throne, sending astral light flaring through the warp. By providing a single fixed point, the Astronomican forms a vital part of warp travel, allowing Navigators to effectively triangulate their position. Perhaps a thousand such martyrs are sacrificed to the Emperor in this manner each day. Most consider this a small price to pay in return for the protection and guidance offered by the Master of Mankind.

Latent Psykers

There are some psykers that are unaware of their abilities. They may hail from a primitive world ignorant of proper ways, or else their powers might manifest in subtle ways, such as strange luck with dice, "poltergeist activity", uncanny hunches and so on. These psykers might never be detected, or more likely they might become host to all manner of warp corruption. Some might be infected with weird psychic parasites which slowly gnaw away at their mind until insanity results. Others might become host to Daemons, or even be snatched away into the warp to make a plaything for the Ruinous Ones which lurk there. Some have been known to flower into full-blown psychic ability—a phenomenon known as emerging—under stress, often with spectacular results. In any case, latent psykers are considered dangerous weak points, and the agents of the Black Ships do not shy away from hunting them down.

Witches & Psykers

The people of the Imperium fear that which is different, strange or unusual. Such is the brutal and unforgiving nature of the 41st Millennium that this mindset is a wise survival strategy. Unusual growths, rumours of deviance, supposed magic powers or simple unpopularity are often enough to see a person branded a witch and lynched, burned or worse. The paranoid fear of witches is common throughout the Imperium, and many innocent souls are sacrificed upon the altar of hysteria. Those accused of being witches might be psykers but just as often they are simply a wizened crone ugly misfit or drivelling simpleton. Some cultures add charges of witchcraft to other crimes for reasons political and otherwise. For example, a charismatic soul theist within the mines of Typhero Secundus might be tried as a traitor and warlock. His followers might be described as being enchanted or bewitched into acting against their baron. Even on planets with advanced technology such fears still run deep. A dissolute hive world noble might be mind cleansed by his family for treating with the occult or having heretical psychoses. One of the more common tasks of the Inquisition is discovering if a witch has any real connection with the warp or if their crimes are of a more domestic nature. The majority err on the side of guilt just to be sure.

Whilst sorcerers, witches and, to some extent, latent psykers are feared and hated by the common man, Imperial psykers and Astropaths enjoy a different status. Sanctioning imparts a measure of orthodoxy and authority to these psykers, marking them as part of the Imperium. After all the Imperial psyker has made the great pilgrimage to Holy Terra and beheld the Emperor's light first hand. Whilst the common man will almost certainly be full of awe and fear at the psyker's presence it is little different to the feeling he might experience when encountering a commissar or an Administratum tax project. That said, Imperial psykers usually take pains to avoid making their abilities too apparent. Mob rule and superstitious rage is never far away, particularly when psychic phenomena begin to manifest. Astropaths are usually sequestered far away from the public gaze, but even they are conscious that their presence is unsettling for the blind masses. Most folk will never have heard of a Navigator, let alone seen one, for they are a rare breed which is kept closely cloistered and hard at work. On the rare occasions that they deal with human society like other orthodox psykers they choose to hide from plain sight.

Sorcerers

Some psykers choose the path of damnation in their quest for power. Heeding the whispered lure of Daemonic promises, they give up their souls in return for secret knowledge, raw power and mastery of things that man was not meant to know. These psykers embrace the Dark Gods as their lords and masters, making vile pacts to further their own depraved avarice. They are despised and feared for their unnatural practises and Daemonic taint. The Inquisition regards these sorcerers as highly dangerous foes, for they often act as doors through which Daemons may enter realspace.

Untouchables

Untouchables are individuals who have no warp signature. They are not psykers, in fact they are completely the opposite. Their presence frequently acts as a damper on psychic activity, lessening or even completely halting its effects. Untouchables, like psykers, actually have different grades of "ability", though few savants have actually been able to study them closely due to their extreme rarity. Their strange aura makes most folk uncomfortable around them, and for this reason they are often loners, outcasts and pariahs. Of all Imperial institutions, the Inquisition makes the greatest use of Untouchables.

MEASURING PSYCHIC ABILITY

Psychic ability typically manifests between the ages of ten and twenty, though there are psykers who have emerged in infancy or later in life. What triggers latent psychic ability is unknown to Imperial scholars, though not for lack of trying. Only the rare psyker is strong enough to "stand alone" against the terrible dangers inherent in possessing psychic abilities. Even the majority of the strongest psykers still require a great deal of training to effectively utilise their abilities. In order to be properly trained, each psyker needs to go through a reckoning of their powers.

Assessing the capabilities of a psyker is a difficult and imprecise art. The primary consideration is the psyker's strength against predation and corruption from the warp. Sanctioneers have many ways of measuring this peculiar strength of will, from demanding years of devotional training, to simply intuiting with a glance. Those deemed weak and pliable are granted the Emperor's mercy, or sent to join the throngs of martyrs on Holy Terra. Those who have the strength to resist the maddening touch of the warp and exhibit some control over their gifts are then divided into groups and types, according to their powers, raw ability and finesse. Some are soul bound and become Astropaths. Others are sent out by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica to serve in various roles and to study under the auspice of the Scholastia Psykana.

Psykers In Dark Heresy

For the sake of clarity, Psykers in Dark Heresy have been graded on a Psy Rating scale of 1–6. This is very much game terminology, designed to make the rules simple and easy for you to use. In the 41st Millennium, Psyker abilities are not so cut and dried! There are many names for the different levels of Psyker, each with their own subtle meanings and significances. Whilst you, the player, might happily discuss Psy Ratings, your character would not know what "Psy Rating 3" means. For an idea of how differing Disciplines of psychic study grade their members, take a look at **Table 6-1: Scholastica Psykana Calixis**. This is an example of how the larger schools of the Scholastica Psykana within the Calixis Sector describe their initiates.

Each tradition or branch of the Scholastia Psykana has a different method for measuring psychic ability. Some grade the individual on raw power, from the flickering power of an Omicron Grade psyker, to the world shattering awe of the Alpha Grade psyker. Others prefer to group their novices by the Discipline they study, whilst others still rate the psyker on the level of training and finesse they have attained. This rating might follow a scientific numerical system, depend on mystical degrees of initiation, or use some method in between. However it is measured, the psyker is expected to study the traditions, Disciplines, powers and obligations of the Scholastia Psykana with the utmost devotion.

Am I A Psyker?

To be formally considered a Psyker in game terms, a character must have one of the Psy Rating talents. However, there are other ways to gain Psychic Powers, especially minor ones, through Talents, Traits and even drugs. It is also possible for a character with some psychic ability to improve their level of power, effectively increasing their Rating. For details on the effects of the various Psyker Ratings and other Talents that grant Psychic Powers see **Chapter IV: Talents**.

Table 6-1: Scholastica Psykana Calixis

Psy Rating	Telekine	Telepath/Diviner	Biomancer	Pyromancer
1	Grammatican	The Crimson Aeon	Novice Carnate	Ignis
2	Rhetorite	The Golden Aeon	Novice Sanguis	Cauterite
3	Dilectate	The Silver Aeon	Novice Cognate	Pyrist
4	Trigmestus	The Hermetic Aeon	Novice Tuitus	Cinorator
5	Quadrivite	The Silent Aeon	Novice Spiritus	Incandate
6	Iptissimus	The Spectral Aeon	Novice Tenebrae	Crematist

Using Psychic Abilities

"When you stare into the warp, the warp stares back into you."
— Scholastica Psykana aphorism.

To use a Psychic Power, a Psyker directs his will into the sea of the immaterium, pulling forth power from the warp to create an effect in realspace. To do this, the Psyker must make a Focus Power Action. They then make a Power Roll by rolling a number of dice up to their Psy Rating (typically 1–6) and adding their Willpower Bonus. Compare the total of the roll to the Power's Psychic Threshold (PT). If this number equals or exceeds the PT, the power takes effect. Otherwise, the Psyker has been unable to gather the necessary power, or perhaps they have been repelled by something in the warp and the power fails.

Example

Elyra Yivor, a Psyker with Psy Rating of 2, tries to activate a power with a PT of 13. Her Psy Rating of 2 means she can roll two dice and adds her WP Bonus, meaning she will roll 2d10+3. Rolling the dice she scores a total of 15. As she has beaten the PT she has managed to manifest the power.

Characters with the Invocation skill can take a Full Action prior to trying to manifest a power to gain a bonus to their Power Roll (see ***Chapter III: Skills****)*

Note that a Psyker need not roll all of their dice when making a Power Roll.

Psychic Phenomena

When a Psyker focuses their power they invite the very essence of the warp into the real world causing such things as frost to cover nearby surfaces, ghostly whispers to fill the air and statues to weep tears of blood. These psychic disturbances are rarely dangerous (most of the time). However, they do instantly alert others to the presence of the Psyker and even harmless effects can cause the superstitious citizens of the Imperium to flee in terror.

Example

Elyra Yivor is trying to conjure a Fire Bolt to smite her foes. As she has a Psy Rating of 2 she rolls two dice and adds her WP Bonus. Rolling the dice she scores a 4 and an 9. Adding these together and her WP Bonus she scores a total of 16, enough to manifest the power. However, as she rolled an 9 she must also roll on Table 6-2: Psychic Phenomena. Rolling on the table she scores a 13. So even as she flings her fiery bolts, a Grave Chill fills the air around her.

When a Psyker rolls an 9 on any of the dice used to manifest a power, they will invoke Psychic Phenomena and must roll on **Table 6–2: Psychic Phenomena, page 162** once for each 9 rolled. Psychic Phenomena can open the doorway to darker things and can cause a Psyker to conjure the Perils of the Warp.

Note: It is possible to successfully manifest a power and still cause Psychic Phenomena or Perils of the Warp.

Psychic-Foci

One of the principle ways a Psyker can enhance or control his powers is through the use of Psychic-foci. There are many different types of psychic-foci, which range from simple tricks that are known to help focus the mind when using certain abilities, to some exceedingly rare and sophisticated devices crafted by the Adeptus Mechanicus designed to boost or amplify Psychic Power. The most famous psychic-foci in the Imperium is doubtless the Emperor's Tarot, which helps act as a powerful divinatory tool in the hands of a trained Psyker. In mechanical terms Psychic-foci add a bonus to a Psyker's Invocation skill Test. For details on Psy-focus see **Chapter V: Armoury, page 151**.

Table 6-2: Psychic Phenomena

Roll	Effect
1–3	**Dark Foreboding:** A very faint breeze blows past the Psyker and those near him, and everyone gets the eerie feeling that something unfortunate has just happened somewhere in the galaxy.
3–5	**Warp Echo:** For a few seconds, voices and other noises cause echoes regardless of surroundings.
6–8	**Ethereal Stench:** The air around the Psyker fills with a faint smell, which can either be pleasant or noxious.
9–11	**Mounting Paranoia:** The Psyker gets an itch between his shoulder blades for a few moments.
12–14	**Grave Chill:** The temperature drops sharply for a few seconds and a fine coating of frost covers everything within 3d10 metres of the Psyker.
15–17	**Unnatural Aura:** All animals within 1d100 metres become spooked and restless.
18–20	**Memory Worm:** All people within line of sight of the Psyker forget something trivial.
21–23	**Spoilage:** Food goes off and drink goes stale in a radius of 5d10 metres.
24–26	**Haunting Breeze:** Moderate winds whip up around the Psyker for a few seconds, blowing very light objects about within 3d10 metres.
27–29	**Veil of Darkness:** For a brief moment (effectively the remainder of the round) it seems to everyone within 3d10 metres of the Psyker that night has fallen, plunging the area into darkness.
30–32	**Distorted Reflection:** Mirrors break and other reflective surfaces distort or ripple within 5d10 metres of the Psyker.
33–35	**Breath Leech:** Everyone (including the Psyker) become short of breath for a 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 for the remainder of the Round, but also gains 1 Corruption Point.
39–41	**Unnatural Decay:** All plants within 3d10 metres of the Psyker wither and die.
42–44	**Spectral Gale:** Howling winds erupt around the Psyker, lifting him slightly into the air and forcing both him and anyone within 4d10 metres to make an Easy (+30) Agility Test or be 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 of people or statues in this radius, 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	**Psy Discharge:** Static electricity fills the air for 6d10 metres causing hair to stand on end, while the Psyker rises 1d5 metres into the air, falling back to earth after a second or two.
5–56	**Warp Ghosts:** Ghostly apparitions fill the air for 3d10 metres around the Psyker, flying around and howling in pain for a few brief moments. Everyone in the radius must make a WP Test or gain 1 Insanity Point.
57–59	**Falling Upwards:** Everything within 2d10 metres of the Psyker (including him) rises 1d10 metres into the air as gravity briefly disappears before falling to the ground after a second or two.
60–62	**Banshee Howl:** A deafening keening sounds out for a kilometre, shattering glass and forcing everyone in the area (including the Psyker) to make a Toughness Test or be deafened for 1d10 Rounds.
63–65	**The Furies:** The Psyker is thrown to the ground by unseen hands and thrashes about for a few moments as winds howl about within 6d10 metres of him, lifting up light objects and forcing those in the area to make Agility Tests or be blown down.
66–68	**Shadow of the Warp:** For a split second the world changes in appearance and everyone within 1d100 metres has a glimpse at the heart of the warp. Everyone in the area (including the Psyker) must make a WP Test or gain 1d5 Insanity Points.
69–71	**Tech Scorn:** The machine spirits reject your unnatural ways. All tech devices within 5d10 metres malfunction momentarily and all ranged weapons Jam (see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**).
72–74	**Warp Madness:** A violent ripple of discord causes all creatures within 2d10 metres (with the exception of the Psyker) to become Frenzied for a Round and gain a Corruption Point.
75+	**Perils of the Warp:** Invoking the Psychic Power calls down a maelstrom of warp energy power. Roll on **Table 6-3: Perils of the Warp, page 163** and apply the results to the Psyker.

Perils of the Warp

The warp is a dangerous and unpredictable entity and every time a Psyker draws from it he risks insanity, death and ruin. When a Psyker invokes Psychic Phenomena there is a chance that it might actually indicate that something far, far worse has occurred. Psykers who have rolled 75 or more on **Table 6-2: Psychic Phenomena** must immediately roll on **Table 6-3: Perils of the Warp**.

In addition to any other effects, whenever a Psyker invokes the Perils of the Warp he gains 1 Corruption Point.

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 unprotected mind. He must make a Willpower Test or gain 1d5 Insanity Points.
06–09	**Warp Burn:** A violent burst of energy from the warp smashes into the Psyker's mind, sending him reeling. He 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 Willpower Test or be Stunned for a Round.
14–18	**Psy-Blast:** There is an explosion of power and the Psyker is thrown 1d10 metres into the air, falling to the ground (see **page 210** for Falling Damage).
19–24	**Soul Sear:** Warp power courses through the Psyker's body, scorching his very soul. The Psyker cannot use any powers for one hour and gains 5 Corruption Points.
25–30	**Locked In:** The power cages the Psyker's mind in an ethereal prison. The Psyker falls to the ground in a catatonic state. Each Round thereafter, he must spend a Full Action to Test Willpower. On a success, his mind is freed and restored to his body.
31–38	**Chronological Incontinence:** Time warps around the Psyker. The character winks out of existence and reappears in 1d10 Rounds (or one minute if you're using Narrative Time).
39–46	**Psychic Mirror:** The Psyker's power is turned upon him. Resolve the power's effects as normal but the power targets the Psyker instead. Should the power be of benefit, it instead deals 1d10+5 Energy Damage to the Psyker and the beneficial effect is cancelled. Armour offers the Psyker no protection against this Damage.
47–55	**Warp Whispers:** The ghostly voices of Daemons fill the air within 4d10 metres of the Psyker. Everyone in the area (including the Psyker) must make a Hard (–20) Willpower Test or gain 1d10 Corruption Points.
56–61	**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 within 50 metres swap minds for 1d10 Rounds. This may include fellow Acolytes, or even enemy combatants. Each creature retains its Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Intelligence, Perception, Willpower, and Fellowship during the swap, but gain the other Characteristics of the new body. Should either body be slain, the effect immediately ends. Both beings are strangely revolted by the process and are unable to meet each other's gaze for some time afterwards. Each gains 1d5 Insanity Points for the experience. If there are no creatures within this range, the Psyker must make a Willpower Test or become catatonic for 1d5 Rounds whilst his mind wanders the warp and gains 1d5 Insanity Points.
62–67	**Dark Summoning:** A Lesser Daemon (see **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists**) pops into existence within 3d10 metres of the Psyker for 1d10 Rounds or until it is slain. It detests the Psyker and trains its attacks on the fool that summoned it.
68–72	**Ethereal Storm:** All sentient creatures (including the Psyker) within 1d100 metres take 1d10 Energy Damage that ignores Armour.
73–78	**Blood Rain:** A psychic storm erupts, covering an area of 5d10 metres. In addition to whipping winds and raining blood, any Psychic Powers used in the area automatically invoke the Perils of the Warp for 1d5 Rounds.
79–82	**Cataclysmic Blast:** The Psyker's power overloads, arcing out in great bolts of warp energy. Anyone within 2d10 metres of him (including the Psyker) takes 1d10+5 Energy Damage and all of the Psyker's clothing and gear are destroyed, leaving him naked and smoking on the ground.
83–86	**Mass Possession:** Daemons ravage the minds of every living thing within 1d100 metres for 2d10 Rounds. Every character in the area must Test Willpower at the start of their Turn. A failed Test indicates that the character must spend his entire Turn fighting off the attack and counts as helpless. Characters that also fail the Test gain 1d5 Corruption Points.
87–90	**The Surly Bonds of Earth:** Reality buckles and all gravity within 1d100 metres reverses for 1d10 Rounds. All creatures and unattended objects begin to lift off the ground at a rate of three metres per Round. At the end of this time, reality asserts itself and everything comes crashing down, likely dealing Damage to all those affected.
91–99	**Daemonhost:** The Psyker must immediately pass a Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test or be possessed by a Daemon and become a Daemonhost! Create an Unbound Daemonhost (See **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists**) that will immediately attack. Only the destruction of the Daemonhost will free the Psyker (though he may die anyway if his body is destroyed in the process). If the Psyker does somehow manage to survive this result, he automatically gains 4d10 Corruption Points.
100	**Warp Feast:** A rift in reality is torn open and the Psyker is sucked into the warp with a little burping noise. He is no more.

Overbleed

A Psyker sometimes channels more warp energy than he requires to manifest a power. In most cases he bleeds off the excess into the immaterium and it is lost. However, with some powers it is possible to funnel this energy directly into manifesting greater effects. If a Psyker beats the power's Psychic Threshold by a certain amount he will gain extra effects, such as increased Range, Damage or Duration. If a power has this ability, it is mentioned in the entry along with the extra effects of Overbleed.

Sustaining Psychic Abilities

There are a number of Psychic Powers that are worth "keeping on" for an extended length of time. Powers that can be used in such manner are referred to as being "sustainable", which is noted in their entries. Sustaining a Psychic Power for an extended period of time is very taxing and only the most proficient Psykers can accomplish it. Every 10 Rounds a power is active, the Psyker must make a Power Roll to maintain it—just as if he were rolling to manifest it. Unlike a normal Power Roll, this is performed as a Free Action at the start of the Psyker's Turn and cannot invoke either Psychic Phenomena or the Perils of the Warp.

Sustaining Multiple Powers

A Psyker can sustain a single Psychic Power without much effort once properly activated. However, all Power Rolls the Psyker makes while sustaining a single Psychic Power are reduced by 4. A Psyker can sustain multiple powers, but all Power Rolls get progressively more difficult as he must expend more and more of his power on maintaining the powers already in effect. A Psyker sustaining two powers reduces all Power Rolls by 8 while a Psyker sustaining three powers reduces all Power Rolls by 16. It is not possible to sustain more than four powers at once. These penalties to the Power Roll also apply to sustaining powers already in effect.

Cumulative Effects

Modifiers, Characteristic Bonuses, and other benefits generated by Psychic Powers do not stack. If two powers provide the same kind of bonus, such as an increase in Strength, then only the highest applies.

Detecting Psychic Powers

All Psykers can, to a greater or lesser degree, feel the movements of the immaterium about them. They are very sensitive to the warp's ebb and flow, often feeling when others of their ilk reach out to touch the psychic currents about them. All Psykers can Test Psyniscience when Psychic Powers are used in their presence in order to help determine the source (see **Chapter III: Skills, page 105** for details on this Skill).

Psychic Powers

"Power Corrupts?"
— Traditional meditation of the Scholastica Psykana.

The remainder of this chapter presents an assortment of the most common Psychic Powers found in the Imperium. These are certainly not all of the powers that might be found, even within the specific Disciplines. The Imperium is a vast and strange place and nearly anything is possible.

Minor Psychic Powers

While Psykers may aspire to mastering the Psychic Disciplines, the reality is that most never rise far above only being able to manifest minor powers and effects. This plethora of lesser abilities is collectively known as Minor Psychic Powers and often forms the standard arsenal of most Psykers. Unlike the more powerful Disciplines, these powers are relatively easy to learn and use. Minor Psychic Powers can be purchased by spending Experience Points on the relevent Talents (see **Chapter IV: Talents**).

The Psychic Disciplines

There are a number of different groupings of psychic abilities, which are referred to as Psychic Disciplines by the savants of the Imperium. Because each Psychic Discipline requires a certain type of training and well, discipline, it is easier by far for a Psyker to learn multiple powers from one Discipline then try to learn from another. Mastering a specific Psychic Discipline is considered to be a great milestone for a Psyker.

Biomancy: The art of sculpting flesh to conform to one's will.

Divination: The art of reading past, present and future in the shadows of the immaterium.

Pyromancy: The art of controlling heat and flame.

Telekinetics: The art of translating thought into physical force.

Telepathy: The art of reading and controlling minds.

Discipline Mastery

Once you have learnt ten or more powers of a particular Discipline, you are said to have mastered it. When manifesting any power within the Discipline reduce the power's PT by 5. Those who have mastered a Discipline are extraordinarily powerful, capable of manifesting powers quickly and efficiently.

Power Format

All powers use the following format.

Power Name

Threshold: This is the amount of accumulated energy needed to manifest the power.

Focus Time: This entry describes the length of the Focus Power Action required to manifest the power.

Sustained: Yes or No. If yes, the power's effects remain in play for up to 10 Rounds. Beyond this, you must make Tests to keep the power active. If no, the power's effects may remain in play or be instantaneous, though in either case the Psyker no longer needs to maintain them.

Range: This entry describes the power's range. This is expressed in one of four ranges: "You" indicates that the power can be cast only upon yourself; "Touch" indicates that you must touch a target—a Weapon Skill Test—for the power to take effect; "Touch (You)" functions as touch, but you can also manifest the power on yourself; and "Metres or Kilometres" indicates that the power takes effect at the listed distance. A description of the power's effects follows.

Overbleed: If the power has additional effects for exceeding the threshold, it is listed here. Otherwise this entry is absent.

Table 6-4: Minor Psychic Powers

Name	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustain
Call Creatures	9	Full Action	No
Call Item	5	Half Action	No
Chameleon	7	Half Action	Yes
Déjà vu	8	Half Action	No
Distort Vision	8	Free Action	No
Dull Pain	8	Half Action	No
Fearful Aura	7	Full Action	Yes
Flash Bang	6	Half Action	No
Float	8	Half Action	Yes
Forget Me	6	Half Action	No
Healer	7	Full Action	No
Inflict Pain	8	Half Action	Yes
Inspiring Aura	6	Full Action	Yes
Knack	7	Half Action	No
Lucky	6	Half Action	No
Precognition	6	Half Action	Yes
Psychic Stench	5	Half Action	No
Resist Possession	6	Reaction	No
Sense Presence	7	Half Action	Yes
Spasm	7	Half Action	No
Spectral Hands	10	Full Action	No
Staunch Bleeding	8	Half Action	No
Torch	5	Half Action	Yes
Touch of Madness	11	Full Action	No
Trick	5	Half Action	Yes
Unnatural Aim	8	Half Action	No
Wall Walk	8	Half Action	Yes
Warp Howl	8	Full Action	No
Weaken Veil	9	Full Action	Yes
Weapon Jinx	8	Full Action	No
White Noise	8	Full Action	Yes
Wither	6	Full Action	No

Minor Powers

Minor Psychic Powers are tricks and knacks that those with even a shadow of psychic ability can learn. They are nothing compared to the "true" Disciplines, but are useful nonetheless.

Call Creatures

Threshold: 9
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 1 km radius

You call a number of simple-minded creatures within range to travel to your location. Creatures called depend on the nature of the environment, though the sorts of creatures called may include rats, ash slugs and other kinds of vermin. If no such creatures are likely to be in the area, the power has no effect. Under most circumstances, 1d10 such creatures appear after 2d10 minutes have passed. The creatures are not compelled to serve the Psyker; they simply appear and behave as normal for their species.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the powers Range by 1km.

Call Item

Threshold: 5
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: Unlimited

You summon a specially prepared item to instantly appear in your hand. To prepare the object, you must spend one hour in deep meditation, infusing the object with your psychic imprint, and marking it with glyphs and runes. The object must be small and light enough to be carried in one hand. You may only have one prepared item at a time.

Chameleon

Threshold: 7
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You cause reality to blur around you, distorting your image and allowing you to blend in with your surroundings. You gain a +30 bonus to Concealment Tests. In addition, all opponents using ranged weapons to attack you suffer a –20 penalty to their Ballistic Skill Tests.

Déjà vu

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 30m

You create a brief memory loop in the mind of the target, causing their thoughts to slip back several seconds in time. You must be able to see the target and they must be within the range of the power to be affected. They are also permitted a Willpower Test to resist its effects. If they fail to resist, however, they must repeat the same Action that they took last Round in their next Turn, be it firing a gun at a target that is no longer there, continuing to run from slain enemy, or diving for cover from a grenade that has already gone off. Any action that would obviously be harmful to the target, such as running off a cliff, automatically allows them to resist the power.

Distort Vision

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

With this power, you disappear and your image reappears in another space no more than 10 metres away. Until the start of your next Turn, you are effectively invisible to all other creatures, defeating even sensory equipment. All attacks against you, should your position be discovered by means of a Psyniscience Test, are Very Hard (–30). Creatures and sensors that do not rely on sight are not affected by this power.

Dull Pain

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You can nullify the pain of any creature, including yourself, within Range. The target of this power reduces their levels of Fatigue by one step.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you remove an additional level of Fatigue.

Fearful Aura

Threshold: 7
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You twist reality in such a way as to make you appear more sinister and dangerous. You become the source of dread for anyone who looks upon you. Whilst this power is active, you have a Fear Rating of 2. See **Chapter VIII: The Game Master, page 232** for details on Fear Ratings.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the Threshold, your Fear Rating increases by 1.

Flash Bang

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 20m

You create a bright flash of light and a deafening bang. Anyone within Range must succeed on a Routine (+20) Willpower Test or become Stunned for 1 Round.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the Threshold, the Difficulty worsens by one step, from Routine (+20) to Ordinary (+10), from Ordinary (+10) to Challenging (+0), and so on.

Float

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You focus your concentration and slowly begin to lift off the ground. You can only move up and down while under the effects of this power, and you cannot rise higher than 5 metres. You can use this power to stop yourself from falling, but you must succeed on a Difficult (–10) Willpower Test in addition to beating the PT.

Forget Me

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You become instantly forgettable to a single creature within range. They can't seem to recall having met you before this very instant and you effectively suppress all memories of your previous encounters. The target is entitled to an Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test to resist this power. Their memory returns after 1d10 minutes.

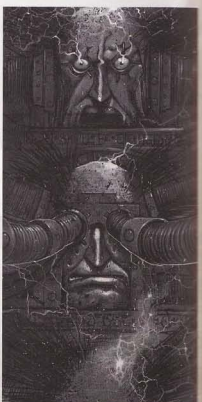
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may do any of the following: extend the effects of this power to either one additional target, add an extra 1d10 minutes to the duration, or worsen the Difficulty of the Willpower Test by one step.

Healer

Threshold: 7
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You channel your power into a single target to knit flesh and mend bones. You may only use this power on a willing target, including yourself. The target of this power removes 1d5 points of Damage (removing Critical Damage first).

Repeated uses of this power can be dangerous, however, not to mention painful, and the person's flesh rebels against the intrusion of warp energy. If a person (including the Psyker) is the subject of this power more than once in a 6 hour period, they must Test Toughness or take 1d5 points of Damage (with no reduction for Toughness Bonus or Armour), rather than being healed.



Inflict Pain

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 100m

You cause a person to be wracked with agony, filling their minds with unspeakable pain. The target is entitled to a Willpower Test to resist the effects of this power. On a failed Test, the target suffers a –10 to all their Tests as they struggle to control their pain.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the Threshold you can extend the effects of this power to affect another target.

Inspiring Aura

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You seem to glow with an inner light and all those around you are filled with confidence. While this power is active, all allies that can see you gain a +20 bonus to Tests made to resist Fear and Pinning. They may also feel compelled to say nice things about you. Which is nice.

Knack

Threshold: 7
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

You tap into your unconscious to awaken a deeper understanding of your capabilities. Until the end of your next Turn, you may gain a +10 bonus to any one non-combat Test. After this point, your enlightened mood fades.

Lucky

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

It is said that luck acts strangely around Psykers, no doubt in part to powers like this one. When you manifest this power, any time before the end of your next Turn, you may re-roll any one roll of your dice (including Damage rolls).

Precognition

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You get a fuzzy picture of what will occur a few moments into the future. As you draw nearer to the event, the picture becomes clearer. For as long as this power is active, you gain a +10 bonus to Dodge Tests and to Weapon Skill Tests made to Parry incoming blows.

Psychic Stench

Threshold: 5
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: Touch

By momentarily handling an item you imbue it with an unnatural psychic smell. Anyone coming within five metres of the tainted item will smell it, regardless of barriers or other smells present. What a person smells when around an item affected by psychic stench depends on what they find most distasteful, so the aroma can vary greatly. As the smell only exists in a person's mind, it will also affect creatures that do not have a sense of smell or have had their sense of smell impaired. Psychic stench remains in effect for 1d10 days, after which time it dissipates.

Resist Possession

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Reaction
Sustained: No
Range: You

You create mental wards to shield your mind from the malign denizens of the warp. Any time in the next hour you may re-roll any failed Test to resist being possessed by a Daemon.

Sense Presence

Threshold: 7
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 50m (see text)

Reaching out with your mind, you get a vague inkling of other life forms within range. You automatically detect all living creatures in the area. Walls in excess of 1 metre thick block this power.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range by an additional 10 metres.

Spasm

Threshold: 7
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 50m

You cause a target's muscles to spasm. The target is entitled to a Willpower Test to resist this power. On a failure, the target twitches in an uncontrollable and possibly amusing way. If the target is carrying any ballistic weapon, the weapon goes off—make a Ballistic Skill Test as normal to hit the closest creature. In addition, the target immediately falls to the ground and must use a Stand Action to regain their feet.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may either affect an additional target or worsen the Difficulty of the Willpower Test by one step.

Spectral Hands

Threshold: 10
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 30m

You create an invisible force that you can use to manipulate any object within 30 metres. The force has a Strength Characteristic equal to your Willpower. This power lasts until the end of your next Turn. You can use it to knock over objects, push buttons, pull levers or do any number of other things requiring force. You cannot perform any action that requires precision, such as typing on a data-slate, pulling the pin from another creature's grenade, pull a trigger, and so on. In addition, Spectral Hands has no effect on living targets.

Staunch Bleeding

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You cause yourself or another creature within Range to halt Blood Loss. See **Chapter VII: Playing the Game, page 211** for details on Blood Loss.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may affect another target.

Torch

Threshold: 5
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

By burning the very stuff of your thoughts, you create a ball of glowing psy-flame. The light cast by Torch is equivalent to a glow-lamp. The flame may issue from any point on your body. The flame is roughly the size of your palm, and pulses slightly in time with your heartbeat. It may be coloured according to your whim. The light produces no heat.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the Threshold you may double or half the size of the light or cause it to float up to one metre from your body in any direction.

Touch of Madness

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 100m

You reach into the mind of a target within Range and force them to believe something that just isn't true. The target is entitled to a Willpower Test to resist this power. On a failed Test, the target must roll 1d100 and consult **Table 8-6 Mental Traumas** on **page 235**.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you affect an additional target.

Trick

Threshold 5
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You subtly influence the fields of probability flowing around you, making you especially good at cheating at games of chance. If you do not have the Gamble skill, you gain it at two levels of mastery for as long as the power is sustained. If you have Gamble, you gain an additional +20 bonus to Gamble Tests. If you already have Skill Mastery in Gamble, this power has no effect, as you are already that good.

Unnatural Aim

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

You draw upon the power of the warp to guide your aim. Before the end of your next Turn, any ranged attacks you make count as being made at Point Blank Range (+30 to hit).

Wall Walk

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You bend gravity to your will. You negate all penalties incurred by low- or high-gravity worlds. In addition, you can walk on walls or ceilings for as long as this power is active. You move across such surfaces at half your normal rate. You must also Test Agility to go between a wall and ceiling and vice versa, unless you take a Full Action to ease yourself onto the new surface.

Warp Howl

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 50m

You send out a long, keening screech throughout the warp that tears through into reality in a cacophonous burst. This power drowns out all sound within Range for 1 Round.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range by 10 metres.

Weaken Veil

Threshold: 9
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 30m

You weaken the fabric of space within 30 metres by drawing the immaterium closer. Anyone within Range that uses Psychic Powers gains a +2 bonus on Power Rolls. However, as the veil between worlds is weakened, Psychic Phenomena occur on the roll of an 8, 9 or 10.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range by an additional 10 metres.

Weapon Jinx

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 50m

You reach into nearby machines with your mind to scramble their circuitry. All mechanical devices within range cease to function for 1 Round. In addition, you may Test Willpower to force a single weapon within range to jam. The jammed weapon can be cleared as normal (see **page 196**). Note that the Adeptus Mechanicus are especially loathing of this kind of ability and tend to take a very dim view of Psykers that employ it.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range of this power by 10 metres, or you can affect an additional weapon.

White Noise

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 10m

You fill the warp with static, fouling psychic detection and making tech sensors less reliable. While active, any Tests made to detect your presence, as well as that of anyone within range of you, using either psychic or technological means, count as Hard (–20). If the means of detection would not normally require a Test, the user must make an Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test if using psychic means, or an Ordinary (+10) Intelligence Test if they are using technological means.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range of this power by 10 metres.

Wither

Threshold: 6
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 3d10m

You cause a vile wave of invisible pestilence to emerge from your body, extending out to the Range of the power. The wave withers all normal plant life in the area in a matter of moments, leaving the area barren and utterly dead.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range of this power by 1d10 metres.

Psychic Disciplines

Psychic Discipline reflect a deeper understanding of a Psyker's capabilities and allow him to manifest some of the most destructive powers known to Man. A Psyker that has mastered one or more Disciplines is truly a horror to behold, capable of such things as reducing his enemies to ash, repairing torn flesh in the blink of an eye, and even defying the march of time itself.

Biomancy

Biomancers specialise in manipulating bio-electrical energy with their minds. They are masters of the flesh, learning to shape and direct their bodies according to their wills. Biomancers are often considered venal souls. Most are viewed with no small amount of jealousy, as they freely feast and drink, yet maintain a healthy, toned physique.

Bio-lightning

Threshold: 14
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You channel your life force through the meridians of your body, causing your form to crackle with living energy. You may direct this energy against a single target within Range. The target takes 1d10 plus your Willpower Bonus in Energy Damage.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range of this power by 10 metres. For every 10 points that you exceed the Threshold, you can launch another bolt of energy against the same or a different target.

Blood Boil

Threshold: 19
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 10m

With a rhythmic crushing gesture, you tune into an enemy's body, flexing their heart muscles to accelerate their pulse. This continues until their blood pressure reaches lethal levels. As you continue to exert your will, blood vessels begin to rupture, causing haemorrhaging across the target's body. Each Round (including the Round in which the power manifests), you may spend a Half Action to make an Opposed Test, pitting your Willpower against your target's Toughness. If you win the Test, your opponent takes one level of Fatigue plus one level of Fatigue per degree of success, until he collapses unconscious. Each level of Fatigue beyond those that the target can take deals 5 Damage instead. Should Damage equal the target's Wounds, their heart and brain explodes, showering gore around.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you gain a +10 bonus on your Opposed Willpower Tests.

Table 6-5: Biomancy Powers

Name	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustain
Bio-lightning	14	Half Action	No
Blood Boil	19	Half Action	Yes
Cellular Control	16	Half Action	Yes
Constrict	13	Half Action	No
Enhance Senses	10	Half Action	Yes
Hammerhand	15	Full Action	Yes
Regenerate	23	Full Action	Yes
Seal Wounds	10	Half Action	No
Shape Flesh	19	Full Action	Yes
Toxic Siphon	11	Half Action	No

Cellular Control

Threshold: 16
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You learn various ways of transcending your body's natural limitations by balancing your humors, modifying cellular structure and meditating upon the meridians of your body. This power enables you to achieve any one of the following effects:

- Gain immunity to all poisons.
- Ignore the effects of extremes of temperature.
- Increase any Characteristic—except Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill—by +10.
- Gain immunity to Fatigue.
- Count as though wearing a void suit in a vacuum (though you still need to breathe).

Each Round you sustain this power, you must succeed on a Toughness Test. On a failed Test, you take 1d5 points of Damage, ignoring your Toughness Bonus and Armour as your body begins to break from the strain.

Unlike most powers, you can manifest this power multiple times. Each time, choose a different effect.

Constrict

Threshold: 13
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

With a word, thought or gesture, you can command the flesh of your target to sharply contract. The target's windpipe closes, choking them and cutting off their breath. They begin to Suffocate. (See Suffocation on **page 210**) Each Round, the target must spend a Full Action to Test Toughness. On a success, they regain control over their body and clear their windpipe. On a failure they continue to suffocate. The target is considered to be engaged in strenuous activity.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the Threshold, the Difficulty of the Toughness Test worsens by one step.

Enhanced Senses

Threshold: 10
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

With a moment's thought, you force your senses into impossible feats of perception that can only be equalled among humans by the biomechanically augmented. When you manifest this power, choose one of your five senses. *You gain a +30 bonus to all Tests made with this sense. The sense organ involved becomes strained as you push* it past all normal human limits; the eyes weep and grow hugely dilated, skin flushes red, the nose drips mucus and so on.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may enhance an additional sense.

Hammerhand

Threshold: 15
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

Biomancers who have learned to channel the fierce power of the warp into their limbs can eventually master the art of letting the energy of the immaterium flow unhindered through their body, phenomenally increasing their fighting capabilities. Your body becomes a lethal engine, capable of shredding flesh and bone as if they were tissue paper. Such power comes at a cost though, for there is no subtlety to the Hammerhand. While this power is in effect, your Strength Bonus is multiplied by 4, and you gain the Natural Weapon trait (see **page 330**) However, you can wield no weapon save for your bare hands (not that you need any!).

Regenerate

Threshold: 23
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

One of the pinnacles of a biomancer's abilities, this power allows you to knit your flesh back together at a phenomenal rate, letting you swiftly overcome any non-fatal injury. This is a hard ability to master, but the rewards are great—Regenerate can eventually regrow lost limbs and organs. Each Round this power is active, you remove 1d5 points of Damage (removing Critical Damage first) and have all levels of Fatigue removed. Once all Damage is removed, you begin to regrow lost organs, limbs, and so on. Limbs and organs replaced by cybernetics do not regrow unless *the bionic is first removed.*

Seal Wounds

Threshold: 10
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You focus your power to repair your damaged flesh or that of any character within Range. Ragged wounds fuse and cuts vanish. Broken bone knits together, and burnt skin sloughs away as fresh tissue grows beneath. The target of this power removes 1d10 points of Damage plus an amount of Damage equal to your Willpower Bonus. This power can remove Critical Damage as well as normal Damage.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may achieve any of the following: extend the Range by 10 metres, target an additional character within Range, or remove an additional 1d10+WB Damage from the target.

Shape Flesh

Threshold: 19
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

Shape Flesh is the point where your flesh and will become indistinguishable—the goal of many a biomancer. Shape Flesh allows you to twist your physical frame in nearly any way you can imagine. Each manifestation of this power produces one of the following effects:

- Gain any one of the following traits—Burrower (1), Crawler, Dark Sight, Flier, Hoverer, Natural Armour (2), Natural Weapons or Quadruped. These traits are described in **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists, page 329**.
- Assume the appearance of any one creature. You may make Disguise Tests as if you had the Disguise skill and at a +10 bonus. If you already have the Skill, you gain an additional +20 bonus.
- Gain Natural Weapons (Bite, Claws, and so on) to deal 1d10+SB Damage.

Unlike most powers, you can manifest this power multiple times. Each time, choose a different effect.

Toxic Siphon

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: Touch (You)

You draw poisons from the flesh. This has the same effect as taking a dose of de-tox (see **Chapter V: Armoury, page 148**) with the exception that the target must lose a Full Action as the toxin expels itself from the body naturally.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may draw poison from an additional target, who must be touching you or another person being purged by you.

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. Their art is horribly taxing, though. The warp lies heavy on diviners; many of them are morose and sullen individuals. Insanity is common amongst their ranks. Divination is the most widely known Psychic Discipline, mainly due to use of the Emperor's Tarot.

Divine Shot

Threshold: 15
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

Using this power enables you to make near impossible ranged shots, allowing you to strike virtually any target you can perceive. You must concentrate on a single firearm or other missile weapon in your possession and the ammunition it carries before casting your psychic gaze into the warp to search down the near-infinite paths of potential future trajectories. When you find the one you seek, you shoot, and while the damage to the target may vary, the attack cannot be avoided in any way. In effect, you automatically hit any one target you can see regardless of Range. Only one shot automatically hits, even if you are using a semi-automatic or automatic weapon. All other shots require Tests as normal.

Dowsing

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

By focusing his mind the diviner can single out an object or person somewhere in his immediate vicinity, pushing aside all other distractions until he can unerringly find it. First the Psyker must choose an item or person to be the subject of the power. This can be anything, but it must be a specific item. So for instance, the Psyker could say, "I want to know where the key to this lock is" but not "I want to know where a key is". Likewise with a person, the Psyker must have either seen them before (possibly remotely or in a pict) or know their name. Simply trying to find the person who murdered the governor, for example, will not work.

Once the Psyker has chosen his subject, he makes a Pysniscience Test. The following factors modify this roll:

- He is intimately familiar with the subject (an object he has been carrying for a long time or a person he knows well): +10
- He has a portion of the subject (a lock of a person's hair, a stone chip from a statue): +5
- The subject is within 100m: +5
- The subject is over 500m away: –10
- Subject is surrounded by others of its kind (i.e. a person in a crowd, a key in a draw full of keys): –10

If the Psyker passes the Test, and the subject is within a number of kilometres equal to or less than his Perception Bonus, then he will have some idea of its location depending on how many degrees of success he scored.

Degrees of Success	Result
0	The rough direction of the subject
1	The specific direction of the subject and a roughly how far away it is
2	The specific direction of the subject and exactly how far away it is
4	A visual image of the current location of the subject as well as knowledge of in which direction and how far away it is

As long as the Psyker sustains this power he can spend a Full Action to gain updated information on the location of the subject (the level of this information remains dependant on his original degrees of success). Thus, a Psyker can follow a person who is actively trying to evade them for instance.

Table 6-6: Divination Powers

Name	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustain
Divine Shot	15	Free Action	No
Dowsing	11	Full Action	Yes
Far Sight	17	Full Action	Yes
Glimpse	18	Half Action	No
Precognitive Dodge	11	Free Action	No
Precognitive Strike	17	Free Action	No
Preternatural Awareness	9	Half Action	Yes
Psychometry	16	Full Action	Yes
Personal Augury	14	Full Action	No
Soul Sight	23	Full Action	Yes

Far Sight

Threshold: 17
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 1km/Willpower Bonus

Some diviners are capable of opening their inner eye to perceive events that occur at places far away from them. Far Sight may be used to make you aware of a single space anywhere within Range of this power. You need not be aware of the destination; you merely need to identify how far away you need to cast your senses (for example: "I look two kilometres to the west"). Should the point you select be inside a solid object, such as a wall, tree, cliff face or the like, the power simply fails. You may use Far Sight to cast your view inside buildings, bodies of water, pockets of gas and so on without impediment.

Once you have cast your sight to a particular place, you can see up to the normal range of your vision from a specific point of view. You may change your facing by 90-degrees by spending a Half Action. Once you choose your point, you may not select another. You must use the power again to select a new point. Far Sight does not grant any special forms of vision; if your clairvoyant point is within a darkened room and you cannot normally see in darkness, you perceive nothing but darkness. In addition, Far Sight does not pick up sound (though if you have the Lip Reading skill, you can use it to work out what speakers are saying).

While under the effects of this power, you are disoriented and cannot spend more than a Half Action each Round. In addition, you take a –30 penalty to all Tests.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you can double the Range of this power.

Glimpse

Threshold: 18
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

You peer into the future, sensing the manifold web of different possible pathways and potential outcomes. Until the end of your next Turn, you gain a +30 bonus to any single Skill Test.

Precognitive Strike

Threshold: 17
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

Like a spider on a web, you are able to sense disturbances to your immediate future. This ability to read possible outcomes lets you anticipate the movement of your opponents. Until the end of your next Turn, you gain a +20 bonus to all Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests.

Precognitive Dodge

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: You

You may manipulate probability to your own advantage. The threads of your immediate future appear clearly in your mind. You have the power to Dodge projectiles before they've been fired. When you manifest this power, you can walk into combat with what appears to be astounding grace (or incredible luck), weaving your way through fields of gunfire without a scratch. Until the end of your next Turn, all Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit you with ranged weapons suffer a –30 penalty.

Preternatural Awareness

Threshold: 9
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

Casting your perception from the limited vessel of your bodily senses, you gain an unnatural awareness of the world around you. Your eyes roll white within their sockets and your senses roam about you, at once glancing above, behind, before and sideways. You also gain impressions of future events, granting you uncanny accuracy in anticipating them. You gain a +20 bonus on all Awareness Tests. In addition, you add your Willpower Bonus to your Initiative count.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you may add your Willpower bonus to your Initiative again.

Psychometry

Threshold: 16
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You (see text)

Intense displays of emotion leave a psychic "residue" on objects and places exposed to them. Similarly, anything that has been actively carried or used by an individual for a long time will eventually pick up similar psychic impressions. With this power, you can read the psychic traces that others leave behind, giving you images directly connected to the place or object in question. These traces often take the form of sensory data. For example, a diviner may taste the hot blood-tang of murder, or smell the rank sweat-stench of desperation.

You may use this power in one of two ways. First, you may use it to divine the impressions of an object, or, second, you may use it to divine psychic impressions in an area. In the case of the former, you must be handling the object. In the case of the latter, you may divine any pertinent details that occurred within a number of metres equal to your Willpower Bonus.

The quality and nature of the information depends on how long you sustain the power. You derive a new piece of information for every ten Rounds you spend handling an object or concentrating on an area.

Rounds	Result
10	You sense the most recent strong emotion associated with the area—love, hated, amusement, fear and so on.
20	You perceive the general features of the person who experienced the emotion.
30	You get a clear image of the features of the person who experienced the emotion.
40	You are able to identify the person's occupation (e.g. Career and Rank).
50	You are able to discern the name of the person.
+10	You discover an additional fact about the person as determined by the GM.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold,

you cut the time required by half: if you exceed the PT by 10 points, you derive a new fact every 5 Rounds; if you exceed by 20 points, every 2 Rounds; and for 30 points, every Round.

Personal Augury

Threshold: 14
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: Touch

Personal Augury allows you to peer into the fate of a single, willing target. You may warn the querant of impending dangers, opportunities and even divine specific advice for your client. To begin the augury, you clasp the hands of your client, and ask them to specify a circumstance that they wish divined. This may be as detailed as, "What terrors does the headquarters of the Barbed Chalice hold?" or as vague as, "How can I please my Inquisitor?" The more precise the question, the more specific the reading may be. Once the question is established, the diviner and client spend the next thirty minutes using his Psychic-foci. This may be reading the Imperial Tarot, casting runes, examining entrails, or any other such act. At the end of this time, you may make a Psyniscience Test to accurately sense the weave of the client's future. Each degree of success reveals more information.

Degrees of Success — Result

0 **Doom:** The diviner receives a symbolic warning of the greatest peril or obstacle faced by the client with regards to the question. This is a vague hint at what is to come.

1 **Malign Influences:** The diviner gains intuition of the client's doom, and a further two negative influences that the client will face.

2 **Benign Factors:** The diviner gains an additional impression of the greatest advantage or weapon the client has in their possession.

3+ **Fate:** The diviner is aware of all of the previous effects, and may also offer a single sentence of mystical advice to the client.

Soul Sight

Threshold: 23
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

Diviners are said to be able to read a person's shifting aura, the ghost self they unconsciously project into the warp. From observing the nature of this aura, they can learn many things about a person's emotions and feelings: from their current emotions, to habitual moods, to their levels of injury, and even any addictions or madness they may suffer from.

When this power is manifested, the diviner may try to read the aura of any person they can see as a Full Action. This requires a successful Psyniscience Test with each degree of success granting him more information. The diviner must manifest this power each time he wishes to view an additional person's aura.

Degrees of Success — Result

0 **Hue.** You focus on the dominant colours in the target's aura. This allows you to detect the strongest three emotions they are currently experiencing. You are also able to detect their race, and if they have any Psychic Discipline Powers (though not what they are). From the brightness and consistency of the aura, you are also able to gain a rough idea of the target's physical and mental health. This does not tell you their exact Wounds or Insanity Points, but rather grants a loose impression (good, poor, slightly weak, and so on). Finally, you may tell whether the target is an Untouchable.

1 **Flow.** You gain all the impressions of the previous result, and also gain a greater understanding of their emotional state. You can read all of the target's current feelings. You also gain an insight into the target's nature and their habitual tides of sentiment (depressive, misanthrope, optimist etc). These perceptions grant you +10 to all Fellowship Tests made against the target whilst this power is active. In addition to this, you can see undercurrents of emotion caused by biological feedback, such as hunger, desire, fatigue, intoxication and pain. You may determine the target's current Wounds and Fatigue levels. Finally, if the target has any Psychic Discipline Powers, you may tell which Disciplines these powers originate from (though not which specific powers these are).

2 **Shape.** You gain all the impressions of the previous result, and gain a greater understanding of the target's longstanding emotions and emotional states. The aura's connection to the warp around it reveals if the target has any Corruption Points (though not how many). Ripples in the aura reveal the three major emotions experienced by the target over the past twelve hours. You may determine the target's Insanity Points and any madness or addictions they are currently suffering from. If the target has any Psychic Disciplines, you may infer their precise Psy Rating.

3 **Pattern.** You gain all the impressions of the previous result, and gain a full appreciation of the target's aura. You may determine the exact Corruption Points of the target. You may also detect if the target has any Minor Psychic Powers (though not what they are). Finally, you may tell if the projected aura is genuine, or has been produced by some unnatural means (Psychic Power, Daemonic ability, technological means etc). Note that you cannot divine what the target's genuine aura should be; only that it is artificial.

Pyromancy

Deemed by the majority of Imperial savants (those who are at liberty to discuss such matters, that is) to be both the most common and the most limited of Psychic Disciplines. Pyromancy is the art of creating and controlling fire. Students of this discipline are known as pyromancers or pyrokinetics. Less charitable souls, and some of those who've been on the receiving end of their abilities, frequently refer to them as "pyromaniacs". Few indeed, however, question the effectiveness of a master pyrokinetic on the battlefield.

Note: Any Pyromancy power that inflicts Damage may also set the target on fire; see **page 210** for details of things catching fire.

Blinding Flash

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 12m

You focus blazing mental energy into a single point within your mind before releasing it all in a burst of searing bright light, blinding anyone who sees you and is within Range. Those with appropriate glare shielding and beings that don't have visual sensory organs are immune. All those affected must make an Agility Test or be blinded for a number of Rounds equal to 1d10 times the Psyker's Psy Rating. Blinded targets automatically fail vision-based Tests, move at half normal speed and take a –20 penalty on any Test that involves fighting, movement or reactions. Note that a Psyker may accidentally blind himself with this power (if he's very stupid).

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you extend the Range by 4 metres.

Burning Fist

Threshold: 10
Focus Time Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

With intense concentration, you wreathe your hands in waves of shimmering flame. Your unarmed attacks deal 1d10+SB Energy Damage. In addition, your unarmed strikes do not count as having the Primitive special quality.

Table 6-7: Pyromancy Powers

Name	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustain
Blinding Flash	11	Half Action	No
Burning Fist	10	Half Action	Yes
Call Flame	8	Half Action	Yes
Douse Flames	16	Half Action	Yes
Fire Bolt	11	Half Action	No
Fire Storm	16	Half Action	No
Holocaust	23	Full Action	Yes
Incinerate	19	Full Action	Yes
Sculpt Flame	13	Half Action	Yes
Wall of Fire	17	Full Action	Yes

Call Flame

Threshold: 8
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

One of the first powers commonly learned in this discipline is to summon fire with thought. This allows you to conjure a small flame (about the size and intensity of a burning torch) into your palm. The primary purpose of this power is not to attack—though it adds 2 points of Damage to your unarmed attacks and makes them Energy attacks—but rather it is used to set things alight or as fuel for other Pyrokinetic powers, such as Sculpt Flame. While this power is in effect, you cannot use your hand for anything else besides holding the flame.

Douse Flames

Threshold: 16
Focus Time Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 5m × Willpower Bonus

It takes a potent mind to deny the natural tendency of flames to run out of control. Douse Flames allows you to instantly extinguish all fires within range as well as interfere with fire-based weapons such as flamers, causing them not to function for as long as they are within Range of the power although their fuel may still spray forth, depending on the design of the weapon. Note that chemically flammable substances, such as promethium, that burn continuously once exposed to the air, burst back into flame the moment the power's effect ends or as soon as the chemical is brought outside of Range.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you extend the Range by 5 metres.

Fire Bolt

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 100m

Fire Bolt allows you to create bolts of flame with your mind and hurl them at your foes. The appearance of these flames is up to you—for example, searing white light or green-black spheres of obscenity-mouthing faces. You can direct the bolt at any target you can see within range. Make a Challenging (+0) Willpower Test to strike the target. On a hit, the bolt deals 1d10+5 Energy Damage.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the Power Roll exceeds the Threshold, you generate an additional Fire Bolt, which can be directed at any targets within Range. Test Willpower for each separate target.

Fire Storm

Threshold: 16
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 50m

Fire Storm instantly creates an intense conflagration about your target as the air itself ignites, burning all within to cinders. You can call a Fire Storm anywhere within range to a point you have line of sight to. The Fire Storm has a 6 metre radius from the point (or individual) targeted. The Fire Storm deals 1d10+5 Energy Damage to all creatures and objects in the area.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you deal an additional 1d10 points of Damage.

Holocaust

Threshold: 23
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 6m

A legendary ability that few pyrokinetics are strong enough to even wield, much less have the courage to use. Holocaust calls forth a raging white-hot firestorm ignited by the Psyker's own soul. The flames of a Holocaust burn across dimensions, affecting the entities of the immaterium as well as material beings, but the cost is high as the psyker risks losing his own spirit to the fury of the conflagration. The fires of a Holocaust always burn outward from you, dealing 1d10 Energy Damage per point of your Willpower Bonus to all creatures and objects in the area. This Damage bypasses Toughness Bonus and Armour. You take 1d10+1 Energy Damage (ignoring Toughness Bonus and armour) each Round that you sustain this power. There is no immunity to the fires of a Holocaust and Warp Entities, as well as other immaterial creatures, are burned as readily as the fleshbound. Those slain by Holocaust are killed forever.

Incinerate

Threshold: 19
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 10m

Incinerate allows you to generate intense heat as well as flame. By psychically agitating the molecules in a tightly focused area, you create an effect even more devastating than a meltagun. However, Incinerate requires you to concentrate on a single point, making it difficult to use against non-stationary targets. Incinerate has a range of 10 metres and deals 1d10+1 Energy Damage. Each Round, beyond the first, that you use a Full Action concentrating on the target (it must remain in Range and in line of sight) this power deals the Damage of the previous Round plus 1. Damage caused by Incinerate ignores both Armour and Toughness.

Sculpt Flame

Threshold: 13
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 5m×Willpower Bonus

You control the shape of the fires burning around you. With this power, you can intensify any flames or shape them to assume any appearance you desire. A successful use of this power allows you to do any of the following effects with an existing fire:

- Double a fire's area (assuming there are combustibles).
- Diminish a fire's area by half.
- Spread fire into a number of 1 metre squares in any direction equal to your Willpower Bonus.
- Create crude shapes that resemble creatures, body parts, people or objects.
- Cause a fire to burst, requiring all adjacent targets to Test Agility, catching fire should they fail the Test.
- Cause a fire to spew smoke, filling three times the area of the fire (treat as fog).

Each Round you can choose a new effect or apply the same effects to the same source of fire.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you can manipulate fire more efficiently. If you exceed the PT by 5 points, you can create easily recognisable images. If you exceed by 10 points, you can create near life-like figures, as if carved from flame. You can increase the distance of spreading fire: for every 5 points you exceed the PT, the distance is double your Willpower Bonus; for exceeding by 10 points the distance is four times your Willpower Bonus and so on.

Wall of Fire

Threshold: 17
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 60m

A relatively blunt, but effective, ability in the pyrokinetic's arsenal, this power allows you to place an immobile barrier of flame that lingers for as long as you will it. The wall is three metres high and a metre thick and can be up to ten metres long for every point of your Willpower Bonus. You can place it anywhere within Range and even on top of foes, though they are allowed an Easy (+20) Agility Test to get out of the way. Foes crossing the wall or failing the Test take 1d10+5 Energy Damage (ignoring Armour) and must Test Agility again or catch on fire.

Telekinetics

The art of the Telekinetic Discipline is to translate mental energy into physical force. Wielders of these powers are known as the telekine, and they readily break the laws of physics with their abilities. Telekine are notorious for their forceful personalities, which, while unpleasant to deal with, are fairly understandable. In many places, there is a common image of the telekine as a pallid, unfit and spoilt individual. In reality, Telekinetics often suffer intense migraines, nose bleeds and high blood pressure as a result of focusing their powers.

Catch Projectiles

Threshold: 16
Focus Time: Reaction
Sustained: No
Range: 1m×Willpower Bonus
You can use your telekinetic abilities to catch incoming projectiles. This power only works against solid projectiles and so energy attacks get through normally. Until the end of your next Turn, you automatically discount a number of hits from incoming missiles equal to your Willpower Bonus, causing them to immediately stop and hang in the air. When this power ends, they fall harmlessly to the ground.

Fling

Threshold: 14
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m
You can telekinetically lift an unattended object from the ground and fling it at a target. You may lift up to 5 kilograms per point of your Willpower Bonus. You can throw the object a number of metres equal to your Willpower Bonus ×3. To hit a target, Test Willpower. On a success resolve the hit as if your Test was an attack. The object deals 1d10 Impact Damage plus 1 point per 5 kilograms of weight.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the Threshold, you may lift an additional 5 kilograms per point of your Willpower Bonus.

Force Barrage

Threshold: 21
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m×Willpower Bonus
This power functions as Force Bolt except you create one bolt per point of your Willpower Bonus. You may fire each bolt when you manifest this power.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you generate an additional bolt.

Table 6-8: Telekinetic Powers

Name	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustain
Catch Projectiles	16	Reaction	No
Fling	14	Half Action	No
Force Barrage	21	Full Action	No
Force Bolt	13	Half Action	No
Precision Telekinesis	23	Half Action	Yes
Psychic Blade	19	Half Action	Yes
Psychic Crush	17	Half Action	No
Push	13	Half Action	No
Telekinesis	11	Half Action	Yes
Telekinetic Shield	17	Half Action	Yes

Force Bolt

Threshold: 13
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m×Willpower Bonus
Use this power to hurl a burst of tangible mental force at your opponent. Test Willpower to hit the target. If you succeed, your attack deals 1d10 Impact Damage +1 Damage per point of your Willpower Bonus.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you deal 1 additional point of Impact Damage.

Precision Telekinesis

Threshold: 23
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: 10m
If Telekinesis is a sledgehammer, then Precision Telekinesis is a scalpel. This ability allows you to achieve far more subtle effects with telekinetic force. At its most basic, this power can pull the pins on grenades, press buttons, jog triggers, undo latches and direct small projectiles to deadly effect. Essentially, with this power, you can manipulate objects as if you were physically handling them. In any situation where the task would call for a Characteristic Test you substitute your Willpower instead.

Psychic Blade

Threshold: 19
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

A phenomenally complicated ability to master, this power allows you to project your will as a blade of psychic force. Because the blade is formed of psychic energy, it can be formed almost impossibly thin, as little as a molecule thick. A Psychic Blade can thus shear through almost any physical object with ease, and is capable of cutting through most forms of armour as if they were made of cloth. The Psychic Blade is a terribly dangerous weapon to use, though, for any stray thoughts can misdirect it with devastating effect.

Once manifested, treat the Psychic Blade as a sword wielded by the Psyker (though it does not require a free hand) that requires no Melee Training to use, but cannot Parry. To strike with the Psychic Blade, the telekine uses their Willpower Characteristic rather than Weapon Skill. On a successful hit, the weapon deals 1d10 Rending Damage, plus 2 additional points of Damage per point of your Willpower Bonus. In addition, the weapon has Penetration equal to twice your Willpower Bonus.

Psychic Crush

Threshold: 17
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: No
Range: 10m

You can direct your Telekinetic power directly against your opponents, wrapping them in bands of force that constrict and crush the life out of them. Once manifested, you may use this power against any target within Range. Make an Opposed Test, pitting your Willpower against your opponent's Toughness. If you beat your opponent, you deal 1d10 Impact Damage plus 1 per point of your Willpower Bonus. For each degree of success, you deal an additional 2 points of Damage.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you may extend the Range by 10 metres.

Push

Threshold: 13
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10m

You gather a ball of telekinetic energy and direct it against any single target within range. Make an Opposed Test, pitting your Willpower against your target's Strength. If you beat your opponent, you knock them to the ground. For each degree of success, you also deal one level of Fatigue.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you may extend the Range by 10 metres or gain a +10 bonus to your Willpower Test.

Telekinesis

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: 10m

Telekinesis is the ability to use the strength of one's will to move physical inanimate objects around. You may lift or move any object within Range, whose weight does not exceed 5 kilograms × your Willpower Bonus. You may move the object slowly anywhere within Range of the power. This power cannot affect living creatures. You cannot make attacks with objects you manipulate. Once you cease concentrating on the object, it falls slowly to the ground.

Telekinetic Shield

Threshold: 21
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: You

You erect a field of telekinetic energy about you. This field functions as a force shield, granting 1 Armour Point on every location in addition to any other armour you are wearing. By spending a Full Action to activate this Psychic Power, you may opt to cause the Telekinetic Shield to vibrate at a colour frequency of your choosing (golden yellow, skull white, ice blue, and so on). Note that whatever its hue, the shield only produces a gentle shimmer in the air. It is not opaque and cannot block your opponent's line of sight.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you increase the Armour Point by 1.

Telepathy

The Discipline of Telepathy allows the practitioner to contact and control the minds of others. From outright mental domination to subtle perceptual effects, the telepath can shape and mould thoughts with but a whim. For all this power, telepaths tend towards misanthropic depression. All too easily they can detect the foetid overspill of thought and emotion that oozes from the human mind, leaving them under no illusions about the nobility of man's soul. As they grow in skill, many telepaths are unable to completely shut out the constant low level chatter of other minds. Consequently many develop great loathing for crowds of people. Along side this constant irritation, telepaths face another peril as they practise their art. By immersing themselves in another person's mind, they can often "catch" personality traits, mad beliefs or even psychic corruption. Sometimes a telepath can lose their selves entirely, becoming little more than a mirror of those around them, a tragic figure with dim memories of the individual they once were. Such telepaths are often given the mercy of mind cleansing and reassignment as some form of servitor.

Beastmaster

Threshold: 13
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: 8m

You may stretch out your thoughts to animals, becoming able to perceive their emotions and establish a rudimentary form of communication. The relative simplicity of an animal's mind allows you to dominate them. Affected animals must follow your every command. When you manifest this power, select one animal within Range. Each Round you sustain the power, you may spend a Reaction to give the animal a command. The command must be simple, such as "come", "guard", "flee", "heel", "attack" and so on. The animal follows the command to the best of its ability. If the animal feels threatened or is ordered to act in a way that is not suited to its nature, it may make a Willpower Test to break your control. How it acts if it succeeds depends on your treatment of it.

Compel

Threshold: 17
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: No
Range: 8m

One of the most direct of all "psyker mind tricks", Compel allows you to force others into briefly acting against their own will. Compel is a highly versatile power, useful for both subtle and blatant effects. When you manifest this power, make an Opposed Test, pitting your Willpower against the target's. If you succeed, the target must follow your command. The nature of the command must be simple and must be able to be taken in a single Round. Good commands include "flee", "attack that target", "dance a jig", and so on. If the command would result in a suicidal act, the target gets a +20 bonus to its Willpower Test.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you gain a +10 bonus on your Opposed Willpower Test.

Table 6-9: Telepathic Powers

Name	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustain
Beastmaster	13	Half Action	Yes
Compel	17	Half Action	No
Dominate	24	Half Action	Yes
Inspire	9	Half Action	Yes
Mind Scan	23	Full Action	No
Projection	21	Full Action	Yes
Psychic Shriek	18	Half Action	No
See Me Not	14	Half Action	Yes
Telepathy	11	Free Action	Yes
Terrify	13	Half Action	No

Dominate

Threshold: 24
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: 8m

One of the most infamous of all telepathic abilities, you reach out with your mind to seize control of another's body. Make an Opposed Test, pitting your Willpower against the target's. If you succeed, you control your target's body as if it were a puppet. For as long as the power remains active, you may divide up your Actions between yourself and your target. For example, on your Turn, you might spend a Half Action to fire your laspistol at an Ork and then for your other Half Action, order your puppet to fire his bolter at the Ork. The dominated target uses its own Characteristics, but takes a –10 penalty to all Tests because it is controlled. Any action that could be deemed as suicidal grants the target a new Willpower Test to try and break your hold.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you gain a +10 bonus on your Opposed Willpower Test.

Closer Than Flesh

Telepathy is an intimate act, more personal and affecting in some ways than any petty communion of the body. To slip into the consciousness of another is a disturbing and disorienting task, for no two minds are alike and there is no telling what a telepath may find within another's psyche. Unwilling targets of telepathic acts are apt to conceive of a deep loathing for the invading psyker, in some cases bordering on a psychopathic hatred for the telepath.

Aside from making enemies for himself, the telepath also risks mental contamination when he enters another person's mind. It is all too easy to take on the personality traits of another, or worse still be infected by the putrid pus of their madness. Psykers who are promiscuous with their powers often find their original personalities much altered, or even completely eroded, by continuous contact with foreign minds. Sad indeed is the fate of such lost souls. Worse than this loss of the self, however, is the fate of telepaths who stumble upon dark and corrupted souls. Chaos is all too willing to exploit the mental bridge that the telepath forges between his mind and his target. If a Psyker uses a telepathic power on a target who has twice his own Insanity or Corruption Points, he must make a Willpower Test. Should the psyker fail the Willpower Test, he contracts some form of psychic rot from his debased contact. Psychic rot inflicts 1d10 Insanity or Corruption Points on the Psyker, depending on which type of mental foulness caused the psychic rot in the first place. Should the target have both Insanity and Corruption Points equal to double the Psyker's own, the Psyker must make a second Willpower Test with failure resulting in the loss of a further 1d10 Insanity or Corruption Points.

Inspire

Threshold: 9
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: 6m

You bolster your comrades by subtly implanting images of great courage, and masking various negative emotional stimuli, allowing them to swiftly shake off fears and doubts. A number of targets equal to your Willpower Bonus immediately overcome the effects of Pinning and Fear, and remain impervious to these effects for as long as they stay within Range and for as long as you sustain the power. Such psychic propaganda is frequently used amongst the Imperial Guard.

Mind Scan

Threshold: 23
Focus Time: Extended Action
Sustain: No
Range: Touch

With this power, you can read a target's mind, probing whatever secrets are hidden therein. You must touch the target for this power to work, which, unless clever methods are employed, means you must successfully Test Weapon Skill. If you manage to touch the target, you may enter a contest of wills in order to pierce your target's mental barriers and discover all sorts of information.

Mind Scan is a lengthy process, extending over five Rounds. During each of these Rounds the Psyker and target make Opposed Willpower Tests. If the Psyker succeeds, he may delve deeper into the target's psyche. Should the target succeed, it indicates that he has managed to thrust the Psyker from his mind, and the Mind Scan power ends.

Each Round that Mind Scan is successfully maintained, the following information is revealed:

Round 1 (Contact)

Information: The Psyker contacts the target's mind, learning basic information such as name, mood, Insanity Level, physical health, and so on.

Round 2 (Surface Thoughts)

Information: The Psyker investigates the thoughts which are uppermost in the target's mind, such as opinions on the Psyker, immediate fears, conscious lies, a single location, object, event or person which is significant to the target (such as a lover, personal hab block, treasured heirloom or cult initiation). It is not apparent why the significant thing is important—only the emotions associated with it. The target's Corruption Level is also apparent to the Psyker.

Round 3 (Short Term Memory)

Information: The Psyker may rifle through the target's memories over the previous twelve hours, and may uncover two further significant locations, objects, events or persons. Again, it is not apparent why the significant thing is important—only the key emotions associated with it. The Psyker may also dredge up simple passwords and routine behaviours from the target's mind (e.g. hab block entry code, habitual paths to work, bank ident numerals or frequently used Skills, Talents and Characteristics).

Round 4 (Subconscious)

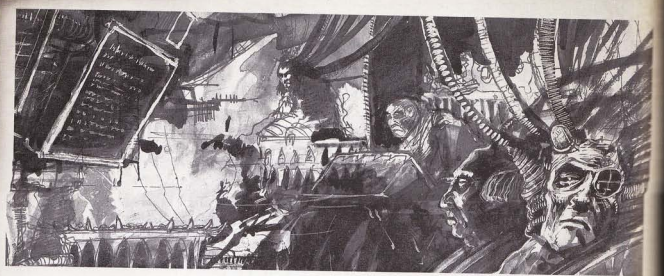
Information: The Psyker may gain detailed understanding of why significant locations, objects, events or persons hold importance to the target, and how they relate to each other. The target's beliefs, motivations and personal goals are apparent to the Psyker, as are the target's immediate network of contacts. Complicated ciphers may be extracted from the target's mind, and the Psyker is aware of pivotal moments in the target's life (earliest memory, adolescence, coming of age and so on).

Round 5 (Soul Baring)

Information: The Psyker may plunder the target's mind at will. Any information contained within the target's psyche is there for the Psyker to do with what he wishes.

The Psyker may attempt to scan his target's mind covertly. In this case, the Psyker must make an Opposed Willpower Test at a -10 penalty. Should the Psyker succeed in a covert scan, the target gains a faint sense of unease, but is unaware that his mind is being probed.

If the Psyker does not attempt a covert scan, the target is fully aware that his psyche is under attack. He may attempt to break physical contact with the Psyker or even strike out.



Projection

Threshold: 21
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: You

You can send out your disembodied mind and spirit, allowing you to touch other minds from a great distance away. You project a "mental self", which you can shape to look like whatever you choose. The projection can travel at great speed, literally the speed of thought, but *it can also be very dangerous as creatures native to the immaterium and other Psykers may be able to* directly attack your mind. Whilst using Projection, you are completely unaware of what is happening with your physical body. This power lets you communicate with any creature you know well (such as a companion or your Inquisitor), and is somewhere within the same solar system. Unwilling targets, or possibly those that do not look kindly at having people invade their thoughts, may make an Opposed Willpower Test with the Psyker to force them back into their bodies. Whilst using this power, your body functions as if it were unconscious.

Psychic Shriek

Threshold: 18
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: No
Range: 10m

A voice's volume is limited to the realities of vocal capacity and a listener's ability to hear. Minds have no such limitations. With this power, you gather your will and launch it as a blast of screaming mental energy designed to overload nervous systems and knock one or more targets unconscious. All creatures within Range that you specify must succeed on a Willpower Test or suffer a number of levels of Fatigue equal to your Willpower Bonus.

Overbleed: For every 10 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you may extend the Range by 10 metres.

See Me Not

Threshold: 14
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: Yes
Range: 20m

You erase your presence from the minds of others. This power is more than just "invisibility"; targets that this power has been used successfully on literally cannot perceive you at all. While they may suspect that someone else is present, they can only react to the effects of what you do. For example, you could punch a guard while using See Me Not. The guard would know that he had been hit by "something" and would certainly do his best to find the source of the attack, in hopes of stopping a second blow, but he would look "right through you" while he was searching.

Upon manifesting this power, select a number of targets within Range equal to your Willpower Bonus. Each target must succeed on a Willpower Test or they can no longer perceive you for as long as you sustain the power. Lack of perception means they cannot directly attack you: they cannot see, hear, smell or perceive you in any way.

Oddly, this power has no effect on creatures with an Intelligence of 10 or less.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, you may add another target or impose a –10 penalty on one target's Willpower Test made to resist this power.

Telepathy

Threshold: 11
Focus Time: *Free Action*
Sustain: Yes
Range: *1km/Willpower Bonus*

You can send your thoughts into the minds of those around you. You can choose to send your message to one or more persons in a select group of individuals, which is known as a "placed sending", or can transmit your thoughts to anyone within Range, an art known as "broadcasting".

Terrify

Threshold: 13
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustain: No
Range: 8m

You dredge up a person's worst nightmare and project it directly into their mind, causing them to flee screaming. You may affect a number of targets within Range up to your Willpower Bonus. Each target must pass a Willpower Test or roll on the Shock Table (see **page 233**).

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which you exceed the power's Threshold, the target adds +10 to their roll on the Shock Table.

VII

Playing the Game

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Chapter VII: Playing the Game

"You have been chosen to serve the God-Emperor of Mankind with your very lives! But before you are even worthy to honour Him with your demise there are some things you need to know..."
— Inquisitor Saffena Sengir, Ordo Xenos.

In the service of the Holy Inquisition, Acolytes are called upon to perform all manner of tasks, such as rooting out heretics, travelling through the warp and combating the many foes of mankind. To achieve these things, characters need to draw upon all their skills and abilities. Having created your character, this chapter explores all the different sorts of things your Acolyte might have to do in the service of the God-Emperor.

Tests

"There is nothing to fear but failure."
— Warmaster Slaydo.

As your Acolyte undertakes adventures, explores strange environments and exposes villainy, he will engage in all manner of actions. Shooting a lasgun, scaling a cliff wall, avoiding the power sword of a heretic: these are just a sample of the typical sorts of things your character might face in his service to an Inquisitor. While it might be sufficient to say that you can or cannot achieve these things, Dark Heresy uses a system for resolving the challenges that characters must overcome during game play.

The basic way of determining success or failure is determined by what is called a "Test". Whenever the action, task or effort could have dramatic consequences—things that affect the story, your character's health and so on—you must take a Test. To do so make a percentile dice roll. See **Reading and Rolling the Dice** on **page 9** for more information on how to do this. Now compare the result rolled to the Characteristic that best describes the action you're attempting. If you roll lower than or equal to the Characteristic, you succeed. If you roll higher than the Characteristic, you fail.

If the d100 roll is greater than the Characteristic, you fail.
If the d100 roll is equal to or less than the Characteristic, you succeed.

SKILL TESTS

The most common sorts of Tests you have to take during play are Skill Tests. Every skill (see **Chapter III: Skills)** is governed by a particular Characteristic. For example, the Agility Characteristic governs the Dodge skill. Whenever you would use a Skill—again, for any Action with dramatic consequences—you make a Skill Test, making a percentile dice roll as described above.

Example

Drake, a Veteran Guardsman with Agility 34, fights a hive ganger. The unwashed hive scum makes a successful attack with his lead pipe. Drake has the Dodge skill, so he tries to get out of the way. Drake's player makes a Dodge Test, rolling 42 on his percentile dice. Since this is over Drake's Agility characteristic, the ill-fated Guardsman fails and the ganger's weapon strikes home.

You can sometimes make Skill Tests even when you do not actually have the Skill. You can only make Skill Tests with Skills you do not have if the Skill is a Basic Skill. Advanced Skills require specialised training and experience. If you don't have the Advanced Skill, you can't make the attempt.

When making a Skill Test with a Basic Skill you do not have, roll as normal, but halve the Characteristic (round up).

Many Talents (see **Chapter IV: Talents**) can improve your chances of success, as can Skill Mastery (see **page**

+10). Talented, for example, provides a +10 bonus on Skill Tests made with any one Skill.

Example

Nursing a nasty lump on his head, Drake tries to bargain down the price of a medi-kit from a local hive merchant. He doesn't have the Barter skill, but Barter is a Basic Skill so he can give it a try anyway. Drake has a Fellowship 34, but he must halve it because he doesn't have the skill. He must roll below or equal to 17 (34/2=17) to successfully haggle the price down. Drake rolls a 15—a success! He has managed to convince the merchant to lower the price.

CHARACTERISTIC TESTS

Sometimes you may want to do something that is not covered by a Skill (using brute force to knock down a door, for example). In these cases, you make a Characteristic Test instead of a Skill Test. The GM determines the most appropriate Characteristic for what you're trying to do. Then roll a percentile dice and compare the roll to the Characteristic. As with Skill Tests, if the roll is equal to or less than the Characteristic you succeed; if the roll is greater than the Characteristic you fail.

Example

Kiera, a Death Cult Assassin, runs across a narrow gantry high above a space port in the driving rain. The gantry is very narrow and extremely slippery, but with the Crimson Alliance in pursuit, Kiera is not going to slacken her pace. The GM calls for an Agility Test. Kiera's Agility is 37. She rolls the dice and gets a 26, enough to safely cross the gantry, leaving her enemies behind.

Table 7-1: Characteristics Tests

Characteristic	Example Tests
Weapon Skill	Make an attack with a melee weapon.
Ballistic Skill	Make an attack with a ranged weapon.
Strength	Bend bars, break down a door, push over a Grox.
Toughness	Resist poison or disease, tolerate temperature extremes, stave off hunger, resist mutation.
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 a Psychic Power, torture or Fear.
Fellowship	Make a good impression, seduce a target, get someone to do you a favour.

Using Characteristics

For everything not covered by Skills, you should always fall back to Characteristic Tests. See **Table 7–1: Characteristic Tests** for examples of typical Characteristics Tests.

Characteristic Bonuses

Except for Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill, all Characteristics have an associated bonus. The Characteristic Bonus is equal to the tens digit of the Characteristic. For example, Jonas has a 45 Toughness, so his Toughness Bonus is 4. Adriel has a 36 Perception, so her Perception Bonus is 3. Since these bonuses are determined by the Characteristic, they may rise and fall throughout the adventure. Should a Characteristic take a penalty, that penalty likewise applies to the Characteristic Bonus.

Example

Drake, who's Toughness is 45, is suffering from poisoning, and therefore takes a –10 penalty to all Toughness Tests. This means that his Toughness functions as if it is 35. Thus Drake's Toughness Bonus, for as long as he takes the penalty, is reduced to 3.

Using Characteristic Bonuses

Characteristic Bonuses are used in a number of ways. Usually they are added to a dice roll to give a modified result. For example, to ascertain the Damage inflicted by a successful attack with a club, you roll 1d10 and add your Strength Bonus (1d10+SB).

Table 7-2: Characteristic Bonuses

Characteristic	Example Tests
Strength Bonus	Used to determine Damage from melee attacks.
Toughness	Used to resist Damage taken in combat.
Agility	Used to determine Initiative.
Intelligence	Used with Skills, the Medicae skill for example.
Perception	Used with Skills, the Psyniscience skill for example.
Willpower	Used with Focus Power to manifest Psychic Powers.
Fellowship	Used when interacting with people.

"Mankind stands upon the brink; on the one hand lies a realm of unimaginable power, on the other awaits darkness, death and utter damnation. Only those that follow the guiding light of the Emperor may save their souls."

Sometimes you will be asked to add or subtract a number from a Characteristic Bonus before you apply it to a result. For example, to ascertain the Damage inflicted by a successful hammer attack, you roll 1d10 and add your Strength Bonus minus one (1d10+SB-1).

In addition, Characteristic Bonuses can be used to break ties—see **Opposed Skill Tests** for more details.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

For most tests, it is enough to know whether you succeeded or failed. Sometimes, however, it is useful to know how well you succeeded, or how badly you failed. This is particularly important with social skills like Charm and Inquiry, as it gives the GM a guideline to help determine Non-Player Character (NPC) attitudes and to portion out the information attained.

Measuring degrees of success and failure is straightforward. Compare the result of your Test with your score. For each full 10 points by which you exceed your Characteristic, you achieve one degree of success. Conversely, for each full 10 points by which you fail, you gain one degree of failure. Your GM will let you know if degrees of success or failure are important for a particular Test.

Example

Father Horst is boasting, none too truthfully, of his success in smiting mutants. He makes a Deceive Test. Since Deceive is a Fellowship-based skill, Father Horst must roll beneath his Fellowship Characteristic to successfully convince the drill-abbots that his actions were indeed "like the Imperial heroes of old". Horst rolls 12 against a Fellowship of 44. Not only does he succeed, he beats his target by 3 degrees of success (44–12 = 32). The Drill-Abbots completely believe his tale and decide that, as Horst is such a hero, he is best employed at the front line of a local war.

EXTENDED TESTS

Some tasks are quite complicated and may take extra time to finish. In these cases, the GM may decide that it takes more than one successful Skill Test to complete the task. This is known as an Extended Test. Generally, the Skill in question will describe whether it requires an Extended Test, though the GM may adjust the time represented by each Test depending on what is in fact being attempted.

OPPOSED SKILL TESTS

Sometimes you have to Test your Skill against that of an opponent. This is known as an Opposed Skill Test. If you were trying to hide from a searching Guardsman, for example, you would make a Concealment Test, while the Guardsman would make an Awareness Test. In these situations, both parties make Skill Tests as normal. Whoever succeeds on the Test wins. If both participants succeed, the one with the most degrees of success wins. If the degrees of success are the same, the higher Characteristic Bonus wins out. And if this still results in a tie, then the lowest dice roll wins.

Should both parties fail, one of two things occurs. Either there is a stalemate and nothing happens or both parties should re-roll until there is a clear winner.

Example

Having eluded the Crimson Alliance on the gantry, Kiera is now trying to sneak out of the space port and past one of their sentries. The GM calls for a Silent Move Test and opposes it with the sentry's Perception Test. Both the player and the GM roll. Kiera must roll below 37 and the sentry must roll below 30. Kiera rolls a 24 for a success, while the GM gets a 28, also a success. Kiera beat her number by 13 while the sentry beat his only by 2. As Kiera has the greater degree of success, she manages to slip past and off into the night.

THE ROLE OF CIRCUMSTANCE

Not all Skill Tests are equal. Climbing a fence is quite easy, for instance, but ascending the face of a sheer cliff is quite difficult. The GM assigns bonuses or penalties to Skill or Characteristic Tests depending on the circumstances. While published adventures define these modifiers for the GM, there are many instances where the GM has to determine them on the wing. Making judgements like this is a big part of being a Game Master.

For each Test, the GM should decide the Difficulty and then consult **Table 7–3: Test Difficulty** to determine the appropriate modifier. GMs may choose to assign even greater bonuses or penalties than those shown on the table, but such modifiers should only be used in extremely unusual situations. It is recommended that all modifiers be given out in 10-point increments to keep the numbers simple. GMs who prefer more finesse, however, may hand out modifiers in 5-point increments.

Example

Vos, a Feral warrior, tries to find the tracks of an unruly Grox he is hunting. He makes a Tracking Test. Under normal circumstances, he'd simply use his Intelligence Characteristic as his base chance of success. However, the GM decides that the rain last night washed away most of the tracks. He deems the task Very Hard and imposes a –30 penalty on Vos's Skill Test. His Intelligence is 41, with the penalty, he has to roll under an 11 (41–30=11) to succeed. Vos rolls a 35, which would have been a success under normal circumstances, but in this instance the rain foiled him and the test is failed. To make matters worse, Vos failed the Test by more than 20, so the GM rules that he becomes lost for 1d5 hours.

Assistance

In some situations, multiple characters working together have a better chance of completing the task than if a character attempts it alone. With the GM's permission, a character can assist another character that's taking a Test. When doing so, the character with the best chance to succeed rolls the dice. Each character assisting reduces the Difficulty by one step. If the Test succeeds, the character who rolled the dice gains an extra degree of success.

Table 7-3: Test Difficulty

Difficulty	Test Modifier
Easy	+30
Routine	+20
Ordinary	+10
Challenging	+0
Difficult	–10
Hard	–20
Very Hard	–30

Limits on Assistance

Characters can assist each other in most tasks but there are limits:

- To assist, both characters must have the Skill being Tested.
- The assisting character must be adjacent to the character taking the Test.
- You cannot assist on Reactions or Free Actions.
- You may not assist on Tests made to resist disease, poison, Fear, hazards or anything else the GM deems inappropriate.
- No more than two characters may attempt to assist another.

Example

Hannah and Boris search a room. The GM declares that a Challenging (+0) Search Test is required, so Boris decides to help Hannah rather than search on his own. Since Boris is helping, the Difficulty drops to Ordinary (+10). If Hannah, who has the higher Perception, succeeds, she gains an extra degree of success because of Boris's help.

The Role of Fate

"There is no fate, but what the Emperor makes."
— Catechism of the Founding, Gunmetallicus 104th.

All Player Characters begin play with a number of Fate Points. The number of Fate Points a character receives is decided during character creation. Fate Points are what separates Acolytes from the ordinary people of the Imperium. PCs have destinies and the Emperor has marked them for greater things. While their ultimate fate is a mystery, with no guarantees that it will be glorious, enriching or pleasant, they are a cut above the rest.

Using Fate Points

Fate Points allow you to turn luck to your advantage, hitting with that bolter shot when you would have otherwise missed, or cracking the security code on a door just in time to make a hasty escape. Using these twists of fate, you can take a few more risks, which makes the game faster and far more exciting than would otherwise be the case.

That said, you have a limited pool of Fate Points and whenever you spend a Fate Point, you reduce your pool by one, so choose wisely. Fate Points are restored at the start of the next gaming session. Spending a Fate Point allows a character to do one of the following things:

- Re-roll any one failed Test. The results of the re-roll are final.
- Count as having rolled a 10 for their Initiative.
- Add an extra degree of success to a Test.
- Instantly recover 1d5 Wounds.
- Recover from being Stunned.

Burning Fate

Sometimes a re-roll or an extra degree of success is not going to be enough to save a character's life. In these instances, the character may choose to burn a Fate Point and permanently reduce their Fate Points by 1. The result is that the character survives whatever it was that would have killed him, but only just. So for example, if the character was shot with a lascannon and suffered a Critical Hit that would have killed him, instead he will only be horribly wounded, hideously burnt and rendered unconscious on 0 Wounds. In more extreme circumstances, such as being trapped on a space ship during a warp drive implosion, it is up to the player and the GM to work out just how the character makes his escape.

Note that you may burn a Fate Point even if you have already used all of your Fate Points for that gaming session. This just means that at the start of the next session, when your points are restored, you will have 1 less Fate Point.

Gaining Additional Fate Points

Since Fate Points are an expendable resource, you may be reluctant to burn them for fear of never gaining more. However, as your character undertakes adventures, he may gain additional Fate Points to replenish those that have been burnt away. Your GM may grant Fate Points for particular acts of heroism, cunning or good roleplaying. See **Chapter VIII: The Game Master** for details.

"The foolish man puts his trust in luck, the wise man puts his trust in the Emperor."

Investigation

"Wisdom is the beginning of fear."
— Ordos Hereticus maxim.

Another key element of Dark Heresy games is, of course, investigation. Over the course of an adventure, you are likely to spend a fair amount of time pouring through dusty libraries, searching through forbidden texts or chatting with the locals to uncover the heresy you seek. **Chapter III: Skills** offers a number of Investigation skills, such as Inquiry, Scholastic Lore, Forbidden Lore and so on, to help you through this process.

Using Investigation Skills

In many cases, clues come as a result of achieving certain objectives in the game. You might travel to another planet to search through ancient xenos ruins, before heading on to a hive-city to find someone who knows a bit about what you found, only to head back to a shrine world to find the corrupted priest who heads up a cult to the Dark Powers. All of these instances can result from knowing where to look, who to talk to, and where to go once you find the information you seek. Sometimes, though, you may need to roll up your sleeves and do some digging to discover the truth. Examples of investigation could be to find out the background to a forbidden planet, to learn more information about a xenos, or to research a particularly famous figure in the history of the Imperium. Luckily, all Investigation skills work the same way.

All Investigation tests require a character to have access to an Investigation skill. The Difficulty of the Test depends on its complexity, which also determines the base time it should take to uncover the information sought. A success on the Test allows you to roll 1d10 and add the appropriate Characteristic Bonus (as determined by the Characteristic used for the Test) and subtract this value in hours from the time it takes to uncover the information sought. A failed Test indicates no progress gained. Failing by three or more degrees indicates a setback, adding 1d10 hours to the total time required by the Test. Failing by five or more degrees means that your investigation comes to a complete halt and that the information's complexity increases by two steps. Once you reduce the time to 0 or less, you get the available information on the subject you're investigating.

Table 7–4: Investigation Benchmarks offers a selection of example Difficulties, times and Actions based on secrecy. As with many other Tests, you may benefit from assistance from other Player Characters subject to the same limitations described under Assistance (see **Assistance, page 184**).

Investigation should never be used to replace roleplaying or participating in adventures, but rather to augment roleplaying and assist in arriving at the facts of a matter.

Combat

"Strike fast and suddenly. Attack without warning. Secure victory before the foe is aware of his danger. Remember always, a war is easily won if your enemy does not know he is fighting."
— *Tactica Imperialis.*

Make no mistake: the Imperium is a dangerous place. Over the course of their investigations, explorations and travels, the characters are bound to encounter those who would see them dead. Unless the characters plan to spend their lives running away from their enemies, they will have to make a stand and fight. As a result, combat can form a key component in your Dark Heresy game. Being familiar with the ins and outs of battle can only improve your chances of survival.

Rounds, Turns & Time

For most occasions whilst playing Dark Heresy, the GM simply describes the scene or situation and asks the players how they react. Time is flexible, and is subject to the GM's decision based on the choices the characters make. Whilst the GM should have an idea about how much time approximately passes, it's not necessary to track the passage of time down to the exact second, or even the minute or hour. It is enough to say that "it takes about an hour to reach the spectral vestibule" or "after about fifteen minutes of walking, you come upon a crashed Aquila Lander". This sort of approach is known as "game time" or "Narrative Time".

In contrast to the loose laws of Narrative Time, there are many situations when every second counts and the GM must closely monitor what is going on. It might be that the GM needs to adjudicate a furious sword fight, or to track the characters' pace as they pursue fleeing cultists through the alleys of Gunmetal City.

Table 7-4: Investigation Benchmarks

Complexity	Difficulty	Modifier	Example	Time
Simple	Easy	+30	Discovering marketplace gossip	1 hour
Basic	Routine	+20	Finding a general's major victories	6 hours
Drudging	Ordinary	+10	Finding a general's service record	24 hours
Taxing	Challenging	+0	Identifying an obscure poison	72 hours
Arduous	Difficult	–10	Tracing the origin of a machine spirit	14 days
Involved	Hard	–20	Translating an entire book	1 month
Labyrinthine	Very Hard	–30	Cataloguing a datacrypt	1d5 years

When playing in such detailed moments of time, the GM must slice the action up into Rounds and Turns. A Round is approximately five seconds of Action. During a Round, participants in the encounter each have a Turn to act. Each character's Turn overlaps slightly, so Actions are almost simultaneous within the Round. Combat is the most common time that players will encounter detailed time or "Combat Time", but is by no means the only circumstance where Rounds and Turns are used. See **Movement** on page 212 for more details.

COMBAT OVERVIEW

Each character, including NPCs, takes a Turn within the Round. It is therefore necessary to determine the order in which Actions are taken. When combat begins, follow these steps to determine what happens.

Step One: Surprise

When beginning a combat, the GM determines if any of the combatants are Surprised. This only affects the first Round and isn't always necessary even then. Surprised combatants lose their Turn on the first Round of combat. They are caught unawares and their opponents get a full Round's "drop" on them. If no one is Surprised, then move immediately onto Step Two.

Step Two: Roll Initiative

At the start of the first Round, each combatant must roll for Initiative. Each combatant rolls 1d10 and adds his Agility Bonus (the tens digit of his Agility characteristic). The result of the roll applies for all successive Rounds in the combat.

Step Three: Determine Initiative Order

The GM ranks all the Initiative rolls, including those of the NPCs and creatures, from highest to lowest. This is the order that characters will act in during each Round of combat.

Step Four: Characters Take Turns

Starting with the participant with the highest Initiative roll, each character takes a Turn. During his Turn, a character can perform one or more Actions. Once a character has finished his Actions, the next participant takes a Turn and so on.

Step Five: Round Ends

Once each participant has taken a Turn, the Round is over.

Step Six: Repeat Steps Four and Five as Needed

Continue to play successive Rounds until the combat is complete or until you finished whatever it is that triggered the switch from Narrative Time to Combat Time.

SURPRISE

Surprise only affects the first Round of 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 a Perception 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 a Perception 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. Whilst it's often the case that one entire side or the other is Surprised, there can be individual exceptions. For example, mutants may easily Surprise a unit of green Guardsmen, but not their keen-eyed commissar.

If no one is Surprised, proceed with the combat as normal. Surprised characters lose their Turn in the first Round. They can do nothing except stand dumbfounded whilst their opponents fall upon them, with the attackers gaining +30 to hit during the first Round of combat only. After the first Round, Surprised characters recover their wits and can act normally.

Example

Having dealt with one group of cultists, Mordechai and Drake continue on their mission only to fall foul of an ambush by more members of the Barbed Chalice. The combat begins when the cultists attempt to shoot their autoguns at the Acolytes from concealed positions. The GM decides that Mordechai and Drake are Surprised. The cultists aim and shoot at the unlucky Acolytes. Since they are Surprised, Mordechai and Drake do not get a chance to act. Once the cultists have taken their shots, the Surprise Round ends. The GM starts at the top of the Initiative order for Round two and the combat proceeds as normal.

Initiative

Initiative determines the order in which participants act during each Round. To determine Initiative, roll 1d10 and add the result to the character or NPC's Agility Bonus. Naturally, the GM rolls the Initiative of any NPCs and creatures present.

GMs can make one Initiative roll for each group of like characters. For example, if there are three gangers in the combat, all of which have the same Characteristics, it isn't necessary to roll Initiative separately for each ganger. One roll will do for all of them and they'll act at the same time in the Initiative order.

Example

Mordechai, an Arbitrator with AB of 3 (the tens digit from his Agility of 35), rolls for Initiative when his group is attacked by three cultists of the Barbed Chalice. He rolls a 6 on a d10, so his Initiative for this combat is 9 (6+3). His companion, Drake, gets an 8 and the cultists 7. So, Mordechai goes first, followed by Drake, and then by the cultists.

Once everyone has rolled, the GM makes a list and places each character or creature in order, from highest to lowest. This 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. You only need to determine Initiative at the start of the fight, however. Once the Initiative order has been established, it remains the same from Round to Round. If new combatants join in the midst of the encounter, simply roll Initiative for them and add them to the order.

Example

The combat has been raging for three Rounds now and one of the cultists has been slain. Alerted by the noise ,a corrupt enforcer arrives to aid the cultists, so the GM rolls Initiative and gets a 7. The enforcer has 25 Agility (giving him an AB of 2), so he goes after Mordechai (Initiative roll of 7 plus Agility Bonus of 2=Initiative of 9). In the new Round, the revised Initiative order is Mordechai (9), enforcer (9), Drake (8), and finally the two remaining cultists (7).

"Strike fast and suddenly. Attack without warning. Secure victory before the foe is aware of his danger. Remember always, a war is easily won if your enemy does not know he is fighting."

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 Dark Heresy.

Full Action

A Full Action requires a character's complete attention to accomplish on his Turn. A character that takes a Full Action cannot take any Half Actions this Round.

Half Action

A Half Action is fairly simple, like moving or drawing a weapon. A character can take two different Half Actions on his Turn instead of taking a Full Action.

Note that you may not take the same Half Action twice.

Reactions

A Reaction is an Action that is made in response to some event such as an attack. All characters receive one Reaction each Round, which may only be used when it is not their Turn. Examples include making a Dodge Test or Parrying an attack.

Free Action

A Free Action takes but a split second and so can be taken in addition to any other Actions you make in a Round. There is no formal limit to the number of Free Actions a character can make in a Round, but a GM should use common sense to set reasonable limits on what can be done in a few seconds.

Extended Actions

Some Actions take more time than a single Round to complete. Once you commit yourself to an Extended Action, you are considered to be working towards completing that Action for as long as it takes. Should you be interrupted or if you abandon the Extended Action, all progress towards completing it is lost.

Using Actions

Typical Actions include drawing a weapon, attacking and moving. 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 the time—obviously a terse warning or a wry aside to a comrade would be acceptable. Reciting the complete one-hundred and seventeen rules for the denunciation and chastisement of traitors to the Imperium would not be.

Example

Vos has rolled an Initiative of 11 this Round. When his Turn comes, he must decide what to do. As he has finally found the Grox he has been tracking, he decides to move up to the beast and then hack at it with his chain axe. Moving and attacking are both Half Actions, so Vos can't do anything more this Round. Once his Actions are resolved, the next combatant in Initiative order (in this case, the rather annoyed Grox, with an Initiative of 10) takes its Turn.

Most Actions must be completed during your Turn. You can't start a charge attack in one Round and finish it on the next. Some Actions, however, take longer than a single Round to complete. These are known as Extended Actions and they are noted in the following descriptions.

A character attempting an Extended Action must continue with that Action until it's finished. He can't start to reload a musket, move and then finish reloading, for example. A character may abort the Action part-way through, but this means that all the time spent on it thus far is wasted.

Example

Hybris, a Tech-Priest, needs to reload his heavy stubber, which takes two Full Actions. He starts on his next Turn, taking one Full Action. On his following Turn, he finishes reloading by spending another Full Action. If he had chosen to abandon his reloading efforts after the first Round, the Extended Action would have been aborted and he'd have to start the process all over again later, if he still wanted to reload.

Table 7-5: Combat Actions

Attack Actions

Action	Type	Description
All Out Attack	Full	+20 to WS, cannot Dodge or Parry.
Charge	Full	Must move 4 metres, +10 to WS.
Defensive Stance	Full	Enemies –20 WS, you cannot attack.
Feint	Half	Opposed WS Test, if you win, your next attack cannot be Dodged or Parried.
Full Auto Burst	Full	+20 to BS, additional hit for every degree of success.
Grapple	Full	Make a Grapple attack (see **page 197**).
Guarded Attack	Full	–10 WS, +10 to Parry and Dodge.
Knock-Down	Half	Try and knock an opponent to the ground (see **page 190**).
Multiple Attacks	Full	Use Swift Attack or Lightning Attack talents to make multiple attacks.
Overwatch	Varies	Shoot targets coming into a set kill zone, –20 to BS.
Semi-Auto Burst	Full	+10 to BS, additional hit for every two degrees of success.
Standard Attack	Half	Make one melee or ranged attack.
Stun	Full	Try to Stun an opponent.
Suppressing Fire	Full	Force opponents to take cover, –20 to BS.

Move Actions

Action	Type	Description
Disengage	Full	Break off from melee and move.
Jump/Leap	Full	Leap or Jump (see **page 214**).
Manoeuvre	Half	Opposed WS Test, if you win move enemy 1 metre.
Move	Half/Full	Move up to your movement as a Half Action or twice your movement as a Full Action.
Run	Full	Move triple, enemies –20 BS and +20 WS.
Stand/Mount	Half	Stand up or mount a riding animal.
Tactical Advance	Full	Move from cover to cover.

Miscellaneous Actions

Action	Type	Description
Aim	Half/Full	+10 bonus to hit as a Half Action or +20 to hit as a Full Action on your next attack.
Delay	Half	Before your next Turn take any Half Action.
Dodge	Reaction	Test Dodge to negate a hit.
Focus Power	Varies	Use a Psychic Power.
Parry	Reaction	Test Weapon Skill to negate a hit.
Ready	Half	Ready a weapon or item.
Reload	Varies	Reload a ranged weapon.
Use Skill	Varies	You may use a Skill.

Actions

These Actions provide players with a variety of manoeuvres, giving their characters a range of options in combat. Actions are divided up into Attack Actions, Movement Actions and Miscellaneous Actions.

Attack Actions

Attack Actions are any Action that involves attacking and damaging your opponents.

All Out Attack (Full Action)

You make a furious melee attack, exposing yourself to danger in order to land a forceful blow. You gain a +20 bonus on your Weapon Skill Test, but you may not Parry or Dodge until your next Turn.

Charge (Full Action)

You rush up to an opponent and deliver a single attack. The opponent must be at least 4 metres away from you, but within your Charge Move (see **Table 7-28: Movement (Metres/Round)** on **page 212**). The last 4 metres of the Charge must be in a straight line, so you can build up speed and line up with your opponent. You gain a +10 bonus to your Weapon Skill Test made at the end of the Charge.

Defensive Stance (Full Action)

You strike no blows this Round as you concentrate on self-defence. Until your next Turn, all opponents suffer a –20 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests made to attack you.

Feint (Half Action)

You pretend to attack in one direction, deceiving your opponent and throwing off his defence. This is resolved by an Opposed Weapon Skill Test. If you win, your next attack cannot be Dodged or Parried. If your next Action is anything other than a Standard Attack, you lose this advantage.

Full Auto Burst (Full Action)

You hurl a burst of fully automatic fire at your opponents. You must be using a weapon capable of fully automatic fire to take this Action. (See **Rate of Fire** on **page 127**)

Your vast hail of fire grants a +20 modifier to your Ballistic Skill Test. If the ranged attack is successful, a hit is scored as normal. Furthermore, every two degrees of success scores an extra hit. The number of extra hits you can score in this manner may not exceed the fully automatic rate of fire for your weapon. Your extra hits can be either allocated to the original target or any other target within 2 metres (provided that the new target would not have been harder to hit). See **Table 7-6 Multiple Hits, page 190** to determine the Hit Locations for multiple hits against the same target. Alternatively, as an optional rule, you may roll dice to determine the location of each additional hit, though doing so will slow the game down.

A result of 94 to 00 on your Ballistic Skill Test indicates that your weapon has Jammed (see **Weapon Jams** on **page 196**).

If you have a pistol in either hand you may fire them both (see **Two-Weapon Fighting** on **page 197**).

Table 7-6: Multiple Hits

Location	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	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

Grapple (Full Action)

Whether you are Grappling or being Grappled, you may only take the Grapple Action. If Grappling, you may make an Opposed Strength Test to injure your opponent. If you beat your opponent, you deal normal unarmed Damage (1d5–3 plus SB, with Armour Points counting double) and one level of Fatigue. If your opponent wins, you deal no Damage, but your opponent is still Grappled.

If you are being Grappled, you may make an Opposed Strength Test to break free or take control of the Grapple. If you win the Test, you escape the Grapple or you begin Grappling your opponent and can now deal Damage on your next Action. See **Grappling** on **page 197** for more information on starting a Grapple.

Guarded Attack (Full Action)

You attack carefully, making sure you are well defended from counter-attacks. You make a melee attack with a –10 penalty to your Weapon Skill Test. Until your next Action, though, you gain a +10 bonus on Dodge or Parry Tests.

Knock-Down (Half Action)

You smash into your opponent in the hopes of knocking him from his feet. You and your opponent make Opposed Strength Tests. If you succeed, you Knock-Down your opponent who falls to the ground and must use the Stand Action to get back to their feet. If you succeed by two or more degrees of success your opponent also takes SB–4 Damage and one level of Fatigue. If your opponent wins, he keeps his footing. If your opponent wins by two or more degrees of success and you fail, you are Knocked-Down instead. If you spent a Half Action to move first, you gain a +10 bonus to your Test.

Multiple Attacks (Full Action)

If you have the Swift Attack or Lightning Attack talents, you may spend a Full Action to make multiple attacks as determined by the Talent you have. Or, if you have a weapon in your secondary hand you may also make an extra attack with this weapon (see **Two-Weapon Fighting** on **page 197**).

Overwatch (Varies)

You guard a particular area, poised to hurl an enormous volley of fire at any opponent foolish enough to approach. You must be using a weapon capable of full automatic fire to take this Action (see **Rate of Fire** on **page 127**). Overwatch is an Extended Action, which may operate over multiple Rounds of combat.

Pick an area to watch. The size of this area, known as your kill zone, extends 45 degrees out from the direction you are facing up to half the Range of the weapon. It is often easier

to say that you are covering a specific area such as a corridor, doorway or section of treeline. If there is any doubt, the GM has final say on whether a target is in your kill zone or not.

Establishing your kill zone takes a Full Turn.

Once your kill zone is established, you may spend subsequent Turns waiting for targets to enter your kill zone.

Whilst lying in wait, at any time before your next Turn, you may take the Full Auto Burst Action to fire at any targets within your kill zone (see **Full Auto Burst** on **page 190**). Additionally, when you use your reserved Full Auto Burst, characters within the kill zone must make a Hard (–20) Pinning Test (see **Pinning** on **page 196**). If this Action occurs at the same time as another character's, the character with the higher Agility Bonus acts first. If both characters have the same Agility Bonus, you must make an Opposed Agility Test to see who acts first.

You may continue Overwatch for up to your Willpower Bonus in hours. After this time you must rest and refresh yourself for 1d10×10 minutes. Once you have used your Full Auto Burst Action, Overwatch ends. You may opt to end Overwatch during your Turn, even if you have not used your reserved shot.

If you take any other Action or Reaction whilst reserving your shot in this manner, Overwatch immediately ends, whether you have used your reserved shot or not. Note that this does not include Free Actions, such as speech.

Semi-Auto Burst (Full Action)

You hurl a burst of semi-automatic fire at your opponents. You must be using a weapon capable of semi-automatic fire to take this Action (see **Rate of Fire** on **page 127**).

Your increased volume of fire grants a +10 modifier to your Ballistic Skill Test. If the ranged attack is successful, a hit is scored as normal. Furthermore, every two degrees of success scores an extra hit. The number of extra hits you can score in this manner may not exceed the semi-automatic rate of fire for your weapon. Your extra hits can be either allocated to the original target or to any other target within two metres (provided the new target would not have been harder to hit). See **Table 7-6: Multiple Hits, page 190** to determine the Hit Locations for multiple hits against the same target. Alternatively, as an optional rule, you may roll dice to determine the location of each additional hit, though doing so will slow the game down.

A result of 94–00 on your Ballistic Skill Test indicates that your weapon has Jammed (see **Weapon Jams** on **page 196**).

If you have a pistol in either hand you may fire them both (see **Two-Weapon Fighting** on **page 197**).

Standard Attack (Half Action)

You can make one melee or ranged attack by Testing Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill. Certain weapons require Talents to use them effectively (see **Chapter IV: Talents**). You can still make attacks with these weapons if you lack the proper Talents, but you do so with a –20 penalty to your Weapon Skill for melee weapons or Ballistic Skill for ranged weapons.

Stun (Full Action)

When unarmed or armed with a melee weapon, you can strike to Stun rather than attempt to land a killing blow. Whilst any character may attempt this Action, only characters with the Takedown talent stand a good chance of succeeding. Striking to Stun is resolved in a similar way to making a Standard Attack. Test Weapon Skill. If you don't have Takedown, take a –20 penalty to the Test. On a success, roll 1d10 and add your Strength Bonus. Your opponent rolls 1d10 and adds his Toughness Bonus +1 per Armour Point protecting his head. If your roll is equal to or higher, your opponent is Stunned for a number of Rounds equal to the difference between the rolls and gains one level of Fatigue.

Suppressing Fire (Full Action)

You unleash a devastating hail of firepower to force your opponents into cover. You must be using a weapon capable of fully automatic fire to take this Action (see **Rate of Fire** on **page 127**).

Pick an area to suppress. The size of this area, known as your kill zone, extends 45 degrees out from the direction you are facing up to half the range of the weapon. It is often easier to say you are covering a specific area such as a corridor, doorway or section of treeline. If there is any doubt, the GM has final say on whether a target is in your kill zone or not. Targets within this area must make a Hard (–20) Pinning Test (see **Pinning** on **page 196**).

Additionally, you must make a Hard (–20) Ballistic Skill Test to see if your wild spray of fire has hit anyone, friend or foe, within the kill zone. If the ranged attack is successful, 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 Suppressing Fire Action does not affect the defensive benefits of armour or cover. The number of hits scored may not exceed the fully automatic rate of fire for your weapon. See **Table 7-6: Multiple Hits, page 190** to determine the Hit Locations for multiple hits against the same target. Alternatively, as an optional rule, you may roll dice to determine the location of each additional hit, though doing so will slow the game down.

A result of 94 to 00 on your Ballistics Skill Test indicates that your weapon has Jammed (see **Weapon Jams** on **page 196**).

Combat Abstractions

Combat in Dark Heresy is fast and furious, designed so your games don't become bogged down with minutia. As such, the rules take certain licences with reality and assumptions must be made about what is really going on during a combat. Generally speaking, when two characters are engaged, they are exchanging attacks, Parries, Dodges, Feints and a number of other manoeuvres, all of which are rolled into the Standard Attack. Therefore, a Test against Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill assumes that the defender is attempting to defend himself to some degree—hence a typical Attack Test is Challenging (+0). A failed Test means that the defender was too difficult to hit effectively, whilst a successful Test means that the attacker was able to strike a telling blow. Where Dodge and Parry come into play, they represent your last line of defence against an attacker, giving you one more chance to avoid a bullet or the swing of a chainsword.

Move Actions

Move Actions let you manoeuvre on the battlefield.

Disengage (Full Action)
You break off from melee combat and may move up to your Half Move rate. Opponents whom you were engaged with do not gain the customary free attacks. See **Fleeing sidebar** for more details.

Fleeing
Sometimes it is just best to get away from your opponent by any means you can. In combat, you may voluntarily flee from an opponent or be forced to flee because of Fear, a Psychic Power or some other effect. When fleeing under your own control, you can take any of the following actions: Disengage, Move or Run. When fleeing against your will, you must take the Run action. Under most circumstances (except for Disengaging), you're turning your back on your opponent and leaving yourself open for an attack. If you are trying to move away from one or more melee opponents without using the Disengage Action, each opponent gets a free attack against you as you move away. This is an extra attack and is made in addition to any other attacks they make during their Turn.

Jump/Leap (Full Action)
You can Jump up or down, or Leap across something. For **Jumping and Leaping**, see **page 214**.

Manoeuvre (Half Action)
By using superior footwork and aggression, you can force your opponent to move one metre in a direction of your choosing by making an Opposed Weapon Skill Test. If desired, you can advance one metre as well. The opponent cannot be forced into another character or some other obstacle (wall, barrel, and so on).

Move (Half or Full Action)
You can make a short move. If you spend a Half Action to move, you may move up to that described on **Table 7-28: Movement in Metres/Round** on **page 212**. If you use a Full Action, you may move twice this value. Whenever you end your movement adjacent to an adversary, you are said to be engaged with that opponent.

Run (Full Action)
You run at full speed (see **Table 7-28: Movement in Metres/Round** on **page 212** for distances). This makes you harder to hit with missile weapons, but easy prey for melee attacks because you are not actively defending. Until your next Turn, ranged attacks made against you take a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests, but melee attacks gain a +20 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests.

Stand/Mount (Half Action)
You can get up if currently on the ground, or mount a riding beast or a vehicle.

Tactical Advance (Full Action)
You can move up to your Full Move rate provided that you move from a position of cover and end your movement in a position of cover. For the duration of your move, you are considered to benefit from cover, even though you are moving in the open for a brief time.

Miscellaneous Actions

Miscellaneous Actions encompass everything else you might wish to do in combat.

Aim (Half or Full Action)
You may take extra time to set up a melee or ranged attack to increase the chance to hit. If you spend a Half Action to aim, your next attack is made at a +10 to your Weapon Skill (for melee attacks) or Ballistic Skill (for ranged attacks). If you spend a Full Action Aiming, the bonus increases to +20. The attack must follow immediately otherwise the benefits of Aiming are lost.

Delay (Half Action)
You watch and wait for an opportunity. When you use the delay Action, your Turn ends immediately, but you reserve a Half Action for later use. Any time before your next Turn, you can take your reserved Half Action. If you try to do something at the same time as another character that used a delay Action, you must make an Opposed Agility Test to see who acts first. If the prepared Action is not taken before your next Turn, it is lost.

Dodge

Dodge is a Basic Skill, so anyone may attempt it even without training. Once a hit is scored, but before Damage is rolled, you can try to Dodge if you were aware of the attack. This is simply a Dodge Test. If the Dodge Test succeeds, you get out of the way at the last minute and the attack is considered to have missed (and thus there is no Damage roll). If you fail the Test, the attack connects and your opponent may roll for Damage as usual. You may Dodge both melee and ranged attacks.

Example

It seems that the barman has taken exception to Drake's treatment of his paying customers and on his Initiative, starts combat by charging the Guardsman with a shock maul. The barman makes a Weapon Skill Test and hits. Drake can Test Dodge to get out of the way. He rolls the dice and compares the result to his Agility. He succeeds and manages to duck beneath the arc of the shock maul.

Dodging Auto-Fire and Area Effect Attacks

Some attacks are more difficult to Dodge either because they cover a large area, like a grenade or flamer, or because they throw out large amounts of rounds, like a weapon fired on Full or Semi-Automatic Bursts.

When Dodging an area effect weapon, a successful Dodge Test will move the character to the edge of the area of effect, as long as it is no further away than their Agility Bonus in metres. If they would need to move further than this to avoid the attack then the Dodge Test automatically fails.

When Dodging Full or Semi-Automatic fire, each degree of success negates an additional hit.

Example

Father Horst is surprised by a mutant trooper with an autogun sneaking into the far end of his chapel-trench. The mutant has the drop on Father Horst, and so gets a Full Turn to act before Father Horst can do anything.

The debased-looking trooper uses his Turn to spray a Full Auto Burst (a Full Action) at Father Horst. The mutant gains +20 to his Ballistic Skill of 30 because of the sheer number of slugs his autogun is hurling. The mutant scores a 19 on his Test—a hit! As he has three degrees of success (50–19=31) the trooper has managed to score one additional hit.

Being a sensible soul, Father Horst decides use his Reaction to try and Dodge the Full Auto Burst. Father Horst Tests against his Agility of 40, and scores a 17. As this grants two degrees of success (40–17=23) Father Horst can escape two of the mutant's hits. Somehow, Father Horst has avoided all Damage—a miracle!

Focus Power (Varies)

This Action is used to manifest your Psychic Powers in combat. How long the Focus Power Action takes is dependant on the power being manifested. When you take this Action you roll a number of dice and add a bonus dependant on your Psy Rating. Then compare the total to the Psychic Threshold (PT). If this number equals or exceeds the PT, the power takes effect. Otherwise, it has failed and you may try again next Turn. For more information on Psychic Powers, see **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**.

Parry

You can attempt to Parry a successful attack if you are wielding a drawn melee weapon (see **Chapter V: Armoury**) and are aware of the attack. To Parry, Test Weapon Skill. If you succeed, you beat back the attack and it is considered to have missed (thus, there's no Damage roll). If you fail the Test, the attack connects and your opponent may roll for Damage as usual. Parrying requires no special Skill or Talent to attempt.

You may only use Parry to negate melee attacks.

Ready (Half Action)

You can draw a weapon or retrieve an object stowed in a pouch or pocket. You can also put an item away that you are currently holding. So, you could holster a pistol and unsheathe a knife as one Half Action. You can also use this Action to do such things as apply a medi-patch, inject stimm or some other kind of drug, or coat a weapon with the contents of a vial of poison, for example. You may use the Ready Action twice in one Turn if you are preparing two different items.

Reload (Varies)

You can reload a missile weapon. See **Chapter V: Armoury** for the time it takes to reload different missile weapons. Reload can be an Extended Action.

Use a Skill (Varies)

You may use a Skill. This usually involves making a Skill Test. This can be an Extended Action, depending on the Skill and the circumstances.

Example

Vos is still battling the ill-tempered Grox. He has scored an Initiative of 7 while the Grox has an Initiative of 4, meaning Vos goes first. In his turn he spends a Half Action to Aim with his chain axe and then his remaining Half Action to attack. Unfortunately, Vos misses, despite the bonus for Aiming.

It is now the Grox's Turn. Angered by the large hairy creature trying to kill it, the Grox uses a Full Action to make an All-Out Attack, though fortunately for Vos it also misses. As a Free Action the Grox lets out a whining bray calling for help from the herd. Since there are no more combatants, the Round ends.

As the new Round begins, a Bull-Grox appears from the forest in answer to its fellow's cry for aid. The GM rolls Initiative for the new combatant and determines that the Bull-Grox can act before Vos. The Bull-Grox Charges (a Full Action) and hits the feral warrior inflicting a nasty wound. Now it is Vos' Turn again. Wisely, he decides that two Grox is a Grox too many and beats a hasty retreat using a Disengage Action.

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 Tactical Map

The Dark Heresy rules are written so you can use a tactical map and 28mm miniatures whilst playing out combat. This approach adds a visual element to the game and allows you to instantly understand the relative positions of all the combatants. You can find maps that are blank and can be written on with wet-erase pens. These allow you to sketch out the terrain and other important features on the map before combat begins. Wet-erase maps also make it easy to track the duration of Psychic Powers, reload times, and the like since you can scribble notes on the map. A tactical map is overlaid with a grid of one-inch squares to make measuring distances easier. In Dark Heresy, these squares represent a distance of one metre.

To make fullest use of the tactical map, you'll need miniatures. You'll want one for each PC, and the GM should try to collect a fair number of the most common foes (gangers, cultists, mutants and so on). If you don't have any miniatures, there are all sorts of things you can substitute, like counters, coins, or stones. Humans, mutants and other similarly sized creatures occupy a single square on the map. Larger creatures can take up 2, 4, or even more squares.

If you don't like tactical maps, but still want to use miniatures, the rules can easily accommodate this. Simply use a tape measure and each inch of distance equals one metre. This makes movement more flexible and has the advantage of allowing the easy use of three-dimensional terrain.

Some gamers don't like to use miniatures at all, preferring to imagine all the action. This is okay too. This method requires the GM to keep a snapshot of the action and the relative positions of all the combatants in his head, but it also allows for greater narrative freedom in describing encounters.

The Attack

The most common Action in combat is the attack—you are fighting, after all. Whether armed with a melee or ranged weapon, the process is the same. Follow these steps to resolve attacks in combat.

Step One: Test

To make a melee attack with a hand-held weapon, you must be engaged with your target. Test Weapon Skill. When making a ranged attack, you Test Ballistic Skill. Both of these are like any other Tests. If you roll equal to or below your Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill, you hit your opponent.

Step Two: Determine Hit Location

On a successful hit, you next need to determine where the hit landed. Using the Test result, reverse the order of the dice, (e.g. a roll of 32 becomes 23, 19 becomes 91, and so on) and compare this number to **Table 7-7: Hit Locations**. Note that certain creatures with different body shapes, or mounted opponents, may use different hit location tables.

Table 7-7: 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

Example

Pieter (BS35) shoots at the oncoming ganger, rolling 13—a hit! Reversing the number rolled gives 31, the ganger has been shot in the body.

Step Three: Determine Damage

Once you've determined the Hit Location, it is time to work out any Damage you have dealt. Each weapon has a Damage listing. This is usually a die roll, plus or minus a number. Roll the appropriate die, and add the Damage Bonus of the weapon. Finally, if you are using a melee weapon, add your Strength Bonus.

This is the Damage total. If you roll a "10" on any of your Damage dice, you have a chance of Righteous Fury! (see **sidebar**).

Step Four: Apply Damage

From the Damage total, your opponent subtracts his Toughness Bonus and any Armour Points that protect the location that is hit. If this reduces the Damage total to 0 or less, your opponent has shrugged off the attack. Any remaining Damage is recorded on his character sheet as Damage. Should this injury equal or exceed his Wounds, he notes any excess as Critical Damage and

the GM consults the appropriate table based on the weapon used and the amount of Critical Damage accumulated. See **Critical Damage** on **page 201** for more information.

Example

Drake has a Ballistic Skill of 42 and uses his triplex-pattern lasgun to shoot a gambler foolish enough to accuse him of cheating. He rolls a 27. Since this is less than his Ballistic Skill, he has scored a hit. Next, he reverses the dice rolled to see where he hits, which is a 72—the Right Leg. Now he rolls Damage. He is using a lasgun, which does 1d10+3 Damage. He rolls 1d10 and gets an 8, for a total of 11 (8+3=11). The gambler has a Toughness Bonus of 3 and is wearing a concealed quilted vest. Since the armour does not cover the legs, the gambler can only use his Toughness Bonus to reduce the Damage. The gambler takes 8 Wounds (11–3=8), hopefully discouraging him from making any rash accusations in future.

Righteous Fury!

Normally, when you hit with an attack, the resulting Damage includes rolling one or more d10s. When you roll a 10 on any die (this includes a result of 10 when using a d5—even though the number is halved), it may indicate that the eye of the Emperor is upon you. This calls for a second attack roll, Testing Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill as if you were making another attack. If this second Test is successful, the spirit of the Emperor is within you, aiding your attack and guiding your aim. You can roll an additional 1d10 and add the result to the Damage total.

Should the result of this die also be a 10, the Emperor has indeed smiled upon you. You may immediately roll a third 1d10 and add that to the Damage total as well. This process continues until you roll a number other than 10.

Not content to let things lie, the gambler has charged Drake with a knife. The Veteran Guardsman responds by smashing him across the face with the butt of his lasgun. Drake rolls for Damage, and scores a 10! He has a chance of dealing extra Damage. He makes a second attack roll and succeeds again. He rolls another d10 and once again gets a 10. Rather than make another Weapon Skill Test, Drake just rolls another d10. This time it comes up 8. The Damage total for this attack is 4 (Drake's SB) + 10 +10 + 8, for a total of 32 Damage. It doesn't look like the gambler will be getting up anytime soon.

Normally NPCs do not benefit from the Righteous Fury rule, however, at the GM's discretion particularly important or powerful NPCs might take advantage of this rule.

Dealing Damage

Any attack, Psychic Power or hazard that deals Damage generally indicates the amount of Damage with a die type, and Damage modifier. For example, a lasgun's Damage is 1d10+3. This means that in order to discover the injury caused by the weapon, you roll one d10 and add 3 to the result. This gives your Damage total. In some cases, the modifier will subtract from the Damage you have rolled.

When dealing Damage with a melee attack, your Strength Bonus also comes into play.

To calculate Damage done with a hand-to-hand weapon, such as a chainsword, hammer or spear, you calculate the Damage as normal and then add your Strength Bonus.

Example

Father Horst is fighting in a mud-filled trench on a Throne-forsaken battlefield. A crazed Chaos worshipper moves in to attack Horst, and misses. Hefting his blessed hammer, Horst swings at the degenerate scum. Success! His attack hits. The Damage of Horst's hammer is 1d10+1. Horst rolls a 6 on his Damage die, and then adds the Damage modifier of 1. Finally, Horst adds his Strength Bonus of 2 (his Strength is 29). In total, Horst has dealt 9 points of Damage (6+1+2=9).

Whether your Damage total can be reduced depends on the nature of the attack, but Damage is typically reduced by the target's Toughness Bonus and Armour Points that protect the location struck.

Ranged Attacks

Ranged attacks—lasguns, scatterguns, thrown weapons, etc.—are resolved in the same way as melee attacks, except that you Test Ballistic Skill instead of Weapon Skill. In addition, there are a few extra considerations that apply to these attacks.

- Ranged attacks cannot be Parried, unless you have a special Talent.
- You do not add your Strength Bonus to the Damage of ranged attacks.
- You cannot make ranged attacks whilst engaged in melee, unless you are armed with a ranged weapon that is classed as a pistol.
- You must be able to see the target. You may still attack targets that are partly visible, such as those standing behind a tree or behind other targets, but they will often be in cover. If you are aware of an opponent that is completely concealed from you by a barrier, you can attempt the shot, but at a –30 penalty and the shot must deal enough Damage to breach the barrier. When shooting at unseen targets you also gain no bonuses for range.

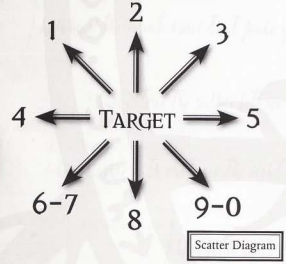
Shooting into Melee

There will be times when a target is already engaged with another enemy. Ballistic Skill Tests against these opponents are harder than normal. You can still make a ranged attack at an opponent engaged in melee, but you take a –20 penalty to the Test.

Optional Rule: GMs keen on reinforcing the merciless nature of the 41st Millennium may rule that if you would have hit the target were it not for the penalty, you instead hit the target's opponent. The GM might also rule that anyone shooting into melee with a semi-automatic or full automatic weapon must allocate at least one of their hits against the target's opponent.

Missing

Sometimes, when flinging a thrown weapon, it's important to know where the weapon lands should you fail on your 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.



Scatter Diagram

Pinning

Being shot at is a terrifying experience at the best of times and even the most inexperienced Acolytes 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. While he may want to charge headlong into a storm of bullets, he first needs to steel his nerves. When a character is on the receiving end of suppressive fire, even if the shot struck a Hit Location that is behind cover or the character suffers no Damage, he must make a Hard (–20) Pinning Test. This is a 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 must take a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests if he fires, snapping off shots while being mindful of their own safety. If a Pinned character is in cover relative to the attacker that Pinned them, he may not leave it except to retreat (provided that 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 Test Willpower at the end of his Turn to escape Pinning, in which case he may act as normal in his next Turn. This Test is Easy (+30) if the character is not longer under fire (i.e. no one tried to shoot him since his last Turn). A character engaged in close combat automatically escapes Pinning. There are some special Talents, Skills and Psychic Powers that can also free a character from the effects of Pinning—as well as such things as combat drugs and terrifying commissars.

Example

Vos is being pursued by the Grox. Fortunately for him he has found the burnt-out remains of an Arbites APC to shelter in, complete with intact pintle-mounted heavy stubber. Aiming the powerful machine gun in the direction of the Grox, Vos decides that rather than firing a full auto burst, he will lay down Suppressive Fire. He chooses a narrow gully nearby as his kill zone, as this is where the Grox are emerging from.

Each of the three Grox in the kill zone must make a Hard (–20) Pinning Test to ignore the terrifying effects of Vos' Suppressing Fire. Each fails, meaning that the Grox will be forced to use their Turn to fall back into cover. Vos makes a Hard (–20) Ballistic Skill Test to see if his volley has struck any of the Grox. He scores a 55, which means that none of his bullets hit.

On the Grox's turn, each flees into the cover of the gully. Each then Tests Willpower to see if they feel brave enough to risk the hail of bullets once more. Two succeed and one fails.

Seeing that the heavy stubber's ammo belt is empty, Vos uses his turn to run away as fast as possible.

The two Grox who managed to escape Pinning are free to use their turn to chase Vos. The Grox which failed to escape Pinning, meanwhile, is forced to remain in cover, emptying its bowels and snorting nervously to itself. As it is no longer under fire from the heavy stubber, at the end of its turn the cowardly Grox makes an Easy (+30) Willpower Test to escape Pinning. The Grox succeeds, meaning that on its subsequent Turn, it may break from cover and rejoin the chase.

Weapon Jams

Such is the capricious whim of the 41st Millennium that many of the ranged weapons that an Acolyte uses will have an unfortunate tendency to malfunction, either through extreme age, maltreatment of their machine spirit, or just plain poor design. To represent these unfortunate occurrences, 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.

Two-Weapon Fighting

Many warriors fight with a weapon in either hand (this includes shields). 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. The following apply when you are fighting with two weapons:

- You may use any close combat weapons or ranged weapons that you may reasonably use in one hand when fighting with two weapons.
- You may use either hand to make an attack. Attacks made using your secondary hand take a –20 penalty.
- If you have the Two-Weapon Wielder talent, you may spend a Full Action to attack with both weapons, but each takes a –20 penalty to the Test. If you have the Ambidextrous talent, this penalty drops to –10.
- If you're wielding a melee weapon as one of your two weapons you may make a Parry once each Round as a Reaction as normal with this weapon, though you still may not Parry more than once in a Round. This Weapon Skill Test is not an attack, and therefore it does suffer the standard penalty for attacks made using your secondary hand.
- If armed with a melee weapon in one hand and a pistol in the other, you may, with the Two-Weapon Wielder talent use both in close combat. Resolve each attack separately by Testing Weapon Skill for the melee weapon *and Ballistic Skill for the pistol. Using* both attacks simultaneously is a Full Action and is subject to the usual penalties.
- When firing a ranged weapon with each hand, you 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, you may only lay down one area of suppressive fire.
- You may fire your weapons at different targets, though they must be within 10 metres of each other.

Unarmed Combat

Not every fight in Dark Heresy 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). A successful Weapon Skill Test made with an unarmed attack deals 1d5–3 Impact Damage, plus the character's Strength Bonus. Armour Points count as double against the attack. In addition, a successful hit also causes one level of Fatigue.

During unarmed combat, if you roll a 10 on a die for Damage the rules for Righteous Fury apply (see **page 195**) with 10s counting as 5s in terms of Damage caused.

Grappling

Instead of inflicting Damage with an unarmed attack, you can attempt to Grapple and immobilise your opponent. You can attempt a Grapple with either a Charge or a Standard Attack. Resolve a Grapple by following these steps.

Step One: Make the Attack
Make an unarmed attack by Testing Weapon Skill as normal.

Step Two: Avoid the Attack
If you succeed, your opponent may use their Reaction to make an Agility Test. If this Test fails, or they have already used their Reaction this Round, the opponent is Grappled. If he succeeds, the Grapple attempt fails.

Step Three: Grapple!
While two or more characters are Grappling, the following effects apply.

- Participants in a Grapple may not Dodge or Parry.
- Other attackers gain a +20 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests made to hit a Grappling target.
- Grappled characters may only take the Grapple Action (see **Grapple Action** on **page 190**).
- As a Free Action, you can voluntarily end the Grapple that you initiated on your Turn.

Combining Difficulties

There will be instances where multiple factors make taking a particular action more difficult than normal. For example, while in a shadowy hanger bay, trying to shoot at an opponent at long range is harder that shooting at the same opponent if the hanger was brightly lit. To combine multiple factors, use the following guidelines:

- If the situation would apply two or more penalties, simply add the modifiers together to a maximum of –30 or Very Hard. For example, fog and Aiming for a specific body part both make Ballistic Skill Tests Hard (–20). When combined, the test would be Very Hard (–30).
- If the situation would apply a penalty and a bonus, add them together to find the new Difficulty. Attacking an opponent while standing in deep snow normally requires a Very Hard (–30) Test. But attacking an opponent who is Stunned requires a Routine (+20) Test. In a situation where both apply, the Test would be Difficult (–10) since –30 plus +20 equals –10.
- If the situation would apply two or more bonuses, add the modifiers together to a maximum of +30 or Easy. Two characters that attack the same Stunned opponent would ordinarily gain a +10 bonus for ganging up and a +20 bonus for attacking a Stunned target. Thus the need to make Easy (+30) Weapon Skill Tests to hit their opponent.

When adjudicating Difficulty, common sense should prevail. No matter what limit there is on Test penalties, some shots are simply impossible.

Combat Circumstances

The chances of hitting in combat can be modified in a similar manner to Skill Tests. These combat circumstances can be used to reflect the effects of terrain, the weather, tactical situations and a variety of other factors. Characters 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 an Acolyte. 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.

Called Shots

Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit a specific location are Hard (–20). Note you cannot make Called Shots when firing a weapon on semi-automatic or full automatic fire.

Darkness

Weapon Skill Tests made in darkness are regarded as Hard (–20), while Ballistic Skill Tests are regarded as Very Hard (–30).

Difficult Terrain

Weapon Skill and Dodge 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 upon ice are Very Hard (–30).

Extreme Range

Targets that are at a distance of three times the range of a character's weapon, are at Extreme range. Rolls to hit these targets with a ranged weapon are Very Hard (–30).

Fatigued

When a character is Fatigued all their Tests, including any Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests, suffer a –10 penalty.

Firing a Weapon on Semi-Automatic

Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit targets when firing a weapon on Semi-Automatic are Ordinary (+10).

Firing a Weapon on Full Automatic

Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit targets when firing a weapon on Full Automatic are Routine (+20).

Fog, Mist or Shadow

Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack targets concealed by fog, mist or shadow are Hard (–20).

Ganging Up

You have an advantage when you and your allies engage the same foe in melee combat. If you outnumber your opponent

Table 7-8: Combat Difficulty Summary

Difficulty	Skill Modifier	Example
Easy	+30	Attacking a Surprised opponent.
		Shooting a Massive target.
		Shooting a target at Point Blank range.
Routine	+20	Close combat with foe who is outnumbered three to one or more.
		Attacking a Stunned opponent.
		Shooting a target with Full Automatic fire.
		Shooting an Enormous target.
Ordinary	+10	Close combat with a foe who is outnumbered two to one.
		Attacking a Prone opponent.
		Attacking from higher ground.
		Shooting a target with Semi-Automatic fire.
		Shooting a Hulking target.
		Shooting a target at Short range.
Challenging	+0	A Standard Attack.
Difficult	–10	Attacking whilst you are Knocked Down.
		Fatigued.
		Attacking or Dodging whilst in the mud or heavy rain.
		Shooting a target at Long range.
		Shooting a Scrawny target.
Hard	–20	A Called Shot to a specific location.
		Shooting into melee combat.
		Dodging whilst Prone.
		Making an unarmed attack against an armed opponent.
		Secondary hand attack.
		Attacking with a weapon in either hand.
		Close combat attack 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.
		Shooting a Minuscule target.
		Shooting a target at Extreme range.
		Shooting at a completely concealed target.
		Shooting at a target in darkness.

two to one, your Weapon Skill Tests are Ordinary (+10). If you outnumber your opponent by three to one or more, your 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 two dice and add the results. If either die rolled comes up as a 10, you have a chance at Righteous Fury. If both dice come up as 10, you automatically gain Righteous Fury, and roll Damage again.

Higher Ground
Characters standing on higher ground—such as standing on a table, fighting from the top of a mound of dead comrades, on top of a hill, and so on—have a combat 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. Rolls to hit these targets with a ranged weapon are Difficult (–10).

Point Blank
Rolls to hit a target within three metres with a ranged weapon are Easy (+30). Note that this bonus does not apply when shooting targets that are in close combat with the character.

Prone
Targets that have been Knocked Down are easier to hit and they find it harder to hit other foes. Weapon Skill Tests made to attack Prone targets are Ordinary (+10). Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made by Prone targets are Difficult (–10). Dodge Tests made whilst Prone are Hard (–20).

Off Hand Attacks
Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack foes whilst you're using a weapon in your off hand are considered Hard (–20).

Short Range
Targets that are at a distance of less than half the Range of a character's weapon are at Short range. Rolls to hit these targets with a ranged weapon are Ordinary (+10).

Shooting into Melee Combat
Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit a target in melee combat with an opponent are Hard (–20).

Size
Size is an important factor when shooting at a target: it is far easier to hit a Land Raider than a grav-bike for instance. Use **Table 7-9: Size Modifiers** for working out bonuses and penalties based on size.

Stunned Targets
Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack Stunned targets are Routine (+20).

Table 7-9: Size Modifiers

Size	Modifier
Minuscule (Door handle, knife)	–30
Puny (Rat, servo-skull)	–20
Scrawny (Child, ash slug)	–10
Average (Human, mutant)	0
Hulking (Grox, combat servitor)	+10
Enormous (Silt spider, Land speeder)	+20
Massive (Battle tank, scar wyrm)	+30

Unaware Targets
Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack unaware targets (i.e. Surprised targets), are Easy (+30).

Unarmed
When making an unarmed attack against an armed opponent, your Weapon Skill Test is Hard (–20).

Weather and Unnatural Conditions
Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack whilst enduring harsh weather or unnatural conditions, such as standing in heavy rain, an ash storm or knee-deep in waves of fungus are considered Hard (-20).

Cover
Cover is a vital part of surviving a firefight and a good Acolyte 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 player to decide which parts of his body he is exposing when behind cover. Unless the Acolyte is attempting a rather crude form of psychological warfare, as a rule of thumb, 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 7-10: Cover Types** 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 Damage in excess of the Armour Points it provides will reduce the cover's Armour Points by 1. For example, a bolter shot that penetrates a light wooden door would reduce the door's AP to 3.

Table 7-10: Cover Types

Cover Type	AP
Light Wood, Armour-glas, Light Metal	4
Heavy Wood, Flakboard, Sandbags, Ice	8
Rockcrete, Thick Iron, Stone	16
Plasteel, Armaplas	32

Injury

"Better crippled in body than corrupt in mind."
— Lexiconum Moralis.

As a consequence of fighting, characters take Damage. A combatant can take Damage up to an amount equal to his Wounds. When the Damage equals the character's Wounds, he is a bloodied mess barely clinging to consciousness. Further blows become Critical Damage, resulting in such things as permanent disability, the loss of limbs and of course, death.

Fatigue

Not all Damage is lethal in Dark Heresy. 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 Damage a character can take over the course of game play. Characters gain Fatigue from certain types of attacks, Grappling, forced marching and other Actions which push them beyond safe limits. A character can take a number of levels of Fatigue equal to his Toughness Bonus, so a character with a four Toughness Bonus can take four levels of Fatigue. Should a character take a number of levels of Fatigue in excess of his Toughness Bonus, he collapses, unconscious for 10–TB minutes.

Characters suffering from Fatigue are at a –10 penalty to all Tests.

Example

Drake has been on a forced march for several hours, causing him to take two levels of Fatigue. Finally, he arrives at the settlement of Stern Hope, and makes his way to the local dive for a cold flagon of spitbrew. Whilst quaffing the (slightly chunky) ale, he manages to get on the wrong side of Slippery Zim, a local gangster. Zim takes a swing at him with a bottle. Drake is forced to Dodge out of the way. He makes a Dodge Skill Test, and rolls 30. As Drake's Agility is 34, this would normally be a success. However, as Drake is Fatigued he would need to roll 24 or less to successfully Dodge (34–10 = 24). Too tired to leap out of the way properly, Drake gets the bottle smashed into his skull.

Removing Fatigue

If left alone, Fatigue goes away in time. Each hour of rest which includes no combat, no Psychic Powers and nothing strenuous, removes one level of Fatigue. Eight consecutive hours of rest remove all levels of Fatigue.

Becoming Stunned

In addition to Wound loss and other sorts of Damage, characters may also become Stunned. A character can become Stunned due to the effects of some Psychic Powers, Critical Hits, or the Takedown talent. Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests to hit Stunned characters are considered Routine (+20). In addition, Stunned characters cannot take Actions of any kind, even free ones like Dodge.

Characteristic Damage

Some Psychic Powers, poisons, diseases and other hazards circumvent your Wounds and deal Damage directly to your Characteristic. Characteristic loss cannot reduce a Characteristic below 0. Unless otherwise specified, Characteristic Damage is never permanent and you recover lost points at a rate of one each hour. Remember, penalties to Characteristics as well as Characteristic Damage may also affect the Characteristic's bonus. Should the Damage or penalty reduce the tens digit of a Characteristic, the associated bonus also drops by 1.

Consult the following entries for information on what happens if a Characteristic is reduced to 0. Remember when a Characteristic like Strength, Toughness or Agility is reduced, it will also reduce your corresponding Strength Bonus, Toughness Bonus or Agility Bonus.

Weapon Skill: You may not take Tests based on this Characteristic.
Ballistic Skill: You may not take Tests based on this Characteristic.
Strength: You collapse into unconsciousness.
Toughness: You die.
Agility: You are paralysed and helpless. Take no Actions.
Intelligence: You slip into a dreamless coma, possibly drooling on yourself in an embarrassing way.
Perception: You are bereft of your senses. Take a –30 penalty to all tests (except Toughness) until you recover.
Willpower: You collapse into a nightmare filled sleep. When you awaken, gain 1 Insanity Point (see **Fear, Terror and Insanity** in **Chapter VIII: The Games Master**).
Fellowship: You withdraw into a catatonic state. You may not speak or take Tests based on this Characteristic.

Damage Types

All Damage is divided up into four types: Energy (lasers, fire, plasma), Explosive (grenades, bolt rounds, missiles), Impact (clubs, bullets, falling) and Rending (swords, chain weapons, claws). What kind of Damage a weapon or effect deals will be noted in its description. Damage types only apply to Critical Hits and serve to determine which Critical Effects table you use when inflicting Critical Hits.

If it is not specified what type of Damage an attack deals, count it as Impact. If it does not specify what location an attack hits, count it as the Body.

CRITICAL DAMAGE

Any Damage taken in excess of a character's Wounds counts as Critical Damage. When this occurs, immediately consult the table that corresponds with the location (arm, body, etc) and the type of attack (Energy, Explosive, Impact or Rending). The Critical Damage total determines the severity of the injury to the location. Should the character survive, the Critical Damage still remains. If the same character takes Damage again, the Critical Damage is added to the existing Damage and the cumulative Damage total is used to determine the new Critical Effect.

Example

Mordechai takes a nasty hit from a ganger's axe, taking 10 points of Damage. Mordechai has only 10 Wounds, so he's probably in trouble. On the next Round, the filthy ganger hits him again, dealing another 3 points of Damage (after reducing the Damage total by Mordechai's TB and Armour Points) to the head. These three points exceed Mordechai's Wounds, so they count as Critical Damage. The GM looks at the Critical Rending–Head table, looks at the third row and announces the result. Mordechai loses one eye, is Stunned, and takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue. The GM rolls for Fatigue, getting a 3. Luckily, Mordechai's Toughness Bonus is 5, so he can take two more levels of Fatigue before falling unconscious.

On Mordechai's next Turn, he attacks feebly, noting that he's at a –10 penalty for his Fatigue, and misses. The ganger, sensing the end is near, lashes out with his axe and hits Mordechai again, this time dealing 5 points of Damage (after TB and AP) to the body. Mordechai adds 5 Critical Damage to the 3 he's already accumulated for a total of 8. Looking at the Critical table, this time for the body, the GM reads the "8" result, "With a vile tearing noise, the skin on your chest comes away revealing a red ruin of muscle. You must make a Toughness Test or die. If you pass, you permanently lose 1d10 from your Toughness, take 1d10 levels of Fatigue, and now suffer Blood Loss." This could well be the end for poor Mordechai.

Sudden Death Critical Hits

Sometimes players just want to know if an opponent is dead or not and don't much care about the details. Where convenient (or if a situation demands it), the GM can speed along combat without adjudicating detailed Critical Hits. In some cases, grievous wounds have already been inflicted, so it's just a matter of finishing an enemy off. In these instances, use the Sudden Death method. Any Critical Damage results in the target's death, i.e. they will die when they take any Damage in excess of their Wounds. This rule is especially useful when dealing with minor foes, such as nameless gangers and cultists, though it should not be used for PCs or NPCs, who probably deserve better.

Permanent Effects

Some Critical Effects are permanent. Should a character suffer more than one of these effects, it's probably time to start looking for some bionic replacements (see **Chapter V: Armoury, page 153**) or retire the poor fellow and roll up a new one. Whenever a character suffers a permanent effect, they apply the following changes to their character.

Lost Hand

You take a –20 penalty on all Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on the use of two hands and you cannot wield two-handed weapons. A shield can be strapped to the injured arm, however. Should this be your primary hand, you take the customary -20 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests made to attack with weapons using your secondary hand. For every 100 xp you spend, you can reduce this penalty by 10.

If you lose both hands, you can either secure at least one replacement or get someone to sharpen your teeth.

Lost Arm

As for a lost hand, but you cannot strap a shield to the arm since you don't have one. Losing both arms is just as bad, plus it's a bit difficult to reach those hard-to-clean spots. Once again, either look into replacement limbs or consider rolling up a new character.

Lost Eye or Blinded

Losing one eye permanently reduces your Ballistic Skill by -10. In addition, you take a –20 penalty to all Skill and Characteristics Tests that rely on sight. Should you have the misfortune to lose both eyes, you gain the Blind trait (see **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists, page 329**). You can of course continue to serve the Inquisition as you don't need your eyes to see the truth.

Lost Foot

Reduce all your movement by half permanently (round up) and take a –20 penalty to Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on mobility, such as the Dodge skill. Losing both feet makes it hard to walk. Perhaps one of your fellow Acolytes will carry you…

Lost Leg

Treat this as a lost foot, but you cannot use the Dodge skill. Losing both legs makes you half the servant of the Emperor you were—a fact not lost on your enemies.

Deafened

You cannot hear at all, or at least not well enough to communicate with others. Until you recover or have this disability repaired, you will automatically fail any Skill or Characteristic Test that relies on sound. Apart from also having trouble communicating with your fellow Acolytes, the GM is free to decide whenever being deaf will have an effect in the game.

Table 7-11: Energy Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	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 Stunned for 1 Round and inflicting 1 level of Fatigue.
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, and causing him to scream like a stuck Grox. In addition to losing his hair, he is blinded for 1d10 Rounds and takes 3 levels of Fatigue.
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 permanently reduces his Fellowship characteristic by 1d10 points. The target also takes 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 takes 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 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 196**). Anything flammable it passes, including characters, must make an Agility Test or catch fire (see Special Damage).

Table 7-12: Energy Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Effect
1	A blast to the arm leaves it all numb and tingly. Tests made involving the arm are at –30 for 1 Round.
2	The attack smashes 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 character takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The attack burns the target's arm leaving him Stunned for 1 Round and inflicts 2 levels of Fatigue. The arm is useless for 1d5 Rounds.
4	The shock of the attack makes the target vomit. He is Stunned for 1 Round and takes 3 levels of Fatigue. The arm is useless for 1d10 Rounds.
5	The arm suffers superficial burns inflicting no small amount of pain on the target. The target's WS and BS are halved (round down) for 1 Round and the target takes 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 halves WS and BS for 1d10 Rounds, takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue, and must successfully Test Toughness 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 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 also takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
8	Energy sears through the arm at the shoulder, causing the limb to be severed from the body. The target must take a Toughness Test or become Stunned for 1 Round. In addition the target takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue and is suffering from Blood Loss. 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 Toughness Test or die from shock. If he survives, however, the target takes 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 they immediately die from shock, clutching their smoking stump.

Table 7-13: Energy Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	Effect
1	A blow to the target's body steals a breath 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, inflicting 1 level of Fatigue upon him.
3	The attack cooks the flesh on the chest and abdomen, inflicting 2 levels of Fatigue and leaving the target Stunned for 1 Round.
4	The energy ripples all over the character, scorching his body and inflicting 1d10 levels of Fatigue.
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 takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and must take the Stand Action to regain his feet.
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 takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue. In addition, he must make an Agility Test or catch fire (see **Special Damage** on **page 210**).
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 reduces his Toughness by half (round down).
8	As the attack washes over the target, his skin turns black and peels off while body fat seeps out of his clothing and armour. The target is Stunned for 2d10 Rounds and the attack halves his Strength, Toughness and Agility. The extensive scarring permanently halves the target's Fellowship characteristic.
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 Dodge 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 7-14: Energy Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Effect
1	A blow to the leg leaves the target gasping for air. The target gains 1 level of Fatigue.
2	A grazing strike against the leg slows the target for a bit. The target halves all movement for 1 Round.
3	The blast breaks the target's leg leaving him Stunned for 1 Round and halving all movement for 1d5 Rounds.
4	A solid blow to the leg sends electric currents of agony coursing through the target. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and halves all movement for 1d5 Rounds.
5	The target's leg endures horrific burn Damage, fusing clothing and armour with flesh and bone. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue and moves at half speed for 2d10 Rounds.
6	The attack burns the target's foot, charing the flesh and emitting a foul aroma. The target must successfully Test Toughness or lose the foot. On a success, the target's movement rates are halved until he receives medical attention. In addition, the target takes 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 Toughness Test or become Stunned for 1 Round. In addition the target gains 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 Toughness Test or become Stunned for 1 Round. In addition the target gains 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 must Test Toughness 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 7-15: Impact Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The impact fills the target's head with a terrible ringing noise. The target must Test Toughness or take 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The attack causes the target to see stars. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue and takes a –10 penalty to Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests for 1 Round.
3	The target's nose explodes in a torrent of blood, blinding him for 1 Round and dealing 2 levels of Fatigue.
4	The concussive strike staggers the target, dealing 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
5	The force of the blow sends the target reeling in pain. The target is Stunned for 1 Round.
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 and takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
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 7-16: Impact Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The attack numbs the target's limb causing him to drop anything held in that hand.
2	The strike leaves a deep bruise. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The impact inflicts crushing pain and the target takes 1 level of Fatigue and drops whatever was held in that hand.
4	The impact leaves the target reeling from pain. The target is Stunned for 1 Round. The limb is useless for 1d5 Rounds and the target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
5	Muscle and bone take a pounding as the attack rips into the arm. The target's WS and BS are both halved (round down) for 1d10 Rounds. In addition, the target takes 1 level of Fatigue and must make an Agility Test or drop anything held in that hand.
6	The attack pulverises the target's hand, crushing and breaking 1d5 fingers (for the purposes of this Critical, a thumb counts a finger). The target takes 1 level of Fatigue and must immediately make a Toughness Test or lose the use of his hand.
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 and takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
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 Toughness Test or die from shock. If he passes the Test, he is still Stunned for 1d10 rounds, takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and is suffers from Blood Loss. He now only have 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 takes 1d10–8 Impact Damage.

Table 7-17: Impact Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	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.
3	The attack breaks a rib and inflicts 2 levels of Fatigue. The target is also Stunned for 1 Round.
4	The blow batters the target, shattering ribs. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and is Stunned for 1 Round.
5	A solid blow to the chest winds the target and he momentary doubles over in pain, clutching himself and crying in agony. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and is Stunned for 2 Rounds.
6	The attack knocks the target sprawling on the ground. The target flies 1d5 metres away from the attacker and falls prone (if the target strikes a wall of other solid object, he stops). The target takes 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 takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
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 takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue.
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 successfully Test Agility or be Knocked Down.

Table 7-18: Impact Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Effect
1	A light blow to the leg leaves the target gasping for air. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
2	A grazing strike against the leg slows the target. The target halves all movement for 1 Round and takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The blow breaks the target's leg leaving him Stunned for 1 Round and halving all movement for 1d5 Rounds. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
4	A solid blow to the leg sends lightning agony coursing through the target. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and halves all movement for 1d5 Rounds.
5	A powerful impact causes micro fractures in the target's bones, inflicting considerable agony. The target's Agility is reduced by –20 for 1d10 Rounds and he takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
6	Several of the tiny bones in the target's foot snap like twigs with cracking noises. The target must make an immediate Toughness Test or permanently lose the use of his foot. On a success, halve all movement until medical attention is received. The target takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
7	With a nasty crunch, the leg is broken and the target is knocked down 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 takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
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 Toughness Test or die from shock. On a success, the target is Stunned for 1d10 rounds, takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and suffers Blood Loss. 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 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: Explosive Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The explosion leaves the target confused. He can take only a Half Action on his next Turn and takes 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The flash and noise leaves the target blind and deaf for 1 Round. The target takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
3	The detonation leaves the target's face a bloody ruin from scores of small cuts. The target takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
4	The force of the burst knocks the target to the ground and Stuns him for 1 Round. The target takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
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. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and can only take Half Actions for 1d5 hours. Finally, the target's Fellowship drops by 1d10 due to hideous scarring.
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 Energy 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 in the ground. For the rest of the fight, anyone moving over this spot must make an Agility Test or fall over.
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 who are within two metres of where the target stood, must make an immediate Willpower Test or spend their next Turn fleeing from the attacker.

Table 7-20: Explosive Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The attack throws the limb backwards, painfully jerking it away from the body, inflicting 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The attack sends a fracture through the limb. The target drops anything held in the hand and takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
3	The explosion takes 1d5 fingers from the target's hand. The target takes 3 levels of Fatigue and anything carried in the hand is destroyed. If this is an explosive, it goes off. Messy.
4	The blast causes the target to howl in agony. He takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue, is Stunned for 1 Round, and the limb is useless until medical attention is received.
5	Fragments from the explosion tear into the target's hand, ripping away flesh and muscle alike. He must immediately Test Toughness or lose the hand. Even on a success, the hand is useless until medical attention is received. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
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 Toughness Test or die from shock. On a success, the target is Stunned for 1d10 rounds, takes 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 Damage to anyone within two metres.
10+	As above, except if the target is carrying any ammunition it explodes dealing 1d10+5 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 7-21: Explosive Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The target is blown backwards 1d5 metres and takes 1 level of Fatigue per metre travelled. He is Prone when he lands.
2	The target is blown backwards 1d10 metres, taking 1 level of Fatigue per metre travelled. If he strikes a solid object, he takes 1d5 additional levels of Fatigue.
3	The explosion destroys whatever armour protected the body. If the target wore none, the target is blown backwards 1d10 metres, as above but the target takes 2 levels of Fatigue for every metre travelled.
4	The explosion sends the target sprawling to the ground. He takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue, is Stunned for 1 Round, and must spend a Full Action to regain his feet.
5	Concussion from the explosion knocks the target to the ground and tenderises his innards. The target falls down Stunned for 1 Round and takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue.
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, takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue 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 falls down, is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds and takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue. In addition, he now suffers Blood Loss and can only take Half Actions for the next 1d10 hours as he tries to regain control of his body.
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 his torn into bloody gobbets by the attack. In addition, if the target is carrying any ammunition, it explodes dealing 1d10+5 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 an Agility Test or take a -10 penalty to Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests for 1 Round as blood fouls their sight.

Table 7-22: Explosive Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Effect
1	A glancing blast sends the character backwards one metre.
2	The force of the explosion takes the target's feet out from under him. He lands Prone and takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The concussion cracks the target's leg, leaving him Stunned for 1 Round and halving all movement for 1d5 Rounds. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
4	The explosion sends the target spinning through the air. The target travels 1d5 metres away from the explosion and takes 1 level of Fatigue per metre travelled. It takes the target a Full Action to regain his feet and he halves all movement for 1d10 Rounds.
5	Explosive force removes part of the target's foot and scatters it over a wide area. The target must make an immediate Toughness Test or permanently loses the use of his foot, inflicting 1d5 levels of Fatigue. On a success, the target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and halves his movement until he receives medical attention.
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. In addition, the horrendous nature of the wound means that he now suffers from Blood Loss.
7	The explosion reduces the target's leg into a hunk of smoking meat. The target must immediately make a Toughness Test or die from shock. On a successful Test, the target is still Stunned for 1d10 Rounds, takes 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 of the target takes a 1d10+2 Impact Damage.
10+	As above, except in addition, if the target is carrying any ammunition, it explodes dealing 1d10+5 Damage to anyone within 1d10 metres. If the target is carrying any grenades or missiles, these too detonate on the target's person.

Table 7-23: Rending Critical Effects - Head

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The attack tears skin from the target's face dealing 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 takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The attack tears the target's helmet from his head. If wearing no helmet, the target loses an ear instead and inflicts 2 levels of Fatigue.
4	The attack scoops out one of the target's eyes, inflicting 1d5 levels of Fatigue and leaving the target Stunned for 1 Round.
5	The attack opens up the target's face, leaving him Stunned for 1d5 Rounds and inflicting 1d5 levels of Fatigue. If the target is wearing a helmet, the helmet comes off.
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 201**), 4–7: Nose (permanently halve Fellowship), 8–10: Ear (permanently reduce Fellowship by 1d10; you can always hide the wound with your hair.) In addition the target is now suffering Blood Loss and takes 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 takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue.
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 take an 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 7-24: Rending Critical Effects - Arm

Critical Damage	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 shredding attack sends the target screaming in pain. He takes 2 levels of Fatigue and drops whateverwas held in that hand.
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 takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and vomits all over the place in agony. He drops whatever was held and the limb is useless until medical attention is received. The target also suffers Blood Loss.
6	The blow mangles flesh and muscle as it hacks into the target's hand, liberating 1d5 fingers in the process (the rol of a 5 means that the thumb has been sheared off). The target takes 3 levels of Fatigue and must immediately make a 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, inflicting 1d5 levels of Fatigue. 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 Toughness Test or die from shock. If he passes the Test, he is Stunned for 1d10 Turns and suffers Blood Loss. He also takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue and 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 will be hit by these shots, in which case resolve a single hit from the target's weapon as normal.

Table 7-25: Rending Critical Effects - Body

Critical Damage	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	The attack Damages the target's armour, reducing its Armour Points by 1. In addition, the target takes 1 level of Fatigue. If not armoured, the target is also 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 takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
4	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 takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
5	The blow opens up a long wound in the target's torso, causing him to double over in terrible pain. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
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 Prone and takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue.
7	The attack cuts open the target's abdomen, causing considerable Blood Loss and exposing some of his innards. 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 takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue 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 Toughness Test or die. If he passes, he permanently loses 1d10 from his Toughness, takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue, 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 an Agility Test or fall over.

Table 7-26: Rending Critical Effects - Leg

Critical Damage	Effect
1	The attack knocks the limb backwards, painfully jerking it away from the body. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue.
2	The target's kneecap splits open. He must Test Agility or fall to the ground. Regardless, he takes 1 level of Fatigue.
3	The attack rips a length of flesh from the leg, causing blood to gush from the wound. The target takes 1 level of Fatigue 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 moves at half speed until medical attention is received. In addition, he takes 2 levels of Fatigue.
5	In a spray of blood, the target's leg is opened up, exposing bone, sinew and muscle. The target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue and halves his movement for 1d10 hours.
6	The blow slices a couple of centimetres off the end of the target's foot. The target must make an immediate Toughness Test or permanently lose the use of his foot. On a success, movement is halved until he receives medical attention. In either case, the target takes 1d5 levels of Fatigue.
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 takes 1d10 levels of Fatigue.
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 Toughness Test or die from shock. On a success, the target is Stunned for 1d10 Rounds, takes 1d10 Fatigue 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 moments later.
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 an Agility Test or fall over.

SPECIAL DAMAGE

The horrors of battle are not the only way to die in the Dark Heresy universe. Acolytes may find themselves set on fire, suffocating to death, falling from a great height or, worst of all, exposed to the cold vacuum of space. These are collectively known as Special Damage and they are dealt with in this section.

Fire

Characters take Damage each Round if exposed to fire. If you are exposed to the same fire source for two or more consecutive Rounds (or if you are hit with a Flame weapon as detailed in **Chapter V: Armoury, page 128**), you must make an Agility Test each Round or catch on fire. Once you are blazing, you lose 1d10 Wounds (with no reduction for armour) and take 1 level of Fatigue each Round until the fire is extinguished. All Damage from fire is counted as Energy Damage for the purpose of Critical Damage, and applied to the body. When on fire, a character must make a Willpower Test to act normally, otherwise they may only run around and scream (count as a Full Action).

Once a character is on fire, he may try and put himself out by taking a Full Action and making a Hard (-20) Agility Test, i.e. stop, drop and roll. The GM may make this Test easier or harder depending on such factors as allies helping to beat out the flames, leaping into water or loose sand, high winds etc.

Falling

Characters can fall off things for all manner of reasons, though the results are usually the same. To work out Damage from falling, find the distance fallen and consult **Table 7-27: Falling Damage** to work out the Damage the character suffers. Roll on the **Table 7-27: Hit Location, page 194** to see which part of his body hits the ground first. Armour offers no protection against falls. Damage from falling is counted as Impact Damage for the purpose of Critical Damage.

Table 7-27: Falling Damage

Distance Fallen	Damage
3 metres	1d10+3
6 metres	1d10+5
9 metres	1d10+7
12 metres	1d10+9
15 metres	1d10+11
18 metres	1d10+13
21 metres	1d10+15
24 metres	1d10+17
25+ metres	1d10+20

Suffocation

There are many ways to suffocate. Drowning is the most common, but the inhalation of smoke and certain gases also does the trick. The rate of suffocation depends on your activity level. If you are actively trying to conserve oxygen, you may hold your breath for a number of minutes equal to your Toughness Bonus. Test Toughness each minute. A failure indicates that you take 1 level of Fatigue. If you do not gain a fresh source of oxygen at the end of this period, regardless of your Fatigue level you immediately fall unconscious and start to expire. From this point onwards, at the end of each Round, you take 1d10 Damage until you experience death once you reach 0 Wounds. Armour and Toughness Bonus' do not reduce the Damage incurred.

Example

Shawnmaker, an Arbitrator with a TB of 3, is trapped in an airless corridor. Knowing that his allies are nearby with a lascutter, he decides to sit down and conserve his breath. Shawnmaker can hold his breath for three minutes, so his friends have just enough time to slice through the corridor walls. After the first minute of breath holding, Shawnmaker takes a level of Fatigue. After the second minute, he takes a further level of Fatigue. Finally, after the third minute Shawnmaker takes another level of Fatigue. If rescue does not arrive in the fourth minute Shawnmaker will take another level of Fatigue, fall unconscious and start to suffocate.

If you are engaged in strenuous activity (combat, swimming and the like) you may hold your breath for a number of Rounds equal to twice your Toughness Bonus. After this period, you lose 1 Wound and gain a level of Fatigue at the end of each Round. Should you fall unconscious due to Fatigue, you take 1d10 Damage at the end of each Round until death. Armour or Toughness Bonus do not reduce the Damage incurred.

Example

Shawnmaker has a TB of 3 and 9 Wounds. He can hold his breath under the murky waters of a hive sump for six Rounds before he begins to take Fatigue and lose Wounds. After a further four Rounds, he falls unconscious and begins to take 1d10 Damage each Round.

Vacuum

There is nothing good about being exposed to vacuum. There are two 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 trapped on a star ship as its atmosphere is vented into space).

If suddenly exposed to vacuum, you may survive unharmed for a number of Rounds equal to your Toughness Bonus. Unless you have an oxygen source, you will also begin to suffer from the effects of suffocation. At the end of each Round after this, you suffer 1d10+3 Explosive Damage from depressurisation. If you are in the vacuum of space, at the end of each Round make a Toughness Test. A failure indicates that you suffer 1d10 Energy Damage from the extreme cold. In both cases, any armour worn does not reduce the Damage incurred.

If you die in space, it takes five Rounds for your corpse to freeze. If your corpse suffers any Damage whilst frozen, it shatters into thousands of blood-red ice shards. There is precious little, except perhaps a Daemonic pact, which can bring you back from such a fate.

If you are trapped in a gradually worsening atmosphere, you may survive unharmed for a number of Rounds equal to twice your Toughness Bonus. At the end of this time, you will begin to experience suffocation. You will also begin to feel the effects of depressurisation. From this point onwards, at the end of each Round you must make a Toughness Test with a cumulative –10 penalty. Success indicates that you take 1d5 Explosive Damage but are otherwise unaffected. Failure means that you suffer 1d10 Explosive Damage. In both cases armour will not reduce the Damage incurred.

Damage & Healing

"Success is measured in blood; yours or your enemy's."
— Tactica Imperialis.

As you accumulate Damage, you become more injured until finally, you suffer dreaded Critical Damage. How much Damage you have taken determines the severity of your injuries, describing whether you are Lightly, Heavily, or Critically Wounded. These states determine the time it takes to heal. You remove Damage at a fixed rate regardless of your level of activity. However, if you spend your time resting comfortably and not engaging in any strenuous activity (e.g. fighting, using Psychic Powers, herding Grox, etc), you can remove Damage more quickly.

Lightly Wounded

You are considered Lightly Wounded if you have taken Damage equal to or less than twice your Toughness Bonus. (If you have a 3 Toughness Bonus, then you are Lightly Wounded if you take 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 Damage.) Without medical attention or drugs, you remove 1 Damage per day. If you spend this time resting in bed, you remove an amount of Damage equal to your Toughness Bonus.

Heavily Wounded

You are Heavily Wounded whenever you have taken more Damage than twice your Toughness Bonus (so if you have 3 Toughness Bonus, you are considered Heavily Wounded if you have taken more than 6 Damage). Without medical attention, you remove 1 Damage per week through natural healing. If you spend the entire week resting, you remove an amount of Damage equal to your Toughness Bonus. Once your Damage is equal to or less than your Toughness Bonus, you become Lightly Wounded.

Critically Wounded

You are Critically Wounded whenever you have taken Critical Damage. You do not recover without medical attention. With medical attention, you remove 1 point of Critical Damage for each week of rest. Once all Critical Damage has been removed, you become Heavily Wounded instead.

Medical Attention

Medical attention is any Action by another character or by yourself to treat your injuries. Such efforts can range from the application of healing drugs, being the recipient of a successful Medicae Test, or even using Psychic Powers that can restore lost Wounds. Medical Attention can provide immediate recovery or can speed the process of natural healing. For more information, check out the Medicae skill in **Chapter III: Skills** on **page 104**.

Blood Loss

Characters suffering from Blood Loss have a 10% chance of dying each Round unless treated in some way. Provided the character is conscious, they may attempt a Medicae Test each Round to staunch the bleeding. If they are stationary whilst attempting to stop the blood, this test is merely Difficult (-10). If they are taking part in strenuous activity, such as combat or movement, this test is Very Hard (–30). If the character is not conscious, or doesn't fancy his chances, another character may attempt the test.

Broken Limbs

Certain Critical Effects indicate a risk of permanently losing a limb. To avoid this fate, the character must succeed on a Toughness Test. Should a character with the Medicae skill be present and assisting the injured character, the victim gains a +20 bonus to this test to retain the limb. The limb must be held in a sling for 1d5+1 weeks and is useless during this time.

Should this test fail, the limb must be removed, requiring a character with the Medicae skill to succeed on 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 following).

Amputated Limbs

A character that loses body parts (except for their heads—this pretty much means death, unless you have the good fortune of having your brain somewhere else in your body) is also affected by Blood Loss and must be treated for that first. Should this succeed and 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 it 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 will not start removing Damage for 1d10+2 days.

Cybernetic and Bionic Replacements

It is possible to restore lost limbs with bionic replacements; in fact, sometimes you may prefer to lop off a perfectly good arm or leg to gain the benefits of having a cybernetic one. The rules for both removing and attaching cybernetic, bionic and bio-enhanced limbs, implants and weapons are detailed fully in **Chapter V: Armoury**.

Movement

"Hope is the first step on the road to disappointment."
— Concordium dogma.

Under most circumstances, you need only say that you want your character to go somewhere and eventually he gets there. How fast the character moves rarely matters in ordinary situations, but when it comes to some things, the speed with which a character can move can become very important. A chase through the streets, a charge against a brutal Ork or any number of other factors can all mean the difference between life and death.

During a Round, characters may move at one of four speeds: Half Move, Full Move, Charge, or Run. The number of metres a character may move in his Turn is determined by his Agility Bonus. Traits can modify some or all movement speeds. Details on these modes of movement can be found under Combat.

Table 7-28: 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	24
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

In some situations, it may be important to note how fast a character can travel in Narrative Time. **Table 7-29: Narrative Movement** describes the standard speeds a character can move at a leisurely pace under ideal circumstances. Environment (see following) can affect these speeds, hindering the characters as they travel.

Table 7-29: Narrative 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

†Assumes 10 hours of walking

Narrative Movement and Terrain

Terrain conditions affect how fast your character can cover ground during Narrative Time. Obviously, picking your way through a death world jungle is far more laborious than moving along a major road.

Halve distances when moving through tightly packed foliage, dense urban areas or similarly difficult terrain.

The Game Master will determine what, if any, modifiers apply to Narrative Time caused by the environment.

Hurrying

Characters can pick up the pace, moving up to double their movement in Narrative Time for a number of hours equal to their Toughness Bonus. At the end of this time, characters must successfully Test Toughness or take 1 level of Fatigue. In addition, hurrying characters are less likely to pay attention to their surroundings and thus take a –10 penalty to all Perception Tests. Characters may push on, even with these penalties, but they must Test Toughness, with a cumulative –10 penalty, again after a number of hours equal to their reduced Toughness Bonus or take additional levels of Fatigue.

Example

Lucretious is hurrying to reach a research outpost, so he covers 12 kilometres per hour. His Toughness is 41, so he can hurry for four hours before he needs to Test Toughness.

Running and Narrative Time

Characters can run during Narrative Time, but doing so is tiring. When running, a character triples his rate of movement, but each hour of sustained running requires the character to Test Toughness, with a cumulative –10 penalty per hour after the first, to sustain the pace. On a failed Test, the character takes 1 level of Fatigue. Characters moving at this brisk pace are focused on running and watching their steps, so they take a –20 penalty to all Perception Tests. As with hurrying, characters can continue running after a failed Test, but penalties gained from multiple failed Tests are cumulative.

Example

Kyba has a TB of 2 and runs to reach the village ahead of the Orks, some 30 kilometres away, who should arrive in four hours. She normally moves at 4kph. But because she's running, she's moving 12kph, meaning she'll reach the village in just over two hours if she can sustain the pace. After the first hour of running, she Tests Toughness and fails. She takes 1 level of Fatigue. After her second hour, she's covered 24 kilometres, but she needs to Test Toughness again, this time at a -20 penalty. She fails again! Half an hour later, Kyba reaches the village exhausted, having taken 2 levels of Fatigue.

Forced Marching

There's nothing stopping characters from pushing themselves beyond the standard ten hours of marching. Characters may safely push themselves for a number of extra hours equal to their Toughness Bonus. Beyond this, a character must Test Toughness, with a cumulative –10 penalty per hour, for each hour he travels beyond his Toughness Bonus. A failed Test indicates that the character takes a level of Fatigue. It is possible to march oneself into unconsciousness. Fatigue taken from forced marching is removed after the character has rested for two hours for each hour they marched beyond their Toughness Bonus.

Movement and Environment

The movement rates for characters described on **Table 7-28: Movement (Metres/Round)** assume a relatively clear battlefield. There may be a few obstacles, puddles or wisps of fog, but characters can more or less, move at their standard rates. There are, however, some circumstances that reduce a character's speed. These can include rubble-strewn hallways, deep snow, dense fog, thick underbrush and a variety of other conditions that make it tough to navigate. In such environments, a character's movement is halved. If a character charges or runs, he must succeed on an Agility Test or fall prone. The difficulty of this Test depends on the terrain. See **Table 7-30: Treacherous Environments** for suggestions.

Table 7-30: Treacherous Environments

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

Climbing

There are bound to be times when you want to climb over a wall, scale a cliff, or scramble up a tree to escape the claws of a vicious xenos. Any character with both hands free can climb any non-sheer surface with a Strength (or Climb) Test. On a success, you ascend or descend at a rate of one-half your Half Move speed (to a minimum of a 1/2 metre). For each degree of success, you climb an extra metre. On a failed Test, you fall from your starting climbing position. Climbing Difficulty varies with the nature of the climbing surface, though most tests should be Challenging (+0).

Sheer Surfaces

Certain surfaces are beyond the means of ordinary characters to climb. Naked stone walls without hand-holds, vertical ascents and overhangs all require some skill at climbing to navigate. You may attempt a Climb Skill Test to climb these surfaces at one-half your Half Move speed. Otherwise, you must have tools such as a knotted rope or blanket, rope ladder or ladder. If you can take your time and are not threatened by opponents, you may ascend at one-half your Half Move rate without Testing Strength. You may try to climb more quickly or when you are being attacked, but you must Test Strength as if you were climbing a non-sheer surface.

Abseiling

You can descend ropes and ladders more quickly by abseiling. You descend at a rate of 10 metres per Round with a successful Agility Test. If the Test is failed, the rate is reduced to 5 metres per Round. However, if the Test is failed by two or more degrees, you must Test Strength or lose your grip. Unless you have a climbing harness, you fall.

The Effects of Gravity

Although the inhabited worlds of the Imperium may vary slightly in terms of gravity, the effects on game play are minimal. Only when characters explore high- or low-gravity worlds are movement, lifting and other factors affected.

Low Gravity Worlds

On worlds of low gravity, all characters increase their Agility Bonus by 2 for the purposes of movement . In addition, characters add 4 to the total of their Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus for the purpose of determining carrying, lifting and pushing limits. Characters also add 2 to their Strength Bonus for determining how far they can throw objects. Double all Jumping and Leaping distances.

High Gravity Worlds

On worlds of high gravity, all characters decrease their Agility Bonus by 2 (to a minimum of 1) for the purposes of movement. In addition, characters subtract 4 (to a minimum 0) from the total of their Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus for the purpose of determining carrying, lifting and pushing limits. Characters also subtract 2 from their Strength Bonus (to a minimum of 0) for determining how far they can throw objects. Finally, halve all Jumping and Leaping distances.

JUMPING

A Jump is a controlled vertical ascent or descent that generally allows you to reach a ledge overhead or land on your feet. If you're pushed, or plummet, you're not Jumping but falling (see **Falling**).

Jumping Up

You can make a standing Jump to hop up to reach something above you or land on a higher level. Doing so requires an Agility Test. On a success, you Jump up a number of centimetres equal to 20 times your Strength Bonus. For each degree of success, you add another number of centimetres equal to 10 times your Strength Bonus.

Example

Keira wants to Jump up and catch the lip of a ledge about one metre (100 centimetres) over her head. She has a 36 Strength (3 SB). She rolls and gets a 22. She succeeds with one degree of success. So, she Jumps up 90 centimetres ([SB×20]+30). Not quite enough for her to grab the edge of the ledge.

Jumping Down

When Jumping down, you must make an Agility Test for each metre of descent. On a failed Test, you stop making Agility Tests and fall the remaining distance. So if you fail the first Test, you fall the entire distance and take Damage for falling (see **Falling**).

LEAPING

A Leap is a horizontal jump. It is used to traverse from roof to roof or to cross chasms, ditches and so on. There are two types of Leap: running and standing. In both cases, they are Full Actions.

Running Leaps

In a Running Leap, you must move at least four metres in a straight line leading up to the Leap. At the end of your movement, you Leap across a number of metres equal to your Strength Bonus. Make a Strength Test. For each degree of success, you Leap an extra 50 centimetres. For each degree of failure, you Leap 50 centimetres less (minimum 0 metres—you probably move a few dozen centimetres, but not a full metre). For every four metres run up beyond those required for the Leap you get a +10 bonus (maximum +30) to your Strength Test.

Standing Leaps

A Standing Leap is similar to a Running Leap, except, obviously, you don't have to run first. You calculate your distance as a running Leap, but you take a –10 penalty to your Strength Test.

Example

Our friend Keira is on a rooftop. To get onto the building containing her target, she must make a Leap of four metres. Keira has 36 Strength (3 SB) so she had better roll well or she's going to splatter on the street below. Keira backs up eight metres and then starts her run. She crosses the distance and then makes a Strength Test. Because she ran four extra metres, she gets a +10 bonus to her Strength Test. She rolls and gets a 26! A success by two degrees (36+10=46). If she had just succeeded on the Test, she would have leapt three metres, but because she got two degrees of success, she instead leapt four metres, which is just enough to cross the gap.

Vertical Distance

Should it be important, the height you attain while leaping is equal to one quarter the distance in metres travelled. A result of 0 or less means that you gained enough altitude to leap, but not enough to clear any obstacles.

SWIMMING

A character doesn't need to make a Swim Test under ideal circumstances, but hazardous conditions such as rough waters, hands being tied, or swimming whilst fighting all require Swim Tests to move. To swim under hazardous conditions, you must make a Swim Test as a Move Action. A success indicates that you move in any direction up to a number of metres equal to one-half your Strength Bonus or simply tread water at your option. A failed Test means that you make no progress and cannot move. If you fail by 2 degrees or more, you sink one metre for every 20kg of your weight.

Characters that are unable to swim for some reason (unconsciousness, paralysis etc.) automatically sink one metre of depth for each 20kg of their weight on their Turn. Theoretically, a character could sink all the way to the bottom and walk their way out of the water if they can hold their breath long enough.

Swimming and Narrative Time

Prolonged swimming can be exhausting. You may swim for a number of hours equal to your Toughness Bonus (simply substitute your Strength Bonus for Agility Bonus to determine how much distance you travel each hour). After this point, you must make a Toughness Test, with a cumulative –10 penalty per hour and each hour thereafter. On a failed Test, you take 1 level of Fatigue. If knocked unconscious from Fatigue, you sink and probably drown.

Moving & Lifting

"The mortal burden carried dutifully to its destination is the Emperor's greaTest praise."

— Lexconicum Moralis.

Normally, you don't need to keep track of how much of each item of your equipment you're carrying. Characters in Dark Heresy are assumed to be able to shoulder their backpacks, carry their weapons and don armour without being too hampered. However, there are likely to be instances where it's useful to know how much your character can reasonably lift.

The amount of weight a character can move depends on the sum of your character's Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus. Compare the total to **Table 7-31: Carrying, Lifting, and Pushing** to find out the limits of your might. Note that certain Traits may increase these values.

Table 7-31: Carrying, Lifting & Pushing

Total	Carry†	Lift‡	Push¥
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	225kg
9	67kg	135kg	270kg
10	78kg	157kg	315kg
11	90kg	180kg	360kg
12	112kg	225kg	450kg
13	225kg	450kg	900kg
14	337kg	675kg	1,350kg
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

†*Carrying Weight indicates how much you can comfortably carry.*

‡*Lifting Weight describes how much you can lift off the ground.*

¥*Pushing Weight describes how much weight you can shove.*

Exceeding Your Carrying Limits

If you find yourself carrying more than your normal carrying limits and less than your lifting limit, you are encumbered. You take a –10 penalty to all movement-related Tests and reduce your Agility Bonus by 1 for the purposes of determining movement rates. In addition, after a number of hours equal to your Toughness Bonus have passed while carrying this weight, you must successfully make a Toughness Test or take 1 level of Fatigue.

While handling weights at your lifting or pushing limits, to move at your normal rate requires a Full Action.

You can try to lift or push more than your limit by Testing Strength. Each degree of success on a Strength Test adds a +1 bonus to the sum of your Strength Bonus and Toughness Bonus for the purpose of determining your limits. If you fail this Test by 2 degrees or more, you take 1 level of Fatigue.

Throwing

As described in **Chapter V: Armoury**, some weapons are designed to be thrown. The further away the target is from you, the harder it is to hit the target. While ranges for these weapons are determined by your modified Strength Bonus, this system doesn't cover objects not designed for throwing, such as bags of sand, bricks, and so on.

You can throw any object whose weight is equal to or less than half of your lifting weight. To see how far the object travels, Test Strength. A successful Test means that the object flies a number of metres equal to your Strength Bonus. For each degree of success, this distance increases by a factor of 1, so one degree means that you throw the object a number of metres equal to twice your SB, two degrees means that the object is thrown a number of metres equal to your SB×3, three degrees at SB×4 and so on. On a failed Test, the object flies a number of metres equal to half your Strength Bonus (round down; a result of 0 means it fell at your feet). If the object hits a hard surface such as a wall, it takes 1d10+SB Damage plus 1 for every degree of success on your Test.

If you're throwing such an object as an improvised weapon you must make a Ballistics Skill Test rather than a Strength Test. Throwing heavier objects more than half than your lifting weight, but no more than your lifting weight, imposes a Hard (–20) Test penalty.

Lighting

"If you dare enter these dark times, enter."
— Ordos Hereticus Maxim.

Many adventures in Dark Heresy take place under the cover of night, in the shadowy depths of caves, or in the dank and foetid underhive. As a result, the oppressive darkness becomes a constant enemy, concealing countless terrors and monstrous threats in its depths. For these reasons, light sources are of paramount importance when exploring the dark places of the Imperium.

For simplicity, Dark Heresy uses three levels of light: Bright, Shadow and Darkness. Bright light is any light that allows normal vision, such as sunlight or being within the radius of a torch, glo-lantern, candle and so on. Shadow occurs whenever a normal light source is obscured such as by fog, distance or some similar effect. Darkness, naturally enough, is the absence of light.

Aside from the obvious effects of Darkness and Shadow—being the inability to see, areas of Shadow and Darkness can interfere with a character's movement and combat capabilities. Characters may move through areas of Shadow at no penalty, but may move at only half speed or less through Darkness. Exceeding this speed means that the character may drift in a random direction unless the character succeeds on a Hard (-20) Perception Test. For the effects of lighting on combat, see Combat.

Flying

"It is my belief that foreign travel narrows the mind wonderfully."
— Helem Boesch, Ordo Xenos.

Flying is not a common occurrence for characters in Dark Heresy. Aside from certain rare pieces of tech, or managing to convince a flying creature to hold you, the odds are that the Acolytes will live and die with both feet on the ground. This said, there are plenty of creatures in the *Warhammer 40,000* universe that do benefit from the ability to fly and when they attack it changes the character of the battlefield in challenging ways. The following rules provide an abstract system for dealing with flying.

Altitude

On a planet, there are three broad altitude levels: Hovering, Low, and High. You can change altitude by one level (up or down) during each Move Action taken. If you're using the Charge or Run Actions, you can change altitudes by two levels.

Hovering

Hovering means that you are skimming just above the ground, no higher than two metres. You can move over obstacles or pits with ease, but attacks can affect you as normal. You can both attack and be attacked by creatures on the ground.

Low

This altitude indicates that you are flying no more than 15 metres above the ground. You cannot attack or be attacked in melee, but ranged attacks and Psychic Powers are possible. You take no penalties for shooting downwards, but those firing up at you treat you as being 16 metres further away and take a -10 penalty to their Ballistic Skill Tests made to attack you.

High

When flying at this altitude, you are flying far above the ground, beyond the range of all attacks, even those coming from low altitude. You can only attack or be attacked by other creatures flying at High altitude.

Example

Hybris has secured a powerful grav-harness, granting him a flying movement of 6. On the first Round, he goes from the ground to Hovering and moves 12 metres. On the second Round, he ascends from Hovering to Low altitude and moves another 12 metres. Should a renegade PDF trooper 24 metres away now shoot at Hybris, the Range would be 40 metres because flying at Low altitude adds 16 metres to the Range.

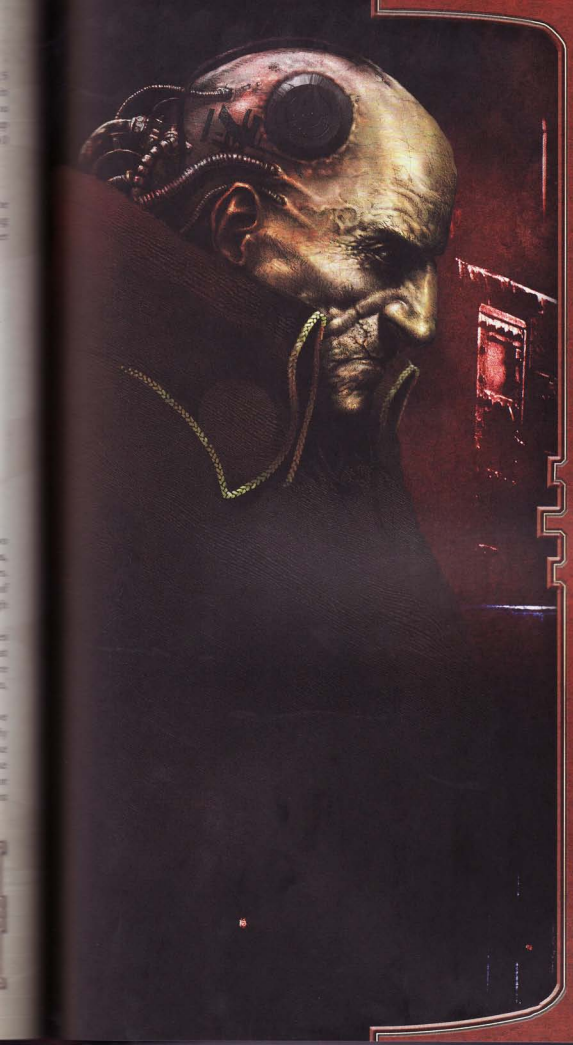
Flying Movement

Flying creatures and characters are broken up into two categories, each of which is a Trait (see **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists**). They are Hoverers and Flyers. Hoverers can move through the air, but are incapable of gaining more than 2 metres of altitude. A Flyer can go high into the sky, just like a bird.

Each Trait has an associated number. This number describes the character or creature's Flying Movement. This works just like regular movement, but applies only when the creature is flying. In the case of spells and other supernatural effects, Flying Movement is included in its description.

When flying, a character must spend at least one Move Action on his Turn each Round or he'll fall. Hoverers simply land, which causes no Damage. Flyers at Low altitude take Damage from a 15 metre fall, while those at High altitude take Damage from a 25+ metre fall. See **Falling** on **page 210** for more details. The Charge, Attack and Run Actions both count as movement for the purposes of staying in the air.

"We are at war with forces to terrible to comprehend. We cannot afford mercy for any of its victims too weak to take the correct course. Mercy destroys us; it weakens us and saps our resolve. Put aside all such thoughts. They are not worth of Inquisitors in the service of Our Emperor. Praise his name for in our resolve we only reflect his purpose of will."



VIII

THE GAME MASTER

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THE DARK POWERS

Chapter VIII: The Game Master

"Every soul wavers between the Void and the Emperor's Holy Light. Most falter."

— Inquisitor Kaede, Ordo Hereticus.

The Imperium of Man is vast beyond all mortal reckoning. A legion of Administratum scribes working their entire lives to produce a single accurate accounting of the God-Emperor's realm would be doomed to failure before they had even started as the numbers exist only in a continuous flux. Worlds are constantly being found, lost, rediscovered and destroyed throughout the Imperium. Across this grand sweep of planets every conceivable culture, political system and ideal is somewhere represented. There are wonders and atrocities, saviours and lunatics, sinners and tyrants. There is courage that can break the heart and knowledge that can harrow the soul. All these worlds, as well as those teeming masses dwelling on and between them, are yours to define should you take up the mantle of Game Master. But remember, power corrupts they say, but it is those without it that most often speak thus…

THE GM'S LOT

The Game Master has the vital task of bringing the grim darkness of the far future to life for the rest of the group, mainly by subjecting the Player Characters to the many horrible confrontations they will doubtless have as they make themselves useful to the Inquisition. It is the GM who runs the game, sets the stage that is the Imperium and ensures that everyone is enjoying themselves. It isn't always easy, but it can be a lot of fun and very rewarding. If you're the GM for your group, this chapter is designed to help you with your job, explaining what this game is about and assisting you in coming up with memorable experiences (the terminology for such incidents is usually "adventures" or "scenarios") for your Acolyte band. If you're a player, you may wish to lightly peruse this chapter just to catch a glimpse of some of the horrors that may be in store for your Acolyte.

Your job as GM is a bit like being the director of a play without a finalised script. You've assembled your cast (the players), know where the action is located (somewhere in the Dark Heresy universe), set the proper mood (a dark and merciless future) and have an idea of how the story goes (an adventure)—now you have to bring all these elements together to craft an exciting production. If you do your job well, everyone participating will have fun, perhaps in spite of growing to love and hate you for all the terrifying events you keep subjecting their PCs to!

Before you run your first game, you should prepare yourself:

Read this rulebook—Don't just skim it—read it. You need to know the rules better than anyone else in the group. You don't need to memorise them, but you should certainly know where to look should a question come up. If you are familiar with *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, you'll find the rules familiar, but note that there are a few critical differences in approach.

Have a plot in mind—Before you can run a game, you need to have at least some idea of what will happen. That idea may be as vague as, "The Acolytes meet Ethern the Bone Numberer and then we'll see…" to a fully described, published adventure from Black Industries (one of which is included in the back of this book). Our website also has an ever-growing selection of free adventures to download and run. A pre-designed adventure has the advantage of being ready to play, whereas making up your own, while time-consuming, has its own rewards. Whichever course you choose, be as familiar as you can with the story you've chosen before beginning.

Ready your supplies—You will need a small collection of ten-sided dice—two for each player, including yourself—to run Dark Heresy. One character sheet per player, writing implements and some notepaper is also a good idea.

Running Dark Heresy

Once everyone has generated an Acolyte, you can start the game. As Game Master, the following tasks are your main responsibilities:

Framing the story—The far future of the Imperium is enormously different from the world we know. It is to you that your players will look for their cues on how their PCs should act and react to the world around them, for you are the lens through which they view the dark future. Describe their surroundings in detail, lingering on what their senses tell them, the sights, the sounds and the smells. The better you are at depicting the right atmosphere, the more invested your players will become in their characters and the adventure.

Act as the referee—You are the final arbiter of game rules in all circumstances. When a player wishes to make a Skill Test, you tell them what dice to roll and what penalties or bonuses might be appropriate. You decide what is probable, possible, unlikely and flat-out insane. Keep in mind that it's easy to say "No" to the various stunts your PCs will try to pull off, but often a lot more fun to say "Yes, but there will be consequences…"

Take on the role of the Non-Player Characters—Everyone and everything who is not an Acolyte is played by you. Big job, that. This extensive variety of beings are known as Non-Player Characters (NPCs). In Dark Heresy, they range from simple serfs to a variety of alien races with inhuman mindsets. There are several sections later in this chapter to assist in characterising the many roles you will be playing. The important thing to remember is that the PCs are really whom the story is about, and the NPCs you introduce are supposed to serve that end.

The Emperor's Inquisition

The central premise of Dark Heresy is that the PCs are Acolytes of an Inquisitor—exceptional individuals from other paths, whose unique personal attributes have brought them to the attention of a member of the Inquisition. The Acolytes have been recruited to serve their Inquisitor to the best of their ability. Inquisitors are few and scattered, for the Imperium of Man is vast and the its enemies are legion. The powerful Inquisitors have neither the time nor the resources to personally follow up every accusation of heresy that may come to their attention. This is where the players come in.

They are operatives of the Inquisition, empowered to investigate allegations of heresy and other charges of deviant behaviour on behalf of their Inquisitor. While the power of Acolytes is definitely limited compared to that of a full Bearer of the Seal, when the time comes for them to brandish their Inquisitorial Rosettes, few will take them lightly. Most of the time though, Acolytes work in disguise or from the shadows, as word of their presence or actual identities could alert their enemies, especially if the local authorities are the ones they've been sent to investigate.

Acolytes join the Inquisition for as many reasons as there are Acolytes. Many believe the work of the Inquisition is holy and in serving its needs they serve the God-Emperor. Some seek redemption for past deeds, while others just want a clean data-slate. A fair number care only that the Inquisition pays well. Regardless of their reasons for joining their Inquisitor's retinue, the PCs must work together as part of a group that includes the Inquisitor who recruited them along with other agents that may or may not be known to them. For more details, see **Chapter X: The Inquisition**.

Know Them By Their Works

The type of Inquisitor each group of Acolytes works for will affect the majority of Dark Heresy adventures you run for them and will certainly end up colouring their perceptions of the Imperium. While players are often willing to be fairly flexible in what they'll put up with for a one-off game, you can rest assured that if you wish to run a series of linked adventures, usually known as a "campaign", they'll want a say in the nature of their patron Inquisitor. Actually, this can be a great asset to you as a GM and you should strongly consider discussing the merits of various potential Inquisitors with your players before the game begins. Several of the Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave are detailed from **pages 316–322**. They represent a wide range of beliefs and philosophies, affording you and your players a fair number of patron choices. If none of them interest you, you can create another Inquisitor to better suit your group's desires. The sort of Inquisitor they prefer can tell you a lot about what it is they might want from adventures and your campaign. Anyone wanting to work for the Ordo Malleus clearly wishes to struggle against Daemons, just as those seeking employment with an Inquisitor of the Ordo Xenos crave alien conspiracies. Those that would follow the Ordo Hereticus wish to seek out and eradicate the corruption that lies within.

Golden Rules

There are five golden rules to remember when running a game. While one could, and indeed several people have, written books about the art of game mastering, if you keep these rules in mind you won't go far wrong.

Always be fair. Remember, you are the referee. The rules are here to help you make decisions, but many of them rely on your sense of fair play. Since you control the game in a very real sense, it's easy to let that go to your head. Do not give in to that temptation and do not start acting arbitrarily. Roleplaying is a group experience and your players must trust that you'll do the right thing.

Give them a chance. Players come up with all kinds of crazy ideas. Often, your first instinct will be to say, 'No, you can't do that.' Resist that urge and stop to consider the action. Players are frequently quite inventive and you don't want to squash that. Rather than just saying 'no', give them a chance—even if it's a small one. They are the heroes of your story after all and they deserve it.

Lay down the law. That said, remember you are in charge. Some players delight in running roughshod over carefully prepared games. It is thus sometimes necessary to remind them who's the boss. Other players will try to endlessly argue with you about the rules. Do not let them get away with it. Simply say, "That's my ruling, it's time to move on."

Don't play favourites. This goes back to the point about fair play. All your players should get equal "screen time". If one character is dominating a scene, make sure to ask the others what they are doing and try to re-engage them in the game. Also, make sure that everyone gets a chance at interesting story opportunities and whatever special items you deem appropriate to hand out.

Keep the pace brisk. You are the narrator of this story, so it is your responsibility to keep it moving. It's easy to get bogged down looking up rules, or going off on a wild tangent. Try to rein that in and keep up the pace. The last thing you want to see when you look up from behind your GM screen is bored faces.

Playing the Inquisitor

Whatever sort of Inquisitor you end up choosing, remember it is the Acolytes who are the true protagonists of your Dark Heresy adventures. Since the Inquisitor is likely to be an NPC played by you, don't make a habit of upstaging the PCs. Make certain the Inquisitor is often busy with other cases, ideally those that are whole sub-sectors away. In the Imperium, communication between worlds is very slow—astropathic transmissions can take a great deal of time and requests for immediate assistance are often in vain. Your Acolytes should never get the idea that if they call their master whenever they're in trouble he'll be able (or willing) to come rushing to their rescue. Your greatest resource in this could very well be your players—just ask them what their master is doing and why he can't help them. Their answers could even serve to set up future adventures!

Many are Called, Most are Found Wanting

A lot of roleplaying games start characters off with few built-in presumptions and no particular expectation of action other than "adventuring"—translation: you are a group of random individuals of varying talents who have coincidentally met in a tavern and decided to set out in search of riches and excitement. Dark Heresy supposes that the PCs are all skilled individuals who were hired by their Inquisitor employer at some point in the "past" of your game's time-line for the specific purpose of assisting him in rooting out heresy within the Calixis Sector. In fact, one or more of the characters may have worked for the Inquisition in such a capacity for many years. Your initial adventure, however, is likely to be the first time the PCs have ever met or worked with one another as a group, as many Inquisitors are fond of gathering cells of diverse Acolytes together whose skills complement one another—a convenient practice from a GM's point of view. A single adventure can take anywhere from one game session to a dozen or more to conclude. Most Dark Heresy adventures are liable to continue until a given case of the Inquisition has been investigated and a variable number of heretics have been either identified for others to handle or dealt with directly by the PCs.

"Some may question your right to destroy ten billion people. Those who understand realise that you have no right to let them live..."

Themes in Dark Heresy

Whether you intend to plot out a single adventure or lay the framework for an entire campaign, there are certain ideas that resonate throughout Dark Heresy. By planning adventures that help to evoke and further these themes, you will help to immerse your players into the dark distant future of the Imperium.

One Minute to Midnight

The Imperium is tottering on the brink of ruin and disaster. Enemies surround mankind: terrible, rapacious and horrific enemies that seek to destroy humanity utterly. Across the Imperium, man is caught up in countless struggles to survive. Doom fills the air, and the end is nigh. In the Calixis Sector, the terrifying Tyrant Star waxes fat and powerful, ready to unleash hell, unless, that is, the Inquisition can somehow turn back the overwhelming tide of dread and ruin.

There is Taint in All Things

Corruption, in every manner it can be expressed, is everywhere. Entropy is the natural state of the universe. All things inevitably seek to break down into the primal chaos from which they came. The efforts of humanity to hold corruption at bay will ultimately prove to be futile, as every system that has ever been erected to hold off the decay are also subject to it.

Libraries built to maintain accurate knowledge of the past corrode; their codifiers break down introducing errors into the data records. Scrolls are burned, lost, miscopied or deliberately falsified by those who would control the future by altering the past. Institutions form, flourish for a time, then fall short of their promises, forgetting their original purpose. Eventually, many such organisations exist only because tradition dictates that they should do so, for nobody knows why they were created or the meaning of the work they do.

Most obvious to all is the corruption of the body, for mutation has become common on many Imperial worlds, and incidents regarding psykers grow more frequent with every passing century. Subtler still is the threat posed by the many people who slowly adapt physically to their environments, losing the "purity" of the human form and those who have forgone "meat" in favour of metal. Souls and minds fester as surely as flesh. Daemonic influence is ever present. Insanity is rife. Those that seek to do what is just lose their way, their pure motives corroding until they find themselves performing the most debased and vile of acts all in the name of decency.

Calcified Knowledge and Mystical Technology

In the Imperium, most of its citizens have no idea how the manifold examples of extant and ancient technology work or that they even exist. A soldier of the Imperial Guard can field strip his lasgun in under thirty seconds, yet he has no grasp of what purpose the various mechanisms he has pulled out of his weapon actually serve. Even the low level Tech-priests of the Mechanicus of Mars have no comprehension of what it is that they do—their knowledge is by rote. Machines work because their operators followed the appropriate rituals to appease the machine's "spirit"—not because they pushed the runic button inscribed with the sacred word of power "ON".

The Imperium prizes a stasis of thought. Traditional ways are always the best ways and obedience to dogma without any consideration for what it may mean is common. Thus, both technology and knowledge have become sacred. All but the most basic of technological devices are thought of as supernatural and capable of being regarded as either holy or unholy. Superstition is commonplace, as the breakdown of knowledge has meant that the majority of the populace are unable to comprehend the reasons why something may be so; the citizens of the Imperium rely on charms and ceremonies to allay their fears as they have little capacity for self-examination or critical thinking. Frequent users of any form of technology know a variety of rituals that they must observe to keep the spirits of their machines placated. There are many who truly believe that ignorance is a form of strength. Active scientific research is rare and often regarded with fear. Outside of the followers of the Omnissiah, it is practically non-existent in the Imperium.

There is Only War

The Imperium has a vast number of worlds that haven't known even a hint of battle for over ten thousand years, but there is no Imperial world within the reach of the Astronomican that doesn't have what is known as a "siege mindset". Constantly harangued about the dangers of xenos threats and more nebulous enemies that lurk out in the dark, the people of the Imperium are forever being reminded that war could come to their world at any time. Every planet's tithes go towards fuelling the Imperial war machine, which is eternally engaged in hundreds, if not thousands, of conflicts across the galaxy. Some are unquestionably large-scale wars, such as the struggle against the chitinous alien horde of living weapons known as the Tyranids that are presently attacking large swathes of the Eastern Fringe, or the ten thousand years long fight against the traitorous ancient followers of the Ruinous Powers that lurk inside the Segmentum Obscurus within the region known as the Eye of Terror. Almost all industries within the Imperium aid the various war efforts in one way or another and the authorities of many planets are often at pains to point out to their citizens how important their efforts are in securing the Imperium's future.

Know Your Place

The Imperium clings strongly to a feudal mentality. Nations brought up following the Imperial Creed have a very definite sense of obligation and a clear idea of what their "place" is within their society. Travel is rare and most citizens never leave the world of their birth. Conformity to what is expected is the norm. Indeed, one of the many reasons why mutants and psykers are so persecuted is because they generally exist outside of the accepted bounds of Imperial culture. The Imperium has three tithes, which it levies against the majority of its worlds:

- Control your psykers and give them over to the Black Ships.
- Whether troops or materials, supply the required amount when asked.
- Have no dealings with enemies of the Imperium.

In exchange for adhering to these three obligations, the Imperium safeguards its worlds against the many dark forces arrayed against them. The majority of Imperial citizens see nothing wrong with this system. Most will report any "witches" they know of (though superstition may silence them) and deviant behaviour when they see it. They willingly join the Imperial Guard when called upon to do so, and the thought of seeing an alien, much less speaking with one, is abhorrent. They proudly serve their leaders and exult in the Imperium's victories. They whisper in awe about the glorious campaigns of the Space Marines and tremble in fear at the thought of ever crossing the Inquisition…

That said, Inquisitors and those they tend to choose as Acolytes are notorious for not knowing their place or even for refusing to accept that they might have a place. It is one of the great ironies of the Inquisition that in order to protect Imperial society, its agents frequently remain outside of it.

We're on a Mission from The God-Emperor

So your players all have their Acolytes ready to uncover heresy, seek out corruption and purge the xenos threat. Time to summon the Daemon into the details. Time to discuss some plot elements you'll need to help craft an adventure worthy of the name Dark Heresy.

Heroes, Heretics and Everyone In-Between

It is the Non-Player Characters (NPCs) that you create and play that will do the most to bring the grim future of Dark Heresy alive for your players. A roleplaying game is populated with all manner of persons that don't matter too much in the overall structure of your adventures. Every irate clerk doesn't really need to be given game statistics. These faceless masses of NPCs serve mainly as setting aids. The few that your Acolytes may actually face in combat should usually have game statistics, but they can't take a whole lot of damage as they mainly serve as cannon fodder.

There are others though, who are special. These are more detailed NPCs and their interactions with the Acolytes should ultimately serve to drive the plots of many of your adventures. Major NPCs do not necessarily need to be as fully detailed as a PC, though they most often will be. Their purpose in your game is to bring depth to the setting by highlighting different aspects of it, and often, to create conflict. Conflict is what drives every good story, though the nature of the conflict varies. In many roleplaying games, conflict is often violent, but the desires and needs of NPCs can cause other sorts of clashes as well. Whenever you introduce a major NPC, you should consider exactly how he/she/it will interact with your band of Acolytes. The desires and needs of these NPCs will directly affect what they may want from your PCs. The following broad categories cover the majority of what most such major characters could want.

Help

The NPC wishes or needs the assistance of one or more of the Acolytes. The characters' master could questionably fall into this category. No one approaches agents of the Inquisition lightly, so if your PCs have settled in one area long enough to be known to the locals, those approaching them are likely to have very serious problems. Travelling or incognito, PCs could still be asked for help for any number of reasons. Since PCs tend to be fairly competent individuals, one common reason they may be approached is because the NPC wishes to make use of the skills that they have.

Exploit

The NPC intends to use the PCs to his advantage, regardless of their personal desires on the subject. Such an NPC may frame the band (or expose their actual practices to the right people) in order to advance his own position or further his plans. Some Inquisitors push their Acolytes until they break, then casually discard them when they are no longer of use. Note, however, that not all NPCs that set out to utilise the PCs necessarily intend them harm. The nobleman who wishes to see his corrupt brother removed so that he has a clearer line to power may offer his assistance freely to the characters—he is still exploiting them for his own ends, but he is also helping them do their job.

Resist

The NPC opposes the PCs in some way—a state that can range from "friendly rivalry" to "willing to destroy an entire planet, if it will kill one or more of the Acolytes". Generally, any dangerous heretics the PCs ever fight will fall under this category, with the really clever ones perhaps attempting to exploit them as well.

Teach

Often the rarest of NPCs, but still among the most important, instructors and mentors both have this motivation. Such NPCs wish to increase one or more of the Acolytes' skills or understanding. Some truly have an altruistic desire to teach, whereas others will have selfish reasons for imparting their wisdom, in which case they may well intend to use their position of trust with the PCs to manipulate them. One or more of your players' Acolytes could be a student of their employer, especially if the PC is intending to become an Inquisitor himself one day.

Finally, consider how the NPC intends to get what he wants from the Acolytes. What sort of person is he? Will he ask politely, or ruthlessly blackmail the PCs into doing his bidding? Will he seek to have them all killed from a distance or will his honour insist that he look them each one directly in the eyes before he gives orders for them to be cut down. What resources are at his disposal to accomplish his aims? How far is he willing to go if the PCs defy him? Thinking about the answers to these questions before the Acolytes even meet your NPC will help you roleplay them effectively, especially since no PC will ever do exactly what you expect them to.

There are many ways to run foul of the Emperor's Inquisition. A fair number of Imperial transgressions are not the choice of the offender in question, for example, nobody asks to be born a mutant. Those that wilfully break the Emperor's laws, though, tend to be fairly dangerous types as the penalties are invariably harsh. When creating "bad guys" for your Acolytes to take on, remember that few "villains" ever see themselves as such. Regardless of whatever crimes they have committed, they justify their behaviour, to themselves at least, as appropriate considering their circumstances. In some cases, the PCs may even agree with them, which doesn't make the heretics in question any less guilty.

Variety, as the old saying has it, is the spice of life—it is certainly the key to creating engaging foes for your Acolytes. If every heretic is a Chaos cultist that represents a galaxy-striding evil, your adventures can swiftly become somewhat repetitious. Choose foes with a variety of different means and abilities. It's always worthwhile to come up with one or two really nasty villains—perhaps they/him/it reappear a couple of times in a campaign and become a nemesis to the Acolytes. When your players discover that their Acolytes are trying to stop something truly monstrous, their engagement in the game will be heightened and their fun increased.

A PROPER STAGE

The sheer number of settings available in the Imperium may be somewhat overwhelming. While deciding where you want to set an adventure, think about its scope. Are the Acolytes meant to track down a single fugitive or do you intend them to uncover the tendrils of a massive cult that worships strange alien masters? By thinking in advance about what your PCs will be doing, you can help pick a proper stage (or stages) for them to do it on. Many campaigns can begin and end on a single planet—some of them may never even leave the bowels of a specific hive—but others may well roam from world to world.

The types of adventures you're running are surely influenced by where you set them as well. A "murder mystery" set on a desolate colony world will feel very different to one that plays out in a noble's court. The setting itself can be the primary element in some adventures, especially if you highlight one or more of the parts of the setting unique to Dark Heresy. Take, for example, a ship travelling through the warp, one protected only by the geller fields that hold warp predators at bay. Anyone travelling on such a ship is effectively trapped until it makes its next stop in realspace. But let's persist in this—what is one of the worst things that can happen when you're trapped? Being hunted. So what could hunt the Acolytes? A xenoform? An assassin? Eversor assassins tend to be somewhat… unstable. What if the PCs were hitching a ride with an Inquisitorial ship when an Eversor got loose in the hold, an Eversor whose last orders were to kill everything he came into contact with, until given the right code words to make him stand down? What if the same accident that set him loose killed the only man on board that knew the code words? One night's setting and adventure (staying alive!) all in one.

Just as there are appropriate settings for various adventures, there are a lot of exciting places to have a fight. Whenever there is a likelihood that combat will occur in your game, see if you can arrange for it to be somewhere interesting. Very few fights in Dark Heresy happen out in open fields with no cover. Thinking about the "terrain" in advance will give you some idea of what could happen during the fight, as well as making the fight exciting for your PCs. Combat is deadly in Dark Heresy and battles should always be swift and uncertain—a course one only engages in if there is no other option.

Heresies Great and Small

The following are examples of the types of adventures that members of the Inquisition face on a regular basis. A few of these situations only challenge the inexperienced, for if you're still alive after having investigated the shadows of the Imperium for a century or two, you'll have doubtless learned more than you care to about heresy. Others will test the mettle of even the most stalwart of Inquisitors.

Something is Awry

The greatest troubles often begin with only the smallest of warnings; like an iceberg, the modest peak that shows above the surface gives no indication of the scope of that which lies beneath. Many investigations crucial to the Imperium's history have begun simply, heralded by an ominous phrase such as, "Ezekial has been acting strange lately". Experienced agents of the Inquisition soon develop a keen eye for noticing unusual patterns of behaviour and what they might indicate, such as cult activity, Daemonic possession, psychic emergence, xenos influence and so on—the list is long. They also have to be wary that they don't start reading ominous doom in every stray glance and odd bit of conduct that they happen to notice, as there are a fair number of non-heretical explanations for a wide range of unusual activities.

Many Acolytes end up spending a fair amount of time secretly studying suspicious individuals from a distance in order to discern if anything heretical is actually occurring. If they do discover that their subject has succumbed to heresy, their response varies depending on what the heretic is up to. Frequently, however, criminal dealings of one sort or another are the reason for wary conduct. Inquisitors generally expect their Acolytes to report such activity to the local authorities to handle when they find it, as they have better uses for their agents than allowing them to act as impromptu police. Sometimes what appears to be "normal" criminal behaviour is in fact the first clue to a deeper and darker conspiracy, where random threads and clues start to build an elaborate picture of a grand criminal or Daemonic plan. Some Inquisitors, especially those with more flexible morals, are deft at using underworld elements to their advantage—their Acolytes may, in fact, find themselves acting as liaisons between their master and the criminals they've discovered. Such Inquisitors are frequently willing to extend a certain amount of "protection" to the right sort of thugs, in exchange for information, black market goods, extra muscle when needed, etc.

We're All Cultists Here

The only religion "officially" recognised by the Imperium is the Cult of the God-Emperor, which ostensibly follows the Imperial Creed as taught by the preachers of the Adeptus Ministorum. All other cults are heretical, including the Cult Mechanicus, though only the most unthinkingly zealous of priests attempt to preach against the beliefs of the Machine God's followers. While this seems straightforward on the surface, the Imperial Creed has in fact been interpreted countless different ways over the various worlds on which it flourishes. What's more, the Ecclesiarchy was only established as the official religion of

the Imperium close to 3,000 years after the Emperor was encased in the Golden Throne as it had, prior to its ascension, been the largest and most influential of the many cults dedicated to the God-Emperor, all of which had sprung up after His "deification". Consequently, there are many, many different sects within the Imperium, the majority of which can legitimately claim authenticity—although if such was to explain their beliefs in detail to one another a holy war of epic proportions would likely occur, as all sides would regard the others as heretics on account of their deviations from the "one true faith". The Adeptus Ministorum exists to prevent such occurrences, but they still arise from time to time. Generally, the Ecclesiarchy is loath to bring the Inquisition into such matters, though if they must summon an Inquisitor, they will invariably request a member of the Ordo Hereticus.

Whichever particular strain of the Imperial Creed that the Ecclesiarchy favours in any given century is not what concerns the Inquisition, but the ease with which true deviancy can slip by unnoticed into the many variations of the God-Emperor's Cult. Since few Imperial citizens are raised to question authority and the majority are encouraged to believe in what they are told by the members of the Ecclesiarchy, a subtly corrupt priest can do massive damage before being discovered. The populace of entire worlds have been lost to suicide cults and much worse because of warp-tainted demagogues. The medieval mindset of Imperial citizens encourages them to deeply believe in spiritual powers beyond their comprehension, which the Ecclesiarchy tells them should be the God-Emperor. The followers of the Ruinous Powers have learned to take advantage of the Imperial "need to believe" by combining it with the subtle lure of secret lore or privileges. By posing as one of the countless sects of the God-Emperor, one offering certain advantages or boasting a lofty or elitist status, a Chaos cult can ensnare many influential followers. By the time such people are initiated into the "deeper mysteries" that their new sect offers, it is far too late for them to escape its clutches. Those who embrace the worship of the foul Chaos gods turn their back on the Emperor and His works, involving themselves in acts of heinous depravity and utter madness as they walk the razor-lined path to power that the Ruinous Powers offer.

It is one of the primary duties of the Inquisition to root out and destroy cults dedicated to the dark gods of Chaos before they can do any lasting harm. One of the most dangerous tasks that a band of Acolytes can take on is the infiltration and possible elimination of a Chaos cult. Not only is there a very real danger if one is discovered, there is also a terrible chance of warp corruption of the soul from learning too much of a heretical cult's beliefs. These secretive cults are incredibly dangerous opponents, as it can be very difficult to tell how far their influence has spread. It is difficult to rely on local backup if you think they may suddenly turn on you! Worse still, the corruption inherent in such depraved beliefs can often manifest itself in disturbingly tangible ways—the leaders of such cults often have strange powers and are frequently mutants, powerful psykers, Daemon-touched or a combination thereof. While the majority of Acolyte bands will only be involved in the discovery and elimination of such groups, there are some Radical Inquisitors who allow and even encourage heretical cults in the belief that they can use them to further their aims—fighting fire with fire, so to speak. Acolytes working for such an Inquisitor may find their faith sorely tested if they are asked to cooperate in certain rituals…

The Creatures Outside

The Adeptus Ministorum preaches that the Emperor's greatest glory lies in His protection of humanity from the horrors of the immaterium. The Astronomican, which guides the ships of the Imperium through the darkness of the warp, is the most tangible example of his benevolence. The Ecclesiarchy makes a point of not discussing what those unseen terrors might be, though. Within the Imperium, the Navis Nobilite and the Inquisition have the greatest knowledge of what resides in the darkness of the empyrean. The warp is thought to be a dark reflection of the material universe, a place of raw emotion given form. Psykers claim that every soul (save those of Untouchables) flickers as a light in the immaterium. The light of a psyker burns the brightest and, without the proper mental discipline or training, can serve to summon forth the beings that call the warp home when they invoke their powers. While there are a variety of strange life forms that exist in the warp, the type that tends to concern the Inquisition the most are known as warp entities.

Warp entities are creatures that the Ordo Malleus believes to be formed of the raw energy of the immaterium itself. The majority of such creatures seem to be hostile to terrestrial life, but the most dangerous by far are the Daemons of Chaos. Daemons are typically formed from the most extreme thoughts and emotions congealed into a single sentience. The Daemonhunters have spent millennia trying to catalogue all the different forms the Daemon can take, but the task is never complete, as the Daemon hordes seem to be endless. All Daemons hate, yet desire, the world of flesh with terrible endless malice. They hunger for a solid form and the sensations that a body can provide, even as they despise the weaknesses of living beings. Unprotected psykers represent the surest way that Daemons can force their way into realspace, using the unfortunate psyker as an energy conduit to allow them access. Daemons take on a myriad of different appearances in realspace, but all are composed of energy made flesh and even the most "lesser" Daemon is incredibly deadly. Fortunately, as creatures of the immaterium, they require a continuous flow of emotional or psychic power to sustain them or they soon lose physical form and collapse back into energy, returning to the warp whence they came. Unfortunately, areas where Daemons have succeeded in attaining flesh become corrupt as the dimensions stretch thin, making the process of crossing into realspace progressively easier. Eventually the barrier between dimensions can collapse entirely, permanently juxtaposing an area of the immaterium with an equal area of realspace, resulting in a hellish Chaos realm where spirit and flesh become equally malleable. Daemons that wish to stay in realspace for an extended time will try to possess a psyker by seizing control of his body. If the Daemon is successful, the resulting creature is known as a Daemonhost and while often not as powerful as a manifested Daemon, they are still some of the most dangerous beings in the galaxy. Daemons frequently cooperate with the followers of the Chaos gods to benefit from the blasphemous rituals that cultists perform to bring them across from the empyrean and into reality, in order to further the cultists' own power.

Acolytes of the Inquisition, especially those seconded to the Ordo Malleus, are trained to look for signs of Daemonic possession. Such foes cannot go long unopposed, for their power can grow greatly very, very quickly—and Acolytes that discover the undue influence of the warp often have to act swiftly to stop it before it can spread beyond control. The role of the Daemonhunter is a lonely one, for few have the strength of will or the spirit to long endure the terrible knowledge of the Daemonic. Acolytes who take up this most sacred

of roles frequently start out pious but often become greatly troubled by what they encounter. Numerous agents eventually succumb to corruption of some sort, if they manage to survive for long. The few that endure with their sanity intact frequently request that they be allowed to either concentrate on other foes or retire entirely from active fieldwork in the service of the Inquisition. Despite the many obvious and manifest dangers of the Daemonic, there are those Inquisitors who believe that the power of Chaos can be used against itself. The most audacious, be they knowledgeable or simply foolish, dare to bind a Daemon into a specially prepared body marked with blessed runes of binding and snared with eldritch sigil-carved chains to form a creature known as a Daemonhost. Daemonhosts are bound to serve their creator and theoretically obey his commands without question, though this is a dubious prospect at best. Any Inquisitor that is ever proved to have created a Daemonhost is automatically declared Excommunicate Traitoris and hunted down by his fellows, invariably led by a squad of Grey Knights—the legendary Chapter of Adeptus Astartes that serves as the Ordo Malleus's chamber militant. So why do Radical Inquisitors even risk such a reprimand? Because Daemonhosts are grotesquely powerful and a potent asset when combating other Daemons and rogue psykers. Acolytes that become aware of an Inquisitor who employs Daemonhosts are honour-bound to report the matter to the Ordo Malleus. Those that don't are automatically condemned along with him if his heresy is ever discovered and their silence is proven.

The Problem With Psykers

Psykers are feared and hated, widely denounced as heretics. The mightiest of their number can unerringly command entire populations, fling their thoughts to the farthest reaches of the galaxy and crush a Battle Titan with their will. They are dangerous potential conduits for Daemons from the immaterium.

One of the responsibilities that Acolytes may take on is the search for newly emerging psykers. Such a task can be a heavy emotional burden, as psykers come from every walk of life and almost none of them asked to be one. Many of them fear and hate what they've become. They are often filled with rage and self-loathing, which, when combined with their newly acquired powers, can make them dangerous and unpredictable opponents. Psykers who have embraced their abilities are even worse. Their control over their psychic talent is seldom precise, but they are often still devastatingly lethal to everyone around them. Psykers who manage to avoid early Imperial detection are forced to hide their powers by going where the standard authorities would be loath to follow them; many Imperial worlds have lawless areas where even the toughest arbitrators will not go and it is there that wyrds can be found, selling their powers to the highest bidder. Wyrds are mercenary psykers, self-taught individuals of wildly varied abilities who eke out a living as far from Imperial scrutiny as they can. The Inquisition is not the only group on the lookout for psykers, though. A number of fledging psykers are inducted into cults or other groups willing to hide them from the Black Ships' tithe. Psykers in league with the forces of Chaos are one of the greatest dangers the Imperium faces. Acolytes fighting rogue psykers who are allied with the Ruinous Powers face an enemy that may very well know what they intend to do before they can even enact it. Such opponents are willing to pull forth the secrets of the Acolytes' past in order to mentally violate them, making the fight against experienced psykers as emotionally damaging as fighting against Daemons. The Inquisition is thus one of the foremost bodies of the Imperium for making use of Untouchables to serve the cause of the Ordo Hereticus in the capture and/or execution of rogue psykers.

Xenos Among Us

The Ecclesiarchy preaches that it is the manifest destiny of the God-Emperor's Imperium to rule the entire galaxy and even those of more secular leanings believe this to be so. All other races are regarded as trespassing in humanity's space. The majority of humans that willingly deal with sentient xenos in any other than a violent fashion are considered to be heretics. Still, the scattered nature of the Imperium's many systems means there are a vast number of planets that bear xenoforms interlaced with those of humanity. While there are a few alien species that simply wish to be left alone, the greater majority ever encountered by the Imperium are all actively hostile to humankind. The Ordo Xenos is continually on the watch for the many threats posed by alien life forms, from deadly diseases to invasion forces. They must constantly guard against the sinister threats posed by alien-worshiping cults, Eldar raiders, the Great Devourer and the brutal Orks to name but a few.

A more insidious threat is present in the form of xenos technology. The more orthodox members of the Adeptus Mechanicus preach that all technology that doesn't derive from humankind is corrupt and capable of endangering its user's soul (at least, that's how they often justify their "requisitions"). Alien works are therefore often deemed suspect. Imperial propaganda generally depicts all items of non-human manufacture as inferior to those of humanity. If forced to acknowledge the efficacy of another race's technology, they swiftly forward the Mechanicus's arguments that xenos devices are all potentially damning. None of this changes the fact that a number of xenos artefacts are very powerful or can produce effects unknown to humanity's devices. Where there are illegal goods, there is profit to be had and a number of criminal groups throughout the Imperium deal in various xenos commodities, ranging from technology to drugs to slavery.

The Acolytes of the Ordo Xenos are forever on the watch for any signs of xenos influence. Cults dedicated to various xenos gods or venerating strange aliens themselves fall under their charter as do the many suspect criminal cartels and users of proscribed xenos technology. The agents of the Inquisition ceaselessly search for patterns when xenos become involved in any enterprise, because history has repeatedly shown that small intrusions often pave the way for full-scale invasions.

Rebellious Intent

If they are able to do so, most of the Imperium's citizens seem to be content to go about their lives in relative peace. Many of the societies of the Imperium's worlds are oppressive though, which breeds resentment. Even the worlds that embrace a more egalitarian viewpoint frequently encourage conformity. Neither resentment nor forced compliance makes for contented people though. The Administratum, which runs the Imperium, is not unaware of this phenomenon. While planetary governors are allowed to run their worlds as they see fit, they are always encouraged to use the twin outlets of "faith" and "fear" as channels to redirect aggression. The Ecclesiarchy assists with the former, and constant vague rhetoric about the many threats of the galaxy helps with the latter. As long as

the Imperial tithes flow when needed, the Administratum often turns a blind eye to all but the most brutal of excesses. It is when the tithes end that the troubles start, for the Imperium does not suffer rebellion lightly. The greatest censure of an errant governor generally arrives in the form of an Imperial assassin, though larger rebellions frequently merit larger forces to put them down. Mutinous planets have been decimated as examples to others—yet rebellions, no matter how hopeless, will still occur, as defiance seems to be one of the defining traits of humanity.

Acolytes can find themselves involved in many different ways on either side of a rebellion. Some bands specialise in going undercover as they seek out particularly deadly threats lurking in the downtrodden shanties and seedy drinking halls. Some Radical Inquisitors may encourage rebellions (see **Chapter X: The Inquisition**) and Acolytes working for them may take up a career of rabble rousing. Neither supporting a rebellion, nor attempting to put one down, makes for a sedate life.

Burning Words

There are many doors that should never be opened, some secrets that should be allowed to remain secrets. Nevertheless, there are various groups in the Imperium that seem determined to seek knowledge that has either been suppressed or deemed blasphemous. There are certain factions of scholars, often ones funded by the noble houses, which specialise in disciplines such as xenoarchaeology and psychic phenomena. As long as their findings are "approved", the Ecclesiarchy allows them to function with little interference, but a questing mind is seldom content with dogma and predisposed to stray into heretical thought. The followers of the Machine God are notorious for seeking out answers to forbidden questions, even when their superiors have forbidden them to continue down certain lines of inquiry. Finally, there are the more radical members of the Inquisition itself, who often consider themselves above the need to explain themselves or their reading choices. The Inquisition maintains a long list of heretical texts, many of which are to be burned unopened should they be discovered, that some individuals often treat as a "wish list".

Depending on the type of Inquisitor they're working for, Acolytes could find themselves involved in either the suppression of knowledge, its acquisition, or both. Stealing or destroying texts and data-files, pict doctoring, secretly corrupting the journals of soon-to-be-dead scholars so that their colleagues abandon certain roads of inquiry, record suppression, "fact" alteration, torching labs along with their occupants, searching for ancient texts—heretical or otherwise, are all distinct possibilities in the pursuit of guarding secrets. Remember that some knowledge is like a disease: once known it cannot be unknown no matter how badly an Acolyte wishes to forget what he has learned.

We are our Own Worst Enemy

The single most dangerous institution in the Imperium of Man is the Emperor's Inquisition. The greatest threat many Acolytes will ever face may very well come at the hands of a rival Inquisitor and his retinue. The Acolytes of the Inquisition are often the best at what they do: ruthless, dedicated and driven by the certain knowledge that what they do is right.

Trust is a luxury that Acolytes can seldom afford.

For Glory or Gain?

Acolytes join the Inquisition for many reasons, but few ever manage to retire. Learning the dark secrets of the galaxy is not conducive to keeping one's sanity. Acolytes regularly face deadly foes, some of which are capable of rending not just bodies but souls as well. Why, then, do they walk into the darkness? Each answers for themselves alone. This section describes the rewards for PCs, as well as advice for how to hand them out.

Experience Points

Experience Points (xp) are the most common reward in Dark Heresy. Characters use them to buy Advances, Skills, Talents and Career Path changes, as this overall process represents the way they become more adept over time. As the GM you are responsible for awarding Experience Points. You want to give out enough to ensure that characters are progressing but not so much that they blow through their Career Path too quickly. There are several different approaches to handing out Experience Points; descriptions of these follow.

The Abstract Method

This is the easiest way to hand out Experience Points and the one recommended for beginners. It has one simple guideline: give each player 200 xp for every four hours of play time. This represents the length of an average session, so this method ensures that after each game a player can take an Advance, or a new Skill or Talent.

While other methods are success-oriented, the abstract method is predicated on the notion that all experience is valuable. In fact, failure is often more instructive than success, so what matters is simple survival. If characters can endure everything the galaxy can throw at them, they deserve a reward.

The four-hour mark is a guideline and it is meant to be flexible. If your group spends a lot of time joking around, taking snack breaks and so on, you may decide that six hours is more appropriate. If your sessions average three hours, but are packed with adventure, that can deserve Experience Points too.

The Detailed Method

As the name indicates, this is the most time-consuming method of handing out xp, but it also gives you the greatest control. When using the detailed method, you break the adventure down into its component parts and give out an xp award for the successful completion of each section. Essentially, each step of the plot has its own reward. Awards can be as little as 5 xp for a minor event and as large as 50 xp for a major one. When considering an appropriate reward for each scene, you can use **Table 8–1: Encounter Difficulty**. This breaks down each scene using the basic framework of the Test Difficulty table.

Example

In one session, the PCs followed a tip to find a seedy bar in the underhive. There they met an information broker who was willing to point them in the direction of a notorious smuggler, supposedly dealing in xenos weapons. First, however, the broker wanted the Acolytes to remove one of her competitors, and since he was a mutant, they agreed. She didn't bother to mention his well-armed gang. After dealing with the underhive scum, the characters finally acquired the location of the smuggler they'd been searching for. For this session, the GM awards 30 xp for finding and dealing with the information broker; 50 xp for the fight with the mutant and his gang; and 40 xp for determining where the smuggler was located. Next session they'll doubtless pay the heretical xenos-coddling scum a visit…

Table 8-1: Encounter Difficulty

Difficulty	XP Award
Very Easy	20
Easy	30
Routine	40
Average	50
Challenging	80
Hard	100
Very Hard	130

As with Test Difficulty, you should try to be fair when determining encounter difficulty. Was the obstacle easily overcome or was the victory dearly bought? Were the PCs at a disadvantage (perhaps due to psychic ability or numbers)? How many Fate Points did they use to get through the fight? These are all questions to consider when assigning encounter difficulty.

You should also consider the importance of the encounter when awarding xp. Randomly killing innocents, or even the guilty, without purpose merits nothing; what matters is bringing heretics to face the Emperor's justice. The climactic encounter at the end of a long adventure, however, is worth extra xp, perhaps up to double the normal award.

Roleplaying Awards

In addition to story-based Experience Points awards, you may also want to hand out individual awards for good roleplaying after each session. Roleplaying awards should generally be in the 20-50 xp range and they are by no means automatic. The idea is to reward players who do an exceptional job portraying their characters.

What "good roleplaying" is can be quite subjective. There is a temptation to reward the boisterous and entertaining player, but you should try to consider the personality of the character being portrayed. A brooding Adeptus Mechanicus enginseer is not going to dominate social situations, but effective roleplaying of that personality is still worthy of an award. As the campaign goes on and the characters evolve, everyone in the group will gain a greater understanding of the personalities of the various PCs. This ought to make judging roleplaying easier.

Fate Points

You may, on rare occasions, wish to award a Fate Point to an Acolyte who has accomplished something truly remarkable at the end of a major story arc, but you should be sparing when handing them out.

Rank & Privileges

As Acolytes of the Inquisition, the PCs already have access to a great deal of worldly influence. Still, there are many groups that will not automatically kowtow to the Inquisition. Acquiring friends and allies within other groups such as the underworld or the Adeptus Mechanicus is always a useful "reward" for an Acolyte. Gaining fame and social status within Imperial society is a bit of a double-edged sword for an Acolyte—while useful, it makes their frequent task of going undercover somewhat difficult. Then again, such connections may make going undercover unnecessary.

Membership in exclusive groups and access to dearly held secrets are great rewards for Acolytes. The Inquisition has many forbidden books that only trusted agents ever get access to. Characters may also have greater resources allocated to them, allowing them to call in greater amounts of support without having to check with their Inquisitor first. A rookie Acolyte can muster almost no one but his immediate companions—having to fend for himself and earn the privileges long service and trust can bring. An Acolyte with a century of loyal service can ask for and expect to receive whole battalions of Imperial Guard if he deems a situation requires it.

Elite Advances

Normally, characters cannot learn Skills and Talents that are not part of their Career Advances. This is intentional. If characters could pick and choose whatever Skills and Talents they wanted, the entire Career Path structure would break down.

That said, you may reward characters with special training that lets them buy Skills and Talents outside their Career Path, but this should be a rare occurrence. You also must make sure that characters justify these acquisitions through their actions. Characters must seek out teachers, spend time training and often pay exorbitant prices for the lessons. Even then, such Skills and Talents should cost at least 200 xp, if not more. You may relax some of these strictures under special circumstances, but don't make it too easy. Your players should never assume that they can acquire whatever Skill they want regardless of their career.

Interaction

"A suspicious mind is a healthy mind."
— Inscription within the Bastion Serpentis

Much of Dark Heresy centres on dealing with the many and varied peoples that inhabit the worlds of the Imperium. From the lax guards that monitor the entrances into the underhive, to the quartermasters that portion out vital gear, to witnesses, contacts and spies, knowing how to deal with the peoples of the 41st Millennium can give you a decided advantage in rooting out and burning the heretics.

Interaction Skills

Chapter III: Skills presents a number of Interaction skills such as Charm, Command, Deceive and Intimidate. Each of these are basic Fellowship skills meaning any characters can employ them, albeit at a reduced rate if they don't have the Skill. To befriend another, a player would use Charm; to issue an order, he would use Command; to fool or dupe, 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

Usually, a player doesn't need to Test Skills to interact with other characters. He simply plays the role of his character. The interactions between the player, in the role of his character, and the GM, in the role of the NPC, determine the outcome of the conversation. As in any situation with dramatic consequences, though, a player should make an appropriate Test if there are consequences for failure, if he is trying to convince an NPC to do something that he or she would ordinarily not do: spilling information about a secret, accept a bribe and so on, or if success would advance the plot in a considerable way. Ultimately, when a player does or does not make a Test is up to the GM. He will have final say about the circumstances of the encounter.

Dispositions

When Testing an Interaction skill, circumstances can dictate the Difficulty of the Test. Such situations include atmosphere, situation and an NPCs particular circumstances. However, the most important factor is the NPCs disposition toward the player character—how the character regards him and what feelings or lack of feelings the NPC displays. The NPCs disposition, which is always set by the GM, determines the base difficulty. Other factors can adjust the Difficulty up or down as the situation demands. **Table 8–2: Dispositions** provides sample dispositions based on the Test a player is attempting and the corresponding Difficulty.

On a successful Test, the target's disposition improves by one step, plus one step per degree of success. On a failed Test, the target's disposition remains unchanged and worsens by one step for each degree of failure.

Generally, a target must at least be Indifferent to do as requested, and then the target will only do what the player wants 50% of the time if left to his own devices. Each step above Indifferent indicates that the target is 10% more likely to do as requested. Under supervision, the base chance increases by 20%.

Example

Drake and his fellow Acolytes have conscripted a group of local PDF troopers to help them in their hunt for a dangerous xenos in the depths of an ancient hive. Coming unexpectedly upon the creature in the dank waste reclamation tunnels, Drake must try and get his cohort of suddenly reluctant PDF troopers to attack.

The GM decides that the PDF troopers are well trained but not happy about being seconded by the Acolytes. The GM classes their disposition as Resentment, so Drake will need to succeed on a Difficult (–10) Command Test. Drake needs to succeed on the Test to improve the troopers' disposition to Indifferent, but then the troopers might run away if the fight goes badly. Luckily, Drake has a 46 Fellowship. He rolls d100, getting a 25: a success! Since he passed the Test by 21, he also got two degrees of success, meaning he improves the troopers' disposition to Devoted, which the GM rules is more than sufficient to ensure that they will fight to the bitter end.

Interaction and Groups

When a player uses an Interaction skill against a group of individuals, he resolves the Test in the way already described, but the GM sets the disposition based on the overall attitudes of the group. The player makes the Test as normal, but if he succeeds, he can affect a number of individuals equal to his Fellowship Bonus. The total indicates the number of targets the player affects with his successful Test. Note that certain Talents can increase the number of targets a player can affect.

Table 8–2: Dispositions

		—Dispositions by Skill—			
Difficulty	**Modifier**	**Charm**	**Command**	**Deceive**	**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	Contemptful	Disloyal	Sceptical	Courageous
Very Hard	–30	Disgusted	Mutinous	Disbelieving	Foolhardy

VIII: The Game Master

Fear & Damnation

The 41st Millennium is a dark and terrible place where mankind's billions inhabit a universe filled with unnumbered horrors and countless dangers. Murderous aliens stalk the cold stars, rebellion and treachery fester within the shadow of the Imperium's decaying might and nightmarish forces eternally claw at the very fabric of reality from beyond, seeking both to feast and to corrupt. The Acolytes must struggle against this backdrop of sinister menace, dark violence and entropy, and fear; horror, madness and the subtle taint of Chaos are fundamental aspects of the games you will play.

The rules presented here reflect these many threats to the mind and soul, and how the player characters interact with them. They are separated into three distinct, interlinking sections: Fear covers a character's immediate reaction to frightening events and creatures, Insanity details with the long-term effects of mental trauma on a character, while Corruption deals with the insidious influence of the warp and forbidden knowledge. During combat encounters, the only rules that will be used from this chapter are those for Fear. the effects of Insanity and Corruption are dealt with in the aftermath of a battle rather than during it.

INSANITY AND CORRUPTION POINTS

Insanity Points (IP) and Corruption Points (CP) are Characteristics that characters gain during play. Both of these scores begin at 0 when a player starts and increase over time as damage is done to a character's state of mind (IP) and the purity of his soul (CP). The higher these scores, the more twisted, damaged and debilitated a character becomes, and should either of these scores ever reach 100, a character is hopelessly driven mad or tainted and his career and life come to a sudden and abrupt end, exactly as if he had been killed.

FEAR

Fear comes into effect when the Acolytes are confronted with scenes of atrocity or horror, or when they are called on to battle against terrifying aliens, insane perversions of science and nightmarish entities from the warp. When an Acolyte is confronted by such a frightening event or adversary, they must take a Fear Test; this is a Willpower Test, modified by how frightening the thing is. If the Acolyte passes this Test then he may continue to act as normal. If he fails however, he succumbs to Fear.

Degrees of Fear

Some things are clearly more frightening than others; for an Acolyte, having a gun waved in his face by a ganger, although obviously dangerous, is not sufficient to call for a Fear Test. However, having a gun waved at him by the walking corpse of his dead brother, while luminous white spiders scurry in and out of his bloodless open wounds—that calls for a somewhat severe one. The **Table 8-3: Fear Test Difficulties,** offers some guidelines on the severity of Fear Tests.

Table 8-3: Fear Test Difficulties

Severity of Fear	Test Mod	Example Adversaries
Fear (1) Disturbing	(0)	Nightwing, Revenant, Synofian Bore Worm
Fear (2) Frightening	(–10)	Carnosaur, Dusk Stalker, Murder Gholam
Fear (3) Horrifying	(–20)	Incarnate Daemon, Astral Spectre, Psychneuein
Fear (4) Terrifying	(–30)	The King in Rags and Tatters

Failing the Fear Test

If in a combat situation a character fails a Fear Test, he must immediately roll on **Table 8-4: The Shock Table**, adding +10 to the result for each degree of failure. The effects listed are applied immediately to the character.

If in a non-combat situation the character fails the Fear Test, the character becomes unnerved and suffers a -10 penalty to any Skill or Test that requires concentration on his part. This penalty lasts while the character remains in the vicinity of the object of their Fear (simply leaving and coming back again doesn't stop this!).

In addition, if a non-combat Fear Test is failed by 30 or more, the character also gains +1d5 Insanity Points.

Shock and snapping out of it

Characters may be able to shake off some of the effects of Fear after the initial shock has worn off. Where specified on **Table 8-4: The Shock Table** that a character may "snap out of it", a character can make a Willpower Test when it is his next Turn. If this succeeds then he regains his senses, shrugs off the effects and may act normally from then on. If he fails this Test, the effect continues and he may try again when it is his next Turn.

"As the mind to the body so the soul to the spirit, as death to the mortal man so failure to the immortal, such is the price of all ambition"

Table 8-4: The Shock Table

Roll a d100 and add 10 for every degree of failure.

01–20	The character is badly startled. He may only take a single Half Action when in 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 232**).
41–60	Reeling with shock, the character backs away from the thing that confronts them. The character cannot willingly approach the object of his fear, but may otherwise act normally, with a –10 penalty on all Tests until the end of the encounter. The character gains 1 Insanity Point.
61–80	The character is frozen by terror. The character may make no Actions until he snaps out of it. After snapping out of it, the character will make all Tests with a –10 penalty for the rest of the encounter. The character gains 1d5 Insanity Points.
81–100	Panic grips the character. He must flee the source of his fear, if able, as fast as he can, and if prevented from doing so he may only take Half Actions and is at a –20 penalty to all Tests. The character gains 1d5 Insanity Points. Once away from the danger he must successfully snap out of it to regain control.
101–120	Fainting dead away, the character keels over and remains unconscious for 1d5 Rounds. Once he regain consciousness he is still shaken and takes all Tests with a –10 penalty until the end of the encounter. The character gains 1d5 Insanity Points.
121–130	Totally overcome, the character screams and vomits uncontrollably for 1d5 Rounds. During this time he is helpless, may do nothing and drop anything he is holding. Afterwards, until the end of the encounter, the character may only take a single Half Action each Turn until he can rest. The character gains 1d5 Insanity Points.
131–140	The character laughs hysterically and randomly attacks anything near him in a manic frenzy, firing wildly or using whatever weapon he has to hand. This effect lasts until the character snaps out of it, or until he is knocked unconscious. The character gains 1d5 Insanity Points.
141–160	The character crumples to the ground for 1d5+1 Rounds sobbing, babbling and tearing at his own flesh, and may do nothing. Even after he returns to his senses, he is a complete mess and at a –20 penalty on all Tests until the end of the encounter. The character gains 1d5+1 Insanity Points.
161–170	The character's mind snaps and he becomes catatonic for 1d5 hours and may not be roused. The character gains 1d10 Insanity Points.
171+	The character is so affected that he begins to see strange and terrible visions as his hold on reality shatters. The character suffers the effects of "acute hallucinations" (see **Disorders, page 234**) for 2d10 Rounds. After the hallucinations fade, the character will make all Tests with a –20 penalty while the encounter lasts. The character gains 2d10 Insanity Points and takes 1d10 points of permanent Willpower damage.

Very Bad Things

Fear Tests in non-combat situations are very much the GM's call as to when and where they occur and should not be considered to be automatic. They should instead be used to build dramatic tension to your games, as their over-use will diminish their effectiveness and novelty, as well as grind down your Acolytes. That having been said, here are a few appropriate examples of events that can cause Fear:

Disturbing (0) Viewing the scene of a gruesome murder, minor unknown supernatural or psychic phenomena—strange lights, spectral voices, weeping statues, etc.

Frightening (–10) Meeting someone you know to be dead, being buried alive, major supernatural or psychic phenomena—the skies raining blood, a painting forming shrieking mouths, etc.

Horrifying (–20) Sudden, shocking and inexplicable death (the man next to you on the shuttle suddenly dies, vomiting maggots), hideous moments of revelation (finding yourself covered in blood, surrounded by bodies with a meat cleaver in your hand and no memory of how you got there), the dead rising across a whole planet, etc.

Terrifying (–30) Experiencing a full-scale Daemonic incursion, discovering your failure is responsible for the deaths of millions, staring unprotected into the warp.

Going Insane

Characters in Dark Heresy are at the centre of terrible events: battling indescribable horrors, uncovering shocking truths and engaging in desperate struggles where perhaps the lives and souls of countless innocents hang in the balance. Such are the stresses and terror involved that the slow slide into insanity is a constant threat. No human mind, not even one hardened by the harsh rigours of life in the Imperium, is immune to the slow erosion of sanity by the horrors of the 41st Millennium, and Acolytes are no exception.

In Dark Heresy these dangers are represented by Insanity Points. Insanity Points represent the strain put on a character's mind by his experiences; the more Insanity Points a character has the more fragile his mind. The cumulative effects of gaining Insanity Points are divided into Traumas, which represent the short term after-effects of particularly terrible experiences, and Disorders, which are permanent mental afflictions that sign post a character's slide into total madness.

Degrees of Madness

A character is classified as having a certain degree of madness depending on how many Insanity Points they have. This classification gives a player a broad idea of the state of a character's mind and how close to the edge he has become. A character's degree of madness also determines the modifier that will apply to Tests taken to avoid Mental Trauma.

Mental Trauma

Mental Trauma represents the relatively short-term damage to a character's state of mind that he suffers after experiencing a horrific or supernatural event. Each time the character gains 10 Insanity Points he must make a Trauma Test. This is a Willpower Test, modified in difficulty by how many Insanity Points the character has accrued in total (see **Table 8–5: The Insanity Track**). If the Test is passed the character manages to cope with his experience without extra ill effect. If the Test is failed roll d100, adding 10 for every degree of failure, comparing the result to **Table 8–6: Mental Traumas**. The result is applied to the character in the aftermath of any encounter that inflicted the Insanity Points on him.

Gaining Mental Disorders

Mental disorders reflect the permanent, long-term effects on a character's mind of exposure to things horrific and unnatural. A new disorder (or a more severe version of an existing disorder) is automatically gained each time the character has enough Insanity Points to increase his degree of madness by one stage as shown on **Table 8–5: The Insanity Track**. When a character acquires a disorder, the severity of that disorder will depend on his new degree of madness, as shown.

A character must have the preceding severity of a disorder for it to get worse, (so for a disorder to have become "Severe" the character must have the "Minor" version of the disorder first, with the exception of "The Flesh is Weak" that has no Minor version).

Example

Beam Rollings becomes unhinged after witnessing the horrifying Beast of Solomon. He already has a Minor Delusion of Invulnerability and so the GM decides to increase the level of the delusion to Severe rather than give him a new disorder.

Table 8-5: The Insanity Track

Insanity Points	Degree of Madness	Trauma Modifier	Disorders
0–9	Stable	n/a	None
10–19	Unsettled	+10	—
20–29	Unsettled	+10	—
30–39	Unsettled	+10	—
40–49	Disturbed	+0	1st–Minor
50–59	Disturbed	+0	—
60–69	Unhinged	–10	2nd–Severe
70–79	Unhinged	–10	—
80–89	Deranged	–20	3rd–Acute
90–99	Deranged	–20	—
100+	Terminally Insane—character retires from play		

Table 8-6: Mental Traumas

Roll 1d100 and add +10 for every degree of failure.

01–40	The character becomes withdrawn and quiet. The character is at –10 to all Fellowship-based Tests. This lasts for 3d10 hours.
41–70	The character must compulsively perform an action such as fevered praying, frantically cleaning a weapon, reciting verse, and so on, and pays little attention to anything else. All Tests that are based on Intelligence, Fellowship or Perception suffer a –10 penalty. This effect lasts for 3d10 hours.
71–100	The character is constantly fearful, seeing danger everywhere and extremely jumpy. The character gains a +10 bonus to all Perception-based Tests and is at –10 penalty to his Willpower for the next 1d5 days.
101–120	The character suffers from a temporary severe phobia (see **Disorders, page 235**). This effect lasts for 1d5 days.
121–130	The character reacts to the slightest stress or pressure by becoming extremely agitated. When performing any task that involves a Test, the character must first pass a Willpower Test or suffer a –10 modifier to the Test. If the character gets into combat, all Tests during combat automatically suffer a –10 modifier. This effect lasts for 1d5 days.
131–140	The character suffers vivid and extreme nightmares whenever they try to sleep. The next day and for the next 1d10 days the character will be exhausted by lack of sleep and gains a level of fatigue. This effect lasts for 1d5 days.
141–150	The character is struck dumb and is unable to speak. This lasts for 1d5 days.
151–160	Extremely distressed and unfocused, the character refuses to eat or drink and looks in a terrible state. The character takes a –10 penalty to all Characteristics (no Characteristic can be reduced below 1) for 1d10 days.
161–170	The character temporarily becomes hysterically blind or deaf. This effect lasts for 1d10 days.
171+	The character becomes completely traumatised and virtually unresponsive. He can't initiate actions but may be gently led. This effect lasts for 1d10 days.

THE SEVERITY OF DISORDERS

All disorders are rated as being Minor, Severe or Acute in ascending order of effect.

Minor Disorder: The effects of the disorder manifest rarely or are experienced only to a small degree. Any Test to overcome the effects of the disorder gain a +10 bonus.
Severe Disorder: The effects of the disorder are stronger and may occur regularly. There is no modifier to Tests made to overcome the effects of the disorder.
Acute Disorder: The effects of the disorder are very strong and occur at the slightest stimulation. Any Test to overcome the effects of the disorder take a –10 penalty.

TYPES OF MENTAL DISORDER

There is potentially no end to the variety of unpleasant and unwholesome disorders that might afflict a character, and a few examples are presented here. GMs should also feel free to invent their own to suit the individual Player Character and the horrors they undergo.

The Flesh is Weak!

Seriousness: Severe, Acute.
The character sees his flesh as weak and will constantly blame it for his failures and problems. He will also try to change and/or remove his flesh, becoming increasingly obsessed with surgical modification as well as bionic replacement.

Phobia

Seriousness: Minor, Severe, Acute.
The character has a deep dislike and fear for a particular thing or circumstance. A phobic character must succeed on a Willpower Test to interact with the focus of his phobia. Enforced or gratuitous exposure to the focus of his exposure may incur Fear Tests. Examples of this disorder are:

Fear of the Dead

The character has an abiding fear and loathing of corpses and the dead, possibly due to the fact that sometimes they don't stay dead…

Fear of Insects

Scuttling things with many legs are the character's waking nightmare: faceless, numberless and hungry, forever hungry.

Obsession/Compulsion

Seriousness: Minor, Severe, Acute.
The character has a compulsion to perform a particular action or is obsessed with a particular thing. A character must make a Willpower Test not to act in a compulsive way or not pursue his obsession when the opportunity arises. Examples of this disorder include any of the following:

Kleptomania
The character compulsively steals small objects if he has the opportunity. Often the character attaches no value to such objects.

Self-Mortification
The character must scourge and whip his flesh on a regular basis (or after a particular event such as killing), in order to purge away the sin of his actions through pain.

Visions and Voices

Seriousness: Minor, Severe, Acute.
The character sees things that are not there and hears things that others do not. Acute sufferers may experience visions into which they are totally immersed.

Dead Comrade
The character hears the voice of an old friend now long-dead. At a Severe level, he may even have visions of his friend or converse with them, if his condition becomes Acute.

Flashbacks
The character relives traumatic moments from his life. The length and vividness of these episodes vary according to the seriousness of his condition.

Delusion

Seriousness: Minor, Severe, Acute.
The character suffers from a particular false belief that he has to act on as if it were the truth, despite his better judgement or evidence to the contrary.

Invulnerability
The character believes that he will never get severely injured, either through luck or divine providence. Such a character would have to pass a Willpower Test not to enter a ganghouse and throw insults and punches instead of exercising due caution, for example.

Righteousness
The character believes his choices are right and justified, no matter what the cost. Such a character might claim to be a Puritan despite using proscribed knowledge, or refuse to act subtly where it would otherwise be prudent to do so.

Horrific Nightmares

Seriousness: Minor, Severe.
The character suffers from vivid and reoccurring nightmares; trying to run from a black sun in the sky, or being imprisoned in an endless machine, for example. After any stressful day, the character must pass a Willpower Test in order not to succumb to his terrors while asleep. If he fails, the character will suffer from a single level of Fatigue (see **Fatigue, page 200**) on the following day.

Only the Insane Shall Prosper…

The more insane a character becomes the less horrific things seem. After all, what are the monsters of reality compared to those one sees whenever one closes one's eyes? If the first digit of a character's Insanity total is double or more a thing's Fear Rating (see **page 325**) the character is unaffected by it and does not need to make a Fear Test.

REMOVING INSANITY POINTS FROM YOUR CHARACTER

With the GMs permission, a character may use xp to remove Insanity Points. It costs 100 xp to remove a single Insanity Point. A character may never go down a degree of madness and so will never lose their disorders. All buying back of Insanity Points should be properly represented as time and effort spent by the character in game. Possible ways of representing the removal of Insanity are:

- Prayer, fasting, penance and mortification of the flesh.
- Long-term palliative care.
- Recuperation in quiet and pleasant surroundings.
- Contemplation of the great holy works or other articles of faith (the Credo Omnissiah for example for Mechanicus characters).

Example

Quinn Valentine has 21 Insanity Points and so will be unaffected by anything with a Fear Rating of 1.

Corruption

The most insidious threat facing Acolytes in Dark Heresy, and indeed the Imperium as a whole, is the corrupting taint of Chaos. Encounters with Daemons, dark rituals and even the knowledge that such things are possible are all paths to corruption. Quite aside from the malevolency and manipulation of Daemons and their mortal followers, there is immense danger in exposure to the substance of the warp itself. The swirling tempest of psychoactive energies and pseudo-matter that make up the fabric of warp space is more deadly than any radiation. It can instantly destroy, but it can also inflict hideous transformations on material, body and mind, far beyond anything found in a sane universe. To most, corruption is a doom to be avoided at all costs, but some, once they find themselves walking the path to damnation, will seek to embrace the darkness.

Corruption Points

All Acolytes sooner or later gain Corruption Points (CP). Corruption Points operate almost exactly like Insanity Points, except that they are gained through exposure to the warp, dark rituals, cursed artefacts and Daemonic influence. The more Corruption Points a character has, the more afflicted he becomes; this is reflected in the rules by the risk of Malignancies and Mutation as shown on **Table 8-7: The Corruption Track**.

Chaos and the Common Citizen

The rules for Corruption presented here are for use with Player Characters; Acolytes are men and women of destiny and purpose—exactly the sort of people that the Ruinous Powers seek to slowly corrupt and toy with. For most, the touch of Chaos brings summary destruction, madness, mutation and death.

Moral Threats

The exact level of Corruption Points inflicted by a particular event, revelation or encounter is determined by the GM. The following presents some guidelines:

Warp Shock

If a character suffers Insanity Points resulting from a failed Fear Test involving entities from the warp, the number of Corruption Points inflicted on him are equal to the being's Fear Rating score (i.e. Frightening 2 equals 2 CP).

Rending the Veil

Characters caught in a full-blown intrusion of the warp into corporeal reality gain Corruption Points from the experience. Just how many depends on what occurs and the severity of the breach. This might be anywhere from a single point to several d10s in value.

Sorcery

The practice of sorcery, witnessing dread rituals and invoking Daemons are all causes of Corruption, regardless of the reason. Normally minor rituals cause 1d10 Corruption Points and major ceremonies can cause many more.

Blasphemous Lore

Knowledge itself can corrupt, and the study of certain tomes, pict-logs and even some debased artwork can cause Corruption in the viewer.

Dark Deeds

Evil acts done in the furtherance of a malignancy, or in pursuit of forbidden lore, or done to appease a Daemon always cause Corruption Points.

Vile Persuasion

Many Daemons and cult leaders are masters of insidious temptation and of sowing the seeds of doubt in a faithful heart. Their words and arguments can corrupt where force alone would fail.

Table 8-7: The Corruption Track

CP Total	Degree of Corruption	Malignancy Test	Mutation
01–30	Tainted	+0	—
31–60	Soiled	–10	First Test
61–90	Debased	–20	Second Test
91–99	Profane	–30	Third Test
00	Damned—Character removed from play		

The Malignancy Test

For every 10 Corruption Points a character gains, he must Test Willpower to see if his corruption has manifested as literal damage to his body and soul. This roll is modified depending on the number of CPs the character already possesses as noted on **Table 8-7: The Corruption Track**. If the Test is failed, the character's corruption of spirit is given form. These metaphysical and psychosomatic scars are called Malignancies, and are randomly rolled on **Table 8-8: Malignancies**. If a player rolls a result that he has previously suffered for failing a previous Malignancy Test, he must roll again.

Table 8-8: Malignancies

Roll	Effect
01–10	**Palsy:** The character suffers from numerous minor tics, shakes and tremors with no medical cause. Reduce his Agility by 1d10.
11–15	**Dark-hearted:** The character grows increasingly cruel, callous and vindictive. Reduce his Fellowship by 1d10.
16–20	**Ill-fortuned:** Whenever the character uses a Fate Point roll a d10. On a score of 7, 8, 9 or 10 it has no effect but it is lost anyway.
21–22	**Skin Afflictions:** The character is plagued by boils, scabs, weeping sores and the like. He takes a –20 penalty to all Charm Tests.
23–25	**Night Eyes:** Light pains the character, and unless he shields his eyes, he suffers a –10 penalty on all Tests when in an area of bright light.
26–30	**Morbid:** The character finds it hard to concentrate as his mind is filled with macabre visions and tortured, gloom-filled trains of thought. The character's Intelligence is reduced by 1d10.
31–33	**Witch-mark:** The character develops some minor physical deformity or easily concealable mutation. It is small, but perhaps enough to consign him to the stake if found out by a fanatical witch hunter. He must hide it well!
34–45	**Fell Obsession:** This is the same as the Obsession Disorder (see **page 237**). However, in this case the character is obsessed by a sinister or malign focus, such as collecting finger-bone trophies, ritual scarification, carrying out meaningless vivisections, etc.
46–50	**Hatred:** The character develops an implacable hatred of a single group, individual or social class. The character will never side with or aid them without explicit orders or other vital cause, and even then grudgingly.
51–55	**Irrational Nausea:** The character feels sick at the sight or sound of some otherwise innocuous thing such as prayer books and holy items, bare flesh, human laughter, fresh food, shellfish, etc. When he encounters the object of his revulsion, he must Test Toughness or suffer a –10 penalty to all Tests as long as he remains in its presence.
56–60	**Wasted Frame:** The character's pallor becomes corpse-like and his muscles waste away. The character's Strength is reduced by 1d10.
61–63	**Night Terrors:** The character is plagued by Daemonic visions in his sleep. See **Horrific Nightmares**, **page 237** for details.
64–70	**Poor Health:** The character constantly suffers petty illnesses and phantom pains, and his wounds never seem to heal fully. The character's Toughness is reduced by 1d10.
71–75	**Distrustful:** The character cannot conceal the distrust and antipathy he has for others. He must take a –10 penalty to Fellowship Tests when dealing with strangers.
76–80	**Malign Sight:** The world seems to darken, tarnish and rot if the character looks too long at anything. The character's Perception is reduced by 1d10.
81–83	**Ashen Taste:** Food and drink hold disgusting tastes and little sustenance for the character, and he can barely stomach eating. The character doubles the negative effects for levels of Fatigue.
84–90	**Bloodlust:** Murderous rage is never far from the character's mind. After being wounded in combat, he must Test Willpower to incapacitate or allow his enemies to flee, rather than kill them outright, even if his intent is otherwise.
91–93	**Blackouts:** The character suffers from inexplicable blackouts. When they occur and what happens during them is up to the GM.
94–00	**Strange Addiction:** The character is addicted to some bizarre and unnatural substance, such as eating rose petals, drinking blood, the taste of widows' tears etc. This acts like a Minor Compulsion (see **Disorders, page 237**), but is freakish enough to cause serious suspicion if found out.

MUTATION

A character's Corruption Points total is also used to determine the warping effects of Chaos upon his body. As his Corruption builds, his flesh may revolt, twisted by the Dark Gods. Of course, such is the insidious nature of Chaos that it is constantly hunting for weakness in mind and body, testing a character's defences until it can find a way into his soul. For every 30 Corruption Points a character gains, he must make a Test against two Characteristics of his choice or suffer a random Minor Mutation (see **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists**). He may not Test against the same Characteristics twice to resist mutation. A player should make a note on his Character Sheet of which Characteristics he has already Tested to resist mutation.

Example

Havelock has 31 Corruption Points and must make a Test to resist mutation. He chooses to Test against his Strength and his Fellowship, two of his best Characteristics. If he fails either roll, he will gain a random mutation. If Havelock reaches 61 Corruption Points or more, he will need to Test once again against two Characteristics of his choice to avoid mutation. However, as he has already used his Strength and Fellowship to resist mutation he may not choose either of these.

The Dark Powers

"If you stare long enough into the warp, the warp will stare back."
— Navis Nobilite saying.

Beneath the fabric of reality lurks the warp, a realm of unspeakable horror and maddening Chaos—a realm inhabited by the Dark Powers. Since time immemorial, man has believed in the existence of spirits, gods and Daemons: otherworldly powers to be appeased, feared and bargained with. In the darkness of the 41st Millennium, such things are all too real and find fertile ground to prosper in the souls of men.

The true nature of these powers can only be guessed at, their dark names whispered by traitorous lips into heretical ears. Most of humanity knows nothing of these powers, nor would ever want to. However, their influence cannot be denied. Of all the Dark Powers, the four Chaos gods, Khorne, Tzeentch, Slaanesh and Nurgle, cast all others into shadow.

Khorne

The Blood God, the Skull Lord, the Master of Battle

Khorne is the Chaos god of murder, rage and war. His great brass throne sits atop a mountainous pile of skulls, rising above an endless sea of blood. He is the Hunter of Souls and Harbinger of War, driving the frenzied servants of Chaos before him. His glory can be found in the meat-rending explosion of a bolt shell or the wet, tearing teeth of a chainsword. His followers exist only to harvest skulls for their dark lord.

Tzeentch

The Changer of Ways, the Master of Fortune, the Great Conspirator, the Architect of Fate

Tzeentch is the Chaos god of change, mutation and sorcery. He waits in a place where time runs soft and wax-like, psychic energy wreathing his head like liquid smoke. Father of paradoxes and master of intrigue, he twists the strands of fate to his unknowable ends, blessing his followers with arcane power and horrific mutations.

Slaanesh

The Pleasure Lord, the Prince of Pleasure, the Despoiler

Slaanesh is the Chaos god of hedonism, temptation and excess. No pleasurable pursuit is too perverse for its followers. The Golden-Haired God watches over the writhing flesh pits and ecstatic rites of its slaves, urging them on to greater depravity and debauchery in his name. Under the gleaming gaze of the Prince of Lust, his servitors weave their wicked works, luring pure souls into heinous debasement.

Nurgle

The Lord of Pestilence, the Great Corruptor, the Master of Plague, the Fly Lord

Nurgle is the Chaos god of decay, disease and entropy. Spreader of disease and Father of Decay, Grandfather Nurgle gathers all in his rotting embrace. His leprous kisses swell in the fullness of time, to glorious pus-flowers, the marks of his favoured children. His laughter echoes across the blasted battlefields of the Imperium with only the bloated corpses of the dead to hear it.

Table 8-9: Signs of the Dark Gods details some of the colours, symbols, emotions and other aspects associated with each of the Chaos gods. GMs can use this information to add tell-tale details to locations and cultists, such as the eight brass rings that would be worn by a servant of Khorne or the great golden serpent sculpture that would dominate a Slaaneshi cult temple.

A Warning to the Curious

The use of Dark Pacts in the game is optional and should be decided upon by the GM who always has the final say in their use and application. GMs should always consider their potential effects on their games and group, and whether they are going to handle them openly or secretly during the game. Players should never take the step of entering a Pact lightly and should always consider that, as well as offering benefits for a character, pacts also have very substantial liabilities and ultimately will probably destroy them. Despite their potential difficulties, Dark Pacts add a fantastic extra layer of intrigue and depth to the game, and they afford a treasure-trove of roleplaying opportunities, plot hooks, motivations and goals for Player Characters and GMs alike. They also offer a perfect accompaniment to the themes of Dark Heresy itself, where no one is immune to the lure of Chaos, not even the Acolytes.

It should almost go without saying that Dark Heresy is just a game, and as such is meant to be enjoyable fun. The things depicted in it do not exist. However, if you do not want your players to get drawn into the temptations of Chaos, steer clear.

Table 8-9: Signs of the Dark Gods

	Khorne	Tzeentch	Slaanesh	Nurgle
Colour	Red, Brass	Blue, Yellow	Purple, Gold	Green, Rust
Number	Eight	Nine	Six	Seven
Animal	Hound	Bird	Serpent	Fly
Sphere	War	Change	Excess	Decay
Symbols	Axes	Chalice	Symbols of Virility	Maggots
	Skulls	Eye	Symbols of Fertility	Insects
	Blood	Lightning	Hermaphrodites	Rusting Metal
Names	Blood God	Changer of Ways	Despoiler	Fly Lord
	Brass Lord	Great Conspirator	Serpent	Great Corruptor
	Skull Lord	Architect of Fate	Prince of Pleasure	Lord of Pestilence
God of Opposition	Slaanesh	Nurgle	Khorne	Tzeentch
Emotions	Hate, Rage	Intrigue, Deceit	Desire, Avarice	Mirthful Fatalism
Major Daemons	Bloodthirster	Lord of Change	Keeper of Secrets	Great Unclean One
	Bloodletter	Horror	Daemonette	Plaguebearer
	Flesh Hound	Flamer	Fiend	Nurgling

SERVANTS OF THE DARK GODS

The gods of Chaos interact with the materium through a myriad of warp entities and Daemonic servants. Taking many forms and guises, these creatures appear to mortals, spreading their taint throughout the worlds of the Imperium. Dealing with Daemons is a dangerous affair, as they are natural deceivers, quite capable of hiding their true master or even their Daemonic nature if it serves their own ends.

Most who seek the favour of these terrible beings inevitably fall into ruin and madness, their weak flesh twisted and their souls snuffed out, becoming little more than pawns in the Daemon's plans. Some, however, prosper in the dark light of Chaos, striking Dark Pacts with these creatures of the warp.

DARK PACTS

There are numerous ways that Acolytes might take to make Dark Pacts. However, it is not simply enough to desire a pact with Dark Powers; you must also have an opportunity to make one. This can occur by a number of means such as the performance of a secret ritual, travelling to a particular accursed location or gaining possession of a particular item (or a combination of all three!). An Acolyte may discover these means quite coincidentally during the course of play through items confiscated from cultists for example), or they may actively seek them out of their own accord. This search is never easy and a Forbidden Lore (Daemons) Test or specifically applied Investigation skill Test is required. This quest should be handled in concert with the GM, and may indeed form a mini-adventure in itself for the character.

Pacts Sought After

These are the classic circumstances in which Dark Pacts are made. Through the use of forbidden knowledge or dark myth, a Daemon or other entity is called on by a character and bargained with for power or aid. The more corrupted and powerful the character, the more likely their chances for success.

Opportunistic Pacts

Often this takes the form of an approach by a Daemon to the character. This might be because of the character's level of Corruption (see **page 238**) or because the GM deems it appropriate. Visions on the point of death, dream sending or a Daemonic visitation when a Psychic Power goes horribly wrong are all possible ways for such offers to be made. In these cases, the Daemon itself is trying to actively ensnare the character, and the Pact is almost certain to succeed if the character agrees.

Blasphemous Locations

There are some places where the veil between reality and the warp stretches thin. In such places Daemons await and darkness listens; here forbidden rituals find favour and myths gather. Ancient ruins, sites of Chaos atrocity and murder, forgotten hulks and dead worlds once lost and saturated in the warp, all might provide locations where a character could lose their soul.

STRIKING THE BARGAIN

Once the character has found the means to make the Pact, they must formulate and chance the bargain itself. What a player asks for from a Dark Pact should be based on their character's motivations for striking the bargain in the first place. The best thing is for the player to write down a list of "wants". These should be in broad descriptive terms and never involve specific game mechanics. Pacts should be about roleplaying and character goals and not naked power gaming (i.e. you may say "Grant me the skill and power to avenge myself on Vathek the Defiler and his murderous cult", but you cannot ask for a "+20 bonus in WS and BS and an extra combat Talent"). The trick here is for a player to keep his wants fairly easily expressed and clear. The more he demands, the higher the cost.

YOUR DEAL WITH DARKNESS

Once the bargain is successfully entered into, the GM should either agree to your list of wants or offer their own counter-proposals on behalf of the Daemon. These, along with a descriptive set of costs which the Daemon imposes for its agreement, should be presented to the player. At the GMs discretion he may allow players to use Social skills such as Charm to try and gain favourable terms with a Daemon, though such Tests should always be Very Hard. Once an agreement is struck, the GM should work out the game effects they impose and what powers and effects (called boons) they will grant; the more powerful the aid, the more costly the bargain should be. A Pact may have more than one boon, but for each boon there should be an associated cost (see **Counting the Cost, page 244**).

In order to help you out in crafting your own Dark Pacts, the section that follows provides extensive details on five iconic types of Dark Pact and their potential boons (which are by no means exclusive).

PACT OF SURVIVAL

"Release me from the weakness of this flesh and let me live!"

Ironically there are those who are willing to bargain their souls to preserve their mortal lives, either through fear of dying or burning hatred for the living. Typically this Pact restores a dying, crippled or aged character to full health and vigour, and may grant additional boons of unnatural life.

Infernal Vitality: The character counts as having the Unnatural Toughness (×2) trait in the case of resisting poisons and diseases.

Unsettling Recovery: If the character takes Damage but is not killed by it, then he recovers from all Damage suffered within a day. Any effect of Critical Damage that do not result in the loss of limb or death turn out to be "not as bad as it looks". Remove all Damage and Characteristic Damage after rest. For a day or so, once healed, the character experiences vast hunger, especially for fresh meat.

Leech Life Force: The character can steal the life force of living things. When the character deals Damage using his bare hands (or teeth), he steals life energy from his victim. Any Damage he deals instantly repairs any Damage he himself has suffered. Excess points count as temporary Wounds, allowing the character to take more Damage than he otherwise could. A character with this boon cannot gain more than twice his starting Wounds. Temporary Wounds fade after one hour. In order to further this regrowth process, the character must consume a large amount of blood. In all cases, leeching life force is instantly and completely addictive.

Timeless: The character does not age and, if elderly, he slowly regresses physically over time to how he was when he was at his most vigorous. The character only needs to spend two Fate Points to avoid certain death, as opposed to burning one Fate Point.

PACT OF DOMINION

"Whether by fear or love I care not; so long as they obey me!"

Of all the Pacts brokered with the warp, none is so common a bargain as that which gives the petitioner power over their fellow man. A character with such a Pact seems favoured by chance and destiny, and is meant for great things. He has the respect of his peers and those above him, and is preferred for promotion and recognition over his contemporaries. Even in the case of failure or folly, blame is more likely to be given to others or to circumstance than the broker of the Pact. For many though, mere favour is not enough and such a character will require more direct boons to master his fellows.

An Eye for Weakness: The character may Test Intelligence to discover with perfect accuracy whether someone is lying and to gauge their emotional state.

Commanding Presence: The character is always treated with respect by everyone he meets and never suffers a negative modifier to any Fellowship Test to Command, Charm or Intimidate others.

Unquestionable Order: The character may spend a Fate Point to make a command that must be obeyed if the subject is able and it is within their rational bounds. This is an order that the subject is inclined to follow without question, not mind control. So, for example, the character could order an elite guard to release a prisoner, but could not order the guard to shoot himself.

Destiny Writ in Shadows: Dark forces conspire to aid and protect the character. Every time the character spends a Fate Point, the GM makes a percentile roll. If it is less than the character's current number of Corruption Points the character recovers the Fate Point immediately.

PACT OF VENGEANCE

"Their destruction will be mine, whatever the cost!"

When those who you hate are so protected it seems that they cannot be touched, what choice is there? This Pact sustains and empowers a character to destroy the specific target of

his personal hatred. As such, a Pact of Vengeance must be made against a distinct group of people or a specific, named individual (such as, for example, all those who bear the blood of the Sinderfell family, the crime-lord Pater Telos or the cult of the Artisans of Pain). When rolling for Damage against the subjects of his vengeance, the character may always opt to re-roll a Damage result, and may spend Fate Points to add 10 to the Damage. Additionally, this Pact might grant further boons.

Death by a Single Word: The character may once specify a single individual. The individual dies within 1d10 days, unless he is protected by superior powers.

Whistle and I Shall Come: The Daemon appears once when so called, and destroys the character's enemies. All the character must do is call when in the presence of the subjects of their vengeance. (See **Invoking the Daemon, page 244** for more details).

A Reckoning: The character can specify a single person who is the subject of his vengeance and within a month events transpire so that he encounters them in person if at all possible.

Dark Power: The player may wish for strength and power to defeat his enemies by his own hands; this might mean Characteristic increases, gaining additional Talents and even acquiring new traits. If this boon is granted it should always have a heavy cost, or take a sinister and terrible form such as mutation or possession.

PACT OF DESIRE

"Grant me my heart's desire!"

To obtain the seemingly unobtainable, there are some who are willing to traffic with dark things and make terrible bargains for what to others might seem vain and empty goals. But be careful what you wish for…

Creating Perfection: The character may specify a particular task that he wishes to undertake, such as sculpting a statue or writing a book, and succeed in it to such a degree that the result is "perfect". Given such perfection's source, however, the work may have unforeseen side effects, and may be too much for mortals to bear, irrevocably tainted or extremely dangerous (works of art that drive the viewer mad and the like).

Goods & Chattels: The character may specify something he desires, such as a particular object, fame, title, deed or wealth, and he comes into its possession, fate itself seeming to conspire to make it so. The exact mechanism of how this is accomplished is up to the GM, but as the boon is the gift of a Daemon, somebody, somewhere should suffer as a result.

Mastery: The character may select a single Skill over which he gains complete Mastery. From this point on, he never suffers negative modifiers when using the Skill. Also, if he spends a Fate Point, he automatically succeeds at a Test of this Skill.

PACT OF KNOWLEDGE

"Show me… everything!"

Lust for knowledge may draw a character to forbidden lore and things that "man was not meant to know". From there, it is but a short step to desiring more such knowledge, blind to the price that he and others must pay. Upon the granting of this Pact, a character knows everything about a particular subject if that knowledge is knowable at all (enough to grant them a +20 bonus to the associated Skill). Alternately, there are other ways a Pact of Knowledge can manifest.

Show Me: The character gains the powers of a seer, and is able to see clairvoyant visions (of distant or hidden people, places, events and so on). These visions may be limited in scope to things present, past or of possible future, and by other occult factors. The more powerful the boon of vision, the more costly to the character it will be. The visions are always experienced in the same way, in a manner particular to the character, as images captured in a reflected surface or as a sudden painful delirium, for example. The character must spend a Fate Point to see such a vision wilfully.

True Savant: The character may make any Lore Test as if he has that Skill, and may re-roll any Test for a Lore skill that he is learned in.

Monstrous Memory: The character remembers everything and gains complete and perfect recall of his life up to that point.

Knowledge Familiar: The character is gifted a familiar that answers questions put to it with complete truth (although perhaps grudgingly). The familiar requires payment for each question asked before it answers. Payment varies but examples might include an eye or tongue, a piece of the questioner's flesh, or an object of beauty it might destroy. The familiar itself may be a conjured creature or may appear to be something innocuous, such as a small statue of black glass, a strange portrait or a clockwork artefact.

DARK PACTS AND CORRUPTION

Entering into a Dark Pact is a stain on a character's soul that will never be clean again, and even attempting such a thing is an unforgivably foul act. Conversely, if a Pact is successful, the character will gain some small measure of control over the warp taint infesting him, and indeed will become less subject to its more minor effects.

A character that successfully enters into a Dark Pact gains +20 Corruption Points to a maximum total of 90 points. GMs may elect to increase this dependent on the nature and benefits of the Pact.

A character with a Dark Pact is shielded somewhat from the effects of petty corruptions and low levels of warp contamination after it takes effect. He halves the result of any randomly rolled Corruption Points inflicted on him (rounding fractions down).

THE MASK OF SEEMING

Daemons mask their grip on their victim's souls, hiding the corruption within from prying eyes and psychic probing. Any attempt to ascertain the effects of corruption, warp taint or possession against a character with a Dark Pact by Divination, Psyniscience, or Telepathy suffers a -30 penalty.

INVOKING THE DAEMON

In addition to the boons of their Pact, a character may seek to invoke his patron Daemon directly to appear and aid him; this is an act of desperation and incredibly dangerous. Invoking the Daemon requires the burning of a Fate Point and succeeding on a Hard (-20) Willpower Test. If successful, an incarnation or greater servant of the Daemon appears (treat this as an unbound Daemonhost), and the character gains 1d10 Corruption Points. The incarnation is more or less inclined to help the character, although the character has no direct control over it, and it will depart once the immediate encounter is over.

How fellow Acolytes react to this "help" is another matter.

COUNTING THE COST

Dark Pacts always have a terrible price. GMs are encouraged to be creative with the costs the character must pay, both in terms of liabilities and the demands of his new patron. As a basic guideline, for each boon a Pact grants there should be a cost. Some basic examples of costs are presented here: in the first instance, service is a common feature of most Pacts; while in the second, fealty is the price of many Pacts that offer major power.

Service

The character must serve his patron's needs and designs as best he is able, and the terms of this service should be laid down during the initial bargain, making the Acolyte in essence a double-agent for his new Daemonic patron. His Daemon may communicate its desires to the Acolyte at will through any number of occult and esoteric means, though his master's goals are far from transparent; indeed Daemons are inconstant and they fashion labyrinthine plots that few mortals can grasp. Worse, they ceaselessly war and scheme against their own hellish kind, and who better to persecute such conflicts than an Inquisitorial Acolyte whose allegiance has been turned?

Fealty

The Acolyte has sold his soul to his dark patron to be collected upon his death. The light of the Emperor is denied him. Such characters gain no benefit from blessings, faith healing and other holy effects, nor regain sanity through prayer and fasting.

Sacrifice

An initial sacrifice may be demanded by the Daemon before the Pact takes effect. This may take the form of an inflicted malignancy of a type favoured by the Daemon, periodic possession, or the death or betrayal of a companion or loved one. Alternatively, the Daemon might demand that the character perform some criminal act that suits its plans or successfully undertake a dangerous task in its service.

Observance

The Daemon may require that regular rituals, oblation or other strange observances be performed in its name. Failure to do so will incur its displeasure.

DENYING THE DAEMON

If you deny the Daemon its price after the bargain is struck, or betrays its interests, it violently withdraws its patronage, inflicting a malignancy and instantly undoing the Pact's boons. Daemons are spiteful beings and rarely simply kill those that have betrayed them, and the GM may wish to ensure that a complex and terrible vengeance ensues.

Masters of Corruption

Many are the Daemons and dread entities that enter into Dark Pacts with mortals to corrupt and enslave them. Here are three examples:

Balphomael: Said to take shape as a great horned man as dark as the void with eyes of flame, this Daemon grants power, wealth, long-life and unnatural vitality to those hungry and ruthless enough to gain his favour. Souls are Balphomael's only currency, worship his due and murder his delight. Old myths, occult lexicons and forbidden records scattered across the Calixis Sector make much of the "horned darkness", and some whisper that many great and noble families owe their position to his shadowy ministry.

The Lord of Misrule: Tales of the Lord of Misrule are woven into the folklore of a dozen worlds, and the truth of his existence are shuttered in the proscribed vaults of the Inquisition. Fickle, manic and terrifying, the Lord of Misrule brings anarchy and madness in his wake. This strange figure is said to speak through the babblings of lunatics, the drunkard's slur and the last gasps of the dying. Appearing to those on the edge of death or who suffer as outcasts, only the most desperate take up his riddling bargains and those in his service quickly come to regret accepting his aid.

The Dusk Hag: On the accursed world of Dusk, a dark legend speaks of the Hag. Black Annaiys, Old Mother Ruin and a hundred other names she has, and if you should risk the journey into the deepest, most trackless swamps with hatred and desire burning in your heart, you might come to the black hollow where she dwells. It is said that her price is paid in flesh, sinew and bone, but her curses can strike death and terror worlds away, and all the secrets that men whisper in the night are hers. Just a legend perhaps, on a world shrouded in countless dark fables, but still petitioners seek her out and some return, maimed and mutilated, but filled with dark purpose.

IX

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Chapter IX: Life in the Imperium

"The martyr's grave is the keystone of the Imperium."
— *Liber Imperialis.*

The Imperium of Man is a war-torn empire, teetering on the brink of collapse. For ten thousand years it has been ruled by the deathless Emperor, a being of incredible power, to whom thousands of souls are sacrificed daily. The peoples of the Imperium live in a place where Daemons are real, mutation is frequent and death is a constant companion. To be alive in the 41st Millennium is to know that the universe is a terrifying and hostile place. It is a place where you are but one amongst billions and, no matter how heroic your death, you will not be missed.

A truly vast domain, the Imperium is spread amongst the many stars of the galaxy. Its territories encompass untold millions of stars and countless more human lives. In its name, terrible wars are fought and desperate sacrifices made, yet even this river of carnage and blood is a small price to pay, for the Imperium is the guardian of mankind. Were it to pass into nothingness, so too would the human race, destroyed by enemies uncountable, to the laughter of the Dark gods.

The Feudal Order

"The Emperor asks only that you obey."
— Queen Coralie of Acreage.

The Imperium covers a wide area of galactic space, sprawling over countless worlds. There are few universals amongst these varying planets. Culture, language and even the human form appear in seemingly infinite variation across the universe. One of the few constants (at least amongst those worlds of the Imperium that are aware of its existence) is the network of feudal obligation and responsibility.

Each Imperial planet owes fealty to a planetary governor. This individual in turn renders to the Imperium's priesthood a tithe of men, materials and loyalty. The governor is also expected to reject enemies of the Imperium, and to ensure that the psykers upon his planet do not fall into witchery or possession. In return, the governor can call upon the priesthood (or Adeptus Terra as they are properly known) in times of dire threat and request aid.

The Adeptus Terra comprises a bewildering variety of departments, bureaus, sub-divisions and offices, each of which deal with a particular aspect of maintaining the continuity of the Imperium. Each order has an obligation to care for its given area of control. This weight of responsibility grows as feudal obligation passes up through a mind-numbing array of ranks within each Adepta. From lowly scribes computing a hive world's annual nutra-slurry yield to mighty sector commanders overseeing the assemblage of a crusading fleet, vassalage and power passes ever upwards to the titular heads of the Imperium, the High Lords of Terra. These powerful individuals rule from ancient Terra in the Emperor's name.

Based on Terra itself, the Emperor is a silent being of awesome power. His withered carcass is cradled within an arcane artefact of incredibly occult design. This Golden Throne, as it is known, sustains the Emperor's life force whilst He guards humanity from the Daemonic beings that would destroy mankind utterly. For hundreds of centuries He has fought this psychic battle and for hundreds of centuries mankind has offered Him their fealty, worship and devotion.

The Adeptus Terra

The priesthood which serves the Lord of humanity is often referred to as "the right hand of the Emperor". It falls to the Adeptus Terra to interpret His will and minister to the Imperium. Many hundreds of thousands of souls labour across the galaxy to serve this vast organisation. There are numerous ancient institutions that make up the priesthood, each with various names on various planets. These varying Adepta, as they are traditionally known, each have a specific function to carry out in the Emperor's name.

The Adeptus Arbites (The Judges, Lawgivers)

The Adeptus Arbites are the watchers of the law. It is given to them to maintain order amongst the higher echelons of Imperial governance—wherever a planetary governor seeks to abuse his rule, wherever populist unrest seeks to unseat the rightful dominion of the Imperium, wherever thoughts of personal gain at the Emperor's expense cross the minds of the ruling classes, there you will find the dogged agents of the Lawgivers.

The Adeptus Astra Telepathica (The Astropaths, Psykers)

Blessed are the blind, for they have looked upon the glorious light of the Emperor directly and no true servant of the Golden Throne could ask for more. Through the agonising ritual of soul-binding, these psykers have been gifted with a small portion of the Emperor's incredible will. Thus protected from the worst evils of predation by warp entities, these unseeing servants of Terra can fulfil their primary function, preserving communication between the far-flung worlds of the Imperium.

The Adeptus Astronomica (The Beacon, The Light of The Emperor, The Ward of Man)

The Black Ships bring thousands of psykers daily to the birthplace of man and many of those so tithed find themselves contributing to the vast psychic choir of the Astronomican. This steady beacon burns bright in the warp; it is the Emperor's will manifest, shining from Holy Terra, and guides Navigators across the Imperium. The process of lending their psychic power to focus the beam quickly leaves the choristers as lifeless husks, but they give themselves willingly, for without the Astronomican the Imperium would cease to exist.

The Adeptus Custodes (The Guardians, Watchers of The Throne, The Thousand Companions)

These are among the mightiest warriors in all the Imperium, the praetorians of the Emperor. They stand ever-vigilant outside the brazen doors which seal His holy chamber. They are entirely beyond reproach and they are among the few over whom the Inquisition has no power.

They never leave the inner sanctums of the Imperial Palace and serve from birth to death within its hallowed halls. Yet they are among the few of the servants of mankind who will ever look upon the Emperor directly, and for that they receive blessings beyond all measure.

The Adeptus Mechanicus (The Priesthood of Mars, Tech-Priests)

The domains of the Adepts of Mars exist semi-autonomously within the Imperium, an empire within an empire, a right given to them by the Emperor Himself at the very dawn of recorded history. They are the guardians of technology, the magi of machinery. It is theirs alone to know how to coax forth the life of a sun in a plasma containment field, how best to apply the blessings of activation and maintenance to the massive Titan war machines, how to ensure that the engines of the Emperor's starships run smooth and true.

The Adepts of Mars worship the Emperor in the guise of the Machine God. To them, mankind is in a fallen state that was at the height of its powers during the Dark Age of Technology, when the secrets of the universe were known to all. Knowledge then, lies in the past and the Adeptus Mechanicus will go to any lengths to uncover the great secrets of antiquity, scouring the universe for any scrap of information from their holy book—the Standard Template Construct system. They hold that, were the STC to be restored in full, it would reveal all of the powers of the hallowed past.

The Tech-Priests venerate machines and regard them as superior to flesh. Many of them believe that the Machine God desires them to shed this weakness and so they often sport numerous bionic modifications. These mechanical enhancements add to their air of otherness and further help to set them apart from the rest of humanity.

Through rune and hammer, the Tech-Adepts are the wards of the arcane and they guard their knowledge jealously. But for all their might, they are not beyond the watchful gaze of the Inquisition.

The Administratum (The Scriptists, The Enumerators)

The huge Administratum sees to the running of the Imperium. Needless to say, its servants are legion. At the will of the Adeptus Terra, the Administratum collects the Imperial tithe, sends out colonists, mobilises the military, catalogues planets and much, much more. Truly stultifying levels of bureaucracy exist within the Administratum and some wayward souls believe that the Imperium survives despite, rather than because of, its efforts. The Administratum has become synonymous with the Adeptus Terra in many places and, incorrectly, the terms are often used interchangeably. The faceless servants of the Administratum can be found all over the Imperium, ensuring that all things are accomplished in the correct manner, even if that may take a thousand years.

The Adeptus Ministorum (The Ecclesiarchy, Cult Imperialis, Ministorum)

The Adeptus Ministorum is not formally part of the Adeptus Terra. Rather it is a sister organisation which works hand-in-glove with the servants of Earth. The Adeptus Ministorum derives its power and authority from the common belief in the Emperor's divinity. Also known as the Ecclesiarchy, after its chief high priest, the Ecclesiarch, the Adeptus Ministorum is vast and powerful. Its duty is to guide and interpret the innumerable ways that humanity has found to worship the Emperor, shepherding the myriad worlds of man along the unsteady path that lies between heresy and true devotion. Whole worlds lie within its administration and on many others still they are the most powerful Imperial institution.

Like the Administratum, the Ecclesiarchy is a complex and byzantine organisation. A bewildering hierarchy of priests, confessors, cardinals, novices, clerics, bishops and missionaries all owe fealty to the Ecclesiarch in his palace on Earth. Just as varied are the various roles within the Ministorum, from wandering missionaries, to charismatic preachers and theosophical scholars. Two of the most famous institutions within the Adeptus Ministorum are the training orphanages of the Schola Progenium and the battle-sisters of the Adepta Sororitas.

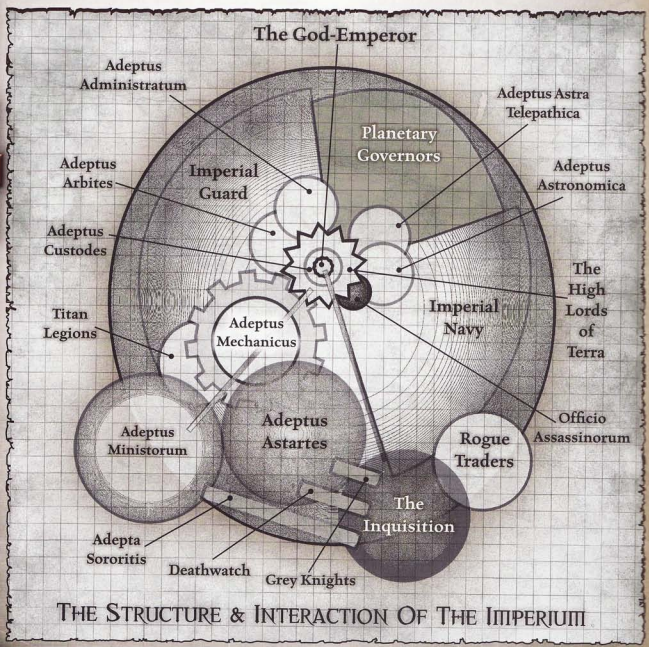
The Inquisition

The Imperium is assailed by countless enemies both from within and without. The attentions of unclean xenos, the invidious influences of the misguided followers of the Ruinous Powers, planetary unrest, mutation, rogue psykers, rebellious Imperial lords and more all work constantly to bring the Imperium down, to the ultimate extinction of mankind. Yet somehow it survives and humanity endures.

The Inquisition is one of the many reasons for the persistence of man in a hostile universe. Known as the "left hand of the Emperor", the Inquisition operates across the Imperium and beyond to suppress and eliminate those forces that would destroy the holy dominion of mankind over the stars.

Inquisitors are empowered to go anywhere and do anything—whatever they must to ensure the survival of the Imperium. Their Inquisitorial Seal opens all doors bar none, and even the vaunted planetary governors must acquiesce to their demands without complaint or delay, lest they be themselves regarded as suspect. They will commit acts, no matter how vile, to maintain the unchanging integrity of the Imperium, and they will put whole planets to death in order to see that this is so.

The members of the Inquisition vary enormously in physical appearance, methodology and mentality. Some operate alone and in secret, hidden from the eyes of the common man, while others operate openly and carry dozens of acolytes and agents in their cadre. What they do have in common is that they answer only to their Order, and each Order answers only to the Emperor. Their efforts can be checked by no Adepta and they are utterly, fanatically devoted to the defence of the Imperium. Even the most loyal and honest Imperial citizen is likely to break into a cold sweat on learning that the Inquisition is nearby—and that suits its members perfectly. For more information see **Chapter X: The Inquisition.**



The Structure & Interaction Of The Imperium

Planets of the Imperium

"True faith is blind and justified."

— Confessor Faust.

The Imperium encompasses countless worlds. No one has ever been able to map them and no one can even say how many there are. Entire departments of the Adeptus Administratum are devoted to cataloguing the worlds in the Emperor's domains, a never-ending task, for it is in a state of eternal flux.

Furthermore, the Adeptus Terra holds that the whole human race and the entire galaxy are under the Emperor's rule—the Imperium has a manifest destiny to unite mankind, impose its laws on every human world and destroy all alien life. The true scope of the Imperium is, therefore, the entire galaxy, though this is far from actuality. The Imperium zealously guards its territory whenever it can but its sheer size means that it cannot react to every circumstance. Many planets live and die alone, with only the truly great threats commanding the attention of the Adeptus Terra. Worlds are frequently lost to aliens, rebellion or disasters, with news of their destruction sometimes taking centuries to reach Terra. The Imperium's borders undergo constant change, with new worlds discovered, conquered or colonised and old ones lost.

Types of Planet

The galaxy teems with worlds—gas giants, worlds of frozen methane, huge, globular masses of hydrogen that failed to become stars, and many more besides. Some of these are mined or exploited in some way, they may even harbour their own forms of truly bizarre alien life, but it is mostly upon small rocky worlds that mankind, and its enemies, are found. Within this category of world, however, are many variations and humanity endures all manner of environments in its quest to survive in a cruel and unwelcoming universe.

Language

Low Gothic (also called Imperial Gothic or simply Gothic) is the "official" language of the Imperium, the tongue of its Adepts and of Terra. Most worlds have been a part of the Imperium for long enough to have adopted Low Gothic as a universal tongue but there are still a great many feral worlds on which Imperial Gothic is not spoken. Inevitably, dialects of Gothic differ from world to world and can be mutually unintelligible. Older planets frequently maintain archaic tongues of their own, to the extent that ruling aristocracies might only know enough Low Gothic to swear in. For highly formal matters, the Adeptus Terra use High Gothic, a precursor language of Imperial Gothic. Many Ecclesiarchy rituals, Administratum edicts and Imperial charters use this ancient and venerable language.

Types of Culture

Just as the people of the Imperium live in hugely varied environments, so too do their cultures vary immensely.

Hive Worlds

The Imperium's most populous worlds are its hive worlds. The populations of these planets are so high that the people live in huge cities, truly immense many-layered structures that reach high into the sky, each housing billions of individuals. Hive worlds often provide much-needed labour, their manufactoria producing mountains of war materiel and other goods to meet the Imperial tithe demands. Most hive worlds started out as relatively hospitable places but have become severely polluted, the areas outside the hives reduced to ash wastes or radioactive desert by the never-ceasing industry of the great cities. Equally dangerous can be the hives themselves. The crime-ridden, poverty-stricken areas, almost always found in the most polluted and decrepit lower levels of the underhive, are home to violent gangs, criminals and assorted scum as well as mutants and heretical cults who hide there from the authorities.

Agri-Worlds

These farming planets, in their own way, are as vital to the Imperium as its hives. These planets are given over entirely to the production of food, which hive worlds cannot produce in sufficient quantities to keep their huge populations from starving. Many a world has whole continents given over to livestock or fields of crops. Some agri-worlds are covered in oceans teeming with fish and a few are far stranger—worlds covered in edible fungus, scoured by swarms of nutritious insects or gas giants home to flocks of flying creatures. A few planets are used solely to provide clean water to nearby hive worlds. Agri-worlds are sometimes ruled directly by the Administratum, to help ensure that their produce is grown and harvested with maximum efficiency.

Forge Worlds

Much of a forge world is like an immense factory, with industrial complexes soaring into the sky and mine workings burrowing deep into the crust. Forge worlds build great numbers of complex machines, like tanks or spacecraft parts. They are ruled by the Adeptus Mechanicus, whose training and research facilities are located there, along with the grand cathedrals to their deity, the Omnissiah, in which the Archmagi of the Tech-Priests enact the grandest, most complex rituals to honour the Machine God. The Adeptus Mechanicus' fleets, its tech-guard armies and, most formidably of all, the Titan Legions, are also all based on forge worlds. The forge worlds are sovereign ground and the Adeptus Mechanicus is loath to allow anyone on their surface other than Tech-Priests and the legions of menials who serve them.

Developing Worlds

These worlds are split into geographical areas with widely varying levels of advancement and culture. Depending on the prevailing governments, these might be countries, states, power blocks or tribal homelands. It may be the case that higher levels of technology and wealth are concentrated around original colonisation sites. Other planets might exhibit gross variations in culture due to environment, with areas weak in natural resources being similarly weak in terms of military power, economic muscle and so on. Some planets preserve a great divide due to ancient tribal taboos, religious notions or plain old-fashioned habit. A great many worlds of the Imperium fit into this broad category, but no two are alike in the way they realise these divides.

Feudal Worlds

These planets are populated by folk who have lost access to all but the most basic of technologies. Farming, simple machines such as pulleys, windmills and the like are known, but propelled flight, automatic weaponry and even powered vehicles are likely to be rare or non-existent. These worlds are often said to be the most politically harmonious of all the planets of the Imperium, because their peoples know their place.

Feral Worlds

These worlds are populated by tribal peoples largely living without the assistance of maintained technology. This may be due to a failed colonisation project, religious preferences, cultural choice, environment or some other reason. They may be aware of the Imperium in some fashion but are unlikely to know much more than something about a large group of distant people living in the stars. These planets are frequently unsuitable for later colonisation, either due to the circumstances which drove the natives feral or because the natives themselves actively resist new people settling on their lands. People of feral worlds can range widely in culture, from Grox-hunting tribes of ancestor worshippers to wild-eyed, post-apocalyptic road warriors, fighting endlessly amongst the toxic, sand-strewn ruins of their civilisation.

Shrine Worlds

These worlds are dominated by religion and acts of devotion. It may be that these places saw the birth of a famous saint or formed the battleground for a particularly important war. Often studded with temples and shrines, these worlds are frequently controlled by the Ecclesiarchy and may form training grounds for members of their Adepta.

There are also the dark mirrors to these places of Imperial devotion—fallen worlds where the inhabitants offer up ceaseless prayer to the Dark Gods. These places of obscene sacrifices and bloody rites are not suffered continued existence for long.

Quarantined Worlds

The existence of these planets is rarely made obvious but there are many of them throughout the Imperium. Travel to these worlds is forbidden except for the most well-informed and heavily armed expeditions, and even then only with a very good reason. Death worlds, alien empires or planets where the creatures of the warp have broken through into realspace are all examples of quarantined worlds, as are planets wracked with plague. Some worlds are quarantined because no one can fathom the origins of what has been found there, be it mysterious artefacts or ancient cities—it is thought better to live in ignorance of what lies on such worlds than risk it becoming a threat. Other worlds are quarantined because every expeditionary mission there has failed to return. Planets are often quarantined by the pronouncements of Inquisitors, especially if they have uncovered some warp taint or xenos infestation that cannot be cleansed. Many quarantined worlds possess great resources that would be extremely valuable to the Imperium if they were properly explored and exploited, but there are enough tales of ancient horrors awoken on sinister alien worlds that few adepts would try to defy a planetary quarantine.

War Zones

There are a great many worlds in the Imperium that can be classed as war zones. The Imperium is constantly at war and in those wars whole planets can burn. Massive campaigns can envelop dozens of systems and hundreds of worlds, many of which are utterly devastated by orbital bombardments and artillery in planet-spanning battles that last decades. Long-term war zones are hellish places where death comes quickly. The Imperium can field truly immense armies of millions of men, grinding their way across a devastated planet and reducing cities to rubble. Mercenaries flock to such places, hoping to leave soon after with their ships loaded with pay. Deserters and escaped prisoners form bands of pirates, preying on any ships unable to defend themselves or roam the war-torn planets in feral packs stealing and killing. The Administratum sends colonists from overcrowded worlds to populate war-torn worlds after the fighting has ended but the wheels of the Imperium grind slowly and a world can lie devastated for centuries before any effort is made to resettle it. These places can be some of the most ghastly in the Imperium, with ravaged environments, cracked planetary crusts, burnt-out cities and plains covered in the bones of the fallen.

PLANETARY GOVERNMENT

Just as the environments and cultures of Imperial worlds vary, so too does the way they are governed. The Imperium allows most of its worlds to govern themselves, using whatever method of government the population gravitates towards. Some are hereditary monarchies, others ruled by aristocracies or warlords. Some are ruled by elected parliaments, while on others power is given to whoever can pay for it. On some worlds these are the same thing. Upon other planets, such things as democracy, free choice and even personal rights are present, though these are few and far between. Some worlds are administered directly by the various Adepta, such as agri-worlds run by the Administratum or cardinal worlds ruled by the Ecclesiarchy.

Whilst the individual countries, states, tribes, corporations, hegemonies, peoples' work collectives, and so on, may have their own various leaders, the Adeptus Terra will look to one person to fulfil the planet's tithes and obligations to the Imperium. Titles for this governor vary from planet to planet. In some cases the person judged responsible for the tithe may not even be aware that this is the case until too late. Certainly, more than one titular head of state has discovered this upon rejoining the Imperium after a period of isolation through warp storm, war or other calamity.

All governors are expected to recognise the authority of the Imperium and to uphold its laws. These responsibilities include aiding the agents of the Adeptus Arbites and the Inquisition, as well as arranging the allotted tithes for the Administratum. Governors are also expected to yield psykers up to the Black Ships of the Inquisition when required and to keep the population free of mutants, cultists, radicals and witches. In practice, some planets escape from these duties with relative ease, whilst others are placed under seemingly tyrannical restrictions. Due to the sheer size of the Imperium and the unpredictability of travel, there are many occasions where the Administratum never manages to extract its levy, or the Black Ships never arrive to take psychic individuals away. Planets can be isolated for generations and it is not unusual to encounter worlds where the Imperial tithe has been all but forgotten. Certainly the scribes of the Prol System have, in their vast libraries, several accounts of Administratum logisters arriving at worlds lost for centuries, only to discover their yearly tithe burning on vast pyres as the natives offer their dues up to the sky.

In some cases, a group of planets might have enough contact with one another to form political alliances and even minor empires. Other clusters of worlds might be connected by huge corporations, the powers of hereditary nobles, religious leaders or other such ties. In such cases, planetary governors must not only tend to the needs of the Imperium but also the whims of these power blocs.

Psykers

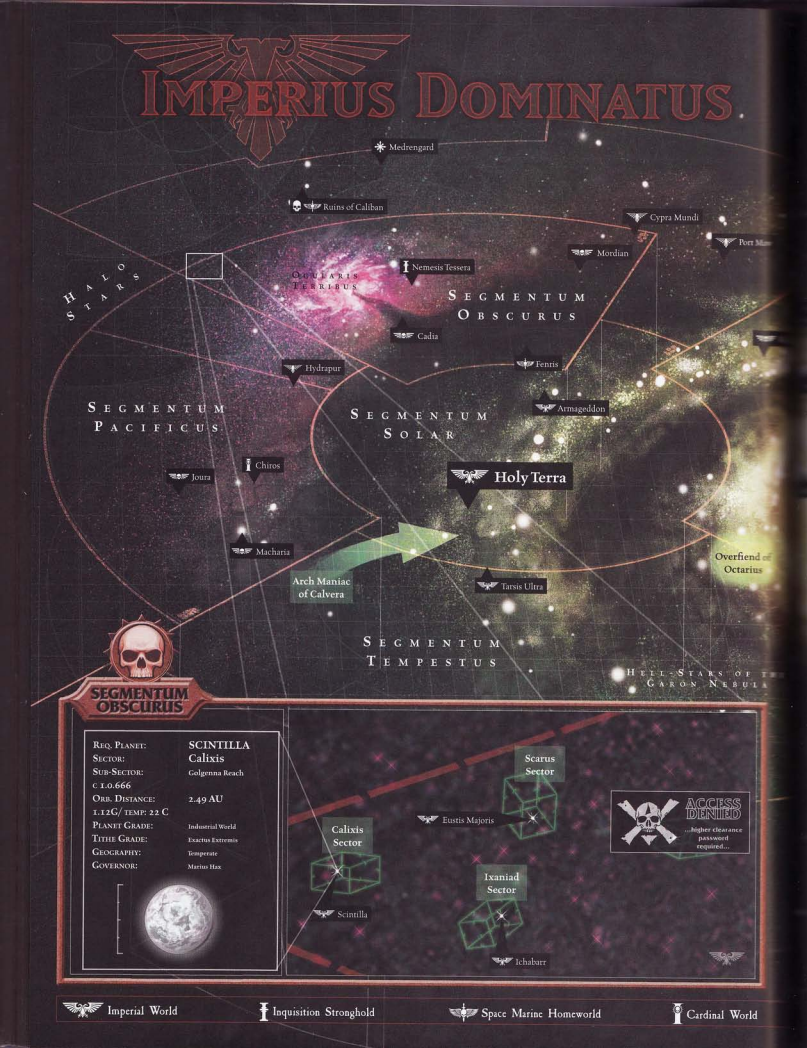
Humans with psychic powers, from telepathy to pyrokenesis, have existed since the dawn of mankind, but their position in the Imperium is uncomfortable at best. An untrained psyker is an unguarded gateway to the warp, through which psychic predators can enter realspace and wreak havoc. It is said that whole worlds have been lost to hideous monsters of the empyrean, while rogue psykers have committed horrible crimes with their powers or led dangerous and destructive cults. On some worlds all psykers are tried as witches, subjected to tortuous ordeals and burned at the stake when their inevitable guilt is proven. Imperial law requires all worlds to monitor its psykers and subject them for testing by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. Those who are strong enough to withstand the perils of the warp are trained to serve the Imperium. Those who are too weak are taken away by the Black Ships and never seen again.

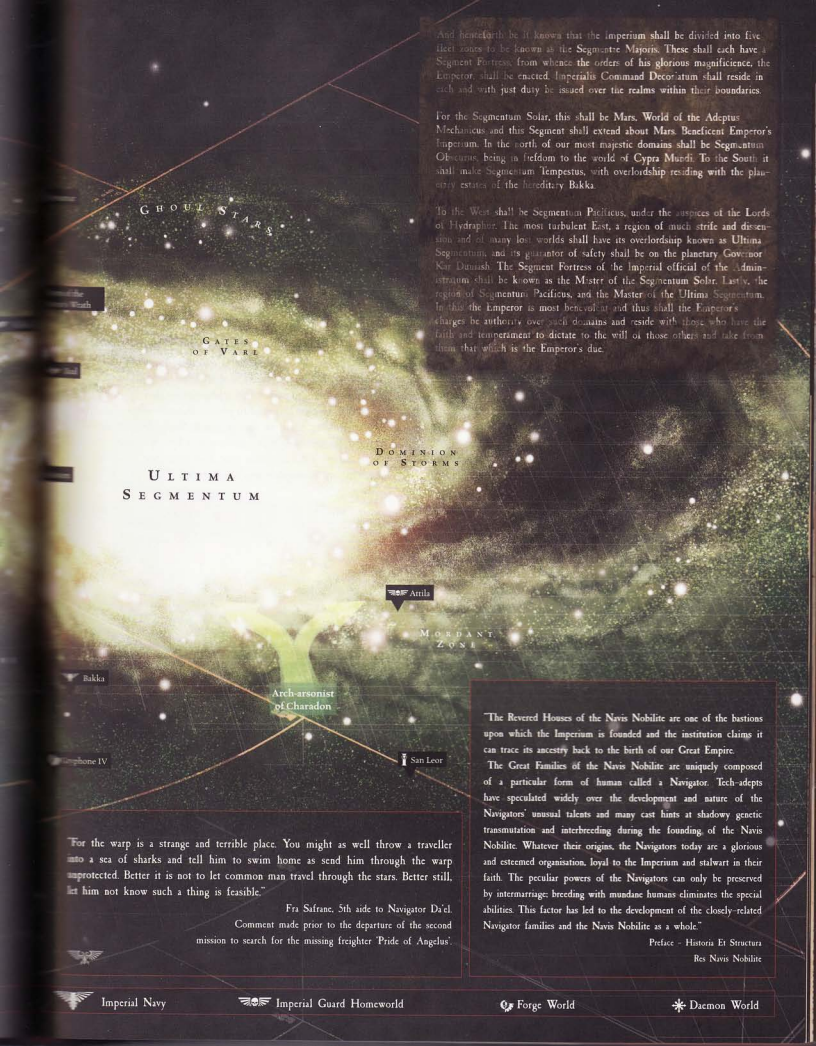
PLANETARY APPEARANCE

The peoples of the Imperium vary in their form just as their home worlds do. Whilst there is a generally agreed human standard, consisting of four limbs, one head, twenty digits and so on, local environment and genetic stock have caused all manner of interesting anomalies, evolutionary adaptations and fashions. These differences are usually cosmetic in effect; however, the more radical alterations walk the line between accepted variation and outright mutation. It is a subject of intense debate amongst some Inquisitors, and indeed the Ecclesiarchy, on what it is to be human and therefore accepted into the Imperium.

Certain planets will betray their colonial origins with the appearance of their peoples—perhaps a particular type of nose or skin colour will be dominant. Others will have clear tribal divisions. Some populations will possess unusual adaptations as a consequence of their environment. The folk of the agri-world Dreah, for example, have a grey skin, hair and eye tone, which exactly matches the flora, fauna, sky and waters of their notoriously dull planet. Some cultures may impose certain ideals of beauty that drastically alter the looks of their peoples. Certainly, many strange and terrible gangs of underhivers have been discovered, clad in hyper-fashionable armour, sporting glowing electoos, skull studs, gang mutilations and shiv scars with pride.

To some extent a similar appearance and culture binds the people of a planet together into a common stock. Usually speaking, citizens of the Imperium will prefer to spend their time with fellow natives of their world. That said, however, man has ever been titillated by the exotic, so friendship, love affairs and even children with off-worlders is not unknown on planets with a culture of such travel.


Imperius Dominatus
Medrengard
Ruins of Caliban
Cypra Mundi
Port Maw
Mordian
Halo Stars
Nemesis Tessera
Ocularis Terribus
Segmentum Obscurus
Cadia
Fenris
Hydrapur
Segmentum Pacificus
Segmentum Solar
Armageddon
Chiros
Joura
Holy Terra
Macharia
Overfiend of Octarius
Arch Maniac of Calvera
Tarsis Ultra
Segmentum Tempestus
Hell Stars of the Garon Nebula
Segmentum Obscurius
Req. Planet: SCINTILLA
Sector: Calixis
Sub-Sector: Golgenna Reach
c 1.0.666
Orb. Distance: 2.49 AU
1.12G/ temp: 22 C
Planet Grade: Industrial World
Tithe Grade: Exactus Extremis
Geography: Temperate
Governor: Marius Hax
Scarus Sector
Eustis Majoris
Calixis Sector
Access Denied
...higher clearance password required...
Ixaniad Sector
Scintilla
Ichaburr
Imperial World
Inquisition Stronghold
Space Marine Homeworld
Cardinal World


And henceforth be it known that the Imperium shall be divided into five fleet zones to be known as the Segmentae Majoris. These shall each have a Segment Fortress, from whence the orders of his glorious magnificence, the Emperor, shall be enacted. Imperialis Command Decoratum shall reside in each and with just duty be issued over the realms within their boundaries.
For the Segmentum Solar, this shall be Mars, World of the Adeptus Mechanicus and this Segment shall extend about Mars. Beneficent Emperor's Imperium. In the north of our most majestic domains shall be Segmentum Obscurus, being in fiefdom to the world of Cypra Mundi. To the South it shall make Segmentum Tempestus, with overlordship residing with the planetary estates of the hereditary Bakka.
To the West shall be Segmentum Pacificus, under the auspices of the Lords of Hydraphur. The most turbulent East, a region of much strife and dissension and of many lost worlds shall have its overlordship known as Ultima Segmentum, and its guarantor of safety shall be on the planetary Governor Kar Duniush. The Segment Fortress of the Imperial official of the Administratum shall be known as the Master of the Segmentum Solar. Lastly, the region of Segmentum Pacificus, and the Master of the Ultima Segmentum. In this the Emperor is most benevolent and thus shall the Emperor's charges be authority over such domains and reside with those who have the faith and temperament to dictate to the will of those others and take from them that which is the Emperor's due.
Ghoul Stars
Gates of Varl
Dominion of Storms
Ultima Segmentum
Attila
Mordant Zone
Bakka
Arch-arsonist of Charadon
Stephone IV
San Leor
"For the warp is a strange and terrible place. You might as well throw a traveller into a sea of sharks and tell him to swim home as send him through the warp unprotected. Better it is not to let common man travel through the stars. Better still, let him not know such a thing is feasible."
Fra Sufrane, 5th aide to Navigator Da'el.
Comment made prior to the departure of the second mission to search for the missing freighter 'Pride of Angelus'.
"The Revered Houses of the Navis Nobilite are one of the bastions upon which the Imperium is founded and the institution claims it can trace its ancestry back to the birth of our Great Empire.
The Great Families of the Navis Nobilite are uniquely composed of a particular form of human called a Navigator. Tech-adepts have speculated widely over the development and nature of the Navigators' unusual talents and many cast hints at shadowy genetic transmutation and interbreeding during the founding of the Navis Nobilite. Whatever their origins, the Navigators today are a glorious and esteemed organisation, loyal to the Imperium and stalwart in their faith. The peculiar powers of the Navigators can only be preserved by intermarriage; breeding with mundane humans eliminates the special abilities. This factor has led to the development of the closely-related Navigator families and the Navis Nobilite as a whole."
Preface - Historia Et Structura
Res Navis Nobilite
Imperial Navy
Imperial Guard Homeworld
Forge World
Daemon World

Travel in the Imperium

"You cannot fathom the mysteries of the Universe, you must simply trust in the righteousness of the Emperor's Command."
— Edicts of the Navigator Guild Calixis.

Travel between the worlds of the Imperium is rare and dangerous. The vast majority of civilians will never know the roaring tedium of shuttle flight, the sickening plummet of a drop pod or the unnerving silence of deep space. Given the huge size of the Imperium, it is impossible to cross it in the fleeting span of time given to ordinary men. Colonists, pilgrims and refugees spend many generations in the vastness of space, and many ships never survive the vagaries of travel to reach their destination. Some have theorised that the universe actively resists mankind's crude attempts to explore its mysteries. The darkness between the stars keeps its secrets close and yields them to inquisitive humanity only rarely.

Slower Than Light Travel

Used mostly for journeys between planets or closely neighbouring systems, slower than light travel involves speeds that confound mortal imagination and yet are still nothing when measured against the sheer size of the galaxy. Those attempting to use slower than light drives to travel any appreciable distance condemn themselves and their descendants to a shipboard life, endlessly whittling away the years until they arrive at the distant star they set out to reach.

The average citizen is unlikely to experience slower than light space travel. Even those individuals living within a system with plentiful ships for interplanetary travel are likely to prefer the world of their birth over distant places with strange customs, odd food and "funny-looking" people. In many places, space travel is reserved for the privileged few who can afford to maintain the rituals, priests and shrines that such craft require, as well as the vast cost of the ships themselves. Tech-Priests do what they can to sate the spirits of these craft, but often even their unfathomable lore is not enough to prevent these temperamental ships from venting their rage (and oxygen) to the detriment of passengers. Sheer odds dictate that sooner or later those that frequently travel in ships between planets will experience such a disaster.

Those worlds that have not lost the art of creating and maintaining slower than light ships jealously guard their arcane craft. This reluctance to share their guild secrets ensures the reliability and price of their vessels but also robs others of vital information required to placate their own craft.

Institutions such as the Imperial Navy, Inquisition and various Adepta have access to much better-quality vessels, maintained with religious awe and reverence by countless generations of the Adeptus Mechanicus.

The Chartist Captains

The space lanes of the Imperium are plied by huge, often ancient, merchant ships commanded by the Chartist Captains. Lacking Navigators or Astropaths to guide them, these civilian craft take years to travel their circuitous routes between the stars, trading and bringing supplies to worlds which need them. The ships of the Chartist Captains are the only contact many worlds have with the galaxy at large, and to some primitive worlds their arrivals are long-prophesied events of great spiritual significance. Similarly, the reports of Chartist Captains are the only evidence that many worlds still exist at all. The route of each ship, set down in its charter written up by the Adeptus Terra, can take generations to complete and a Chartist ship is home to a spacefaring community of "void born" souls who can live and die without ever setting foot on the surface of a planet.

WARP TRAVEL

To move any appreciable distance within the Imperium, voyagers must resort to warp travel. This method of faster than light travel is rare, expensive and dangerous, as it requires the use of the unpredictable realm known as the warp, or immaterium. Vessels equipped with a functional warp drive are able to translate themselves into this other dimension of being by generating an envelope of Geller fields. These quixotic waves "bend" the ship through the veil of realspace into the immaterium. Once within this strange place, the ship is able to ride the currents and eddies that flow within the warp, frequently dropping back into realspace to check its positioning.

The immaterium is a bizarre and contradictory place, entirely unnatural to mankind. Looking upon the warp unprotected causes madness and corruption, and thus is greatly feared by almost everyone. Dimensions, colours, forces and emotions operate entirely differently within the warp's embrace, and this can drive even the most thick-headed crewman insane. Psykers of course, find such travel even more disturbing as their mystical senses are able to comprehend much more of the immaterium and the foul creatures that dwell within it.

Those that travel through the warp emerge to discover another of its disconcerting effects. Time does not operate normally within this other realm and so travellers can emerge to discover that centuries have passed since they started their journey, that they have merely been absent for a few seconds, or have even arrived before they left. Even skilled Navigators cannot predict how much time will be lost, gained or repeated over the course of a journey. Those that embark upon warp travel know that they will probably never return home, or that if they do so they will find it so changed that it is unrecognisable. When two or more captains of ships meet, they invariably trade dates, attempting to reconstruct the time they are missing or have gained. Needless to say, warp travel is not embarked upon lightly.

The warp is occasionally prone to great turbulence or storms of activity. These strike at random and last for an unpredictable amount of time. Whilst these storms rage, any vessels within are tossed about on roiling currents, sometimes being spat out at random locations. Other ships simply become trapped, unable to translate back into realspace, cursed to an eternity upon the waves of the warp. These storms disrupt communication across the Imperium and can sometimes herald a great disaster within realspace.

Navigators

The Navis Nobilite, or Navigators, form a sprawling network of extended families, all of which bear the Navigator gene. Navigators are different to other men, with some seeing them as mutants, but their differences are stable and, unusually, are not only tolerated by the Imperium but are essential to its very existence. A Navigator possesses a third eye in his forehead through which he can perceive the warp itself and read its currents and eddies. For anyone else to look upon the warp would be to invite madness and possession, but a Navigator's power allows him to guide a ship through the warp and reach its destination far faster than any ship could travel without him. Navigators use the great psychic beacon of the Astronomican as a fixed point to aid their route-finding. In this way they are able to complete a journey with far fewer drops into realspace to plot position. The great majority of Navigators serve in the Imperial Navy and many Navigator families are tied to Naval aristocracies by complex bonds of honour, debt and patronage.

COMMUNICATION

Just as travel within the Imperium is a complicated and inexact science, so too is the business of exchanging messages between the many and varied planets that make up the Empire of Man. Planetary communications systems such as vox-casters, hardwired lines and the more advanced vox-communicators suffice to pass messages amongst the nations of a world, yet have almost no use beyond the bounds of the planet's surface. Such devices require many years for their signal to reach even the nearest planet and have no surety of even being detected when they arrive. The perils of travel ensure that human or servitor messengers are just as unreliable and potentially as slow as radio or other energy wave communications.

The Imperium then, is forced to rely upon communication by psychic, or astropathic means. Astropaths communicate with symbols and iconic images, projecting these messages through vast distances of space by means of psychic power. This process is usually exhausting and requires ritual and focus in order to keep the pskyer in the right frame of mind. These can take a wide variety of forms, such as use of the Emperor's Tarot, vision quests, automatic writing, trances, séances and the like. The Gaolist Astropaths of Hredin for example, spend many years etching their messages onto painstakingly illuminated sheets of iron and then destroy the work of art upon a massive grinding wheel. The pain of annihilating a much-loved labour is said to produce psychic messages of unparalleled clarity.

These messages are received by fellow astropaths in various ways. Some appear as vague and troubling dreams, whilst others appear as visions or mystic portents. Others appear within whatever ritual method or divination technique the receiving psyker happens to practise. Thus warning of an Ork invasion might appear as a glistening imperfection in fish entrails, a looming cloud of smoke, bleeding orifices or a worrying combination of runes or sigils within a holographic matrix.

These messages must not only be transmitted from one astropath to another but decoded at the other end. Each astropath employs slightly different symbols and each has a preferred style or "flavour". Some messages take weeks of poring over tomes of augurs and symbolism before they can be reconstructed, though the best astropaths can do this word for word. Some remain a mystery forever. Some messages are received by astropaths at entirely the wrong end of the galaxy and must be passed on to others who are nearer the place in question.

Some messages simply do not get to their intended recipient or are drastically misinterpreted along the way. In addition, there are too few astropaths. Most worlds, especially those with small populations or on the fringes of the Imperium, have no astropaths at all, and must rely on the infrequent visits of passing Chartist ships or Administratum census-takers to make contact with the outside galaxy at all. For this reason the Adeptus Terra cannot react quickly to every event in the Imperium, even when an event occurs that is great enough to attract the notice of the vast and ponderous bureaucracy. On most worlds, the Imperium feels very far away.

THREATS TO HUMANITY

"Beware the enemy within!
Scorn the enemy without!
Fear the enemy beyond!"
— Excerpt from *The Acolyte's Oath.*

Perversely, for the largest empire that humanity has ever known, many planets within the Imperium feel isolated and alone in the long night of space. Across all the peoples and planets of the Imperium, fear gnaws away at the psyche, worming mistrust and desperate faith into the conscious and unconscious mind. Time and again the universe has proved itself an uncaring and frightening place. People sicken, the warp rages, xenos attack and worlds die. The people of the Imperium watch their neighbours for signs of heresy and witchery. Mankind prays to the Emperor to protect them from the woes of the universe, of which there are many.

DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS

Time and again, the minds of man have proven fertile soil for the seeds of corruption. There are certain dark powers abroad in the universe that seduce the weak and foolish into their damnable service. These ageless beings, their names unspeakable, prey upon mankind's needs and desires. With honeyed words, forbidden knowledge, bloody rites and festering secrets they lure humanity to become their slaves.

Some within the Imperium choose to worship these Daemon gods. The ways of these cults are many. Some meet in clandestine rituals of sacrifice and incantation. Others are foolish scholars, meddling with powers beyond their ken. Others still are organisations, companies or political groups drunk with power gained through pacts with unspeakable creatures of the warp. Perhaps worst of all are the instances of entire worlds that worship the Chaos gods through ignorance or choice. All of these profane cultists invite ruin upon themselves, the Imperium and humanity.

The Adeptus Terra, planetary governors and the Inquisition watch for these disciples of Chaos, for the inevitable consequence of their meddling is pain, disaster and blood shed. The ordinary peoples of the Imperium rightly fear these cults and their malevolent masters. On many worlds an undercurrent of paranoia, suspicion and fear of Chaos cultists is the norm.

MUTATION

The degeneration of the holy human form is one of the Ecclesiarchy's greatest concerns. Environmental pollution, deliberate genetic alteration, stellar radiation, alien diets and simple evolutionary adaptation have wrought manifold

changes upon the physique of man across his empire of stars. Some of these mutants have a standard, stable, morphological type and are tolerated by the authorities—notable among them being the abhuman Ogryns and the ancient and noble Navigators. But to find whole worlds where the population has no eyes due to never-ending darkness, or unusually long legs because of millennia of nomadic living, is not unusual. Whether these aberrant populations are declared acceptable or not is the business of the Adeptus Terra.

But mutation can also be a sign of the Dark gods. Just as they twist and destroy the minds and souls of man, so too do they toy with his flesh, bending it into profane shapes, gifting strange abilities and creating monsters for their perverse amusement. Where such mutation is present, it is rightly abhorred. Few are willing to tolerate such a aberation within their midst and fear of mutants runs through the populations of many worlds, even those where such things have happened but once in a hundred generations. Perhaps worse still is the constant fear of becoming a mutant oneself. Many folk pray that should this worst of all things occur, they will have the strength to end their own lives, before the mob or the Inquisition does it for them.

Some poor fools are willing mutants, seeing the distortion of their flesh as a sign of favour from the Dark gods. They seek out ways to gain more of these gifts, either by begging the Daemon gods for more of their touch or by doing their bidding in the hope of reward. Others, more poignantly, claim innocence of any wrong doing or foul worship. Whatever the case, a mutant is a mutant and must be feared, hated and destroyed. This is but one of the many reasons Imperial citizens tend to be highly intolerant and many innocent men, upon finding themselves on a new world, have been murdered by a frenzied mob for merely appearing to be different.

Concerning The Three Great Threats To The Safety Of Man

On Witchcraft

The question of witchcraft exercises the minds of a great many of the Emperor's servants. Indeed, one whole arm of the holy Inquisition—the Ordo Hereticus—has the finding and destruction of these dangerous beings as one of its primary activities, and several other organisations exist to contain, exploit and control these human psychics.

It is said by a heretical few that mankind stands upon the brink of an evolutionary change, that every year the incidence of psykers rises and that one day the entirety of mankind will become a new, psychic race.

True or not, the psykers of the Imperium are a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they enable the continued existence of the Imperium—the astropaths, the seers, Imperial psykers, the savant battle-psykers of the Guard, the Librarians of the Space Marines, even the Emperor Himself—these loyal, good and necessary servants of mankind are psykers all. Yet they are few in number and for every mind that is strong enough to stand against the perils of the warp, there are hundreds of others whose minor gifts, whether they seem a boon or a burden to the individual, are a clear danger to the worlds of man. The employ of their talents can lead to intrusions into the physical universe by warp entities or leave the individual open to manipulation by certain strains of perfidious xenos.

By far the most dangerous are the witches, those who revel in their abilities and seek to use them in a personal quest for power. Alone, they can wreak untold havoc, intentionally or unintentionally. It is for this reason that, of all the threats from within, the populace fears the witch most. It is a hidden danger that can spring up unbidden even inside a man's own family, and parents dread the birth of a witch child above all things.

All psykers must be given over to the appropriate Imperial body or be purified by death. Those psykers that appear to have evaded the tithe-men of the Black Ships, by accident or design, are guilty until proven innocent and the cleansing flame is their only fate.

Concerning The Three Great Threats To The Safety Of Man

On Daemons

On Daemons we shall not dwell here, for the very existence of such fell beings is a terrible secret and must be hidden from the minds of those who would fall prey to them.

A Daemon is a warp entity, a terrible creature of thought and energy brought forth into existence by the twisted needs of sentient beings, or at least so the high masters of the Orde Malleus say. So even think of them is to invite their attention and only the steeliest mind, the most powerful faith, is enough to overcome their utter, monstrous evil.

Inconceivable as it may seem, there are those who would consort with the Daemon, for they whisper dark things in the night to those who would listen and make many promises of temporal or eternal power. They can be brought forth willingly, by the witch or by certain arcane sorceries, or they may try to force a way through into the world through the unsuspecting portal of an untrained psyker's mind.

However they become incarnate, if they achieve their goal, just one Daemon can bring ruination to all it encounters. One need not talk of the Night of Silence in Atraxian_II's capital, nor of the lost world of Abandoned Hope, which to this day is guarded by the Inquisition, knowledge of its existence forbidden to all.

Make no mistake, to face a Daemon is to face damnation, to court a Daemon is to embrace it.

Concerning The Three Great Threats To The Safety Of Man

On Xenos

It is mankind's manifest destiny to rule this galaxy, of that there is no doubt. Spiritual perils may beset us, the physical universe may assail us, but it is the Emperor's will that mankind and mankind alone will bestride the stars, and to that end we fervently bend our lives.

There are many other creatures in this galaxy, unclean creatures born of worlds far from the sacred soil of Holy Terra, whose misbegotten forms are an insult to those who wear the shape decreed by the Lord of Man as fitting and right. Some of these creatures are weak and harmless, and easily extirpated, their planets expropriated for the true masters of the stars, their memory expunged. But there are other, stronger races that would see the toll of the Emperor foiled and mankind cast down.

Among them are the savage greenskin Orks, whose numberless multitudes plague the galaxy with their endless desire for war. Hulking creatures, bigger than a man, they are mindless, yet powerful and unafraid. Elsewhere can be found the fickle Eldar, those who cannot be trusted, beings which extend the hand of friendship whilst clasping a dagger behind their back. Beware these fiends, their machineries of war are as swift and as deadly as their lying tongues. Likewise the Tyranids, blasphemous monstrosities who reduce worlds to bare rocks in their feeding frenzy, their endless armies made up of hell-spawned bio-constructs.

Other things dwell in the dark places of space—the Hrud, whose very presence is poison even to the rightful progression of time, the Yan, whose heretical technicians enslave technology to their grotesque ends with no thought for the proper rites, the Verminthaulans, wild mercenaries and reavers. But fear not, the alien may be legion but man is the stronger, and their warmongering is but the desperate savagery of those who know that their end draws near.

REBELLION

The Imperium is the only rightful authority of mankind. It has been decreed by the Emperor, and His will, executed by the Adepts of Terra, is absolute. But man has ever been a fractious creature and not all agree that this should be the case. Therefore the rule of Terra must, by necessity, be harsh. Be this as it may, the size of the Imperium means the grip of governance is, perforce, loose, and rebellion is only regarded to have taken place when one of the tithes goes refused.

Worlds which rise up to shake off the fatherly hand of the Emperor fall into the following four main categories:

Governmental Revolt: Occasionally the ruling body of such a world might misguidedly decide that their world would be far better off outside of the Imperium. They might not have been visited for a thousand years or the planetary governor may harbour territorial ambitions, but whatever their motivations, the result is the same—ruthless and immediate repression. These revolts must be dealt with swiftly and graphic examples made of the ringleaders, for if just one planet is shown to succeed in such a quest, others will certainly follow. It may take centuries to quash a revolt, but no human world must be allowed to secede. Assassination, planetary assault and, occasionally, Exterminatus are all righteous tools that may be employed to bring the wayward world to heel.

Popular Revolt: It is a regrettable fact that many citizens of the Imperium suffer the most horrendous living conditions in less than ideal environments. From time to time, a particularly bold demagogue may rally his fellows and overthrow the government. This only becomes a problem if they then go on to defy the authority of the Imperium, otherwise the new regime will go unmolested—it is ordinarily not the adepts' way to impose governmental form upon a population. Foolishly, flush with success, the rebellious people of a world often go on to do just that, mistakenly identifying the Imperium with their oppression and not their salvation.

Also, it is sometimes better in planets with a particular strategic importance to ensure continuance of governance. In both these cases the forces of the Imperium are brought to bear.

Xenos Infiltration: There are many creatures in the universe that exist by using other creatures as their proxy. These may be creatures from the physical realm, such as Genestealers, or beings such as the Enslavers, who somehow have a material being but dwell within the empyrean. Sometimes these worlds carry on seemingly as normal, the rest of the galaxy unaware of the dark, alien cancer eating at their heart. As often as not though, the alien-dominated population will rise up in armed rebellion. In either case, utter destruction of the infested inhabitants is, regrettably, the best course of action. This can be effected via tectonic destabilisation, Exterminatus, cyclonic torpedoes or viral (general or geno-tailored) bombardment, dependant upon the importance of the world and possibilities of recolonisation.

Daemonic Infiltration: A planet may turn to worship of the Dark gods under a number of circumstances. Suppression of such revolts must be handled carefully—destruction of the population may be the Dark Powers' actual aim, as the psychic death scream of millions of people can be enough to permanently open a rift between the warp and the real universe. Planetary invasion by specialist formations is advisable, followed immediately by planetary cleansing or destruction.

ON ORGANISATIONAL DISAGREEMENT

Regrettably, even the true organs of galactic governance can become embroiled in disagreements with each other. The very creation of the Imperium as it stands today is entirely predicated by the actions of the Warmaster <CENSORED—CODE 15/775/Sigma> and one only has to look at the wickedness perpetuated by the High Lord Goge Vandire to see that it is inadvisable to rest too much power in the hands of any one of the Emperor's hands. It is only fitting that each Adept should maintain a healthy suspicion of his peers.

Divided we stand, united we fall. E Unis Pluribum.

Taken from The Inquisitorial Omnibus of Actual Governmental Destabilisation vol 987, Chapter 2: Threat & Consequences. Passages quoted penned by Explicator-General Diomedes Gann, of the Cross-Ordo Harmonisation Conclave, M36.3679. Revised by Inquisitor Eusebius Bhail, M39.4487.

War

"The Emperor asks only that you hate."
— Last words of Commissar Roth.

In war humanity excels, and the Emperor's armies are spread across the galaxy. The threat or effects of war are never far away, no matter where you go in the Imperium. Mankind seeks to purge the stars of its enemies, and the bloody carnage it wreaks in doing so shows no sign of abating. The Imperium's military is at once mighty, glorious and terrible.

IMPERIAL GUARD

The Imperial Guard is the backbone of the Imperium's military might. Millions upon millions of well-trained men and women, organised into thousands of regiments, make up the Guard. With lasgun and bayonet they march upon alien battlefields and garrison vital worlds. They form the Imperium's first line of defence and they strike the first blow in many crusades. Its regiments are drawn in great tithes of manpower from the Imperium's worlds and each regiment has a unique character and fighting tradition, from the rigid discipline of the Steel Legion to the stealthy brutality of the pale-skinned Stygian 23rd and the unflinching bravery of the Vostroyans. Vast conscript armies, elite special forces, massive tank columns and glorious sabre-wielding cavalry can all be found in the Imperial Guard, often fighting alongside one another on Emperor-forsaken worlds they have never heard of. Regiments do not remain on their home worlds but are raised explicitly to be sent to fight and die light years away from home. And die they do, for the Imperial Guard bear the weight of the Imperium's wars. It is said that the Emperor knows the name of every soldier that has fallen fighting in His wars—but if that is true, He is the only one who can comprehend just how many Imperial Guardsmen have died in the ten thousand years since the Emperor ascended to the Golden Throne. Those who survive the grinding horrors of a lifetime of war are frequently gifted a portion of the very land they fought to conquer as a reward. As with many things in the Imperium, this is a mixed blessing indeed.

The Imperial Guard regiments are raised from the local armies of the Imperium's worlds as part of a planet's tithe to the Imperium. These regiments are normally deployed according to the orders of the Adeptus Terra. However, when the High Lords declare a major military campaign (often referred to as a "crusade") they appoint a Warmaster chosen from among high-ranking Imperial Guard officers to command the campaign's regiments. One of the most famous Warmasters, Macharius, was given the title Lord Solar on account that he conquered a thousand worlds on the Imperium's eastern fringe and expanded the Imperium to the very edge of the Astronomican's reach.

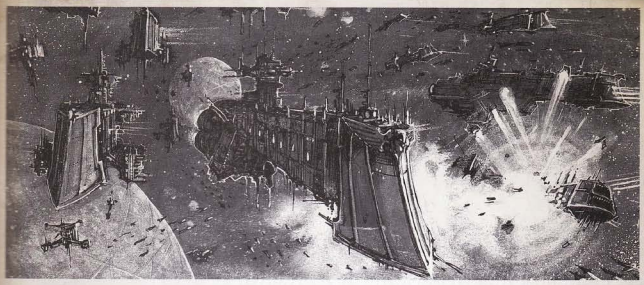
IMPERIAL NAVY

The Imperial Navy holds nearly all of the Imperium's fighting vessels; local governments, Warmasters and others are forbidden to maintain their own fleets of warships. Their spacecraft include some of the most potent engines of destruction in the whole galaxy, including mighty battleships thousands of years old. The Navy's ships range from small escorts with a crew of a few dozen to the immense Emperor-Class battleships which might

The Commissariat

The Imperial Guard is exposed to terrible threats which can shake the resolve of even the most steel-hearted veteran, from bizarre aliens to the terrifying inhabitants of the warp. To encourage the men to fight the most horrendous of situations, commissars are attached to regiments of Imperial Guard. The role of a commissar is to fight alongside the regiment's officers and take control when morale is flagging or the men are not fighting with sufficient zeal. In such situations a commissar can take over command from an officer and summarily execute any man who tries to flee. Even the colonel of a regiment must be sure to display courage and zeal at all times when a commissar is watching him.

Commissars are orphans educated within the Ecclesiarchy's Schola Progenium and selected from among those who show fearless faith in their Emperor. They are then assigned by the Commissariat to Imperial Guard regiments whether the regiment in question likes it or not. Commissars are pious, self-righteous and unwavering in their purpose. They are exceptionally brave and many a seemingly hopeless battle has been turned by a commissar taking command. However, they are universally feared and loathed by the men of the Imperial Guard and are always the first against the wall when a regiment mutinies.



have twenty thousand souls or more on board. The Navy also includes fighter and bomber crews and aircraft that support the Imperial Guard on the ground.

The Navy's officer class is highly traditional and aristocratic in character. The Imperium's noble families frequently boast naval officers among their number and naval dynasties dominate many battlefleets. Elitism is a virtue on most ships, where the officers' lives are in stark contrast to those of the ratings and engine crews. With thousands of crew living and dying on ships that can spend decades without seeing port, a ship of the Imperial Navy becomes a society in its own right; a city in space. Mutinies are not unknown and the Naval security battalions are a familiar sight on the decks of all Naval ships, their black visors and shotguns constantly reminding the men that obedience is their duty to the Emperor.

The Navy relies on many other organisations to function. Perhaps most importantly, these ancient and complex ships could not function without a complement of Tech-Priests who know how to appease the ships' machine-spirits and maintain technology that is too old and mysterious to be replicated. The Navy is also reliant on the Tech-Priests of Mars for refits, upgrades, repairs and new ships.

It is usual for a warship to have astropaths on board, for proper communication is essential if the Imperium is to be defended. Many captains are glad to have Ministorum clergy among their crew, ministering to the spiritual needs of the men and steeling their spirits with sermons. Commissars are appointed to the larger ships, watching over the moral fibre of the crew and providing a watch against mutiny and impiety. Then, of course, there is the Navigator of each vessel, whose family can occupy entire spires jutting out into space atop the ship.

THE ADEPTUS ASTARTES

The Adeptus Astartes, known as the Space Marines, are the elite warriors of the Imperium. They are few in number and regarded with almost mythical awe by most folk, for they are inheritors of traditions founded by the Emperor Himself. The Space Marines are divided into Chapters, each possessing a thousand Space Marines along with its own support staff and spacefleet. It is said that there are around a thousand such Chapters in the Imperium.

A Space Marine is recruited in adolescence from among the most violent cultures of the Imperium. His body is hugely enhanced with new organs promoting muscle and bone growth to give him immense strength, size and resilience. His mind is similarly enhanced; hypno-doctrination and sleep-learning give him both a fervent belief in the Imperium and the knowledge of weapons and tactics to bring the Emperor's wrath to the battlefield. Upon completing his augmentation and training (which not all novices survive), he is issued with his wargear, including a suit of power armour. This armour is one of the most powerful symbols of Imperial might, depicted in statuary and stained-glass windows across the Imperium. Equipped with nerve-fibre bundles so it moves in sync with his body, a Space Marine's armour not only grants him great strength and protection but is a work of art, resplendent in the heraldry of his Chapter.

Each Chapter is independent from the Adeptus Terra. While most will eagerly answer the summons of a Warmaster or a plea for help from somewhere in the Imperium, some Chapters have their own agendas and cannot be relied upon entirely. All, however, serve the Emperor loyally with complete devotion.

All Chapters have proud traditions and distinct characteristics that translate into the way they fight. The ferocious Space Wolves, for instance, are more fiercely independent than most other Chapters and fight on their own terms up close with chainswords and bolt pistols. The Iron Hands, on the other hand, have close ties to the Adeptus Mechanicus and are the masters of siege warfare, arming their warriors with an array of devastating heavy weapons and tanks. Many Chapters are legends, and names such as the Blood Angels, Ultramarines, Dark Angels and Imperial Fists are spoken of with hushed awe among Imperial citizens. A Space Marine Chapter has its own fleet of fast spacecraft and can react far more quickly to a threat than the Imperial Guard or Navy, making the Adeptus Astartes one of the only forces in the Imperium that can mount a rapid response to a crisis. The Space Marines are extremely few in number compared to the size of the Imperium and few citizens will ever see one in the flesh, but without them the Imperial military and the human race would slide ever faster towards destruction.

GREY KNIGHTS

The Space Marines of the Grey Knights Chapter are amongst the most highly specialised of the Adeptus Astartes, designed to specifically defend the Imperium against the threat of Chaos. The Grey Knights are permanently attached to Ordo Malleus and their Chapter Master is rumoured to be a member of the Inner Conclave of the Inquisition. No ordinary warriors, Grey Knights are chosen from amongst the most fearsome and savage feral cultures, each one an emergent psyker who has undergone arduous tests of faith, strength, endurance and courage that would break all but the strongest.

Grey Knights fight in baroque, heavily ornamented suits of armour, carrying mighty sigil-encrusted swords and halberds. These warriors alone can stand before the might of a Greater Daemon with any hope of banishing it back to the warp from whence it came.

The millennia the Grey Knights have spent in battle against the forces of Chaos has furnished them with blasphemous knowledge, painstaking pieced together by the Inquisitors of Ordo Malleus. Each warrior carries a copy of the sacred Liber Daemonica, the holy battle rites of the Chapter, in a ceramite case on his breastplate, and it is this which most symbolises a Grey Knight's most potent weapon; an unshakable faith in the Divine Emperor of Mankind.

DEATHWATCH

Mysterious figures who battle in black power armour, fighting with preternatural skill and dedication against the most terrible of alien creatures. Appearing without warning and vanishing as quickly as they arrived, leaving no trace of themselves or of the creatures they have fought. These are the Imperium's most highly trained xenos fighters, known simply as the Deathwatch.

Forming the chamber militant of Ordo Xenos, the Deathwatch uniquely draws its members from across the many different Space Marine Chapters, all of which have sworn sacred oaths to maintain specially trained xenos fighters and stand ready to deploy them at a moment's notice. These specialised warriors are drawn together as and when needed by the Ordo to combat alien menace whenever and wherever it rears its vile head.

Rumour has it that Ordo Xenos maintains a number of secret fortresses at the fringes of the Imperium where the Deathwatch keeps a silent and constant vigil, ever watchful for the tell-tale signs of alien encroachment.

Superstition & Faith

"Thought for the day: Blind faith is a just cause."
— Liber Imperialis.

The weapons of war may do much to guard the Imperium from the threats that assail it. Yet the strongest armour is not forged from ceramite, it is formed of faith.

The Cult of the Emperor

The Cult Imperialis is one of the few common factors that link the disparate worlds of the Imperium together. No matter what conditions prevail upon a world within the Imperium, the Imperial cult will be found there.

The ways in which the Emperor is worshipped are multitudinous. To some He is revered as a distant, patriarchal and human figure. Others identify Him with some aspect of nature, many others, such as the primitive Ephesians of Dwimlicht, regard Him as a star-god, for His agents only visit occasionally and they descend from the heavens when they do so. But all the creeds of the cult agree upon this one thing: there is only one Emperor. To worship a pantheon of gods and put other gods alongside Him is heresy. However, there have been many individuals over the millennia who have been seen as His saints, people visibly touched by the Emperor, and they are venerated all over the Imperium. There are saints for every aspect of life and there is a thriving trade in their relics on many worlds.

The worship of the Emperor is, in the main, highly organised. Cathedral complexes can be found in the capitals of all worlds of any meaningful populations. On the densely populated, teeming hive worlds, these can occupy entire spires. The graceful structure of the Emperor Triumphant, constructed after the Second Armageddon war at Hive Primus on Armageddon, climbs delicately skyward, its main tower nearly a full kilometre in height. The statue of the Emperor at the top brushes the troposphere, looking benignly down upon the seething, polluted world below. Most towns will have a church or temple to the Emperor and even the crudest village of the most primitive tribesman will sport a sacred cave or grove dedicated to his name.

Of course, in some places, the worship of the Emperor supercedes all other aspects of life—these are the shrine worlds of the Imperium, where perhaps one of the great saints, or even, in the distant past, the Emperor Himself, performed a great deed. These planets can be one, vast, religious complex, or huge cemetery worlds such as Granithor, where the wealthy spend vast fortunes bringing the dead scions of their families for burial, usually those who have perished in the service of the Emperor. Then there are the cardinal worlds, which attract millions of pilgrims and are the strongholds of the cult. These planets are directly governed by the Ecclesiarchy and are the seats of functionaries high in the Cult, responsible for the spiritual health of vast areas of space.

The Ecclesiarchy maintains and promotes the cult galaxy-wide and, where possible, tries to sanction the worship of the Emperor no matter how bizarre it may seem. Very few practices are proscribed, and even such abominations as human sacrifice to the Emperor are useful to the Imperium, for it is easy to convince a newly encountered culture that approves of such custom to give up its psykers to the Black Ships.

One of the Ecclesiarchy's tasks is to record this multiplicity of tradition with which the Emperor is honoured. In that way, two preachers from opposite sides of the galaxy will know, no matter what their title or manner of expressing their devotion might be, that neither is a heretic. The Ecclesiarchy sends out mission fleets for precisely this purpose, whose flotillas of blessed spacecraft slowly circle a particular part of the galaxy, recording new variants of the cult, correcting serious heresies and proselytising to newly discovered populations of humans.

To all, the Emperor is a living god. He may be tens of thousands of light years away, but that He exists, the inhabitants of the Imperium know, so faith is an easy thing. Some amongst the Ecclesiarchy and Inquisition may argue that men should be more ardent in their devotion to Him, but though some may be lax in their adulation and may blaspheme or heretically curse the Master of Mankind for their lot, it is nevertheless rare to meet a man who would dare to deny the Emperor's divinity.

Preachers & Confessors

The Ecclesiarchy presides over the souls of the Imperium's citizens, dividing its countless diocese into parishes, some of which are centred upon a particular planet, others focussed to tending to a particular locale or holy shrine. Each parish is ministered by a preacher, seeing to the well-being and purity of his flock's souls. It is their duty to watch for deviancy and ensure that heretical belief is purged wherever found.

A truly pious preacher may rise to become a portifex, whose authority extends over several parishes and preachers. The responsibilities of a portifex are diverse and can encompass the protection and administration of routes of pilgrimage, the consideration of beatitudes and recommendation of canonisation to the holy synods.

Confessors are the beckoning voices of the Ecclesiarchy, exalting the faithful to ideals of penitence, fervour and righteousness. Confessors are not charged with the administration of a diocese, but rather roam the Imperium wherever the hand of the God-Emperor calls them. Under the spell of a confessor a city can burn at the hands of its own citizens, armies may jubilantly throw themselves into the waiting guns of an enemies hands and heretics shrink fearing their holy wrath.

THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Technology and its mysteries are the preserve of the followers of the Machine God, the Tech-Priests. For they believe that machines are imbued with a life-force of their own, a soul granted to them by the Machine God—a will and a personality. The more ancient a piece of technology, the greater reverence it will elicit from these robed followers, who will spend many hours anointing a machine with the correct unguents before pressing the sigils of activation to coax its spirit into life.

A machine that is both old and complicated is given the same status by the Tech-Priests as the Ecclesiarchy would give a major saint, for many of the systems on these machines are irreplaceable, their secrets lost to time. Among the greatest of such machines are the vast battleships of the Imperial Navy, or the super-heavy Titan war machines. But the Tech-Priests will also lavish their attention upon an antique lasgun or prognosticator and will spend much time trying to understand the intricacies of a device's workings. All machines though, no matter what their pedigree, are treated as living things by the Tech-Priests and they will treat all with reverence, for all are gifts from the long-lost past, knowledge of their function handed on through time only by the beneficence of the Machine God. Woe betide any man who fails to treat his weapon with respect or hurls abuses at his desktop logicator within the range of the machine enhanced senses of a Tech-Priest.

Paradoxically, true machine intelligences are held to be anathema by the Tech-Priests, for they view these as soulless automata, spiritless things cast into the galaxy to confound the will of the Machine God. Shrouded in myth and legend, these abominations are rumoured to have originated during the Dark Age of Technology. Supposedly pathologically dangerous, an Inquisitor may encounter them, although rarely, in the course of his duties. Should they learn of these creations, the Tech-Priests will hunt them down, investigate them and then destroy them. Only properly sanctioned logic engines, those deemed to have a spirit gifted them by the Omnissiah, are allowed to persist.

X

The Inquisition

Organisation

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Ordos of the Inquisition

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Methods

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Tradition

Chapter X: The Inquisition

"Innocence proves nothing."

— Inscription above the gates of the Calixian Conclave spire.

Acolytes of the Inquisition work for a secretive and wide-ranging organisation, which is charged with a vital task. The Inquisition guards the soul of mankind, fending off Daemonic corruption, witchery and mutation lest humanity succumb to their blandishments and fall into darkness. The Inquisition is by necessity a clandestine and complicated organisation. Mystery and fear are essential tools in its mission and Acolytes soon learn to use them to their advantage. The common man fears the agents of the Inquisition as harbingers of woe who steal away loved ones or uncover horrific cults. Even planetary governors, Imperial nobles and military leaders blanch at the mention of an Inquisitor's presence, as well they might, for all hide some guilty secret.

"Come in acid-storm they did, with the rain and the lightning licking the spireport as they landed. They cut the power to the big estate-habs. Whole half the hive went dark with it, and by the time they got it running again and stopped the riots and scraped up the dead, it were too late. They never found no one left up there. Just cold and empty palaces, not a lick of scrap left in the place. Five noble houses gone—and they never did say why neither. I venture I could make a guess or two though—the things you see when you're cleaning viewports…"

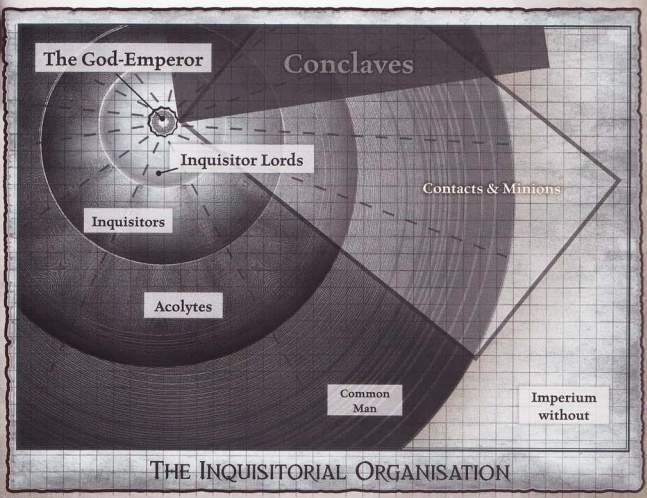
— Phormbis, Hive Tranch Windowjack.

"Mutants are bad, and what's worse is what comes in their wake. Listen up, stubberscum, if you spy something strange with your platoon mates, report it! Otherwise the Inquisition will be through here like the worst dose of gutflush you ever swallowed, giving each and every one of you a Commissar's Welcome—the last and loudest noise you'll ever hear!"

— Arms-Sergeant Heikon Thrass, Mortressen 103rd.

"'Quisitors? Hush now, we don't even speak of 'em. You names 'em, you call 'em an' that's the last thing yer want. They'll 'ave an excruciater up yer fundament afore yer can scream 'Throne blind me!'"

— Agri-hand Jaspus Sawney.



The Inquisitorial Organisation

Organisation

"Understanding is overrated."
— Stormtrooper Sergeant Havlock.

As with the other Adepta, the Inquistion is a confusing tangle of duty and power, secrecy and division. The highly autonomous and covert nature of most Inquisitors only serves to exacerbate the situation. There are wheels within wheels, and many hidden depths to the knowledge and power of the Inquisition. Many Acolytes are ignorant of all but the most fundamental structure of their organisation. Others still know nothing at all of the monolithic, byzantine order.

Overview

Broadly speaking, the Inquisition is a feudal organism. At its base are a great number of thralls toiling to support a complex edifice of influence and duty. At its very peak rests the master of mankind, the God-Emperor, in whose name all acts are justified. In between sit all manner of offices, fiefdoms, ranks and privileges, all of which an aspiring Acolyte may one day hope to claim.

At the very lowest level, a person may work for the Inquisition unknowingly. These minions may have some inkling that they are involved with a secretive organisation but believe it to be mundane in nature, such as a crime syndicate, religious order or governmental murder squad (on some planets, of course, these are one and the same). These folk are not considered to be Acolytes of the Inquisition—merely pawns, employees and agents to be moved upon the field of operations and dropped or sacrificed at will. In their way, they may play an important role but they will never know the truth of their deeds.

An Acolyte is a different creature altogether. The Acolyte is aware that he serves the Inquisition, and will have spoken to his master at least once in his career. He is thought of as a seed of potential that may one day stand to become a fully fledged Inquisitor. Though he starts at an admittedly lowly level, as disposable as any unwitting agent, he has a certain something that sets him apart. This may be an incredible skill or talent, a prophesied destiny, the luck to be in the right place at the right time, or simply something about him that appeals to the Inquisitor in some way.

As he progresses in his service, gaining skill, experience and success to his name, an Acolyte becomes more valuable to his master. Those considered to have proven themselves will be given more and more important tasks and will gain greater knowledge. These trusted Acolytes may come to have cadres of Acolytes or unwitting agents working for them, and may even be asked to seek out potential recruits for their Inquisitor to assess. With time, their master may even deem them ready to begin the long and arduous task of training to become an Inquisitor themselves.

Though far fewer in number than Acolytes or unwitting minions, Inquisitors very firmly form the heart and soul of the Inquisition. These independent and wildly varying individuals drive the organisation forward, seeking out all manner of foulness and ensuring its destruction. There are countless types of Inquisitor, with endless levels of power. Each controls an intricate and subtle web of agents, Acolytes, resources, influences and contacts. Functioning very much as a microcosm of the Inquisition itself, each of these networks is capable of operating independently if need be—though what manner of necessity would require such isolation is a troubling thought indeed.

Whilst the chain of command amongst the ranks of the Inquisitors is obscure at best, the ultimate expression of the group's tremendous powers is the Inquisitorial Representative to the High Lords of Terra. The Representative's role is to observe the workings of the Imperium and inform the High Lords of dire threats uncovered by the Inquisition. The means by which an Inquisitor is appointed as the Representative are very obscure and the Representative changes constantly, with the same Inquisitor rarely serving on the High Lords' Council twice. He is not the leader of the Inquisition, because no one man could ever claim leadership over the wilful and scattered ranks of its Inquisitors. He is at best an advisor who can whisper in the ears of the High Lords and, through them, the Emperor Himself. Beyond this basic structure, the Inquisition is further organised into loose groups, roles and affiliations. Each of these serves to further muddy the treacherous waters of the organisation. These ordos, conclaves and factions are as diverse as those who make up their ranks. Whether it was these structures that have shaped the Inquisitors into the varied force that they are, or vice versa, is a matter of great debate.

Excommunication

An Inquisitor has the power to declare an individual, or sometimes an organisation or whole planet, as 'Excommunicate Traitoris'. This declaration excommunicates the accused from the human race and is an indication to other Inquisitors and Adepta that the excommunicate party should be hunted down and killed for the good of the Imperium. Inquisitorial gatherings are often the venue for declaring excommunications and, in extreme circumstances, even a fellow Inquisitor can be labelled Excommunicate Traitoris. Excommunication is never done lightly but is a principal weapon of the Inquisition and one of the ways its authority can be used to protect the Imperium.

THE ORDOS OF THE INQUISITION

The great ordos are the principal means by which the Inquisition organises itself, and most Inquisitors belong to one of them. The ordos are groups given over to rooting out a particular threat against mankind. With millennia of specialisation, each has become a sharply honed weapon with which to excise those that would seek to move against mankind.

Ordo Hereticus

The Ordo Hereticus is the largest of the ordos and its Inquisitors watch for enemies among the Imperium's own population. Members of the Ordo Hereticus are sometimes known as "Witch Hunters" because of the priority they place on apprehending psykers. Mutants, rebels and heretics are also targeted by the Ordo Hereticus. The Ordo has no qualms at all about acting against threats in the other Adepta and many a renegade Ministorum cardinal or corrupt Tech-Priest has met his end at the hands of a Witch Hunter.

The Ordo Hereticus often makes use of Imperial forces, like the Imperial Guard or Adeptus Arbites, to aid in the fulfilment of its duties. However, armed forces led by a Witch Hunter Inquisitor frequently include Sisters of Battle. Centuries ago, following the Age of Apostasy, the newly reformed Adepta Sororitas and the Ordo Hereticus forged an agreement to assist one another in fighting the Emperor's enemies. This agreement, made at the Convocation of Nephilim, is still shrouded in mystery and it is suggested among some Inquisitors that the Sisters of Battle and the Ordo Hereticus are following some secret plan that only the canonesses of the Sororitas and a few Inquisitor Lords fully understand. Whether this is true or not, a Witch Hunter can expect to find common purpose with the Sisters of Battle, and the two organisations work together extensively.

Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus are commonly figures of incredibly strong will. Some are fitted with special psychic hoods designed to nullify hostile witcheries targeting their mind or person. Others prefer to trust in the Emperor, uttering litanies of protection and hate as they move against rogue psykers. As with the other ordos of the Inquisition, the Witch Hunters are happy to use individuals with psychic powers, provided they have been properly sanctioned. Perhaps surprisingly, there are many Inquisitors amongst the Ordo Hereticus who are capable of using psychic disciplines themselves. Woe betide the witch who is hunted by one such individual, for these Inquisitors are notorious in their zeal. Perhaps it is because they are fully aware of the terrible dangers that lurk within the warp, or perhaps it is a result of their training—whatever the case, these psychic Witch Hunters will stop at nothing to destroy the corrupt and tainted.

Some Inquisitors within the Ordo Hereticus specialise in the identification and eradication of mutants. They may have numerous cells of Acolytes at their disposal, which range from hive-toughened flamer squads, trained to purge large infected areas, to precision assassination cells, which remove and replace key political figures that have succumbed to the lure of the Dark gods. In most cases, such Inquisitors will be less concerned with the mutants themselves (as they are a relatively simple matter to deal with) and more with the causes of mutation. An outbreak of mutation may herald a terrible event, point to an upswing in cult activity or simply be the inexplicable whim of the Ruinous Powers. Whatever the cause, the Ordo Hereticus will require an investigation and purge. This can sometimes cause the Ordo to be involved in high-profile events, such as the removal of a head of state, the cleaning up of corrupted pollutants or even outright war.

Occasionally the Ordo will find itself pitted against an individual being or phenomenon which presents a significant threat. This might be as varied as a psyker of unprecedented power, a mutant with terrifying abilities or even a governor unwilling to carry out necessary pogroms. In such cases, the Ordo Hereticus will excommunicate the offending person from the human race and then hunt them down with frightening ruthlessness. The ordos will call upon any allies they feel necessary, from the Sisters of Battle, to members of other Adepta or servants of another ordo. They are willing to do whatever is needed to get at the excommunicated party, even if it should mean sending the Imperial Guard against the Imperium's own people. Better to end a thousand innocent lives than to suffer the spread of corruption.

Perhaps more so than other arms of the Inquisition, the Ordo Hereticus is concerned with the big picture. Their duty tasks them with tending to a vast flock, and as such, individuals within that mass are seldom of importance. The Imperium is comprised of billions of souls, each of which is a potential psyker, mutant or rebel. The Ordo Hereticus fights on countless fronts, endlessly, with no warning of where fresh heresy may arise. Whilst cells of Acolytes or particular Inquisitors may have the luxury of dealing only with the local situation, the scholars and masters of the Ordos look upon events with a distanced eye, thinking in terms of systems and sectors rather than planets or countries. To some observers, this impersonal attitude is vile, but to members of the Ordo Hereticus it is necessary to protect mankind from itself.

The Sisters of Battle

The Sisters of Battle are the Chamber Militant of the Ordo Hereticus and are more properly known as the Ordere Militant of the Adepta Sororitas. Their duties include performing purity sweeps through Imperial organisations, persecuting apostate clerics, guarding some of the most dangerous of the Ordo's prisoners and acting as wardens on the infamous Black Ships. These and a thousand other duties are entrusted to these most holy servants of the Emperor. The Adepta Sororitas is also closely allied with the Ecclesiarchy and perform beneficial works throughout the Imperium. This includes the Orders Hospitaller, which provides medicae to almost all arms of the Imperial military, and the Orders Famulous, which forms a network of advisors and diplomats to insure that the Imperium's noble households work towards the ultimate good of Mankind. Lastly there is the Sisters of the Orders Dialogous who are scholars and experts in the translation of texts both human and xenos, holy and blasphemous.

The Sisters of Battle are a powerful fighting force in their own right, defending religious sites, guarding Ecclesiarchy adepts, watching over the safety of the huge pilgrim convoys criss-crossing the Imperium and fighting Imperial campaigns of a religious significance.

Ordo Malleus

The Ordo Malleus is the smallest and closest-knit of the ordos, and its Inquisitors are among the most knowledgeable, incorruptible and dangerous men and women in the galaxy. This is because the Ordo Malleus fights perhaps the most dangerous opponent that mankind can face—the Daemon. Daemons are creatures of the warp, servants of the foul powers that dwell there, and they are things of utter evil and madness whose very presence can only lead to corruption and death. The Ordo Malleus—the Daemonhunters—have the responsibility of battling these otherworldly horrors, risking their very souls to fight what might be humanity's ultimate battle against the madness and malevolence of the warp.

The fight against the Daemon requires the Ordo Malleus to share precious information among its Inquisitors and work together. Alone amongst the ordos, the Daemonhunters have a distinct home base—the Inquisitorial facilities on the moons of Saturn. This is where the Ordo's great libraries of Daemonic lore are kept, its volumes carefully warded against the malevolent nature of the information they contain. The Ordo Malleus fleet is docked among Saturn's rings along with its principal fortress, where new Inquisitors are trained and old ones impart the knowledge painfully acquired over centuries of facing the direst and most corruptive of threats.

Ordo Malleus Daemonhunters tend to be very martially minded. They trust only themselves to execute a Daemon's destruction and so go to battle armed with sacred weapons and armoured with potent psychic wards. It is not unknown for Malleus Inquisitors to command whole armies from the front, charging into combat against Daemonic foes and inspiring the men around them to do battle with the most horrible of enemies. For this reason many Daemonhunters consider it their duty to be strong in both mind and body, great warriors with the finest battlegear as well as the strongest will. Some Ordo Malleus Inquisitors are investigators rather than fighters, hunting down Daemonic lore and searching for the signs of a Daemon's presence, but when it comes to destroying the most heinous of foes, the Daemonhunters, with their sacred power hammers and blessed armour, come to the fore.

The Ordo Malleus needs the most elite and dedicated Chamber Militant to combat Daemons, and it has them.

the Space Marines of the Grey Knights Chapter. The Grey Knights are trained specifically to fight Daemons and they are perhaps the only force in the Imperium who can do so without eventually losing their souls. Every Grey Knight has some psychic ability, which is trained and honed until they can shield their minds against Daemonic corruption. Their power armour is imbued with potent anti-Daemonic wards and their distinctive Nemesis force weapons are designed to focus their psychic strength into formidable destructive power. The Grey Knights are based at their fortress-monastery on Saturn's moon of Titan but the majority of them are elsewhere in the galaxy at any given time, forming the retinues of Ordo Malleus Inquisitors or fighting in the cutting edge of an army led by a Daemonhunter. The Grey Knights, like most chapters, have their own fleet and support staff but, unlike most, they do not act completely independently—they are commanded by the Ordo Malleus, who alone know how to use such a potent weapon as the Grey Knights to maximum effect. In all the history of the chapter, a Grey Knight has never become corrupted by the forces of the warp and the tomb-vaults of Titan are the resting places of some of the greatest heroes the Imperium has ever known.

In spite of their skill and dedication, the Inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus are still ultimately mortal. One of the biggest dangers they face is the possibility of one of their own becoming corrupted and ending up in thrall to the very powers they once sought to destroy. Contact with Daemons provides a constant threat of corruption, especially given that the Ordo Malleus collects knowledge about Daemons to help find and destroy them. Such is the potency of the Daemon that even knowledge of them can be dangerous. The Ordo Malleus polices its ranks thoroughly for any sign that its members may be susceptible to corruption or even already in league (knowingly or not) with the Dark gods. Nevertheless, the Ordo Malleus must often hunt down one of its own before all their knowledge of Daemonic lore is used to bring forth the horrors of the warp instead of to destroy them.

One Radical concept is the idea that the warp is a source of immense power that, if it could be harnessed, could usher forth a golden age for the human race. Some Radicals therefore search for ways in which Daemons can be controlled, binding them with complex forbidden rituals or entering into bargains with them in the belief that an Inquisitor's willpower and knowledge will allow him to cheat the damnation that is sure to follow. Some Inquisitors research the warp-spawned sorcery that disciples of the Dark gods have in turn learned from Daemons, hoping to use the warp's own magic against the Emperor's foes. Still other Radicals seek to employ Daemonic weapons or other items of power, believing that it is the will of the user, and not the Daemons bound into the items themselves, that determine whether they are used for good or ill. For every Radical purged from the ranks of the Ordo Malleus, another dares to read a forbidden tome instead of burning it, or takes up a mighty Daemon weapon instead of destroying it. It is a cruel irony that while knowledge is essential for the Ordo Malleus to fight the Daemon, that same knowledge can become the Dark gods' most dangerous weapon of all.

"Daemons cannot normally exist outside the warp. They must be brought through either by cultists enacting ancient rituals to the Dark gods or by possessing unguarded psykers. Daemons are cunning and deceitful and many humans serve them willingly at first, foolishly believing their lies of power. However, once a Daemon is called into realspace it can do untold damage. A Daemon is not just a destructive force, although I have known of some that can lay waste to whole cities and even worlds. Their real danger lies in their corruptive powers. Even the strong-minded can be driven mad by a Daemon's powers, becoming no more than a slave to the Daemon's whims. Cultists may act to help it call forth more of its kind from the warp, or even attempt to build an empire from among the Imperium's unguarded worlds. The result is always damnation — the worst excesses of the Ordo Malleus are as nothing compared to the eternal woe that awaits all the servants of the Dark gods. The servants of the Daemon, as well as the Daemon itself, are justifiable targets for our wrath."

— Daemonhunter Alwazzi

Ordo Xenos

The Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos accept responsibility for protecting humanity from the predations of aliens. To most of the Imperium, the alien is an abomination, a heathen who desires humanity's destruction and who must be slain for the good of mankind. Most Inquisitors share this view and pursue the alien to the point of extinction if they can.

Some aliens are a threat to the Imperium in a military sense, invading large swathes of Imperial space, ransacking planets and killing or enslaving the inhabitants. The green-skinned rampaging Orks and voracious Tyranids are chief among these large-scale threats. The Imperial Guard and Imperial Navy are the main weapons against these xenos hordes, and the Imperium's war zones are constantly ablaze with battles against them. The Ordo Xenos is instrumental in leading the Imperium's military forces against major xenos invasions, gathering intelligence and deploying troops. An Inquisitor in this position makes decisions that can cost millions of lives and must be prepared to go further than even the most hard-hearted Imperial Guard general or Navy admiral in stemming the alien tide. Some of the Ordo Xenos' greatest Inquisitors, such as the legendary Inquisitor Kryptmann, have sacrificed entire worlds to deny them to alien forces.

Other aliens are far more subtle. These in a way are more dangerous, because the Imperium's armed forces cannot be brought to bear against such a foe. Some aliens can control humans or otherwise hide their tracks, living among human communities and corrupting them. Alien-led cults can persist for centuries, sometimes attaining great power and prestige for their members, taking advantage of the superstitious and repressive nature of many Imperial worlds to enslave hundreds of thousands of people. Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos search for tell-tale signs of alien infiltration, often gathering groups of nearby Inquisitors to them before they move to destroy it wherever it is found. Such Inquisitors are hard-nosed investigators who must be prepared to face inhuman enemies and show no mercy to those in thrall to the alien.

A few alien threats are dormant, waiting to emerge. Many examples of fallen alien civilisations are dotted around the galaxy on dead and quarantined worlds, and not all the aliens there are completely extinct. It only takes an ill-advised mining colony or Explorator mission to awaken something ancient and slumbering. To prevent this, many Ordo Xenos Inquisitors actively investigate the relics of alien civilisations, hunting for potential dangers among cyclopean alien cities and forgotten tomb-worlds. These Inquisitors frequently work alone and, needless to say, one of the dangers they face is awakening the very alien horrors they seek to keep dormant.

While many Ordo Xenos Inquisitors believe that all aliens must be killed, this is not true for all of them. Some believe that if an alien species does not wish the Imperium harm and does not move against Imperial interests then cooperating with them is not out of the question. Some aliens possess technology that far surpasses the Imperium's own, such as the elegant digital weapons made by the ape-like Jokaero, and trading for such technology may be to the Imperium's benefit. Furthermore, the Imperium shares common enemies with some species, and alliances between Imperial and alien forces are sometimes a necessity. Some Ordo Xenos Inquisitors actively foster these alliances, believing that their superior knowledge of alien methods and mindsets negates the risks of collaborating with xenos. These beliefs are considered Radical among the Ordo Xenos and their adherents can be shunned or even hunted down by their brother Inquisitors. Nevertheless, the contact an Ordo Xenos Inquisitor has with alien species can impart a belief that some of them can be used, not just destroyed, by the Imperium.

As well as having the capacity to command the Imperium's military forces, the Ordo Xenos also have access to the Ordo's Chamber Militant—the Deathwatch Space Marines. The Deathwatch is an unusual Space Marine Chapter that draws its members from the other Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes, with Marines serving in the Deathwatch for a set period of time before returning to their original Chapters. Most Space Marine Chapters are a part of this ancient agreement, sending Space Marines with the most appropriate skills to be trained and equipped for a term of service as specialised alien hunters under the command of the Ordo Xenos. A squad of Deathwatch Space Marines is invaluable when an Inquisitor comes to exterminate an alien infestation, investigate a potentially deadly alien world or eliminate a particularly loathsome xenos creature. Some Deathwatch squads are placed at the disposal of a conclave, but most of them are appointed to the retinue of a particular Inquisitor until his mission is complete.

Other Ordos

Whilst the three great ordos are perhaps the best known and established, there are a number of other smaller ordos charged with guardianship of particular aspects of the Imperium. Some police the ranks of assassin death cults, whilst others tend the workings of the Black Ships. Rumours persist of Inquisition ordos which watch the officers of the Imperial Guard and Navy, and others whose sole task is to purge the ranks of the Inquisition itself. Whilst in theory these smaller ordos are of equal rank and power to Ordo Hereticus, Ordo Xeno and Ordo Malleus, in practice they seldom control as many resources as these great organisations.

CONCLAVES

Aside from their membership of an Ordo, many Inquisitors also serve in a regional grouping generally known as a conclave. These federations of Inquisitors watch over a particular area of Imperial space, although the whole Imperium is by no means covered by conclaves and endless tracts of it are devoid of a permanent Inquisitorial presence.

Conclaves can include Inquisitors from all manner of ordos as well as those who belong to no other organisations. The largest conclaves, those which watch over particularly populous or dangerous areas of the Imperium, have enormous resources available for the use of their dozens of Inquisitors, from spaceships to private armies. The smallest might number only three or four Inquisitors and a handful of trusted agents.

The Calixian Conclave

As with many others throughout the Imperium, the Calixian Conclave has a long and labyrinthine history. This ancient establishment has gathered many resources over the years, ranging from small safe houses on distant planets to mighty fortresses like the Tricorn officio on Scintilla. Troops, secret libraries, ancient pacts and even entire merchant companies are in the control of the conclave—though many would be hard pressed to find any evidence of such a thing. There are also numerous hidden heresies and forbidden episodes buried within the annals of the conclave.

The symbol of the Calixian Conclave is a golden chalice. At Inquisitorial gatherings, an ornate version of this chalice is often displayed upon a table, plinth or other prominent position. Tradition holds that it should be filled only half-way with clear liquid. The mythology of the conclave holds that this is either a draught from the well of knowledge or the waters of forgetfulness. The original charter in which this detail was recorded has been lost and copies of the tattered manuscripts seem to contradict one another. Darker whispers from the more Radical elements of the conclave whisper that the symbolic cup is in fact the Chalice of Corruption, a warning to those who would taste the mysteries locked within the Calixis Sector's apocalyptic fate.

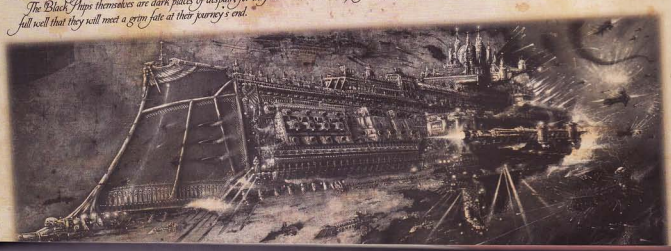
The Black Ships

A major duty of the Inquisition, alongside the primarily investigative role of the various ordos, is running the Black Ships. These craft, crewed and commanded in conjunction with the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, transport psykers from all over the Imperium to Terra. These psykers are given up by Imperial worlds as part of their tithe, and indeed surrendering psykers to the Inquisition is one of the most important rules of Imperial law. The skill of the Inquisition at finding the truth about a planet's psyker population and the power of intimidation that the Inquisitorial Seal brings with it means that the Black Ships could not function effectively without the Inquisition's help.

Some of the psykers transported to Terra are strong enough to be trained as Imperial psykers or astropaths. The rest are never seen again and as far as most people see it, what happens to them is a secret known only to a few Lord Inquisitors and senior Adepts of the Telepathica.

The crews of the Black Ships come from both the Telepathica and the Inquisition. Adepts of the Telepathica test the psykers being transported, selecting those who are strong enough to shield themselves from possession by warp entities to begin their training. The Inquisition's role is to scrutinise the tithe gathered from each world to make sure that there is no shortfall in the number of psykers given up, monitor the psykers being transported in case they pose a threat while in transit and (though not their official duty) pick the best psykers for training and use by the Inquisition itself. Indeed, many Acolytes with psychic powers began their careers as unwilling passengers on a Black Ship, where their talents were first recognised.

The Black Ships themselves are dark places of despair, for they are little more than spacefaring high-security prisons and many of the psykers being transported know full well that they will meet a grim fate at their journey's end.



Cabals

Any conclave has the power to commission a special cabal to investigate a particular matter, though they are rare. Sometimes the line between cabal and conclave are none too clear, particularly in areas where there are few Inquisitors. Cabals are, in practice, autonomous bodies, specialist taskforces charged with the prosecution of a particular sensitive concern. Cabals are despised by many, who see them as secret societies or unnnecesary inner factions within a conclave. However, they have been shown to be a highly effective tool: by combining and focusing the activities of varied Inquisitors on a particular scheme, cabals have often achieved noteworthy successes.

The Tyrantine Cabal of Inquisitors within the Calixis Sector is an example of a large and comparatively close-knit cabal. The ominous threat of the much prophesied Tyrant Star—a strange apparition that heralds great disaster—has forced Inquisitors to band together. Appearing as it does, seemingly at random throughout the sector, the Tyrantines have so far been unable to track or predict its wax and wane. Whenever events begin to herald the arrival of the Tyrant Star—mass riots, dreams of a black wreathed sun, natural disasters, unprecedented psychic phenomena and so on—nearby Inquisitors and Acolytes race to observe the appearance. The data they record is shared amongst the other members of the cabal and is much debated upon.

FACTIONS

A further division within the Inquisition is the personal philosophy adopted by each Inquisitor and, to some extent, their Acolytes. The members of the Inquisition are men and women of strong character and convictions, and each has a different view of how the Imperium should best be saved from the many threats that beset it (including the Inquisition itself). There are as many beliefs as there are stars in the sky but over the centuries Inquisitors have found common cause and banded together into factions. Some factions are ancient and can claim many powerful Inquisitors among their ranks, while others are little more than cells of two or three like-minded Inquisitors.

Many Inquisitors describe a broad split in their ranks between Puritans and Radicals. Puritans more or less believe the Imperial Truth as it is handed down to the Imperium's citizens—the Emperor is a god, the dark forces of the warp are unutterably evil, and mutants, heretics and witches must not be tolerated. Furthermore they tend to believe in maintaining the status quo of the Imperium, since it is the instrument of the Emperor's will. Puritans are mostly young and full of fire, eager to prove themselves to their peers and their Emperor by hunting down mankind's traditional foes and preserving the stability of the Imperium. Many Acolytes also share this zeal, particularly as they are often at the sharp end of any engagement with cultists, mutants and other such scum. Even if he does not entirely agree with this view of the Imperium, an Inquisitor will often encourage Puritan ideals within his servants, knowing that they will expedite the task of rooting out corruption with great gusto.

Radicals, meanwhile, have deviated from the Imperial Truth. They vary immensely in their beliefs, from those who use the forces of the warp against its inhabitants to Inquisitors who seek to shatter the very Imperium they serve. A Radical will often say that all Inquisitors start out as Puritans, but that as they are exposed to the realities of the Imperium and the galaxy beyond, they inevitably become more and more flexible in their ideas and all become Radicals in the end. Puritans, on the other hand, consider the more extreme Radicals to have been corrupted by the very power they wield and the dreadful knowledge to which they are exposed. Most Radicals try to conceal their divergent beliefs when in the company of many other Inquisitors, preferring to pursue their agendas away from the sight of more puritanical souls. Some, however, are outspoken in their views and can gain many enemies in attempting to convert Puritans to their cause. Inquisitors are generally wary of such beliefs within their Acolytes, at least until they have proven themselves over many successful investigations.

It is not unknown for Inquisitors to come into direct conflict over their beliefs. On a few occasions Inquisitors have been dragged into hidden, internecine wars, using the Inquisition's valuable resources (and often their Acolytes) to purge the ranks of their enemies and settle old disputes. Such conflicts are rigorously concealed from the rest of the Imperium, and even the highest-ranking adepts would be deeply shocked to discover that these inscrutable, all-powerful guardians of humanity can be riven with dissent and even murder. Even when these conflicts are not exposed, they simmer beneath the surface—there is probably not a single Inquisitor in the Imperium who does not have an ideological opponent among the Inquisition's ranks. Given that Inquisitors are men and women of action, such conflicts always come to a head sooner or later.

For these reasons, Inquisitors are often unwilling to openly identify themselves with one faction or another. Acolytes are frequently in the dark as to their master's true predilections. Some Inquisitors hold that such things are not for the likes of Acolytes, whilst others refuse to discuss such complicated matters until the Acolyte is astute enough to have guessed where their master's beliefs lie. Rumours and half-truths constantly circulate between cells of Acolytes, which only further serves to muddy the water. Acolytes who succeed in divining their master's faction may discover that he holds beliefs that are very different to their own, which can lead to some very interesting moral quandaries.

Puritans

Perhaps the largest Puritan faction in the Calixis Sector are the Amalathians, named after the Conclave of Amalath at which many Inquisitors swore to uphold the stability of the Imperium. Amalathians believe that the Imperium is the Emperor's own work and that it must be preserved in its current state—maintaining the status quo is the goal of the Amalathians. The most extreme Puritan faction is the Monodominants. These hard-line Inquisitors believe that the Imperium can only survive if everything else is destroyed. Monodominants are intolerant in the extreme, advocating the wholesale slaughter of heretics and rebels and xenocidal campaigns against alien races. There are a great many crimes in the mind of a Monodominant, and death is the only sentence.

Radicals

There are too many Radical factions to count, but some have a great many adherents. One of the most prevalent is the Xanthite faction, named after Inquisitor Xanthus who was hunted down and killed by fellow Inquisitors for his beliefs. He believed that the warp, and even the Daemons that lived within it, could be harnessed for the good of humanity. Xanthites study the warp and the ways of Chaos, employ forbidden sorcery, Daemon-wrought artefacts and even bind Daemons into their service. Knowledge is the weapon of choice for a Xanthite, and turning their enemy's weapons against him is their favoured tactic. Meanwhile, the Isstvanian faction, named after Horus' great betrayal of the Imperium at Isstvan III, believes that the Imperium becomes stronger through war and catastrophe. Isstvanians attempt to ferment rebellion and disaster at every opportunity, with mayhem and strife as their primary goal. Many an Inquisitor has investigated a dire threat to the Imperium, only to discover that it is the work of an Isstvanian.

Methods

"The end justifies the means."

— High Justicar Prateus.

The methods employed by an Inquisitor can often provide a clue as to their personal philosophies. Each Inquisitor works in a different way, as befits such highly individual beings. Some like to work alone, whilst others employ thousands. Some lean towards direct, personal action, whilst others like to puzzle things out from a sequestered retreat filled with comm-links and data-lines. Whatever the case, the modus operandi of each Inquisitor is unique.

An Inquisitor's Cadre

Broadly speaking, each Inquisitor controls a network of agents beholden to serve his needs and interests. In turn, each Inquisitor also has certain obligations to his Ordo, conclave or conscience, which he must fulfil. An Acolyte quickly learns that he is but a small part of a wide and subtle web of influence, knowledge and power. Frequently he will merit little direct attention from his master—at least until he proves himself capable and worthy.

An Inquisitor may inherit a cadre of people, resources and obligations—particularly if they are taking over from a mentor or deceased colleague. More usually, however, they will create a network over a number of years. Acolytes often find themselves part of a cadre that has an intricate history and must be carefully dealt with. They may find themselves caught up in petty rivalry or suffer jealous outbursts from other cells of Acolytes. They may have to deal with various eccentricities and habits that seem bizarre at first. For example, they may find that their master will only speak to them over vox-link from another room or that they are forbidden to wear the colour blue in the Inquisitor's presence.

New Recruits

Freshly recruited Acolytes are usually bound together into small groups and tasked with simple investigations. Sometimes a promising Acolyte will be told to remain a "sleeper agent"—living a normal life until such time as the Inquisitor has found a suitable number of companions to form a cell. Some Inquisitors like to craft finely balanced groups, filled with Acolytes whose skills and personalities perfectly complement one another. Others prefer to throw individuals together and hope that they get on.

These newly forged cells will sometimes be required to swear binding oaths of companionship but, more often than not, the Inquisitor will leave the group alone to figure out their own loyalties, hierarchy and so on. Most Inquisitors do not have the time to nursemaid young Acolytes and view the behaviour of the group at this time to be particularly revealing of their future potential.

New cells will feel pressure to produce results. Successful investigations, thorough purgings, insightful observations and other such victories, all serve to cement their reputation. Cells that fail to perform seldom remain active for long. Occasionally the members will be split up and reassigned, but usually they simply disappear. Dark rumours of mind scrubbings, servitor assignment and other terrible fates constantly circulate between groups of Acolytes, becoming more sinister with each retelling.

Depending on the nature of their master, new Acolytes may have contact with other cells. These may be other inexperienced peers or elder groups. Through these contacts, new Acolytes will generally find out very quickly that there is a great deal they do not know about their master. They certainly will not know the full extent of their Inquisitor's cadre. Other cells within the cadre are just as likely to purposely mislead them about this as they are to help and guide them.

Ranks and Player Characters

In game terms, an Acolyte's progression through the stages of trust and responsibility is represented by their Rank within their Career Path. As a Player Character gains Ranks, so too does their importance to their master rise.

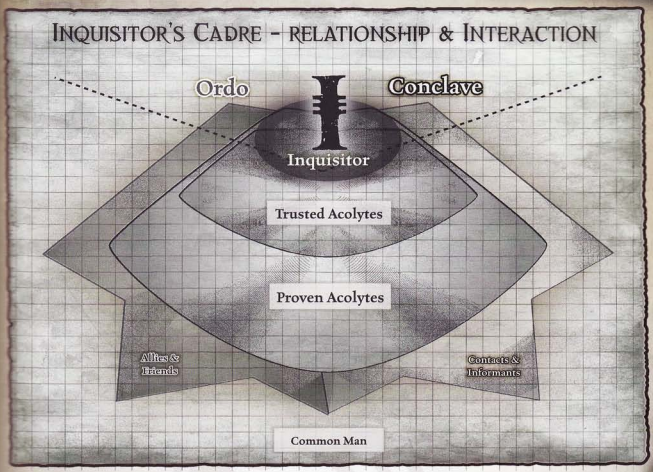
1st–3rd Ranks: New Recruit. Promising, but do they have what it takes?

4th–6th Ranks: Proven Acolyte. Demonstrated ability, but are they a survivor?

7th–8th Ranks: Trusted Acolyte. Tough and competent—Inquisition material?

Completed Career Path: Ready to become an Interrogator?

The manner in which they have gained these Ranks is important. Should they be smart, successful and devoted to the Emperor, they will receive many rewards and exciting tasks to fulfil. If they have merely bumbled through investigations, yet still managed to not die, their master will consider them an Acolyte who is lucky, rather than competent. Of course, in some situations a lucky fool is exactly what is required…



Proven Acolytes

Once a cell has a number of successful missions to its name, it rises in estimation and status within the Inquisitor's cadre. The Acolytes have proven themselves capable and independent enough to take on more difficult assignments. They will gain marginally more time with their master and be given slightly more insight into the nature of the Inquisition. At the same time that they begin to understand what they are involved with, the danger of their duties begins to increase. Inquisitors frequently regard this stage as a crucible, through which only the most driven and capable may pass. Losses at this stage are often high, both of life and limb.

Trusted Acolytes

Naturally enough, the dangers and travails of the Acolyte's lot mean that as time goes on, the ranks thin. The weak, foolish, indiscreet and unlucky do not survive assignment to dangerous tasks. Those that remain are considered capable indeed. Some may even gain the trust of their master. Acolytes that gain their Inquisitor's confidence become powerful and highly useful servants. Often completely accustomed to their master's ways after years of service, trusted Acolytes are allowed to organise and control entire sections of the Inquisitor's cadre. This may be as simple as keeping track of certain cells or as complicated as setting up planet-wide investigations. Trusted Acolytes are often the seneschals and chatelains of the Inquisitor's holdings, running households, businesses, elaborate false identities and the like whilst he is away. Some trusted Acolytes are primed for long-term undercover assignments, becoming vital sleeper agents, nestled in positions of power. Indeed, some shrewd Acolytes hold that Inquisitorial influence is the best way to gain coveted political positions on some worlds. Trusted Acolytes gain a level of independence and knowledge unimaginable to Acolytes lower down the pecking order, to the point where some new recruits are unable to distinguish them from true Inquisitors.

Inquisitors in Training

At some point or another in their career, most Inquisitors will sponsor a promising Acolyte to become a full member of the Inquisition. As usual for the quixotic organisation, there is no single standard way that the Inquisition does this. In some places, Acolytes are sent to formal training schools, where they learn the arts of the Explicator and Interrogator. In other places, the Acolyte is "adopted" by the Inquisitor and learns at their side as an apprentice. On occasion the Acolyte is subjected to strange and painful rituals or abandoned upon some hellish world to walk their own path and prove their worth. The Acolyte may or may not be aware that they are being groomed for power. There have been instances where an aged master has vanished, only to leave their cadre, status and library of secrets to a very surprised Acolyte. Whilst an Inquisitor in training is generally thought to be of a higher status than the ordinary Acolyte, they are still beholden to their master and owe him fealty. Only once they have completed all the necessary rites to become a full Inquisitor will they be considered to have left the Inquisitor's cadre. Even then, their former master will still be able to exert considerable influence upon the new Inquisitor.

Other Inquisitors

Though the structure of the Inquisition is such that a chain of command does not really exist, in practice there are many ways in which other Inquisitors can have influence upon an Inquisitor and their cadre.

At the lowest level, an Inquisitor may spend time assisting lower-ranking Inquisitors with their investigations. There are many reasons why this may be done. The lesser Inquisitor may be an old apprentice or may have information that is much needed. An alliance where the Inquisitor can be sure of a controlling hand may be temporarily necessary or, of course, they may choose to do such a thing out of kindness. Lending assistance will place a strain upon the Inquisitor's resources and Acolytes may well feel the pinch as a result of this. Lower-level, unimportant cells may be temporarily seconded over to the lesser Inquisitor—perhaps even permanently gifted should the need be there. Some Inquisitors see this practice as a perfect way to be rid of troublesome or awkward cells.

An Inquisitor's peers may also have a great effect upon his cadre. It may be that two or more Inquisitors decide to pool their resources to deal with a particular problem. In which case, Acolytes may find themselves working alongside another cell. In other cases, Acolytes may find themselves caught up in rivalries or outright hostility. Should their master be a member of an unpopular faction, Acolytes might find themselves the victims of threats and violence designed to disturb or persuade their Inquisitor away from dangerous beliefs. Zealous rivals might even seek to destroy the cadre completely—and the lives of the Acolytes along with it.

More subtle manipulations might also be passed down from older Inquisitors. It may be that they have specific instructions from an ordo or conclave, which the Acolytes may end up enacting for their master. Elders may act as a mentor for the Inquisitor, guiding them towards particular actions or discouraging them from others. Sometimes Acolytes may find themselves in the uncomfortable position of mistrusting their master's mentor, knowing that a particular deed is suspect, even whilst being forced to carry it out. Even more disturbingly, Acolytes might even be asked to report upon their own master, in cases where corruption is suspected. In these cases, they are frequently trapped between disloyalty to their Inquisitor and seeming to share guilt with a suspected renegade.

Exterminatus

Exterminatus is the term used for the destruction of an entire planet by order of the Inquisition. As such, it is an incredibly rare and vastly powerful event. The Inquisition has, in theory at least, sole access to the weapons with the potency to destroy a whole world and they vary from high-yield virus weapons to cyclonic torpedoes that can penetrate a planet's crust and tear it apart in a chain reaction. It is a measure of an Inquisitor's strength of will that he is willing to cause the deaths of billions of people through the Exterminatus, but in the case of alien or Daemonic infestation, it takes an Inquisitor to understand that it is for the good of those same people that sometimes the ultimate sanction must be taken.

AN ACOLYTE'S DUTIES

As part of an Inquisitor's cadre, Acolytes may be called upon to perform various tasks on behalf of their master. They may receive formal orders from their master, written requests, missions dictated by intermediaries or may even be managed by older, more trusted Acolytes.

Investigation

Perhaps the most common mission an Acolyte will be tasked with is the gathering of information. Knowledge is power and the actions of Acolytes allow their master to cast his net wide indeed. Investigations might be full-on covert operations, making use of all manner of high-tech and low cunning. They might also be simple catch-and-question missions. In some cases, psychic disciplines will be necessary. Sometimes Acolytes will need to gather evidence or follow a confusing tangle of leads. In some cases, particularly when uncovering a cult, Acolytes will need to be skilled at following people and extracting information. Wits, skill and speed are all vital parts of succeeding at these sorts of missions.

Purge

Sometimes Acolytes will be charged with the destruction of something, or someone, deemed to be abhorrent. This might be as simple as a surgical strike upon a criminal organisation or as complicated as the destruction of a powerful cult magus. Most cells of Acolytes have standing instructions to destroy any mutants, cultists and the like who they uncover in the course of their investigations. By way of contrast, some cells specialise in assassination of particular targets, such as political leaders, freethinking agitators or all too charismatic preachers.

Occasionally a particularly dangerous object must be located and destroyed, in which case Acolytes will need both the skills to find and destroy the item, as well as fend off whatever terrible effects it has, and the attentions of other groups who wish to claim it for themselves.

Whilst Acolytes are expected to be capable of defending themselves—indeed, some cells specialise in it—serious assaults where high body counts are necessary are seldom likely to be the sole purview of a cell of Acolytes. Inquisitors will usually call upon the Chambers Militant of their Ordo or conclave to bring additional firepower to the fray. Acolytes can sometimes find themselves working alongside Sisters of Battle, or even the Deathwatch. Of course, these forces are only involved if serious resistance is anticipated. If Acolytes walk into a room full of highly armed cultists by accident, escaping with their lives is their own concern.

Special Circumstances

Sometimes Acolytes will find themselves sent to perform tasks that they do not understand or that are somewhat unusual. Perhaps they will be asked to take a tour of duty aboard one of the Black Ships or to help round up rogue psykers. Sometimes they might be asked to guard an item or individual, or courier shipments between worlds. Perhaps they will be asked to trial new combat stimms, live amongst xenos or masquerade as a hive gang for a number of months. Sometimes they will need to do darker deeds, such as find a suitable Daemonhost or investigate a rival Inquisitor for corruption. These sorts of tasks are often the ones that produce the most hesitation and moral quandary within Acolytes, for it is not always clear if their action is a good or bad one.

Tradition

"Only the wisest and stupidest men ever change."
— Lady Olivia Ol'Wynn of Hive Sibellus.

One of the few constants of the Inquisition is that there are no standard regulations, codes of practice or "correct" behaviour. Whilst the other Adepta follow dogma set down millennia ago, the Inquisition remains a flexible and unpredictable organisation. An Inquisitor is free to arrange his affairs in any manner that suits his needs and personality. However, humans being the creatures they are, the Inquisition does possess a certain level of tradition and custom within its various ordos and conclaves. The Calixian Conclave, for example, looks to the ancient wisdom of the Scintillan Dictates to guide it, inscribing and interpreting its principles until they have an almost liturgical quality to them.

Symbols

Perhaps the most common shared traditions are those steeped in powerful symbolism. In many ways, man is a very simple creature, who responds very well to certain images. The Inquisition knows this, and is happy to exploit it to suit its own needs.

Fire is traditionally associated with the Inquisition and its works. The image of the cleansing flame is a strong one and Acolytes are encouraged to employ it when they have need to strike fear. Wherever there is the white-hot excruciator, a witch pyre or a promethium-dripping flamer, there too is the Inquisition. Other than the literal interpretation of fire as a weapon, there are other uses for such symbolism. Many Inquisitors consider their role to be that of the cleansing flame, there to burn away the rotting flesh of corruption. Some also hold that they are guardians of the Emperor's light, the holy flame of faith. Those that attend the Black Ships speak of fuelling the mystical beacon of the Astronomican, casting willing souls into the furnace of the Emperor's will.

The hammer is also associated with the Inquisition. Many Inquisitors carry gorgeously bedecked warhammers with which to smite their foes. Like the Ecclesiarchy, many members of the Inquisition regard the hammer as a metaphor for piety, the force by which heresy and corruption are crushed. Warhammers are common gifts for Acolytes who have proven themselves especially adept at destroying cultists and heretics.

Aside from the flame and the hammer, perhaps the most powerful of the Inquisition's symbols is the Seal. Each Inquisitor bears an Inquisitorial Seal. This is a small amulet or icon in the shape of a stylised column. Thought to depict a pillar of strength or rod of control, this seal is their badge of office and for an Inquisitor to reveal it shows that he is demanding that his authority be respected. An Inquisitor who shows his seal to a planetary governor, for instance, expects to have the planet's resources at his disposal from that moment onwards. The Inquisitorial Seal is, in a sense, an Inquisitor's most important item of equipment, and he will never willingly relinquish it. Some seals incorporate circuits and sonic probes that can be used to hack into cogitators and open electronic locks, or double as simple weapons to ensure that the Inquisitor is never unarmed.

An Inquisitor and his cadre can also display the Inquisitorial Rosette, a symbol of the Inquisition worn on an Inquisitor's clothing or wargear. The rosette can be worn by those in an Inquisitor's employ and can also be displayed on vehicles or by the armed forces being used by the Inquisitor. The rosette signifies that an individual is in the employ of the Inquisition and is enough to ensure the fearful cooperation of most adepts and citizens who know of the Inquisition's purpose. The rosette, however, is used very sparingly, as most Inquisitors prefer to keep themselves and their Acolytes low-key. The rosette is most commonly used when in the company of fellow members of the Inquisition or when an Inquisitor wishes to strike fear and awe into the common man.

CUSTOMS OF THE CALIXIAN CONCLAVE

The Calixian Conclave has many traditions and rites unique to its organisation. These have grown up over the many hundreds of years that the conclave has watched over the sector and serve to bind the Acolytes and Inquisitors together through common custom. Whilst some pay little more than lip service to these habits, others treat them as seriously as the Imperial Creed.

When they are new to the Inquisition, Acolytes are unlikely to be party to the mysteries and traditions of the conclave. They are likely to find the unwritten rules of the group inexplicable at first. Their first encounter with such things might be to attend a consecration of a temple as an honour guard or to stand outside the door of an Inquisitorial gathering, knocking three times and being refused access. Others might be sent to collect an annual tithe of thanks, only to discover it is naught but a slap in the face and a sack of grain.

As they become accustomed to the ways of the conclave, Acolytes may be invited to take part in the cycle of gatherings and rituals. They may also get to know the unspoken laws of etiquette and behaviour common to the conclave. Their master, for example, may instruct them in the Scintillan Dictates, or else an elder cell of Acolytes may decide to take them under their wing. Acolytes may choose to reject the trappings of the conclave, indeed, if their Inquisitor is of Radical tendencies, they may be encouraged to ride roughshod over the "proper way" of doing things. They are, of course, free to do so but such behaviour will mark them out as "strange", "difficult" and "unreliable".

There are countless rituals and practices used by the Calixian Conclave. Some are highly obscure, attended only by a few or only taught to those with the proper level of initiation. Others are widely known by Acolytes and Inquisitors alike. Some of the most common customs are presented below.

Petitioning

An Inquisitor expects much of his Acolytes, however, as with any feudal master, he holds some obligation to his servants. Acolytes have a right to request things from their master. This may be as simple as a shot of amasec and a ten minute briefing or as grandiose as an entire moon. The Inquisitor may not always grant these petitions, but cleverly made, apt or amusing requests may be heard. Experienced Acolytes know only to ask for things that cannot be had in any other way and to ask for them in an unusual fashion. Those that ask for too much too often are considered to be somewhat foolish and are generally ignored. Many Acolytes spend some time sizing up their master's foibles before making a petition.

Customs in Game Terms

The customs of the Calixian Conclave can add to games of Dark Heresy in many ways. For example, if a Game Master wishes to run a game involving intrigue between Inquisitors, a great feast or ritual gathering can make a perfect backdrop. Similarly, scenarios where Acolytes must sneak into a shrine of Saint Aret to recover a hidden file are full of possibility. Severely wounded characters that spend a Fate Point to avoid death might see a vision of Saint Uthur guiding them or even believe that the Saint has performed a miracle. Some Player Characters might spend a long time working out the details of a spectacularly intricate petition, whilst others might merely carry an icon of Saint Castor to smooth away their troubles.

Players and Game Masters should feel free to invent their own saints, customs and rituals, for the Calixian Conclave is a huge and convoluted organisation. No book could ever hope to chart all of the traditions of such a complicated and superstitious group.

The Scintillan Dictates

Some centuries past, legendary Inquisitor Herachon Thros issued a series of letters that have now become common teaching for Acolytes of the Calixian Conclave. Originally intended for investigators stationed on the capital planet of Scintilla, later generations of scholars have read many deeper levels of meaning and interpretation into what, on the face of it, seem very simple instructions.

Thy master's will shalt be the whole of the law.

This is loosely translated to mean that Acolytes should not be held back by local custom and law. In the service of the Inquisition, even the darkest of illegal acts are sometimes justified.

Thou shalt know thy duties.

Broadly speaking, Acolytes should know their remit and dutifully follow their instructions. This dictat is also interpreted to mean that Acolytes should not stand by and allow heresy and other transgressions to go unpunished even if their Inquisitor seems unaware of them.

Thou shalt not over-esteem thine own importance.

This dictat causes some confusion amongst scholars. It is generally agreed to be an admonishment to remember that each Acolyte is but a small part of a larger picture, which only the Inquisitor has access to. Some believe it to be a reminder that sacrifice, even of one's own life, is a necessary part of the Inquisition's work.

Thou shalt not make improper use of thy master's purse, nor his seal, nor his name either.

Perhaps the clearest of the dictates, this is almost universally held to be a warning against abusing the incredible resources an Inquisitor can call upon. Most also believe that it is a commandment to be subtle in one's work, invoking the Inquisition only when absolutely necessary. Some Acolytes take this dictat to extremes, living in penury and never speaking the name of their master, lest they draw his wrath.

Thou shalt seek no reward but the satisfaction of thy master.

Commonly believed to be a warning against profiteering from investigations, this dictat has perhaps the widest leeway attached to it. Some Inquisitors closely watch their Acolytes and their possessions to ensure that they are not becoming too luxuriant. Others seldom bother looking into their servants' dealings. Most ensure that Acolytes do not display their status too openly, knowing that the temptation to show off, impress attractive strangers, claim recognition, free drinks or notoriety can all too easily lead to disaster or corruption.

Thou shalt be glad of thy master's punishment, for it is deserved and it improves thee.

Opinions vary wildly about this dictat, depending mostly, it seems, upon the nature of the person doing the interpretation. Some flagellants hold that "deserved punishment" is an Acolyte's lot, as a poor and stumbling vessel of the Emperor's will. Meanwhile, some point to the concept of constant improvement implied in the dictat as proof that Acolytehood is but a crucible, intended to burn away impurity and forge a strong and powerful Inquisitor from what was once humble clay. Some, admittedly more cynical in nature, hold that the true essence of this dictat is a commandment to rejoice, for even whilst being punished, the lot of an Acolyte is far, far better than that of the average citizen.

The Emperor's Grace

Acolytes and their masters see and do many things that the mortal mind was not meant to witness. Faith is all too easily tested by the horrors of Daemons, mutation and corruption. The Calixian Conclave offers its servants indulgence, grace and confession via Inquisitor-Priests skilled in the arts of absolution. Acolytes may be offered forgiveness for the deaths of innocents and for heresies gone unpunished while undercover. Preparatory funerary rites can also offer the Emperor's grace to those about to embark on tasks where death is likely. These Inquisitor-Priests also form a vital part of the Exterminatus ritual, in which they cleanse the soul of the murder of a world.

The Calixian Conclave also has a small and secret number of Imperial saints ordained and worshipped in a furtive manner by blind, mute priests of the Ecclesiarchy. Acolytes often call upon these saints to intercede on their behalf, bringing prayer and confession before the eyes of the Emperor Himself. They also swear oaths by the saints, particularly when in a tight spot.

Saint Uthur the Cataplast

Known as "Uthur the Unfortunate" or "The Cursed", Saint Uthur is said to accept misfortune and suffering upon the behalf of others. Acolytes insist that he was once one of their number, where that official canon states that he was an Inquisitor-Priest. Uthur is usually invoked to guard against injuries. Tradition states that if one screams to the Saint loud enough before looking at a wound, he may be convinced to take some of the injury upon himself. Devotees burn bandages in his honour or smear statues of him in medicae balm. Saint Uthur is usually depicted as a weeping middle-aged man clutching an imbalanced scale and a lightning rod. Images of Uthur traditionally have ninety-nine wounds, each caused by a different calamity. It is a point of pride amongst statue carvers to ensure that no two icons of Saint Uthur are the same.

Saint Castor the Obviate

The remover of obstacles and patron of truth. Legend has it that this missionary endured all manner of undignified public punishments upon the feudal world of Maccabeus Quintus, including five attempts to cut off his head. Each one failed until he pointed out an error with the guillotine's mechanism. According to the legend of his beatification, the people of Maccabeus Quintus were so impressed by his pious devotion that they rose up in support of the Imperial Creed, casting down their government to much rejoicing. Acolytes call upon Saint Castor to watch over interrogations, smile upon investigations and speed answers to the minds of researchers.

Saint Aret the Lethecant

Saint Aret is a martyr. The nature of his death, and indeed his true name, has been lost over the ages. At the time it was generally agreed that his miraculous death was truly one of the most spectacular cases of martyrdom ever seen. However, it seems in the centuries between the petition for his beatification and the eventual granting of the sainthood, his legend was forgotten. When the scribes of the Calixian

Conclave searched their archives, they found that the only book of his deeds was damaged, his name half-erased and his achievements mouldered away. After much debate, it was decided that Saint Aret should guard over that which should not be remembered. His shrines are dust-filled archive rooms where forbidden scrolls are abandoned and data is sent to decay and die. Statues of Aret usually have large ears, so that Acolytes may whisper their fears, deeds and memories to the Saint, who will bear them away, to trouble them no more.

Death

Acolytes and Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave are offered a great honour upon death that many Imperial citizens could never dream of attaining. When death in service arises, the name of the departed is passed along to the script-savants of the conclave. This ancient brood of lexiconographers record the names of the dead in vast tomes, bound in creaking leathers and smeared with preservative oils. The skulls of especially honoured servants are ground within mortuary pestles and the bone dust used to set the ink upon the vellum pages. Once full—a regrettably frequent event—the tome is sealed with gold and lead. These golden ledgers are then sent to Terra, where the books are interred in vast subterranean data-crypts, there to rest for all eternity near the Emperor Himself. This practice is known as "descripting", and many Acolytes say that a dead comrade has been "written up" or "gilded".

Now, Shoulder Your Burden for the Glory of the Emperor

Contained herein has been the merest overview of the Imperium of Man. The glory of our Emperor casts its light upon a million worlds and so the information I present here is, sadly, of a limited nature.

There is much more to learn about the galaxy and a great deal of that will test the body, mind and soul. Perils unnumbered lie around every corner and the sights and sounds of a million cultures will attempt to confound you, but be strong and you will prevail.

In reading this you have begun to prepare yourself for the journey you must take. The enemies of the Imperium are everywhere and the long war needs new soldiers. Soldiers like you. For whatever reason, you have been selected by an Imperial operative to serve him in his travails as he seeks to bring order to the chaos of the galaxy. Serve him well and you will forever know the light of the Emperor and dwell in His favour. Survive, and one day you may find yourself recruiting others as you yourself have been recruited, passing on the torch of duty and obligation to others so that more men may come to dwell in peace under the watchful eye of our undying lord.

That it is a burden not shouldered lightly is plain, but we carry the weight of the galaxy lightly upon our backs, for should we stumble, the Emperor will be at our side to steady our steps.

Now, gird yourself, take up your weapons and prepare your mind. The Emperor and mankind needs you.

O.S.C.

XI

The Calixis Sector

Overview

Homeworld

The Calixis Sector Map

Scintilla

Iocanthos

Sepheris Secundis

The Misericord

Power Groups

The Calixian Conclave

The Tyrantine Cabal

Komus, the Tyrant Star

Other Sector Worlds

Chapter XI: The Calixis Sector

"It is an ill omened place, my lord. Cursed, they say, a fount of witches and other foulness. A chalice of corruption, haunted by a dead sun. They say it is but a matter of time before the stars align and the entire place is torn asunder by Daemons. Of course, they say that about a great many places. But in this case, master, the Tarot indicates it is actually true."

— Diviner Adept Harpious Mundis.

The Calixis Sector is located in the Segmentum Obscurus, on the northern edge of the known galaxy, and represents a portion of the considerable territories conquered by the Imperial hero Lord Militant Angevin more than a thousand years ago. Its first governor was Drusus, one of Angevin's most capable generals, a man now revered as an Imperial saint.

This territory represents a vulnerable fraction of the Imperium, far from the millions-strong armies and mighty battlefleets that protect its most ancient and important worlds and defend its war-torn frontiers. The fate of the sector is tainted with disturbing prophecies and haunted by an inexplicable evil. Within its ill-portended bounds there are countless threats to keep the adepts of the Imperium stretched beyond capacity. It is up to a few extraordinary individuals to save the sector from being consumed by a dark future of corruption and suffering.

Overview

The Calixis Sector has many heavily populated and important worlds, but it lies a great distance from the Imperium's heartland and, like so much of the Imperium, it must ultimately fend for itself. Like all Imperial territories, the Calixis Sector is at risk from the chronic dangers facing humanity: war, mutation, xenos activity, the mark of Chaos, and so on. However, a singular threat lurks somewhere in the Calixis Sector, a mysterious

Sector Governor Marius Hax

Lord Hax (whose formally correct title is "Lord Sector" or "Lord Calixis") is descended from an ancient family of Terran stock, a bloodline bred for leadership in the Imperial heartland of the Segmentum Pelor. He was appointed governor of the sector by the High Lords of the Adeptus Terra more than one hundred and fifty years ago, and maintains a firm, unflinching grip on the planets under his control. The Lord Sector is a man of immense gravitas and solemnity, a glowering, intimidating presence at the heart of the Lucid Palace on Scintilla. Hax makes few public appearances, and personal audiences are rare. His devotion to the minutiae of leadership is legendary—it is said that he sleeps just four hours a night, and personally receives the daily fiscal and economic reports in great detail. His reputation in the sector at large is therefore chilly and austere: he is popularly mocked as an unsmiling hardliner and administrative stickler, and also feared as a figure of unsympathetic authority. This widely accepted image, however, misses the essential truth. He is a pamphlet fair, even-handed man, devoted to the principles of ordered rule. In person, he is tall and granite-featured, and dresses in starkly simple dark robes, eschewing all aristocratic finery. He is over two hundred Scintillan years old, though modest juvenat treatments make him appear to be a robust fifty year old. Hax is not a man to be trifled with, nor underestimated.

The Lord Sector is driven by his convictions, not in the right or even divine authority of the Imperium. He cares little for but in the absolute necessity of order and obedience for the survival of the human race. Hax cares little for events on individual planets and is even dismissive of happenings on Scintilla (of which he is nominally planetary governor). He cannot be distracted by the fates of a few million citizens here and there and is more concerned with the big picture, levying correct tithes and collecting them, monitoring psykers and rebellious groups (Hax despises rebels above all others, including cultists and witches) and maintaining the conspicuous majesty of the Imperium.

Hax is surrounded by a lavish court populated by representatives and advisers from organisations and worlds across the sector. He values good advisers and is willing to listen to them, as long as they do not overstep the mark and openly contradict his philosophies. Hax has the power to request military assistance from the Segmentum Governor on distant Cypra Mundi, but he is loathe to do so. The Calixis Sector is his, and his presence and the activities of his adepts should be enough to awe its citizens into obedience.

Using the Calixis Sector

This chapter presents an overview of the Calixis Sector's worlds and power groups. There are many reasons why this information has been included in Dark Heresy. For instance, it provides enough information for a GM to run a campaign without having to come up with a sector and its worlds by themselves. The GM can then concentrate on the adventures his players engage in without worrying about the backdrop and setting. In addition, the information presented here provides a sample taste of the worlds, people and organisations of the Imperium for GMs who are not particularly familiar with the 41st Millennium. Even players and GMs who have a thorough knowledge of the *Warhammer 40,000* universe will find information in this chapter that they will not have come across before. Perhaps most importantly, this chapter presents some of the themes on which Dark Heresy is based, such as corruption, moral ambiguity, power and secrecy. In addition to the information presented here, there is an extensive "living encyclopaedia" detailing all of the planets and sub-sectors of the Calixis Sector. All of this and more can be found at **www.blackindustries.com/calixis/**

In the campaign setting given here, players take on the roles of Acolytes serving one of the Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave. The worlds described provide plenty of opportunities for Inquisition-based adventures, from investigating the nobility of Scintilla, to hunting debased mutant cults in the blackest pits of Sepheris Secundus. The locations vary from towering hives, home to billions of citizens, to the hardy frontier settlements of Iocanthos. The inhabitants of these worlds are more varied still: astonishingly wealthy aristocrats, dedicated adepts, underhive gang scum, mad cultists, heartless warlords, impassioned preachers, downtrodden mutants, pious citizens living in ignorance and countless others. Any of them could provide GMs with enemies or allies for their Acolytes and some of the most important individuals are fully described in this chapter.

Nothing in the Calixis Sector is set in stone. GMs can set their games in the sector as it is written, change it to suit the campaign they had in mind, or even pick their favourite parts and transport them to somewhere else in the galaxy.

prophesied doom that has drawn the particular scrutiny of the Inquisition to this group of worlds. This enigmatic threat, the Hereticus Tenebrae, or the Tyrant Star as it is known, is something the forces of the Inquisition most fervently wish to uncover, to comprehend and to destroy, before it is too late.

To trailing, the Calixis Sector is bordered by the hazardous territories of the Fydae Great Cloud and to spinward by the Scarus Sector. Bordering to coreward, its immediate neighbour is the Ixaniad Sector. To rimward lie the contested and unregulated frontiers of the Halo Stars.

The hive world of Scintilla, situated in the Golgenna Reach, is the capital of the Calixis Sector. Along with the hellish mining world Sepheris Secundus and the war-torn planet Iocanthos, it forms a triumvirate of worlds essential for the sector's survival. The most powerful man in the Calixis Sector is officially Sector Governor Marius Hax, who rules in the name of the Adeptus Terra from the Lucid Palace on Scintilla. However, the Calixian Conclave, led by Lord Inquisitor Caidin, is the ultimate authority in the sector, a clandestine and all-powerful presence behind the visible emblems and figureheads of power. No one has the power to gainsay the word of the Inquisition. Other important Imperial servants are Lord Inquisitor Zerbe of the Tyrantine Cabal, Cardinal Ignato of the Adeptus Ministorum, Lord Marshal Goreman of the Adeptus Arbites, Senior Astropath Xiao and Canoness Goneril of the Adepta Sororitas. The power of the Adepta, however, is rivalled by the Great Houses, the noble families and corporations, which maintain a presence across the sector. Even the minor noble houses, those whose influence is limited to a single world, hold a great deal of power over ordinary citizens.

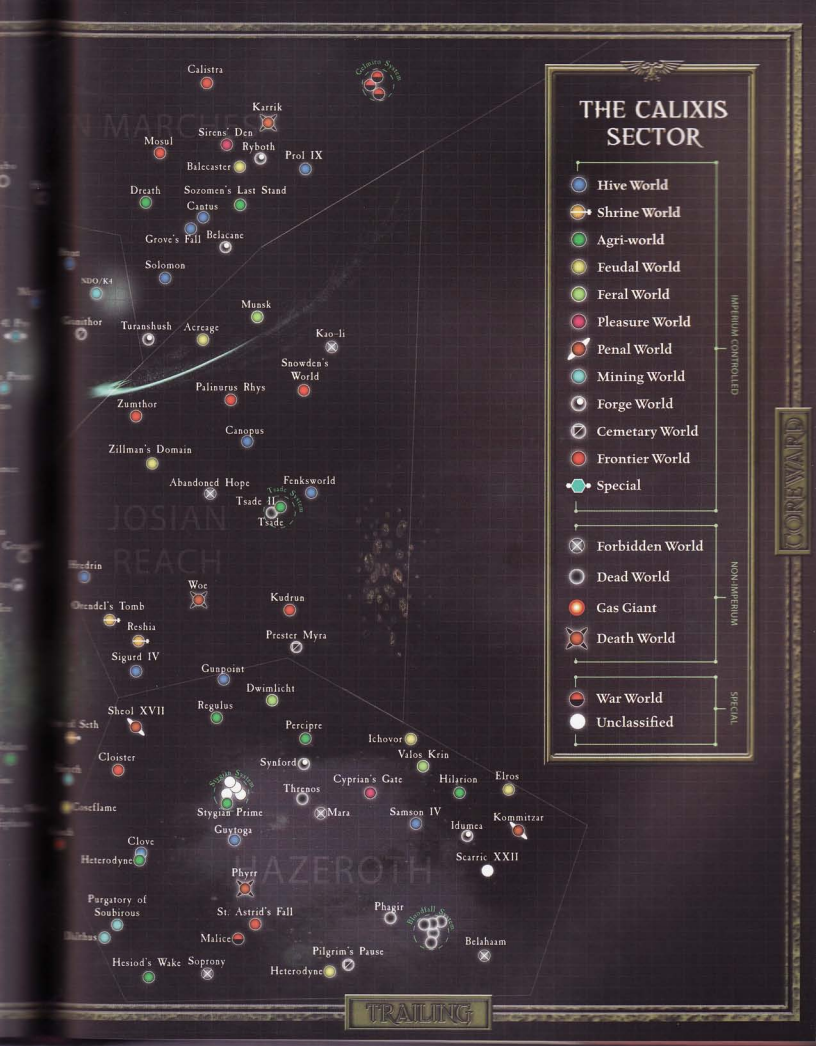
THE HERETICUS TENEBRAE

The Calixis Sector is beset by many threats but few of them are as obvious as rampaging aliens or widespread rebellion. Perhaps the most troubling is the prophecy of the Tyrant Star, the horrific harbinger of ruin and desolation, the spectral sun which consumes light, hope and sanity. This prophecy is known as the Hereticus Tenebrae ("the black doctrine" or "the shadow heresy") by the Inquisitors of the Calixis Sector. Reports of the conflict, destruction and psychic cataclysm that accompany apparitions of the black sun are often suppressed, in case disorder and fear overtake entire worlds.

The baleful Tyrant Star casts an ill light upon the Calixis Sector and nowhere seems immune from its influence. Cults and seditionist groups fester in its underhives and moral corruption gnaws away at the nobility, which holds much of the power on the sector's scattered worlds. Conflicts brew between the Adepta and the great noble families who trace their lineage to the times before Angevin's conquests. Mysteries abound, for the Calixis Sector was quite evidently occupied by more than one long-vanished civilisation in the past. The previous inhabitants of this province of the galaxy have left their indelible traces behind them. Certainly, many Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave fervently hope that the spectral sun is a legacy of aliens long since gone to dust, for the alternatives have implications that are unspeakable.

For more on the Hereticus Tenebrae, see **Komus, the Tyrant Star** on **page 317**.

SPINWARD
RIMWARD
PERIPHERY
MALFIAN SUB-SECTOR
GOLGENNA REACH
DRUSCUS MARCHES
ADRA
THE HALO STAR
Sleef
Ganf Magna
Sisk
Kulth
Avitohol
Vaxanide
Kalf
Sigurd IV
Fedrid
Sinophia
Kenov III
Lind
Kuluth Avitohol
Perinctus
Xeiros Prime
Valon Urr
Mcrov
Alactra
Synford
Sepheris Secundus
Clove
Protasia
Lo
Vaxanide
Grove's Fall
Quaddis
Lugganum
Seedworld AFG-218
Lacusta
Port Wrath (Orbital)
Strank
Sophano
Iocanthus
Bront
Orbell Quill
Cyrus Vulpa
Penolpass
Aryus One
Dusk
Faldon Kise
Scintilla
Ysai Ydum
Malfi
Fydac Minor
Junos
Kessac
Extra Systems
Landunder
The Lathes
Het
Hadd
Hesh
Settlement 228
Skorgulian
Mortressa
Haddrack
Pellucida IX
Opus Macharius
Vigil
Archaos
Askelphion Secundus
Omnicron 71-DX
Perinctus
Lehyde Ten
Tygress V
Thical
Fervidus
Piety
Tygress I
Monrass
Spectoris
Tranch
Tygress II
Tygress IV
Lacusta
Tygress III
Lo
Lind
Zel System
Zel Primus
Zel Tertius
Zel Secundus
Drusus/Sentinel
Veneris
Maccabeus Quintus
Haddrack
Morwen VI
Hippocrasian Agglomeration
Protasia
47 Kapella
Endrite
Baraspine
Pry
Cryptus
88 Tanstar
Threnos Zone
Sacris


THE CALIXIS SECTOR
Hive World
Shrine World
Agri-world
Feudal World
Feral World
Pleasure World
Penal World
Mining World
Forge World
Cemetary World
Frontier World
Special
IMPERIUM CONTROLLED
Forbidden World
Dead World
Gas Giant
Death World
NON-IMPERIUM
War World
Unclassified
SPECIAL
COREWARD
TRAILING
Calistra
Calixis Sector
Karrik
Sirens' Den
Mosul
Ryboth
Prol IX
Balecaster
Dreath
Sozomen's Last Stand
Cantus
Grove's Fall
Belacane
Solomon
SDO/K4
Munsk
Turanshush
Acreage
Kao-li
Snowden's World
Palinurus Rhys
Zumthor
Canopus
Zillman's Domain
Abandoned Hope
Fenksworld
Tsade II
Tsade Sector
Tsade
Woe
Kudrun
Reshia
Prester Myra
Sigurd IV
Gunpoint
Dwimlicht
Sheol XVII
Regulus
Percipre
Ichovor
Valos Krin
Cloister
Synford
Cyprian's Gate
Hilation
Elros
Stygian Sector
Threnos
Stygian Prime
Mara
Samson IV
Kommitzar
Idumea
Guytoga
Clove
Heterodyne
Scarric XXII
Phyrr
Purgatory of Soubirous
St. Astrid's Fall
Phagir
Malice
Pilgrim's Pause
Belahaam
Hesiod's Wake
Soprony
Heterodyne
JOSIAN REACH
IMPERIAL MARCHES
GHAZEROTH

Scintilla

Population: 25 billion.
Tithe Grade: Exactus Extremis.
Geography: Climate temperate with extensive equatorial deserts. Three main continents—mountainous/volcanic southern polar cap, equatorial crescent deserts/jungle (Hive Tarsus, Hive Tenebra [extinct]), northern temperate landmass (Hive Sibellus, Ambulon, Gunmetal City). Remainder of planetary surface covered in ocean (heavily polluted, severely depleted fish stocks). Two moons (Sothus and Lachesis). Orbital docks geostationary above Hive Tarsus.
Government Type: Adeptus Terra.
Planetary Governor: Sector Governor Marius Hax.
Adept Presence: Adeptus Terra, Administratum (Goldenhand Consular Taskforce), Adeptus Ministorum, Adeptus Astra Telepathica (Astropathic Choir at Hive Sibellus), Adeptus Arbites, Ordos of the Calixian Conclave High Council Officio (palace headquarters at Hive Sibellus).
Military: Army of the Scintillan Protectorate (medium/high quality force, based at Hive Tarsus).
Trade: Scintilla is a major exporter of manufactured goods including ship-drive components and weaponry. It is also an important source of manpower, with a large planetary defence force (PDF) and a huge underhive population, both of which make for excellent Imperial Guard recruit sources. Scintilla cannot support itself and requires massive imports of food from the Calixis Sector's agri-worlds.

OVERVIEW

Scintilla is the capital world of the Calixis Sector, a thriving Imperial hub that supports the largest planetary population in the territory. It is dominated (some observers say "shared") by two vast hive cities, Hive Sibellus and Hive Tarsus, into which the vast majority of the planet's groaning population is crammed. Despite the dominance of the two great hives, the "offspring" communities of Ambulon and Gunmetal City contribute significantly to the planet's economic function. Scintilla is a world of splendours where the wealthy and powerful compete with ruthless appetite. Astonishing magnificence abounds, from the wondrous fashions of the hive nobility to the towering spectacle of the hives themselves. Landmarks, like the Lucid Palace and the Cathedral of Illumination, are famous throughout the sector.

Scintilla is also a world of corruption. Moral decay eats away at the noble houses, whose members are often deluded by their own wealth and status. In the rarefied culture of the high-born, the corruption of power and privilege runs deep. Noble houses consider themselves (sometimes correctly) as above or outside of Imperial law and can wield immense influence. Their attitude towards those who are lower-born is callous: it is not unknown for thrill-seeking degenerates from noble houses to prey upon lesser humans as sport. At the other end of the social spectrum, the underhives are rife with mutants, outlaws and ultra-violent gangs, as well as the psychotic zealots of the Redemption. The middle hivers trapped between the aristo spires and the rancid underhives live out thankless lives of unending toil, where ignorance is a virtue and death a reward for a lifetime of loyal, drone servitude, fulfilling the exorbitant tithes levied on Scintilla by the Administratum. It has been this way since the days of Angevin, and Scintilla's various corruptions are so deeply ingrained that they have become invisible even to those who perpetrate them.

Scintilla's most important features are its two hives: immense, multi-levelled cities that house billions of citizens. Both hives on Scintilla are largely independent, ruled by councils drawn from the nobles of the spire. The majority of the inhabitants are middle hivers, the labouring classes, without whom the planet's manufactories and trade houses would cease to function. Almost all middle hivers are owned or indentured to nobles from the great sector-wide families or from Scintilla's own lesser houses. The poorest and most neglected areas are the underhives: polluted, crime-ridden places where life is cheap and brutal gangs struggle for supremacy before violent death inevitably claims them. As long as the violence does not spill into the middle hives, the authorities are happy to let the gangs murder each other in the cesspits of the underhive.

Scintilla's two great hives have always compared with one another for prestige and influence, but no rational observer could fail to acknowledge Hive Sibellus's dominance. Geographically the larger of the two hives, it is often referred to as "the Capital" or the "ruling hive", and is both the seat of political and administrative power, and the centre of the planet's manufacturing might. Hive Tarsus functions as a dark, shadowy twin, popularly referred to, by Sibellians, as the "other place". Hive Tarsus is a mercantile hive and controls all off-world trade and commerce. Neither hive could function without the other, a fact celebrated in Scintillan proverbs and myths. However, neither great hive would openly admit to the importance of the "offspring" communities, Ambulon and Gunmetal City, both of which wield considerable influence of their own.

Civil Order

Law on Scintilla is the province of the Magistratum, the planet's police force. In the hive spires, the dark green greatcoats of Magistratum officers are a common sight as they patrol the streets and investigate anything from petty theft upwards. In the middle spires, they are concerned mainly with serious or violent crime, unable and unwilling to deal with other common crimes. In the underhives, they are almost completely absent. The quality of the Magistratum's officers and procedures varies enormously through the layers of Scintilla's hives, depending on the funding and support they are given by the ruling noble councils, and on the environments they have to work in. Inevitably, it is far easier for a noble victim to get the Magistratum to investigate a crime, and far easier for a middle hiver criminal to be arrested for one. The Adeptus Arbites have a strong presence on Scintilla but they leave everyday policing to the Magistratum, concentrating on sedition, interference with the tithes, certain cult and psyker

activity, and in using their paramilitary strength to help put down major riots. Most citizens never see an Arbites officer unless it is from the wrong side of a riot shield. The Arbites and the Magistratum despise each other and have little interest in working together except under dire circumstances.

The laws across Scintilla vary from place to place, but two constants are trial by combat and duelling. Both are legal on Scintilla, and trials by combat are especially common when the hive nobility are involved. Trials by combat, where the accuser and defendant fight to decide who is right, have conditions attached depending on the nature of the crime (murder and severe violent crime is to the death, while some crimes have restrictions on the weapons to be used and sometimes bizarre conditions for victory, from first blood to the removal of limbs). It is permitted for either party to have a champion fight in their place and a skilled combatant can find lucrative, if perilous, employment in the Bloodsquares run by the Magistratum. Needless to say, good champions do not come cheap, and the very best are retained by the noble houses of the spires. Similarly, duelling is permitted on Scintilla and forms a part of the culture in the hives and elsewhere. The Magistratum does not interfere with duels and killing an opponent in a duel is not considered murder. This means it is entirely possible to eliminate an enemy by manufacturing a matter of honour between him and an opponent who happens to excel at the form of combat used in the duel.

Hive Sibellus

Hive Sibellus is the oldest city on Scintilla, almost certainly predating Angevin's invasions. Its immense, eight thousand kilometre-wide bulk dominates the coastal plains and lowlands of the northern temperate landmass. Where its enormous, multi-layered skirts touch the coast itself—in a five hundred kilometre belt—they spill out over the black granite cliffs like shelves or glacial ridges. Sibellus has twice the population of its "twin" Hive Tarsus.

Like almost all Imperial hives, Hive Sibellus is composed of an extraordinary conglomeration of architectural forms. Countless generations have added their own embellishments and every available surface is crammed with gargoyles, frescoes, columns and mosaics. The hive spire is a jumble of glittering wonders, while the middle hive—and even the underhive—is composed of long-fallen statues and temples to wealth and power. The middle hivers live in rickety tenements built inside the shells of great mansions and basilicas, and trudge to work each day through avenues formed by fallen statues. The underhivers live in buried hovels built into the eyes of great stone heads or clustered around the broken columns of fallen temples.

The sprawl of the hive is at its most spectacular along the rugged coastline. The hive looms—indeed, spills—over towering black granite cliffs, which are lashed by ferocious seas during the stormy season. The Lucid Palace, a city in its own right, stands on a massive column of rock rising from the sea just off the coast, connected to the hive by a single, cyclopean, stone processional bridge, as well as by countless smaller rope bridges and a fleet of ferries which transport strong-stomached passengers across the debris-strewn waters. Hundreds of rickety elevators scale the cliffs and the rock column on which the palace stands, and the hovels of ferrymen and fishermen cling to the rock face like barnacles. The bulk of Hive Sibellus itself rises up many times the height of the cliffs, casting a permanent shadow over the headland and the waters.

Hive Society

Hive Sibellus is Scintilla's power centre and every noble house on the planet seeks to have its own estate on the hive spire. These estates form an extraordinary riot of architectural styles, from stern fortresses to gilded pleasure palaces. The spire is constantly growing, the new estates built on the remains of the old, and so a noble house must constantly strive to embellish its own estates to keep up.

Antiquity is everything in Hive Sibellus. A family draws prestige from the number of ancestral generations it can trace and even the newest estates look like age-weathered bastions of tradition. Hive Sibellus's nobles are intensely competitive and demonstrate their superiority through the magnificence of their estates as well as the antiquities they collect, from artefacts excavated from the deserts and jungles of Scintilla to works of art from across the Imperium. Most estates conceal a high-security gallery or museum, which sometimes holds extremely valuable and illegal items, like xenos artefacts or even dangerous proscribed texts.

The streets of the hive spire are constantly busy. Hive Sibellus' noble fashions are spectacular, impractical and perpetually changing, and the nobles travel the streets of the spire accompanied by large retinues of servants whose primary role is to look impressive. The streets in the spire are very safe thanks to the large private armies that guard every estate and the efforts of the Magistratum to man checkpoints, which regulate the people coming in and out of the hive spire. Violence in the spire, apart from trials by combat and sanctioned duels, is rare—the crime that most nobles fret about is burglary, since their collections or artworks and relics are so important to them. Tales of impossibly skilled cat burglars are a staple of Hive Sibellus' folklore and many of those tales are true, since there are a great many things worth stealing in the spire of Hive Sibellus.

Hive Sibellus's middle hive is dominated by manufactories devoted to heavy production and the enormous blocks of cheap, warren-like housing for the factoria workers. The traditions of the hive spire filter down to the middle hive, with many hivers collecting curious objects to beautify their meagre homes, aping the extraordinary fashions of the spire nobles or even keeping crudely stuffed dead relatives. The middle hive's factories and tenement blocks are built among layers of compressed mansions and statuary, making it a confusing and dark place of collapsed finery.

Somewhere deep amongst the fragments of vast statues and toppled remains of great temple-mansions, the middle hive becomes the underhive. Composed of countless compressed layers of the city above, Hive Sibellus' vast underhive is impossible to navigate and prone to frequent collapse. Underhive settlements huddle in the few stable areas, separated from one another by endless deadly warrens where hive-quakes and cave-ins are a constant threat. Many settlements are completely isolated, their inhabitants hunting underhive vermin to survive and having no idea that there is a hive city above them at all. It is not unknown for nobles of the spire to sponsor heavily-armed expeditions into the underhive to dig up coveted artefacts from Scintilla's past or to explore the tombs of a family's distant ancestors.

Notable Locations

Hive Sibellus' most extraordinary single landmark is the Lucid Palace, which houses the magnificent court of Sector Governor Marius Hax. The Lucid Palace, and the vast column rising from the waves on which it sits, is thought to be much older than Hive Sibellus or indeed, anything on Scintilla. The palace resembles a vast flower of stone, its granite petals overlapping to form its huge dome and the many archways used as entrances. The palace is draped with hundreds of banners representing the institutions of Scintilla and its noble houses, and having a banner fluttering from the palace dome is an honour that some will murder for.

Another spectacular landmark is the Bastion Porphyr. This slender tower of purple-black stone is the tallest point in Hive Sibellus and the headquarters for Scintilla's astropaths. Scintilla's Astropathic Choir consists of about half a dozen astropaths, the largest concentration of these powerful psykers in the Calixis Sector, led by Senior Astropath Xiao. These astropaths are the only means for contacting other sectors and without them the Calixis Sector would be cut off from the rest of the Imperium. Anyone who wishes to use them to send a message must personally climb the apparently endless spiral staircase up the tower and make their request personally to Senior Astropath Xiao. Each astropath has a different method of visualising and sending messages, and they spend their lives amid the draughty belfries of the Bastion performing intensive mental exercises and studying the tomes of symbolic code. Aside from a few servitors to assist them, no one lives in the Bastion other than the astropaths.

Inquisitional Holdings

The other most notable landmark in the hive is the Tricorn, the palace of the Inquisition. A dark and austere trio of linked towers at the northern end of the hive sprawl, the palace is the headquarters of the High Council of the Calixian Conclave, which is to say that it is the administrative seat of the Inquisition in the sector. Since earliest times, the Inquisition has often convened and empowered a conclave of its members for each sector of the Imperium. Each sector conclave is ruled by a Lord Inquisitor of unimpeachable merit, selected and appointed by the High Lords of the Inquisition on Terra. For the past two hundred years, the Lord Inquisitor of the Calixian Conclave has been Aegult Caidin. Though respectful of the Lord Sector, Caidin answers to no one except the distant High Lords. From the Tricorn Palace, he supervises and directs the general policies and activities of the Inquisitors under his command, as well as individual specialist cabals of Inquisitors sent upon "special circumstance" missions.

The Lord Inquisitor is seldom seen in public. It is said that he keeps his true likeness secret, even from close aides and allies, so as to be free to operate unmolested and unrecognised. His true age is not known.

Lord Inquisitor Caidin chairs the High Council of the Calixian Conclave, a ruling body of seventy senior Inquistors drawn from all three Ordos, which orchestrates and monitors the Inquisition's work throughout the sector territories. Estimates suggest that over eight thousand Inquisitorial personnel toil in the officio of the Tricorn, from lowly scribes to archivists, from savants to specialist Tech-Adepts. A small but potent army of Inquisitorial troops is garrisoned at the Tricorn and dedicated starships of the Inquisition are permanently stationed at high anchor above Scintilla for rapid response deployment. It is also suggested, but unconfirmed, that the Tricorn possesses its own astrotelepathic choir. In times of great crisis, the Officio of the High Council Calixis can call upon the help of any Imperial Adeptus it requires.

The general multitudes shun the Tricorn, regarding it as a place of fear, peril and downright evil, though largely this is because the average citizen has no real grasp of the work and duties of the conclave. Nevertheless, to be seized by the Inquisition and carried to the Tricorn for questioning is a grim fate that few ever return from.

HIVE TARSUS

Hive Tarsus is Scintilla's second largest population centre and is the seat of the planet's trade and commerce. It maintains an aggressive independence from Hive Sibellus, though it relies on the export produce of Sibellus's manufactories.

Hive Tarsus is in the centre of Scintilla's least hospitable desert, baking in the relentless sun and battered by sandstorms. The hive's construction is based around a foundation of immense vertical bars, between which stretch the great conglomerations of buildings that make up the body of the hive. As a result, Hive Tarsus is more vertical than horizontal, with more middle hivers climbing to work than walking.

Tarsian Society

Hive Tarsus's unusual structure and hostile location mean that darkness and cold are valued commodities and, as such, very unusually for a hive city, the richest areas are those on the bottom of the hive instead of at the top. Hive Tarsus's nobility enjoy the shade afforded by having a whole city strung in a dizzying web above them, while they are far enough from the merciless sun to live in cool comfort. The very wealthiest live in pitch-black subterranean mansions where inhabitants and visitors carry dim lanterns to see by, while the air is cooled to sub-zero temperatures that require everyone to wear lavish furs. The nobility here demonstrate their superiority by controlling their environment at immense cost, even to the extent of making their handsome estates as dangerous to the ill-prepared as the worst summer droughts. Hives cum that stray too close to the base of the city are often found frozen to death, caught out by the dramatic drops in temperature the closer they get to the wealthiest districts.

The closer to the surface of Hive Tarsus, the poorer and more dangerous the hive becomes. Middle hivers labour in sweltering workshops bathed in the heat filtering down from the sun, plagued by sunbeams that sweep through the hive during the day and burn exposed skin. The outermost layers (known as the Hiveskin) are hellish; it is

Senior Astropath Xiao

Xiao is an improbably tall and broad-shouldered man with a shaven head and large grey-streaked beard. His blindness—he wears an embroidered band around his head to cover his empty eye sockets—is the only note of physical weakness about him, for even in his robes he is obviously a large and muscular man. Xiao does not permit anyone to send a message through his astropaths unless he deems it necessary. Lord Hax is rarely refused by Xiao, but anyone else must justify the use of the astropaths' rare talents. Though Xiao is unfailingly polite he is still a very intimidating man and calmly refuses to compromise once he has made his decision. Xiao is one of the most powerful psykers in the Calixis Sector but he never sends astropathic messages personally, even for Hax, always having one of his astropaths do so instead, although it is rumoured that he has an arrangement with someone very powerful for whom he sends messages exclusively.

almost too hot to breathe and hivers are bathed in sunlight so potent it can make those caught in it blacken and shrivel up in a few minutes. Layers of hovels cling to the top and sides of the hive, too flimsy to completely block out the deadly sun or the frequent lethal sandstorms. Worst of all, the heat is relentless, easily hot enough to kill those not adapted to it. The hiveskinners scrabble like scarabs across the outermost layers to avoid the worst of the sun as it moves overhead during the day. They are a sunburned, sand-scarred lot who survive by hunting the hardy fauna that dwells here including dangerous Scaldbats and mildly poisonous Fingerburner Beetles. Many wear improvised, iridescent armour suits to reflect the sun, so that they themselves resemble human-sized beetles.

Trade Within Hive Tarsus

Hive Tarsus manufactures very little. Instead, its middle hive is dominated by the Goldenhand, a vast complex of trading halls and auction houses held like a great golden nugget in the heart of Tarsus's city-web. The Goldenhand houses a massive, infinitely complex financial market where commodities are bought and sold at a dizzying rate, and enormous amounts of money and goods change hands hourly. Traders representing both planetary and sector-wide houses buy, sell and try to swindle each other. The Goldenhand never shuts and is constantly thronged with people yelling out offers and curses in a complicated trader's code called Goldentongue. Most traders are accompanied by armed bodyguards, since the application of violence or even assassination are recognised tactics for gaining the upper hand. Activity in the Goldenhand is extremely intense, with few who work there lasting very long before they are burned out. Many is the man who has lost a fortune for his noble patrons in the Goldenhand and chosen to walk to certain death into the desert to do penance for his failures.

Activity in the Goldenhand is regulated by two bodies. The first is the Goldenhand's own staff of auction masters and functionaries, dressed in browns and brass, their faces painted deep gold, they look appropriately enough like a part of the Goldenhand itself. The second group is the Administratum. The adepts of the Administratum's Goldenhand Consular Taskforce (under the leadership of the energetic and surprisingly good-humoured Consul Sevavin) forms the largest concentration of adepts on Scintilla and probably in the whole Calixis Sector. They are a familiar sight in their stark grey uniforms, contrasting with the outlandish fashions of the various noble traders, and are never jostled or threatened as they go about their business. The adepts are considered above the violence that flourishes between the other traders, partly because they represent the interests of the Holy Emperor, but mainly because they have the very best protection in the form of veteran soldiers from the death world of Mortressa. The adepts' purpose in the Goldenhand is to ensure that the tithes handed over to the Administratum from the hives of Scintilla do not consist of inferior goods with inflated values, and to maintain awareness of all the major deals going on among the planet's noble houses. Another important player is House Krin, one of the great sector-wide noble houses, which revels in its reputation as "Drusus's bankers" and can arrange banking and massive loans to anyone confident that they can pay up when the time comes. The adepts of the Administratum are based in a building of gold and glass suspended over the Goldenhand's largest trading hall, while House Krin's household troops protect the family's complex of vaults and safe rooms just beneath the Goldenhand.

Hive Tarsus's trade dominance is due to the fact that the planet's orbital docks are geostationary above the hive. It is said that Tarsus is the "lungs and stomach" of Scintilla. Vast wharfs and warehousing/handling vaults dominate the middle hive, pulsing with the import and export of goods. There are said to be chambers the size of cathedrals in the dense heart of Hive Tarsus, packed with crated goods never claimed or shifted.

Protectorate Barracks

Hive Tarsus's proximity to the orbital docks means that it is also the home of the planet's military units. Scintilla's planetary defence force, the Army of the Scintillan Protectorate, is based at Hive Tarsus. It draws its troops from across the planet and there is considerable rivalry between regiments. The regiments raised from Gunmetal City's ruffians consider themselves to be superior and they are mostly justified in this, with the Gunmetal regiments being the equal of the Imperial Guard. The Gunmetallicus 41st, in particular, is a prestigious elite formation whose troops are used to escort VIPs and perform dangerous missions in the wastelands between the hives. When the Imperium needs new Imperial Guard regiments raised for conflicts close to the Calixis Sector, Scintilla's tithe is often raised to include a draft of manpower for the Imperial Guard. This draft is mostly taken from the Army of the Scintillan Protectorate, with some Imperial Guard also being raised from the ultra-violent gangers of Gunmetal City's notorious Infernis. Since the Scintillan troops often cut their teeth battling the Infernis gangs, care must be taken to keep the resulting Imperial Guard regiments apart. The Army of the Scintillan Protectorate, while answering to Hax in his role as planetary governor, is effectively sponsored by the noble families who contribute their household troops to tours in the army, and most of its officer class is drawn from the younger sons and daughters of noble houses. Warrior brotherhoods, secret societies often born of loyalties to a particular noble house, are common in the army, with the most prestigious having fraternal meeting houses in the spire of Hive Tarsus.

The Cathedral of Illumination

Hive Tarsus is also the site of one of Scintilla's sector-famous landmarks. The Cathedral of Illumination is the most important place of worship in the whole Calixis Sector. It is the base of operations for Cardinal Ignato, the sector's most senior Adeptus Ministorum clergyman, who leads the Synod Calixis from the cathedral's lavish auditorium. The cathedral is an extraordinary collection of spires surrounding a cavernous central nave, topped with an enormous stained-glass dome, through which the scorching light of Scintilla's equatorial sun blazes. The decoration on the cathedral is paid for by nobles and prominent citizens from across the sector, all eager to purchase a piece of the Emperor's grace. The outside of the cathedral is covered in statues, depicting scenes of Imperial history and images of the saints, all gleaming gold in the fierce sunlight. It is said that some of the cathedral's

least accessible places conceal bizarre statues, like grotesque monsters or scenes of bizarre occult rituals. The area around the cathedral is a forest of statues of saints and important citizens of Scintilla, the most impressive of these being an enormous statue of Saint Drusus that has pride of place outside the main doors to the nave.

Inside, the cathedral is just as magnificent. The cavernous nave's glass dome is supported by columns carved into the likenesses of past cardinals and there are enough pews to sit tens of thousands of worshippers. The nave is dominated by an altar that sits in front of a triple portrait in gold and silver, depicting the Emperor (with His face turned from the congregation) flanked by Saint Drusus and Lord Militant Angevin, as well as effigies of several saints. Behind the altar is a choir of two thousand servitors filling the nave with soaring choruses. A pulpit overlooks the nave, and it is from here that Ignato and the other Ministorum preachers speak the word of the Emperor. On days of religious importance, such as the Feast of the Emperor's Ascension, many thousands of nobles and adepts from across Scintilla fill the nave, while lesser citizens crowd outside in the hope of glimpsing some of the splendour within.

The cathedral also contains the cardinal's quarters, the Synod Auditorium, where the sector's cardinals meet to discuss spiritual issues, and the Hall of Relics where holy items are kept for safekeeping and study. These include relics of Saint Drusus's life, including bones purported to be from Drusus's own body (enough to reconstruct several skeletons). The Archivum Spiritual, a library of theological works and religious records, also resides below the cathedral, as do the extensive catacombs where members of the Ecclesiarchy are buried. The cathedral has a huge staff made up of both lay volunteers (mostly ex-pilgrims) and members of the Ecclesiarchy. Armed laymen of the Frateris Militia protect the cathedral, assisted by a single squad of Sisters of Battle from the Order of the Ebon Chalice.

The presence of the cathedral means that the Ecclesiarchy has immense influence in Hive Tarsus, to the extent that Cardinal Ignato has more power here than the hive's nobles and the Frateris Militia have a stronger presence on the streets than the Magistratum. All the trade and warehousing halls of the middle hive have lay clergy preaching to the workers about the sacred nature of obedience and the heinous sins of leisure and curiosity. A large proportion of Hive Tarsus's population is made up of pilgrims who are journeying through the city to reach the Cathedral of Illumination. Queues of pilgrims snake from the cathedral throughout the middle hive, sometimes spending years waiting for a glimpse of the cathedral while surviving off the efforts of Ecclesiarchy handouts, lay volunteers and unscrupulous traders. The pilgrims are an essential part of Hive Tarsus's economy and most never leave, finding themselves among the labourers of the middle hive or, for a lucky few, working as volunteers among the glittering majesty of the cathedral itself. Hive Sibellus may be the seat of power, but Hive Tarsus is the seat of faith, despite many attempts to shift the Ecclesiarchy's base to the ruling hive. Almost single-handedly, the cathedral accounts for Hive Tarsus's continued importance and influence in the shadow of its giant rival.

Ambulon

Ambulon is a bizarre sight indeed, claimed by many to be a hive in its own right. The entire city is mounted on the back of a machine that slowly walks across the unstable rocky regions in the centre of Scintilla's main continent. The machine is extremely old, and was almost certainly already on Scintilla when the Imperium conquered the Calixis Sector. It is probably a pre-Imperial artefact, constructed by a civilisation that fell before the foundation of the Imperium, though some claim it is a relic of pre-Heresy terraforming technologies. Certainly the skeletal ruins of moving constructs similar to Ambulon dot the central steppes. Ambulon's unusual form affects every aspect of life in the city, from the industries that employ its middle-class citizens to the city's customs and folklore.

Control of Ambulon

Ambulon is navigated via a huge and very complicated control centre, powered by arcane engines of incredibly occult design, in the area corresponding to its head. The Guild Peripatetica, highly superstitious engineers who keep the secrets of how to control the citadel-mechanicus, are constantly scrambling about the intricate controls making tiny adjustments to keep the edifice moving. Many tales of hive folklore dwell on the terrible consequences should Ambulon ever stop, varying from the city simply collapsing, to the machines becoming self-aware and devouring the humans clinging to its back. The noble houses quarrel constantly over what orders to give to the guild, but they are also well aware that they should not bully or otherwise cross the Guild Peripatetica lest the engineers point them towards a crevasse or other dangerous obstacle and hold the citadel to ransom. The path that the machine takes is crucial to harvesting the deposits of oil, natural gas and precious stones that form Ambulon's contribution to Scintilla's tithe, and everyone has an opinion about where it should go next. Ambulon stalks the wastelands, mining and harvesting the planet's natural resources, supplying the manufactories of Hive Sibellus and the foundries of Gunmetal City. Neither could function without Ambulon's resources. Ambulon tours the steppe wastes once every twenty-eight months, slowing to minute speeds in order to dock with Sibellus and Gunmetal City for a few days to offload ore and mineral resources. Between these celebrated ceremonial times of docking, Ambulon supplies Sibellus and Gunmetal City by way of regular land trains: ore-cargo crawler pods many kilometres long.

Life on Ambulon

Ambulon's constant movement means that even the most solid buildings are in danger of being shaken off the city's structure. This in turn means that the city's wealthiest and most important districts are located in the places where they are least likely to be destroyed, especially along the city-machine's Spine. The Spine's buildings are rarely as big as on hive spires, since space is at such a premium on Ambulon's carapace, nor are they as tall, as they have to endure the constant swaying of the city-machine's slow, rolling gait. The style of the Spine sees elegance and even minimalism

preferred to the grotesquely grandiose ornamentation common in the great hives. The nobles of Hive Sibellus, in particular, consider Ambulon to be a cultural backwater, whose nobles neglect the proper pursuits of beautifying their city and venerating their dead.

Ambulon's equivalent of the middle hivers are the hundreds of thousands of workers who inhabit tenement blocks piled up on the vast, shield-shaped back of the city-machine. These tenements are plagued by cityquakes caused by the city's movement, and are all shored up and extensively repaired after past collapses. Few streets run between Ambulon's buildings since there is not enough space for them, so the middle classes tramp to work across the roofs of the tenements, or even through each others' homes. Almost all the middle classers are engaged in harvesting or refining the raw materials that Ambulon gathers from the igneous wastes. The "head" of the city is equipped with immense drills that can be lowered into the rock, and when the city strikes oil, thousands of flexible pipelines are lowered from the edge of the city to pipe up as much of the oil as possible as the city-machine passes by. Working on these pipelines, which are controlled by webs of chains like the strings of vast puppets, is very dangerous and requires a hardy breed of men and women with no fear of heights. Ambulon's many refineries process this oil into promethium fuel, some of which is piped back into the city-machine, while most forms the majority of the city's tithe contribution, to be delivered to Hive Sibellus and Gunmetal City. Other citizens sift through the rock thrown up by the drilling to pick out precious stones, which are then worked into industrial components, or cut for jewellery in workshops inhabited by generations of gemcutters (considered a hereditary occupation on Ambulon). Ambulon's lack of space means that every citizen must justify his presence there and unemployment is illegal. Each household in the middle city is tied to a particular refinery, workshop or other industry, and its members may not work anywhere else. It is vitally important for every middle citizen to be properly recorded in the Rolls of Justification which each place of industry maintains, because if they cannot prove to the authorities of the Spine that they are permitted to fulfil the role in which they work, they are banished to the Underbelly.

Ambulon's "underhive" clings precariously to the belly of the city-machine. It is known by a variety of colourful names such as the Underbelly, the Guts, the Vitals or the Hivegroin. Clusters of hovels blister down from the city-machine like warts, connected by makeshift catwalks and rope bridges. Many thousands of people live only a footstep away from plummeting to their deaths towards the rocky ground that constantly grinds by hundreds of metres below. Underbelly settlements are often scraped off the city-machine's underside by ridges or peaks that the city-machine walks over, or are simply shaken off by the city's movement. Life is short and very difficult here, and the Gutscum live off the detritus of the carapace above, constructing scoops to catch the effluent and waste thrown off the edge of the city, or they form bandit gangs to prey on the citizens who work near the edge of the city-machine's back. One prominent feature of the Underbelly is the cages hung from the edge of the city above containing prisoners condemned to the much-feared punishment of "dangling". The prisoners are locked in a cage attached to a long chain, which is then flung off the edge of the city-machine and left to dangle, swaying with the city's movement, until the prisoner starves and the cage is hauled back up. Hundreds of dangled prisoners hang from the city at any one time, and the Gutscum sometimes use them as target practice or, on very rare occasions, "rescue" them to induct them into Underbelly gangs, enslave them or pit them against one another in bloody gladiatorial fights. Ambulon folklore maintains that some dangled prisoners have survived for months hanging below the city, thanks to divine intervention from the Emperor, and were released when the cage was brought back up again to live saintly lives. In practical terms, however, dangling is a cruel, drawn-out death sentence.

GUNMETAL CITY

Gunmetal City is a huge industrial mass, built into the crater of an immense volcano, Mount Thollos, that rises from the smouldering lava fields of the northern coast. A mere megapolis compared to the planet's two great hives, Gunmetal City's spires tower high above the volcano's peak, while its lowest districts delve right down into Scintilla's crust.

Metallican Society

Gunmetal City is a place of soaring steel, with towers like great, tarnished silver needles piercing the sky. The volcano's crater limits the size of the city's foundation, so nobles have built upwards, the most prestigious locations being perched precariously on slender columns of steel hundreds of metres high. The city is frequently bathed in smoke from the foundries of the middle city below and the houses employ small armies of menials whose job is to scour the surfaces of the skybound mansions until they gleam. Clean air is a valued commodity with every mansion having powerful filtration systems to cut out the smoke, while the most ostentatious hosts pipe air imported from cleaner worlds into their magnificent homes.

The middle level of the city is dominated by immense foundries powered by the heat from the heart of Mount Thollos. Almost all of Gunmetal City's middle classers work in these foundries over cauldrons of molten metal or blazing furnaces the size of tenement blocks. Gunmetal City's main export is munitions, and endless crates of weapons emerge from its foundries, forming an important part of Scintilla's tithe to the Imperium as well as arming many of the Calixis Sector's own planetary defence force troops. The foundries are sweltering, filthy places where accidents are common and even a fortunate worker's life is shortened by decades thanks to the choking air and cruel environment. The middle classers' homes are clustered around the foundries and often fashioned from cargo containers. People are an afterthought in Gunmetal City. The foundries and the weapons they produce form the real purpose behind the place.

The Infernis is a region formed by the lowest levels of factories that have collapsed or become uninhabitable. This far down, the city is unbearably hot and prone to floods of lava or toxic gas from Mount Thollos's occasional lurches out of dormancy. The gangs of the Infernis are the toughest and best-armed on Scintilla and almost no one else lives there save hardbitten killers toting weapons extorted from the middle hivers. There is nothing to live for in the Infernis save superiority over enemy gangs, and so gang warfare is literally a way of life.

The Lawless City

In truth, Gunmetal City is an upstart. Younger and far, far smaller than the dominant hives, Gunmetal is a feral community that thrives simply because of what it produces. Hives Sibellus and Tarsus tolerate it because of its export materials. It is a jumped-up, uncivilised boomtown in the Wilderness, a city that got too big for itself. One day, in a thousand years' time, it might become powerful enough to challenge for the dominance of Scintilla. For now, it is a four billion strong foundry station where law is slack and noble houses fight, literally, for ownership of lucrative mercantile output. Of all the main population centres on Scintilla, Gunmetal City is the most dangerous and lawless.

The gun is everywhere in Gunmetal City, from the weapons churned out by its foundries, to the symbols of the city's noble houses and the guns carried by almost every citizen. Gunfighting is a leisure activity, with designated areas throughout the city set aside for shoot-outs. Duels in Gunmetal are fought with pistols, and a great many people, especially from the middle hives where life is quite short anyway, seek out brief but glorious careers as gunfighters. Shots ring around the foundries of the middle city incessantly and the nobles often hire prestigious gunslingers to battle in elaborate arenas while the audience watches from behind bulletproof screens. Some of the best gunslingers come from Infernis, and it is little wonder that the gangers adore their guns so much when expertise in their use brings such wealth and status.

THE WILDERNESS

The hive inhabitants refer to the areas outside the great hives as "the Wilderness". This is something of a misnomer, as there are a great many settlements outside the hives, but certainly none of them can compare to the importance of the great hives themselves. Scintilla's natural resources have either been drained long ago or are monopolised by the great hives and Ambulon, so many people exist as nomads. Those permanent settlements that do exist are often founded by mercenaries, who lived by selling their services to the land trains that criss-cross the planet. The mercenaries, easily recognisable by the white bands painted or tattooed across their faces, are essential to providing security against the more predatory nomad tribes. Land trains consist of dozens of huge tracked vehicles that crawl in from hive to hive transporting goods and passengers. Some land trains even cross Scintilla's oceans, loading their vehicles onto great barges for risky journeys across polluted waters with their fair share of predators and pirates.

With resources in short supply away from the hives, settlements can grow up and die out rapidly. Few survive for more than a generation and the Wilderness is studded with ghost towns. In some places, on the very fringes of Scintilla's habitable lands, small communities continue to exist as they have done for centuries far from the shadow of the great hives. These people have often been in the same place for centuries. Isolated and ignored by Scintilla's authorities, they live in ignorance that the hives exist at all, much less that they live in a galactic empire ruled from distant Terra. Scholars of the Magnopticon sometimes send expeditions out to search for such benighted peoples, in the hope that studying them will reveal some secrets about the pre-Imperial history of Scintilla.

The most extraordinary feature of the Wilderness is the ruin of Hive Tenebra. This necropolis was once the heart of Scintilla's high culture and arts, built around a circle of stepped pyramids rising like enormous altars from the steaming jungles of Scintilla's equator. The hive is now a titanic mass of wreckage gradually being reclaimed by the voracious jungle. The disaster that claimed Hive Tenebra along with millions of lives happened over eight centuries ago, and is thought by most to have been caused by a collapse of the geothermal heatsinks that provided it with power. There is no shortage of conspiracy theories about what "really" happened to the hive, however, ranging from ill-advised summonings of warp creatures to a deliberate act of sabotage by agents of the Imperium. Tales about its destruction are outnumbered only by stories about what might lurk in the ruins now: ravenous monsters, renegade nobles and hordes of hideous mutants ruled by a mighty deformed overlord. No one ventures close to Hive Tenebra with any regularity, and when they do they rarely penetrate into the collapsed interior of the hive where the foulest horrors are said to lurk.

Guns of Gunmetal

A few of the guns produced by Gunmetal City are famous, either through their iconic nature or exceptional performance. These guns are status symbols, especially for the Infernis gangers, and are carried by officers of the Pantillan army as side arms. The Thellen Service Autopistol, or the "Thell", is an autopistol that sacrifices capacity for stopping power and is much coveted by Magistratum officers in particular. The Scalptaker on the other hand, is a very solidly built and extremely uncomplicated slug pistol designed for use by just about anyone. It is such a common weapon that any self-respecting ganger will try to upgrade his Scalptaker, even though it is a very easily maintained weapon designed to survive the rigours of the Infernis. The Ephon Forge Nomad Hunting Instrument is one of the most precise and well-calibrated weapons produced in Gunmetal City, and is the rifle of choice for hunters who stalk big game in Scintilla's wastelands. Procuring a "Nomad" costs an enormous amount of money and involves a five-year waiting list. Finally, the Blackhammer Defence Shotgun is a brutal, massive-bore shotgun that can blast holes in doors and shred opponents. Its limited range and single-shot capacity do little to diminish its value as a weapon of intimidation in the hands of hardened criminals and enforcers.

Iocanthos

Population: 5 billion (estimated).
Tithe Grade: Exactus Median.
Geography: Four main continents and extensive island chains. Only the largest continent is populated (mountainous/rocky, dense southern forests. Largely arid climate with frequent dust storms). Very few sources of fresh water.
Government Type: None/Tribal.
Planetary Governor: Vervai ("King") Skull.
Adept Presence: Very low. Adepta Sororitas (Commandery at the Abbey of the Dawn), Administratum (Port Suffering).
Military: Massive armies in service of warlords. Large mercenary presence.
Trade: Iocanthos's only meaningful export is Ghostfire pollen. The Ghostfire harvest is essential to the existence of the Imperial Guard penal legions in the Segmentum Obscurus.

Iocanthos is a lawless world dominated by warlords and their huge armies, which clash across its jungles, forests and plains. The planet's importance in the Calixis Sector is defined by the fact that it is one of the few places in the Imperium where the Ghostfire flower can grow. Ghostfire pollen can be refined into the combat drugs used extensively in the penal legions of the Imperial Guard.

Iocanthos's warlords (usually styling themselves "vai" or tribal prince) battle constantly for control of the Ghostfire harvest. The Ghostfire crop cannot be cultivated normally and so once a patch of it is harvested another one must be found. The warlords' armies are therefore constantly on the move, travelling in enormous hordes across Iocanthos's main continent and clashing violently wherever they meet. Iocanthos's wide plains, dense, dark forests and forbidding mountain passes are studded with old battlefields where burned-out vehicles and age-bleached skeletons abound.

Every five years, a taskforce of Administratum officials descends onto Iocanthos to gather the planet's Ghostfire tithe. The warlords exchange their harvests of Ghostfire pollen with the Administratum in exchange for weapons, vehicles, fuel, clean water and other essentials. The warlord who hands over the most Ghostfire pollen is considered the planetary governor and claims the lion's share of support from the Imperium and the title Vervai (literally "prince of princes" or "king"). The title brings with it immense prestige and confirms the warlord's position as the most dangerous and skilled on Iocanthos. The current planetary governor is "King" Skull, a terrifying warrior at the head of an enormous and supposedly invincible army of madmen and killers. The warlords of Iocanthos are also required to hand over their psykers as well as the Ghostfire harvest, but these are taken from them not by the Administratum but by nameless grey-uniformed men who herd the psykers onto their sleek black ship and take their leave.

The Administratum fully accepts the situation on Iocanthos. The Ghostfire pollen is harvested very efficiently because so many warlords' armies battle to find every last blossom. Were the Administratum to take over Iocanthos themselves, the planet would first have to be conquered by the Imperial Guard at enormous expense and the Administratum themselves would be hard-pressed to match the vigour with which Iocanthos's warlords hunt down every Ghostfire flower. They therefore leave the warlords to do the hard work, safe in the knowledge that none of them can rebel against Imperial authority lest their supplies of guns and fuel be cut off.

PORT SUFFERING

Port Suffering, the largest permanent settlement on Iocanthos, is a sturdy fortified town that serves as the base for Imperial operations on Iocanthos. The town's largest and most important feature is its spaceport, an expanse of rockcrete broken by docking clamps and refuelling ports that can accommodate the landing craft that deliver supplies and pick up Ghostfire shipments. Equally important for the people living in Port Suffering are the huge freshwater tanks beneath the town. Freshwater is very valuable on Iocanthos, and Port Suffering not only has its own supply brought down on Imperial ships, but can trade its surplus water to the warlords (mainly for guarantees that the warlords will not attack the town). Port Suffering's architecture is based around a standard hab-block pattern since most of its buildings, from the chapel to the accommodation blocks, were dropped from spaceships directly to the surface when the town was first founded as an Imperial trading post. Its dry, dusty streets and prefabricated rust-red buildings are home to a community mostly geared towards maintaining the spaceport and ensuring that the port remains self-sufficient.

The town's population is broadly Emperor-fearing and law-abiding, and they attend the town's chapel and send their children to the seminary school run by Preacher Goudt. The largest building in Port Suffering is the Administratum counting-house where the town's small body of adepts calculates the projected Ghostfire crop and receives envoys from the various warlords. The under-consul in charge of the counting-house, Adept Sabetha Kosloff, serves as the de facto mayor of Port Suffering, sometimes against her will as she is not very good at dealing with townsfolk and would rather stick to ensuring that the Emperor's forms are correctly filed. Other important citizens include the sharp-tongued but compassionate Sister Xanthe, the Sister Hospitaller who runs Port Suffering's hospital along with a small staff of inexperienced laymen. Unkind rumours suggest that Sister Xanthe was given her thankless post as a punishment by her canoness at the Abbey of the Dawn.

Port Suffering's walls are always manned by the citizens who serve in the Port Militia. The town's greatest protection, however, is the fact that it is considered neutral by most of Iocanthos's warlords. If Port Suffering was to be attacked, the more powerful warlords would lose their supply of weapons, freshwater and fuel from the Imperium and what little structure that exists on Iocanthos would fall apart. Some lesser warlords eye the support received by the more powerful with jealousy, however, and endlessly plan to launch devastating raids on Port Suffering. Should this ever happen, the stoutness of the town's defences and the dedication of its well-armed but inexperienced militia will be sorely tested.

THE LEVIES OF KING SKULL THE MAGNIFICENT

King Skull, as Vervai, is the most powerful man on Iocanthos and styles himself on the legendary warrior-kings from the planet's history. In truth, the great ages of martial kingship are long past, with the old traditions have been bastardised into the modern, ruthless business of controlling the Ghostfire commerce.

Nevertheless, King Skull's army is many millions strong and dominates huge swathes of Iocanthos's main continent at any one time. Skull himself is a tall, saturnine man clad in elaborate black steel armour, wielding a huge spear with a head cut from the flint of Iocanthos's highest peak. "Skull" is clearly a deliberately assumed name—the Vervai's tribal banner is a bleached human skull—though there is little clue as to his real name, as his origins are very obscure and are the subject of considerable speculation. Some say he is a deposed noble who fled to Iocanthos to avoid some scandal or tragedy, others that he is a dangerous fugitive criminal who found his true calling among the warlords and madmen. Most rumours centre around his supposed capabilities in battle. Skull is undoubtedly a tenacious warrior, but tales whispered in Iocanthos's frontier towns hint at far more, such as allegations that he drinks blood to gain strength from his enemies, or is a powerful witch who can summon mighty storms of black lightning down on his foes. Skull's rule is based on the immense loyalty the core of his army feels towards him. Warriors must first prove themselves in battle before they are ever armed with the weapons and equipment that Skull acquires in return for the Ghostfire harvest. As they demonstrate prowess in battle, they are further armed and drawn towards the core of battle-hardened, well-equipped veterans of the Harrowguard who surround Skull himself. Skull leads these warriors into battle personally, and the sight of his black-armoured form is enough to demoralise those unfortunate enough to meet the Harrowguard in battle.

Life in the Horde

King Skull's army welcomes all as long as they are willing to fight their first battles armed with little more than sticks and stones. Skull deploys huge numbers of new, expendable troops to swamp the enemy while the Harrowguard function as shock troops. Skull's army in battle is a terrible thing to witness, with swarms of madmen hurling themselves upon the enemy while the better-armed sections of the army fire volleys of lasgun shots into the shocked enemy or charge alongside the Vervai himself.

Skull's army travels on a number of huge, smoke-belching vehicles. The Throne is Skull's personal transport, which was once a huge-tracked mining vehicle, refitted to function as a mobile throne room and prison for captured enemies. This soot-stained monstrosity is festooned with captured banners and other trophies, and Skull himself sits on a throne platform suspended over hundreds of cages where his prisoners languish. Skull sells these prisoners back to their families or comrades in exchange for Ghostfire pollen or offers them a place in the ill-armed hordes of his army. Those who are good for neither Ghostfire nor fighting are left to rot, their sobs and screams accompanying the Vervai everywhere he goes. Another mobile landmark is the Sanctum, a tower supported by a raft of lashed-together Chimera vehicles. It is home to Gurgerin, the Vervai's advisor and, it is widely assumed, a sorcerer whose divinations are essential to Skull's plans. The Sanctum is a stone tower pulled from some long-forgotten mountain ruin, said to be full of bewildering and grotesque experiments (or captive aliens, shambling warp monstrosities or a cabal of the Calixis Sector's rich and powerful, depending on which stories you believe). Gurgerin, a man of extremely advanced age with tiny glinting eyes like specks of flint, can sometimes be seen on the Sanctum's uppermost battlements watching the vast throng of the army marching beneath him. Several other massive vehicles, used either to house the Harrowguard or to transport the precious Ghostfire crop, travel alongside the army, often hung with trophies or the weathered corpses of particularly hated enemies.

SETH THE VOICE

One of the largest and newest armies of Iocanthos is that led by Seth the Voice, self-styled Prophet of the Emperor and figurehead of an apocalyptic splinter cult of the Imperial Creed. Vai ("prince") Seth is almost certainly an ex-adept, probably from Port Suffering's Administratum contingent, who became convinced that the Emperor was granting him visions that demanded he immediately take over Iocanthos. Since then, through force of personality and by tapping into Iocanthos' need for religion and redemption, Seth has forged a ragtag but huge army with which he is challenging the most powerful rival warlords, especially that of the great Vervai.

Vai Seth himself is a slight, balding, bespectacled figure in white robes. He travels in a battered old scout vehicle converted into a mobile pulpit from which he can preach. And preach he does, almost constantly, his voice transmitted by bulky vox-units carried by his devout followers. The passion with which Seth exhorts the people of Iocanthos to claim the planet for their Emperor is genuine and convincing.

Everywhere he goes he gathers more souls for his army, be they drifters looking for a purpose or hard-bitten mercenaries searching for a way to redeem themselves of their many sins. Seth is not a soldier, but he has a gift for getting others to fight for him that is so profound that it might as well have been granted by the Emperor Himself.

The Army of the Voice

Vai Seth's army is ill-equipped, undertrained and frequently starving. It is, however, uniquely motivated, for all its members believe that fighting for Seth will grant them a far better afterlife than is awaiting all the galaxy's other sinners. The Army of the Voice, uniquely, has no problem getting new members to replace its frequent losses, as even defeated enemies are sometimes swayed to join by Seth's impassioned preaching. The army travels on many hundreds of vehicles, most of them looted from enemies or donated by recruits, and as a result it is constantly in the throes of a critical fuel shortage. Capturing more fuel is essential to the army's continued existence.

The men and women of the army are as varied as the sins they are trying to cleanse, but they all wear white robes, or at least they

did when they joined up, for the constant travel and fighting means that most of them are actually dressed in dirty greys. Some are armed with lasguns and other reliable weapons, but most have the hunting rifles or stub pistols they were armed with when recruited. The most experienced fighters, normally ex-mercenaries or recruits from other warlords' armies, are referred to as Seth's "Saints" and are the focal points of the army, instructing the enthusiastic, but often clueless, faithful in the best ways to avoid dying too quickly. In spite of the army's inexperience it is a formidable military force. As well as having the numbers and the determination, the effect of Seth's own presence seems to demoralise enemy troops and even cause them to flee or mutiny. Mercenaries in particular are a superstitious lot, and even an experienced killer can baulk at the idea of killing a man who so convincingly claims to be a holy man ordained by the Emperor's will.

THE ABBEY OF THE DAWN

The Abbey of the Dawn is the Adepta Sororitas' main training facility in the Calixis Sector. A spectacular fortress of pale yellow ouslite built into the knife-like slopes of a dark flint mountain, the abbey is the most secure place on Iocanthos. Its location means that, while it is close to the heartland of the Calixis Sector, its immediate surroundings are bleak and rugged, and the abbey's Sisters are cut off from the corruptive influences of the outside world.

The abbey's purpose is to train initiates into fully-fledged Sisters, who then go on to perform devotional works across the Calixis Sector and beyond. The abbey is run by Canoness Goneril, who leads the Lesser Order Famulous of the Opening Eye. The Opening Eye's purpose is to offer counsel to the Calixis Sector's powerful noble families. Most novices at the abbey are trainees of the Opening Eye and are schooled in a variety of subjects from Imperial history to theology and sector economics. Most importantly they are trained in the strength of mind to resist the secular temptations that are a constant threat to the Sisters Famulous. A Sister Famulous must be disciplined and incorruptible as she is sent out to fend mostly for herself, and is surrounded by the sometimes morally questionable nobles to whose house she is attached. Canoness Goneril has her novices undergo a strict regime of fasting, prayer, lectures and theological study. She stops short of outright cruelty, but life is far from easy for a novice of the Opening Eye. Goneril's Mistress of Novices, the formidable Sister Gert, is a physically intimidating reminder of a Sister's duty to obey her order at all times.

The Abbey of the Dawn is also home to a Mission of Sisters of Battle from the Order of the Ebon Chalice, who are led by Palatine Rhiannon. The Ebon Chalice is based on Holy Terra, and the Battle Sisters at the abbey, even if they have only glimpsed the spires of the Imperium's holiest world, are regarded with something like religious awe by the novices. Their duties include maintaining the Sororitas honour guard at the Cathedral of Illumination on Scintilla and guarding important Ecclesiarchy adepts who visit the Calixis Sector. Both Canoness Goneril and Palatine Rhiannon are adherents to the long-standing agreement between the Adepta Sororitas and the Ordo Hereticus, and would willingly lend the Battle Sisters' martial prowess to an Inquisitorial operation should it be needed. Lord Inquisitor Zerbe of the Calixian Conclave does not take this agreement lightly and will not permit the Sisters of the Ebon Chalice to be sent to battle by an Inquisitor unless it is absolutely necessary. Though they number only around fifty, Rhiannon's Sisters of the Ebon Chalice are the most elite and dedicated troops in the Calixis Sector.

THE BADLANDS

This is the rugged interior of Iocanthos, bounded to the south by dense forests and the sea, and to the north by the jagged flint mountains. The Badlands are an endless sweep of plains, scrub and steppe where most of the Ghostfire crops can be found and where the warlords clash. It is dotted with battlefields, some of them no more than a tangle of recently slain bodies and others titanic fields of bones and burned-out wrecks. A fortunate and hardy individual can make a good living scavenging these battlefields to find valuables and weapons to sell. Iocanthos's folklore is full of the tales of the sticky ends experienced by such scavengers, from dread curses to old-fashioned walking dead, and most normal folk stay away from these battlefields.

Sepheris Secundus

Population: 12 billion.
Tithe Grade: Exactus Extremis.
Geography: Planet-wide overcontinent, small polar oceans. Mountainous, forested, extensive areas of open mine workings. Arctic climate, atmosphere moisture-laden and blizzards constant. Three moons, none inhabited.
Government Type: Feudal monarchy.
Planetary Governor: Queen Lachryma III.
Adept Presence: Very low. Some Adeptus Ministorum clergy, Adeptus Arbites Precinct-Fortress.
Military: Royal Scourges, Baronial armies, noble private armies. Poor/medium quality.
Trade: Sepheris Secundus is the largest exporting planet in the Calixis Sector. Without its massive exports of ore, metals and fuel, the trade of the Calixis Sector could not function. Sepheris Secundus relies on imports of food from the sector's agri-worlds. Its vast population makes it a potential supplier of Imperial Guard recruits, although a relatively small proportion of the population would be suitable because of universally poor health, along with the risk of exposing the subjugated masses to the possibility of life outside the mines.

Sepheris Secundus is a world of immense mineral wealth, city-sized mines, billions-strong hordes of serfs and the sharpest divide between the elites and the masses in the Calixis Sector. It is a grim place of snow and twilight, feral mutants and lives spent in back-breaking labour deep beneath the ground. The Imperium's eagerness to exploit Sepheris Secundus's vast resources is such that the planet is at the same time the richest and poorest world in the sector.

Sepheris Secundus's climate is cold and stormy, its surface obscured by a mantle of cloud. It has no oceans save for the small polar seas, so the moisture in its atmosphere comes from below the crust, spewed out from failed mine workings or natural geysers that pockmark the planet like pustules. Its surface is split between the vast open mines like deep scars in the crust and the dense, snow-laden forests broken only by the ruins of failed kingdoms that tried to claim Sepheris Secundus in the past. With its endless blizzards, widespread ignorance and antiquated methods for doing everything, Sepheris Secundus would be a meaningless backwater were it not for the enormous mineral wealth beneath its surface.

The Suffering Kingdom

While the whole Imperium is a feudal empire, feudalism is an extreme on Sepheris Secundus. Everyone born on the planet must have a master to whom they pay nine-tenths of everything they produce, which for most citizens means the ore they hack from the rock faces of the planet's mines. Queen Lachryma III, the planet's absolute monarch, sits at the top of this feudal system. The rights to the labour of these billions of serfs belong to the barons appointed by the queen or to noble families and business consortiums that purchase them from the crown. The queen's own master is the Imperium, to whom she hands over truly staggering amounts of ore, metals and raw fuel to fulfil the planet's tithe. Sepheris Secundus's tithe is the highest in the Calixis Sector, and without its immense output of raw materials, the economy of the whole province would be badly unsettled.

Two principal forces maintain Sepheris Secundus's feudal system. The first is the weight of tradition: every serf labouring in the mines is doing what his father did and his grandfather before that, often at the same rock face. Mothers tell their children tales about the horrible fates met by disobedient serfs who deny the demands of their masters, and the lay preachers who administer the Imperial creed describe no greater sin than having ideas above one's station.

The second force is physical violence. One of the reasons that Sepheris Secundus's culture is so primitive by many standards is that weaponry and other technology is monopolised by the crown. The queen's Royal Scourges are equipped with lasguns, grenades and chainblades, contrasting with their gaudy, stained-glass-like armour. Though few in number, the technological advantage that these troops possess has been enough to put down a great many uprisings in the mines of Sepheris Secundus, and the planet's history is littered with massacres where thousands of serfs fell to volleys of lasgun fire. The barons each have their own forces, some of which are permitted to use a few high-tech weapons, although most of them are armed with primitive but well-made weapons and armour with which to enforce the baronial will. Meanwhile, when the serfs rise up, they do so with improvised weapons and mining equipment. The serfs, even when roused to

violence in significant numbers, have never held one of Sepheris Secundus's mines for very long because of the massive superiority in equipment and training possessed by the forces of their masters. When the baronial armies fail, the Royal Scourges do not. The Royal Scourges answer directly to the queen, which also makes them ideal for keeping the barons themselves in line. Many an overambitious baron has refused to send the queen her rightful tribute, only to find his supposedly elite army cut to pieces by the Royal Scourges.

The Rule of Law

Order upon Sepheris Secundus is enforced by the troops of the various barons. While Sepheris Secundus has some generally observed laws—a serf who strikes his master will usually be put to death, for example—each baron enforces his own laws in his own way, and some do not bother at all as long as there is no open rebellion. Other barons, by contrast, have troops patrolling the upper mines ensuring that no one wears the wrong colour on the wrong day, spits in the street or fails to use the traditional forms of address. In Icenholm, the capital, the Royal Scourges enforce order and are also sent to restore obedience where it has broken down.

ICENHOLM

Sepheris Secundus's capital is Icenholm, a wondrous city built into the mountain crags that loom over the vast smoking pit of the Gorgonid Mine. Icenholm's glass spires encrust the mountain peak like a crown, bathed in an otherworldly light. This light is actually concentrated on Icenholm by a series of enormous reflecting mirrors positioned around the peaks overlooking the Gorgonid Mine, an expensive and complicated process that makes it look as if the light of some distant heaven is shining directly onto the capital.

The main body of the city is suspended between three vast peaks on thousands of thick cables and chains, like a glittering jewel upon a complex necklace. The origins of this unusual structure are not recorded anywhere, but a common theory is that it was built around the core of an enormous warship that docked there during Angevin's crusade and never left, the hive growing up around it like a pearl around a speck of grit. Many buildings dangle from the city's mass, reaching down hundreds of metres towards the floor of the valley below the city like strands of hanging moss.

Icenholm is constructed of stained glass that shines in a dazzling array of colours in the sunlight. Its spires house some of the most senior barons along with members of the royal family. The majority of Icenholm's population is made up of hereditary servants, pledged to either the queen or one of her barons. They form small armies of clerks who ensure that the planet's barons are offering up the correct tithes to their queen, and attend to other matters of governance such as the regulation of heraldry. These servants have their own hierarchies, with the queen's own servants very much in charge. They wear the liveries of their masters, which in the case of the queen's servants is red (red is a colour reserved for royal use on Sepheris Secundus—anyone else wearing it is likely to be arrested by baronial troops). Icenholm's gates do not open to just anyone, so while adepts and barons will be received into Icenholm anyone else will have to sweet-talk the hereditary family of gate servants who are difficult to impress.

The peak of Icenholm is taken up by the palace, which consists of the various chambers of state along with Queen Lachryma's own quarters. The throne room is spectacular indeed, set beneath a soaring spire of stained glass depicting the glories of Sepheris Secundus's past monarchs. The throne itself is of ice kept permanently frozen, and the voluminous royal robes which the queen wears are partly to keep her from being frozen herself. The queen's chambers are lavishly appointed, with three separate bedrooms alone: one for sleeping, one for promulgating the royal line (not used since the Prince Consort passed away twenty years ago) and one for receiving morning visitors.

Queen Lachryma III

The queen of Sepheris Secundus is an elderly woman who has successfully led Sepheris Secundus through numerous revolts, baronial uprisings and increasingly spectacular tithe demands from the Administratum. Now, however, she is getting old. Though her mind is still sound, her body is infirm and, some of the more ambitious barons say, she is losing the ruthlessness and willpower that once served her so well.

Queen Lachryma's aged, underweight form is swamped by her royal regalia, with its voluminous gown made from thousands of panes of stained glass and its crown of white gold, for the feudal system of Sepheris Secundus. In her later years, the queen has sunk into the throes of a personal crisis. Why do her serfs have to live such grim lives of toil? Is there another way that Sepheris Secundus could be ruled? She has ordered her barons to investigate what actually goes on in the depths of the planet's mines, but her barons have resisted this and a few of them have sensed weakness and doubt in their queen. Though she would never admit it to anyone, Queen Lachryma is afraid of how she will be remembered, and knows that she is running out of time before she can get to the root causes of Sepheris Secundus's misery.

GORGONID MINE

The Gorgonid is one of Sepheris Secundus's largest and most productive mines. Though it is within sight of Icenholm and the royal palace, the structure and society of the mine itself is typical of many across Sepheris Secundus's surface. The exact population of the Gorgonid is impossible to calculate, but it is vast, consisting of enormous hordes of serfs, most of whom never see the world outside the mine. The Gorgonid is a vast open mine hundreds of metres deep. Rickety scaffolding reaches down into its lower depths, and countless pulleys and cranes lift containers of ore to the edge of the enormous mine pit, where it accumulates in mountainous heaps waiting for cargo ships to transport it off the surface. From the edge of the mine pit can be glimpsed the heaped-up wooden tenements known as the Commons, while cart tracks and well-worn paths lead below the edge of the pit towards the mining areas deep below the ground. Only the central part of the Gorgonid is open to the air. All the mining faces and many homes are below the surface, existing in eternal darkness.

Most inhabitants of the Gorgonid live in the Commons. This is the collective term for the areas of built-up wooden housing where the serfs live. In theory, all of this is owned by the Gorgonid's barons, who allow the serfs to live there in return for nine-tenths of everything the serfs mine. In practice serfs simply live where they can, often cramming large families into a single candle-lit room. The Commons are teeming, but it is not a boisterous, lively place. The serfs go everywhere with their heads bowed, trudging to and from the mine faces, snatching a few moments of rest in the squalor of the Commons. Besides work, sleep and sermons by the lay clergy who represent the Imperial Creed in the Gorgonid, there is very little levity in a serf's life.

The barons of the Gorgonid live in the Commons, tradition demanding that they live in fastness keeps and small castles. The serfs are expected to show deference to all barons, particularly the one who owns their labour, at all times. A baron travelling through the streets can expect to have serfs present him with small handcrafted trinkets or other gifts. He will then burn these outside the gates of his tower to symbolise the relationship between serf and master. Most barons have large entourages of troops and other servants to ensure that the serfs do not get too close. These include the distinctive Stench Wardens, servants who carry censers of scented water to help fend off the "Commons stink" when a baron must endure walking the poverty-stricken streets.

The Face is the term for those areas where there is ore to be mined, and it is here that most of the Gorgonid's work is done. The Face consists of thousands of kilometres of open rock face stretching deep beneath the ground, from massive cliff faces covered in precarious scaffolding to narrow, stifling tunnels too low for a man to stand upright. Every serf has the right to mine a particular section of open mine, and the Face is covered in markers driven into the rock to state which serf is permitted to work that spot. In times past, the serfs had to chain themselves, or one of their children, to the marker to ensure that the claim was respected. Nowadays, however, a smear of the serf's blood is enough to demonstrate that the serf is currently working the spot. Serfs must frequently draw blood to renew this mark, hence the process is known as "staking" a claim. The means by which the serfs mine is very primitive. Most use tools handed down by their forefathers, and fortunate is the serf who earns enough from his minuscule portion of the rock's bounty to buy a brand new set of tools. Each morning countless thousands of serfs trudge to the Face from the Commons and every evening they trudge back again, pausing only to pay deference to the barons who tour the Face to ensure that the slothful are punished. When the explosives engineers of the Disassemblers' Guild blast a new area of the Face, a stampede occurs as thousands of serfs rush to stake their new claims. These occasions can be dangerous, as many are trampled or killed in fights over the best claims, but this is accepted as the price for making sure the fittest, most determined serfs mine the most productive seams.

The Shatters is the term given to the deepest, darkest, most dangerous parts of the Gorgonid, which even the barons recognise are too dangerous for serfs to work. Caverns filled with deadly gas, flooded, partially collapsed or simply lethally hot or radioactive can be found in the Shatters. No claim may be staked in the Shatters and ore mined there is not owned by anyone. The Shatters are home to the very lowest of the Gorgonid's low, comprising two main groups. The first consists of the dispossessed: those who have no master, either having been born outside a marriage sanctioned by the barons or condemned to lose even a serf's meagre rights after being convicted of a crime. These hapless individuals invariably die very quickly in the Shatters. Those who survive to illicitly sell a few handfuls of ore fare well compared to most.

The second group consists of mutants. Mutants are common in the Gorgonid, as on the rest of Sepheris Secundus, perhaps due to the massive amounts of dangerous metals and chemicals that find their way into the dubious water supply. In any case, mutants gravitate towards the Shatters, which is the only place where they can survive in any numbers without being hunted down by baronial troops or burned by torch-wielding serfs. Some mutants are well adapted to the hostile conditions, and a few even thrive in the Shatters. Mutants have their own crude society where seniority is based on brute strength and the degree of mutation. The mutant barons and kings, it is said, are inhuman monsters from the depths of a nightmare, hellish abominations that range from enormous tentacled horrors to three-eyed seers who can read thoughts. The more criminally minded serfs buy the ore mined by the outcasts and mutants in exchange for food and other essentials, and a major part of Sepheris Secundus' economy is made up by the labour of the mutant underclass. It is even possible that more ore comes out of the Shatters than out of the exhausted seams of the Face.

The Tumble is the only area outside the Gorgonid that most of its serfs ever see. It is a wasteland on the surface above the mine, dominated by titanic heaps of rock spoil and other trash. In this polluted twilight, thickly carpeted with toxins, shady deals are made that take place outside the mine's proper feudal economy. These range from serfs selling off their surplus, to organised criminals selling their services as killers or smugglers. The mutants of the Shatters have a tunnel that links to somewhere in the Tumble, and on the darkest nights, shambling, hideous creatures emerge from the poison smog to take their cut. Barons and off-worlders are sometimes known to frequent the Tumble, every one of them eager to hide their identities.

XI: The Calixis Sector

Cults and Malcontents

The Gorgonid's large, oppressed population has led to the formation of groups of criminals and other malcontents. The baronial troops eagerly hunt down criminals and execute them on the street corners of the Commons. Other groups are cults and secret societies lurking in the Gorgonid's dark places. The Loathers, for example, is a group that has forsaken all happiness and hope, and sells its services as assassins and destroyers of lives to spread the misery that has afflicted them. Some whisper that cutting off a finger and nailing it to a signpost in the Commons will bring the Loathers to your doorstep when you least expect it, and that you can then bargain with them to destroy someone you despise.

The Orphans' Crusade, on the other hand, searches discreetly for those with unusual abilities, reading minds or precognition for example, and spirits them away before they are handed over to the baronial troops by fearful relatives. No one knows what the Crusade needs these gifted individuals for, but the fate that awaits them can surely be no more sinister than being dragged away by the baronial troops, never to be seen again. The grey-hooded agents of the Orphan's Crusade can sometimes be glimpsed at the bloodsport pits popular in the Commons or at the witherhouses where victims of diseases and accidents languish, always looking for something. Perhaps most terrifying of all the Gorgonid's hidden cults, though, is the Granite Crown. This group's sinister symbol of a blinded eye is carved on many entrances to the Shatters and many an old serf miner tells tales of how the Granite Crown rules over even the mightiest of mutant shatterchiefs, who pay fealty to the Granite Crown's lords. These "lords" are said to dwell in the most ancient of places beneath the ground. No one knows where these stories originated, let alone whether they hold any truth, but similar tales are told by firelight all across Sepheris Secundus.

FATHOMSOUND MINE

The Fathomsound is the most unusual of Sepheris Secundus's mines. Within its enormous basin is an underground lake upon which float thousands of rafts, barges and lashed-together wooden structures that form the home of Fathomsound's serfs. The frequent blizzards that rip across Sepheris Secundus churn up the waters of the Fathomsound, and many serfs are lost to the freezing waters with every storm. The Flotsam, as this floating city is known, is one of the most poverty-stricken and desperate places on Sepheris Secundus, with its inhabitants literally clinging to life, permanently ill thanks to the fouled water, and condemned to lives spent in the deadly underwater mines.

The barons of the Fathomsound are obliged by planetary law to live within the mine whose serfs they own, but none would willingly dwell on the dangerous Flotsam. Instead, they live in mansions suspended from the edge of the mine pit, hanging from mighty chains and served by precarious elevators and cable cars. The barons typically enjoy taking caffeine on the balconies along the lower surface of these extraordinary homes, from where the Fathomsound is a spectacular sight and its poverty and dangers are not obvious. The mansions swing alarmingly when the wind is up and it is not unknown for them to break free and plunge into the lake. Inside, the furniture and ornamentation is bolted down and visitors to the Fathomsound's barons have to find their sea legs quickly.

The Traditions of Serfdom

Sepheris Secundus's centuries of serfdom have created many traditions that confirm the relationship between baron and serf, some of which seem very strange to outsiders. The details of these traditions differ across the planet but their spirit is preserved everywhere. They include:

Marriage. A marriage between serfs must be sanctioned by both serfs' barons. The prospective husband and wife each cut off a finger and send it to their baron, which symbolises the serfs handing over of their rights of any children born out of wedlock.

Death. To demonstrate the fact that no serf ever fully pays off his debt to his baron, his body becomes his baron's property upon his death. Most barons dispose of these bounties by burying them under heaps of mine spoil, but some more ostentatious barons make a point of feeding dead serfs to their hounds.

Mandatory Celebrations. On an occasion important to the baron, such as the birth of a child, the baron's serfs are required to celebrate by breaking into dance upon hearing the news and wherever the baron approaches. Many barons take this very seriously and will flog nearby serfs until they begin to dance, regardless of whether they have heard the baron's good news or not.

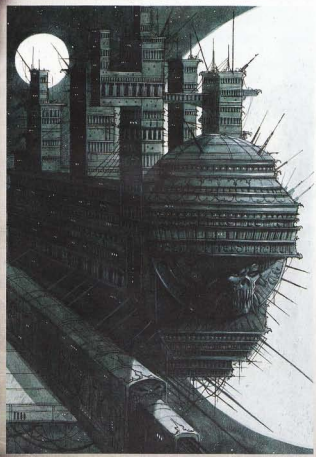
Faceday. A serf celebrates the day when he becomes old enough to stake his own claim on the Face (normally in early adolescence). The first Faceday is marked with three days of ceaseless toil, to demonstrate that the young serf indeed deserves the bounty of the Face. Anniversaries of this Faceday are marked with ceremonies that vary wildly but are always painful or humiliating, varying from simple beatings to being painted with offensive slogans and forced to run naked through the Commons.

Day of Thanks. An annual holiday observed across Sepheris Secundus, the Day of Thanks is a chance for the serfs to remember and mourn their dead (a practice otherwise frowned upon or even prohibited). Since mourning is considered a selfish act, participants ritually disguise their identities by wearing masks, painting their faces or attending gatherings in pitch darkness.

The Misericord

The *Misericord* is an example of the many Chartist spacecraft that ply the trade routes between Scintilla, Iocanthos and Sepheris Secundus and the other worlds of the sector. It is an ugly and enormous ship, resembling a barnacle-encrusted, spacefaring whale, from which jut haphazard clusters of engines and towers, and it trails a long tail of debris like a comet. The *Misericord* carries huge quantities of trade goods between the client worlds, along with many passengers. Buying passage on a ship like the *Misericord* is the most common method of travelling between planets. Its round trip—Scintilla/Iocanthus/Sepheris Secundus—a route laid down on the charter carried by its captains, takes well over a year. Ships like the *Misericord* are very common in the Calixis Sector and throughout the Imperium, plying a slow, thankless route across the stars. Without the Chartist ships, large swathes of the Imperium would be completely cut off and sector economies would fail. In spite of this, few have much regard for the Chartist ships, and their crews are stereotyped as rough, untrustworthy void born with few scruples and even fewer refinements. Each Chartist craft needs a charter that sets out its permitted trade routes and activities, and the *Misericord's* charter was signed by one of the earliest generation of sector commanders.

The *Misericord* is considered an ill-omen at any place it docks. There are many Chartist craft in the Calixis Sector but for some reason the *Misericord* has an especially evil reputation.



It is considered very bad luck to marry, give birth or embark on a major venture while the *Misericord* is docked in system, and during the ship's many centuries of operation, tales have grown up about the dark things that occur while it is in port, such as plagues, tech-failures and the random disappearance of children. In addition, the crew are mostly void born, people who were born in space and rarely set foot on a planet, and the void born, as everyone knows, just aren't right in the head.

Inside, the *Misericord* resembles a huge, complex and grotesquely ornate castle. Many different ships make up the *Misericord* and they each have their own style, which in turn has been embellished and replaced over the centuries. In places where the component ships connect, corridors can become precipitous shafts, rooms can be upside-down and moving from place to place can be very complex, although the void born crew are adept at clambering up makeshift ladders or even leaping pits in the floor. The *Misericord's* interior is archaic, with feasting halls, dungeons, cobwebbed processional galleries and many other places that seem to have little connection to the business of the ship or the needs of the crew.

Ship Society

Life on the *Misericord* is defined by the castes into which the crew are divided. There are dozens of castes, each one responsible for a particular function aboard ship. Crewmen are either born into these castes or assigned to them on the few occasions they join from outside. These castes range from the Scourhand Brotherhood (who scrub the filth from the floors of the engine decks) to the Company of Imbeciles (the ship's entertainers, consisting of various clowns, actors and storytellers). The officers of the *Misericord* form their own caste and wear distinctive and rather sinister masks to mark them out from the rest of the crew. Each caste has its own leadership, which reports to the officer caste, and the officers in turn receive their orders from the twin captains Anapollo and Luneros. The captains believe that the caste system is the reason the *Misericord* has survived for so long and are quick to bring anyone opposing it to trial. Castes are insular and proud, and sometimes they can come into bitter conflict, such as the regular skirmishes between the Lamplighters' Guild and the Followers of the Wire over who gets to change the glowbulbs. All have their own baffling traditions, from the large wood and paper animal masks of the Obeyers' Guild (the ship's lawyers and executioners) to the ritual removal of an ear from every member of the Enginists (who maintain the ship's temperamental engines). This latter ritual is said to be born of respect for a mythological Enginist of ages past, the heroic Bessimer "One-lug" Jone, who supposedly saved the *Misericord* from "dire disassemblage and ventation".

Most crew are true void born and live their whole life on the ship. However, since the castes are not permitted to interbreed, the ship needs new crew members from outside to replenish the gene pool. Some older legends remember the terrible "Age of Six Toes" when a mad previous captain refused to allow new blood onto the *Misericord*. Crew who join from outside—referred to as "clayfeet"—are both blessed and cursed. They are valuable to the crew and are given the least dangerous duties, but on the other hand they can never be regarded as true members of the *Misericord's* crew, and are treated as outsiders no matter how long they serve on the ship.

The Misericord's Castes

The castes into which the Misericord's crew are organised are insular, specialised and hereditary. It is impossible to change castes and most crew are born into them. Old castes can be dissolved and new ones founded by the order of the captain, but some of the Misericord's castes are as old as the ship itself. The ship's castes include the following:

The Lords, Ladings and Officers is the full name of the officer caste. Members go everywhere masked, and assist the captains in making and enforcing decisions.

The Merciful form the ship's security wing, armoured in archaic plate and mail, and carrying enormous shotguns. They can change from impeccable politeness to extreme aggression instantly, even during the course of a mundane conversation.

The Futurers' Parliament is the Misericord's body of medical personnel. The Futurers practise their procedures on the ship's small complement of live animals, so cats, pygmy Geese and other creatures wander around their sick bays and surgeries.

The Immortals recover the bodies of dead crewmen, conduct void burials and investigate suspicious deaths. They enjoy reminding other crewmen of the fact that one day, they too will require the ministrations of the Immortals.

The Communion of Ratters is dedicated to tackling the Misericord's constant vermin problems. There are only a few crewmen among the Ratters, with the rest of the Communion being made up of old, patched-up ratting servitors.

The Renders are the Misericord's cooks and they are also responsible for raising livestock raised on the ship for food. The caste's members take great pride in their food and are extremely vocal and sometimes violent in proclaiming the superiority of their personal recipes. No one argues like a Render.

The Bringers of Silence are the only caste not to have a generally known purpose. They answer to the twin captains and are occasionally seen walking purposefully through the ship in midnight blue uniforms, their faces painted with stars.

LOCATIONS OF NOTE

The bridge of the *Misericord* is located close to the centre of the ship, in one of its very oldest parts, where the walls are covered in layers of faded frescoes depicting scenes from long-forgotten myths and tragedies in the vessel's history. The captains and the bridge officers command the *Misericord* from a raised area, known as the captain's floor, which is flanked by a series of ornate and ancient flags which are changed to match the work shifts. Gilded war banners attend the day shift whilst silvered mercantile pennants are displayed at night. No one can remember the origination of this curiously theatrical practice, though it may be down to the whim of the twin captains. Bridge uniforms and staff are changed from gold (day) to silver (night) as the bridge hands over from one "ban" (ship jargon for a work shift) to another. Subsidiary helms, manned by officers who monitor the ship's systems, plot courses, man the ship's vox-casters and so on, stand to the side of the captain's floor. By ancient tradition, these lesser officers may not take the floor, unless specifically invited. To do so is to rise above one's station, an unforgivable and treasonous act against the strict hierarchy of command. Traitorous helmsmen have been thrown into the vastness of space for such a deed.

The twins require an audience on the bridge at all times and lots are drawn to determine which crew members must spend a day in an area known as the watch court. From here the watchmen are supposed to observe procedures on the bridge to ensure protocol. In reality, crew members treat their days on the court benches as if it were a theatrical performance. Most spend their time eating, commenting raffishly on various officers or staring in wonder at the captains. It is a point of strict protocol that officers on the bridge studiously ignore any comments, noisy chewing, thrown food or jeering from the court. In reality, crew who behave poorly often find that they suffer the consequences once they return to their normal work.

Key ceremonial decisions, like a course change, are considered especially interesting by members of the crew, and those lucky enough to have their number drawn on a day when such an event is to occur will often sell their ticket to the highest bidder. Attending court on a false ticket is technically an offence against regulation, but in practice most officers turn a blind eye to the custom. Visitors to, and passengers aboard, the *Misericord* are often delighted by the arcane pageantry of bridge activity, which they are free to observe from an outer circle of seating beyond the watch court. This captive, intrigued audience may, of course, be why the captains have allowed this curious behaviour to develop.

Passengers on the *Misericord* stay in the Beyonder's Hostelry, a sprawl of small but well-appointed rooms kept by the Minions of Stewardship. The Minions have a number of quirks including being forbidden to speak, so they communicate through written notes (illiterate passengers tend to have difficulty on the *Misericord*) and with rapid sign language among themselves. The Minions decorate the Hostelry with the hundreds of shiny or brightly coloured things they find, many of which are left behind by previous passengers. The Hostelry is cramped and rather dusty, and while they are obliging, the Minions have a habit of getting things slightly wrong—most notably the food they bring to passengers always tastes bizarre. It is possible that the Minions deliberately misinterpret requests to make sure that passengers understand they are not a proper part of the *Misericord's* world.

The Gallery of Sin is one of the few places where the crewmen of the various castes mix. The Gallery is a wide, high-ceilinged deck with a small bustling town built inside it. Several of the castes, such as the Guardians Mercantile and the Coinwrackers, sell goods and services to crew and passengers. The Gallery of Sin (the name is of uncertain origin) is the closest thing to a "normal" community on the *Misericord*, but strange rituals and traditions still abound—shopkeepers regularly hold mock battles in the streets, engage in elaborate and foul-mouthed haggling rituals with customers, and make sham sacrifices to vegetables. It is in the Gallery of Sin that the Company of Imbeciles performs in small street corner theatres. Some of these entertainers roam around singling out passers-by (preferably bemused passengers) to follow them performing mimes or poetry. The ethos of the Gallery seems to be that because it fulfils a fairly mundane purpose, its normality must be balanced by oddness and symbolism as much as possible.

Power Groups

Several groups in the Calixis Sector hold power that is not restricted to one planet, but can be felt across the whole sector. These include the adepta of the Imperium, as well as the five Great Houses, which are as old as the Calixis Sector itself. Members of these groups can turn up on any of the sector's worlds, and they all possess enough resources to make themselves major players in the sector's complex tapestry of power.

The Adeptus Terra

The Adeptus Terra is nominally the most important group in the Calixis Sector. As the "government" of the Imperium, the Adeptus Terra's members are responsible for ensuring that the Calixis Sector fulfils its obligations to the Imperium: offering up the correct tithes of materials, manpower and psykers, obeying Imperial laws and never harbouring the Emperor's foes. Lord Sector Marius Hax is the sector governor and he appoints the subsector commanders who oversee the various areas of the Calixis Sector in Terra's name. Commander Hax himself answers to the commanders of the Segmentum Obscurus. Through this connection, Hax can request military aid from the Imperial Guard or Navy, or even the mighty Space Marines. However, unless he has strong evidence that the Calixis Sector is in immediate peril, his requests will not be answered. On a smaller scale, Commander Hax could have considerable sway over many of the sector's Adepts, such as members of the Adeptus Arbites or the Ecclesiarchy. Though Hax rules in a "hands-off" manner, this influence is not to be underestimated.

The Adeptus Ministorum

The Ministorum is a powerful force in the Calixis Sector. The area is sacred to Saint Drusus and is a destination for pilgrims from many sectors around, with many of its most notable places being religious in nature. Cardinal Ignato is energetic in keeping up the numbers of preachers and confessors active in the sector and these promulgators of the Imperial word are the most common adepts by far on most of the sector's worlds. Many planets have their own cardinal and these form the Sector Synod, headed by Ignato, which rules on spiritual matters affecting the Calixis Sector. Pious, Emperor-fearing citizens abound and pronouncements by Ignato or the Synod can be disseminated by the clergy and reach the ears of the average citizen far more effectively than through any other means.

The majority of citizens perform some act of worship regularly, from trudging along to a dingy temple once a month to nightly prayers in a noble's private chapel. Most permanent places of worship are home to a member of the Ecclesiarchy, which means that the Ecclesiarchy's adepts are numerous and strongly connected to the population in a way that no other adepts are. On worlds where adepts are lacking (such as Sepheris Secundus) much of the day-to-day preaching is done by lay clergy, pious individuals trained and deployed by Ecclesiarchy adepts to spread the word in places where even a devoted preacher baulks to tread. While there are few places in the Calixis Sector where the Emperor's word is not preached, the scattered nature of the adepts and the use of lay clergy mean that strict dogma is not always observed. Sometimes the teaching of the Imperial Creed can drift away from the Ecclesiarchical line. On Sepheris Secundus, for example, the barons and the queen are sometimes portrayed as sacred beings imbued with the Emperor's power by lay preachers who grew up in the planet's feudal system. On Iocanthos, mercenaries pay fealty to the Emperor as paymaster, while in Scintilla's underhives, countless versions of the Emperor are worshipped, from a fearsome god of destruction appeased with murder to the spirit of the hives themselves. While the Imperial creed reaches everywhere in the Calixis Sector, in truth Ignato and the other cardinals of the Sector Synod often have to strive hard to maintain orthodoxy there.

The Adeptus Arbites

The role of the arbitrators is to ensure that the Calixis Sector's worlds obey Imperial law. Most worlds have an Adeptus Arbites presence and the arbitrators tend to be based in grim, precinct-fortresses to remind the population of the unyielding nature of Imperial law and to insure that there will always be a defendable location for the Arbites to hold in case of widespread rebellion. In the Calixis Sector few worlds aside from Scintilla have a major arbitrator presence, and most worlds only have a single precinct-fortress along with a few regional stations. In spite of this, the arbitrators are a feared force because they are loyal to nothing save Imperial law. Even a planetary governor can be arrested by the Adeptus Arbites should he harbour the Emperor's enemies or seek to throw off the yoke of Imperial authority. While they are a formidable presence with great authority, the arbitrators can only act to defend Imperial law and have little influence beyond this.

Lord Marshal Goreman is the most senior arbitrator in the Calixis Sector. Goreman began his long career as an enforcer, and his lack of sympathy for the desperate mass of Imperial citizens borders on disdain. He sees no greater crime than that of an Imperial citizen abandoning his duties to take up arms against a rightful authority, and he is known to personally lead riot suppression forces on Scintilla. The lord marshal demands regular reports from arbitrators on the sector's other planets, and is pessimistic in character, constantly issuing dire warnings about the Calixis Sector careering down a slippery slope towards lawlessness and terror. Goreman sees doom and anarchy in everything, including the activities of Scintilla's Magistratum. As far as he is concerned, the Magistratum are part of the problem and he actively despises them.

Goreman has recently permitted the development of the Divisio Immoralis, a small taskforce of arbitrators whose purpose is to collect intelligence on cult activities across the Calixis Sector and explain a recent rise in unrest and acts of terrorism by fringe cults. The Divisio Immoralis numbers only a few arbitrators led by the veteran, and rather burned-out, Senior Arbitrator Kae Drusil, but they have considerable leeway for their investigations and may turn up anywhere in the sector.

On Scintilla, the Adeptus Arbites is based at the Fortress of the Just, a massive rockcrete slab that sits in the relentless desert a short flight away from Hive Tarsus. It is here that Goreman's headquarters can be found, along with the training facilities for the arbitrator cadets sent to the Calixis Sector, and the Sector Judicial archive. The Divisio Immoralis is based in a cramped set of offices in the Archive, while Scintilla's large pool of enforcers trains regularly in the bullet-scarred mock town just outside the fortress. On Sepheris Secundus, the arbitrators are based at the Isolatorium and are mainly concerned with battling cults and mutant groups among the massive serf populations of the planet's mines. On Iocanthos, the Adeptus Arbites' presence is limited to a single squad of enforcers and an arbitrators stationed at Port Suffering, although they are almost always to be found out in the Wasteland following up some new allegation of cultists or rogue psykers.

THE REDEMPTION

The Adeptus Ministorum's preachers are in short supply in the very deepest, darkest parts of the Calixis Sector's cities. Instead, another religious force brings the fiery word of the Emperor to these forsaken places, one that operates well beyond the reach of the Adepta: the Redemption. Many consider the Redemptionists to be the true terror of the underhives, rather than the bandits, mutants or criminals. Violent zealots who see sin everywhere, the tactics of the Redemptionists are simple: they roam the underhive putting sinners to the flame, holding impromptu stake-burnings, exhorting the fearful underhivers to give up their friends and relatives to the purifying fire, and preaching impassioned sermons about the intolerance of the Emperor and the wickedness of anyone who does not agree with the Redemption's point of view. The Redemption's masked foot soldiers are clad in red robes and are armed with anything that burns, from lit torches to flamers. The most blessed among them carry the eviscerator, a massive two-handed chainsaw, with which to mortify the flesh of sinners. Many Redemptionists are broken-minded souls who have lost everything to the violence of the underhive, and seek solace and vengeance in the religious hatred promised by the cult.

The Cult of the Redemption is strong in many areas of the Imperium and was probably brought to the Calixis Sector by zealots making a pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Illumination. It is active on several planets, but its spiritual home is Scintilla. The cult is organised into many Crusades, each led by a charismatic deacon. Though the Crusades operate independently, they all recognise the authority of one woman, the Archdeacon Ludmilla.

HOUSE KRIN

House Krin are "Drusus's Bankers", a very old and close-knit family whose immense fortune stems from offering banking and loans to the other noble houses. They are possibly the oldest of the Great Houses still to have a sector-wide presence and are sharp in their criticism of the "new money" that has so much power in the modern sector. There are houses on almost every planet that rely on House Krin to help maintain their own finances. The conspicuous expenditure of Hive Sibellus, for example, would be impossible without House Krin loans, and the DeVayne Incorporation could not purchase the rights to generations of Sepheris Secundus's serfs without House Krin advancing them the funds to do so. House Krin keeps itself to itself but its estates can be found on a great many worlds. They are not as lavish as those of other houses, as their position is secure enough for them not to rely on such vulgarity to ensure their position. House Krin has a sizeable body of

Archdeacon Ludmilla

Ludmilla is a sturdily built, middle-aged woman who is the self-styled leader of the Redemption in the Calixis Sector. She believes that the Emperor is vengeful in the extreme and that it is her duty as a human being to punish every sin, from impure thoughts to excessive cursing, with excessive amounts of fire. Ludmilla believes in purifying fire as strongly as she believes in the Emperor, and loves to see sinners, places of ill repute and whole sections of the underhive consumed in flame.

Ludmilla is devoted and not a little crazed. She is an impassioned hellfire preacher and a competent fighter, although she wields her sacred weapon, a pair of massive industrial shears, with more enthusiasm than skill. Ludmilla's true skill is in encouraging her faithful to let the Emperor's fury consume them, until there is nothing left of themselves: no compassion, not even any memory, just the burning hatred of the Emperor for all sinners. Her grandest project is to have the Redemption accepted as a part of the Imperial Creed, and she sends tributes to Cardinal Ignato in the hope that he will declare the Redemptionists to be valued members of the Adeptus Ministorum. These tributes mostly consist of cartloads of charred sinners left outside the Cathedral of Illumination. So far, Ignato has not responded.

The Great Houses

The term "Great House", or "Sector House" refers to those civilian organisations that have a presence across the Calixis Sector. This sets them apart from "planetary" or "lesser" houses, which might wield enormous power on a particular planet but do not have any particular influence elsewhere. In the earliest days of the Calixis Sector, all the Great Houses, and most of the planetary houses, were based around noble families. The old Great Houses were enormous extended familial lines, with strict rules of heredity to maintain their monopoly on power. In the current days, several of the Great Houses are actually corporations. They may act as if they were noble families but the truly hereditary Great Houses are quick to point out that their memberships are based on ambition and skill, rather than bloodline. The Great Houses play their own game of politics and wealth, and with their thousands of members and troops, they have the potential to exercise enormous power in the Calixis Sector. Some dominate whole worlds and some harbour ambitions that will one day pit them against the Adepta of the Imperium.

agents in the Goldenhand in Hive Tarsus on Scintilla and keeps smaller taskforces anywhere they can use their large amounts of accessible wealth to make more money. Many nobles are certain that House Krin must have a vault somewhere filled with unimaginable wealth, and even suggest that the house's senior members view this accumulation of gold with religious awe, but if any of this is true, the location of the House Krin vaults is a closely guarded secret. Similarly House Krin's most important members rarely deal with anyone outside the house, preferring to have lesser members deal with "outsiders" (a fact that does little to endear them to nobles from other houses).

THE CESTELLE ALLIANCE

The origins of the Cestelle Alliance lie on the world of Regulus in the Hazeroth Abyss. Regulus was an agri-world run by the Administratum but when their adepts were all killed by a meteor impact, the small feudal kingdoms took over the management of their world. By the time contact with the Imperium was re-established, it was clear that the alliance of indigenous peoples was running the agri-world more efficiently than the Administratum, and the natives of Regulus were left to their own devices as long as their tithe of food was met. From this string of events was born the Cestelle Alliance, the unified people of Regulus, who sent members to other, less promising worlds and transformed them over the following decades into fertile agri-worlds in their own rights, passing on enormous tithes to Sector Governor Hax's government. Slowly, almost without the other Great Houses knowing, the Cestelle Alliance amassed the wealth and power to make them the equal of the other sector houses.

The Cestelle Alliance now controls many agri-worlds in the Calixis Sector. It has not escaped the notice of Lord Sector Hax that the Alliance, if it wished, could cut off food supplies to the sector's most populated worlds and create a crisis of famine to hold the sector to ransom. To keep the Alliance firmly on the Imperial side, Hax has appointed Egoyan Cestelle as the governor of the Adrantis Nebula and continues to permit the Alliance rights to its agri-worlds. The members of the Alliance must walk a curious tightrope between maintaining the traditions of their home worlds and kingdoms, and acting like fully recognised nobles of the Calixis Sector. The traditions of Regulus include facial tattooing (with the higher-ranking nobles sporting extraordinarily intricate scrollwork), incinerating the house's dead on funeral pyres and praying to the Emperor in the raucous manner first taught to the people of Regulus by Imperial missionaries.

The Alliance participates in the sector's games of politics and etiquette, even though it is considered little more than a gang of primitive yokels by most other nobles, but they are very reluctant to allow any interference on the planets they control, even resisting visits by adepts to their agri-worlds. Those few who have gone to a Cestelle Alliance world have sometimes reported wide-eyed tales of abased rituals around giant burning effigies. The Alliance goes to great lengths to show a sophisticated, aristocratic face to the Calixis Sector but some say they are unable to completely hide their primitive side. The colours of the Cestelle Alliance are red and golden yellow, and their emblem is a sea of crops, gently bending in the wind.

THE DEVAYNE INCORPORATION

The DeVayne Incorporation is an unusual sector house that was originally a large and powerful religious order. The Sepulchral Brotherhood was a movement of the Imperial Creed that trained laymen in religious matters. Specifically, it sent out emissaries to the most downtrodden masses, to preach to them how they were blessed to have the opportunity to give their lives in service to their Emperor and how they should be grateful for the decades of backbreaking labour that made up their future. The Brotherhood grew in popularity and was originally a valued part of the Adeptus Ministorum, but a distance grew between the Ministorum and the Brotherhood's army of lay preachers who had become the only religious authority in many areas. Several centuries ago, following a declaration by

the Synod Calixis, the Ministorum withdrew its adepts and demanded that the Brotherhood cease preaching. The Brotherhood abandoned its religious functions in the wake of the "Sepulchral Schism" but it did not disappear. Instead, it took advantage of the hold it had over the labourers of many worlds and its lay preachers became instead members of the newly founded DeVayne Incorporation.

The DeVayne Incorporation bases its wealth and influence on the labour of those same hordes of menial workers (referred to by the Incorporation as "thralls"). It owns the rights to millions of lives in places such as the lower forges of Gunmetal City. The Incorporation is the single biggest purchaser of serf rights from the crown of Sepheris Secundus outside the local barons and on dozens of other worlds, the labour of DeVayne's thralls allows the Incorporation to amass wealth and influence. If another Great House needs raw materials, they often come from mines, fields or refineries managed by DeVayne thralls. The Incorporation is famous for the small army of clerks it employs to keep the records of its thralls. It is said that every single thrall is named in DeVayne's records and that the Incorporation has contracts with mercenaries and bounty hunters whose job is to bring back runaway thralls. DeVayne's household troops, veterans of serf uprisings on Sepheris Secundus, are famously brutal when they lend their strength to putting down rebellions and protests in which thralls are involved.

Though the Sepulchral Brotherhood has been officially dead for centuries, the DeVayne Incorporation's members have a strong air of religiosity about them. It recruits new members from among the children of its thralls, a practice unique among the Great Houses and one which elicits great suspicion amongst noble families who do not understand how base peasants can rise to become members of a Great House. The Incorporation's members consider the thralls to have no value except in financial terms, which mystifies observers considering most of them were once thralls themselves. Cynics insist that the Incorporation must still have some religious purpose at its heart to command such devotion from the same people whose lives it made a misery.

Certainly DeVayne's organisation, with its members divided into "orders" each responsible for an area of house business, resembles that of a religious body, and its members can be evangelical about the Incorporation's mission to help the people of the Imperium fulfil their duties to the Emperor and their fellow man. These impassioned outbursts are excellent for convincing thralls that they are working for the good of the Imperium but are less welcome among sector nobility. The low-born nature of the Incorporation's members means that they are treated like pariahs by most noble houses, but none can deny that the DeVayne Incorporation is one of the driving forces behind the economy of the Calixis Sector. The Adeptus Ministorum harbours a deep mistrust of the DeVayne Incorporation and many of its adepts believe that the Sepulchral Brotherhood is alive and thriving among the Incorporation's leadership, intent on spreading some form of religious corruption. The Incorporation's colours are dove grey and its symbol is an open hand.

The Machenko Dynasty

The Machenko Dynasty, an extended family organised along strictly hereditary lines in the manner of the old houses, is the most mysterious of the Great Houses. Seventy-five years ago the dynasty's patriarch, Lord Scelestes Machenko, was accused of witchcraft, heresy and impiety, and burned at the stake. The dynasty fell with him, its estates invaded by rival families and its wealth confiscated by the Administratum. The dynasty spent the following decades rebuilding itself, and its members have kept its record scrupulously clean since the Machenkan Purge. Although a dark shadow hangs over the dynasty because of its past, no one has ever been able to find evidence of impiety during the dynasty's return to power. The source of the dynasty's wealth, with which it funded its return to Great House status and currently plays the great games of noble politics, is a complete mystery and the source of the darkest of rumours. Certainly the dynasty owns a great deal, from hive spire estates to tracts of land, but it does not seem to control any agri-worlds or factoria with which to make the money it so clearly has. When questioned about the source of the dynasty's capital, Machenkan nobles reply (with impeccable politeness) that they keep their own counsel about such matters.

The members of the Machenko Dynasty have turned etiquette into an art form and house scholars compile great volumes of etiquette, which Machenkan nobles carry around with them by means of a lectern-servitor. So complex are the dynasty's ritualised greetings and forms of address that nobles from rival houses often claim they are some kind of secret code. In any case, the Machenkan nobles dismiss the great mysteries of their house with charm and politeness, and without exception make for gracious guests and accommodating hosts. As dark as the rumours about them may be, few nobles turn down an invitation from the dynasty. The Machenko Dynasty's symbol is a ringed planet and its house colours are a deep blue.

The Skaelen-Har Hegemony

Skaelen-Har is a massive corporation founded on a set of comprehensive philosophical principles known as the Concordium. The Skaelen-Har Hegemony is a very powerful and efficient heavy manufacturing corporation with concerns across the Calixis Sector, including hundreds of factoria in Hive Sibellus and Gunmetal City. One of its major products is spaceship parts and the Battlefleet Calixis in particular

relies on Skaelen-Har to keep its warships in space. The connection between the Imperial Navy and the Hegemony is strong, since without the Hegemony the Battlefleet Calixis would be completely grounded.

Every member of the Hegemony follows the Concordium, a set of strictures that emphasise the realisation of an individual's potential through the destruction of his personality. The Concordium describes an "ideal" personality as obedient but ambitious, amoral and unmoved by emotive arguments, decisive and unforgiving. People who display these traits, claim Skaelen-Har, are those most likely to succeed in the 41st Millennium. A member of Skaelen-Har is required to gradually put aside his own personality in favour of the Concordium. His original personality is only permitted to emerge in controlled environments at Skaelen-Har gatherings. Members of Skaelen-Har are recruited from all strata of society, as long as they have the potential to accept the Concordium. They then advance up the strict Hegemony hierarchy, with the higher circles being composed of those who have abandoned their personality completely. These higher circles form the leadership of Skaelen-Har and with their Concordium so in control there is little dissent or indecisiveness displayed in the Hegemony's activities. Skaelen-Har members make for excellent Naval officers and there are many in the Battlefleet Calixis, but many in the officer class are suspicious of the Hegemony's motives in placing so many of its members on the sector's warships.

Members of Skaelen-Har are all required to give up a part of themselves to the Concordium. To symbolise this, they all have a body part replaced, usually a hand or facial feature. The replacements range from simple prosthetics for lower-circle members to state-of-the-art augmentations for the most devoted followers of the Concordium. Skaelen-Har's members wear the hegemony's colours of black and silver and bear the symbol of a silver starburst.

The Calixian Conclave

The branch of the Inquisition that watches the Calixis Sector is known as the Calixian Conclave. Overseen by Lord Inquisitor Caidin, its High Council and Officio are based in the Tricorn Palace on Scintilla. It has many sub-officios and a grim fortified outpost can be found on or near most major or highly populated planets. Sub-officio administrators are known by the rank Planetia Inquisitor and control local conclavium councils that resemble the High Council in miniature. The Calixian Conclave has troops, spacecraft and acolytes at its disposal, but its most valuable commodity is its Inquisitors themselves, who possess skills and authority beyond the imaginings of most Imperial citizens. The Calixian Conclave watches over the whole sector and there is no limit to its jurisdiction.

It should be noted that, despite the governing hand of Caidin and the High Council, the Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave are not all of the same mind. They are independent souls, set on individual missions and enterprises. Each one has very strong ideas about the way the Inquisition should conduct itself and the length to which they must go to preserve the Imperium. Some become outright enemies and no two have exactly the same agenda. Should they ever pull together they would form by far the greatest power block in the area, eclipsing even the great noble families in the resources they can muster. Until that happens, the Inquisitors of the Calixian Conclave are their own worst enemies, scheming against one another or pursuing their goals in secret, using their acolytes as playing pieces in games of superiority. Some of the Calixian Inquisitors are noble and pious, exemplars of Imperial values, others are more free-thinking or, as a Puritan would put it, corrupt. Any one of them could be the Calixis Sector's greatest saviour or its most notorious villain. Caidin and the High Council do their best to keep the scattered Inquisitors moving with a unified purpose, but sometimes they have to arbitrate disputes.

The Tyrantine Cabal

The Tyrantine Cabal was commissioned many years ago in response to the dread prophesy of the Tyrant Star. Its members are known as Tyrantites or Spectarians (or more dismissively as star gazers), for they are charged with investigating apparitions of the spectral sun and the influence of the baleful Tyrant Star. The Tyrantine Cabal is based at the Bastion Serpentis, a bleak fortress of age-polished black stone jutting from the surface of Scintilla's moon Lachesis. The Bastion is typical of the Inquisition waystations and local fortresses peppered across the sector. The Spectarians were granted sole discretionary use of the Bastion Serpentis at the inception of their cabal. Lord Sector Hax, Chief Astropath Xiao and a few others know of its existence, and those who do not are kept away from the moon by dire warnings about geological instability. Lord Inquisitor Zerbe can normally be found at the Bastion and it is here in its grand audience chamber that he holds the semi-regular meetings with all the cabal's Inquisitors, at which they report on their activities and share information. These gatherings are as much a venue for making allies and enemies as they are a forum for exchanging intelligence on the sector's various threats and power groups.

As the threat of the Tyrant Star is felt across the Calixis Sector, the membership of the cabal is not formally fixed. Some Inquisitors, those listed here, have stayed in the Calixis Sector for some time and accept Zerbe's authority (although they do not all obey him by any means). Other Inquisitors might join on a temporary basis, especially if an investigation elsewhere brings them to the Calixis Sector in matters intersecting the Hereticus Tenebrae, while some simply come to lend their support while they tap the expertise of the cabal's most experienced Inquisitors. The individuals listed here are confirmed Spectarians, but Inquisitors join and leave all the time, with Zerbe's blessing.

Komus, The Tyrant Star

The so-called Tyrant Star resists easy interpretation but certain key facts are evident.

Komus is described in a doom-laden vision which speaks in apocalyptic terms of a "darkness" that will engulf the worlds of man and ultimately devour human civilisation. The engulfing darkness will be preceded by signs and portents, so-called herald events, that will gradually transmute human minds and make them ready to embrace the darkness. Many believe this to be an obvious allusion to a rising of Chaos and the warp, though this explanation is far from universally agreed. There are many considerable threats in the galaxy. The prophecy could as much apply to the Tyranids (scholars note a repeated use of the word "devour" in the prophecy text) or the Eldar as to the warp. However, given the warp's manifest ability to uncreate and mutate reality, much weight is given to this idea by the Tyrantian Conclave. The actual text of the prophecy is secured in the archives of the Bastion Serpentis, and Zerbe only allows a very favoured few to examine the complete transcript.

In speaking of the herald events, the Propheticum Hereticus Tenebrae, as the manuscript is called, makes many references to "Komus" or the "Tyrant Star". Komus is said to be the harbinger, a portent of the encroaching darkness. It is said to be a "black sun" or a "halo of black flame". This preternatural harbinger is represented by an unholy rune, best described as a clawed bird's foot. The rune has resisted specific translation and no previous occurrence of it has yet been found.

Zerbe believes it can be no coincidence that the Calixis Sector is fraught with a curious, recurring phenomena: that of the "Spectral Sun". From time to time—no specific interval period has been identified—a monstrous "black sun" matching the prophetic descriptions has mysteriously appeared in various locations throughout the sector.

No two appearances have been quite the same but the pattern of visitation is usually this: with little warning, a ghostly star apparently emitting black flames and esoteric, unknown radiations, spontaneously materialises in a planetary system, shines malevolently for a few days, and then, just as mysteriously, vanishes without trace. The visitation is accompanied by psychic disturbance, geological upheaval and sociological problems, including mass rioting and unrest.

Most often, the Spectral Sun actually eclipses a system's natural star, as if possessing it, causing consternation and panic on the orbiting worlds as their sun goes black. However, the Spectral Sun has also on occasion appeared less directly—a strangely bright star at night, a phantom corona around a moon—before disappearing.

No astronomer has successfully explained the eerie phenomenon. It belies human science and has thus far evaded close investigation. Its visitations cannot be predicted. The Tyrantine Cabal believes that the Spectral Sun phenomenon is the Tyrant Star, Komus, as it so closely matches various descriptions in the prophecy. Some suggest the Tyrant Star is the ghost image of some stellar body in the immaterium, shining through the worn fabric of space. Others say it is a mirror image, a warp-space star that is partially translating into realspace, trying to find a way through. Yet others claim that the Tyrant Star is an artificial body, driven by xenos engines and mechanisms mankind cannot comprehend.

Whatever the truth, the phenomenon is a fact. It has manifested eighteen times in the Calixis Sector during the last century. Every single visitation has caused public unrest and geological instability. Where the Tyrant Star appears, earthquakes and volcanic upsurges follow. A world will experience a violent period of upset and revolution prior to its appearance. Many more psykers than usual will be born or become active. Mutation will occur. These things will usually take place in the two or three months leading up to a manifestation.

Signs and portents will be widespread: these generally are a matter of birthmarks, odd runic sigils appearing upon walls without explanation and the rise of fanatical cults. Some sources also describe premonitory half-sightings, fleeting glimpses of the black-flamed sun in mirrors, pools, puddles or even on the surface of wine or water in drinking vessels.

Mass panic and insanity precede a visitation of the Tyrant Star. No one has been able to explain how it appears and covers a system's natural star with its noxious black smoke. Sometimes, disorder and civil unrest lead to nothing and, for all the portents and cues, the Tyrant Star never actually appears, though this may be because it has manifested in a way that is hard to detect. On at least two recorded occasions, the Tyrant Star has appeared merely as a distant star above a world, no larger than a morning star, instead of eclipsing the local sun.

The Tyrantine Cabal believes it is a vital part of its work to trace and investigate these visitations, and to actually be on site to witness a manifestation. Zerbe hopes that important data may be gathered during a genuine sighting. In the sector at large, the visitations are a matter of myth and rumour. The Inquisition has carefully suppressed any official confirmation of the phenomenon.

Inquisitors of the Tyrantine Cabal

Lord Inquisitor Anton Zerbe, Ordo Hereticus

Anton Zerbe is the commissioned leader of the Tyrantine Cabal, a position he was granted by Lord Inquisitor Caidin himself. He does not take his duties lightly, as he believes the black doctrine of the Tyrant Star to be very real indeed. He rarely leaves the Bastion Serpentis, and chairs the frequent meetings of the cabal's Inquisitors. Zerbe once roamed the Imperium seeking out corruption and incompetence amongst the Adepta but he is now dedicated to his role. Zerbe is never seen without his impassive golden mask and magnificent gilded armour, and he seems perfectly at home on the throne of the Bastion's audience chamber. He is not an easily approachable man and always remains distant from those around him.

Zerbe is even-handed to a fault, refusing in all cases to support one Inquisitor over another, no matter how grave an accusation might have been brought. His principal motivation is preventing strife within the Tyrantine Cabal, so that the group can do its holy work. He believes that if any one Inquisitorial faction within the cabal was to prevail, the sector—the Imperium itself even—would be doomed. If the Recongregators got what they wanted, the cabal would devolve into anarchy. If the Xanthites prevailed, Chaos would corrupt the work. Even the Amalathians, if they succeeded in their aims, would drag the cabal into a miserable malaise. Zerbe's objective is to prevent any one of these factions overcoming the others in the Calixis Sector, so that the Hereticus Tenebrae might be averted. Nothing else matters. He will even go as far as to recruit acolytes of his own to foil one of his Inquisitors' plans. In addition to his political skills, Zerbe is a powerful psyker, although this fact is not generally known within the cabal. Zerbe keeps his psychic talents in reserve should he be forced to vanquish a particularly dangerous foe personally.

Witch Finder Rykehuss, Ordo Hereticus

Rykehuss is the terror of witches, a man for whom everyone is guilty of something and the only punishment is death. To him the Calixis Sector is a cesspit where witches breed like flies and the honest, pious Imperial citizens are besieged by sin on all sides. Rykehuss's bouts of volcanic anger and impassioned sermonising are well known at the Bastion Serpentis, and he constantly exhorts his fellow Inquisitors to descend on all the sinners to purify them with righteous flame or condemn them to damnation. Rykehuss wears ornate, heavily customised armour gifted to him by the Adeptus Mechanicus after he sought out a witch cult on a forge world in a nearby sector, and he is an expert with a veritable armoury of weapons.

The witch finder's methods are simple. He descends on a particular city, sees depravity everywhere and immediately sets up a Court of Ordeals where pious citizens bring accused neighbours and family members to be tried. When Rykehuss hears of a particularly foul heresy being perpetrated somewhere nearby, he gathers all the torch-wielding backup he can and marches there, trusting in his martial skill to help him put the sinners to death personally. Some who witness Rykehuss's terrors consider him a hero, others a butcher, and both are right. Many innocents have died at Rykehuss's hands but so have many rogue psykers and cultists. Rykehuss, however, is not as crude a man as his methods would suggest. He knows that he cannot kill all the sinners, but his bombastic and terrifying style ensures that Imperial citizens are constantly reminded that there are threats in their midst and bigger threats waiting to punish them for their weaknesses. Innocent deaths, while regrettable, are a small price to pay for Rykehuss to spread the fear that helps suppress the activities of witches—and in any case, the Emperor sorts them all out in the end. Rykehuss is obsessed with the notion that it is the widespread activity of witches in the sector that is bringing on the doom of the Hereticus Tenebrae.

Daemonhunter Ahmazzi, Ordo Malleus

Ahmazzi is the Spectarians' sole Ordo Malleus Inquisitor. He is a grizzled and ancient veteran, close on three hundred years old, whose career has taken him from Titan to the very edges of the Imperium, hunting down Daemons and the corrupt humans who summon them. Now all but decrepit, he has come to the Calixis Sector to, as he puts it, "bask in the radiance of the Tyrant Star and learn its secrets".

A long career has left Ahmazzi intensely cynical and pessimistic. He has come to believe that the Emperor is dead, Chaos cannot be stopped and the human race is doomed. The Imperium, Ahmazzi believes, is a grotesque symptom of the fact that the human race is currently living through its inevitable and drawn-out extinction. He has dabbled with Radicalism in his career, even being declared Excommunicate by Puritan colleagues for seeking out Daemonic knowledge but no one in the cabal other than Zerbe knows this. Ahmazzi has no friends and does not particularly care what people think of him, angrily refusing to tell any stories of his astonishing Daemonhunting career, although an acolyte who displays great courage in the face of a Daemonic foe might win Ahmazzi's grudging respect. Ahmazzi was a martially minded Inquisitor in his prime and secretly would love nothing better than to mount up on his mobile war pulpit, don his armour and take up his Daemonhammer to ride into battle once more against a horde of Daemonic foes. He believes that the Tyrant Star maybe the harbinger of man's inevitable doom and he wants to be at ground zero to witness the great day when it happens.

Inquisitor Astrid Skane, Ordo Hereticus

A formidable woman, Inquisitor Skane exudes the rough authority of a seasoned arbitrator officer. Tough and resourceful, she is one of the most active of the cabal's Inquisitors, happy to get her hands dirty rooting out corruption. Skane is a striking woman with a stern, strong face who wears her hair regulation short. She habitually dresses much as she did when she served as an arbitrator on Scintilla, in a black uniform and body armour, and is rarely seen without her shock maul and shotgun. Skane respects those who respect her, treats her more skilled acolytes as equals and has little time for pomp and appearances.

Skane follows the Recongregators' creed, which states that the Imperium must be reformed radically to reduce the suffering of its people and that the Inquisition is the only body with the authority and skill to reform it. Skane believes that the Imperium's woes are caused by corruption among its ruling classes. She developed a particular hatred for corrupt nobles whilst serving as an arbitrator and has carried that through to her work as an Inquisitor. Her operations, therefore, target corruption among the nobility and the Adepta, including the Adeptus Arbites she once served. She dreams of a future where the Imperium is turned upside-down and justice is the rule rather than the exception, but she realises that she will not live to see it. She fights for what justice she can and hopes that others will follow her to carry on the battle. Skane is convinced that the Tyrant Star can only be appearing due to some form of summons. She believes there is a powerful cult at work in the sector, employing sorcery to call the Tyrant Star down on mankind. That is a cult she would very much like to personally root out.

Inquisitor Van Vuygens, Ordo Xenos

Rarely seen at the Bastion Serpentis, Van Vuygens represents the Ordo Xenos in the conclave. He is a quietly spoken man who is more of a scholar than a warrior and, though he can certainly look after himself if required, he sees more value in dissecting and studying xenos than exterminating them. Slender, bespectacled and dressed in an archivist's robes, Van Vuygens does not cut as imposing a figure as some of the cabal's more dramatic characters, but he has the intellect and strength of will to delve into the mindset of the xenos and still retain his humanity. He leaves the human and Daemonic threats to the other Inquisitors, focusing instead on helping provide the Imperium with its chief weapon against the alien: an understanding of what the aliens want and what they will do to get it. Though Van Vuygens seeks knowledge about aliens, he does not trust them and would never fraternise with them. He has not studied a single alien species that does not pose some threat towards the human race.

A disciple of the legendary Inquisitor Kryptmann himself, Van Vuygens is in the Calixis Sector to watch for the signs of a Tyranid hive fleet invasion from beyond the edge of charted space. Kryptmann has theorised that the earlier Tyranid invasions of Imperial space have been testing the Imperium's defences and that the next invasion will come from an unexpected quarter. Van Vuygens has seen nothing that proves that a Tyranid invasion is impending but there are certainly plenty of other signs of alien influence among the worlds of the Calixis Sector, from ancient cyclopean ruins to disturbing similarities between the mythological cycles of primitive worlds. Van Vuygens is currently piecing together a picture of the alien civilisation that once inhabited the very edge of the Calixis Sector's space and he does not like what he sees. He, naturally, subscribes to the view that the Tyrant Star is a matter of xenos origin and has grave fears that it is linked with the dreaded Tyranids.

Inquisitor Globus Vaarak, Ordo Hereticus

Severely wounded as an Interrogator while boarding a pirate ship, Vaarak's body is broken, scarred and bloated. Both his legs were amputated and he moves by means of a robust mechanical vehicle with mechanical legs and an inbuilt life-support system. His face is horribly burned and pockmarked, with tubes running from his nostrils and mouth to help him breathe. One arm was also lost and has been replaced with an obvious bionic limb. Vaarak's clothing is a ribbed black bodyglove that barely holds in his enormous girth and which incorporates cooling and regulating devices to keep him alive.

Vaarak is an Amalathian who believes that the Imperium, as grim a place as it is, must survive in its current state if the human race is to continue existing. He therefore seeks out sedition and rebellion in the Calixis Sector, trying to maintain the careful balance of its power groups. Given that he cannot operate in the guise of a normal citizen or adept, Vaarak must conduct most investigations through his acolytes, of whom he has several teams. His methods are subtle and moderate compared to some of the cabal's other Inquisitors, for he would prefer that the Inquisition's hand was not obvious, and encourages his acolytes to avoid open conflict and violence as much as possible. Vaarak has a bleak and self-deprecating sense of humour and is an excellent judge of character. Many of the conclave's next generation of Inquisitors will come from among Vaarak's Interrogators if he remains in favour. He has joined the Spectarians because the Tyrant Star represents a truly destabilising threat to Imperial society.

Lady Olianthe Rathbone

Lady Olianthe claims membership of none of the three great Ordos. She originated among the Calixis Sector's nobility and still favours magnificent ballgowns and elaborate wigs, which would not look out of place in the ballroom of some governor's palace. Beneath the finery, her piercing, ice-cold grey eyes betray a keen and ruthless intelligence. Some say she was originally an Interrogator in the employ of Lord Inquisitor Zerbe but there is never any obvious familiarity shown between them. Lady Olianthe is very difficult to know and impossible to befriend, and manages to suggest that everyone around her is her inferior without actually stating it out loud.

Secretly a deep-seated Radical, Lady Olianthe is an Istvaanian and believes that for the Imperium to become stronger, it must be exposed to war and catastrophe. The Calixis Sector, to her way of thinking, is bloated and irredeemable, and desperately needs a major cataclysm to weed out its weak and corrupt citizens. While she is not averse to combating particularly horrible threats like Chaos cultists or the mutants she personally despises, Lady Olianthe is also constantly on the lookout for ways to manipulate the power structures of the Calixis Sector towards strife. She intends to do this by subtly coaxing the sector's leading noble houses towards conflict or rebellion. She is willing to pursue this agenda personally, treating her acolytes as little more than intelligence gatherers who have no idea of her destructive ambitions. The Tyrant Star would be a wonderful tool for her purposes.

Inquisitor Soldevan, Ordo Hereticus

A handsome man with skin the colour of ebony and a taste in imposing military dress uniforms that only enhance his air of strength and authority. Soldevan was originally an Interrogator in the employ of Witch Finder Rykehuss but never believed in his master's extreme methods, and quickly broke with Rykehuss after attaining the Inquisitorial Seal. Soldevan believes that knowledge, not wanton destruction, is the key to protecting humanity from the threats it faces.

Soldevan's beliefs run deeper than he would ever admit. He believes that the warp is an immense source of power and that an Inquisitor is a man of sufficient intelligence and willpower to harness it. Soldevan wants to open up a pathway to the warp and seek out the consciousnesses that dwell there hoping to bargain with them for the power he needs to combat the enemies of mankind. Soldevan has got quite close to his goal and has several forbidden tomes in his possession that, with the right sacrifices and rituals, will summon forth powerful Daemons for him to negotiate with. He is always seeking more knowledge or artefacts of the warp, either captured during the cabal's operations or purchased at extortionate prices from unscrupulous dealers in forbidden relics. Somewhere during this process Soldevan has lost his sanity and replaced it with absolute conviction that the warp holds the secrets of humanity's survival. He believes that the Tyrant Star represents a vital conduit to secrets of the warp.

Inquisitor Vownus Kaede, Ordo Hereticus (Xenos)

Inquisitor Vownus Kaede is a noted scholar, philosopher and an optimist. He is also a skilled swordsman, irreverent scoundrel and a self-righteous reprobate. Named after the rogue hero of Catuldynus's epic verse allegory *The Once-Pure Hive*, Kaede has spent most of his life living up to his namesake's legacy. Originating somewhere, "East of Sol and West of Macragge", Kaede signed on with a free captain at a young age and has never looked back. The details of his elevation to Inquisitor status are hazy and change every time he tells the story. The only point that remains consistent is that he was once a member of the Ordo Xenos, before finding his true calling as a Witch Hunter. Regardless of his chequered past, Inquisitor Kaede has been a respected member of the cabal for over a decade.

Though he is nominally of Puritan leanings, Kaede is a skilled psyker who fanatically believes in the psychic future of the human race and is willing to casually commit almost any atrocity in order to safeguard it. He and the martially inclined acolyte bands he employs spend a great deal of time travelling between Calixis's subsectors chasing down rumours of hidden witches. Kaede absolutely detests Rykehuss's methods and takes a great deal of pleasure in spiriting promising young psykers out from under the Witch Finder's pogroms. Inquisitor Kaede appears exactly the way Imperium citizens picture a Witch Hunter. From his wide-brimmed hat, to his Inferno Pistol, to the ancient short-bladed force sword named "Slight Jest" that he bears at his side, there is no mistaking his appearance and what it implies, which is exactly what Kaede wishes. To Kaede, the Tyrant Star prophecy is a delicious mystery to be unlocked.

Inquisitor Al-Subaai, Ordo Xenos

Recently elevated to Inquisitor status after serving as an Interrogator in the service of Inquisitor Van Vuygens. While Van Vuygens combs the very edge of Imperial space for alien civilisations, Al-Subaai's role is to search for alien influence in the populated worlds of the sector. Probably the youngest Inquisitor in the cabal, Al-Subaai is deeply pious, and he looks it, usually attending gatherings in a monastic habit worn over sturdy, practical carapace armour.

Al-Subaai believes that everything in the galaxy is connected and that the various alien species and their depredations are part of a larger web of hostility generated by the galaxy. The galaxy, Al-Subaai believes, is reacting to human occupation like a body reacting to a disease. To him, aliens (as well as all creatures of the warp) are symptoms of the galaxy's enmity towards mankind. Al-Subaai therefore advocates the destruction of all aliens, especially those who influence humans. He considers his remit to cover not only alien-influenced cults and corruption, but also the trafficking in alien creatures and their technology. Anyone dealing with aliens or their artefacts is an enemy of humanity and nothing gives Al-Subaai greater satisfaction than to hunt them down and subject them to whatever punishment the cabal decrees. To Al-Subaai, the Propheticum Hereticus Tenebrae is the handiwork of alien manipulation.

Other Sector Worlds

There are many worlds within the Calixis Sector. From the stretches of the Golgenna Reach to the dim coldness of the Hazeroth Abyss, there are many types of planet inhabited by man. Some, such as the Hives of Fenksworld, are well known to the Imperium, whilst others are all but lost, faded from Administratum maps or isolated by warp storms. All have the potential to harbour miscreants, heretics and other, darker forces. Unlike many folk in the 41st Millennium, acolytes may well find themselves ranging far and wide across the sector in the course of their duties.

41 Pry

Pry is a gas giant, with a dingy Imperial station in orbit, designated 41 Pry. The station is a famous supply point and a seat of illegal activity. Ghostfire pollen is available here, at a price, if you know who to talk to. If you don't, such questions will get you killed rather swiftly.

88 Tanstar

A Navy depot on an outlying colony world (seventy eight million population).

Acreage

A feudal world with sub-Imperial tech-levels, marked out across its continents in feudal demesnes ruled by despot warlords.

Barsapine

Small Imperial hive world (population two billion) in the Adrantis Nebula. Primary exports: cogitation cells and pottery.

Cloister

This inhospitable world is the site of a mendicant order whose fraters occupy a vast bastion. The bastion is said to have been built by the Black Templars, during Angevin's Crusade. Woe betide any inhabitants if the Templars return to claim their property.

Dreah

This agri-world is noted the sector over for its grey skies, soil, plants and waters. Dreahans are notoriously dull, with pallid, greyish flesh and a sullen look to their faces. Traders are able to make large sums selling exotic dyes to the Dreahans. More unsavoury merchants have found a ripe market for hallucinogenic drugs, as Dreahans are particularly fond of the bright colours such substances make them see. The planetary governor is attempting to crack down on this trade, with little success.

Drusus Shrine World

Also known as Sentinel, this planet stands at the rimward limits of the sector and is dedicated as a holy shrine world to Saint Drusus. A barren world, dominated by bleak dust bowls and salt-deserts, it supports, thanks to the Chartist ships, a population of pilgrims who maintain the shrine: a five thousand metre tall structure of ouslite and rockcrete located in the southern hemisphere. The shrine is the only significant artificial structure on the planet. There, high up in the draughty reaches of weathered stone, burns the eternal flame of Drusus, ministered to by the flocks of pilgrims, most of whom come to Sentinel to die. The standard of living is low on this bleak world and there is no system of government or order apart from the rubrics of the Imperial Creed. Outside the shrine—"beyond the shadow" as local slang has it—life is a fringe existence, to say the least. Endless, waterless deserts of dust and calcification stretch out to the very edges of the planet. Jettison collectors and scavengers may be found in the vast salt-licks, but they are transient. A well-supplied man might last twenty days in the barrens of this harsh world.

However, Sentinel is a world that draws visitors and explorers. Foremost are the pilgrims, those wishing to abase themselves at the foot of Drusus's shrine. For many, this is an act of suicide. Voyaging to the shrine world is vastly expensive and passage is hard to procure. Even if you get there, there is no guarantee of a return ticket. The licks beneath the shrine are littered with desiccated bones and mummified remains, sometimes in a thick carpet.

It is said that in the outer bowls of Sentinel, a man may find visions and answers. This rumour has undoubtedly arisen from the mind-altering effect of the emptiness and the heat. Even so, pilgrims come to the shrine and then head off, on foot, into the bleakness, in search of illumination. Any short ride by land car or flier from the shrine will reveal tortured bones lying in heaps at the end of long footprint trails that the wind has never erased. "Walking into silence" is what the shrine priests call this behaviour. Rumours suggest that, at the point of death, the silence speaks back to the true of heart.

Other rumours make mention of a xenos race living on the shrine world. Certainly there are several species of lustrous bug and beetle that thrive in the desert, drinking dew off their armoured carapaces every dawn. The rumours talk of an ancient, insectoid race called the Whisperers, which lives, shelters and breeds in deep tunnels under the dry earth. Far from being an animalistic species, the Whisperers—if the insane rantings of a few, surviving silence walkers can be trusted—are a complex and ancient culture, tunnelling under the crust of Sentinel and only occasionally crawling to the surface. The Whisperers—so named because of the brushing sounds their giant wing cases make—are said to hold great truths and secrets about the cosmos, which may be learned by the aware and the capable. No relic or evidence of the Whisperers has ever been found.

DUSK

The feral world of Dusk is noted for the extreme hostility of its native creatures. "A walk on Dusk" has become a byword for horrible and painful death amongst certain Rogue Traders and Chartist captains.

ENDRITE

The degenerate medieval populace of this place worship the ruined hulk of an Imperial battlecruiser. It is not clear when this vessel crashed upon the planet, or what technological level its people were before the disaster.

FEDRID

The thick forests of this feral world are so dense and so teeming with dangerous carnivores that access is forbidden without a licence. Fedrid is a favourite of game hunters and those individuals procuring animals for the Imperial arenas.

FENKSWORLD

A small, grimy hive world to the coreward of the sector and the location of a substation depot of the Battlefleet Calixis. It is suggested that many cults and other "secret parties" test their influence on the Fenksworld population before moving on to dominant worlds like Scintilla and Malfi. Cults and cult activity certainly fester here. Fenksworld's most notable feature is its Library of Knowing, one of the sector's most comprehensive sources of data outside the Prol system. The Library of Knowing's most significant attribute is that it is run under the ordination of the planetary governor and exists outside general Imperial jurisdiction. The Calixian Conclave has made several (subtle) attempts to close the Fenksworld library down, due to its esoteric contents. The library remains a "family-run" enterprise, overseen by the planetary governor's family, the mercurial House Vaahkon.

GANF MAGNA

Despite many purge efforts, this forested wilderness retains several pockets of Ork infestation, left over from the last invasion. They exist as small, tribal units of monsters in the dense forests. The Imperial settlers, mainly frontier farmers, wage a constant war with them.

GRANGOLD

A dead world on which stands—or, more appropriately, survives—a single temple to Saint Drusus, despite the ferocious elemental squall. The temple is staffed by two ancient dreadnoughts of the Iron Hands Chapter. The hazardous environment and volatile staff make this a dangerous shrine to approach, although it is said that "on Grangold, the saint answers all questions".

HEED

A dead world and a battle site of Angevin's Crusade. Renowned for the noxious firestorms that pepper its surface.

KLYBO

An extinct world, where the ruins of a lost colony poke from the shifting sands. Klybo's harsh environment spurned all efforts to settle it. The sector fleet maintains a waystation on a moon in close orbit.

Klybo has become proverbial over the years, indicating a worthless or doomed effort. "It all went like Klybo" or "I tried my best, but I had a day on Klybo" are common sector euphemisms.

Klybo attracts prospectors and tech-archaeologists. It is rumoured that fabulous STC finds are hidden on Klybo, remnants of the colonial attempts to settle the world. Several myths report "walking monsters", akin to Ambulon, still striding the wastelands. No form of conclusive data has yet been obtained.

LANDUNDER

The limp, untrustworthy planetary crust of Landunder floats freely on a deep chemical ocean. The colonies here are built to cling underneath the planetary crust in suspension. There are eight "hanging" undercities, containing almost a billion inhabitants, with trade deriving from ocean-depth mining and chemical treatment (processing plants that exploit the curious mix of oceanic chemicals).

THE LATHES

A trio of quasi-worlds at the hem of the Malfian subsector, the Lathes are the foremost forge worlds of the sector, rivalling Scintilla's Gunmetal City for weapons manufacture. The three planetoids, Het, Hesh and Hadd, enjoy an irregular orbit around their star, intersecting to produce events of hyper-gravity. At such times, industry goes into frantic production, as the commingled gravitational urges of the passing planetoids allow for the specialist smelting of rare metals and alloys. Lathe-world blades are famed throughout the Calixis Sector for their unbreakable character. Gravitational duress also accounts for the dense, armour-piercing quality of Lathe-world ammunition. These so-called "body-blowers" are expensive and rare, and often purchased singly. The damage they can do to flesh is astonishing. Blades produced under gravitic circumstances on the Lathes are considered holy and special. Lord Hax owns a rapier of Lathe origin, presented to him by Magus Luol Rho, emissary of the Lathes at the court of Scintilla. It is rumoured that King Skull's sword is also an unbreakable tongue of Lathe manufacture.

The workforce of the Lathes is surprisingly small but all those born and bred on those oddly tangling planetoids are meaty, squat and powerful in their demeanour, and built with heavy bones and mounds of flesh.

The Lathes are held in the fealty of the Mechanicus of Mars, and are a secretive, closed environment. Visits require special permits and authority, and the Lathes are protected by a fraternity of warrior priests, who can call upon the power of Titans if the circumstances demand.

LEHYDE TEN

A pleasant, potentially arable world, which is generally unpopulated. Angevin's annexation surveys identified Lehyde Ten as a colonial target, but all attempts to land terra-former mechanisms on the world have resulted in failure. The landscape is

littered with the dug-in, dormant hulks of Imperial land-makers. No one can explain the planet's resistance to development.

A small Imperial observatory station survives here, recording data from the Adranti Nebula. The crew turnover is alarming: a year or two on the world will, inexplicably, drive a man insane.

LUGGNUM

A harsh and inhospitable mining colony with a small settlement called Lugg City which exports ores.

MALFI

This hive world, eight hundred days standard from Scintilla, is the main population and manufacturing focal of the rimward territories of the sector. Malfi is a semitropical, gloomy world of overbuilt hives and habitation ledges. Its population approaches that of Scintilla and it subsists on its engineering and metalwork industries. The population of Malfi has a grudge: they believe that Malfi should be the sector capital world and venomously protest the supremacy of Scintilla.

Certainly, with its super-continental hives and eradication of natural landscape, Malfi resembles a Solar hiveworld far more than any of the other worlds in the sector, and its claim for capital eminence seems reasonable. However, politics and demographics are fickle mistresses. Scintilla is better placed to provide a centre of effective governance for the sector. Early regimes, following the Lord Angevin's campaign, made their headquarters on Malfi but the province has spread out since then. Despite its efforts, Malfi remains a border world, colossal in both its consumption and its production. It satisfies itself in commanding the Malfian subsector, ruling the territories rimward and spinward of Scintilla. The subsector governor, Jendrous Kaffiq, answers only to Lord Sector Hax himself. Malfi is a seat of the Administratum and several chief banking houses. Its nominal ruler is the Eminence Glydus Matriarch.

Malfi is—and this may be the very reason that the sector rulers passed over it—a place of the most infernal intrigue. It is impossible to count the courtly factions vying for power and the ear of the Matriarch. The central palace is a labyrinth of chambers and anterooms, a warren that, so proverbs say, many have entered and subsequently died trying to find a way out again. Guides may be procured to steer a visiting party through the warren of Malfi's central palace: they cannot be trusted. Every act and motion of Malfian life is about dissemblance and intrigue. Hire the wrong guide and you may be damned to years of squabbling diplomacy and sudden duels. It is said of the Malfian palace that "life has a thousand separate doors" and this is no exaggeration. Entering Malfian society, one enters a world of complexity and deceit. Few emerge alive.

The Calixian Conclave, which supports a district office on Malfi, regards the world as a particular hotbed of dissent and heresy. Apart from the many political factions and underground groups (many sponsored or run by Malfian noble houses) that support and promote Malfi's usurpation of the capital world role (it is worth noting that three times in the last two centuries, Malfian dissenters have almost triggered open civil war with Scintilla), the excessively secretive and disingenuous society of the Malfian hives propagates many sects and cults. These groups find it ridiculously simple to conceal themselves within Malfi's layered, elaborate culture of falsehood and deceit. They also find the hive citizenry to be a fertile source of amenable, pliable recruits. In recent years, the Conclave has become aware of a particularly active sect, whose reach is now spreading beyond Malfi.

THE MASQUED

This "cult", which has strong connections to an alarming number of noble houses, is believed to have grown directly out of Malfi's culture of intrigue. Its original architects took the concepts of falsehood and subterfuge to their limits and arrived at the cult's guiding tenet: that nothing is what it seems. By extension, human life and the Imperium is a deceit, and Chaos itself is the truth. The Masqued believe that the "civilised Imperium" wears a mask of refinement and devoted duty, beneath which lies man's natural affinity with the lurid machinations of the warp. They believe that it is simply a matter of time before the mask falls away and mankind's true nature as a Chaotic species is revealed.

The Masqued revel in licentious, debauched behaviour and delight in extremes of falsehood and mendacity. All cult members are anonymous and wear, at their gatherings, grotesque and colourful masks derived from the styles worn at courtly masques and entertainments. The Masqued boasts, in its membership, a shockingly large number of nobles and high-born, for whom the cult is a mere extension of their courtly world; intrigue taken to its natural conclusion. It is likely that many of them have no real concept of the dark truth lurking at the centre of their compact. More a deviant secret society than an actual cult, the Masqued have avoided censure for a number of reasons: they have connections and influence, they are almost impossible to identify and target; and they offer no palpable threat as yet. The Masqued do not seem to be striving to achieve anything: their activities are more a broad excuse for licentious, orgiastic behaviour. Attempts made by the Calixian Conclave, in the most part abortive or unsuccessful, to infiltrate the order have revealed that the cult seems content to meet and worship, waiting for "the inevitable" to happen. They seem to show no desire or intent to bring about a chaotic revolution, as they regard it as a preordained fact. It is known that Caidin himself regards the Masqued as a "dilettante order", a grouping of deviants rather than an active threat, and therefore not a priority target. However, given the potential membership of the cult, and the wealth, resource and influence that implies, if the order ever did decide to become more proactive, it would be the richest and most insidious cult in the Segmentum. For this reason, several key figures in the Conclave believe that it should be dug out and sanctioned without delay.

The range of the cult's activity is alarming: suborders and satellite lodges have been noted on Scintilla, Sepheris Secundus, Iocanthos and many other high population worlds in the sector. Traces of it have been found as far away as Cypra Mundi and Eustis Majoris in the Scarus Sector. It goes wherever the noble houses of the Imperium have influence. Some say it has links all the way back to Terra. It is also chilling to reflect that, in the last three decades alone, four high-level operatives, each of unimpeachable character, sent by the Inquisition to infiltrate the cult, have later turned up as bonded members. It is an alluring, seductive order.

ORBEL QUILL

An oddly serene, pastoral world of shepherd flocks and herding where, curiously, no one lives beyond the age of forty years standard. Often thought to be a rumour or a joke, the "death threshold" of Orbel Quill is quite real. Visitors and travellers must beware, as often they are far above the age of forty in sidereal terms. Anyone forty or over is stricken with a terminal decline and dies within thirty-six hours, even visitors who have amassed their years during ship-time. Many speculate that the planet is governed by some deep-seated system that combs out what it perceives to be the elderly. Certain facts are evident: no one has managed to identify what it is that kills the over-forties on Orbel Quill. Whatever it is, it certainly does kill them without exception. Also, xenos ruins in the southern hemisphere of the planet have never been properly explored.

It seems likely that it is no coincidence that Eldar have been regularly sighted in the empty quarters of this planet.

PROL IX

This crowded, reddish-brown world is the current seat of the scholastic order known as the Decatalogues of Prol. This ninth planet of the "Scrivener's Star" is an ancient seat of the Administratum. Each of the nine planets is given over to record keeping, collation, statistical analysis, archiving and the like. Space is running out on Prol IX leading to a vicious schism within the ranks of the Decatalogues. The Centurists wish to move to the forbidden tenth planet within the system, whilst the Pyratics wish to destroy the ancient files stored upon Prol I and raise new temples of information from the ashes of the old. Violent debate and long, impeccably researched discourses are being exchanged between the two factions. These written arguments—some as many as one hundred and six volumes long—are not helping the chronic shortage of space.

SEEDWORLD AFG:218

Believed to be an Eldar holding, whatever the truth, the world is evidently a place of geo-genic experimentation on the part of a xenos species. It is interdicted by a cordon of the Battlefleet Calixis.

SETTLEMENT 228

A new colony (established four hundred years ago), seating eighteen thousand families on a dry, harsh settlement world. Though "cram beans" have proved a reasonably successful export crop, there is great unrest within Settlement 228's plantation farms. The settlement families, all exported from Scintilla, believe they were sold their land rights fraudulently. They claim that the planet is nothing like as viable as they were led to believe from the surveys. There is a strong anti-Imperium groundswell here and a hard-bitten drive towards revolution.

SLEEF

This outworld, close to the Scarus Sector border, is unninhabited. However, it is famous for its sulphurous volcanic vents, through which, it is said, the voice of the warp whispers. It is said the skin of reality is thin there and one might hear the vibration of the immaterium, just out of reach.

SPECTORIS

A waterworld with a thriving Imperial habitat, constructed on top of a submarine peak. With two million population this is the sector's largest exporter of fish and fish-meal product. The "Complete Ocean" of Spectoris is the subject of many legends, with some saying that there are sentient xeno forms of vast size inhabiting the unexplored depths of the world. Others claim that the world-ocean itself is sentient.

THRENOS

Despised by Chartist vessels and Navigators, a satellite relay surrounds this system, blasting Imperial liturgy into the void of space upon all manner of frequencies. No one has travelled to the interior of Threnos's thirteen planets for some millennia, though it is rumoured to be lifeless.

TRANCH

A minor hive world in the Adrantis Nebula, home to a long-lasting and vicious civil war.

VAXANIDE

Situated at the edge of sector territory, Vaxanide is a poorly supplied, desperate world, struggling to enter the "inner circle" of sector planets. It has decent mineral output and considerable exports of meat and fish, but it fights to survive. Its three billion population answers to Lord Vaxanide, scion of House Vaxanide, which has holdings on Scintilla, Malfi and Regulus. The economic degeneracy of Vaxanide results in it being a generally lawless, dangerous frontier world, especially beyond the precincts of the central hive, Vaxanhive. The planet is especially famed for its porcelain, glass and fish products. It is also the site of a shrine to Saint Drusus, where miracles are said to occur. Base rumours say that a hidden city exists in the canyons of the dense equatorial jungles. The city is said to be a mirror of the Lucid Palace, populated by phantoms of the actual Lucid Palace's denizens. All expeditions into the jungle areas have ended in failure, with few members returning alive. Those who survive are usually insane, raving of "grey death" stalking them, or simply ending their lives in a variety of messy ways.

WOE

A death world. Extremely hazardous.

ZILLMAN'S DOMAIN

A low tech level feudal world with a heavy Imperial tithe burden. Existence here is agricultural and frugal. The king owns a lasgun, which makes him king. The Domain is famous for its brutality and medieval mindset and accidental visitors are often burned at the stake as witches for possessing such items as vox-links.

The Domain was "visited" by the Spectral Sun eight years ago.

XII

Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists

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Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists

"It is our destiny to rule the universe just as it is the destiny of the xeno to pave our way."

— Lucretius VII, Inquisitor.

Arrayed against the Acolytes is a galaxy of adversaries, ranging from mortal foes to the most hideous horrors imaginable, each struggling to claw their way out from the warp and visit pain and incalculable suffering on those they encounter. While Dark Heresy is a game of investigation, suspense and fearsome environments, it is also a game set in a universe overwhelmed with conflict and war. Thus, it stands to reason that over the course of a character's career, he will undoubtedly face a veritable army of foes.

Traits

Skills and Talents represent ability and knowledge gained over the course of a character's life. Traits, then, 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 I: Character Creation**, Player Characters acquire certain Traits as a result of their birth world, their destiny as revealed to them by their Imperial Divination, and later as they acquire madness, corruption and potentially mutations. Other characters in the universe of Dark Heresy have Traits too, features inherited from their particular type of species or their environment.

Table 12-1: Traits

Trait	Description
Amorphous	Creature is a blob and slow.
Armour Plating	Increase Armour Points by 2.
Auto-stabilised	Always counts as braced.
Bestial	No need to make Survival Tests in natural habitat, Test Willpower to avoid flight.
Blind	Cannot see.
Brutal Charge	+3 Damage on a Charge.
Burrower	Moves by digging.
Crawler	Calculate movement by half Agility Bonus. No penalties for moving over Difficult Terrain.
Daemonic	Double Toughness Bonus against normal weapons. Immune to disease and poison.
Dark Sight	Can see in darkness.
Incorporeal	Insubstantial and weightless. Cannot be affected by mundane weaponry.
Fear	Forces others to make Fear Tests to avoid Shock and Madness.
Flyer	Can fly and enter any altitude.
From Beyond	Immune to Fear, Pinning, Insanity Points and mind-affecting powers.
Hoverer	Can fly and enter the hover altitude.
Machine	Gains immunities and resistances.
Multiple Arms	Gains extra attack with Multiple Attack Action, +10 Toughness, +10 to Strength Tests involving movement.
Natural Armour	Gains one or more Armour Points to all locations.
Natural Weapons	Unarmed attacks deal 1d10+SB Damage.
Phase	Can switch between incorporeal and corporeal as a Half Action.
Possession	Can take control of another creature.
Quadruped	Movement equals twice the creature's Agility Bonus.
Regeneration	Can Test Toughness to remove 1 Damage.
Size	Determines creature size and benefits.
Sonar Sense	Perceives surroundings flawlessly within 30 metres.
Soul-bound	Bound to a particular group or creatures in exchange for certain benefits.
Stampede	Failed Willpower Test causes creature to flee, trampling anything in its path.
Strange Physiology	Death when Damage equals Wounds.
Stuff of Nightmares	Immune to all but Psychic Powers, force weapons and holy attacks.
Sturdy	+20 bonus to resist Grapple and Takedown.
Toxic	Gains poisonous attack.
Unnatural Characteristic	Increases one Characteristic Bonus.
Unnatural Senses	Perceives surroundings by uncanny means.
Unnatural Speed	Double Agility Bonus for purpose of determining movement.
Warp Instability	Creature must deal Damage if it is damaged or be cast back into the warp.
Warp Weapons	Creature's attacks ignore Armour.

Trait Descriptions

Amorphous

An amorphous creature 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 half their Agility Bonus. Amorphous creatures are often missing senses and so rely on the Unnatural Senses trait to perceive their surroundings.

Armour Plating

The creature is encased in armour plating, increasing its Armour Points by 2 to all locations.

Auto-stabilised

The creature always counts as braced when firing heavy weapons and may fire on semi- or full-automatic as a Half Action.

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 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 take a –30 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests and most other Tests that ordinarily involve or are benefited by vision.

Brutal Charge

A creature with this Trait deals an extra 3 points of Damage when it charges in the same Round.

Burrower

A creature with this Trait can move through solid objects by burrowing through them. This Trait always includes a number to indicate speed. Such creatures can burrow through soil, rock, sand and so on, and 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 move for a creature with this Trait is half its Agility Bonus, but it does not take penalties for moving over Difficult Terrain.

Daemonic

Daemonic creatures are creatures of the warp, but can manifest in realspace either through sheer strength of will, hunger or occult rituals. Creatures with this Trait double their Toughness Bonus against all Damage, except for Damage inflicted by force weapons, Psychic Powers, holy attacks or other creatures with this Trait. Daemonic creatures are also immune to poison and disease.

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.

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 Concealment Tests when hiding inside something. If it so wishes, it may become completely silent, automatically passing any Silent Move Tests that it is required to make.

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 Geller field of a spaceship. Creatures with this Trait cannot pass through such a field.

Fear (variable)

A creature with this Trait has an unnerving appearance. Its Fear Rating (1–4) reflects just how awful the creature is to behold. The higher the Fear Rating the harder it is for others to resist going insane from the encounter, as shown on the following chart.

Fear Rating	Description	Penalty
1	Disturbing	0
2	Frightening	-10
3	Horrifying	-20
4	Terrifying	-30

When a character encounters a creature with this Trait, he 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: The Shock Table** on **page 233**, adding

Threat Rating

All the creatures and Dramatis Personae in Dark Heresy have a threat rating in their description based on the classifications used by the Ordos Calixis. The threat rating is divided into two; the first part of which designates the nature of the threat posed, and the second being the degree of threat posed to the Imperium.

Threat Designation

Hereticus: The threat comes from within humanity, such as heretical thought, criminality, rebellion, rogue mutants, witches and the like.

Xenos: The threat comes from a species other than mankind; be it the alien itself or a product of the alien's blasphemous nature, influence or technology.

Malleus: The threat comes from the warp, and is either a being born of that infernal realm or is infused by its power.

Obscuro: The nature of the threat is either unknown, resists analysis or it falls outside the normal categories of danger. This threat classification is also in rare circumstances applied to forbidden dangers of mankind's own forgotten antiquity.

Grade of Threat

Minima: In small numbers the threat is minimal and only likely to affect isolated or weak individuals. Still potentially dangerous to the unprepared or inexperienced Imperial servant.

Minoris: In numbers the threat can pose a severe threat to those who confront it. However, unless encountered in large numbers or allied to greater forces, it is unlikely to pose a threat to the Imperium's control over a particular world or the local dominion of the God Emperor.

Majoris: Constitutes a considerable physical or moral threat to a civilian population, hazardous to Imperial agents and in large numbers the threat would require specialised or mass forces to neutralise. Containment of such threats, especially the prevention of widespread knowledge or contact with them by the civilian population, is considered crucial.

Extremis: The threat poses a lethal threat to those who encounter it and is by its very nature or power enough to require the most powerful of responses. Such threats endanger the safety of whole worlds if left unchecked, and, if not locally confined, can have wider implications for the dominion of the God Emperor.

Terminus: The level of threat posed is such that almost any deployment of forces to combat it is likely to result in serious loss. Such a threat can only be eliminated with extreme prejudice, and if widespread, entrenched or accelerating in severity, then the consideration must be given to the use of the most exceptional measures.

+10 to the roll for every degree of failure by which the Willpower Test failed. The results of this roll have variable effects, but generally leave the character a gibbering mess. For more details on the effects of Fear and Insanity, see **Chapter VIII: The Game Master**.

Flyer

A creature with this Trait has the natural ability to fly, whether with broad leathery wings, strange warp energies or inflatable gas sacs. This Trait always includes a number to indicate at what speeds it moves when it flies. For more details on flying, see **Chapter VII: 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 mind.

Hoverer

Creatures with this Trait have a limited capability for flight, flying no higher than two metres. As with the Flyer trait, this Trait always includes a number to indicate speed. For more details on flying, see **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**.

Machine

A creature with the Machine trait is fashioned from inorganic materials and is generally more rigorous than fleshy folks. Machines do not breathe, are immune to the effects of a vacuum, extremes of cold and any mind-influencing psychic effect. Their Armour Points apply towards fire Damage. Machines are also resilient to injury, having 1 to 5 Armour Points for each location. This number is indicated next to the Trait.

Multiple Arms

This creature has more than one pair of arms. It increases its Toughness Characteristic by +10 and gains a +10 bonus on Strength Tests involving movement such as Climb and Swim. Finally, the creature may use the Multiple Attack Action to gain two attacks on its Turn.

Natural Armour

This creature has a naturally tough hide or an exoskeleton, affording it some protection against attacks. This Trait always includes a numeric value to indicate how many Armour Points the creature gains to all locations.

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, you hack off its limbs! Natural weapons always count as Primitive.

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 Geller field or a void shield.

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 "ware" 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 degrees of success over the other—this is cumulative over several Rounds. If the entity wins, it successfully possesses its victim. If its 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.

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 his Strength and Toughness Characteristics by 10 and gains 1d10 Wounds. The victim uses the possessing entity's Intelligence, Perception, Willpower and Fellowship, and uses the entity's Psy Rating and Psychic 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 a Daemon, the victim has a good chance of becoming immediately mutated and likely to become further mutated the longer the possession continues.

Surviving Possession

Should the victim survive and the entity is cast out by exorcism or some other means, then the ordeal reduces the character's Toughness and Willpower Characteristics by 2d10 permanently. In addition, the victim gains 1d10 Insanity Points.

Quadruped

Quadrupeds are much quicker over a distance than their bipedal counterparts. To calculate their movement, double their Agility Bonus. This Trait is intended to cover creatures with hind legs and forepaws. Creatures with more than four legs may gain this Trait but they increase the Agility Bonus by 1 multiplier for every extra set of legs (six legs equals AB×3, eight legs AB×4 and so on).

Regeneration

Creatures with this Trait heal very quickly. Each Round, at the start of its Turn, the creature Tests Toughness to remove 1 point of Damage. It loses this Trait when slain.

Size

Trait Groups: Minuscule, Puny, Scrawny, Hulking, Enormous, Massive

Creatures come in one of seven different size categories, as shown on the following chart. Size affects movement and how easy or hard it is to strike that creature in combat. (When calculating movement, apply the size modifier first, and then other modifiers from other Traits or Talents.) For the purposes of comparison, a human is an average-sized creature.

Table 12–2: Creature Size Modifiers

Size	Modifier	Concealment	Base Movement
Minuscule	–30	+30	AB–3
Puny	–20	+20	AB–2
Scrawny	–10	+10	AB–1
Average	0	0	AB
Hulking	+10	–10	AB+1
Enormous	+20	–20	AB+2
Massive	+30	–30	AB+3

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 range, and that succeed on a Difficult (–10) Awareness Test, may detect the curious keening.

Soul-bound

The soul of this creature is bound to a higher purpose 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 d10 when forced to roll on **Table 6-3: Perils of the Warp** on **page 163**, discarding whichever one he chooses to get a more favourable result.

Upon becoming soul-bound, a character must choose one of the following effects: 1d10 Insanity Points, the permanent loss of sight, the permanent loss of 1d10 from one Characteristic or a random mutation (only if soul-bound to the Ruinous Powers).

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 is escaped or 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.

Strange Physiology

A creature with this Trait has an unusual, alien, or altogether bizarre anatomy. All hits count as Body hits and death results when Damage equals or exceeds the creature's Wounds.

The Stuff of Nightmares

Some warp entities are so terribly powerful that their 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, Blood Loss, Stunning and any Critical result other than one that would destroy them outright, unless caused by a Psychic Power, force weapon or holy attack.

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.

Toxic

A creature with this Trait is poisonous. The toxins might be delivered through the creature's attacks, in which case a target hit by its natural weapons must make a Toughness Test. The toxins might instead be delivered by contact with the creature's skin or by inhaling its stench, in which case a Toughness Test must be made upon coming into contact or proximity. A failed Toughness Test indicates that the victim has been poisoned. A typical poison deals 1d10 points of Damage, ignoring Armour Points. Variations, if present, are included in the creature's description.

Unnatural Characteristic

One or more of the creature's Characteristics is unnatural. Each time this Trait is gained, select a Characteristic and double its bonus. For example, *a creature with a Strength of 41 normally has a 4 Strength Bonus. With this Trait, its Strength Bonus increases to 8.*

The Trait may be gained multiple times. Each time, you may select a new Characteristic or one chosen previously. Each time

you apply this Trait to the same Characteristic, the Bonus multiplier increases by 1. For example, *one selection multiplies the Characteristic Bonus by ×2, two selections by ×3, and three selections ×4. Note that this Trait does not modify the creature's movement.*

During Opposed Characteristic Tests, on a success the bonus multiplier is added to the degree of success. For example, *Gybalt (S32) is trying to break free of the grip of a Daemon (S35, Unnatural Strength (×2)). This is an Opposed Strength Test with Gybalt rolling 12 (2 degrees of success) versus the Daemon's roll of 15 (2 degrees of success plus 2 from the Unnatural Strength, a total of 4 degrees of success). Gybalt fails to shake off the Daemon.*

Unnatural Senses

The creature can perceive its surroundings using senses other than sight or hearing, using special organs, fine hairs or some other disturbing quality to make itself aware of what's around it. This Trait always includes a range, usually 15 metres.

Unnatural Speed

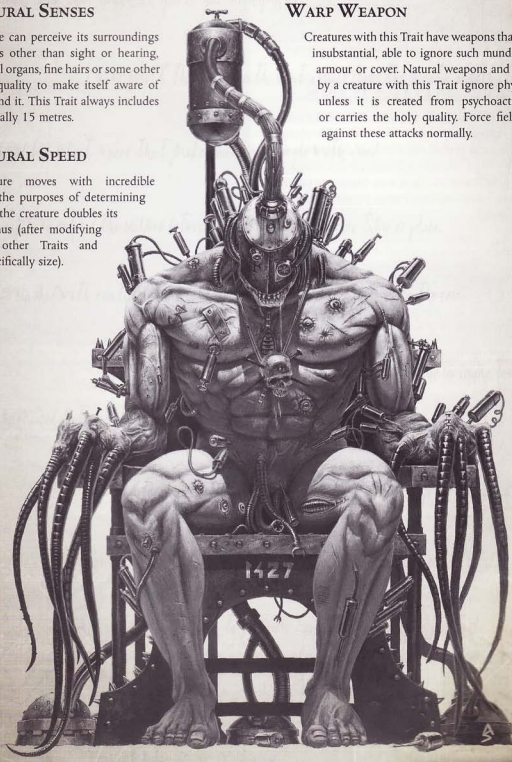
The creature moves with incredible speed. For the purposes of determining movement, the creature doubles its Agility Bonus (after modifying AB from other Traits and factors, specifically size).

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 1 Damage for failure, plus 1 Damage for each degree of failure. If this would deal Damage equal to or in excess of the creature's Wounds, it is cast back into the warp.

Warp Weapon

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 carries the holy quality. Force fields still work against these attacks normally.



Mutations

One of the most pervasive signs of corruption in the Imperium is the manifestation of mutations. These subtle, or not-so-subtle, changes in the flesh can result from exposure to toxic pollutants, alien biospheres, genetic engineering, radiation and other hazards, while others might result from exposure to the warp, Daemonic possession and other perils of the universe. The level of tolerance for mutants varies planet to planet. Subtle or cosmetic changes are accepted, and such beings are regarded as abhumans or subs, who in some worlds form an oppressed and exploited underclass. Truly horrific mutants are purged on sight wherever they are found.

Gaining Mutations

Characters, creatures and so on, acquire mutations in a variety of ways, but the most common cause is through physical corruption. Warped environments, chemicals, illegal drugs and so on, can all result in mutation and there are few safeguards to prevent a mutation once it takes root. Mutations function as Traits, meaning that characters cannot purchase them with Experience Points.

Mutation

Whenever a mutation occurs, roll either for a Minor Mutation on **Table 12-3: Minor Mutations,** or Major Mutations on **Table 12-4: Major Mutations** to discover what type of mutation is gained. Always re-roll duplicate results.

Table 12-3: Minor Mutations

Roll D100	Effect
01–20	**Grotesque:** The mutant is either badly deformed, scarred or bestial, marking it as accursed and impure, Fellowship Tests with 'normals' are made at –20, but the mutant has a +10 bonus to Intimidate Tests.
21–30	**Tough Hide:** The mutant has 1 AP worth of Natural Armour thanks to dense skin and scar tissue.
31–40	**Misshapen:** The mutant's spine and/or limbs are horribly twisted, giving it a penalty of –1d10 to its Agility.
41–50	**Feels No Pain:** The mutant cares little for injury or harm and gains +1 Wound.
51–60	**Brute:** The mutant is physically powerful with deformed masses of muscle. Apply +10 Strength, +10 Toughness and –10 Agility.
61–70	**Nightsider:** The mutant gains the Dark Sight trait, but suffers a –10 penalty to all Actions in bright light or daylight conditions unless its eyes are shielded.
71–80	**Big Eyes:** The mutant's eyes are virtually lidless and watery. Apply +10 Perception and –10 Fellowship.
81–85	**Malformed hands:** Apply –10 to WS and BS and the mutant suffers a –20 penalty to all tasks involving fine physical manipulation.
86–89	**Tox Blood:** The mutant's system is saturated with toxic pollutants and poisonous chemicals. As a result it has a +10 resistance to toxins and poisons, however it suffers a –1d10 penalty to its Intelligence and Fellowship.
90–99	**Wyrdling:** The mutant has Minor Psychic Powers that it has so far been able to conceal. The mutant has a Psy Rating of 1. (See **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**).
100	Roll on **Table 12-4: Major Mutations**.

Table 12-4: Major Mutations

Roll D100	Effect
01–25	**Vile Deformity:** The mutant is marked by some terrible deformity that shows the touch of the warp and should not exist in a rational universe. There is no end to the dire forms this might take such as writhing tentacles in place of arms, skinless glistening flesh, re-arranged facial features or thousands of restless eyes studding the body, to name but a few. The mutant gains the Disturbing trait.
26–35	**Aberration:** The mutant has become a weird hybrid of man and animal (or reptile, insect, etc.) Apply +10 Strength, +10 Agility, –1d10 Intelligence, -10 Fellowship and the Sprint talent.
36–40	**Degenerate Mind:** The mutant's mind is warped and inhuman. Apply –1d10 Intelligence, +10 Fellowship, roll 1d10 and apply the following Talents or Trait: **1–3:** Frenzy, **4–7:** Fearless, **8–0:** From Beyond.
41–50	**Ravaged Body:** The mutant's body has been entirely re-made by the warp. Roll 1d5 times on **Table 12-3: Minor Mutations**, re-rolling duplicate rolls. Such mutations, regardless of their nature, still show the obvious taint of Chaos.
51–60	**Clawed/Fanged:** The mutant gains razor claws, a fanged maw, barbed flesh or some other form of Natural Weapon that inflicts 1d10 R or I damage in close combat.
61–65	**Necrophage:** The mutant gains +10 Toughness and the Regeneration trait, but must sustain itself on copious quantities of raw meat or starve.
66–70	**Corrupted Flesh:** Beneath the mutants' skin a blasphemous transformation has taken place, exchanging living organs for writhing creatures and blood for ichorous, maggot-ridden filth. If the mutant suffers Critical Damage, those witnessing it must take a Fear Test at –10.
71–75	**Vile Alacrity:** The mutant is constantly juddering and shaking unnaturally and can move almost faster than sight. They gain the Unnatural Agility (x2) trait and the Sprint talent, with a penalty of –10 to Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill.
76–80	**Hideous Strength:** The mutant gains the Unnatural Strength (x2) trait.
81–85	**Multiple Appendages:** The mutant has sprouted additional functioning limbs in the shape of arms, tentacles or a prehensile tail (or tails). Gain the Ambidextrous and Two-Weapon Wielder talents and +10 bonus on Climb Tests and Grapple attacks.
86–90	**Worm:** The mutant's lower limbs have fused together to form a worm or snake-like tail. They gain the Crawler trait, +5 Wounds and the Disturbing trait.
91–92	**Nightmarish:** So warped and horrific is the mutant's appearance, it can cause enemies to flee in fear. It gains the Frightening trait.
93–94	**Malleable:** The mutant possesses a sickeningly liquid flexibility and is able to distend and flatten its body. Apply +10 Agility and +20 to Climb Tests, and Grappling attacks. They may also fit through spaces only one-quarter its usual body dimensions.
95–96	**Winged:** The mutant's body has warped to accommodate a pair of leathery wings or the like. They gain the Flyer trait.
97–98	**Corpulent:** The mutant's huge and bloated frame gives them +5 Wounds and the Unnatural Toughness (x2) trait. This mutation means that the mutant may not run.
99	**Corrosive Bile:** The mutant may vomit burning bile, flesh-eating grubs or some other horrific substance instead of attacking normally in close combat. The attack uses the mutant's BS, is a Full Action and can be Dodged but not Parried. This attack inflicts 1d10+5 R (or E) Tearing Damage.
00	**Hellspawn:** Saturated with the energies of the warp, the mutant is imbued with Daemonic energies and gains the From Beyond, Frightening and Daemonic Aura traits and a Psy Rating of 2.

Dramatis Personae

Most adversaries that Acolytes face are of the mundane sorts, being hardened thugs, twisted mutants, soldiers and political rivals. The following entries describe some common foes that the Player Characters are likely to encounter as they tear back the grim facade and stare deep into the abyss of corruption. Do note that weapons, armour and gear are typical for these characters, but are not necessarily consistent for all such characters. Modify an entry's gear to suit your needs. Also note that in the instance of melee weapon Damage, SB has already been factored in.

Arbitrator

Arbitrator

The Adeptus Arbites are the iron fist of Imperial law. Arbitrators are the militant arm of the Imperial judiciary and the first line of defence against heresy and rebellion, empowered in extremis to take control of a world should its ruling bodies fall from grace.

Arbitrator Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	38	38	38	35	35	34	33	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15

Skills: Acrobatics (A), Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Underworld) (Int), Interrogation (WP) +10, Scholastic Lore (Judgement) (Int) +10, Scrutiny (Per), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).

Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, SP), Disarm, Melee Weapon Training (Shock), Pistol Training (Bolt, SP), Takedown.

Armour: Storm Trooper carapace (Head 6, Arms 6, Body 6, Legs 6).

Weapons: Combat shotgun (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 18; Reload Full; Scatter), hand cannon (35m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 2; Clip 5; Reload 2 Full), shock maul (1d10+3 I; Shocking).

Gear: Micro-bead, photo visor, respirator, 2 combat shotgun magazines, combat shotgun magazine of man-stopper shells, 1d10+5 Throne Gelt.

Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Astropath

Without the astropaths of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica there would be no Imperium. Every message transmitted between the stars must be passed telepathically between thousands of psykers known as astropaths. Without this living web of communication, mankind's galactic civilisation would be impossible.

Astropath Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
10	15	20	20	20	40	35	30	25

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 8

Skills: Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Forbidden Lore (Warp) (Int) +10, Psyniscience (Per) +20, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) +10 (Int), Secret Tongue (Acolyte) (Int).

Talents: Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Minor Psychic Power, Power Well, Psy Rating 1, Psy Rating 2, Psy Rating 3.

Psychic Powers (Telepathy): Enhance Phenomena, Precognitition, Projection, Resist Possession, Sense Presence, Telepathy.

Traits: Blind, Soul-bound.

Weapons: Staff (1d10+2 I; Balanced, Primitive).

Gear: Hooded robes.

Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Bounty Hunter

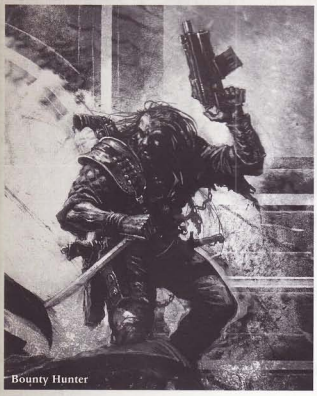
The kind of killer skilled enough to hunt down warranted criminals and renegades within an underhive, or even between worlds, is a dangerous individual. Bounty hunters are lethal beyond any mere ganger or scum—often even more so than their quarry.

Bounty Hunter Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
43	43	35	35	45	30	33	35	25

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 15

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Dodge (Ag), Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Inquiry (Fel), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S) +10, Medicae (Int), Security (Ag), Shadowing (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak

Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tracking (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las, SP), Disarm, Heavy Weapon Training (Launcher, SP), Hip Shooting, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Shock), Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Rapid Reaction.
Armour: Enforcer light carapace (Head 5, Arms 5, Body 5, Legs 5).
Weapons: Chainsword (1d10+5 R; Pen 2; Balanced, Tearing), hand cannon (35m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 2; Clip 5; Reload 2 Full), shock maul (1d10+3 I; Shocking).
Gear: Slick clothing, 3 hand cannon clips, photo-visor, respirator, manacles, 1d10 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.


Bounty Hunter

Cult Fanatic

The terrible revelations that involvement in a proscribed cult can bring can break the sanity of the strongest. Such "touched" individuals still remain useful to the cult as guards, lackeys and handy sacrifices.

Cult Fanatic Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Insanity Points: 8
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Forbidden Lore (any one) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: Fearless, Frenzy, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Unshakeable Faith.
Weapons: Sacrificial blade (3m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), hand cannon (35m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 2; Clip 5; Reload 2 Full).
Gear: Ritual robes, 2 hand cannon clips, false ID.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Cult Initiate

Like cancer cells in the body of the Imperium, hidden conspiracies, blasphemous religions and forbidden creeds fester and ferment in the shadows, and there is no shortage of hapless souls ready to join their ranks.

Cult Initiate Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	30	30	30	33	35	28

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Forbidden Lore (any one) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Unshakeable Faith.
Weapons: Sacrificial blade (3m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), stub automatic (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Reload Full).
Gear: Ritual robes, stub auto clip, false ID.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Cult Magus

The higher echelons of many cults venerating the Ruinous Powers are peopled with men and woman who have sold their souls in return for occult power.

Cult Magus Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	30	30	41	33	40	39

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +10, Forbidden Lore (any one) (Int) +10, Secret Tongue (any one) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong Minded, Unshakeable Faith, Psy Rating 2.
Armour: Mesh vest (Body 4).
Weapons: Sacrificial blade (3m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), stub automatic (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Reload Full).
Gear: Ritual robes, stub auto clip, false ID.

Sorcery!

Though not a true psyker, a witch can wield the power of the warp through incantation and sorcery. To reflect the eldritch and esoteric methods they employ, all their Psychic Powers need a Full Action to use (regardless of the actual focus time, and their Psychic Powers have a Psychic Threshold of +2. A Cult Magus must be able to speak and gesture freely in order to use Psychic Powers. Also, the practice of the dark arts is far from safe, even compared to the use of a psyker's abilities, and they must add +20 to the results of any Psychic Phenomena and Perils of the Warp rolls that they incur.

Threat Rating: Hereticus Majoris.

Dreg

The lowest of the low, dregs, sometimes known as scavvies or wasters, are addicts, degenerates, outcasts, madmen and worse. Utterly desperate, and often ruined in body and mind, some of them can be far more dangerous than any sane man, and willing to do anything for very little payment at all…

Dreg Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
18	18	25	30	30	30	25	20	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Insanity Points: 15 or more.
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Common Lore (Underworld) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Deceive (Fel), Intimidate (S), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).
Weapons: Improvised (1d10 I; Primitive, Unbalanced).
Gear: Rags, 2 doses of obscura.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Citizen

The Imperium contains countless billions of men and women, from the hab-workers trudging to and from the manufactora day after day, to the ratings that bloody their feet treading the wheels of magazine hoists on the Emperor's warships, to the ore miners whose short lives feed the Imperium's iron heat.

Citizen Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	30	30	30	20	30	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: None.
Weapons: Unarmed.
Gear: Drab citizens' garb, 1d5–1 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

"What foes are we to meet in battle that we have not vanquished in the shadows of the human soul? What Daemons scram that have not cried to us from the dark places of the mind? What fear have we of death who know there is immortality in the great and noble deeds of men"

Combat Servitor

Combat Servitor

Combat servitors are armed with highly effective combat weaponry and programmed with basic weapon routines to use them.

Combat Servitor Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
30	15	50	40	15	10	20	30	05

Movement: 1/2/3/6 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10.
Talents: Heightened Senses (Vision), Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive).
Traits: Armour Plating, Dark Sight, Machine (4), Natural Weapon (Fist).
Armour: Carapace (Head 6, Arms 6, Body 6, Legs 6).
Weapons: Fist (1d10+5 I; Primitive), chain axe (1d10+9 R; Pen 2; Tearing).
Gear: Internal micro-bead (to receive/relay instructions only).
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Dissolute Noble

When the most privileged go bad, they go very bad indeed. With money and influence, a noble can fall into all manner of depravities that are to them no more than mere pastimes to alleviate the boredom of excess.

Dissolute Noble Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	30	30	35	30	35	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Blather (Fel), Carouse (T), Charm (Fel), Command (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +10, Forbidden Lore (any one) (Int), Gamble (Int), Interrogation (WP), Literacy (Int), Sleight of Hand (Ag), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Power, Primitive, Shock), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Quick Draw, Street Fighting.
Armour: Mesh combat cloak (Arms 4, Body 4).
Weapons: Knife (3m, 1d5+2 R; Primitive), compact stub automatic (15m, S/3/–; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 4; Reload Full), compact laspistol (15m, S/–/–; 1d10+1 E; Shots 15; Reload Full; Reliable), power sword (1d10+8 E; Pen 6; Balanced, Power Field).
Gear: High-fashion clothes, jewellery worth 1d5×10 Throne Gelt, 3d10 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Enforcer

While the Adeptus Arbites are the vigilant guardians of Imperial law, everyday policing and enforcement of local laws falls to a planet's own security forces. Variously called chasteners, prefects, watchmen or any other number of local titles on different worlds, such security forces are most commonly referred to as enforcers.

Enforcer Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	35	35	35	30	30	35	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Interrogation (WP), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Disarm, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Takedown.
Armour: Light flak coat (Arms 2, Body 2, Legs 2).
Weapons: Club (1d10+3 I; Primitive), stub automatic (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Reload Full).
Gear: Uniform, 2 stub automatic clips, micro-bead.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Entertainer

Given the often crushing misery of life, it is no surprise that a little escape is often desirable for the masses, and entertainment in the Imperium has a tendency towards the simple, direct and visceral.

Entertainer Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	30	30	30	20	30	30	40

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one), plus any one of the following—Acrobatics (Ag), Gamble (Int), or Performer (Fel).
Talents: None.
Weapons: Unarmed (1d5; Special).
Gear: Outlandish garb, gewgaws, deck of cards *or* musical instrument, advertisements, 1d5 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Enforcer

Furnace Worker

Across the Imperium, in smelteries and forge factories, huge crucibles pour rivers of white-hot metal into moulds and the air is filled with sparks. Amidst the glow, figures lumber under the weight of vulcanised rubber suits, their eyes hidden behind smoked-glass goggles.

Furnace Worker Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	40	30	20	20	30	30	30

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: None.
Armour: Protective gear (Head 4, Arms 4, Body 4, Legs 4; -10 Agility).
Weapons: Unarmed (1d10; Special).
Gear: 1d5-2 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Gun Servitor

Gun servitors are military-grade units equipped with enhanced sensors, programmed with targeting cants and fitted with heavy weaponry.

Gun Servitor Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
15	30	50	40	15	10	20	30	05

Movement: 1/2/3/6 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Trade (any one) +10.
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Heightened Senses (Vision), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive).
Traits: Armour Plating, Auto-stabilised, Dark Sight, Machine (4), Natural Weapon (Fist).
Armour: None (Head 6, Arms 6, Body 6, Legs 6).
Weapons: Fist (1d10+5 I; Primitive), twin auto-guns (90m; S/6/20; 2d10+6 I; Pen 0; Clip 30; Reload Full).
Gear: Internal micro-bead (to receive/relay instructions only), ammo hopper equivalent to 3 clips.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Gun Servitor

Heretek

Heretek

Technology is little understood and rightly feared. Hereteks are criminals who specialise in the dark arts of tech-reclamation, science and salvage outside the rightful purview of the Cult Mechanicus, and risk "recycling" into a more productive life as a servitor if the Priesthood of Mars gets hold of them. Some hereteks are little more than scavengers, others are dangerous renegades that supply the underworld with proscribed drugs or arms, and the worst delve into matters best left alone.

Heretek Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	28	35	30	30	40	35	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Chem-Use (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Tech) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Evaluate (Int), Intimidate (S), Medicae *or* Scholastic Lore (any one) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tech-Use (Int) +10.
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Master Chirurgeon, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).
Weapons: Compact laspistol (15m, S/–/–; 1d10+1 E; Shots 15; Reload Full; Reliable), mono-knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Pen 2).
Gear: Re-breather, clothing, data-slate, laspistol clip, 1d10 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Industrial or Heavy Repair Servitor

These servitors have been modified with rigs to lift loads, drill rocks or smash ore in one of the Imperium's countless industrial complexes, or are fused with specialised repair gear.

Repair Servitor Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
15	15	50	40	15	10	20	30	05

Movement: 1/2/3/6 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: None.
Talents: None.
Traits: Machine (4), Natural Weapon (tools), Unnatural Strength (×2).
Armour: None (Head 4, Arms 4, Body 4, Legs 4).
Weapons: Fist (1d10+15 E, I, or R; Primitive).
Gear: Internal micro-bead (to receive/relay instructions only), photo-visor.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Kill Squad Trooper

Used to enforce execution warrants or when extreme prejudice is required, the kill squads are some of the most dangerous formations that can exist within an enforcer organisation. On some worlds, where the rule of the planetary governor is dictatorial and harsh, kill squads are the hated embodiments of their power.

Kill Squad Trooper Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	35	35	35	30	30	35	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Climb (S), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Interrogation (WP), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Disarm, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Takedown.
Armour: Enforcer light carapace (Arms 5, Body 5, Legs 5).
Weapons: Autogun with man-stopper rounds (90m; S/3/10; 1d10+3 I; Pen 3; Clip 30; Reload Full), stub automatic with dumdums (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+5 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Reload Full; AP counts double).
Gear: Uniform, 2 autogun clips, micro-bead, respirator, photo-visor.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Heavy

Dumb muscle always has a market for hire, and many thugs, cut-throats and brawlers augment their own prowess with crude vat-grown muscle implants, dangerous chemical treatments and brain-damaging combat drugs.

Heavy Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	28	45	40	30	20	25	25	20

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Intimidate (S), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Iron Jaw, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).
Weapons: Brass knuckles (1d5+3 I; Primitive, Unbalanced), chainsword (1d10+6 R; Pen 2; Balanced, Tearing).
Gear: Threadbare clothing, 2 doses of slaught, 1d5 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Kill Squad Trooper

Merchant Magnate

Merchants owe their station to their ability to survive in a world of profit and loss as they turn fortune's wheel. Charming yet often utterly ruthless, they are best not crossed.

Merchant Magnate Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	30	30	35	30	35	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel) +10, Command (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Evaluate (Int) +10, Literacy (Int), Logic (Int), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).
Armour: Mesh vest (Body 3).
Weapons: Compact laspistol (15m, S/–/–; 1d10+1 E; Shots 15; Reload Full; Reliable).
Gear: High-fashion clothes, personal encrypted micro-bead, seal of guild/trade cartel, data-slate, jewellery worth 1d5×10 Throne Gelt, 3d10 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Ministorum Preacher

Ministorum Preacher

To countless billions, the Emperor is nothing less than a god. Over the millennia this faith has created a vast and powerful organisation devoted to His worship; the Ministorum. It is made up of countless ranks and divisions from the deacons, cardinals and high ecclesiarchs that govern the faith to the numberless priests, preachers, mendicants, rectors, psalters, scribes and choristers that make up the body of the priesthood.

Ministorum Preacher Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	30	30	30	35	30	35	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int), Literacy (Int), Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Air of Authority, Master Orator.
Gear: Ecclesiastical robes, prayer book, numerous small devotional items.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Mutant

Mutation is a sad fact of human existence in the Imperium, and on many worlds the human gene pool has become irrevocably damaged by generations of exposure to pollutants and alien biospheres. Mutants tolerated by the Imperium are generally referred to as abhumans (sometimes even being classified by the Administratum) and often allowed to toil in slave-like conditions in factories and hives.

Mutant Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
22	22	36	36	22	22	30	25	20

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Climb (S), Common Lore (Local) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Primitive).
Traits: Mutation (any one; 50% chance to have 1d5–1 additional).
Weapons: Club (1d10+3 I; Primitive).
Gear: Tattered clothing, combi-tool, 1d5–3 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Mutant Abomination

Worse by far than any tragic unfortunate, born twisted from the effects of pollutants and radiation, is the mutant struck down and remade by the influence of the warp. These are the lost and damned; their bodies have become the clay of an insane and macabre sculptor, and their minds and souls tainted beyond salvation.

Mutant Abomination Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
27	22	41	36	22	22	30	25	15

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 17
Corruption Points: 8 **Insanity Points:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S),

Common Lore (Underworld) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Intimidate (S), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).
Traits: Mutation (any one; 75% chance to have 1d5 additional).
Weapons: Axe (1d10+5 R; Primitive, Unbalanced), stub revolver (30m; S/–/–; AP 0; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 6; Reload 2 Full; Reliable).
Gear: Rags, random bits of rubbish.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Mutant Abomination

Rating

Any large star vessel requires crew in the hundreds, if not thousands. It is dangerous and backbreaking laborious work for the most part, where life expectancy is low and slow death through radiation exposure and pressure-ague commonplace.

Rating Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	35	35	25	20	35	30	30

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Tech) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tech-Use (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: None.
Armour: Work overalls (Head 2, Arms 2, Body 2, Legs 2; –5 Agility).
Weapons: Unarmed (1d5; Special).
Gear: Industrial tools, combi-tool.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Recidivist

Scum they say rises to the surface—and it's true that there are always those skilled, amoral or clever enough to rise to prominence in the underworld. These crime lords, slavers, fencers and fixers can fulfil many different roles, but the Arbites give them a single damning title, recidivists, and they live like parasites on the soft underbelly of the Imperium.

Recidivist Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	28	35	30	30	30	33	35	40

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel), Blather (Fel), Carouse (T) +10, Chem-Use (Int), Common Lore (Underworld) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +10, Intimidate (S), Security (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).
Armour: Flak jacket (Arms 3, Body 3).
Weapons: Compact autopistol with man-stopper rounds (15m; –/–/6; 1d10+1 I; Pen 3; Clip 9; Reload Full), mono-knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Pen 2).
Gear: Stylish clothing, 2 autopistol man-stopper clips, 1d10 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Scribe

Their fingers stained in ink, their backs hunched over parchment-strewn desks, scribes can be found in every dark niche of the Imperium.

Scribe Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	30	30	30	20	30	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Literacy (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).
Talents: None.
Weapons: Unarmed (1d5; Special).
Gear: Robes, ink stains, quills, ink bottles, parchment, data-slate, 1d5–2 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Scum

Life in the Imperium is harsh and unforgiving, and breeds a variety of scum that prefer to prey on the weak and make a living by victimising those even worse off than themselves. This entry is appropriate for any number of low-rent thugs, robbers, racketeers, bagmen and malcontents.

Scum Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	28	35	30	30	30	27	25	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Intimidate (S), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).
Weapons: Knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), stub automatic (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Reload Full).
Gear: Threadbare clothing, 2 stub automatic clips, 1d5 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Servitor Drone

Servitors are fusions of flesh and machine made from culture-grown organics or mind-wiped human bodies. Millions of these cyborg creations are found throughout the Imperium and are used to perform monotonous single functions without deviation or question.

Servitor Drone Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
15	15	50	40	15	10	20	30	05

Movement: 1/2/3/6 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Trade (any one) +10.
Talents: None.
Traits: Machine 4, Natural Weapon (Fist).
Armour: None (Head 4, Arms 4, Body 4, Legs 4).
Weapons: Fist (1d10+5 I; Primitive).
Gear: Internal micro-bead (to receive/relay instructions only).
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Servitor Drones

Skulker

Skulker

Some scum prefer thievery, guile and lies to get what they want rather than risk open violence (a bullet in the back is a different matter however). Skulkers often consider themselves a cut above the rest of the underworld, with an arrogant disdain for "dog work".

Skulker Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
23	28	30	30	40	30	27	25	30

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Climb (S), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Concealment (Ag) +10, Deceive (Fel) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Evaluate (Int), Inquiry (Fel), Intimidate (S), Security (Ag), Shadowing (Ag), Silent Move (Ag) +10, Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP), Melee Weapon Training (Basic, Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Rapid Reaction, Sprint.
Weapons: Mono-knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Pen 2), compact silenced stub automatic (15m; S/3/–; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 4; Reload Full).
Gear: Cool clothing, 2 stub automatic clips, multikeys, 1d5 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Slaughterman

Clad in leather aprons, stinking of raw meat and wielding saw-toothed cutters, slaughtermen kill and butcher the billions of tons of meat consumed by the populace.

Slaughterman Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	20	35	30	30	20	30	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one).

Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Chain).
Weapons: Chain axe (1d10+7 R; Pen 2; Tearing).
Gear: Drab citizens' garb, 1d5–1 Throne Gelt.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima.

Slaughterman

Tech Adept

The ancient priesthood of Mars, the Adeptus Mechanicus are the only sanctioned repositories of scientific thought and technological lore in the Imperium. Steeped in arcane ritual and labyrinthine dogma, to them their arts are a divine mystery of their incarnation of the Emperor—the Omnissiah, and to them all things technological are sacred.

These are fully initiated acolytes of the Cult Mechanicus and form the bulk of its ordained priesthood.

Tech Adept Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	30	30	40	35	35	20

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12

Skills: Awareness (Per), Chem-Use (Int), Common Lore (Tech) (Int), Drive (any one) (Ag), Logic (Int) +10, Pilot (any one) (Ag), Scholastic Lore (any one) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Secret Tongue (Techno-Cant) (Int) +10, Tech-Use (Int) +10.
Talents: Binary Chatter, Chem Geld, Electrical Succour, Energy Cache, Gun Blessing, Luminen Charge, Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Power, Primitive), Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Plasma, SP).
Armour: Flak cloak (Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3).
Weapons: Chain axe (1d10+7 R; Pen 2; Tearing), laspistol (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+2 E; Pen 0; Clip 30; Reload Full; Reliable).
Gear: Basic MIU interface and 1d5 other implants, 25% chance of partial augmentation (see **Cybernetics, page 153**), tools, respirator, data-slate, personal cogitator, 2 laspistol clips.
Threat Rating: Hereticus Minoris.

Witch

Witches are a breed of rogue psykers and mystics who have rejected the Imperium and all it stands for, and embraced the fell powers of Chaos. Madmen, lunatics and vile heretics, they are hunted by Inquisitors and destroyed wherever they are found.

Witch Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	30	30	41	33	40	39

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +10, Forbidden Lore (any one) (Int) +10, Secret Signs (Occult), Secret Tongue (any one) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (Int).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong-minded, Unshakeable Faith, Psy Rating 2.
Armour: Mesh vest (Body 4).
Weapons: Knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), stub automatic (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Reload Full).
Gear: Dark and voluminous robes, stub automatic clip, false ID, bits of strangeness, profane amulet, mad glare.

Sorcery!
Witches have the Sense Presence and White Noise Psychic Powers. Also select one of the following packages:
Puppeteer: Distort Vision, Forget Me, Detect Minds, Compel, Dominate.
Seer: Inflict Delusion, Precognition, Psychometry, Visions.
Pyrokine: Flash-Bang, Wither, Call Flame, Fire Bolt, Sculpt Flame.
Giest: Spectral Hands, Spasm, Float, Force Bolt, Telekinesis, Telekinetic Shield.

Threat Rating: Hereticus Majoris.

THE BESTIAL & THE ALIEN

Being an account of xenos, crude beasts and other inhuman horrors that trouble the sector.

Brain Leaf

Few would believe that of all the enemies faced by mankind, a greyish vine-like plant could pose such an insidious threat. Variously referred to as "slave vine" or "the grey weed", but most commonly the "brain leaf", this malignant creature was once thought to originate from the jungle death world of Catachan. In physical form, the brain leaf plant resembles a coarse vine or ivy, each tendril of which is tipped with a single fleshy leaf. Uniquely, the brain leaf possesses a form of gestalt consciousness, and each leaf is a macro-cell forming part of its utterly alien intelligence. The underside of each vine leaf is barbed to latch onto creatures straying too close and, once attached to a victim, microscopic fibre bundles penetrate the skin and extrude fibrous growths throughout a victim's nervous system to take control of its body utterly. Though not sentient in any measurable sense, the brain leaf efficiently and swiftly dominates its victim, subverting it to the will of the parent plant. Once this has been accomplished, the leaf detaches from the main body and remains as an attached parasite on the victim, allowing a new leaf to rapidly grow in its place. The victim, now a staggering thrall to the brain leaf plant, is used by the weed to protect itself and proliferate its young.

Infestations of brain leaf have been discovered on many worlds, and recent emergent evidence is that the brain leaf is no true native of Catachan, but likely a rogue mutation and evolutionary descendant of the Tyranid cortex leech, makes the destruction of any infestation a priority for many in the Ordo Xenos Calixis. The horrors visited on members of the sector's nobility during the infamous "Slaughter Gardens of Quaddis" incident several years ago have emphasised the need to prevent the spawning and multiplication of this foul vine.

The Brain Leaf Plant

The vine is most often encountered wrapped parasitically around another large plant or tree, or crawling across the face of some statue or edifice, and varies in size according to maturity. Some of a brain leaf's Characteristics vary according to how much it has grown and there are three levels of growth listed here: Immature, Mature and Ancient.

Brain Leaf Plant Profile – Immature

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
–	–	–	20	–	18	36	60	–

Movement: — **Wounds:** 6

Brain Leaf Plant Profile – Mature

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
–	–	–	40	–	18	36	60	–

Movement: — **Wounds:** 20

Brain Leaf Plant Profile – Ancient

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
–	–	–	60	–	18	36	60	–

Movement: — **Wounds:** 40

Traits: Limited Actions†, Size (Scrawny for immature, Average for mature, Hulking for ancient), Strange Physiology, Taking Control‡.

†**Limited Actions:** The only Action a brain leaf may perform is an attempt to latch on to a victim within half a metre of one of its leaves.

‡**Taking Control:** A brain leaf's victim is nearly always unaware of the danger he is in and has a single chance to feel the prick of the leaf's barbs, and rip it off before it is too late. A resilient, sealed covering over the victim's head and neck (sufficient to provide 2 AP) can protect against an attack. At the moment that a leaf makes contact, the target must succeed on an Agility Test or the leaf latches on and rapidly begins to subvert the victim's nervous system, causing the victim to fall prone and twitch. It takes 1d10 minutes to infiltrate the victim's nervous system fully and, if the leaf is removed during this time, the victim recovers consciousness but loses 1d10 points permanently from Toughness and gains 1d10 Insanity Points. Unless the process is stopped, after the required time has passed, the victim becomes a Brain Leaf Thrall.

Brain Leaf Thrall

Thralls of the brain leaf are completely under the control of the malign plant, turning them into nerve-damaged, drooling, twitching shamblers. Modify the thrall Characteristics as follows. Where a "—" is listed, it indicates that the creature loses this Characteristic and can no longer take or fail Tests based on it.

Brain Leaf Thrall Profile Adjustment

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
-10	-10	–	-10	-10	–	-10	–	–

Wounds: Halve.

Skills, Talents and Powers: The thrall loses all Skills, Talents and Psychic Powers whilst enthralled. All thralls gain the Fearless talent. They react sluggishly; their only evident behaviour is to stand sentry over their parent plant, hurling themselves spasmodically against anything threatening it.

Recovering from Thralldom

Should the leaf be ripped from a thrall, the thrall immediately lets out a horrific scream of agony and collapses unconscious, as the severing of the plant's control causes a massive trauma to the victim's nervous system. Once the leaf is removed, a thrall must pass a Toughness Test or die. If he survives he recovers but retains the reduction of Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Toughness, Agility and Perception as permanent Characteristic Damage. The released thrall also gains 3d10 Insanity Points.

Threat Rating: Xenos Minoris.

Dusk Stalker

A terrifying creature that has become the stuff of dark fable across the Calixis Sector, the stalker is one of the most feared of Dusk's many dangers, haunting the deepest swamps of that world. In appearance, it resembles a frightening hybrid of a withered elderly human and gigantic four-limbed spider.

Dusk Stalker Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
52	0	43	40	53	21	46	28	18

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 20
Skills: Awareness (Per), Climb (S) +20, Concealment (Ag), Deceive (mimic voices and sounds only) (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag).
Talents: Catfall, Hard Target, Swift Attack.
Traits: Dark Sight, Fear 2, Natural Armour 2 (Arms and Legs), Natural Armour 4 (Body), Natural Weapon (Bone Spars).
Armour: None (Head 0, Arms 2, Body 4, Legs 2).
Weapons: Bone spurs (1d10+5 R; Primitive).
Threat Rating: Obscuro Majoris.

Grox

The demand for meat and livestock to feed the Imperium's countless mouths is immense, and while dozens of other (and far more palatable) species such as spiralhorns, demi-pach and tusk bison are common, it is the Grox that has become the Imperium's widest used staple.

Dusk Stalker Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	0	62	65	11	12	41	38	10

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 22
Skills: Awareness (Per).
Traits: Bestial, Brutal Charge, Size (Hulking), Natural Armour 2 (Legs), Natural Armour 4 (Body, Head), Natural Weapon (Clawed Hooves), Quadruped, Stampede.
Armour: None (Head 4, Body 4, Legs 2).
Weapons: Clawed hooves (1d10+6 I).
Threat Rating: Xenos Minima.

Nightwing

The ill-famed world of Dusk is known for its many horrific creatures and sinister predators, and the Nightwing is no exception. A nocturnal creature, strange and disturbing to look upon, its amber, slug-like body is the length of a man's arm and nearly featureless but for a small round mouth surrounded by hook-like barbs at one end.

Nightwing Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
26	0	23	30	42	06	55	48	–

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 5
Skills: Dodge (Ag).
Talents: Fearless.
Traits: Bestial, Fear 1, Flyer 6, Narcotic Dust†, Natural Weapon (Bite), Sonar Sense, Sucking Bite‡, Scrawny.

†**Narcotic Dust:** Any creature without breathing apparatus approaching within one metre of the Nightwing must succeed on a Challenging (+0) Toughness Test or become Stunned for a number of Rounds equal to 1d10 minus its Toughness Bonus (for a minimum of one Round). This is a poisonous attack.

‡**Sucking Bite**: If a Nightwing successfully bites its prey, it automatically latches on and drains its victim's blood. Each Round, the Nightwing deals 1d10 points of Toughness Damage until the victim's Toughness falls to 0, at which point death occurs. In addition, the sucking bite inflicts 1 level of Fatigue per Round. The Nightwing can be removed by winning an Opposed Strength Test. While a Nightwing is attached, all melee attacks against it gain a +20 bonus.

Weapons: Bite (1d10+3 R; Primitive).
Threat Rating: Xenos Minima.

Sabre-Wolf

The Sabre-wolf is a custom-bred apex predator. Created by centuries of cross-breeding mutant creatures and xenos predators, its hunting grounds are the pleasure parks of the Calixis elite and, in some cases, the fighting pits of the less wealthy. Like its forebears, it is a quadruped and able to move with both stealth through the undergrowth and with frightening speed across open ground. Its disproportionately elongated skull has multiple rows of fangs designed to latch onto, then worry and rend away at its prey. Its body is lean but highly muscled and no larger than many of the felids kept by many nobles as pets and guard animals.

Sabre-Wolf Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	–	40	35	40	15	45	35	10

Movement: 8/16/24/48 **Wounds:** 18
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Concealment (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag), Tracking (Int) +20.
Talents: Berserk Charge, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Sight, Smell), Sprint, Talented (Silent Move), Takedown.
Traits: Bestial, Dark Sight, Natural Weapon (Bite), Quadruped.
Weapons: Bite (1d10+6 R; Primitive).
Threat Rating: Xenos Minoris.

Saurian Carnosaur

Giant reptiles and similar creatures, often classified under the name "saurian" by the Magos Biologis, are a relatively common form of life throughout the galaxy, often comprising the primary predatory species on many worlds. Sometimes farmed for meat, but more often aggressively hunted on colony worlds, large saurians remain a favourite of the Imperial fighting pits that operate on many worlds.

Saurian Carnosaur Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
42	0	65	58	31	18	42	38	01

Movement: 6/12/18/36 **Wounds:** 40
Skills: Awareness (Per).
Talents: Fearless, Heightened Senses (Smell).
Traits: Huge Jaws†, Natural Armour 2, Natural Weapon (Bite), Quadruped, Unnatural Strength (×2), Unnatural Toughness (×2), Size (Enormous).

†**Huge Jaws:** A carnosaur's bite deals 1d10+SB+2 R Damage that has the Tearing quality. Its bite attacks cannot be Parried.

Armour: None (Head 2, Body 2, Legs 2).
Weapons: Bite (1d10+14 R; Primitive, Tearing).
Threat Rating: Xenos Majoris.

Saurian Carnosaur

Animals & Vermin

The following entries can be used for various ordinary creatures the Acolytes might encounter.

Beast of Burden

Beasts of burden are mostly harmless herbivores and represent any kind of riding beast, horse or horse-like creature.

Beast of Burden Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	–	50	40	30	10	33	10	–

Movement: 6/12/18/36 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per).
Talents: None.
Traits: Bestial, Quadruped, Sturdy.
Weapons: Bite or hoof (1d10+1 R or I).

Ferocious Creature

This is a generic term, allowing GMs to invent creatures specific to a particular environment. Ferocious creature includes the common sorts of dangerous animals such as felids, reptilians, warhounds and wolves.

Ferocious Creature Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
30	–	30	30	30	15	38	40	–

Movement: 6/12/18/36 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10, Swim (S), Tracking (Int) +10.
Talents: Sprint.
Traits: Bestial, Natural Weapon (Bite), Quadruped.
Weapons: Bite (1d10+3 R; Primitive).

Flying Creature

Flying creatures include any sizeable birds, flying insects and so on.

Flying Creature Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	–	10	10	40	10	35	20	–

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 4
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Concealment (Ag) +10.
Talents: Swift Attack.
Traits: Bestial, Flyer 8, Size (Puny).
Weapons: Unarmed (1d10–3; Primitive, Special).

Slithering Creature

This entry describes any creature that crawls, oozes or slithers. Examples include serpents, massive centipedes, roaches and other disgusting critters.

Slithering Creature Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	–	10	35	50	10	35	40	–

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 8
Skills: Awareness (Per), Swim (S).
Talents: None.
Traits: Bestial, Crawler, Natural Weapon (Bite), Toxic (Bite).
Weapons: Bite (1d10+1 I; plus Toughness Test or 1d10 Damage).

Walking Creature

This entry describes basic walking creatures such as dogs, giant rats, feral cats and so on.

Slithering Creature Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	–	20	20	30	15	35	20	–

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 6
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10, Swim (S).
Talents: None.
Traits: Bestial, Quadruped, Size (Scrawny).
Weapons: Bite (1d10–2 R; Primitive, Special).

"Contact with alien races always renews ones faith in humanity. It is my belief that foreign travel narrows the mind wonderfully"

From Beyond

Being a treatise on the manifold terrors of the warp and its foul denizens. Whilst to the average citizen, the terrors of the Ruinous Powers and their minions are little more than myth, those of the innermost ranks of the Inquisition know all too well the true nature of the ultimate threats to mankind's future.

Astral Spectre

Spectres are powerful entities composed of congealed psychic energy and warp-stuff. When manifest in the physical world, they take the shape of incorporeal spectres: patches of moving darkness, unnatural mists boiling with flickering images, half-transparent figures that cast no shadow and a host of other forms.

Astral Spectre Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	20	–	35	45	30	45	50	15

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: None.
Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 3): Call Creatures, Enhance Phenomena, Inflict Delusion, Inflict Pain, Spectral Hands, Warp Howl, Wither, Telekinesis.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 6), Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, Flyer 8, From Beyond, Incorporeal, Possession, Warp Instability.
Weapons: None.
†**Daemonic Presence:** Living chreatures within 25 metres of an Astral Spectre feel chilled and unsettled. Shadows become unnaturally deep, and people may hear voices and glimpse fleeting echoes of past events. Animals become restless and prone to panic, and machines suffer random glitches and breakdowns. All creatures take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.

Charnel Daemon

Accounts of encounters with the entity known as the Charnel Daemon are some of the most horrific records held by the Ordos Calixis. Powerful and singularly murderous, in order to gain a foothold in our reality, the Charnel Daemon must be summoned by extraordinarily bloody rituals performed by a powerful cult magus. Once manifested, it is in the form of an uncontrollable berserker, that will seek slaughter without end, working to remake the world in an image more pleasing to the Blood God.

Charnel Daemon Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
48	20	55	53	50	50	50	50	10

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 30
Skills: Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag).
Talents: Frenzy, Hard Target, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Sprint, Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 10), Daemonic Presence†, Dark Sight, Fear 4, From Beyond,Fuelled by Slaughter‡, Natural Weapons (Teeth and Claws), Unnatural Strength (×2), Warp Instability.
†**Daemonic Presence:** The area within 25 metres of the Daemon is permeated with the radiation of the warp, manifesting as an all-pervasive smell of blood, rippling nausea, and the shrill of a continuous agonized scream on the edge of mortal hearing. All characters take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests while in the area.
‡**Fuelled By Slaughter:** Every time the Charnel Daemon kills a living creature, it heals 1d10 points of Damage.
Weapons: Teeth and claws (1d10+10 R; Primitive, Tearing).
Threat Rating: Malleus Majoris.

Incarnate Lesser Daemon

The shapes and blasphemous hungers that a Daemon might exhibit are without number, and literally thousands of different manifestations are recorded within the restricted archives of the Ordo Malleus. Many reflect the nature and drives of their patrons among the powers of Chaos, acting as foot soldiers in the legions of hell, while others represent the congealed stuff of mankind's worst fears and hidden evils. Regardless of their shape, incarnate Daemons are formed from the pure substance of the warp and cannot maintain their grip on our universe without the aid of bloodshed, misery and death.

Incarnate Lesser Daemon Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	25	35	40	30	30	45	40	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: None.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Teeth or Claws), Warp Instability.
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Weapons: Claws and teeth (1d10+3 R; Primitive, Tearing).
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.

Bloodletters

Bloodletters

Horned and bloody, these Daemon-warriors serve Khorne, the Chaos power of murder and slaughter. They exist only to kill and often materialise clad in bronze armour and wielding vicious hell-forged blades.

Bloodletters Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
55	25	55	40	30	30	45	40	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: Frenzy, Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, From Beyond, Natural Armour 6, Natural Weapon (Teeth or Claws), Warp Instability.
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Armour: Bronze plate (Head 6, Arms 6, Body 6, Legs 6).
Weapons: Great axe (1d10+1 R; Pen 0; Primitive, Unbalanced), Claws and teeth (1d10+5 R; Primitive, Tearing, Warp).
Threat Rating: Malleus Majoris.

Daemonettes

Daemonettes

Lascivious and obscene, these She-Daemons serve the depraved Chaos power Slaanesh. Lean, lithe and hypnotic in their blasphemous allure, they tear their prey apart with their razor-sharp, crab-like claws.

Daemonettes Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	25	35	40	50	30	45	40	30

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Acrobatics (Ag), Athletics (S), Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: Heightened Senses (all), Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Deadly Allure‡, Fear 3, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Pincer Claw), Warp Instability.
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
‡**Deadly Allure:** Living creatures that look upon or are engaged in combat with a Daemonette must succeed on a Willpower Test each Round or can only take a Half Action that Round.
Weapons: Pincer Claw (1d10+5 R; Primitive, Tearing).
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.

Dispayres

Famished and tattered figures with hollow eye-sockets and mouths frozen in endless silent screams, these Daemons serve no single great power; they desire only to bring sorrow and madness. Darkness clings about them, and they make formidable stalkers and assassins for malefic cults.

Dispayres Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	25	35	40	40	30	45	40	10

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Concealment (Ag) +30, Dodge (Ag), Interrogation (WP), Psyniscience (Per), Shadowing (Ag) +20, Silent Move (Ag) +20, Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: None.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Teeth or Claws), Warp Instability.
Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 1): Gaze of Oblivion (Psychic Threshold 5; 10m; one target; Willpower Test or take 1d10 points of Intelligence damage and gain 1 Insanity Point).
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Weapons: Claws and teeth (1d10+3 R; Primitive, Tearing).
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.

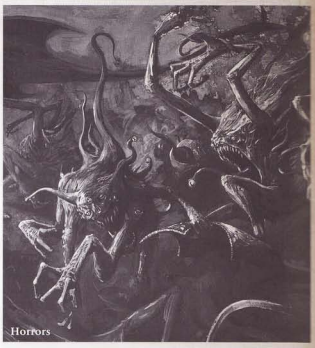
Furies

Furies

Bestial predators in the service of no single power, these twisted and disfigured hunting Daemons are grim and winged in the manner of nightmarish gargoyles.

Furies Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
45	25	45	40	40	20	45	40	10

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: Furious Assault.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, Flyer 8, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Teeth or Claws), Warp Instability.
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a -10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
Weapons: Claws and teeth (1d10+4 R; Primitive, Tearing).
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.


Horrors

Horrors

Rolling, twisting, twitching masses of iridescent flesh and fire. Horrors serve their master Tzeentch, Chaos power of change, intrigue and sorcery. Their many mouths scream and gibber, and their shifting, clawed hands twitch with incantations.

Horrors Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	25	35	40	30	30	45	50	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 20
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (Per) +20, Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: None.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, Fire of Tzeentch‡, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Teeth or Claws), Regeneration, Warp Instability.
Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 3): Fire Bolt, Float, Psychic Shriek.
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
‡**Fire of Tzeentch:** Horrors are immune to Perils of the Warp.
Weapons: Claws and teeth (1d10+3 E).
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.

Psychneuein—the Mara Strain

Thankfully rare, Psychneuein are vile warp entities drawn to the mental emanations of unprotected, badly injured or nascent psykers whose minds they attack for the obscene purpose of gestating their progeny. Psychneuein have been known to evidence various distinct genus, of which the Mara Strain is deemed among the most dangerous.

The Mara Strain

The Mara Strain was first identified by Ordo Xenos Inquisitor Ark-Ashtyn during a heavy infestation at the mining penitentiary on the ice-world of Mara in the Calixis Sector, three centuries ago. Although the Mara facility was subsequently decommissioned, the tale of the "ice station massacre" remains a favourite dark fable among the sector's spacefarers. Since then, confirmed incidents of Mara infection have occurred on the sector worlds of Dusk, Lachrymae and Pellucida V as well as several vessels transiting near Mara, although these incidences remain thankfully very few.

The Infested—Final Stage Mania

The victim can be any creature with a Psy Rating of 1 or more. Apply all of the following modifications:

- Halve Intelligence and Fellowship Characteristics
- Increase Psy Rating by 1.
- Gain Corpus Conversion, Die Hard, Fearless talents.
- Gain immunity to Stun.
- Creatures that attempt to establish any form of telepathic contact with the infected creature suffer a psychic backlash and takes a level of Fatigue.
- If the infected creature attempts a Psychic Power that results in Perils of the Warp, instead of rolling to see what happens, 1d10 adult psychneuein are born, killing the host in the process.
- If the psyker is slain, there is a 25% chance of 1d10 adult Psychneuein appearing. Otherwise, 1d10 larvae erupt instead.

Larval Form

Movement: 1 **Wounds:** 6

Larval Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
15	–	20	20	20	–	10	70	–

Skills: None.
Talents: None.
Traits: Fear 2, Natural Weapon (Bite), Psychneuein†, Size (Puny).
†**Psychneuein:** Whenever the larva takes Damage but isn't killed outright, it has a 25% chance of metamorphosing into an adult Psychneuein.
Weapons: Bite (1d10+2 R).

Adult Psychneuein (Warp Predator)

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 20

Adult Psychneuein Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	–	30	86	52	56	66	70	–

Skills: Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Psyniscience (Per).
Talents: None.
Traits: Dark Sight, Fear 4, Flyer 10, Immune to the Perils of the Warp, Natural Weapon (Feeding Tube), Sense Minds†, The Stuff of Nightmares, Unnatural Strength (×2), Unnatural Toughness (×2).
†**Sense Minds:** A Warp predator is always aware of any and all sentient minds within 30 metres and can pinpoint their location without regard for lighting, cover or any other form of obscurement.
Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 5): Blood Boil, Regenerate, Space Slip.
Weapons: Feeding tube (1d10+6 R; Primitive, Warp).
Threat Rating: Malleus Extremis.

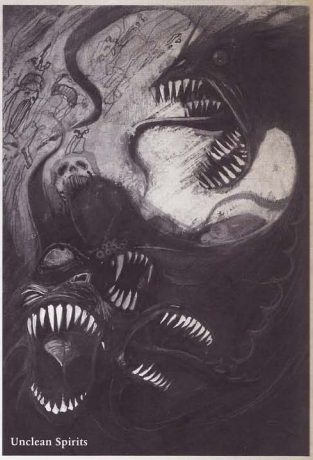
Plaguebearers

Bloated and malformed, clutching rusted butcher blades and glaring out with a single milky-white eye, these foulest of Daemons are walking incubators of the most terrible diseases and excrescence, serving Nurgle, Chaos power of decay and contagion.

Plaguebearers Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	25	35	50	30	30	45	40	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 20
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (any one) (Int).
Talents: None.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 10), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence†, Fear 3, From Beyond, Infected Wounds‡, Natural Weapon (Teeth or Claws), Vomit¥, Warp Instability.
†**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
‡**Infected Wounds:** Any injuries inflicted by a Plaguebearer automatically become infected.
¥**Vomit:** As a Half Action, a Plaguebearer can vomit on any adjacent victim. 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. In lieu of Critical Damage, the vomit deals 3d10 points of Toughness Damage to the victim's Toughness Characteristic.
Weapons: Claws and teeth (1d10+3 R; Primitive, Tearing) or sword (1d10+3 R, Balanced, Primitive).
Threat Rating: Malleus Minoris.

Plaguebearers



Unclean Spirits

Unclean Spirit

The warp is a place of myriad horrors and numberless dangers, and the entities that seethe and boil within its turbulent depths range from the vast powers of the so-called Chaos gods to mindless, verminous predators. The Ordo Malleus classifies some in this latter category as unclean spirits, and while they lack the reality-damaging powers of true Daemons, they can still prove dangerous if loosed on the world.

Unclean Spirit Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
15	15	–	25	30	18	35	30	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 8
Skills: Psyniscience (Per) +10.
Talents: None.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 4), Fear 1, Flyer 6, From Beyond, Incorporeal, Possession, Spirit Form†, Warp Instability.
†**Spirit Form:** The unclean spirit is invisible to normal sight, although it can be seen normally via Psyniscience, and detected by devices that can register warp disturbance. Those without this ability may still sense the unclean spirit's presence with a Difficult (-10) Awareness Test if in its immediate area. This registers as a feeling of deep unease, a sudden chill or an unaccountable foul stench.
Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 1): Sense Presence, Spectral Hands, Warp Howl.
Weapons: None.
Threat Rating: Malleus Minima.

DAEMONHOSTS

Daemonhosts are unholy creations of foul and dangerous rituals in which a powerful Daemon is bound into a living human host body and enslaved to its creator's will. An utterly foul act, the creation of a Daemonhost condemns the soul of the host body to eternal torment and provides a lasting home in the universe for a Daemon to work its evil. Despite the horror of their creation, there are those within the Inquisition itself, it is said, who have dared to replicate the act, hoping to turn their creations against enemies of the Imperium. Unfortunately, Daemonhosts are not only the preserve of a handful of Radical Inquisitors. Insane dabblers in proscribed knowledge and the most powerful of cults have also been known to create Daemonhosts to serve them in their designs. Daemons do not rest easily under the will of any mortal, and to earn the enmity of such a creature is to gain an immortal enemy, so a Daemonhost's creator is faced with a dangerous conundrum: the more powerful the Daemonhost created, the weaker the bindings of the Daemon.

Daemonhost Generator

The generator included here is intended to give you a quick way of creating these most potent opponents, or even allies, of the Inquisition, while also giving you ideas to customise your own Daemonhosts.

The Method

Creating a Daemonhost has seven stages as detailed below:

Stage One: Roll on **Table 12-5: Binding** to determine how many times the Daemonhost has been bound.
Stage Two: Generate the Daemonhost's Characteristics.
Stage Three: Generate the changes wrought on the host body.
Stage Four: Generate the phenomena of the Daemonhost's presence.
Stage Five: Generate the Daemonhost's Psychic Powers.
Stage Six: Determine Skills and Traits.
Stage Seven: Add your own finishing touches.

Stage One: Binding

The less strongly bound a Daemonhost is, the more powerful it will be; but the weaker the binding, the greater the chance the Daemon has to slip its master's control.

Table 12-5: Binding

Roll	Effect
01–10	**Unbound:** The Daemon, within its host, has broken free of its fetters. Such a creature is the walking embodiment of the corrupting power of the warp.
11–40	**Once-bound:** A Daemonhost that has the least number of bindings placed on it is apocalyptically powerful, but only barely contained.
41–70	**Twice-bound:** More powerfully bound, a Daemonhost is still extremely dangerous, but its raw power is tempered and more easily controlled.
71–00	**Thrice-bound:** The most strongly bound Daemonhosts are the least likely to rebel, but are still not without inhuman strength and power.

Stage Two: Characteristics

Once you have determined the extent of the Daemonhost's binding, cross-reference this with the profile given in the following table to give the Daemonhost's Characteristics.

Table 12-6: Daemonhost Characteristics

Characteristics	Unbound	Once-Bound	Twice-Bound	Thrice-Bound
Weapon Skill (WS)	20+2d10	20+2d10	20+2d10	20+2d10
Ballistic Skill (BS)	20+2d10	20+2d10	20+2d10	20+2d10
Strength (S)	45+2d10	45+2d10	40+2d10	35+2d10
Toughness (T)	30+2d10	35+2d10	40+2d10	45+2d10
Agility (Ag)	10+2d10	10+2d10	10+2d10	10+2d10
Intelligence (Int)	70+2d10	70+2d10	70+2d10	70+2d10
Perception (Per)	50+2d10	50+2d10	50+2d10	50+2d10
Willpower (WP)	80+2d10	70+2d10	60+2d10	50+2d10
Fellowship (Fel)	5+2d10	5+2d10	5+2d10	5+2d10
Wounds	30	30	30	30
Psy Rating	8	6	5	4

Stage Three: Unholy Changes

Daemonhosts are covered with chains and amulets, their skin punctured by needles and their flesh etched with sigils. The host body beneath the bindings is warped by the terrible essence trapped within it. To determine what changes have been visited on the Daemon's fleshy prison, roll on **Table 12-7: Unholy Changes** that follows.

For unbound Daemonhosts, roll 1d5+1 times; for once-bound, roll 1d5; for twice-bound, roll 1d5–1 (minimum once); and for thrice-bound, roll 1d5–2 (minimum once). In all cases, re-roll duplicate results.

Table 12-7: Unholy Changes

Roll	Result
01–04	**Vestigial Horns:** Two small horns project from the Daemonhost's forehead.
05–08	**Glowing Eyes:** The Daemonhost's eyes glow with a malign light.
09–12	**Boils:** The flesh of the Daemonhost is covered with weeping boils and sores.
13–16	**Cat's Eyes:** The Daemonhost's eyes are yellow and the pupils are black slits.
17–20	**Horns:** A set of horns, like those of a ram or goat, spring from the Daemonhost's head. It gains the Natural Weapon (Horns) trait.
21–24	**Claws or Blades:** The Daemonhost's fingers are elongated and sharpened into razor claws, or fused into blades as sharp as sin. It gains the Natural Weapon (Claws) trait with the Warp Weapon quality.
25–28	**Broken Form:** The Daemonhost's body is permanently contorted, its body folded in unnatural ways.
29–32	**Snake Tongue:** A long forked tongue flicks from between the Daemonhost's teeth.
33–36	**Fluid Form:** The Daemonhost's flesh flows continually: limbs, screaming faces and other terrible things pushing out from its body before being reabsorbed.
37–40	**Wings:** Great wings of feathers or stretched skin have sprung from the Daemonhost's back. It gains the Flyer trait at a rate equal to twice its Agility Bonus.
41–44	**Bleeding Mouth and Eyes:** The Daemonhost's eyes continually weep blood, while viscous gore seeps from between its lips.
45–48	**Covered in Eyes:** The Daemonhost's flesh is covered in eyes. The Daemonhost gains a +20 bonus to Awareness Tests involving vision.
49–52	**Quills:** The Daemonhost's flesh has sprouted long avian quills. It gains the Natural Armour 2 trait.
53–56	**Un-fleshed:** The Daemonhost has no skin, its glistening muscles and sinews are exposed.
57–60	**Inner Fire:** An unearthly fire burns within the Daemonhost, glowing through its flesh, veins and skin. Its natural attacks inflict Energy Damage.
61–64	**Bloated Form:** The host body is grossly bloated.
65–68	**Snake Nest:** Snakes coil around the Daemonhost, flowing from its mouth and rents in its flesh. Whenever it deals Damage, the target must succeed on a Hard (-20) Toughness Test or be affected as if by a hallucinogen grenade for 1d5 Rounds.
69–72	**Insect Hive:** The Daemonhost's body is a hive for a mass of insects that crawl across it. It gains 1d10 Wounds.
73–76	**Corpse-Host:** The host's body has expired during the ritual and is visibly rotting—yet it still lives! It increases its Toughness by 1d10.
77–80	**Elongated limbs:** The Daemonhost's limbs are distorted and elongated. The Daemonhost can attack creatures up to three metres away in close combat.
81–84	**Scales:** The Daemonhost's body is covered in a fine layer of snake-like scales. It gains the Natural Armour 3 trait.
85–88	**Animalistic:** The Daemonhost's body has bestial features, such as the head of a goat, bull or avian, backwards-jointed limbs or fur.
89–92	**Featureless Face:** Though it has no effect on its senses, the Daemonhost's head is smooth, featureless flesh.
93–96	**Charred Form:** The host body appears horrifically burnt. The Daemonhost is immune to all forms of fire and heat damage, even psychic fire (but not holy flame).
97–00	**Seeming Normality:** If you roll this result, do not roll any further on this table. Also, any results already rolled are removed. The host body seems perfectly normal, apart from the instruments of its binding. It adds 1d10 to its Fellowship.

Stage Four: Daemonic Presence

The very presence of a Daemonhost has an effect on its surroundings. The diameter of this area is equal to the Daemon's Willpower Characteristic in metres. Within this area, all characters experience a particular set of phenomena and take a -10 penalty to Willpower Tests. The number of phenomena caused depends on how strongly the Daemonhost is bound: unbound Daemonhosts cause four phenomena; once-bound Daemonhosts cause three phenomena; twice-bound Daemonhosts cause two phenomena; and thrice-bound Daemonhosts cause one phenomenon. For each phenomenon the Daemonhost has, roll once on **Table 12-8: Daemonic Phenomena** that follows. Re-roll any duplicate rolls.

TABLE 12-8: DAEMONIC PHENOMENA

Roll	Result (In the Daemonhost's presence…)
01–04	…people will feel nauseous.
05–08	…people perceive a sickly sweet smell.
09–12	…everyone tastes gritty ashes.
13–16	…people's noses begin to bleed.
17–20	…the sound of scuttling can be heard.
21–24	…there is a smell of burnt paper and hot metal.
25–28	…a single high-pitched note can be heard.
29–32	…liquid falls upwards in drops, pooling on the ceiling.
33–36	…snatches of sound without connection can be heard.
37–40	…plants wither and die, food and drink spoils.
41–44	…the air is hot, as if standing in front of a furnace.
45–48	…the air is filled with the smell of ozone.
49–52	…there is a smell of burning flesh.
53–56	…paint peels as if burnt, metal rusts and wood rots. Once the Daemonhost has passed everything returns to normal.
57–60	…the air is filled with the smell of blood.
61–64	…the buzzing of flies can be heard, though none can be seen.
65–68	…shadows flicker and distort, seemingly to the silhouettes of strange figures.
69–72	…lights dim, candles snuff out, a gloom spreads.
73–76	…strange things are seen out of the corner of people's eyes.
77–80	…the air is cold, breath forms in the air and surfaces are covered with a sheen of frost.
81–84	…a cold breeze swirls and screaming can be heard distantly.
85–88	…sparks arc across metal and ghostly radiance glimmers from flesh.
89–92	…muttering familiar voices can be heard dimly.
93–96	…everyone feels things scuttling across their skin; when they look, there is nothing there.
97–00	…the taste of bile and of blood fills people's mouths.

Stage Five: Psychic Powers

Daemonhosts do not suffer Perils of the Warp. When a Daemonhost is using a Psychic Power and an 9 is rolled on the power dice, the Daemonhost takes a Wound for each 9 rolled. In addition, Daemonhosts do not suffer any negative effects of Psychic Phenomena, although those around the Daemonhost will be affected as normal by any that occur.

Minor Psychic Powers: Daemonhosts possess all Minor Psychic Powers described in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**.

Psychic Powers: An unbound Daemonhost has 1d5+4 Psychic Powers, a once-bound Daemonhost has 1d5+2 Psychic Powers, a twice-bound Daemonhost has 1d5+1 Psychic Powers, and a thrice-bound Daemonhost has 1d5 Psychic Powers. Select any Psychic Powers you like from those found in **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**.

Stage Six: Skills, Talents and Traits

All Daemonhosts have the following Skills, Talents and Traits:

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Forbidden Lore (Daemonology, Heresy, Warp, plus any others you like) (Int) +20, Psyniscience (Per) +20, Secret Tongue (any you like) (Int) +20, Speak Language (all) (Int) +20.

Talents: None.

Traits: Daemonic, Dark Sight, Fear 4, Flyer (AB), From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Claws or Fangs). Unbound and once-bound Daemonhosts have Unnatural Strength (×3), and twice and thrice-bound have Unnatural Strength (×2).

Stage Seven: Finishing Touches

Its now time to pull together all of the randomly generated factors, add in your own details such as a name, and unify it into a consistent whole.

Threat Rating: Thrice-bound and twice-bound are rated as Malleus Extremis, while once-bound and unbound are rated as Malleus Terminus.

Example Daemonhost:

Hedrodal

Twice-bound Daemonhost

Created by the false prophets of the Pilgrims of Hayte using the unwilling body of the fallen Interrogator Cripon, Hedrodal is a foul thing. A long purple snake-tongue flicks from between its grinning teeth, glowing eyes burn with an icy light and its chain-crossed flesh is covered in rolling eyes and glistening boils. Everywhere Hedrodal passes there is the sound of nameless things scuttling, and lurking shadows of horrible visage can be seen inhabiting the darkness around it.

Hedrodal Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	28	45	44	12	85	65	79	13

Movement: 1/2/3/6 **Wounds:** 30

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Forbidden Lore (Daemonology, Heresy, Warp, plus any others you like) (Int) +20, Psyniscience (Per) +20, Secret Tongue (Daemonic) (Int) +20, Speak Language (all) (Int) +20.

Talents: None.

Traits: Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Fear 4, Flyer 1, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Claws or Fangs), Unnatural Strength (×2).

Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 5): All Minor Psychic Powers, plus Blinding Flash, Call Flame, Holocaust, Regenerate, Telekinesis.

Weapons: Claws and angs (1d10+8 R; Primitive).

Threat Rating: Malleus Extremis.

XIII

Adventure: Illumination

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The Brazen Sky

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Part V
Dancer at the Threshold

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NPCs & Creatures

Chapter XIII: Illumination

"The most dangerous weapon this galaxy has ever produced is faith. All other force is merely a shadow of what that terrible power can achieve."

— Inquisitor Globus Vaarak, Ordo Hereticus.

Illumination is an introductory adventure designed to help novice Game Masters and players alike plunge into the grim and mysterious milieu of the *Warhammer 40,000* universe. In it Player Characters (PCs) will be pitched into the midst of dark events and journey to a barren and barbaric world where ancient evils are stirring, and the lives, and indeed the souls, of many will depend on the Acolytes' actions.

The story as it unfolds is one of treachery, dark secrets revealed, intrigue and deceit (as well as a generous amount of action and mortal danger), so if you are intending to play this scenario as an Acolyte, please read no further as you will spoil the surprises in store for you. Game Master, you may proceed!

A Note for Novice GMs

If you're a novice Game Master, take care to read the adventure through a few times before running it. Don't be afraid to make a few notes along the way, as the better you know what's going on in the adventure's storyline, the better you'll be able to react when your players do something unexpected! Also we've added a few extra touches to help you keep track of things, such as details on NPCs, and blocks of descriptive text at the start of important encounters. These can simply be read out verbatim or paraphrase to help set the scene for your players. A lot of the drama lies in unravelling the truth and the consequences of being deceived. Illumination is no different, so don't worry too much if the PCs don't "get it" all the way up to the end— it'll just make the final encounter all the more frightening.

Good Luck & Have Fun!

Introduction & Game Master's Section

This adventure is intended for starting Acolytes and showcases many of the iconic perils that PCs will face in Dark Heresy. It's also intended to serve as a good introduction to the game mechanics, and so a thorough reading of the rules for Tests, Fear & Insanity and, of course combat, is advised before play.

The adventure itself is divided up into five parts that should be played through in order, and the game itself may take four or more sessions of play to complete. For brevity and convenience, detailed statistics for noteworthy Non Player Characters (NPCs) are gathered together at the end of this chapter.

The adventure breaks down as follows:

Part One: The Brazen Sky
Part Two: Planet Fall
Part Three: The Black Cathedral
Part Four: Faith Betrayed
Part Five: Dancer at the Threshold

An Overview of the Adventure

The PCs are Acolytes just beginning their service with the Inquisition. As one of their first tasks, they are brought together as a team to assist and safeguard a senior Inquisitorial agent in carrying out an investigation on the barbaric world of Iocanthos.

The senior agent's name is Aristarchus. He is a sanctioned Imperial psyker and more specifically a seer. His expertise lies in matters of prophesy, prognostication and the investigation of psychic and warp phenomena. Aristarchus is a favoured member in the retinue of the PCs' own Inquisitor, and also a distant descendent of the famous Saint Drusus—one of the key figures in the founding of the Calixis Sector, a seemingly incidental fact that will be revealed to have dire importance later on.

The investigation has been triggered by a report of strange and potentially warp-spawned phenomena that have plagued the closing stages of the founding of a new cathedral in the settlement of Stern Hope, and is a result of a formal request from the mission's abbot, Orland Skae.

The Acolytes must first travel to Iocanthos on the void freighter *Brazen Sky* and meet up with Aristarchus at the Imperial outpost of Port Suffering. Then they must cross the barren and dangerous wastes to Stern Hope where they will investigate a suspected psychic disturbance. If need be they must bring an end to matters by force to ensure that the cathedral is consecrated on Saint Drusus' feast day as planned.

Unfortunately for the Acolytes, there is a lot

more going on than meets the eye, and they have become entangled in the machinations of an ancient and scheming Daemonic entity known in the dark myths of Iocanthos as Tsyiak—the Crow Father, Dancer at the Threshold, in a plot to unleash itself on the material world.

Long ago, during the campaign to bring war-ravaged Iocanthos into the Imperial fold, the blessed Saint Drusus vanquished Tsyiak's cult on Iocanthos and destroyed the Daemon's earthly vessel in the shape of the cult's leader. Knowledge of this event was completely repressed and even among the natives it has faded into half-remembered myth. The Daemon, however, has not forgotten, and since then it has clawed and scratched at the barriers of reality seeking to revenge itself and to walk Iocanthos once more to work its evils.

To this end, Tsyiak has whispered corruption into the mind of a good-intentioned but flawed Imperial missionary—Orland Skae. Manipulating Skae's pride and blind faith, the Daemon has slowly twisted his mind and brought him completely under its thrall. Betrayal, lies, murder and despair are meat and drink to the Daemon, and it has been secretly orchestrating events from the shadows to use Skae to enact a ritual sacrifice and unleash the Daemon. The Daemon has duped Skae into founding a new cathedral in the wilderness on the very site of Tsyiak's ancient defeat, with the missionary's gathered congregation ready to be betrayed and sacrifice when the time is right. But to fully and firmly take a grip on mortal flesh, Tsyiak needs the body and soul of a powerful psyker to consume and possess, so the Daemon has conspired to bring a descendant of the hated Drusus to fulfil this role.

The Daemon's plan has been to cloud Aristarchus's mind through the gift of a corrupted Emperor's Tarot deck, which will slowly bring him under Tsyiak's thrall. However, the arrival of the Acolytes on the scene is an unforeseen complication. They are, at first, useful to the Daemon's designs as they will serve to escort its chosen prey safely through the barren lands of Iocanthos to Stern Hope, but after that they have outlived their usefulness. The Daemon is not powerful enough (yet) to destroy them directly, and so it will plan to mislead them, seeking to divert their suspicions onto a local Ashleen elder called Esha Raine. The Acolytes are sent off on a wild goose chase, whilst the ritual to incarnate the Dancer at the Threshold is begun and the people of Stern Hope are betrayed to destruction. As matters are reaching fruition, Tsyiak has even gone so far as to begin appearing to Skae in visions as Saint Drusus himself, claiming that the preparations and Aristarchus's presence will allow him (the saint) to be reincarnated in mortal form—a lie that he will also tell Aristarchus when the time is right, duping him into becoming a willing sacrifice.

Through deduction and the right actions—principally by not falling for the Daemon's final ruse and killing Raine, the Acolyte's will be forewarned when the Daemon's plan reaches fruition. They will have a good chance of stopping Tsyiak from possessing Aristarchus and hurling its Daemon-essence back into the warp. If, on the other hand, they have fallen for the lies and intrigues of the Dancer at the Threshold, not even their faith in the God-Emperor is likely to save them or Iocanthos from the Daemon's wrath.

Dramatis Personae of Major Characters

The adventure features numerous NPCs, the most important listed in short form here, with full statistics detailed at the end of the adventure.

Aristarchus: Inquisitorial agent and seer in charge of the Acolyte's mission.

Under-Consul Kerred Smyk: An Imperial official at Port Suffering.

Prelate Orland Skae: Abbot of Stern Hope and leader of the faithful.

Brother Lamark: A senior cleric at Stern Hope, charged with the people's welfare.

Brother Severus: A senior cleric at Stern Hope, charged with defending the settlement.

Esha Raine the Death Singer: A respected Ashleen elder and folk-healer.

Kos'ke: A local petty warlord of the Ashleen whose clan is allied to Stern Hope.

Tsyiak aka The Crow Father aka The Dancer at the Threshold: An ancient and vengeful Daemon once banished by Saint Drusus and clawing to get back into reality.

From Shattered Hope to Illumination

If your characters come straight from the carnage in the Gorgonid Mine depicted in the *Shattered Hope* preview adventure, they are quickly extracted from the mine workings to a fast system craft. On board they are met by a grey-robed adept who identifies himself by showing the Acolytes a ring bearing the seal of their master. He passes a data-slate to each of the Acolytes. He does not know the contents of the data-slate and only knows that the system vessel will be meeting a trader-hauler called the *Brazen Sky* which will take them to Iocanthos where their next task waits. Once the characters are on board the *Brazen Sky* begin the adventure as described.

The *Shattered Hope* preview adventure and additional support material is available for download at Black Industries web site.

www.blackindustries.com

THE WIDER SITUATION ON IOCANTHOS

Iocanthos is a barbaric, war-torn world lying in the Golgenna Reach in the heart of the Calixis Sector. The planet is a dusty, arid wasteland and home to a continuous cycle of strife and internecine conflict that was elevated little by its conquest under the auspices of General (later Saint) Drusus during the Angevin Crusade that carved the Calixis Sector into being. Possessing little by way of resources other than its warlike people, over the years Iocanthos was used intermittently as a dumping ground for convicts and undesirables and a mustering ground for regiments until, centuries later, a strange indigenous plant known as the Ghostfire flower was discovered to possess potent psychoactive properties, particularly when rendered down and concentrated in the form of a bloodlust-inducing combat drug.

Ghostfire quickly became a staple of Imperial Guard penal legions across the sector and is even exported beyond. The rendered pollen has become the planet's only tithe to the Imperium. Otherwise the planet has been left to languish and exists in a near feral state. Indeed, the control of the pollen's export, traded for arms and the products of off-world industry by the planet's fractious warlords, has become the measure of power on Iocanthos and even further cause for bloodshed and violence.

Ghostfire itself has proved all but impossible to synthesise or cultivate on other worlds, and is incredibly difficult to intensively farm as its tangled iridescen blossoms seem to cleave only to the torn and battlefield-strewn lands. This has led to a popular myth that may well have more than a grain of truth to it, that the Ghostfire's nourishment is anguish, despair and violence and that one blossom springs for every one of the world's lost souls. Some even whisper the sedition that those who rule the sector prevent anyone from looking too closely into the suspect nature of these "crops", ignoring what should be obvious to anyone who spends time among the warring clans of Iocanthos: that wherever their soldiers fight and die, the Ghostfire flowers soon follow.

The population of Iocanthos are a mixed group; some are outcasts or refugees from elsewhere dumped on the world by Imperial authorities and others are the descendents of former convicts shipped in previous centuries. The largest group are known as the Ashleen, an indigenous clan of humans that predate the sector's founding. The Ashleen are a warlike, semi-nomadic people who freely mix the primitive skills and lifestyles of hunter-gatherers with imported firearms and scavenged machinery. Outside the world's few off-worlder outposts, wider Imperial culture and law are nothing more than stories and myths, and while the Imperial Creed is kept up by a constant supply of willing missionaries, the persistence of old native beliefs and local variations of Ecclesiarchy teachings are common, something the wider Cult would like to see change.

More information on Iocanthos can be found both in **Player Handout I** and in **Chapter XI: The Calixis Sector**.

Part One: The Brazen Sky

GETTING STARTED

Before running this scenario, you should take the time to read it thoroughly so you get a sense of the plot, the characters, their motivations and the various locations that the PCs are likely to explore. If the players have not done so already, they should create their characters using the rules found in **Chapter I: Character Creation**. Once they've finished and you've looked over their character sheets, encourage the players to come up with backgrounds and reasons for their being selected to join the Inquisitor's retinue. Once all the background elements are in place, give the PCs or read aloud **Players Handout I**. This handout describes the nature of their mission. Then begin with the section entitled **The Brazen Sky**.

Ref: Ing/045678499/BI
Author: Inquisitor Tyburn Graves
Subject: Mission Briefing
Name: Iocanthos
Location: Segmentum Obscurus
Sector: Calixis (Scintillan Sub)
Tithe Grade: Exactus Median
Notes: ref—Ghostfire Pollen

++ Ignorance is a blessing not to be disdained by the wise ++

Mission Details: The Inquisition offices on Scintilla have been formally issued with a request for assistance from the settlement of Stern Hope on Iocanthos. The report, while vague, suggests suspicious disturbances, possibly psychic or warp-based, occurring in the area of a new cathedral raised to honour Saint Drusus. The cathedral lies at the heart of the remote outpost and its successful completion will do much to further the Imperial faith on this troubled world, a laudable goal and one that the Holy Ordos shares.

You are requested and required to proceed to the planet Iocanthos where you will assist a Senior Inquisitorial Agent, Aristarchus the Seer, in investigating the incidents and ensuring that the consecration of the cathedral goes as planned. Your princpal tasks are to gather data about any phenomena encountered and, where needed, eliminate any threats that you find. for the duration of the mission, Aristarchus has the honour of command over you in my name. Assist him and afford him the same loyalty as you would give me, in the God-Emperor's name.

Passage for you has been arranged on the trade-hauler Brazen Sky for immediate departure to Iocanthos. Make yourself known and familiarise yourself with your fellow Acolytes on board using the codes you have learned during your training.

Landing close to the site of the incident is impractical due to its geographical location in a mountain range and the potential hostility of the natives. Instead you will make planetfall at Port Suffering (Iocanthos' primary Imperial outpost) and meet Aristarchus there.

From Port Suffering arrangements have been made for your journey to Stern Hope.

Addendum 1: The Cathedral Mission

Missionary-Abbot Orland Skae successfully petitioned for the first Iocanthan cathedral to be built in the settlement Stern Hope two years ago, and since then reports indicate that he has gathered a sizeable congregation of native converts and worthy off-world pilgrims to his cause. Skae himself, a very distant scion of Scintillan nobility, has managed to garner both off-world donations and considerable local support to his mission, so far succeeding where others have failed.

Addendum 2: Reported Phenomena

As the cathedral structure has neared completion, unusual phenomena have been evidenced both at the site and in the surrounding area. These include strange lights in the hills, animal attacks, missing persons, an upsurge in accidents and unexplained deaths. These incidents have culminated recently in more serious and obviously unnatural events such as manifestations of phantom sounds, walls weeping blood, telekinetic disturbances and other such phantasmagoria.

Addendum 3: Planetary Briefing

Society: Iocanthos is an anarchic pseudo-feudal society, where all power-relationships are based on violence or its threat. A war-torn and brutal world, the control of the planet rests with various warlord and clan factions that compete to harvest or steal the planet's only tithed material, Ghostfire pollen, in order to turn it over to the Imperium in exchange for supplies. The most powerful warlord is currently King Vervai Skull who is currently acknowledged as Iocanthos's de facto planetary governor. Iocanthos boasts a single fortified Administratum-controlled spaceport settlement, Port Suffering, where the tithe is collected and trans-shipped.

Founding: Iocanthos was taken by General (Saint) Drusus's 2nd Army Group during the first great crusades through the sector. As the planet lacked any significant technology, Drusus's forces defeated the indigenous people, known as the Ashleen, in a single week of bloody fighting. Drusus later remarked in his memoirs that the only memorable aspect of the planet was the vast fields of wild flowers which resembled "Shimmering fields of rippling explosions, caught at that fleeting moment between beauty and destruction" [Ref. pg. 526—Breaching the Darkness]. As ever, the general was perceptive as the Ghostfire would become central to the world's future.

Additional Notes: In times past, Iocanthos served as a penal dumping ground for undesirables that the Scintillan authorities for various reasons didn't wish to execute or expatriate further afield. Such exiles were given minimal supplies and allowed to thrive or falter without further interference. The current population is largely a mixture of their descendants and the native Ashleen.

Imperial xeno-botanist Mogren Thunt was the person who discovered that the pollen of the native Ghostfire flowers contained powerful psychoactive properties and refined their use.

After being graced with a powerful vision telling her to build a temple, "Where the flowers burn", Sister Semberle of the Adeptus Sororitas came to the world and ordered the building of the Abbey of the Dawn in one of Iocanthos's flint mountain ranges. The Sororitas facility is forbidden to outsiders.

Ref—Ghostfire Pollen: Iocanthos's sole tithe. It is a powerful psychoactive substance used as the base for a considerable number of combat drugs used by the Imperial Guard's penal legions throughout the Segmentum Obscurus.

Past Inquisitorial Involvement: To the average Iocanthan, the Inquisition is merely another half-legendary power from beyond their world, and while there are records of several Inquisitorial missions to Iocanthos in the past, they are all classified beyond your clearance rating. I have reviewed them and judge none to be currently relevant to your mission.

The planet historically registers a slightly higher per capita level of psyker birth, but not significantly so.

The Sisters of the Abbey of the Dawn regularly report any unusual heretical activity to the Conclave. Other than this, the Holy Ordos retain no standing presence on Iocanthos.

Sights and Sounds Onboard the Brazen Sky

As far as ships go, the *Brazen Sky* is hardly luxurious but in good repair and is a sizeable vessel capable of making the trip across the well-travelled trade route in a few days. Unfortunately, it's not ideal for transporting passengers, offering one rusty-walled open crew bay filled with lumpy cots, mismatched fittings and flickering glow-lamps that sometimes wink out for days at a time before coming back to life again. Meals are offered in the ship's galley, where the PCs rub shoulders with ratings and engineers, but are segregated off and roundly ignored. Further, they have no freedom to move around the ship and must always deal with a single fawning purser. Then there's the noise, the constant grinding sound of mechanical parts that may or may not be working, screeching behind the plas-steel plates. It's enough to drive a person mad.

The Brazen Sky

The adventure begins with the uncomfortable trip to Iocanthos aboard the *Brazen Sky*, a large and rather down-at-heel cargo vessel. The Acolytes are hustled aboard past scenes of frenetic activity as the ship's crew load and offload goods. They are left in a large and dishevelled-looking open-plan crew bay largely on their own for the duration of the trip, which will last for three days under warp.

Their only connection with the crew of the vessel is an alarmingly obsequious purser who goes by the name of Sebek. His fawning manner should be made to irritate somewhat, and he should drop heavy hints about "seeing to their needs", which basically means selling them low-grade "grey market", mildly illegal goods. He may also be questioned through the use of Interaction skills, by making either an **Ordinary (+10) Inquiry** or **Charm Test**, with some example results shown on **Table 13-1: Inquiries about Iocanthos**. He will be well disposed to any Acolyte who has bought something from him, granting a further +10 bonus to that Acolytes test.

During this time, the PCs can also get to know one another and discuss their upcoming mission. Allow the players to introduce their characters, offer descriptions of themselves, and reveal whatever they wish about their backgrounds, capabilities, and any other interesting details they're inclined to share. There's not much to do on the ship, nor is there anywhere to explore.

An Unpleasant Descent

Read or paraphrase the following:

> *After weeks of continuous shuddering motion, you feel a sudden lurch and a sickening wrenching sensation that can only mean that the* Brazen Sky *has dropped out of warp. After a few minutes, the pale-faced purser appears in the hatchway with a flourish and advises you that you must "pack your gear and present yourselves in Forward Hold 2/DZ015 for debarkation to Iocanthos". He waits smiling to lead the way.*

Allow the players to make whatever final preparations they need before they head out. Forward Hold 2/DZ015 is a long, narrow and high-vaulted room that holds a modest-sized lighter—a multi-purpose transport designed to move goods and people from orbit down to the planet's surface. The access hatch is already open and waiting for the Acolytes while workers finish loading supplies and other cargo into the vessel. A deck officer takes a data-slate from the purser who wishes you a last fawning bow of farewell, saying:

"Honoured guests you must depart."

Once the purser has gone, the grimy hard-faced deck officer asks:

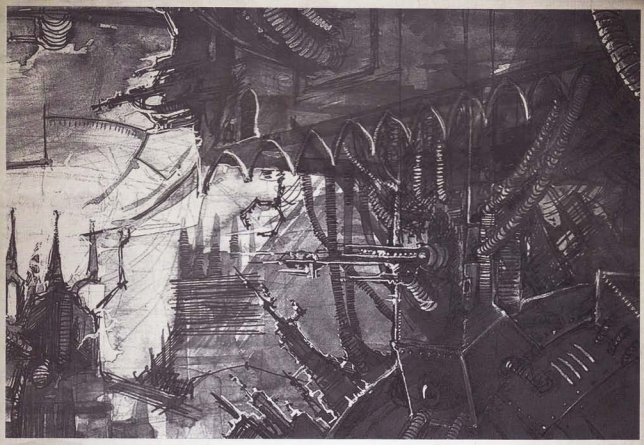
"Any of you ever been on a drop before?"

Characters with a military background undoubtedly have, but it's less likely for other characters. The deck officer looks with sympathy at those who haven't and says:

"Would you like a sedative?" and hands any character who accepts a blue lozenge saying, *"This should help."*

Table 13-1: Inquiries about Iocanthos

Test Result	Information
Standard Success	*"Iocanthos just has the one spaceport, Port Suffering. It's the door to the world—there's no safe landing anywhere else, what with the raiders, winds and broken terrain."*
One Degree	*"Oh it's rare to get any passengers at all for this leg of our route. Now further on, say the Lugnum to Scintilla stretch, this deck will be packed. I'll warrant you'll see no business to be had down on Iocanthos, that's the way of it."*
Two Degrees	*"A terrible bleak place so I've heard, the Ashleen would gut you a soon as look at you, they paint their faces like blue fire to ward off evil sprits they say, and value bullets higher than gold.…To be honest I think even the Administratum sees the place as a punishment posting, if you know what I mean."*
Three+ Degrees	*"Forgive me for saying so, but you see—no one goes to Iocanthos sir, you understand me—no one.…not by choice, unless they have 'hard business' if you catch my drift, rather like yourselves, not that I pretend to know who you are, but I think we understand each other, yes?"*



The lighter's interior is cramped and uncomfortable, with hard metal seats and heavy padded straps to keep a passenger from flying around inside during the bumpy descent. Once the characters are seated, a cold mechanical voice comes over the vox-comm and counts down until descent. The bay doors seal shut with a hissing noise and finally, with a gut-wrenching lurch, the lighter falls into the void of space. Zero-G asserts itself and any loose objects float through the air. After a few moments, an ear-splitting roar sounds from the lighter's engines as it makes its descent into the atmosphere.

Conversation is impossible thanks to the roaring from outside of the craft and the vibrations within. The shuttle shakes horribly for the next thirty minutes. All those new to the "re-entry drop experience" need to make an **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test** to hold down their last meal. Any PCs who took a sedative take the test as **Easy (+30)** but feel a little light-headed and take a -10 to all **Intelligence Tests** for the next 1d5 hours on landing. Characters who are used to this sort of thing can declare that they're doing whatever they wish, e.g. pray softly, meditate, fall asleep, and so on, and do not have to Test Toughness.

After what seems like an interminable amount of time, the shuddering slows and conversation becomes possible as the roaring noise recedes. Bright day can be seen out of the lighter's viewport.

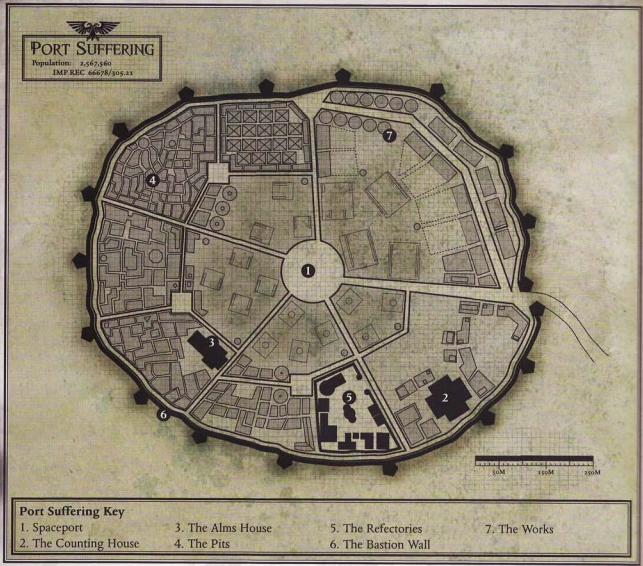
Part Two: Planet Fall

Arrival

It takes thirty minutes for the lighter to punch through the atmosphere and settle on one of the landing pads inside Port Suffering. As the engines wind down, the pilot announces over the vox that they have arrived. The hatch-doors open and a wash of hot air and glaring light surges in, revealing the smoky landing field. Read or paraphrase the following text:

> Through the hatch, you see a scorched landing field, broken ground blackened from innumerable shuttle and lighter engines. Encircling the landing area is a high wire fence and looming above that, the brooding metal-clad walls of the settlement of Port Suffering.
>
> The air smells foul, of chemicals, propellants and cleaning agents, but beneath the odours one would expect of such a place, there's a faint and sweet smell of iron.

Upon leaving the lighter, the PCs see dozens of grubby-faced men scrubbing the hull, attaching hoses to refuel it, and workers approaching with a hover-sled to



Port Suffering Key

1. Spaceport
2. The Counting House
3. The Alms House
4. The Pits
5. The Refectories
6. The Bastion Wall
7. The Works

carry the supplies that the ship brought in and to transport the PCs. Within moments, a blotchy-faced official approaches, wearing dusty and once-fine navy-blue robes trimmed in gaudy gold chains. To either side of him are large men wearing re-breathers and casually cradling shotguns in their arms. The official greets the PCs and welcomes them to Port Suffering. He asks them an assortment of questions about their purpose here, where they came from and how long they intend to stay, while the two guards lean over the characters threateningly. At any point, the characters can interrupt the man, who sputters off in confusion.

The bureaucrat, a vain and self-important fellow called Kerred Smyk, works for the under-consul who has dispatched him to assess the purpose of the Inquisition's presence on Iocanthos, hence his numerous questions. In truth, he has no authority over the characters and they can walk away from him at any time. Questioning the man reveals little other than the isolated state of the place and that there's been "a little local trouble recently, but nothing to warrant high involvement". He genuinely knows nothing about the events in Stern Hope and will seemed shocked if they are explained to him. An **Ordinary (+10) Intimidate Test** will see him and his men depart rapidly, with Smyk muttering apologies.

Once the PCs' gear and equipment are offloaded, a tiny battered-looking cherubim servitor flutters into view, its cracked and dirty cherubic face beaming. It looks like a child, held aloft in the air on tarnished metallic wings, with pearls in place of eyes. It mutely hands the Acolytes a parchment adorned with a seal recognisable as the cipher of the Acolytes' Inquisitor's personal cadre. The parchment instructs them to follow the cherub to Aristarchus "who awaits the pleasure of meeting you".

KEY LOCATIONS OF PORT SUFFERING

As a world riven by endless fighting and dispute, there are few permanent settlements on Iocanthos. Those that do exist have been erected at the behest of the Imperium. Of those few settlements, Port Suffering is by far the largest, being a heavily fortified spaceport surrounded by a steep wall bristling with gun emplacements. **Chapter XI: The Calixis Sector** offers additional information about Port Suffering and Iocanthos, so be sure to review all the relevant details.

Port Suffering serves one purpose and one purpose only—transporting Ghostfire pollen. The spaceport dominates the community's centre and heaps of rust-red hab-blocks extend out from it in concentric circles: living quarters for the locals who call this wretched place home. Although little more than a messy conglomeration of dusty streets and drab buildings, there are a few locations of interest in the spaceport.

1: Spaceport

Occupying the flat ground at the base of the ridge on which Port Suffering is built, the spaceport is a large area of hard-packed scorched ground, punctuated with rectangular pads of rockcrete and heavy-duty docking clamps surrounded by a high wire fence to keep out wandering creatures. Transports sit along the north-western fence where they draw fuel from the main reservoirs beyond the port in preparation for refuelling vessels. Industrial walkers plod throughout the area, unloading much-needed supplies or hefting pallets of barrels holding precious Ghostfire pollen. The air smells of burnt metal and chemicals and a haze hangs over the place from the scorched earth, even when no lifters or shuttles are present.

2: Administratum Counting House

The counting house is one of the few structures in Port Suffering that is not cheaply made and shoddily built. Monolithic and intimidating, it towers over the rest of the accommodation blocks, constructed of black stone and decorated with the symbols of the Administratum and the Imperium. Armed guards monitor passers-by from fortified balconies and shelters, and only those citizens who have legitimate business are allowed to approach the place, let alone enter. Adept-Interlocutor Sabetha Kosloff, the Consul in charge, is not a popular person with either her staff or the locals, and she never leaves the building's shadow corridors if it can be helped.

3: The Alms House

Port Suffering's hospital is a grim structure, being a fusion of a dozen or so hab-blocks that house sick and injured workers. Terminally under-resourced and understaffed, the alms house is run by the acerbic Sister Xanthe and has a reputation as a charnel house, where the doomed gather to die rather than a place of healing.

4: The Pits

Part marketplace and part slum, this section of the town is home to any number of exiles, freaks and vagabonds who have wound up here through misfortune and necessity. Few structures are permanent, with most being clusters of tents and wagons arranged haphazardly. In spite of its poor reputation, the Pits is one of the commercial backbones of Port Suffering and it's here where travellers can hire guards and transport, purchase materials and ammunition, and seek out information.

5: The Refectories

This walled compound is maintained by the Imperium for adepts and such that visit the town. Currently Aristarchus resides here and it is where the Acolytes will be put up for the night in austere hospitality.

6: Bastion Wall

A 20 metre-tall adamantine metal wall completely encircles Port Suffering. Studded with gun emplacements and sentry posts, it is a formidable defence that ensures that none of the violent warbands drift too close or, worse, lay siege to the community. The wall is more than just a simple barrier: it is a symbol, a physical division that separates the violence and hostility of the Barrens from what passes as civilised life within the settlement.

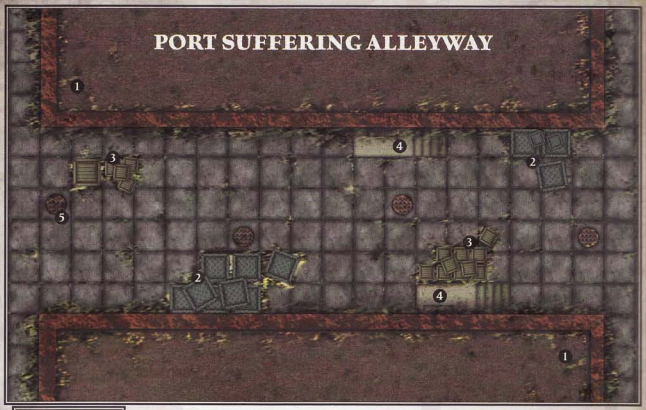
7: The Works

A series of ugly squat buildings and silos where the Ghostfire pollen is refined and stored for shipping, the whole area is clouded with choking dust thrown up by the refining process.

Sights and Sounds of Port Suffering

Port Suffering is a crowded, ramshackle and anarchic place. The buildings are an overbuilt mismatch of prefabricated metal sheeting, clay brickwork faced with crumbling plaster and stone blocks baking in the sun. Everything here is drab and dusty, hot and reeking of scorched metal. The locals are grimy and hard-faced, and have a scavenged appearance wearing patched coveralls, headscarves and coats, most stained a flat grey-brown with dust.

During the day the main streets are a sea of dust-stained workers, and anyone walking them will feel the press of people, the din of a hundred different dialects and the strange iron-sweet stink of Ghostfire flowers hanging heavy in the air, mingling with the heat and stink of too many people crowded into a single space.



Port Suffering Alleyway Key

1. Building rooftops
2. Metal crates (AP 32)
3. Wooden crates (AP 8)
4. Raised stairways
5. Sewer grate coverings (locked down)

1 square = 1 metre

PORT SUFFERING EVENT 1: WATCHERS IN THE CROWD

While the Acolytes are being led from the spaceport, use this opportunity to evoke the atmosphere of the outpost (see **Sights and Sounds of Port Suffering** on **page 367**). The servitor flies just over the heads of the people, nimbly slipping by vehicles and seemingly unmindful that the characters are having a hard time keeping up. Periodically, it turns, realises that the characters are lagging, waves at them and then zips off once more.

While the characters are moving about the settlement, have them make **Challenging (+0) Awareness Tests**. Those that succeed will notice individuals in local grab, standing unmoving and staring at them from a distance. Their faces-bright with gaudy blue and white dye daubed in patterns like flame. All other people seem to ignore these individuals, and if the PCs try to pursue them they will disappear into the side streets.

Characters asking locals who these men and women are should make **Inquiry Tests**. A success confirms that they are inhabitants of the settlement, and one or more degrees of success means that the Acolytes learn that they are members of a congregation that follows the traditions of the "old ways" and that the patterns on their faces are a mark of their beliefs.

PORT SUFFERING EVENT 2: THE MADMAN

Whilst walking through the many alleyways of Port Suffering (whether they spot the watchers or not) the PCs are accosted by a half-naked and badly sunburned stranger with wild dirt-caked hair and blue and white flame tattoos across his face. The man shouts a string of wild phrases and obscenities at them and cannot be calmed, charmed or intimidated; he's too far gone. A **Difficult (-10) Perception Test** will reveal a few salient phrases, although what they mean isn't clear. They include:

"He's here, he's here again, the Crow Father come to drown us in lies!"
"False, false, the two faces he has! First of three has two!"
"His hill shall run with blood!"
"They have grasped a serpent to their hearts, fools! Pity the damned fools!"

If the Acolytes stop for long with the man, or attempt to manhandle him in any way, several young Ashleen hotheads who have been following them since their arrival will attack them with cries of "*Begone off-worlder! We don't need your kind*," and the like. The Ashleen are not out to kill, they are merely restless and violent,

and looking for a well-heeled target to beat up and rob. The attackers rush the PCs to engage them in hand-to-hand combat. They only pull their guns if the Acolytes fire first.

Gunfire here attracts the attention of 1d5+2 guards (use the Enforcer statistics in **Chapter XII: Aliens, Heretics & Antagonists**) who show up 1d5 rounds after the first shot is fired.

Characteristics for the Ashleen thugs can be found on **page 389**. The number that attack should be equal to the number of Acolytes involved, plus two.

If half or more of the Ashleen are killed or incapacitated, the rest flee.

After the Fight

If the Acolytes defeat the Ashleen without resorting to gunfire, they are cheered by the crowd.

If the guards arrive in the midst of the combat, they side with the Acolytes. Once the dust settles, they question the Acolytes about what was going on. They threaten to bring the Acolytes in for questioning, but a successful **Ordinary (+10) Intimidate Test** or **Ordinary (+10) Charm Test** is enough to get them to back down. If the Acolytes talk their way out of this, the guards volunteer the information that the Ashleen clanners from outside the town have been particularly "*restless*" for a few weeks now. No one knows why.

If they are detained by the guards, Aristarchus springs them out an hour later with much roaring about the guards violating the autonomy of the Emperor's chosen servants (proceed to **Event 3** with appropriate modification).

The madman will disappear during the fight.

Capturing an Assailant

Taking any of the ambushers alive is relatively fruitless. They will spit on the Acolytes saying that *"the wise ones have seen darkness brought from afar!"* and little other sense can be got out of them. But a **Difficult (-10) Scrutiny Test** will reveal that they are genuinely scared.

PORT SUFFERING EVENT 3: MEETING ARISTARCHUS

The cherubim eventually leads the Acolytes out of the crowded streets and into a walled compound through doors embossed with the Imperial eagle. Inside, a functionary shows them into a high-vaulted dark room, blessedly cool after the streets of the town. Some effort to make the chamber comfortable has been made, as can be seen from the thick rugs on the floors, the presence of real wooden furniture and even a few tapestries bearing Imperial motifs. Aristarchus sits at a table, examining the local feeds on his data-slate:

> Seated at a wooden table in an old leather chair is presumably the man you're looking for. He wears charcoal-grey robes and has a small smile on his lean, handsome face. As you enter, he holds a set of large ivory cards in his hands which he replaces in a silver case and returns to the pocket of his robes. *"Welcome! I am the Seer Aristarchus. I trust the trip passed quickly?"* he says. He stands, comes round the table and offers each of you in turn a hand in greeting before gesturing for you to sit. Close up, you see he has curious gold-grey eyes and the sanctioning electoo of the Scholastica Psykana imprinted on one cheek. After shaking hands with you all, he adjusts a black satchel hanging at his side. You notice that the bag is made from emadar silk, an expensive material, and held shut with several lead purity symbols, each one bearing a long crimson ribbon that trails behind him.

After the pleasantries are complete, Aristarchus will talk about the ambush of the Acolytes freely if asked. He will be sympathetic but dismisses the Ashleen and the attack as indicative of life on Iocanthos. He signals for attention and blank-faced servitors bring in refreshments and carry away any baggage that the Acolytes have brought with them. Once everyone is comfortable, he explains the nature of the mission:

Aristarchus
The Seer

A widely famed reader of the Emperor's Tarot, known for the accuracy of his divination, Aristarchus also has wide experience at investigating psychic phenomena and has served the Inquisition faithfully for several decades. He is a deeply pious man who fervently believes that the Emperor and various saints of Imperial orthodoxy speak to him directly when he uses the Tarot. Aristarchus, somewhat unusually for a seer, also has a warm and charming manner and is clearly originally from a cultured and noble background. He is also a fairly powerful psyker in his own right, although his gifts are of the more subtle and introspective kind than many of the Inquisition's psykers.

Unfortunately for him, what he doesn't even begin to expect is that he is being led on like a lamb to the slaughter. At the Daemon's whispering, Abbot Skae has sent him a gift in the shape of an ancient set of the Emperor's Tarot. Skae has claimed that the deck is a family heirloom that he has given to thank Aristarchus for his aid, as well as flattering his reputation as a seer. The deck is subtly tainted and its purpose is to cloud Aristarchus' powers and slowly bend him to the Daemon's will, as well as (to soften his mind to accept the Dancer's lies.

Aristarchus' full profile can be found in the NPC section at the end of this adventure.

"While I'm certain that the mission briefing you received from our honoured master describes in some detail the nature of our purpose here, I have had the benefit of spending a few weeks in this… unfortunate… outpost, and I have not been idle. You see, Iocanthos, for all its squalor, is near to my heart. The venerated Saint Drusus himself, to whom I have the very great honour of being distant kin, claimed this world for the Imperium, sweeping over the savage peoples and bringing them into the light and glory of the God-Emperor. As you know, the cathedral of Stern Hope is due to be consecrated to this great hero, and I would not see the memory of this Saint diminished by heresy and such a holy purpose thwarted by a backwoods witch or some such."

"So, Stern Hope… the information I have been able to discover does seem to suggest some psychic phenomena occurring there. While I cannot say, based on the muddled reports we have received, whether this is the result of some reckless, previously undetected psyker or of something far darker, the evidence suggests that all such strangeness has occurred in or around the new cathedral. Bleeding statues, manifestations, haunting noises, sounds of scratching from the walls…" he trails off and stares distractedly a moment into space before retrieving a data-slate from his bag and reading it for a few moments before continuing.

"Ah yes, Stern Hope lies to the north, high in those mountains you may have seen on your way here. On a more civilised world, we would have gone directly to the outpost by air, but that's not possible here, so we have to travel by the Pilgrims Road as they call it, a rutted dirt path is more like it. I've managed to secure us transport, an all-terrain flatbed, and I'm hoping one of you drives, as I've never been much of a hand at the wheel. We must pass through the barren shale wastes first though, and this is not a journey to be taken lightly. The locals claim that the wastes have witnessed all of the greatest battles of Iocanthos' long and bloody past and remain to this day a favoured battlefield of the clans. No one knows for certain, but rumours claim that all manner of terrible things lurk out there, although bandits and marauders are the most likely threat, so we ought to be prepared for any eventuality. Do you have any questions?"

Allow the conversation to flow naturally and let the characters ask what questions they have. Aristarchus knows a great deal about Iocanthos, including the local politics, important figures and how the world's economy centres on the harvesting of Ghostfire pollen. Also, if the PCs have any questions about their Inquisitor, why they have been chosen for this mission, Port Suffering or other details, Aristarchus can reveal as much or as little as you like. After an hour or so, Aristarchus suggests that the Acolytes go about their business since:

"We should leave at dawn. The longer we linger, the greater the threat. The consecration is in five days."

As the conversation moves on, his insistence on haste should be made apparent along with hints of dire consequences should they not be present to see the consecration come to pass. It is their mission, not to mention their duty to the Emperor, the planet and the saint, to be there on time.

The PCs will lodge with Aristarchus at the refectory tonight (unless they have strong ideas otherwise). If asked about other equipment, Aristarchus has obtained sufficient outdoor gear, a personal vox and a lamp pack for each of them. He will mention an area of town called the Pits where they may wish to go and pick up whatever else they think they need, and if pressed will hand over 100 Thrones to share between them if need be. The Pits are a good place to contact local traders and merchants peddling junk, weapons, ammunition, some foodstuffs and other miscellaneous goods, but owing to the world's paucity of goods, anything the GM regards as "advanced" should be very expensive. It's also a good place to get information and get into trouble, so feel free to add any encounters there that you feel appropriate.

After talking to the Acolytes, Aristarchus will retire for the night.

Table 13-2: Rumours From The Pits

Test Result	Information
Standard Success	*"Aye, there's been some bother with the Ashleen recently, a few killings and robberies, nothing we haven't seen before."*
One Degree	*"There's trouble in the wastes and the north country I hear, war clans on the move no doubt, though they're all muttering about 'evil spirits' and painting their faces… but they're killing each other over something. Safer here in the shadow of the aquila…"*
Two Degrees	*"Stern Hope? I've heard of it. They say some priest is building a cathedral up there, attracted a couple of hundred lost souls to his flock too. I'm just surprised some clan hasn't just ridden in and butchered them all by now…"*
Three Degrees+	*"I know a drover-guard who took a herd up to Stern Hope a few weeks back, said he'd never go back. The drove, lost half his hand to bad water and Shale Crows and didn't see a living soul crossing the wastes, not one. There was something else too but he wouldn't say, too frightened, or reckoned we'd call him a fool on it. Anyway he just sold up and headed south to throw in with Seth's lot."*

Into the Barren Lands

The morning after the Acolytes arrive, they and Aristarchus set off on their journey. Beyond the shelter of the port's massive walls is an arid, hostile world.

Travelling the Barrens

The landscape between Port Suffering and Stern Hope is anything but pleasant, and the trip should take about two days, stopping only to rest during the pitch-black night. It's a hot, dusty ride and the road is little more than a dirt track. Their vehicle is a rackety old four-wheeled flatbed truck designed for cross-country use. It has no cab or roof but a tarpaulin cover that can be removed to double as a tent. It carries adequate supplies of food, fresh water and fuel for several days more than they need, and is equipped with a rack of high-power lights.

Throughout the journey, Aristarchus makes small talk, gently testing the PCs in terms of their abilities and their loyalty to the Imperium, to the Inquisitor and, above all, to the God-Emperor. He responds civilly but reservedly to any questions that the characters might have, filling them in on details you'd like to offer about Iocanthos and Stern Hope. In quiet moments he will stare for long minutes at the deck of ornate cards and if quizzed, he will tell them of the abbot's *"touching and generous gift"*, but will be reluctant to show the Tarot deck to the Acolytes closely, and will not let it leave his person. This is a perfect time to paint Aristarchus as an ally and encourage a friendship, or at least a respect, to develop between him and the PCs. Aristarchus, though, will become increasingly fatigued by the journey and noticeably does not sleep well.

That day's journey through the barren lands is uneventful. For the most part the land seems quite literally "dead". The only animal life in evidence are "Shale Crows" as Aristarchus names them:

> *The local carrion eater, vile things more feathered reptile than bird if you get close to them, sharp-beaked too. Local myth has all sorts of unpleasant legends surrounding them. Hardly surprising really. They're not just scavengers either—they'll attack wounded and weak creatures, including men. No eyes in the damn things, no eyes at all.*

Once the Shale Crows are noticed and pointed out, there will always seem to be one or more somewhere near from that point on, staring with their blind featureless faces. The reason for this will become apparent later.

The Acolytes will have two encounters out in the barren lands. The first will occur on the night they make camp, the second occurs in the morning of the second day as the barrens begin to give way to the jagged rocky foothills of the mountain range.

Barrens Event 1: Dead Man Walking

As they camp for the night, Aristarchus will start a fire (even if the Acolytes don't think of it), and suggest keeping watches. He will point out that the nights can be murderously cold and dark, and they should prepare accordingly. Sometime after darkness falls, make each Acolyte on watch take a **Difficult -10 Awareness Test**. The first PC to pass the test notices what seems to be human figure walking slowly towards the camp from the darkness beyond. As they watch it will stop, standing stock still just beyond the range of the firelight. The figure will not respond if called and if attacked or touched will simply crumple to the ground. Examination will reveal it to be an Ashleen who has clearly died by violence some time ago—there is a long diagonal slash across his collarbone and cutting into his neck. The body is sun-baked and already partly decomposed, smelling truly foul, and its eyes have been pecked out.

For the Acolyte that detected the figure and any that saw it walk, this is a situational **Fear Test** at **Challenging (+0)**. Aristarchus will remain unperturbed and dismissive of the event, claiming that the Acolytes should get some rest and stop letting the place get to them. If pressed to examine the body he will distractedly say that he can sense no trace of psychic activity.

Sights and Sounds of the Barrens

The barrens live up to their name; the landscape is a desolate plain of dun-coloured stone, loose, thin soil and thorny weeds. Stretches are pitted with old blast craters and marred by spills of blackened earth, so arid it seems that nothing will ever live there again. Every few kilometres the remains of a ruined settlement or clan camp lies empty and abandoned; some are old, while others seem newly destroyed and are still splashed with rust-coloured dried blood. Here and there skeletons lie where they fell, and eerily, the Ghostfire flowers seem to take root wherever the dead rest, wrapping their roots around the shattered bones and opening their multi-hued iridescent blooms. Then there's the wind. When it blows, it seems to squall from different directions, kicking up eddies and swirls of choking dust, and it always seems to carry the stench of the charnel house, filling the nostrils with the appalling stench of blood and iron, always iron.

Sights and Sounds of Stern Hope

A harsh wind blows through Stern Hope and the air is filled with the chalky smell of dust and the musty scents of human living. At night the sky is clear and the stars very bright. Low illumination seeps from the curtained doors of the dwellings and from the night fires burning in old promethium drums dotted about the camp. The smell of smoke and cooking blends in the chill night air. The settlement has the feel of a refugee camp, and is composed of scores of haphazardly erected tents, lean-tos, shacks and the occasional flint-block building ranging from small, one-man affairs to larger family-sized dwellings. All these are arranged in a rough circle around a bare, rocky hill on which the outline of great domed building is visible even at night.

The people of Stern Hope appear to be a mix of the various indigenous peoples of Iocanthos and off-world pilgrims and mendicants, and many have formed families, often with young children. Signs of the Imperial faith are everywhere and, as the Acolytes move around the settlement, they will find themselves being watched expectantly from the shadows of

BARRENS EVENT 2: SIGNS & PORTENTS

About a day and a half out from Stern Hope, the Acolytes begin to climb the foothills of the dark mountains. As the characters continue forward, call for a **Routine (+20) Awareness Test**. Those who succeed spot a shadowed shape standing atop a rocky outcrop about 100 metres off the side of the trail. With the sun behind, it the figure is quite indistinct and seems to shimmer before disappearing from sight.

An **Easy (+30) Psyniscience Test** allows characters to perceive that something profoundly wrong once occurred near the outcrop, suggesting a weakening of reality around the area. Allow the characters to come up with the idea to use this skill if one of them has it. Otherwise, have Aristarchus claim that he can detect psychic disturbances and order the Acolytes to investigate.

Reaching the formation is dangerous as there is no clear path through the broken and jumbled rocks. Hidden cracks abound and the loose fields of scree could give way at any time, sliding down the slope and taking any characters with them. Getting to the spot is quite difficult, and each PC needs to take an **Ordinary (+10) Climb Test** to make it without losing their dignity and falling over. If a PC does fall, he must pass a further **Routine (+20) Agility Test** or suffer 1d5 Damage to a random location (armour does not affect this).

Searching the area, there's no sign of the figure, but the Acolytes quickly come across a large, crude rendition of a pictograph of a bird grasping a skull in its talons burned into a flat sheet of rock. The area around the pictograph is still hot to the touch.

When Aristarchus first sees the symbol, he immediately fans his hands against his chest in the sign of the Imperial aquila and whispers, *"Throne"*. A successful **Hard (-20) Common Lore (Imperium)** or **Scholastic Lore (Legend) Test** suggests that the symbol is an archaic one associated with Saint Drusus. A success by two or more degrees reveals that the bird of prey depicted is perhaps a falcon, a raptor native to Holy Terra, and the skull it holds is a variation on the blackened skull and sunburst iconography used by General Drusus's 2nd Army Group.

Aristarchus knows this, but does not reveal it to the PCs. However, if any of them ask about his reaction, he states, that this is *"Indeed an age of miracles,"* and put his hands unconsciously to the deck of cards concealed in his robe.

Part Three: The Black Cathedral

ARRIVAL AT STERN HOPE

Around nightfall on the day they encounter the strange sign on the road, the Acolytes will arrive in Stern Hope. Read out or paraphrase the following text:

> As darkness begins to fall, the foothills rise to either side of the road and the path snakes around the increasingly mountainous terrain until at last you see lights glimmer ahead, growing brighter until you can make out some sort of settlement centred on a broad hill. You continue until your path is barred by a rough wall of crudely piled up stone and black flint. Watch fires burn along the top of the wall and you see numerous guns jutting out, silhouetted against the firelight. As you get closer, a pair of heavy wire-mesh and steel gates set into the wall swing open and a tall figure walks forward, wrapped in dark cloak with a rifle slung over his back. In his hand he carries an axe held high. He waves for your vehicle to stop and for you to dismount. Aristarchus orders you all to comply and adds that you should make no sudden moves.
>
> Once you are on the ground the man walks closer and glares at each of you. He seems to consider for a time, then in a fluid movement he bows deeply saying, *"Welcome Servants of the Emperor, you are free to enter."*

This is a good time to give the Acolytes their first impression of the settlement (see **The Sights and Sounds of Stern Hope**). As they drive their flatbed truck up what looks to be Stern Hope's main street, a strong voice hails the party from the side of the path. A smiling heavy-set man in the dark robes of a monk approaches the vehicle with a shuttered lamp in his hand. He takes a pointed look at the party's weapons before grinning up at the Acolytes and winking a bright blue eye:

"Greetings pilgrims. Such faith and preparation is admirable to see. You are the help that the abbot has sent for, yes? Truly we are not forgotten. I'm Brother Lamark, one of the churchmen of this mission. Welcome to Stern Hope—the abbot awaits your pleasure at the priory in the morning after you are rested. Unfortunately he is currently occupied and apologises for not greeting you himself."

Lamark makes a point of greeting each of the Acolytes with a firm hand clasp once he has shown them where to park their truck asking, *"You have any trouble on the way here?"*

Aristarchus remains silent; he seems distracted and can't seem to take his eyes off the outline of a building on a hill in the centre of the settlement—presumably the cathedral. If the Acolytes press for a reason that Abbot Skae hasn't come out to meet them or ask to be taken directly to him, Lamark answers, his mood now somewhat less welcoming, *"Prelate Skae attends a sick girl and her family. He asked me to greet your party in his stead when you all arrived… sir. We arranged accommodations for you at the Crying Clota, our guest hall and an inn of sorts. Not much, but better than a tent."*

Brother Lamark leads the group to the rickety two-storey building (see **Location 2**), before stating, *"I'll tell the abbot, you've arrived."* He nods and walks off into the sea of tents. The Crying Clota proves to be spacious, if a bit dusty and threadbare. The Acolytes are accommodated two to a room on the first floor. Aristarchus has his own room.

Aristarchus gives the Acolytes a wan smile:

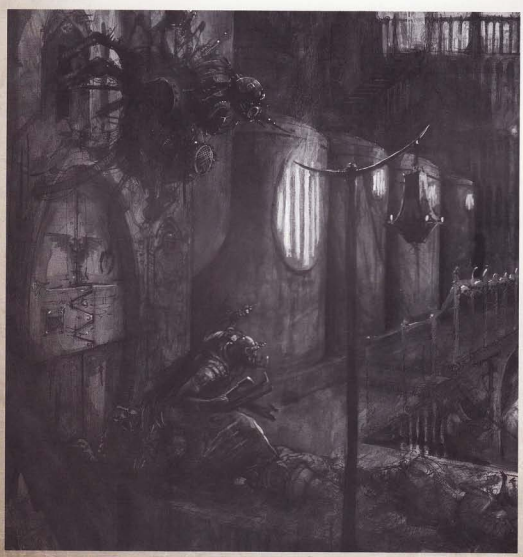
"And here we are. I'm feeling tired. Travel isn't what it used to be for me. If Abbot Skae arrives before dawn, send him my way if you please. Some of you may wish to have a talk with the locals, hmm? Be wary if you decide to go and have a look about outside. Remember that Iocanthos has no moons. The nights are near pitch black." He nods and heads off to his room.

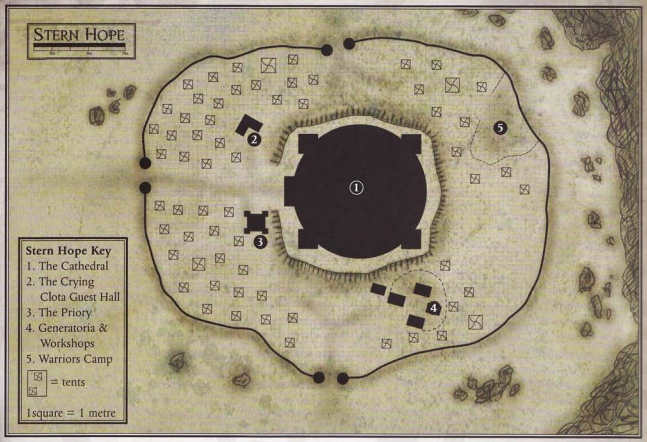
The Acolytes are now free to do as they wish for the remainder of the evening, and there is no further word from the abbot.

Sights and Sounds of Stern Hope (continued)

of tents, and a murmured hum of whispered talk will follow them. The braver adults will come forward to bow and make the sign of the aquila before them, and some will even beg blessings "from the Emperor" while nervous children will stare wide-eyed at them as they pass.

The locals, while a somewhat half-starved lot, seem in fairly good spirits, with many now at something of a loose end since the cathedral is nearly completed. Given their harsh surroundings, many are armed or have weapons in the shape of clubs, knives, a rare few hunting rifles, masonry hammers and a variety of home-made spears, but little else.





KEY LOCATIONS OF STERN HOPE

The Imperial settlement sits in a high mountain valley, securely bracketed with two long spurs of stone. Crude fortifications have been added to the rocky walls forming a partially natural, partially artificial barrier that, while in no way as imposing as the defences of Port Suffering, seems sturdy enough.

What follows is a brief overview of the key locations that the PCs are likely to explore during their time in Stern Hope.

1: The Cathedral

The as yet unconsecrated cathedral has been built with much hard work, using local materials and the unpaid labour of hundreds who have taken to the task as a willing offering to the God-Emperor. In shape it is a large, roughly circular building made of polished and smooth-fitting stone blocks, finished with black quartz facings. Its dominant features are a high central dome and four high pillars set equidistantly around the base, each capped by a tall Imperial aquila. The building is set at the highest point of Stern Hope. It also rests at the top of an angled rise so that any who approach it have to look up as they draw near, making it loom over visitors. Within, the cathedral is a mixture of the ornate and the austere, designed to be a cool, shadowy place, a refuge from Iocanthos' harsh glaring day. Its most striking feature is the massive mural set on the inner surface of the central dome which depicts Saint Drusus standing triumphant, a short-bladed sword held aloft in one hand and a golden aquila in the other, with a shadowy half-suggested figure laying crushed at his feet, surrounded by intricately engraved patterns of flowers and wheeling birds.

2: The Crying Clota

The Crying Clota is what passes for an inn and a guesthouse in Stern Hope, as well as a scrap trader's yard and livery stable. In truth, it is mostly a watering hole that just happens to have a few rooms for rent on the second storey. Constructed of old scrap wood, flint blocks and corrugated iron, it has a shabby appearance, and looks like it would collapse under a strong wind. Hanging from strings all along the front porch are spent brass cartridges and shells that tinkle in the fitful breeze. In spite of its impermanent appearance, the Crying Clota has been around for a while and has proved to be remarkably resilient.

The interior consists largely of the bar room, and a dozen tables and six booths offer plenty of places to sit. Most days, there's a handful of people inside, but at night, the place is packed with standing room only.

The Crying Clota's permanent residents consist of its owner, a small twitchy Ashleen man named Forst, and a few of his clansmen and women who serve as staff. They are all happy

to see the "outlanders", are eager to please, and have a talent for minding their own business.

The Crying Clota serves the local "spitbrew" ale, grit-water and listless stew, and also holds a few bottles of slightly dubious imported amasec behind the bar.

3: The Priory

This sturdy prefabricated building is not far from the path that leads to the cathedral. It strongly resembles an Imperial bunker, on which its architecture is indeed based. The interior is sparsely decorated, the walls adorned with images and icons of the Cult of the God-Emperor. The ground floor consists of a large common area and a few adjoining rooms serving as stores, ablutions and a kitchen. On the second floor are the private rooms of the abbot, Brother Lamark and Brother Severus, and two dorm rooms that house several other lesser monks, clerics and lay brothers.

4: Generatoria & Workshops

These single-storey prefabricated block units house Stern Hope's small generator plant and the workshops where the cathedral's building materials are prepared and the workers' tools and gear stored. Stern Hope's few and often-repaired vehicles are parked in the yard around the back of this location.

5: The Warriors Camp

This area is set aside for visiting Ashleen clanners, clota herd drovers and other nomad groups that may pass this way, and is made up of open tents, a corral and a wellhead. It is isolated enough from the main camp to make everyone feel a little safer while remaining inside the wall.

The Calm Before the Storm

The next morning after the group's arrival, Aristarchus gathers the Acolytes together in his room at the Crying Clota and talks matters through as he sees them so far. Start a discussion with the players and take Aristarchus' part—this is a good chance to get your players to recap to each other the events so far and formulate a plan of action between themselves.

Aristarchus at this stage is looking worn out, and if asked, he will admit that he is sleeping badly but smiles and makes light of it, saying he's *"endured far worse than a few sleepless nights in the Emperor's service."* Once the discussion has reached a natural conclusion, Aristarchus asks them to accompany him to meet the abbot, and tells them that they should feel free to ask whatever seems pertinent, but should remain polite and keep their eyes open.

An Audience with the Abbot

On their arrival at the priory they will be warmly greeted by Brother Lamark who, before ushering them inside, will tell them the good news that the young child that the abbot was standing vigil over will live, as she opened her eyes this morning.

Their meeting with the abbot will take place in the priory's meeting hall, a large square room with a lectern in one corner and furnished with numerous rather crudely fashioned pews and benches. The walls of the hall are decorated with hand-painted scenes of the life of Saint Drusus. In the room waiting for them are Abbot Skae and Brother Severus:

"Good morning, I am Prelate Orland Skae. I have the honour to be Missionary-Abbot of Stern Hope. Good Brother Lamark greeted you last night in my stead, and this tall and dangerous-looking fellow you may remember from the gate is Brother Severus, our Intercessor here. My apologies for not meeting you when you arrived but my duties kept me from it. Thank you all for coming to us in our hour of need. When I first issued my request for assistance I could not have hoped for more prompt attention.

"Let me first tell you of ourselves and our place here, by way of context. I know what you all must be thinking—how did this worn out old man talk the Ecclesiarchy into building such a magnificent cathedral on this forsaken rock? It wasn't that difficult, really. In another life, ages ago, I was of a noble family and not without a few connections. I let my family know that an old man's memory is far more apt to slip when he has nothing to occupy his time. That, coupled with the wonderful story of a "lifetime of service", and working many hours with the locals, has given birth to this place. 'The Throne helps those who plan well', as the saying goes, and thanks to the diligent toil and faith of the good people of our congregation we have brought forth a miracle in the barren land, and not one I will see endangered.

"In recent times we have been plagued by signs and portents, visions and phantoms that may indicate that some foul evil has come to my congregation. There have also been disappearances, deaths and other portents. I am a priest of the Imperial faith and I have seen much in my years and do not take such things lightly, and so I called on those who you serve to aid us. I ask you, I implore you, get to the bottom of this. If it is nothing—so much the better, but if there truly is…a moral threat… find it, destroy it, purge it! Tomorrow on the feast of Saint Drusus we shall consecrate our cathedral to his glory. Nothing must stop that, nothing. You will have our full support. Now I imagine you have some questions?"

The abbot is then open for questions—you can either roleplay the interaction, make tests for it, or a bit of both. Neither Lamark nor Severus will say anything unless directly asked, simply remaining in the background. For more information on these characters, see their detailed descriptions on **pages 389–390**.

Phenomena that the priests will confirm include unexplained sickness and deaths among the settlement's meagre supplies of livestock, several disappearances, strange lights in the hills surrounding the settlement, phantom noises which include a strange hammering, insane laughter and wing beats. Also, up in the heights above the settlement, several bodies were found, possibly bandits judging by their scattered gear. All recently dead, their bones were virtually picked clean—this however, could have a wide variety of causes on Iocanthos.

Skae will seek to deflect attention away from the cathedral building itself. It will take a **Hard (-20) Scrutiny Test** to notice this. If pressed he will mention that the hill on which Stern Hope is built was considered an ill-omened place by the Ashleen before their arrival, but won't volunteer this fact.

Regardless of how the conversation goes, Abbot Skae is unfailingly polite, though if the Acolytes press him hard, the humour leaves his speech and eyes. After the discussion concludes, he bids the Acolytes the Emperor's blessing, offering Brother Lamark's services to them as a guide for the day, saying that he has much to prepare for tomorrow's ceremonies and looks forward to seeing them there.

Shortly after the meeting, Aristarchus will seem to grow increasingly distracted once more, muttering to himself. He will instruct the Acolytes to conduct investigations in his absence and retire back to his room at the Clota. If the Acolytes return later to check on him they are told he has gone for a "private audience with the abbot" and the pair of them are not to be disturbed.

Investigations in Stern Hope

The Player Characters can explore Stern Hope at their own pace that day and evening, and pursue leads and clues as they see fit with Lamark as their guide. Keep in mind that the clock is ticking now to the consecration ceremony when the Daemon's plans will kick into high gear.

The People of Stern Hope

The congregation are a rag-tag group: Ashleen tired of the endless fighting, refugees from the constant wars, the squalor of Port Suffering and a small number of hardy pilgrims from off-world, drawn here by Skae's holy mission. Faith and the Imperial Creed has given them strength and Abbot Skae has given them purpose. If robbed of these unifying factors, they will fall into division and despair—in short they will be lambs to the slaughter, just as the Daemon Tsyiak wishes.

Rumours, Stories and Lies in Stern Hope

Most of the congregation speak a mismatch of Low Gothic dialects, but are easy enough to understand. The Acolytes' presence in the town has been announced in advance by the clergy and the people are well disposed toward "servants of the Emperor", unless they act in an overtly hostile or violent manner. Questioning the people is a **Routine (+10) Inquiry** or **Charm Test**. The more degrees of success they achieve on the test, the more they will hear, as shown on **Table 13-3: Speaking to the Congregation**, which you can either use as it is written, or make up your own responses based on it. The only real difficulty the Acolytes will encounter is sifting the useful information from the mundane or misleading.

Horror in the Heights

If the Acolytes want to take a trip up into the area in the hills where the lights have been seen or to where the bandit bodies were found they may do so, and Lamark will take them—pausing only to pick up a stout walking staff, a battered-looking lasgun and canteens of water for them all. The round trip will take several hours hard walking, and you may wish to call for **Challenging (–10) Toughness** or **Climb Skill Tests** to see how well they get along. Every step of the journey, the ever-present Shale Crows will be blindly watching.

High in the hills and far from help they will be ambushed by a predatory beast known as a Hexalid, which has been corrupted by Tsyiak. While the Shale Crows wheel and flutter frenziedly overhead, a sudden wind picks up carrying a sweet yet unpleasant smell. The Hexalid stalks them and they must make an Opposed Test pitting the single highest **Awareness Skill** in the group against the creatures **Silent Move Skill.** If the Hexalid wins the test, it will achieve **Surprise**, leaping from rocks above to charge one of them. The Hexalid will randomly attack an Acolyte (but not Lamark, as the Crow Father wants only the Acolytes dead or wounded). The creature will fight on until killed, and once defeated the Hexalid will be seen to be covered in suppurating old wounds, half-rotten and with its eyes already gone—seemingly pecked out by crows.

Characteristics for the Hexalid can be found on **page 390.**

Table 13-3: Speaking to the Congregation

Degrees of Success	Information & Rumours Learned
Standard Success	*"The cathedral is due to be consecrated tomorrow on the Saint's Feast Day (the Acolytes' second day at Stern Hope). It's all we've worked for these years."* **Or** *'Abbot Skae is a great and holy man. I lost everything to a warlord's raiders and he saved me from the scavenger's life… Before he came I had no purpose and would surely have died without the Emperor's light."* **Or** *"I heard that old mother Vossa saw the stone of the altar weep blood, so she did! But then she was always half mad that one, losing all her family to the slavers when she was young. Haven't seen her now for days, probably wandered off somewhere…"*
One	*"Strange lights have been seen dancing on the mountains and ill winds blowing up from the hill country. I saw them myself only the other night, the lights, distant, but I saw them. Some fools believe it's a sign of the Emperor's favour. But those of Ashleen blood speak of old devils in the lost places angered by our intrusion into their lands."* **Or** *"The Shale Crows have been bad recently. They give me the shivers they do, staring at you with their blind faces. Nothing like them on Scintilla, where I was birthed!"*
Two	*"I hear that woman Esha Raine is coming to the ceremony. She's one of the "widows of the Ashleen"—a respected wise woman and healer. She believes the cathedral will help the Ashleen join "real" Imperial society and better us all. They say that's why she agreed to help Skae and discouraged those clans nearby from raiding us. Her voice is listened to by many of the war clans and even a few renegades."* **Or** *"I don't trust that war-boss Kos'ke—him and his Dustdog riders make a show of being our friends, but he's as far up to his elbows in blood as any other petty warlord."*
Three	*"They say that the murdering zealot Seth the Voice† used to get along well with Abbot Skae as a servant of the God-Emperor, but he's turned on him out since the missionary announced the building of the cathedral. He claims the place was accursed. Emperor helps us if his army is set against us!"* **Or** *"You want to hear tell of something strange? Well I know'd old Lars a year and more and he was a good man. He'd never had backed up his wife like that unless some unclean thing had gotten to him. I saw him when Brother Severus took him away, like he was sleepwalking kept muttering… what was it, he kept muttering… "it wasn't her," yes that was it, just "it wasn't her," over and again."*
Four+	(From an Ashleen) *"When I was young I lived in a steading not far from here. The old widows used to tell us never to stray to this place—that long ago before the saint came, evil men ruled here and worshipped old and terrible gods and the hill ran red with the blood of their victims. But now the Emperor has come and we are saved. Yet I hear the tales of the lights on the hills and I see the thrice-cursed Shale Crows flock here and I remember the old widow's words round the night fires and I tremble at the darkness."* **Or** (From a pilgrim) *'Abbot Skae is a holy man. Tireless he is in the service of the God-Emperor. Why once I'd left my tools up by the workings and went up there in the dark to reclaim them. Terrified I was until I heard Abbot Skae's voice. At least it must have been his voice. It was so soothing and all my troubles and fears left me. Praying aloud on vigil he must have been. Strange thing, I can't remember what he said. But I saw him leave alone afterward so it must have been him… mustn't it… ?"*

Further questions about Esha Raine bring a variety of answers. All of those of Ashleen blood will make her out to be almost a saint herself, *"a holy woman, that one, and a great healer"*, while others will voice cautious respect, and a nervous few will whisper that she is a witch of some sort, and are confused as to why Skae "consorts" with her.

†*For more information on Seth the Voice and the warlords, see the Iocanthos section in Chapter XI: The* ***Calixis Sector****.*

Principal Characters Encountered in Stern Hope

In addition to the locals, there are a number of key characters in the settlement who play an important part in the unfolding events. The following section briefly details their motivations and history.

Missionary-Abbot, Prelate Orland Skae

Six decades ago, as a young missionary, Orland Skae left the relative comfort of his post in the high churches of Scintilla. Following what he felt to be his vocation to preach the Emperor's word, he travelled to Iocanthos. For many years, he operated with little support, and his crusade to bring the vying warlords and clans of Iocanthos more solidly into the Imperial fold and to fully abandon the "old ways" has been a hard and sometimes bloody struggle. His slow but genuine gains have merited further promotion and support from his distant superiors, eventually becoming impressive enough to garner greater resources from the Ecclesiarchy. This, in turn, has been enough to allow for the establishment of Iocanthos's first cathedral. If Skae is successful, he will be named its bishop by his masters—Iocanthos's first of that rank.

Pride and burgeoning ambition, however, has been Skae's downfall. In searching for a site for the cathedral's location, he was drawn to an ancient valley that legend told was a former stronghold of the old gods he was determined to eradicate. Unfortunately one of those "old gods" found him, in the shape of the entity known as Tsyiak, the Dancer at the Threshold. Since then, the Daemon has slowly whispered in Skae's mind, fanned the flames of his desire for greatness, eroded his sanity and slowly corrupted him, bending the abbot's own plans for the cathedral to secretly fulfil its own designs. Although the abbot is outwardly in control, the Daemon has worn away Skae's mind to shreds, and now appears to him in visions in the guise of the saint, and convinced him that no sacrifice or deceit is too great a price to pay for bringing about the miracle of the saint's return.

Skae comes across as a plain-spoken, tough old missionary and a man used to being obeyed. He considers his words carefully before he speaks, but now and then when he becomes agitated his facade of reasoned calm slips and the fervour of a true zealot can be glimpsed underneath. He typically walks with a staff, and wears plain robes of dark grey cloth, with a white stole to mark his rank and a silver aquila at his neck.

Brother Lamark

Lamark is a garrulous former Imperial Guard NCO who "felt the call" and joined the church as soon as he mustered out. Originally hailing from the sector capital Scintilla, he's a hearty man in his late fifties, accustomed to getting things done and good at looking after those in his charge, whether that means a squad of recruits, as in the old days, or the Stern Hope pilgrims. Lamark was assigned to Skae's mission by the Ecclesiarchy and believes wholeheartedly in it. Like the rest he is ignorant of the abbot's growing corruption. While he cares deeply about the people of Iocanthos and the abbot, he is still a loyal soldier of the Emperor at heart and, as the events of *Illumination* unfold, he will not yield to the Daemon's lies.

Brother Lamark is a loud and talkative sort; he smiles often and laughs a lot. For all that he is a cleric, Lamark still indulges in earthly pleasures from time to time, and will happily drink a willing Acolyte under the table and swap war stories if the opportunity arises.

If questioned on the strange goings on, he will answer that he has seen nothing personally, and tells the Acolytes that many of the congregation are superstitious people who have suffered much in their lives, a fact which can affect their judgement. Having said that, only a fool would discount the possibility of such things happening, and the wiles of the Archenemy are many…

Brother Severus

This taciturn monk was once a sniper in the infamous Scythewind, a unit fielded by Imperial Guard regiments raised on the death world Mortressa—he has tribal tattoos to prove it. He serves principally as Stern Hope's Intercessor (a religious enforcer) and is charged with looking to the defence of the settlement. He is also effectively Abbot Skae's bodyguard, though the old missionary would deny that he has need for any such protection because the Emperor Himself watches over him.

Severus habitually wears a flak vest over his robes and carries a laspistol and mono-axe at his belt. When expecting trouble he is also equipped with either a pump shotgun or long las, both of which he keeps in his chamber at the priory.

Severus knows little about the strange phenomena in Stern Hope, and at the abbot's request, he has not investigated the occurrences—Skae having insisted that experts handle the matter.

Severus hardly speaks at all. A dour and unsociable man, he prefers to act under orders and within established guidelines, and rarely does anything under his own initiative.

Esha Raine, the Death Singer

Esha Raine is a Death Singer, a title that has a literal meaning among the Ashleen as "one who sings for those who have been killed". She is also a well-regarded elder of the clans, a keeper of the Ashleen's oral history and a highly skilled folk healer. Her title is an unusual one and accords her a measure of respect and protection, even on unforgiving Iocanthos. Some would hold that her various herbal cures, chanting rites and soothsaying are the works of a witch, but to the Ashleen it is simply a time-honoured tradition.

Raine herself has genuine faith in the Emperor, although like many of her people she doesn't regard Him as an omnipotent being, but rather as a powerful ancestor-spirit and guiding light for all. She hopes by encouraging her people to follow the God-Emperor, the Imperium will eventually step in and help the Ashleen against some of the more "heretical" warlords on Iocanthos and bring some semblance of peace. To this end she has become a tentative ally of Abbot Skae and his great plan, though she finds the site he has picked for it very troublesome. She also has some dim folk knowledge of the Daemon, a being she knows in myth as the Crow Father, a fact that marks her for death.

Raine is swathed head to foot in a widow's weavings of black gauze shot through with flashes of crimson, and cuts a striking figure. She keeps a small steading in a gorge connected to a main mountain pass a few hours distant, and is an infrequent but honoured visitor to Stern Hope.

Raine arrives at dawn, on the second day of the Acolytes' stay in Stern Hope, to attend the cathedral's consecration ceremony, escorted by Warchief Kos'ke and his riders.

Warchief Kos'ke

Kos'ke is a distant relative of the great warlord Skull. Kos'ke is the leader of the widely scattered mountain clan that largely dominates the broad area in which Stern Hope lays. A man who has earned his position through a mixture of willpower, naked ambition and outright bloodshed, Kos'ke is not a man to be trifled with, nor is he some ignorant savage, despite his appearance. He sees positioning himself as "Stern Hope's protector" as a way to increase his own power, and understands that having the Ecclesiarchy as a "friend" can only be good for him and his clan.

He respects strength, wits and little else. Insults of any kind to his person or that of Raine will bring immediate violence from him and his followers upon the perpetrator. Kos'ke honours the beliefs of his people and considers "holy ones", such as Raine (and to a lesser extent, Abbot Skae), to be somewhat sacrosanct and unlucky to kill. But like his people, he sees the cathedral's location in what his clan calls "The Crow's Valley" as something that is best ill-advised, although he knows nothing of the place other than that it is traditionally shunned.

Kos'ke and his retinue arrive at dawn on the second day of the Acolytes' stay in Stern Hope, escorting Raine to the cathedral's consecration ceremony.

Running a Large Combat

Having the entire town fall under attack and scores of combatants on either side may seem to be a terrifying and overwhelming prospect as a GM, especially if you're new to running games. However, fear not! There's no need to keep track of every encounter, every exchange of gunfire and blows—instead focus only on the events as they happen directly to the PCs, and deal with wider goings on simply by representing it as part of the ongoing story. The Acolytes need only worry about those opponents they directly engage in a fight. This said, one good trick is to have the PCs success or failure influence the outcome of the fight, as we have done here.

Part Four: Faith Betrayed

A Red Morning

The Ashleen rise before the sun, so Stern Hope is likely to be bustling by the time most of the Acolytes rouse themselves. The dawn seems to linger, hanging heavy and red while Shale Crows wheel silently in the skies.

Any character with **Psyniscience** may make a **Routine (+20) Awareness Test**. If they succeed, they are filled with a heavy air of foreboding and a sense of the warp drawing close.

The Acolytes gather for a breakfast of fried clota meat and broth, but Aristarchus does not join them. Just as they are finishing, the sounds of ululating cries echo through the camp, but they don't seem to be sounds of alarm. Any local can tell them that the Ashleen Warchief Kos'ke and his party have arrived for the consecration. An **Ordinary (+10) Inquiry Test** will reveal that he is considered to be an ally of Stern Hope, and has protected them from raiders and bandits in the past.

If any of the Acolytes go to catch a glimpse of the new arrival, small crowds of Stern Hope's people already line the road watching. Kos'ke and six of his warriors ride through the town on massive Dustdogs. Each beast is a lean, long-tailed biped three times the size of a man, and growls and barks as it lopes along. Kos'ke and all of his men are heavily-built fighters clad in dusty hide longcoats, hooded mantles and mismatched scraps of body armour decked out with trinkets. They are also obviously well armed with sabres, bandoliers of shells and saddle-guns, and a few also carry heavy-bladed spears rattling with feathers and fetishes. The one that the PCs guess must be Kos'ke is a huge brute with a full beard whose leather cross-belts are festooned with pistols. He waves as he rides, occasionally calling out a greeting in a tongue unrecognisable to any but a very well-read sage. As the retinue draws close, the Acolytes notice that at the centre of the riders is strikingly different figure—a veiled woman clad in flowing wrappings of tattered black and grey cloth shot through with crimson ribbons. A murmur goes through the crowd as they pass, phrases such as "Holy One, Esha Raine" and "Death Singer" can easily be heard, and many of the people bow or nod their heads in respect as she passes.

Kos'ke and his men head for an area of the settlement that locals refer to as the Warriors' Camp while the veiled woman rides on to the priory.

A Call to Prayer

Aristarchus heads down from his room around twenty minutes after Kos'ke's party arrives. The seer has dark circles under his eyes and looks more haggard than they have seen him before. Despite this, he seems eager and somewhat excited and he waves off questions after his health, and gives the Acolytes the following instructions for the day:

> *"The Emperor protects, but His cards can be a harsh master. Be careful today, the High Priest was in the ascendant, which I would normally interpret as a blessing for the day's occasion, but the Lost Child and the Jackal were present as well. Holy ceremony or not, be on your guard today. Abbot-Missionary Skae has invited us all to the morning plainsong rites that begin today's ceremonies in an hour's time. Unfortunately, I do not feel up to attending. I'd like a bit more rest, but I think it wise for you all to attend as a show of our earnestness. Assure the good Abbot that I will be present for the great consecration service at dusk."*

The Acolytes have about an hour to prepare themselves and maybe conduct a few last minute inquiries or seek out Kos'ke. Acolytes heading to the cathedral find it shining darkly in the morning sun. Many of Stern Hope's people who are obviously wearing their best attire for the occasion are filing inside the great open doors, and organ music is starting to filter out into the morning air.

As they approach, Abbot Skae and two other minor clerics come out to greet them wearing white chasubles over their robes. The abbot asks after Aristarchus and nods sagely once his absence is explained. He then leads them inside to a place of honour in the front benches to the right of the altar, smiling proudly at the Acolytes' reactions as they step into the nave of the building and get what is probably their first real look at the interior (see **Location 1**).

After a time the abbot departs, and returns leading in the veiled woman escorted by the still-heavily armed Kos'ke and his men to a place opposite the Acolytes. The warriors are looking very uncomfortable. At the last moment, Aristarchus slips in and slides quickly over to stand next to the Acolytes. The organ music swells, voices are raised in praise to the God-Emperor and the ceremony begins:

At the height of the plainsong ceremony, Abbot Skae, every inch the commanding servant of the God-Emperor, moves to the altar flanked by Brothers Lamask and Severus who are holding aloft burning braziers. The music falls silent and the abbot begins his sermon.

"On this day, brothers and sisters, the God-Emperor of humanity casts His eye to this world so distant from His Golden Throne. On this day, He acknowledges your great faith and blesses our endeavours. I know you have long fought in the darkness, thinking to see no dawn. Behold! It is upon you at last, and today shall live in history forever and we shall be witness to a great miracle!"

Skae pauses to let his words sink in and in the stillness, you hear the alarm bells of the wall towers begin to ring as the clatter of gunfire and the high zip-crack of las-fire echo about the cathedral. The abbot looks about in surprise, but his gaze swiftly hardens. He turns and looks towards you pronouncing loudly, *"For blood is the sacrament of the Imperium."*

A TASTE OF BATTLE

Stern Hope is under attack! The people of Iocanthos are, sadly, far too accustomed to combat, so despite what the Acolytes might expect, they do not panic, although shocked words quickly echo round the cathedral. Kos'ke bellows, *"Aside!"*, allowing him and his men to directly depart through the swiftly opening "corridor" of worshippers. If any of the Acolytes ask Aristarchus what they should do, he looks at the questioning Acolyte and raises an eyebrow, saying:

"Whoever they are, they interrupted the services of a holy feast day in one of the Emperor's cathedrals. They're heretics. What do we normally do with heretics?"

When they exit, the cathedral's placement in the settlement gives the Acolytes a wide view of Stern Hope and a good picture of what's going on. A large smoke-belching vehicle with a wide-bladed iron plough has been driven into the front gates of the settlement, smashing them aside and jamming itself there in the process. Now at least thirty or so dishevelled-looking warriors, all of whom have strips of yellow cloth tied somewhere on their persons, are running into the town, shooting and hacking at anything that moves. A number of tents are already on fire.

The time has come for the Acolytes to fight in the name of the God-Emperor.

THE FANATIC VOICERS

The attackers are Voicers—followers of the Warlord Seth's nomadic cult-clan of Imperial zealots. They have been manipulated into conducting a suicidal attack on Stern Hope as a part of the Daemon's own day of ritual. The Voicers are armed with a wide variety of low-grade weaponry, mainly melee weapons, but a few stubbers and lasguns as well. They all frequently scream *"Heretic!"* and *"Blasphemer!"* or just howl inarticulately as they attack.

Characteristics for the Voicers can be found on **page 391.**

THE ATTACK ON STERN HOPE

To handle this attack, present the Acolytes with a number of threats to deal with while the wider battle goes on around them. Each time the characters manage to thwart one of these threats, they nudge the tide of battle in their favour. Once the PCs achieve three victories, they and the other defenders manage to overcome the fanatics. Should they fail to accumulate the required number of successes in a reasonable period, Stern Hope still survives the attack, but the casualties are far more severe—see **Aftermath** for what happens at the conclusion of this battle. Some example threats are:

Kill the Leader: A fearsome, fanatic Voicer leads the charge into Stern Hope. The fanatic Voicers take heart and courage so long as their leader stands. Taking him out could demoralise the rest and give the defenders the advantage they need to repel the attackers. **Difficult (–10) Perception Tests** can be made to find him in the heart of battle, but he will always have 1d5 Voicers about him as he fights.

The Lit Fuse: A group of six Voicers are charging straight for the cathedral, gunning down anyone in their path. The one in the centre is carrying a large improvised bomb, its fuse already lit and spitting! The bomb will inflict 2d10+4 X damage with a Blast (4) when it goes off, which it will do if shot, dropped or smashed.

Dustdog Stampede: The smoke, noise and chaos causes several Dustdogs to panic and break out of their pens in the Warriors' Camp. Maddened by the fires, the Dustdogs go on the rampage, attacking anyone they encounter—attackers and defenders alike. The characters could kill the Dustdogs or perform a **Hard (–20) Wrangle Test** to regain control over the beasts.

See **page 391** for the Dustdog profile.

The Fighting Environment

Consider incorporating some of these factors into the fight.

Palls of Smoke: Thick smoke from the burning tents and firebombs will make ranged combat difficult, and combatants shooting through dense smoke will suffer a **–20 penalty** on **Ballistic Skill Tests**. In addition, the clouds of burning and choking smoke engulfing the characters will force them to take a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** every round they remain in the area. Each failure causing the PC affected to take 1 level of Fatigue (cumulative) and suffer a **–10 penalty to all tests** until the PC is no longer fatigued. Should a PC accumulate enough Fatigue levels to exceed his Toughness Bonus he collapses into unconsciousness for 10-TB minutes—see **Fatigue page 200** in **Chapter VII: Playing the Game**. Remember that the Voicers who are fighting in the smoke also suffer a **–10 penalty to all tests** as well! Any Acolyte carrying a filtration mask does not need to make a Toughness Test.

Obstacles: Most combatants do not attempt to shoot through buildings as they cannot readily see their target or gauge distances. However, much of Stern Hope is made of canvas tents—which doesn't provide much in the way of cover. Acolytes can either ambush or be ambushed, right through a group of tents. Remember that shooting at unseen targets incurs a **–30 penalty** to **Ballistic Skill Tests**.

Summary Executions and other Inadvisable Solutions

It's quite possible that, with clever players and the right clues, what's really going on or at least the broad shape of the conspiracy will come to light before the final events of Part 5 or even 4. This is always a possibility in an investigation-based scenario and, if this happens, you as a GM are going to have to think on your feet. If the PCs start to look for solutions to what's going on or prepare for the worst, so much the better—reward them for it, but the danger lies in them going off half-cocked and quickly getting themselves killed. Remind them, if needs be, that both Skae and Aristarchus have the benefits of both the weight of Imperial law and quite probably the whole town on their side (not to mention possible Daemonic intervention), and if the Acolytes want to move against them, they had better be subtle and one hundred per cent sure they are right.

Marauders: A band of Voicers (1d5+1) are attacking the generatoria and the workshops with firebombs. If these are damaged, Stern Hope will be plunged back into the dark ages.

In addition to their usual gear, the Voicers have several firebombs each (see **page 137** of **Chapter V: Armoury**).

Protect the Innocent: The Acolytes see a knot of 1d5+2 Voicers armed with cleaver blades hacking and slashing their way through the tents. Directly in their path, a young Ashleen woman has gathered a dozen screaming and shocked children to her and is shouting for help. Let the Acolytes' wrath be just and swift.

If you feel like expanding the scope of the combat, you may want to create more scenes or even expand the scope of the conflict to a large-scale battle. Likewise, don't be afraid to have aid come in and save the Acolytes at the last minute or have an encounter suddenly break off—battles are anarchic and unpredictable things. The goal here is to present a tense and exciting encounter, not just wear down the characters!

AFTERMATH

Read or paraphrase the following:

> As the last of the attackers are overcome, the shocking cost of the battle becomes readily clear. Scores are dead, whole swathes of Stern Hope are burning, and screams of grief and moans of pain fill the air. Yet you know that the outcome could have been far worse. You are surveying the scene when the warchief Kos'ke rides towards you mounted on his soot-stained and bloody Dustdog mount.
>
> *"You there, you are the champions of the god-man Emperor? Why did the Voicers attack so? It was madness even for them… yes? What has Skae done to anger Warlord Seth?"*

Kos'ke will weigh carefully what the Acolytes will have to say, and if asked will inform them that the attackers were followers of Seth the Voice. They are zealots and famously unhinged—but to attack in so suicidal a fashion simply makes no sense, even for them.

As they finish speaking to Kos'ke, one of his riders comes up looking visibly frightened, and bids him and the Acolytes to come to the cathedral at once. As they reach the summit of the hill, before the doors to the church an ugly scene is developing:

On one side is ranged the abbot and the holy brothers, Severus with his wetted axe in hand and Lamark with a hasty blood-stained bandage wrapped round his head. Beside them is Aristarchus and across from them is Esha Raine, flanked by Kos'ke's other warriors. On the floor between them is a wounded Voicer, his face covered in blood. The Voicer's eyes stare widely and he's muttering something over and over, seemingly unaware of where he is. A small crowd has gathered haltingly at the fringes of the two groups, looking nervous and torn. As you follow Kos'ke up the hill you grow close enough to make out what the angry voices are saying.

"Let us not give these heretics the satisfaction of disrupting our purpose. Let us finish what we have begun. This changes nothing!" shouts the abbot.

"Honoured Abbot Skae," Raine replies, her voice clear and authoritative. *"How can you not see? Look at this man, be has been maddened by some force. He is touched by unclean spirits and whispers the names that shall not be spoken even now. He knows not who we are, or even why he has fought. Something is very wrong here, how can you not see?"*

Then without warning Aristarchus walks towards the prisoner and raises a laspistol to the Voicer's head and pulls the trigger. There is a sharp crack and the Voicer slumps lifeless to the floor.

"Heretic!" Aristarchus shouts and his voice is harsher than you have ever heard it. *"We await a holy miracle here, woman. A miracle that has been revealed to me by the Emperor's grace, and all those who would stand against it are heretics! Do you stand against it?"*

The shock is immediate, and a second later every one of Kos'ke's riders has a weapon in their hands.

"Enough!" Raine cries. *"There has been enough bloodshed this day. We will go and shall not return. I see now that I was wrong. I see now that you are damned and the crow sits whispering on your shoulder. You have led these people to ruin. My people will have no part of it!"*

Esha Raine slowly and deliberately raises her hands one last time in a warding gesture before mounting the Dustdog behind Kos'ke. The Ashleen ride away at speed, kicking up dust in their wake.

The abbot seems visibly appalled but quickly gathers his wits and begins a sermon to the crowd.

"A single candle illuminates a void, though it may take an eon before its light can be seen from afar. Let this hall be no mere candle, but a mighty sun to shine forth into the outer darkness, even in this time of trial we must have faith!"

In the aftermath of the battle and the devastating argument, a brooding hush settles over Stern Hope and the Acolytes are left to their own devices for a time. The fires are extinguished, yet a pall of smoke and the smell of scorched flesh hangs heavy in the heat of the midday sun.

The Acolytes may seek out help if any of them are badly wounded. **Poor Medical Care** (see **page 152**) is the best that's available to them from a shell-shocked junior cleric.

If the Acolytes attained their three encounter victories, many of Stern Hope's people offer them thanks and bring them water and food, and if they saved the woman and children (see **Protect the Innocent** above) several women will seek them out and bless their names, offering the most likely candidate an amulet made of polished flint with an aquila carving. This counts as a Charm (see **Chapter V: Armoury** for more details).

If the Acolytes seek out Aristarchus they will find him much calmer than previously and entirely reasonable. He admits to losing his temper but stands by his actions. He will claim that there was *"No taint in the Voicer, only sunburned madness—but the attack's timing makes me wonder"*.

If questioned about Raine he will state, *"I fear I will regret letting her leave, but there would have been a massacre if we'd tried to stop her"*.

If they ask about the miracle of which he spoke, he will merely smile and say *"I cannot say, but trust me and have faith, there is a reason for all this, and a reason the warp would seek to thwart us here"*.

He will not be drawn further and leaves for the privacy of his room to "pray for guidance."

Abbot Skae has shut himself up alone in the cathedral to meditate before the consecration—which he is determined will go ahead. Guards are posted on the door with orders to let none pass.

Brother Lamark has been forced to lie down from his injuries, and if approached cannot hide his tears for Stern Hope's losses. He knows nothing of a "miracle" but a **Routine (+20) Scrutiny Test** will reveal that this normally gregarious man is holding something back. If the Acolytes have been friendly towards him in the past, he will tell them as soon as he is challenged that he knows that Aristarchus and the abbot visited the cathedral together in the depths of night along with Severus and a handful of other clergy and guards. He was told that this was to perform rites to "protect the cathedral from malign forces," however the secrecy with which it was done makes him uneasy.

Brother Severus is nowhere to be found.

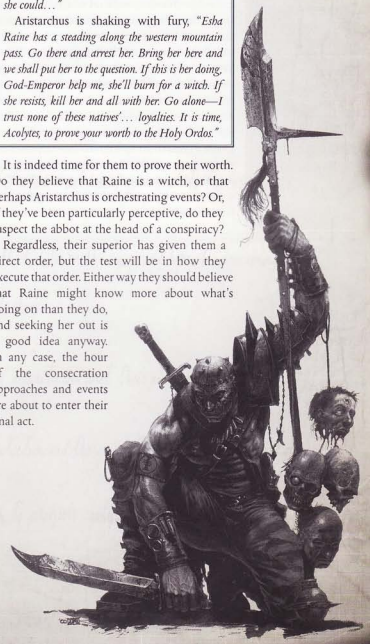
AN ACT OF INFAMY

There is approximately an hour to go before the ceremony when an injured and blood-splattered Abbot Skae staggers out of the cathedral and into the arms of the guards outside. Alarms are raised and panic grips Stern Hope like never before. The Acolytes are called to the scene to find Aristarchus already tending to the wounded and half-conscious abbot, surrounded by armed men:

> The abbot is pale and breathing listlessly, his white chasuble stained crimson with blood. His voice is enfeebled and reed-thin when he speaks. *"I didn't see what it was, it seemed a woman, a dark shape in the form of a woman. I fought, Emperor protect me. I fought and I prayed but… never, I would never have believed she could…"*
>
> Aristarchus is shaking with fury, *"Eshta Raine has a steading along the western mountain pass. Go there and arrest her. Bring her here and we shall put her to the question. If this is her doing, God-Emperor help me, she'll burn for a witch. If she resists, kill her and all with her. Go alone—I trust none of these natives'… loyalties. It is time, Acolytes, to prove your worth to the Holy Ordos."*

It is indeed time for them to prove their worth. Do they believe that Raine is a witch, or that perhaps Aristarchus is orchestrating events? Or, if they've been particularly perceptive, do they suspect the abbot at the head of a conspiracy?

Regardless, their superior has given them a direct order, but the test will be in how they execute that order. Either way they should believe that Raine might know more about what's going on than they do, and seeking her out is a good idea anyway. In any case, the hour of the consecration approaches and events are about to enter their final act.



Part Five: Dancer at the Threshold

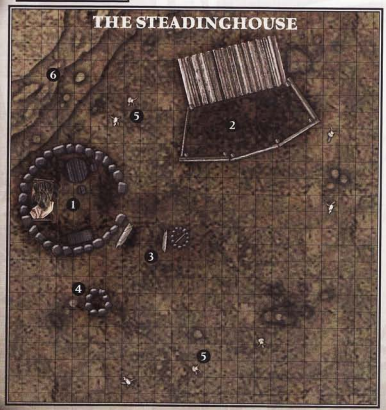
The Journey to the Pass

The Steadinghouse Key

1. Raine's Hut with furniture
2. Corral of Dustdogs
3. Fire
4. Waterhole
5. Skulls on poles
6. Mountain pass wall

1 square = 1 metre

A vicious dust storm, blowing from the north, lashes the Acolytes on their journey up to the pass. The Acolytes can either choose to walk (in which case it takes about three hours in the storm) or take their flatbed, which can make the journey in half that time but will need a **Challenging (+0) Drive Test** not to throw a wheel, break down or get the vehicle trapped or have some other mishap. It is difficult to be heard above the wind, even if an Acolyte cups a hand over an earpiece-vox, they can still barely hear over the storm. The Acolytes' journey takes them up into the low slopes of the mountain range that holds Stern Hope. Other than the dust storm and any transport difficulties, it proves to be an uneventful journey as darkness falls around them.



The Steading House

Towards the end of their journey the dust storm dies away and, in a side gorge down from the main pass, they see a large dwelling formed from rough-cut stone blocks and the hides of various unidentifiable animals, lit by lanterns from within. Nearby is a water-hole and a small corral in which five Dustdogs lounge. Numerous animal skulls on poles dot the area. Several of the Dustdogs begin to make chuffing-bark sounds when the Acolytes approach.

As the Acolytes reach the floor of the gorge, Esha Raine emerges from her home, Kos'ke and several of his men follow her, their weapons are at the ready but they do not attack.

This next part is entirely up to the Acolytes, they can either go in guns blazing or attempt to talk to Raine. The latter is in fact the smarter option, unsurprisingly enough.

If the Acolytes simply order Esha Raine to come with them and refuse to give any explanations as to why or claim Inquisitorial authority to seize her, she states that she is sorry but she will not set foot in Stern Hope even if *"every soul that came before me demanded it!"*

If they threaten her, she spits on the ground and says to Kos'ke, *"You have my permission to spill blood on this ground"*, and goes inside while Kos'ke and his men fan into cover. If the Acolytes force the issue, a gun battle will ensue.

If the Acolytes (far more sensibly) explain why they've come to collect her or simply ask to talk, she will ask them inside saying, *"Come if you value the souls of those who languish at Stern Hope. I have things I must show you"*.

Regardless, the moment the Acolytes express a willingness to talk further with Raine and explain what's going on instead of immediately taking her into custody or simply attacking, the Dustdogs begin howling and chuffing, and the sky darkens. Seconds later the dust storm returns with a vengeance, and with it comes echoing laughter, baleful sickly lights and flocks of Shale Crows descending from the sky.

The Shale Crows

The Shale Crows attack in two distinct flocks, each driven by the Daemon's guiding will and acting in concert like a single living creature. The first will strike at Raine and Kos'ke, and the second at the Acolytes.

Because of the dust storm, bale lights and howling laughter, the Acolytes suffer a –10 penalty to all Ballistic Skill Tests during the fight.

If the Acolytes are victorious, the wind dies and the lights fade, the hellish power spent for the moment.

Characteristics for the Shale Crows can be found on **page 391.**

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

If the Acolytes survive the attack, so will Raine—Kos'ke and his men giving their lives to protect her if needs be, although she and the Ashleen fighters will be badly injured and shocked by the experience.

Assuming that at this point the Acolytes will concede that Raine isn't responsible for what's going on, she asks them to relate to her all they have seen and witnessed. In answer she will retrieve a concealed book from under a loose stone in her house. The book, which is hand-crafted and bound in cracked hide, is clearly extremely old. She calls it a "widow's book":

"A dark spirit has returned. The Ashleen name it the Dancer at the Threshold. Others call it the Crow Father… and we have seen why. It has many names and to say some of them is perilous. It is ancient and wicked, and delights in slaughter and leading men to their deaths with lies of their heart's desire. My people record their past through spoken tales, but some things are too dangerous to say aloud. Take this book for it may help you."

The book is only a few dozen pages long and contains numerous hand-drawn and painted illustrations and lines in cryptic High Gothic script, with odd symbols and runes burned into the pages. Any Acolytes with either **Speak Language (High Gothic), Literacy** or **Forbidden Lore (Warp)**, may Test to understand its pages. If the PC charged with reading the book has one of these skills, the test is at **–20**. If the PC has two of the skills listed, the test is at **–10**; and if he has all three, the test is at **+0**.

If the PC passes the test, the contents of the book can be understood. The book tells of Saint Drusus's battle with a Daemon-possessed cult leader during the conquest of the planet, viewed through the eyes of the Ashleen as a mythic hero-tale. The account refers to the battle taking place on the very hill on which the cathedral has been built.

If two or more degrees of success are obtained, the reader learns that the cult was founded on lies and deceit, which delighted on turning brother against brother. The cult's high ceremonies and sacrifices occurred at dusk after a day when its followers were forced to battle each other to show their worthiness to serve.

If the Acolytes have treated Raine and her people well, by winning through in the earlier attack on Stern Hope, for example, or by showing determination to battle the Daemon-force that seems to have returned, Raine will favour them with a last piece of knowledge passed down by the old stories.

"The old widow's tales from before the saint came said that the only thing the Crow Father feared was the agony he most loved to inflict… but what that might be I cannot say."

The Acolytes can't raise Aristarchus or Stern Hope on the vox, and neither Raine nor the surviving Ashleen are willing to return to Stern Hope with them. They must warn their own people of what they fear is coming.

THE CROW DANCE

When the Acolytes return to Stern Hope in the early evening, and they immediately recognise that something is wrong. There are no guards at the gates, or, for that matter, along the wall and there are no lights in evidence anywhere but for a strange dim haze illuminating the shape of the cathedral on the top of the hill.

If the Acolytes choose to investigate the surrounding camp, they will find very few people at all, and those that they find are shocked and frightened out of their wits, hiding shivering in the dark. There are also a score or so of bodies, disturbingly they appear to have committed suicide. The majority of Stern Hope's population is ominously missing.

The Crying Clota is a wreck, its furnishings smashed and the Acolytes' rooms ransacked. If they search Aristarchus's room, it is in a similar state but, with a successful **Routine (+20) Search Test,** they may find his data-slate journal, damaged but still active. An **Ordinary (+10) Tech-Use Test** will transfer the open file to another data-slate. A quick reading then reveals the following telling passage:

"God-Emperor, I cannot believe it, but it is true. Skae took me into the cathedral and I saw the very vision of Saint Drusus himself! He spoke to me, the unworthy soul that I am. Yes it all makes sense now, my posting here, the gift of the Tarot deck, all leading me here, so I can be his Vessel, the blessed instrument of his rebirth!"

The priory has been the scene of a battle. At the foot of the stairs lie the bodies of Brother Severus and three others the Acolytes recognise as junior clerics. All have had their eyes removed. Slumped half-way up the stairs is Brother Lamark, hanging on to the last threads of life, with an aquila clutched in one hand and his battered old lasgun in the other. He manages to speak, his voice a mere shadow of what it was:

"My friends, I'm so glad I managed to hang on… hang… on until you came… I knew you wouldn't abandon us… sacred oath… Inqui… bringing light to the dark-darkness. Had faith. You must save them… save my poor flock… he has them in the cathedral, I heard… waiting.. waiting to be free and feed… not… not to late…"

Lamark passes into unconsciousness, and it will take a **Hard (–20) Medicae Test** to stabilise him or he will die. If they fail, whatever else happens, one man kept his faith and died a martyr here tonight.

The Cathedral of Night

Ultimately all that will be left for the Acolytes to do (other than running into the night all the way back to Port Suffering and an eventual firing squad) is to approach the cathedral. Within, the final stages of the ritual are transpiring, but it's not too late to stop the Daemon from fully possessing Aristarchus and casting its shadow over all Iocanthos. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

> Walking up to the dark cathedral, the air is heavy and the darkness is so ink-thick it seems to push against the faltering beams of your lamp-packs. As you approach the partly open doors of Skae's great church, the pale light from within chills your soul and a murderous whisper of chanted voices issues forth from within.
>
> Standing before the door, a terrible sight greets you as you see Aristarchus standing atop the altar at the cathedral's centre, the cards of his Emperor's Tarot orbit in the air about him, each one burning ghost white, almost too brightly to look at. In the harsh flickering glare you see that the pews are filled with the people of Stern Hope, men, women and children frozen, standing as if to attention, eyes wide in terror, tears streaming down their cheeks and their mouths whispering words that are not their own. The domed space of the high ceiling boils with a tangle of seething darkness—the warp is bleeding through.

Entering into the cathedral and combating the Daemon requires each Acolyte to take a **Difficult (–10) Corrupt Fear Test** first.

At the centre of the cathedral, atop the altar strewn with Ghostfire flowers, stands Aristarchus transfixed with the light of the Tarot cards that revolve in the air around him. As the Acolytes, approach his eyes flick open and he shouts a tirade of tortuous speech at them. Acolytes who make a successful **Hard (–20) Speak Language (High Gothic) Test** can tell that he is chanting in an obscure dialect, repeating the phrase "the saint is reborn" over and over again.

Beyond the tortured seer thrown into a silhouette by the flickering light, stands Abbot Skae. The man is not himself, that much is clear—his shadow outline is distorted, his limbs judder spasmodically, with his head bowed and his body twitching.

Above this scene, the domed ceiling is filled with a whirling, writhing mass of darkness, which flexes and pushes outward, as if impatiently trying to break some membrane holding it back. With each pulsing surge it draws ever closer to the waiting Aristarchus below.

If the Acolytes simply go in guns blazing, they will quickly find that they cannot affect Aristarchus at all with gunfire. Impacts and energy simply winks out of existence as they reach him, and the Skae-thing will immediately attack. But if they proceed with caution or attempt to speak to either of the figures, the following will occur:

> In a distorted gurgling voice, the thing that was Abbot Skae says, *"I'm glad you could make it, my friends."* The abbot's body shuffles forward and fixes you with burning white eyes. *"Behold! A miracle of faith! Behold! Saint Drusus is returning to us!"* The Skae-thing barks guttural laughter, *"Soon I shall be free, oh not in this petty fragment of meat, but in a form imperishable! And all thanks to these witless fools and their faith! They came scrabbling in the dirt for a saint and found instead a god! Fools they were—easily blinded, one by ambition and one by pride, and what shall I blind you with I wonder.... Now, come forth and receive my blessing!"*

The Acolytes must successfully make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or drop any weapons they are holding and stumble towards Tsyiak, for indeed this is Tsyiak, the Crow Father, the Dancer at the Threshold, commanding the dead flesh of Abbot Skae—a temporary shell until a better abode is prepared.

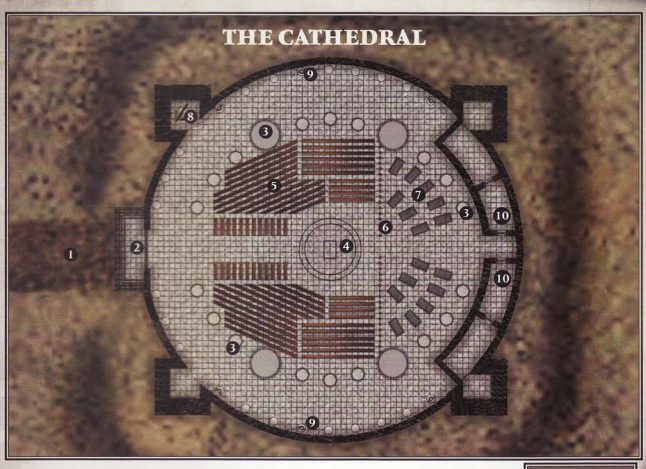
Any Acolyte with a religious background that succeeds on the **Willpower Test** can start calling out the rite of banishment or some similar prayer to the God-Emperor, which will give their companions a second chance at breaking free of the Skae-thing's dark magnetism.

The Final Confrontation

Characteristics for the Skae-Thing can be found on **page 391**.

In one way or another, at this point a battle erupts in the cathedral. Tsyiak has at long last regained a measure of material form and it's in a playful mood. It fully intends to enjoy every moment of killing each sentient being in the cathedral, though it will save the congregation for when it has fully possessed Aristarchus and is hungry from its labours. The Dancer at the Threshold is phenomenally dangerous—the Acolytes will all die if they don't find a way to banish it back to the warp quickly. Mere physical violence will at best delay or distract the Daemon. What's more, while Aristarchus is within the spinning illuminated cards, he cannot be directly harmed.

There are, however, two ways to best the Daemon. The first is through the seer. Aristarchus's mind has been all but overthrown by Tsyiak's influence, but he is not entirely gone. Though ensorcelled to believe that Tsyiak is Drusus reborn, somewhere inside the psyker still lurks a voice that tells him that he has been corrupted and betrayed by his ambition.



Cathedral Key

1. Hill path
2. Cathedral steps & entrance
3. Support pillars
4. Central raised dias & altar
5. Pews
6. Iron dividing rail
7. Biers and stone coffins (empty)
8. Aquila statue
9. Stone plinths of statues of saints (most empty)
10. Clerical offices (currently empty)

1 square = 1 metre

Convincing Aristarchus of this should not be determined just by a die roll, but by roleplaying. If one or more of the Acolytes makes a passionate appeal to Aristarchus, especially after Tsyiak has injured or killed one or more people, for example *"Look at HIM! Look at him, seer! Is this truly Saint Drusus? Would Drusus butcher and enslave his own flock?"* and passes a **Difficult (–10) Charm** or **Intimidate Test** to get his attention, Aristarchus will slowly emerge from his delusion over the course of a round. The light of the cards begins to flicker and the Skae-thing will instantly recognise that something is wrong.

If the Acolytes succeed in reaching Aristarchus, he gives his life throwing himself into the glowing cards and short-circuiting the ritual, immolating himself in the process. The shock of the psyker's fall reverberates through the warp and the cards shatter, flinging liquid crystal shrapnel and tendrils of psychic flame as the roof portal shatters upwards into nothingness and the Skae-thing is consumed—howling as it is returned to the warp.

The second way, if the Acolytes have been paying attention, is the wound that the Daemon deals to others but fears itself—blinding.

Both of the Skae-thing's eyes must be put out. This is extremely dangerous, requiring a suitable weapon and imposing a **–20** to **WS** based attacks and **–30** to **BS** based attacks. Each eye must be targeted separately, 6 points of Damage must be caused to an eye to destroy it (the Daemon gets no defence against this). If its eyes are put out, warp energy spills from the empty sockets as the Skae-thing collapses and overloads the spinning Tarot deck, destroying it and Aristarchus, and blasting the roof off the cathedral in a surge of darkness and flame.

If they failed to convince Aristarchus, didn't work out what the Crow Father feared or didn't try either option, the Skae-thing will rip them apart one at a time.

It is quite possible for the Acolytes to "lose" even if they have the right ideas. This is after all fullblown Daemonic manifestation—in which case, perhaps, you can start a new game involving the disappearance of an Inquisitorial investigation team on Iocanthos…

All that's left of Aristarchus's Tarot deck after the end is a single card, the faceless Magus of the Executeria suit. Damage to the card reveals the internal crystalline circuitry, which any Acolyte with the skill **Forbidden Lore (Archeotech)** or **Forbidden Lore (Xenos)** can tell at a glance has been built using xenos technology—making the deck a blasphemy to both the Ecclesiarchy and the Adeptus Mechanicus.

The cathedral will be a hollow shell filled with several hundred screaming and traumatised people, but at least they will live. The Acolytes have succeeded in saving countless more lives and souls, which would have been lost if the Dancer at the Threshold were freed.

REWARDS

The Acolytes should gain roughly 50–200 xp per game session if they've acquitted themselves well, with extra awards of 50 xp for particularly savvy guesswork, working the plot out and general bravery in the face of the Daemon. If they managed to successfully banish the Dancer and save the people of Stern Hope, an extra bonus of +100 xp per surviving PC in the final scene is appropriate.

For any Acolyte who was responsible for either blinding the Skae-thing or snapping Aristarchus out of his trance, they permanently receive an extra Fate Point. They're going to need it, for the Dancer at the Threshold does not forget such an affront.

IN CONCLUSION

All that remains now is a description of the game's aftermath. If the Acolytes have been righteous in their activities, the Ashleen don't turn their back on the Emperor. Indeed, if they were instrumental in fighting off the Voicers and managed to save Raine, not to mention driving off the Daemon, they acquire a reputation among the Ashleen as heroes. The Acolytes will also discover that the Daemon's final moments sent out a pulse of energy that knocked astropaths unconscious as far away as the system's fringes, and once the source is backtracked help will soon arrive.

The Inquisition will of course want an extensive report on everything that has happened and will recall the whole group back to Bastion Serpentis for "contamination testing". In particular they will want the details of Aristarchus' fall from grace and death explaining at length. More personally, the Acolytes' master will be very interested indeed to find out more about his former retinue member's corrupt Emperor's Tarot card…

IDEAS FOR FOLLOW-UP ADVENTURES

Whilst the Acolytes have, hopefully, dealt with the immediate threat posed by Aristarchus and Tsyiak, the work of the Inquisition never ceases. Corruption, deceit and heresy are always lurking, ever present, in the dark and grim world of *Warhammer 40,000*. What follows are some possible plot threads for follow-up adventures for you, the GM, to work up into full adventures.

Xenos Technology

Aristarchus' Emperor's Tarot deck was exposed as being constructed with xenos technology, but where did it come from? The investigation into the source of the illegal technology continues in ***Rejoice For You Are True*** found in the Dark Heresy adventure anthology ***Purge the Unclean***.

The Dancer at the Threshold

Tsyiak is defeated but undeterred. The Daemon has yet again tasted the pleasures of realspace only to be cast back into the warp, serving to further fuel its anger and desire for revenge. The Dancer at the Threshold has a keen eye and will quietly search for a dark corner within one of the Acolytes' minds in which it can sow the seeds of corruption and downfall. Perhaps Tsyiak could become a major villain in your on-going campaign of adventures, littering future missions with traps, deceit and murderous intent for the Acolytes to stumble upon. Over the course of time, disparate clues and encounters lead the Acolytes to realise that some unseen Daemonic hand is guiding their path into damnation, only to discover at the last that it has been their old enemy the Crow Father!

Heresy Begets Retribution

After undergoing contamination testing at Bastion Serpentis, the Acolytes are (hopefully) declared free of warp taint. The Inquisition is uncertain that the situation is so crystal clear back on Iocanthos and the Acolytes are tasked with returning to Stern Hope to determine if any of the populace was infected by the Daemonic incursion brought about by Abbot Skae. In the time since the Acolytes were last there, Seth the Voice has been waging a war against Warchief Kos'ke and the other leaders of the Ashleen. Amid this ongoing slaughter, the Acolytes arrive and are courted by both sides eager to have the favour of the agents of the Imperium. Is this just another tribal war like countless others on Iocanthos? Or is the unseen hand of Tsyiak guiding events, drawing the Acolytes back to Stern Hope and the revenge of the Dancer at the Threshold?

Undercover

As the time approaches for the next tithe of Ghostfire pollen to be collected, evidence of sabotage in and around Port Suffering comes to light. Port workers, tired of low-pay and harsh working conditions, murmur of rebellion. Bodies of murdered workers begin to appear, each choked to death by massive amounts of the pollen forced down their throats. Who is inciting rebellion and unrest in Port Suffering? Who is threatening the security of the port and the flow of the precious Ghostfire pollen? The Acolytes are sent in undercover, posing as workers themselves, to investigate the port worker guilds in order to seek out the root of the rebellious behaviour. They must discover who's committing the murders and put a stop to it all before the situation descends into a full-scale uprising and mutinous riot. Is this simply a case of defiance or does something corrupt and evil lurk in the shadows of Port Suffering?

NPCs & Creatures

PART ONE: THE BRAZEN SKY

Sebek the Purser

Sebek the Purser Profile									
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	25	30	28	33	35	30	30

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 9
Important Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel) +10, Common Lore (Tech) (Int), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Sector Worlds) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Evaluate (Int) +10, Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tech-Use (Int), Trade (Valet) (Int) +10.
Talents: None.
Armour: None.
Weapons: Unarmed (1d5; Special).
Gear: Data-slate, ship's lesser seal.

PART TWO: PLANET FALL

Kerred Smyk

Kerred Smyk Profile									
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	25	22	30	30	31	30	26	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel) +10, Command (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium, Administratum) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Evaluate (Int) +10, Literacy (Int), Logic (Int), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (Tax Collector) (Int).
Talents: Pistol Training (Las).
Armour: Concealed mesh vest (Body 4).
Weapons: Compact laspistol (15m, S/–/–; 1d10+1 E; Shots 15; Reload Full; Reliable).
Gear: Under-consul's robes, personal vox, Administratum signet ring coder, data-slate.

Ashleen Thugs

Ashleen Thugs Profile									
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	28	35	35	30	28	27	25	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Dodge (Ag), Deceive (Fel), Intimidate (S), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).
Weapons: Club (1d10+3 I; Primitive), knife (1m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), stub revolver (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Shots 6; Reload Full, Reliable).
Gear: Scavenged clothing, face dye, 1d10 spare stub rounds.

Aristarchus the Seer

Aristarchus the Seer Profile									
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
29	31	28	29	33	43	32	47	39

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Acolyte) (Int), Common Knowledge (Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Common Knowledge (Imperium) (Int) +10, Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag), Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Invocation (WP) +10, Literacy (Int), Logic (Int), Navigation (Surface) (Int), Psyniscience (Per) +10, Scholastic Lore (Archaic) (Int), Scholastic Lore (Occult) (Int), Scrutiny (Per), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int), Trade (Soothsayer) (Fel) +10.
Talents: Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Minor Psychic Power (×4), Power Well, Psy Rating 1, Psy Rating 2, Psy Rating 3, Psychic Power (×2), Sound Constitution (×2).
Psychic Powers (Psy Rating 3; Divination): Call Item (5; Reaction; Unlimited), Déjà vu (8; Half; 30m), Dull Pain (8; Half; 10m), Far Sight (17; Full; Sustainable; 1km/WPB), Forget Me (6; Half; 10m), Glimpse (18; Half; You), Healer (7; Full; 10m), Inspiring Aura (6; Full; Sustainable; You), Precognition (6; Half; Sustainable; You), Psychometry (16; Full; Sustainable; You), Sense Presence (7; Half; Sustainable; 50m), Stanch Bleeding (8; Half; 10m), Weaken Veil (9; Full; Sustainable; 30m), Weapon Jinx (8; Full; 50m), White Noise (8; Full; Sustainable; 10m).
Armour: Mesh vest (Body 4).
Weapons: Compact laspistol (15m; S/–/–; 1d10+1 E; Pen 0; Clip 15; Reload Full; Reliable), knife (3m; 1d5+2 R; Pen 0; Primitive).
Gear: Las pistol charge pack, walking cane, auto-stylus, data-slates, lamp pack, personal vox, grey robes, silk satchel with purity seals, book of Imperial Saints, pict recorder, psy-focus (Imperial Tarot deck), sanctioning brand.

PART THREE: THE BLACK CATHEDRAL

Missionary-Abbot Orland Skae

Missionary-Abbot Orland Skae Profile									
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	32	29	38	26	43	33	47	41

Movement: 2/4/8/16 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel), Charm (Fel), Command (Fel), Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy +20, Imperial Creed +10, Imperium +10, Iocanthos +10) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Inquiry (Fel), Forbidden Lore (Heresy) (Int), Literacy (Int) +10, Performer (Singer) (Fel), Scholastic Lore (Legend) (Int), Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic) (Int), Trade (Cook (Int), Steward (Fel)).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Primitive, SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Nerves of Steel, Peer (Ecclesiarchy), Resistance (Heat), Sound Constitution (×2).
Armour: None.
Weapons: Knife (3m; 1d5+2 R; Pen 0; Primitive).
Gear: Staff, ecclesiastical robes, silver aquila (charm), plus anything else needed.

Brother Lamark

Brother Lamark Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
37	43	41	35	26	25	26	42	39

Movement: 2/4/8/16 **Wounds:** 16
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Ciphers (War Cant) (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy, Tech, Imperial Creed, Imperium) (Int), Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Gamble (Int), Inquiry (Fel), Intimidate (S), Literacy (Int) +10, Secret Tongue (Military) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int), Tech-Use (Int), Trade (Copyist, Drill Sergeant) (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP, Las), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Sound Constitution (×3), Swift Attack, Takedown.
Armour: None.
Weapons: Mono knife (3m; 1d5+2 R; Pen 2) lasgun (100m; S/3/—; 1d10+3 E; Pen 0; Clip 60; Reload Half; Reliable).
Gear: Lasgun charge pack, lamp pack, ecclesiastical robes, *Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer.*

Brother Severus

Brother Severus Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	57	30	35	37	30	31	33	22

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperial Creed, Imperium) (Int), Climb (Ag) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Silent Move (Ag) +10, Speak Language (Montressan Dialect, Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int) +10.
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP, Las), Heightened Senses (Sight), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain), Pistol Training (Las), Rapid Reload, Sound Constitution (×2).
Armour: Flak vest (Body 3).
Weapons: Mono axe (1d10+5 R; Pen 2; Unbalanced), laspistol (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+2 E; Pen 0; Clip 30; Reload Half; Reliable), knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Pen 0; Primitive).
Gear: Lasgun charge pack, laspistol charge pack, ecclesiastical robes.

Typical Stern Hope Pilgrim

Stern Hope Pilgrim Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
24	22	36	30	30	23	30	25	28

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (any one), Survival (Int).
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), some also have Basic Weapon Training (SP).
Weapons: Unarmed (1d5; Special), or either a club (1d10+3 I; Primitive), knife (1m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), or rarely a rifle (150m; S/–/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 5; Reload Full).
Gear: Dusty garb, votive item.

Corrupted Hexalid

Corrupted Hexalid Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	–	50	43	40	13	33	18	–

Movement: 6/12/18/36 **Wounds:** 20
Skills: Awareness (Per), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag)
Talents: None
Traits: Bestial, Quadruped, Natural Armour 3, Sturdy, Fear 1, From Beyond
Weapons: Barbed tongue (1d10+6 R; Primitive, may be used for grapple attacks)
Armour: Natural (3 all)

PART FOUR: FAITH BETRAYED

Warchief Kos'ke

Warchief Kos'ke Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
46	36	48	43	43	36	41	34	31

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 16
Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel), Carouse (T), Climb (S), Command (Fel), Common Lore (Warlord Clans) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag) +10, Intimidate (S), Navigation (Surface) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic, Clan Dialect) (Int), Survival (Int) +10, Wrangling (Fel) +10.
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las, Primitive, SP), Blind Fighting, Iron Jaw, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, Primitive, SP), Quick Draw, Sound Constitution (×4), Swift Attack, Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive), True Grit, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee).
Armour (Primitive): Miss-Matched armour, (Body 3, Arms 2, Legs 2).
Weapons: Sabre (1d10+4 R; Pen 0; Balance, Primitive), laspistol (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+2 E; Pen 0; Clip 30; Reload Full; Reliable), pump shotgun (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 8; Reload 2 Full; Scatter, Reliable), knife (3m; 1d5+4 R; Primitive), 2x stub revolvers (30m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 I; Shots 6; Reload Full, Reliable).
Gear: 2 laspistol charge packs, 12 stub rounds, 24 shotgun Shells, Dustdog mount, 30 Thrones (Soules).

Kos'ke's Ashleen Riders

Kos'ke's Ashleen Riders Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
30	25	35	42	33	27	34	42	28

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Concealment (Ag), Deceive (Fel), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic, Clan

Dialect) (Int), Tracking (Int), Wrangling (Fel), Survival (Int) +10.
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Primitive, SP), Basic Weapon Training (SP).
Weapons: Sabre (1d10+4 R; Pen 0; Balance, Primitive), stub revolver (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 6; Reload 2 Full; Reliable) or autopistol (30m; –/–/6; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 18; Reload Full); spear (10m; 1d10+3 R; Pen 0; Primitive) or shotgun (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 2; Reload 2 Full; Scatter, Reliable).
Armour: Reinforced leathers (Body 4, Arms 2, Legs 2, all Primitive).
Gear: Two full reloads for each weapon, 12 shotgun shells, Dustdog mount, CS rations, canteen, kill token bag (charm).

Dustdog Mounts

Dustdog Mounts Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	–	40	35	40	15	45	35	10

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 18
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Tracking (Int) +20.
Talents: Bestial, Berserk Charge, Heightened Sense (Hearing, Sight, Smell), Sprint, Talented (Silent Move), Takedown.
Traits: Dark Sight, Natural Weapon (Bite), Size (Hulking).
Weapons: Bite (1d10+6 R; Primitive).
Armour: Natural Armour (All 2).

Esha Raine, the Death Singer

Esha Raine's Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
27	28	36	38	35	44	47	43	38

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Deceive (Fel), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperial Creed, War Clans) (Int), Forbidden Lore (Warp) (Int), Inquiry (Fel), Invocation (WP), Literacy (Int), Medicae (Int) +10, Performer (Storyteller, Singer) (Fel) +10, Scholastic Lore (Occult, Folk History, Iocanthos) (Int) +10, Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic, Clan Dialect) (Int), Trade (Soothsayer, Herbalist) (Int), Wrangling (Int), Survival (Int).
Talents: Light Sleeper, Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Paranoid, Sound Constitution.
Weapons: Knife (3m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive).
Gear: Widows weavings, gris-gris necklace (charm).

Fanatic Voicer

Fanatic Voicer Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag), Survival (Int).
Talents: Frenzy, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Unshakeable Faith.
Weapons: Varies. The fanatics are typically armed with one of the following weapons: cleaver (1d10+5 R; Primitive, Unbalanced), shotgun (30m; S/–/–; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 2; Reload 2 Full; Scatter, Reliable), autopistol (30m; –/–/; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 18; Reload 18) or lasgun (35m; 100m; S/3/–; 1d10+3 E; Pen 0; Clip 60; Reload Half; Reliable).
Gear: Tattered clothes, 2 full reloads for chosen weapon.

Fanatic Voice Leader

As above but add +10 WS, +10 T, +2 Wounds, Intimidate +10 (Fel) and flak vest body armour (4), carries a cleaver and a hand cannon.

PART FIVE: THE DANCER AT THE THRESHOLD

The Shale Crows

Shale Crows Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	–	10	20	40	10	35	20	–

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 15 per flock
Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Dodge (Ag) +10.
Talents: None.
Traits: Bestial, Flyer 8, Fear 1, Swarm (Flock) Creature[†] From Beyond.
[†]**Swarm (Flock) Creature:** Any attack from a weapon that does not either have the Blast, Spray or Scatter effects can only inflict ½ rolled Damage. A swarm creature cannot be grappled, knocked down or pinned in most circumstances.
Weapons: Shredding beaks (1d5+3 R; Primitive, Tearing).

The Skae-Thing

The Skae-Thing Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
48	20	(10) 55	(10) 53	50	58	53	50	60

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 37
Skills: Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Command (Fel), Deceive (Fel) +10, Dodge (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Warp) (Int), Psyniscience (Per), Scholastic Lore (any as needed) (Int).
Talents: Hard Target, Lightning Reflexes, Sprint, Swift Attack.
Traits: Daemonic (TB 10), Daemonic Presence[†], Dark Sight, Fear 2[‡], From Beyond, Natural Weapon (Distended Hands), Unnatural Strength (×2), Regeneration.
[†]**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20 metres take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests thanks to the seething aura of fear and animate darkness that radiates from the Skae-Thing.
[‡]Seeing the Skae-thing causes a **(–10) Fear Check**—see page 232.
Weapons: Brute strength (1d5+10 I; Primitive)
Note: The Skae-thing is a crude vessel and this form the Dancer wields little of its vast psychic might. The Skae thing has a vulnerability to being blinded, see **Part 5**.

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THANKS TO OUR PLAYTESTERS:

"All Records Expunged": Sean B Schoonmaker, Cliff Drozda, Anita K. Mathur, Andrew J. McDonnell, Barrett Tucker, Eric Ullman. *"Armoured Caltrop Division"*: Chris Corbett, Ron Bettencourt, Shannon M. Heibler, Matt Schaning. *"Collateral Damage"*: Alan Bligh, Joel Clarke, Rob Finnegan, Kendra Hourd, Gary Parker, Gabriella Stenson, Stuart Wells. *"Dark Brew"*: John French, Angela Handley, Paul Handley, Gareth Richards, Paul Scott. *"Excommunicatus"*: Andy Kybett, David Avery, Daniel Burgess, James Duffy, Matt Harcourt, Khy Perryman. *"Forge World Irregulars"*: Alan Bligh, Simon Kirkham, Paul Scott. Stephen Morris, John French. *"G10"*: Jo Bain, Marc Atkins, Jon Blade, Paul Clark, Mark Smith, Stephen Smith, William Trayte, Dan Walker. *"Gadiaston Robbers"*: Scott Llewelyn, Jon Johnson, Mike Renstrom, Brian Van Leuven. *"Hapless Protagonists"*: Nathan Dowdell, Andy Ballingall, Andy Clark, Dave Cole, Greg Davies, James Hewitt, Simon Skelton, Emma Wignall, Sophie Williams. *"Hereticus Finnicum"*: Eero Ruokolainen, Aaro Eloranta, Aapo Kaurunen, Matti Vilimäki. *"K14 Special Ops"*: Ben Webster. Brian Aderson, Cyprian Bogusz, David Lathwaite, Derek McClean, Ian Roberts, Deborah Webster. *"Lapsang Souchong"*: Wim Van Gruisen, Robbert Raets, Eric Rutjens, Gilbert Van Zeijl. *"Legion Llewelyn"*: Scott Llewelyn, Sherik Anderson, Robert Black, Robert Debredi, Matthew Fitt, Brenda Llewelyn, Gary Llewelyn. *"Mallei Heretica"*: Andrew Law, Steve Hern, Lindsay Law, Andrew Leask. *"Minmi's Minions"*: Doug Newton-Walters, Jenni Creaigh, Anthony Jurd, Brendan Jurd, Eric Oliver, Alex Rogers. *"No Guts, No Glory"*: Steven Cook, Robert Barnes, Steve Cansdale, Sean Connor, Leslie Hedges, Jeffery O'Brian, Stephen Pitson, Adam Sparshott, James Sparshott, Michael Thompson. *"Noxie Marines"*: Jude Hornborg, Martin Johnson, Kien-Peng Lim, Anton Nicolaides, Orbis Proszynski, Wayde Zalken. *"Obfuscatum"*: Dave Allen, Gary Bowerbank, Andrew Kenrick, Oliver Morris, Andrew Read. *"Ordo Nihilis"*: Chuck Morrison, Leighton Allred, Sean Allred, Troy Allred, Camilyn Morrison. *"RoC"*: Richard Mawhinney, Clare Gardner, Keith Gardner, Vikki Jones, Allison Mawhinney, Adam Riley. *"Saturday Night Terror Knights"*: Lance Tracy, Allan dela Cruz, Mary Diehr, Mikey Morris, George Rheubottom, Angela Shaffett. *"SaunaMajurit"*: Mikko Savolainen, Jari Åkerström, Matti Kekki, Pauli Kiova, Tommi Kujansuu, Tuomas Latvala, Sami Uusitalo. *"Sleeping Jim Games"*: Peter Ceccardi, Andy Barton, Jim Martz, Steve Milobar, Brighton Montenegro. *"Team Headshot"*: Gabrio Tolentino, Ernie, Lisa, Sam Richmond, Simon, Declan Smith. *"The Admiralty"*: Jameson Rohrer, Josh Habecker, Michael Hacker, Keith Krider, Alex Melendez. *"The Avalonian Guard"*: Kirsten Williams, Barry Holliday, Kai Leske-Heed, Laura Pearson Daniel Williams, Dean Winson. *"The Fate Breakers"*: Yannic Hudziak, Kristoffer Aase, Dave, James Flinders, Steven Ostwald. Stephen Reppe, James "Tzeentch" Ross, Michael Wheat. *"The Heligan Dialectic"*: Ed Morris, Mal Green, Paul Hill, George Mann. *"The Hux"*: Ian Huxley, Kim Huxley, Kim Taylor, Richard Taylor. *"The Larkers at the Threshold"*: Mike Mason, Matt Anderson, Andy Joyce, Viki King. *"The Sons of Leonidas"*: Derek Smyk, Luis Arrojo, Dave Heeney, Kim Hudon, Kevin Perker, Jason Russell, Andrew Sinclair, Jay Winger. *"The Pioneers"*: Karl-Henrik Malmquist, Robert Lindh, Jonas Lindström, Stefan Persson. *"The Traveling Men"*: Michael Congreve, Andrew Barber, Dave Hedley, Sam Holloway, Matt McGowan, David Morson, David Smith. *"VoN RPG5oc"*: Adam Curson, Phil Curzon, Andrew Dolphin, Ilya Frantsuzov, Dawn Hazle, Matthew Spencer, Timothy Southall, John Steele, Simon Vallance, Thomas Whitbread, Simon White.

Dark Heresy

Character Name ..... Player Name .....

Home World ..... Career Path ..... Rank .....

Divination ..... Quirk .....

Gender ..... Build ..... Height ..... Weight .....

Skin Colour ..... Hair Colour ..... Eye Colour ..... Age .....

BASIC SKILLS

	SKILLED	+10	+20
Awareness (Per)			
Barter (Fel)			
Carouse (T)			
Charm (Fel)			
Concealment (Ag)			
Contortionist (Ag)			
Deceive (Fel)			
Disguise (Fel)			
Dodge (Ag)			
Evaluate (Int)			
Gamble (Int)			
Inquiry (Fel)			
Intimidate (S)			
Logic (Int)			
Scale Sheer Surfaces (S)			
Scrutiny (Per)			
Search (Per)			
Silent Move (Ag)			
Swim (S)			

Any Basic Skill that your Character doesn't have may be tested against, but at half the Characteristic value for that skill.

CHARACTERISTICS

WEAPON SKILL (WS)

BALLISTIC SKILL (BS)

STRENGTH (Str)

TOUGHNESS (T)

AGILITY (Ag)

INTELLIGENCE (Int)

PERCEPTION (Per)

WILL POWER (WP)

FELLOWSHIP (Fel)

ADVANCED SKILLS

	SKILLED	+10	+20
Speak Language (Low Gothic)			
Speak Language (.....)			

DARK HERESY

BACKGROUND & NOTES

MELEE WEAPONS

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
SPECIAL RULES

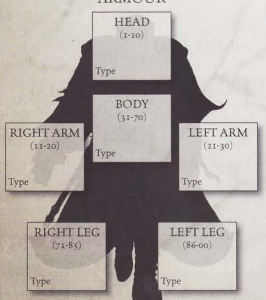
NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
SPECIAL RULES

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
SPECIAL RULES

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
SPECIAL RULES

HANDEDNESS:

ARMOUR



CHARACTERISTICS

WEAPON SKILL (WS)

BALLISTIC SKILL (BS)

STRENGTH (Str)

TOUGHNESS (T)

AGILITY (Ag)

INTELLIGENCE (Int)

PERCEPTION (Per)

WILL POWER (WP)

FELLOWSHIP (Fel)

MISSILE WEAPONS

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
RANGE ROF CLIP RLD
SPECIAL RULES

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
RANGE ROF CLIP RLD
SPECIAL RULES

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
RANGE ROF CLIP RLD
SPECIAL RULES

NAME
CLASS DAMAGE TYPE PEN
RANGE ROF CLIP RLD
SPECIAL RULES

GEAR

WEALTH

Throne Gelt

Monthly Income

Walk (1/2 Action)
Walk (Full Action)
Charge
Run

WOUNDS

Total
Current

CRITICAL DAMAGE

FATIGUE
Max FATIGUE = TB

FATE POINTS

Total
Current

INSANITY POINTS

Insanity Points
Degree of Madness
Disorder: Severity:

CORRUPTION POINTS

Corruption Points
Degree of Corruption
Malignancies:

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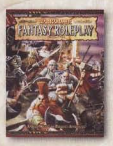

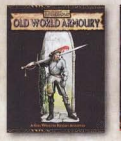

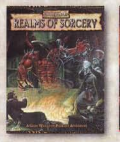

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Imperator mos reverso nos totus ~ Magnus ornamentum nunquam defessus
Beatius est mens ut est quoque bestantis subito ~ Tibes
Paris est tossor sominum ~ Permissum flamma exsisto scentio ~ Veritas
Coward
Calixis Sector
Ixaniad Sector
Hazarth Abyss
Markayn Marches
Josian Reach
Golgen Reach
Femsworld
Iocanthus
Prol'ix
Drah
Heed
Klybo
Zilman's Domain
Acreage
Barspine
Lychde Tem
Crimbol
Ary
Wyr
Kellis
Gistor
Tiber
Dead World

Astronimicon badum rector nos per l[illegible]tis Deus-Imperator misericordia
Fides non Armis, Malevolicum, Penetricus
Tolus Lans immortalis Imperator super suus rutilus per ~ Rex pro ethico
Scintilla
Malfian Sub-Sector
The Halo Stars
The Periphery
Obryl Quail
Settlement 228
The Lathes
Landunder
Malfi
Disk
Scintilla Shipyards
Sector Capital
Secondary Capital
Forge World
Mining World
Agri World
Feudal World
Hive World
Penal World
Void Station
Pilgrim World
Pleasure World
Research Station
Shrine World
Trade Hub
Fortress World
Pilgrim Site
Pleasure Site
Research Site
Shrine Site
Trade Site
Void Site
Pulsars
Nebula
Asteroid Field
Warp Storm
Warp Rift
Warp Route
Impassable Warp Route
Sector Boundary
Sub-Sector Boundary
Segmentum Boundary
Segmentum Obscurus
Segmentum Solar
Segmentum Tempestus
Segmentum Ultima
Segmentum Pacificus
Druscus Marches
Sepheris Secundus
Fedrid
Gamf Magna
Jalf
Lamanide
Franch
Endrie
Enum
Meridiana Saturus
Clye
Ulfo
Mars
Jupiter
Saturn
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto
Sun
Earth
Moon
Mercury
Venus
To the Scarus Sector
To the Segmentum Solar
To the Segmentum Tempestus
To the Segmentum Ultima
To the Segmentum Pacificus
To the Segmentum Obscurus
Forward
Morior in Suus muneris est scio eternus vita

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