



DARK HERESY

BETA CORE RULEBOOK

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For more information about the **DARK HERESY** line, free downloads,
answers to rule queries, or just to pass on greetings, visit us online at

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BETA

In 1987, Games Workshop released **WARHAMMER 40,000: ROGUE TRADER**, a miniatures game that took the gaming world by storm with its depiction of a grim, dark future of malevolent gods and a decaying Imperium of Man. For twenty years fans clamoured for a roleplaying experience set in the grim darkness of the 41st Millennium, and in 2008 Games Workshop delivered **DARK HERESY** to wild success. Soon after, Fantasy Flight Games acquired the game licence, and continued the line since then with **ROGUE TRADER**, **DEATHWATCH**, **BLACK CRUSADE**, and **ONLY WAR**.

Now, Fantasy Flight Games is proud to announce **DARK HERESY SECOND EDITION**, with improved game play, character options, and new rules. In **DARK HERESY**, players take on roles as Acolytes of an Inquisitor, standing at the front line of a great and secret war to root out threats that imperil all of humanity. Should they fail, entire worlds, systems, and sectors will fall to endless night.

WHY A 2ND EDITION?

With the significant experience we've acquired in developing the *Warhammer 40,000* roleplay games, and by listening to thousands of active **DARK HERESY** players over the years, we're proud to have crafted a new edition that we think takes the original game experience into an exciting new direction.

In this beta, veteran **DARK HERESY** players will discover a familiar core system that still uses d10 dice to resolve tests, but with updated and new rules, including:

- Streamlined skills that can be used with more than a single characteristic.
- Vehicles and vehicle combat as an integral part of the core game.
- Fast and fun character creation, with exciting variety through combinations of home worlds, backgrounds, and roles for almost endless roleplaying possibilities.
- New rules for psychic powers, with each discipline gaining its own unique psychic phenomena table.
- Talent trees that visually help players plan their character's progression.
- Combat mechanics that give more tactical flexibility and control over performing actions.
- Damage and wound rules that make a character's health something more than just a number, plus lots of great (and gory!) wound effect tables.
- Easier-to-use NPCs, each with a threat rating so that Game Masters can build suitably challenging encounters.
- And much more!

PRESENTING THE ASKELLON SECTOR

This new edition also allows us to create a new setting: the Askellon Sector. Askellon is an ancient region, pre-dating the Imperium itself, and its history is filled with secrets and lies that have stained every generation. As if to compound its woes, the sector is cursed with a seemingly unending Warp storm known as the Pandaemonium that waxes and wanes across the millennia. With each passing century it grows ever more intense and dangerous, raging like a hungry beast that seeks to devour the entire sector.

Within Askellon, it is the prophesied Time of Ending, close to the culmination of the 41st millennium. On its many worlds, from lordly Juno to the lawless asteroids of Port Aquila, from devout Thaur to the red forges of Cerix Magnus, all watch in fear as the Pandaemonium's rising ferocity heralds the sector's fall. It will take the mightiest deeds of the Acolytes to forestall this terrible doom, if only for one day.

Askellon is a major part of this new edition, as it lets us explore entire new cultures and peoples, and also introduce new adversaries. One of its oldest and most powerful cities, Hive Desoleum, forms the basis for the entries in **Chapter XII: NPCs and Adversaries** with new heretics, aliens, creatures, Daemons, and more. Within the sector, players will see a host of new characters, organisations, cults, and more to ensure their Acolytes have no shortage of heresies to investigate and eradicate.

INQUISITORS IN ASKELLON

DARK HERESY SECOND EDITION delves further into the essence of the Inquisitors and the agents they use to defend Mankind: the Acolytes. Each Inquisitor is an individual empowered with the means, the will, and the authority to face any threat that might assail Mankind, whether that threat emanates from within, without, or beyond. It is in the purview of an Inquisitor to order an entire world burned that the taint of heresy might not infect a whole sector, or to take command of a whole army in order to combat an enemy only he knows how to face. Inquisitors alone know the truths of Mankind's enemies, and have the will to endure and fight these threats no matter the means or cost.

Each Inquisitor fights for Mankind in his own manner, with his own approach to deal with the most dire of enemies. This means every sector has a unique Inquisitorial presence. Few Inquisitors are known to exist within Askellon's haunted regions. Thus, many Acolytes might know of only their own Inquisitor, and could operate under the belief that theirs is the only one in all Askellon. At any given time, there are innumerable threats against Mankind within the sector. The Acolytes must constantly decide which heresies are paramount, knowing for each one they investigate, countless others fester and corrupt Askellon's future. Often acting with little or no outside support, the Acolytes know that, if they fail, there is perhaps no one else to keep the sector from falling to darkness.

WHAT ABOUT THE CALIXIS SECTOR?

Many veteran **DARK HERESY** players conducted their investigations in the Calixis Sector, the setting for the original game. While the Askellon Sector is the locale for the new edition, the Calixis Sector is still a part of *Warhammer 40,000* roleplay. We will not produce any further **DARK HERESY** content for it, but players who wish to continue their games in the Calixis Sector can combine the second edition rules with that background to create new heresies and adventures.

WHAT IS THE BETA?

This beta edition allows players to test-drive the game before its official release, and it gives the *Warhammer 40,000* Roleplay Team the ability to address any major issues that players might find. This book is a shortened version of the final core rulebook, and its layout and content are not representative of the final product. Several chapters concerning the background and setting are not included as they are not necessary for beta testing. The condensed rules allow testers to play through a complete campaign of **DARK HERESY**. Players can do this using homemade scenarios as well as the special adventure included in this book. The latter allows for several different approaches for game play, so that players can test out many different areas of the core rules in one adventure.

SUBMITTING FEEDBACK

There are two main methods for players to submit their feedback about this beta. First, we have created a special section on the Fantasy Flight Games website for the beta (www.fantasyflightgames.com/darkheresybeta) that will be updated weekly with the latest news and game updates. It contains a public forum for discussing the beta test with fellow players, post questions and feedback, and read news updates from the development team. Second, players can submit any specific reports or feedback directly to the team at the beta test e-mail address (darkheresybeta@fantasyflightgames.com). When submitting feedback via e-mail, players should consolidate multiple questions and comments into a single message, rather than sending a separate e-mail for each question or comment.

FEEDBACK GUIDELINES

When submitting feedback, keep in mind we're looking for precise, well thought-out, and concise comments on specific issues that arise during playtest sessions. Good feedback states the issue at hand and accurately cites page numbers and rules issues therein. We are primarily concerned with issues that affect gameplay, such as missing rules entries, examples that are inconsistent with the rules text, and balance or clarity issues.

HERETICS BEWARE!

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to everyone for their enthusiasm and diligence during this beta test. Player feedback is invaluable to us, and we thank all our testers for helping us in making this game the best it can possibly be. Players will be seeing more about the new setting as well, so keep watching the Fantasy Flight Games website for news. Your duty to your Inquisitor is now ready to begin, so grab your chainsword and bolter, steel your soul and will, and prepare to root out heresies in the name of the Emperor!

Happy Gaming,
The Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay Team
013.M3



INNOCENCE PROVES NOTHING

*"In an hour of Darkness, a blind man is the best guide.
In an age of Insanity, look to the madman to show the way."*

—Anon

Welcome to **DARK HERESY**, a roleplaying game of danger, mystery, and brutal violence set in the decaying far future of *Warhammer 40,000*. Here players take on roles as defenders of humanity and embark on hazardous adventures into the dark heart of the 41st Millennium. They act as Acolytes of an Inquisitor, at the front line of a great and secret war to root out dangers that imperil all of humanity. Inquisitors are all-powerful agents dedicated to preserving Mankind at any cost. They are relentless in the pursuit of these threats, and answer to no one but the Emperor Himself, the ruler of the galaxy-spanning Imperium of Man. Inquisitors are still but men, though; they cannot be everywhere, and so use their Acolytes to augment their efforts. To be an Acolyte is to possess more power than most men dream of. This power must be wielded wisely, though, for misusing it can be as damaging as not using it at all. Should they fail, entire worlds, systems, or sectors may fall to endless night.

These 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 the Acolytes' duty to shepherd Mankind from the manifold paths of damnation, with a smoking boltgun or world-burning virus bombs if necessary. Acolytes cannot shirk from their noble calling, harsh as it might be, for the only thing worse than their actions is what might occur if they fail to act.

Their investigations take them into deadly combat against twisted mutants, powerful psykers, and other abominations. Acolytes must face the horrors of Daemons and ancient aliens dedicated to the eradication of Mankind as a species, and battle for survival amidst webs of conspiracy and betrayal. Perhaps their greatest threat, however, is their fellow man, for the human soul is such fertile ground for corruption. Foul cults and insane heresies permeate all areas of the Imperium, and no one is beyond suspicion.

Through their actions, players and the Acolytes they bring to life create epic tales where it is always a minute from eternal midnight, and only their combined efforts can defeat their foes and stave off the end for one more day. They can never rest, for the multitudes of terrors desiring humanity's extinction are ever-present. There are always heresies to be uncovered, aliens to be vanquished, and Daemons to be banished. To be an Acolyte is to know these terrors exist, and possess the strength and will to combat them, no matter the sacrifice. Take up bolter and chainsword, and enter the world of **DARK HERESY**.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

A roleplaying game is a storytelling experience in which the players build a narrative by taking on different roles in an ongoing adventure. Throughout the course of the game, the players embark on harrowing journeys, thrilling investigations, and intense battles. The roleplaying game presents a set of rules that helps guide this narrative as it unfolds. In addition to the rules of the game, every roleplaying game has three key elements: a number of players (usually four to five players works best), a Game Master, and an adventure.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

Each player in the game creates a character—one of the protagonists of the ongoing story. These characters are known as Player Characters (also referred to as PCs), and in **DARK HERESY** they take on the role of Acolytes who form a warband in service to an Inquisitor. During the game, each player chooses the intentions and actions of his character, making these decisions based on his character's personality and motivations. Then the Game Master, using the rules of the game, decides the outcome of the characters' actions, and narrates their effect on the story.

THE GAME MASTER

One person in the group does not create a character. Instead, this person takes on the role of the Game Master (also referred to as the GM). The Game Master presents the story to the rest of the players, adjudicating the rules of the game and unfolding the narrative created by the players' actions. The GM is in charge of creating adventures (or selecting pre-made adventures), narrating the story as the game is played, controlling all of the other characters and adversaries in the game (including the Inquisitor who guides the warband), and fairly applying the rules of the game to the players' actions.

ADVENTURES

Adventures present the setting, story, and challenges that the players face as they participate in the game. In essence, an adventure is a series of locations, characters, and events which the Acolytes encounter as they make decisions and progress the story. The Game Master is in charge of not only presenting the adventure to the players in a fun and engaging way, but also making sure the adventure is prepared before the group sits down at the gaming table. There are three different ways GMs can prepare these adventures:

- **Pre-made Adventures:** This book includes a ready-to-use adventure in Chapter XIII, for players to use in testing.
- **Adventure Seeds:** These are settings, characters, and adversaries to spark adventure ideas, and many can be found within this book and the pre-made adventure within.
- **Homemade:** Instead of using an established narrative, many GMs wish to tell their own stories, or let their players decide the course of the game. **DARK HERESY** presents all of the elements required for a GM to create his own adventure from scratch.

HOW TO PLAY

To play **DARK HERESY**, the Game Master narrates the story of the adventure to the group of Player Characters. As he does this, he allows the players to interact with the game world in any way they want, making decisions, interacting with characters, and then rolling dice to decide the outcome of the story. To resolve the action of the game, the pace of the narrative is broken up in two different ways based on what is currently happening: structured time and narrative time.

STRUCTURED TIME

When the characters are involved in combat against opponents, or are involved in some other all-consuming, time-sensitive task, the game is broken down into structured time. For this, all characters involved in the scene take turns, during which they can perform a limited amount of actions. This continues until the scene is concluded. Structured time is covered in detail in **Chapter VII: Combat**.

NARRATIVE TIME

Narrative time consists of any time in which the Player Characters are not engaging in combat or other involved, time-sensitive tasks, such as during travel, social interaction, investigation, or exploration. During narrative time, the Game Master controls the flow of the narrative as the players go about their tasks, calling on them to make decisions or roll dice based on the needs of the story. Narrative time is covered in detail in **Chapter XI: The Game Master**.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

DARK HERESY is divided into thirteen chapters:

CHAPTER I: PLAYING THE GAME

This chapter begins on page 10, and provides the basic rules and core mechanics, the characteristics that define each character in the game, and how to perform skill tests.

CHAPTER II: CHARACTER CREATION

Players learn how to form their characters in this chapter, including information on the many home worlds, backgrounds, and roles they can choose from as they bring their Acolyte to life. Beginning on page 16, it also offers Elite Advances for special character progressions.

CHAPTER III: SKILLS

This chapter starts on page 72, and describes the many skills available to players. These represent a character's ability to perform feats that require expertise and training, and may be present as part of character creation, or learned later in their adventures.

CHAPTER IV: TALENTS AND TRAITS

Talents (starting on page 96) are special abilities and proficiencies, many of which augment skills. Unlike skills, a talent is always active and does not require a test to use.

CHAPTER V: ARMOURY

An Acolyte would be lost without an arsenal of weapons, armour, gear, and other equipment to smite his foes. This chapter begins on page 130, and includes rules for acquiring these items as well.

CHAPTER VI: PSYCHIC POWERS

Cursed or blessed, some beings can call on the Warp to blast their enemies with eldritch lightning or divine the future. This chapter starts on page 170 and includes rules and descriptions for the powers, as well as the hazards a psyker faces when using them.

CHAPTER VII: COMBAT

Conflict pervades life in the 41st Millennium, and beginning on page 194 this chapter covers the rules for fighting in **DARK HERESY**.

CHAPTER VIII: NARRATIVE TOOLS

Acolytes do not spend all their time fighting, and much of an adventure is spent investigating heresies, travelling to new locales, exploring for clues, interrogating suspects, and in other non-combat tasks. This chapter starts on page 228, and covers these topics along with rules for Fear, Insanity, and Corruption.

CHAPTER IX: THE IMPERIUM AND THE INQUISITION

+++++REDACTED+++++

CHAPTER X: THE ASKELLON SECTOR

+++++REDACTED+++++

CHAPTER XI: THE GAME MASTER

The Game Master guides the other players through adventures to take the Acolytes against fearsome foes and diabolical plots. This chapter begins on page 259 and offers guidance on running encounters, overseeing combats, setting and adjusting subtlety, crafting campaigns, and tips for how to operate as an NPC Inquisitor. This chapter, and the two that follow, are for Game Masters only as they reveal many secrets the Acolytes are not aware of, and can spoil adventures.

CHAPTER XII: NPCs AND ADVERSARIES

Starting on page 281, in this chapter Game Masters can find a plethora of Non-Player Characters (NPCs) to use as to aid or bedevil the Acolytes, from lowly hive scum to powerful Daemons and xenos creatures. It also includes guidelines for crafting new NPCs and suitably matching them to the player characters to generate challenging and rewarding games.

CHAPTER XIII: SEEDS OF HERESY

This beta book includes an adventure, beginning on page 307. In **Seeds of Heresy**, the Acolytes are sent to a seemingly forgotten Adeptus Ministorum world. The players soon discover rival factions there seeking greater power, possibly with the aid of the Ruinous Powers.



CHAPTER I: PLAYING THE GAME

In **DARK HERESY**, players and their characters take part in adventures that the Game Master crafts, together creating a thrilling story as they combat the many perils that face humanity. Within the game, the Player Characters as well as the Non-Player Characters under the control of the Game Master attempt all manner of tasks; this can be anything from trying to hit a charging grox with a boltgun or deciphering xenos markings to shut down a ship's reactor before it explodes. These can also be tasks where a character pits himself against another character, such as interrogation attempts to force a captured cultist to reveal the meeting locations of other heretics.

Tests such as these are resolved by using dice rolls. The values are compared to target levels depending on a character's proficiency at a task, with modifications from the Game Master depending on the situation. A Desoleum bounty hunter, well-schooled in violence, would normally have no problem hitting a fleeing oath-deserter with his trusty laspistol. A deserter running through a crowded hab market while the bounty hunter was standing on an unsteady pile of empty crates, struggling to keep his footing, would make for a much more difficult shot.

It is through these tests and results that the players progress through the story they are creating. These tests are not just rolls, though, for the players also should invest

roleplaying into task descriptions and dice resolutions. This brings the events to life, and makes for memorable games. A player simply stating, "I throw a grenade," does not enrich the narrative as would, "I carefully select a frag grenade from my belt, and swiftly invoke the Rite of Smiting as passed down through my forge world while I thumb the activation stud. Offering a blessing to the Omnissiah, I hurl it at my enemy!" Similarly, a Game Master replying, "the grenade hits," after the test is resolved could instead say, "the grenade lands short, but with a lucky bounce hits your foe, and explodes with a mighty shower of shrapnel!" Failures can also make for great roleplaying opportunities. Though the character might not succeed in a task, his player can use this to further the Acolyte's personality and viewpoint, perhaps forsaking las weapons after his new las carbine jams three times in a row for example. Using the character's nature to drive what he decides to do with the core rules deciding results, and then using these results to drive further character development, is an excellent way to make for great character growth.

It is through extra thought and effort like this that characters and adventures become more than only printed words, and is the essence of what makes roleplaying games interesting and fun. The more players put into this aspect of the game, the more rewarding their adventures become.

THE CORE RULES

"A mind without purpose will wander in dark places."

—Anon

Rules in a roleplaying game exist to provide a framework for players, using dice to determine what happens when players declare their actions. The core rules of **DARK HERESY** are comprised of the ten characteristics that define characters and the core task resolution system used to determine if a task is successfully accomplished or not. Through using these, a player can tell not only if his character's attempt worked, but how well he succeeded (or failed). They offer a basis for all the players to commonly resolve their actions, and the basis from which they can drive the ongoing story with heroic victories and despairing defeats, as well as determining how the Acolytes move forward in their service to their Inquisitor.

CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics define the physical and mental aspects of each character. Each characteristic is measured on a scale of 0-100, with a higher number representing a better characteristic.

CHARACTERISTIC BONUS

In addition to its score, each characteristic has a characteristic bonus, a number equal to the tens digit of that characteristic. For example, a character with a Strength of 42 would have a Strength bonus of 4.

When a characteristic bonus is abbreviated in text, it uses the normal abbreviation listed for each characteristic with an additional "b" at the end (the Willpower bonus, for example, would be abbreviated as "WPb" in text).

WEAPON SKILL (WS)

Weapon Skill measures a character's competence in all forms of close-quarters combat. Characters with high Weapon Skill values are excellent warriors, renowned with a chainsword or even bare hands. This characteristic comes into play when:

- Testing to attack an enemy in melee.
- Parrying enemy melee attacks.

BALLISTIC SKILL (BS)

Ballistic Skill measures a character's accuracy with all forms of ranged weapons. A high Ballistic Skill indicates an excellent shot, someone to be feared in a firefight or shootout. Characters use their Ballistic Skill characteristic when:

- Testing to attack an enemy at range.
- Unjamming a gun.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO PLAY

Once all the players are gathered, the following is needed to play **DARK HERESY**:

- This rulebook
- Three or more people to play the game
- Three or four hours of gaming time
- Some ten-sided dice (two or more per player)
- Paper
- Pencils and an eraser

Pre-made Character and Game Master sheets (either photocopied from the back of the book or downloaded from the Fantasy Flight Games website www.fantasyflightgames.com) are not essential but can aid gameplay.

STRENGTH (S)

Strength measures a character's muscle and physical power. A high value in Strength can allow a character to lift heavier objects and punch a foe harder. Characters use their Strength characteristic when:

- Determining their carrying capacity.
- Using the Acrobatics, Athletics, Command, and Interrogation skills.

TOUGHNESS (T)

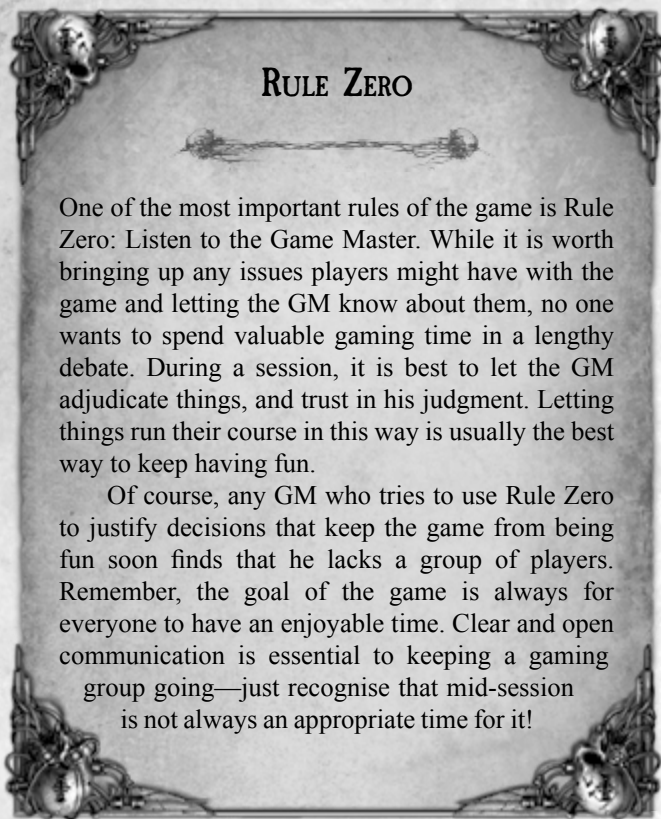
Toughness measures a character's health, stamina, and resistance. Exceptionally Tough characters can shrug off otherwise damaging weapon hits and better withstand poisonous attacks. Characters can use this characteristic when:

- Determining if an attack wounds them in combat.
- Testing to resist poisons, toxic environments, and other physical ailments.
- Using the Athletics skill.

AGILITY (A)

Agility measures a character's quickness, reflex, and poise. High Agility can allow a character to manipulate delicate machinery with finesse, or quickly apply a synthskin spray to a wounded comrade. Characters use their Agility characteristic when:

- Determining movement distance.
- Dodging incoming enemy attacks.
- Using the Acrobatics, Evasion, Logic, Medicae, Operate, Stealth, Subterfuge, Survival, and Tech-Use skills.



RULE ZERO

One of the most important rules of the game is Rule Zero: Listen to the Game Master. While it is worth bringing up any issues players might have with the game and letting the GM know about them, no one wants to spend valuable gaming time in a lengthy debate. During a session, it is best to let the GM adjudicate things, and trust in his judgment. Letting things run their course in this way is usually the best way to keep having fun.

Of course, any GM who tries to use Rule Zero to justify decisions that keep the game from being fun soon finds that he lacks a group of players. Remember, the goal of the game is always for everyone to have an enjoyable time. Clear and open communication is essential to keeping a gaming group going—just recognise that mid-session is not always an appropriate time for it!

INTELLIGENCE (I)

Intelligence measures a character's acumen, reason, and general knowledge. A character with a strong Intelligence value can recall huge reams of data, correlate esoteric clues, or determine if an ancient archeotech relic is real or not. A character uses this characteristic when:

- Using the Command, Commerce, Deceive, Investigate, Linguistics, Logic, Medicae, Navigate, Observe, Operate, Remembrance, Subterfuge, Survival, and Tech-Use skills.

PERCEPTION (P)

Perception measures a character's awareness and the acuteness of his senses. Characters who have a high value here can pick out a stray bolter shell casing left amidst an underhive morass, or tell when someone is being deceitful. A character uses this characteristic when:

- Using the Investigate, Medicae, Navigate, Observe, Psyniscience, Stealth, Subterfuge, and Survival skills.

WILLPOWER (WP)

Willpower measures a character's mental strength and resilience. High Willpower allows for greater abilities with highly dangerous psychic powers, or when exerting control over a crowd of near-rioting hab workers. Characters use their Willpower characteristic when:

- Making checks to resist fear.
- Channelling psychic powers.
- Resisting psychic attacks.
- Using the Command, Interrogation, Psyniscience, and Remembrance skills.

FELLOWSHIP (F)

Fellowship measures a character's persuasiveness, ability to lead, and force of personality. Having a strong Fellowship value makes for a character who can ingratiate himself into a gathering of suspicious hab workers, or make skilled trades with wily vendors. Characters use their Fellowship characteristic when:

- Using the Charm, Command, Commerce, Deceive, Investigate, Linguistics, and Observe skills.

INFLUENCE (IF)

Influence measures a character's connections, reputation, and resources. High Influence can allow a character to quickly summon the aid of local military forces to his side, or arrange for fast transit to another star system. Unlike the other characteristics, Influence changes only as a character performs actions, such as decreasing should he fail a mission in a highly visible manner or gaining after he successfully rescues a kidnapped planetary governor. Characters use their Influence characteristic when:

- Obtaining items and services.
- Using the Charm skill.

GAME DICE

Dice rolls in **DARK HERESY** use only ten-sided polyhedral dice. These are used for three different types of rolls: the d10 roll, the d5 roll, and the percentile roll.

d10 Roll: When called to make a d10 roll, the player or GM rolls a number of ten-sided dice indicated before the "d" and adds the results together to create the result. For example, a 3d10 roll would consist of three dice rolled and added together (for a total result between 3 and 30). If there is no number before the "d," it is assumed to be a 1.

d5 Roll: When called to make a d5 roll, the player or GM rolls a ten-sided die, divides the result by two, and rounds up to create a result between 1 and 5.

Percentile Roll: When called to make a percentile roll, the player or GM generates a number between 1 and 100 by rolling two ten-sided dice. One (designated before the roll) is the tens digit. The other is the ones digit. Two 0s represents 100. These tests can be commonly abbreviated as "d100" in the text.

ROUNDING FRACTIONS

When dividing, if a fraction is generated, round the result up, even if the fraction is less than one-half.

MULTIPLYING

Some rules can require a die roll or number to be multiplied. When two or more multipliers apply to a value, add them together to form a single multiple, with each multiplier beyond the first adding 1 less than its value to the first multiplier. Thus a double (x2) and a double (x2) applied to the same number results in a triple (x3, as 2 + 1 = 3).

THE CORE MECHANIC

Whenever a character attempts an action that has some chance of failure, his player makes a percentile roll to decide the outcome. This might be when he is firing a heavy stubber into a crowd of rioting heretics, attempting to leap from a burning autocarriage, or trying to command a frightened unit of enforcers to stand their ground against unearthly enemies. This is known as a “test.” To determine if the character succeeds:

- Determine the characteristic that best applies to the task.
- Apply any relevant modifiers to the characteristic (such as those from skill, difficulty, or assistance) to determine the target value.
- Roll a d100.
- Compare the roll result to the target value.
- If the roll is equal to or lower than the target value, the character succeeds at the task. If the roll is higher, the character fails.

CHARACTERISTIC TESTS

Characteristic tests are used when a character is performing a task that requires no specialised training, such as breaking down a door with brute strength or resisting a poisonous atmosphere. When making a characteristic test, the d100 roll is compared against the character’s appropriate characteristic value (with any applicable modifiers).

SKILL TESTS

Most tasks that warrant a test require some form of specialised training or skill to perform, such as parrying an incoming melee attack or using arcane technology. There are a large variety of skills that players can have training in, outlined in **Chapter III: Skills**. These skills act as a modifier to a characteristic test based on the character’s training in that area. When making a skill test, the d100 is compared against the character’s appropriate characteristic value with a modifier based on the level of training the character has in the skill being used (plus any additional modifiers). Details on skill tests can be found in **Chapter III: Skills** as well.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Degrees of success and failure are used to measure how well a character has succeeded at a task, or how badly he has failed. They are determined when resolving a test through comparing the difference between the target value and the result rolled on the dice.

Degrees of Success: When a test succeeds, the character making the test automatically gains one degree of success (abbreviated as DoS). He also gains additional degrees of success equal to the tens digit of the target value minus the tens digit of the roll. A character who rolled a 23 when he was testing against a value of 66 would pass the test with 5 degrees of success (1 for succeeding, plus 4 more for the difference between 6 and 2).

TABLE 1-1: TEST DIFFICULTIES

DIFFICULTY	TEST MODIFIER
Trivial	+60
Elementary	+50
Simple	+40
Easy	+30
Routine	+20
Ordinary	+10
Challenging	+0
Difficult	-10
Hard	-20
Very Hard	-30
Arduous	-40
Punishing	-50
Hellish	-60

Degrees of Failure: When a test fails, the character making the test automatically gains one degree of failure (DoF). He also gains additional degrees of failure equal to the tens digit of the roll minus the tens digit of the target value. For example, if a player was attempting a test and needed a 37 to pass, but rolled a 56, he would fail the test with 3 degrees of failure (1 for failing, and 2 more for the difference between 5 and 3).

TEST MODIFIERS

Tasks can be more easy or more challenging to complete based on elements outside of a character’s raw characteristic.

DIFFICULTY

The difficulty of the task a character is trying accomplish can affect the outcome of the test. Based on how challenging the task is, the GM can apply a modifier from to the governing characteristic of the test. **Table 1-1: Test Difficulties** above has a listing of the most common difficulty levels found in **DARK HERESY**.

In addition to the modifiers a GM can apply, the game rules often assign a difficulty to particular tests. For example, when the rules call for a -20 Strength test, the character’s Strength score receives a -20 penalty for that test.

AUTOMATIC SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Regardless of modifiers, a roll of 1 on a test always succeeds, and a roll of 100 on a test always fails. However, the GM can always determine that a proposed task is too difficult, and that the character fails automatically without even taking a test. This is to avoid players attempting impossible tasks to “fish” for a natural 1.

ASSISTANCE

With the GM’s permission, other characters in the group can assist a character with a test to make it easier, such as other characters aiding another attempting to repair a damaged power field generator. When the percentile roll for the test is made, only the character who is performing the test rolls the dice. For each character the rolling character has assisting him, the test receives a +10 modifier.

LIMITS ON ASSISTANCE

There are some restrictions and conditions that must be met to assist on a test:

- To give assistance on a skill test, a character must have a rank of 3 or higher in that skill.
- The assisting character must usually be adjacent to the character performing the test, though certain tests (such as disarming an explosive) could gain assistance from another character over a vox channel at the GM’s discretion.
- Assistance cannot be given on tests that are made as part of a reaction or a free action.
- Assistance cannot be given on tests made to resist disease, poison, fear, or anything else the GM deems inappropriate.
- No more than two characters can attempt to assist another on a single test, unless the GM decides that the specific situation would allow otherwise.

MULTIPLE MODIFIERS

When multiple modifiers apply to the same test, take the total sum of all of the modifiers added together. This value is the final modifier to the test, and is applied to the characteristic value being used.

OPPOSED TESTS

Some tasks involve a character testing himself not against his own mettle, but pitting himself against another character. Here, a character is attempting to perform a task while being directly opposed by an adversary, such as attempting to sneak by a guard or deceive a suspicious trader, and in these cases the GM can call for an opposed test. In an opposed test, each participant makes his own separate test as normal, and whoever scores the greater number of degrees of success on his test wins the opposed test. Note that it is likely the tests are undertaken using different characteristics, and possibly with differing difficulties. For example, an opposed test for a saboteur attempting to sneak past a weary guard might have the former test using Agility, and the latter testing using Perception but with a –10 penalty due to the lateness of the hour. If both parties fail, whoever scores the fewest degrees of failure wins. If both parties tie, the character with the higher value in the skill or characteristic being used for the test wins. If it is still a tie, the test is re-rolled until there is a victor.

A NOTE ABOUT REALITY

DARK HERESY deals with mature themes and concepts. Daemons, insanity, death, violence, corruption, and despair are all integral elements of *Warhammer 40,000*, and players should expect their characters to face these often in their games. These are all part of the world the Game Master creates, using the rules in this book as tools and guidelines to craft adventures, settings, and opposing characters. All these, including the characters, are imaginary creations designed to enable an enjoyable game for all the players. **DARK HERESY** takes place in a grim and dark setting, but everyone should keep in mind the goal of the game is to have fun!

DARK HERESY IN ACTION

Below is an example of game play in **DARK HERESY**, showing how the Game Master sets a scene and the players interact with their environment and decide on actions for the GM to resolve. The warband is investigating an outbreak of horrible deaths in a hive-city, following a lead concerning a suspected dealer of an illegal drug called spook that temporarily grants psychic abilities. Their Inquisitor is rightfully afraid that if this drug has become stronger and more widespread it could be behind these deaths; worse yet, it might lead to a daemoninc incursion as denizens from the Immaterium devour unprotected minds. Sam (the GM) guides the four Acolytes (Lee's highborn bounty hunter Jannasi, Andy's Administratum rogue psyker Sophronia, Max's Tech-Priest Isen, and Tim's voidborn firebrand Lazrus) as they make their way towards a middle-hive hab area where the scum they interrogated said the dealer was last seen.

Sam [GM]: You enter a large room, dimly lit as glow-globes along the walls pulse with uncertain light, and a fat candle flickers in a heavy pool of wax. There is a thick door at the far end, shut tightly, and several overturned containers filled with scraps of rough paper. Along a wall are odd markings that resemble cryptic writing. The floor is littered with more scraps, and in one corner is a large pile of rags and blankets, covered with buzzing flies. What do you want to do?

Lee [as Jannasi]: I'm drawing both my laspistols and moving to one of the walls, the better to cover the area.

Tim [as Lazrus]: Muttering quietly, I ready my shot-pistol and, trusting in the Emperor to protect me, stride into the room.

Andy [as Sophronia]: With the area covered, I move to the other wall and call forth my servo skull to better illuminate the strange markings while I attempt to decipher them. *(Andy rolls and passes a Linguistics test to make sense of the writings)*

Max [as Isen]: "Insectoid life often indicate the failings of the flesh." I check the pile, pushing the rags aside with the tip of my boot.

Sam [GM]: Isen, you uncover the rags to reveal a fresh corpse with a huge, gaping chest wound as if the flesh exploded outward. The terror-stricken face matches that of the suspected dealer. Sophronia, your examination reveals the markings indicate locations in the hive and corresponding dates.

Lee [Jannasi]: I look at the body. "Certainly not what I'm used to seeing at spire soirées or in my own kills." I want to try and check it over. *(Sam directs Lee to perform a Medicae test, which he passes easily)*

Tim [Lazrus]: "These blasted sheets of parchment might contain some hint to our quarry's whereabouts!" I inspect the papers on the floor. *(Lazrus makes an Observe test and rolls very low, succeeding wildly!)*

Max [Isen]: I activate my auspex, and search the surrounding area for movement. *(Max makes a Perception test, but rolls badly; his auspex clearly won't detect anything this round)*

Max [Isen]: "Something has made the spirits of metal surly and unpredictable. This bodes ill."

Andy [Sophronia]: Pulling out a dataslate, I begin comparing the locations on the wall to the known locations of the deaths we investigated earlier. *(Andy makes a Logic test to correlate the new data with the existing information, and, given the ease of the test, passes without problem)*

Sam [GM]: Jannasi, your inspection reveals the wound has no burn marks or other normal signs of weapons fire or an explosive device. You've indeed never seen anything like it. Sophronia, the information on the wall matches precisely to the dates and locations of the earlier deaths, and indicates three more to come. Lazrus, you recognise these as stalk-rat wrappers from a stall you passed earlier, not far from here at a habway crossing. Your keen eyes also notice a grey-white residue in several of them—spook!

Tim [Lazrus]: With a grin of satisfaction, I pick up one of the wrappers and tuck it away, as it has a clear connection to the deaths. "Brothers! I suggest we take a closer look at the provisions offered at the stall; the people there might be involved with this too."

Lee [Jannasi]: "I can take lead on that. I've left some gangers in that area alive and owing me favours."

Andy [Sophronia]: My attention turns from the wall to the body Jannasi is inspecting. "Emperor preserve us! Given the presence of spook and the strange wounds, I am concerned that the fell powers from the Warp may have been used here." *(Andy performs a Psyniscience test on the body to scry for psychic energies, passing with several degrees of success)*

Max [Isen]: "Omnissiah, calm this spirit." I perform an Incantation of Iron by tapping the auspex against my mechandrite three times and offering a binary invocation, then try it again. *(Max makes another Perception test for his auspex, and this time manages to pass)*

Sam [GM]: Sophronia, you definitely detect the taint of psychic energies on the corpse, flowing out of the wound like eldritch blood. Isen, your auspex is working perfectly but still isn't detecting anything, yet suddenly you can all hear wet cries from behind the door. The darkness seems to grow thicker, the air colder, and the candle finally flutters and spits out. The flies annoying the corpse twitch and fall as the gravity shifts seems to shift subtly around you. The far door bulges as if it were rubber and not heavy plasteel...

What happens next? The Acolytes might face an unhinged spook user, or a hideous Warp manifestation that resulted from the psychic blast unleashed early that killed the dealer, or something even worse. They have gathered several important clues that can help them shut down the spook trade before the users unwittingly unleash a daemoninc invasion upon the hive. First though, they have to survive the coming fight!



CHAPTER II: CHARACTER CREATION

Players in **DARK HERESY** take on the role of unique and exceptional individuals plucked from across the galaxy to become Acolytes in the service of an Inquisitor. The warband they form fights at the forefront of a battle of which the rest of the humanity is unaware, for only a select few know the true dangers Mankind faces. Citizens across the Imperium might know of the dangers mutants pose or the heresy of renouncing the Emperor, but their minds cannot conceive of the Daemons of the Warp that readily devour unprotected souls, the ravenous xenos races that pollute the stars, or the horrors of reality-defying psykers. Inquisitors and those who serve them can and must withstand such knowledge and face such enemies.

At the direction of their Inquisitor, warbands of Acolytes scour the stars to investigate and combat such threats. Theirs is a lonely battle that sets them apart from the countless billions in the Imperium. They face daemonic attacks that can rend their souls apart and the terrible weapons of inhuman aliens. Their adventures take them from ancient worlds steeped with Imperial history to planets newly-discovered, from courts of power to barren wastelands no mortal has stood upon in centuries. Every world has its own unique horrors: foul cults and renegades might lurk not only in the darkness but also in the open, masquerading their true nature behind power and privilege.

Such heresies and conspiracies exist everywhere, and for each threat the Acolytes eradicate they might uncover two new ones, each twice as dangerous as the first. These can present other types of dangers, as the temptations of easy power, especially through the corrupting taint of Chaos, are always present. Against all of these threats, Acolytes must use their abilities to the fullest, calling on past experience as well as additional skills and armaments acquired in their travels. They must also rely on each other, even though they can never fully trust each other knowing the horrid betrayals that a fall to the Ruinous Powers can bring. They must also trust in their Inquisitor, never fully aware of what other grim truths he hides from them and knowing they are each expendable in this eternal war.

The struggle is unending, and those who fight it know they are likely to die horribly, unknown and unheralded. There are no rewards, other than knowing that to do otherwise spells the doom of humanity. Each Acolyte is a flickering candle lighting only a tiny fraction of the malevolent darkness, each sputtering but his flame still keeping the final night at bay for a time. They might fall, but others rise to take up the battle. The war must continue, for to abandon it is to cede Mankind's future to dust, to be forgotten amidst the laughter of vile gods and malignant aliens.

CREATING AN ACOLYTE

"My past mattered only to the extent it attracted the attention of a man I cannot name, even here. My future was all that mattered now. Each success ensured there was one, if only for one more day, but we all knew a single failure could condemn Mankind to endless death."

—Gex Avrille, from the private memoirs *Recollections of Service*

Before starting a game of **DARK HERESY**, each player creates a character. These Player Characters (also referred to as PCs) act as alter egos for the players, and star as the protagonists in the ongoing story that they and the Game Master create together. They might have come from the squalid depths of a overcrowded hive city or opulent palaces, devout worlds dedicated to worship or industrial factory planets that revere technology. They could have been powerful scions of noble families, or lowly dregs who lived from day to day on theft or extortion. Their only common aspect is that they have drawn the attention of an Inquisitor, who believes their unique abilities can aid him in fighting the foes of Mankind.

To create a character, each player follows these five steps.

STAGE 1: CHOOSE HOME WORLD

A character's home world is the planet or location where he was born and likely spent a great deal of his life. It can determine his physical appearance, mannerisms, and perspective on the Imperium as a whole. **DARK HERESY** contains six home worlds; four of these are archetypal Imperial planets (feral, forge, hive, and shrine) with the other two representing origins that can come across the galaxy: the power-drenched environs of the highborn, and the artificial, empty reaches of the voidborn. A character's home world also determines his starting characteristics.

STAGE 2: CHOOSE BACKGROUND

A character's background represents what the character has done with his life up until this point, including the previous Imperial organisations under which he served. It determines what sort of training the character has received throughout his life, what kind of resources he has access to, as well as who he knows. Seven backgrounds are included here: the Imperial agencies of the Adeptus Administratum, Adeptus Arbitres, Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adeptus Ministorum, and Imperial Guard, along with Outcasts who have escaped the confines of any group or organisation.

STAGE 3: CHOOSE ROLE

While home world and background determine a character's past, his role determines what he is in the present. Each character views the world around him and his place in it in a certain manner, which is reflected in his role. This broadly defines how he faces dangers, interacts with others, and seeks to resolve problems. His role also dictates what areas of expertise he excels at, and how he grows and learns with experience. This book includes eight roles: Assassin, Chirurgeon, Desperado, Hierophant, Mystic, Sage, Seeker, and Warrior.

STAGE 4: SPEND EXPERIENCE POINTS, ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

In this stage, each player customises his character's abilities. Player Characters start the game with a certain amount of experience points (xp) to reflect their lives up until this point, and can spend this experience to increase his character's characteristics, skills, and talents. Here they can also purchase equipment such as additional weapons, armour, and gear from the armoury.

STAGE 5: GIVE THE CHARACTER LIFE

Lastly, it is time for each player to give his character the unique personality that will set him apart from his fellow Acolytes. This stage helps the players define their characters' appearance, past, temperaments, beliefs, and much more.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

Many of the character creation options presented in this chapter offer recommendation on what other options fit best with that choice. For example, each home world recommends the backgrounds that fit best with that planet, and each background recommends the roles that would fit best with it thematically.

Players, especially those new to **DARK HERESY**, are encouraged to use the recommended options for each stage of character creation. However, if a player feels that there is a reason that a different option would work best for his character thematically, he is encouraged to select it with the GM's permission.

STAGE 1:

CHOOSE HOME WORLD

"We were all from different worlds. We never really liked each other; we could rely on each other but we were never friends. If we weren't bound together against terrors no one else even dreamed existed, we probably would have killed each other quickly."

—Gex Avrille, from the private memoirs *Recollections of Service*

The Imperium of Man is spread across the stars, laying claim to huge reaches of space and encompassing nearly the entire galaxy. It is made up of over a million systems, each an uncertain light flicking in the darkness that surrounds them. Holy Terra is at its centre, the birthplace of humanity. Surrounding it are the many other planets, void stations, vessels, and other locations where man has established a presence. From these come the teeming billions that are the true measure of the Imperium, each life moulded and shaped from the place of his origin.

The Adeptus Administratum classifies each world into broad categories in a vain attempt to apply organisation over the domains of man, and though each setting is utterly unique, there are enough commonalities to make the generalisation somewhat effective. Hive cities might appear superficially identical, no matter the planet, yet in reality are revealed to be wildly different once inspection penetrates the kilometres-tall metallic spikes. The billions that reside inside of each hive though still share more in common with each other than those from a primitive wasteland or massive trawler migrating through the void, no matter what differing cultures each hive might contain.

In an Imperium where only a small fraction ever leave their local environs, let alone the actual place of their birth, home worlds play a huge part in a character's development. They impart certain favoured types of clothing, such as the bloodmarked leathers an ex-ganger still wears or the elaborately braided feathers a feral warrior might never go into battle without. Modes of fashion or grooming might stay with a character long after he has left his home world, for a highborn might insist on keeping his distinctive diamond-dust facial tattoos that once indicated his familial sect, or a Tech-Priest may still wear the forge-lathe's binary pattern engraved on his first mechadendrite.

Home worlds also instil unique religious beliefs, for though the Imperium officially worships the Emperor as the deific Master of Mankind, each world does so in its own manner. Some worlds might venerate Him as a Sun-Father, the bringer of blessed heat to Mankind. On others, the Cult Imperialis has assimilated local beliefs into worshipping the Emperor as the Storm-Fury, showing displeasure through terrible cyclonic devastation whenever His peoples fail in their service. Even the worlds of the Adeptus Mechanicus, which all worship the Emperor as the Omnisiah, might do so in slightly differing fashions from forge to forge.

They also shape characters physically and mentally. Those from a rough, feral world usually grow up strong and tough—or not grow up at all. Voidborn that come from

TABLE 2-1: RANDOM HOME WORLD

ROLL (d100)	RESULT
01–15	Feral World
16–33	Forge World
34–44	Highborn
45–69	Hive World
70–85	Shrine World
86–100	Voidborn

artificial habitats of lessened gravity can develop longer but frailer forms. Hivers are used to dense concentrations of people, and might feel uncomfortable in large, open spaces that lack the usual industrial scents. Highborn are often groomed to rule, and develop charm and social skills at early ages in order to navigate the deadly paths to power.

Though the home worlds in this chapter represent archetypal settings, players are encouraged to use additional information on a location to be found in this or other **DARK HERESY** books to add greater distinctiveness to their character's previous life. The character might be from a hive world, but one from Desoleum would place greater value on personal vows, representing that hive's elaborately binding network of oaths and obligations. An Acolyte from a world gone feral after its pre-Crusade civilisation destroyed itself might view technology as dangerously taboo; one from a violently evolving land could see it instead as useful against the megafauna he fights against each day.

The home worlds presented here include a description of its setting, along with an example from the Askellon Sector. Each also includes the following special rules that are applied to characters from this home world:

Characteristic Modifiers: These alter how the character generates individual starting characteristics.

Fate Threshold: A value representing the starting fate threshold of all characters from this home world (see page 258). This is usually a 1d5 roll with an additional modifier. Each fate threshold value has a listed minimum; if the value would be lower than this minimum, it is equal to this minimum instead.

Home World Bonus: A unique, passive ability that all characters from this home world gain.

Signature Mental Trauma: This mental trauma represents how those from this home world deal with the insanity they will face in their service (see page 252).

Recommended Backgrounds: These samples represent backgrounds (see Stage 2 on page 29) that characters from this type of home world would be likely to follow.

Each player chooses one home world for his character, and either uses the example given, creates a new, unique world for his character, or leaves the exact world of his origin a mystery. Alternatively, players can use **Table 2-1: Random Home World** above to let chance decide. After choosing a home world, the character immediately gains the appropriate home world bonus and generates his characteristics using the modifiers his chosen home world applies.

PLAYER NOTES: HOME WORLDS

Home worlds are often strongly tied to archetypal character types and backgrounds, allowing players to pick settings that match their envisioned character. Those looking for strong fighters would do well with a feral worlder, and forge worlders generate excellent tech-savvy characters as examples. Players should read through the home worlds presented below, especially the effects each setting has on starting characteristics, to see which one matches best to their desired character type. Some players prefer to randomly create a home world, then use this plus their starting characteristics as a guide to lead them to a background and role and create a character perhaps not considered earlier.

Imperial organisations dominate or even control entire worlds though, and many born there have no choice but to enter that society. Those from forge worlds can more easily lead into Adeptus Mechanicus backgrounds and shrine worlds to the Adeptus Ministorum, but players should also explore less well-worn paths. Feral worlders often are taken into the ranks of the Imperial Guard, but some might have been taken aboard an Explorator vessel and been inducted into the ranks of the Cult Mechanicus. Choosing unusual directions such as these can generate interesting characters that stand out from others, and players should work with their

GM to create suitable origins for the surely memorable characters that result.

GENERATE CHARACTERISTICS

As part of choosing his home world, the character also generates his characteristics. These are the basic building blocks that determine the character's strengths and weaknesses. All player characters have ten characteristics, each measured on a scale from 0–100:

- Weapon Skill (WS)
- Ballistic Skill (BS)
- Strength (S)
- Toughness (T)
- Agility (A)
- Intelligence (I)
- Perception (P)
- Willpower (WP)
- Fellowship (F)
- Influence (IF)

For more information on characteristics and their uses, see **Chapter 1: Playing the Game**.

ROLLING CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics are generated one at a time. For each characteristic, the player rolls 2d10, adds the results together, then adds 25. He then follows this same procedure for each of his ten characteristics, filling in the resulting numbers on his character sheet as he goes. Which home world a character has chosen affects these roles through characteristic modifiers. These appear as a characteristic's name with either a "+" or a "-" in front of it:

+ **Characteristic:** When rolling to determine the specified characteristic, the character rolls 3d10, takes the two dice with highest results, and adds their results to 25 to determine the characteristic.

– **Characteristic:** When rolling to determine the specified characteristic, the character rolls 3d10, takes the two dice with lowest results, and adds their results to 25 to determine the characteristic.

Inquisitors do not choose their Acolytes at whim. The player characters in **DARK HERESY** are a cut above the rest of humanity, and fated for a greater destiny. Because of this, the player can re-roll any one characteristic value but must keep the second result.

ALLOCATING POINTS

At the GM's discretion, players can instead use point allocations to determine starting characteristics in place of rolling for them. To do this, the character starts with a score of 30 in each characteristic and then receives 60 points which he can distribute to any of his characteristics as desired. No characteristic can be raised higher than 45 in this way.

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

When using point allocations, the characteristic modifiers the PC's home world applies changes the starting score of the respective characteristics:

+ **Characteristic:** Starts with a score of 35.

– **Characteristic:** Starts with a score of 25.

No characteristic can be raised higher than 45 during point allocation.

FERAL WORLDS

Savage primitives from backward cultures or wild untamed worlds; what they lack in knowledge of the stars and the secrets of technology, they more than make up for in strength and survivability.

"Caring little is me about your gun. Caring more should be you about my axe!"

—Karl-Va, First Steel of the Red Clans

Feral worlds are planets where the dominant culture is trapped in a primitive state, often much lower technologically than that of other Imperial worlds. This can range from nomadic human tribes, with little more than spears and a mastery over fire to once-advanced planets now reduced to barbarism from environmental catastrophes, xenos predations, or other world-shattering events. Those born on such a world are likely to have grown up without technology, and had to survive by hunting or farming with primitive tools and their own two hands. This makes feral worlders hardy, strong, tough, and able to survive in the worst of conditions.

LIFE ON A FERAL WORLD

At first glance, feral worlds would appear backward when compared to more technologically advanced worlds in the Imperium. They are indeed trapped in superstition and ignorance, but no less so than the denizens on any Imperial world, and the concept of progress is as unknown here as anywhere else in the Imperium. The barbaric nature on feral worlds is as pronounced as on any other planet, but here it displays a harsh, personal brutality and dispenses with the veneer of higher civilisation found elsewhere. Feral world natives can view weather as signs from the sky-gods, and the remains of ancient devastated civilisations as relics from ancestors who touched godhood before hubris brought them low. This is no different, however, than a hive labourer who tills powerful machinery through rote actions and dogmatic chants, or reflexively makes the sign of the aquila before entering a hab-room for the first time. Both see the world around them through a thick fog of superstition, not even knowing that there is more to know. To live in the Imperium is to live in ignorance, an awful but blissful experience compared to the horrible truths that Inquisitors know.

Feral worlds are as important to the Imperium as any of its planets, and each tithes men and materials just like any other world. This means that even if the majority of the population are ignorant of other planets, there is often a ruling elite connected to the Imperium and governing the world for them. Populations on feral worlds are often kept in check by their faith in the Imperial Creed, and the Ecclesiarchy ensures that this is the first step when incorporating such a world into the Imperium. On many feral worlds, the local regions and beliefs has thus been supplanted by the faith in the Emperor, and it could be that He is known by different names, such as the Sky-Father, Master of Light, or Star Lord by the primitive people of the world. Even if a feral worlder knows little of the Imperium,

FERAL WORLD RULES

Characters from feral worlds apply the following benefits during their creation:

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

- + Strength
- + Toughness
- Influence

FATE THRESHOLD

1d5–3 (min 1)

HOME WORLD BONUS

Feral world characters start the game with the Heightened Senses (Smell) talent.

SIGNATURE MENTAL TRAUMA

Survivor's Paranoia (see page 253)

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUNDS

Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus
Astra Telepathica, Imperial
Guard, Outcast

it is doubtless that he has heard tell of the Emperor and be raised to revere Him as a god.

There is a near-limitless variety of feral worlds within the Imperium, each different from the next, often mixing ancient cultures and technological levels in a myriad of combinations. For example, a feral world could be little more than a alien wilderness of volcanic tundra, where ignorant tribesmen bow down to effigies of the Emperor whom they call the father-of-lightning. Here they hunt flying-lizards across deserts of ash and dust using weapons of black volcanic glass, until the sky-men call them to serve beyond the world's edge, never to return. Another world could be covered with complex territories of nomadic tribes scattered across an endless swamp, who wear the bones and skins of great amphibians, and constantly war with each other for survival. Some show the signs of previously advanced civilisations, long since blasted to ruins from war or natural catastrophe. Man might live in crude caves nested in crashed orbital towers that could predate the Imperium or even be of xenos origin, using spears tipped with fractal metal shavings to fend off beasts mutated from lesser pets. Feral worlds are defined only by their limited level of technology, where populations have little choice but to live in a primitive state. Feral worlders may well learn to accept the appearance of void ships in their skies and mighty armoured warriors in their cities, their people accepting their place in the universe, perhaps even scorning the sky-men for their feeble reliance on metal trickery when the test

of a true man can only be measured in muscle and bone. Feral worlders might leave their planet, either taken as part of manpower tithes or as part of an Inquisitor's warband, but still retain the primal essence their upbringing provided.

FERAL WORLD CHARACTERS

Feral worlders can be as diverse as the cultures from which they hail, and might encompass nomadic hunters, cave dwellers, and wasteland villages. What they have in common, despite the different worlds from which they come, is that they are tempered by a hard life living outside fighting constantly to survive with little more than the skin on their back and the blade in their hand. This makes feral worlders favoured as soldiers and warriors, where their brutality and survival instincts serve them well, while their lack of knowledge and their limited understanding of the galaxy beyond their world matter little.

Many feral world characters took up arms for the Imperium and later used the skills they have learnt in the service of an the Inquisitor. They are drafted into the Imperial Guard by the millions across the Imperium, whole regiments formed from single tribes or clans; soon their swords, spears, and shields are replaced with lasguns so that they might fight the enemies of Mankind. It can be a brutal and unforgiving way for feral worlders to leave their surroundings behind, thrust into a war light-years from their home world. Those that survive are destined to become among the best the Imperium has to offer, skilled in the arts of war but retaining their hardy primitive origins, able to adapt and survive where others might fail.

Feral worlders might also leave their world by choice, seeking out the tales and legends they have heard of far-off worlds and men that walk between the stars. Such men and women are rare individuals indeed, fighting their way up from nothing to take their place among the Emperor's faithful. More likely, feral worlders seek help to leave their world behind and explore the stars, impressing an Imperial Acolyte or even an Inquisitor with combat prowess or tracking skills and earning a place at their side.

Some feral worlders, like those from any other planet, are burdened with the psyker curse. These damned souls can expect only an existence as feared and reviled shamans, wizards, or oracles. Many have had to face the promise of a brutal death at the hands of their own people or the chance of being sacrificed to their ancient gods. Taken away by the Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica for sanctioning and trained in the use of their gifts, they might in time come to be of use to the Imperium and their new masters.

SAMPLE FERAL WORLD: GREGORN

Gregorn is a world of violence, where primitives fight each other while struggling to survive against tectonic upheavals and predatory megafauna. The natives favour thick lizard-hides and bone helmets, while their martial societies mask highly nuanced customs which have lead to more than one expedition butchered to a man for an unknowing insult. Many seem to have an instinctual fear of plasma weaponry, though there are no indications the world ever hosted a

developed civilisation; it is possible, however, that lava and earthquakes have eradicated traces of any ancient cities.

FORGE WORLDS

Skilled with machinery and commonly using the most advanced forms of technology known to the Imperium; surrounded with sanctified technology and often granted cybernetically augmented bodies, they manifest the Omnissiah's blessings.

"Cease. You dishonour the machine spirit. Speak the litany first, and only then strike the siding so."

—Osmin Ril, Inspector of the Rites, Factorum Aleph VII

Forge worlds are the main armouries and assembly lines of the Imperium. On these densely populated worlds, citizens toil endlessly to craft weaponry for the armies of the Emperor, their bodies often enhanced with technology so that they might better fulfil their task or survive the toxic conditions of the factories in which they toil. A man or woman on such a world is likely to have been born into a generation of workers taught to do a specific task, like their parents before them and their children that will come after, focusing their entire lives on a single job. It is a rigid society from which few escape, where the great Machine Cult and Tech-Priest overlords enforce the construction and toil of the teeming billions working below.

LIFE ON A FORGE WORLD

Forge worlds are a vital part of the Imperium; they are the great factories without which its armies would falter and cease to exist. Because they provide the bulk of the Imperium's armaments and munitions, as well as its voidships and star fortresses, forge worlds utilise forms of technology unseen elsewhere in the Imperium. A forge worlder often lives amongst miracles of machine and man of which other Imperial citizens could only dream. Around them might be moving cities that traverse their worlds on huge tracks, dumping their waste and moving on before the toxic clouds dissolves their walls, gigantic reactors built into the world's moulten core and powered by the tides of gravity, or orbital elevators reaching from the surface into the depths of space like endless skeletal fingers. Huge cogitators that make constant and inhumanly complicated computations, and teeming hordes of servitors fashioned from the bodies of lobotomised humans and mechanical parts, are all frequent sights on a forge world.

Technology is both embraced and feared within the Imperium, and though Mankind dominates the stars with mighty warships and legions of armoured fighting vehicles, much of what was once known has been lost. What remains is bound around with ignorance, ritual, and mystery. This is the purview of the Adeptus Mechanicus, the Imperium's galaxy-spanning keepers of its technological lore and secrets. It oversees most forge worlds, their Tech-Priest Magos ensuring that factories are maintained and workers kept in line. For the Machine Cult, and by extension the Imperium, the understanding and execution of technology has become a complex religion shrouded in mystery and

FORGE WORLD RULES

Characters from forge worlds apply the following benefits during their creation:

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

- + Intelligence
- + Toughness
- Fellowship

FATE THRESHOLD

1d5–2 (min 1)

HOME WORLD BONUS

Forge world characters start the game with the Technical Knock talent.

SIGNATURE MENTAL TRAUMA

Obsessive Hoarding (see page 253)

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUNDS

Adeptus Administratum, Adeptus Arbitres,
Adeptus Mechanicus,
Imperial Guard

ritual. For most Imperial citizens, advanced technology is frightening and strange, hidden behind odd rites and prayer, and the dire warnings of their preachers. For forge worlders, this technology is more omnipresent but no less to be venerated and revered as miracles of the Omnissiah. A forge worlder might have greater familiarity and access to technology, but he has just as little true understanding. For him, the metal and plasteel marvels around him are perhaps less strange but no less sacred, wrapped in the trappings of the Machine Cult's religious teachings.

Everyone born on a forge world has his place, often part of the huge machines which keeps its factories running and the production of war materials flowing to the Imperium's many warfronts. Whether or not the forge worlder is a skilled worker or simply another pair of arms to turn wheels and haul goods, his role will be his whole life, born into a family craft or taking his place dragging the great chain with millions others of his kind. Some might rise into positions within the Machine Cult, proving themselves ably devoted followers of the lost arts of technology and taking on the mantle of Tech-Priest. Others live out their days as mere worker drones, mastering their trade until they can pass it down to the next generation, and die content in the knowledge that their life was spent so the Imperium could continue.

FORGE WORLD CHARACTERS

A forge world is not one but many societies pressed together in a carefully constructed system of classes and castes. Characters that hail from a forge world can therefore come from any one of these classes, either overseeing from above with the guidance of the Machine God, protecting the Imperium in the armies of the Omnissiah, or toiling on the factorum floor among the other workers. Others might even live in the cracks that appear even on such heavily regimented settings, exploring illegal enterprises or merely trying to survive in the dark areas between factories or abandoned manufactorums. What they all share is exposure to some of the most fabulous and terrible technological mysteries within the Imperium, and are often fitted with augmentations and modifications only available to those born in the heat of the forge. This makes them favoured to become members of one of the many branches of the Machine Cult. It also makes them favoured with criminal organisations and others focused on the use and abuse of technology, such as those who actively work to subvert the rules and restrictions put in place by the Adeptus Mechanicus.

Followers of the Adeptus Mechanicus, such as those that would aspire to become Tech-Priests in their orders, are most likely to have come from forge worlds. The training and teaching they receive under the guidance of the Machine Cult can set them on a path to enlightenment and physical augmentation. This is a natural progression for forge worlders, with ascension into the ranks of their masters and a deeper understanding of the mysteries and secrets of technology. From here, they can then serve in any number of capacities within the Adeptus Mechanicus, or be sent to aid another Imperial organisation like the Imperial Guard to maintain its tanks and weapons, the Imperial Navy to oversee the machine spirits of a voidship, or even find a place in the service of an Inquisitor where their technological expertise can prove invaluable.

Forge worlders are normally subject to the manpower tithes to provide forces to the Imperial Guard. Service here is often a worker's first exposure to open air and sunlight away from the oppressive heat of their working areas. Unlike those pressed into service or those who must suffice with whatever meagre weapons the Imperium can provide, regiments from a forge world might be equipped with greater weaponry beyond what might be granted to a lesser world. The men making up these ranks often forge the very weapons they carry. The few shipyards that still create the void-faring vessels of the Imperial Navy are also likely to be found orbiting forge worlds, and boys might grow to men seeing these wondrous ships every day in the skies overhead. It is little wonder that they seek out a place on such a ship, their understanding of the processes that have gone into its creation securing them an important position or even a commission where they can rise in the ranks should they prove their worth. In both cases, the fighting forces of the Imperium always have a use for those raised among the factorums and habs of a forge world, their supreme reverence for the machine setting them apart from the countless masses of the Imperium.

SAMPLE FORGE WORLD: RHODIN IV

The Cult of the Machine God has occupied this world for several thousand years, ever since it was awarded to the Adeptus Mechanicus for its aid in repelling a nearby Ork uprising. Rich in promethium and other useful ores, this once verdant world has since become layered with plasteel and pollutants. Factories many kilometres tall churn out a wide variety of armaments and munitions. Deep mines weave through the planet's crust, so invasive that networks of cyclopean support beams are needed to buttress the immense weight of the manufacturums that cover the surface. Many of the Tech-Priests spend their entire lives underground, feverishly directing legions of servitors to maintain these complex metal webs.

HIGHBORN

The elite who rule over the worlds of the Imperium, obsessed with power and the politics to maintain that power; they may rule from piles of fur on a barren plain, or from the crystalline windows at the top of a hive spire, but all know the precarious nature of power and the ever-present enemies ready to snatch it from them.

"Yes, I especially liked that vintage so I enslaved the village to ensure a steady supply."

—Leisi IX, Governor of Pallon Secundus

Highborn are the elite of Imperial worlds, the nobles, princes, and lords of cities, systems, and worlds ruling over boundless populations alongside other equally privileged scions. To be born into such a setting is to have been given the best that the planet has to offer, raised apart from the struggling ranks of Mankind and destined to take on positions of great import and power. This might be the finest pelts and grox meat of a feudal world, or the most potent of narcotics and off-world delights on a mainstay hive world. It is also to enter into a world of deadly politics and ancient feuds, where children grow up with terrible enemies and sleep knowing there are those that would cut their throats for a taste of their hereditary position. Highborn often live their lives apart from the rest of their world, sometimes never leaving the high castles, spire cities, and sky palaces far above the teeming masses. They are content in the knowledge that they are the instruments of Imperial dominance on their world and voice of the Emperor to their people, and anything that would disrupt such a state is unthinkable anathema.

LIFE AS A Highborn

Highborn exist on nearly all worlds in the Imperium, from the towering spires of its hive cities to the stone forts and caves of its feral kingdoms. They are the privileged and powerful of their worlds; those fit for governance not by the will of the people but by the providence of their birthright. While their powers and purview might differ from world to world, their function remains the same: to lead their people and control the resources and political might of their planet. Most highborn grow up being groomed for this power, taught to

HIGHBORN RULES

Highborn characters gain the following benefits:

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

- + Fellowship
- + Influence
- Toughness

FATE THRESHOLD

1d5–1 (min 0)

HOME WORLD BONUS

Any time a highborn character would reduce his Influence, he reduces it by one less (to a minimum reduction of 1).

SIGNATURE MENTAL TRAUMA

Writhing Phobia (see page 253)

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUNDS

Adeptus Administratum, Adeptus Arbitres,
Adeptus Astra Telepathica,
Adeptus Ministorum

govern justly by fair and even-handed peers or, more likely, instilled with a disregard for those below and ingratitude for the influence and position they have been given. Many are so ingrained into their opulent lifestyle that they have little or no notion of how the majority lives. Generations can be spent in supreme if relative comfort, be that a heated cavern shielded from omnipresent blizzards or an orbiting pleasure-satellite that rides auroral clouds. Here they are content to shield themselves in the trappings of wealth and privilege, while focusing on the real threat to their existence or to that of their family: other highborn.

The scale and size of the Imperium is reflected in the nobility of its worlds. Just as it has endured for millennia and covers the majority of the galaxy, so too are there noble families, sector lords, and planetary governors whose lineage stretches back thousands of years and whose holdings comprise whole systems or wide regions of space. It is also reflected in its diversity, with each world's ruler as unique as the world itself. Some worlds are ruled through agencies such as the Adeptus Ministorum or Adeptus Mechanicus, where the rulers are more the result of power plays than hereditary bloodlines or the decree of the Adeptus Administratum. Some rulers flicker and fade, having barely made their presence known. Others form dynasties lasting the entire history of a world. Often a family or lineage can draw great power to itself, slowly but surely acquiring planetary control and resources, seeding its spawn throughout positions of influence and authority

until there is no place on a world untouched by its grasp. Over the years, such great families will wax and wane in their power, so that a minor highborn might find himself recently risen up on the fortunes of his line, newly gifted with wealth and fame, or he might be lamenting the reckless deeds of his ancestors that have seen his family fall from grace, a mere shadow of what they once were.

Being a highborn means more than being born into power and position; it means the lifelong obligation and struggle to protect the interests of the family or clan, and to try and better them. It is the nature of power that those that do not have it crave it, and those that have it crave more. Noble families thus conduct warfare with each other to garner and defend power, in battles often masked with subtlety, disguise, and innuendo but no less deadly than open combat. At such levels, mere currency is worthless, and power is traded in favours and debts. In these struggles for power there are few rules, and should a family fall from favour they have little recourse for justice when targeted by blackmail, treachery, or murder, save to respond in kind.

HIGHBORN CHARACTERS

While born to power, highborn characters might also be born with little or even nothing to look forward to beyond a lifetime of idle excess and family infighting. Even among the most powerful families, there are usually dozens if not hundreds of heirs to the true positions of power and a highborn, while afforded all the luxuries of his station, may find little with which to content himself. This idleness can lead them in wildly different directions, either choosing to try and climb the social ladder of their family, proving themselves in the bloody politics of the Imperial nobility, or rejecting the control their family has placed upon them and seeking out their own fortune elsewhere. Those that remain find they are never truly free of their family. The ties that bind them to the home are always present, as is the taint of their family and its reputation, which clings to their name as long as they wear it. Even those that try and escape might not be able to run far enough to outdistance their noble obligations and their family's long reach, inevitably dragged back into its petty squabbles and bids for power long after they considered themselves free.

A highborn character not fortunate enough to have a place of real power could spend his days in luxurious indolence, or find adventure on his own in other areas of his world to pass his time. Some might be ceded to one of the Imperial organisations operating on his system or world, thus extending the influence of the family. Here the highborn might rise through the ranks or be as idle as they choose, putting in token effort and continuing a decadent lifestyle secure in the knowledge that the weight of their family can protect them from any chance of dismissal. It is not uncommon for highborn youths to be given commissions in the Imperial Guard or Imperial Navy. While it falls to the highborn to decide if he cares to strive in his position, many of those with gifted commissions earn the hate of those officers that have had to earn their rank, at least until he has proved himself in some way.

Those that endeavour to escape their families also often choose the Imperial Guard or Navy, though with a mind to it taking them far away from those that know them. In this role they strive to earn their place upon their own deeds and not the word of their family, but it is a dangerous game. Imperial forces are filled with those of noble blood, and the chance of encountering someone that recognises the highborn never goes away. Some truly cut ties with their family, becoming criminals or pirates after first stealing as much of their house's wealth as possible. Others, even worse in their family's eyes, forge a reputation for themselves as liberators and freedmen, living lives impossible for their relations to comprehend.

SAMPLE Highborn Setting:

THE PLATINAL PALACE OF SNOPE'S WORLD

Far atop the main hab-city on Snope's World lies the glittering Platinal Palace. Formed of fractalised sheets of iridescent metals, it shines like a beacon above the solemn clouds and polluted swamps that cover much of the planet. It is said that the palace's surface holds a million million angles, each one unique across its conical form. Within are the hive's ruling families, each as superficially gleaming and beautiful as their dwelling. Here they plot endlessly against each other. None dare openly battle, fearing expulsion from the archeotech-supported environs, but instead use pain-poisons, rumour plagues, and other soft weapons to cripple their rivals.

HIVE WORLDS

The struggling masses of humanity, one among uncounted billions living out their lives in vast towering cities; hardened by living among such dense populations, they are savvy talkers and adept criminals.

"Meet is set. Twelve levels down, just above the tox drains along the Killian wall and near the border with the Ironmongers. Bring extra stubber shells."

—Etregan "Ganner" Haiyn, Desoleum ganger

Hive worlders exist in cities that reach kilometres into the sky from the wasted surface of toxic worlds and hostile environments, ruined through many centuries of industry. Sealed off from the planet outside, they live stacked on top of each other over hundreds of levels, each one packed with millions of souls all working, eating, and dying without ever venturing beyond the steel caverns of their birth. To be a hive worlder is to have grown up among overpopulation and artifice, where the sun is only a myth and any light is obscured through layers of smoke and acidic clouds. Unfortunates know only crushing poverty, barely surviving in the dank depths far below the surface in underworlds where the very air cannot be counted on from one day to the next. For a hive worlder, life is a cog in a great city-machine from which few can ever imagine to leave, living and dying in the same few cubic kilometres in which they were born.

HIVE WORLD RULES

Characters from Hive Worlds apply the following benefits during their creation:

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

- + Agility
- + Perception
- Willpower

FATE THRESHOLD

1d5 – 2 (min 1)

HOME WORLD BONUS

When determining initiative order, the Hive World character gains a +2 modifier to his roll.

SIGNATURE MENTAL TRAUMA

Kleptomania (see page 253)

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUNDS

Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Mechanicus,
Imperial Guard, Outcast

LIFE ON A HIVE WORLD

Hive cities are ancient constructions, each century slowly growing wider across the barren ground and higher into the polluted air. They dominate worlds where the local environment has all but collapsed from long years of mining, harvesting, and waste dumping. These are nearly sealed ecosystems, where billions of people live stacked on top of each other in the close confines of what is in essence a great metal tomb. A hive worlder lives out his life never seeing the sky, never knowing what the surface of his world looks like, and often never even leaving the city level on which he was born. Most hive worlds have scores of these constructs, each existing in isolation from each other, rising up from the toxic fog and cursed earth of the worlds like monuments to its demise. Hive worlders are often born into a house or family with their vocation decided. Thus they work endlessly at their task in the factorums and industrial habs of their hive, producing goods to be shipped off-world, or maintaining the many systems of the hive so that its population might continue to survive and another generation be born to take their place.

Nearly everything within a hive is recycled and reused, and few things are ever wasted. The air a hive worlder breathes, the water he drinks, and the food he eats likely all has once passed through the bodies of countless others, endlessly restored to be consumed once again. When a hive

worlder dies his duty to the hive and house are not done, and most hives reconstitute their dead for the resources they can provide. All of a hive worlder's possessions, from the hab room in which he lives to the clothes on his back, likewise come from those before him, the dead gifting the living with what little they have in a continuation of cycle of hive life. Even in a system where the bulk of hive residents must subsist on what meagre resources can be divided among a billion hungry mouths and shivering bodies, there remains a definite division of class. From the spires of the hive top, where the highborn enjoy all the wealth the Imperium has to offer, down through the heads of the guilds and houses that can still hope to live in relative comfort, to the workers and dregs, resources become less abundant. The lower in a hive the more decayed and dangerous it becomes, the detritus of billions drifting down to rest among the filth far below. The rule of law breaks down into the depths, where there is no system to govern what pitiful resources remain. These are wild and deadly domains where some hivers come to escape the ridge structure of their lives, but usually find only death and despair among the mutants and violent gangs that lurk in these dark worlds below.

HIVE WORLD CHARACTERS

Hive worlds are a perfect expression of life in the Imperium in many ways and the result of what it has done to survive among a hostile and decaying galaxy. Hive worlders reflect this too, and are resourceful and hardy in a way that only those born into an overcrowded society with finite resources can be. Within a hive, only the strong survive and only those who are both strong and cunning truly prosper. Even those that choose not to break the law are often forced to bend it to get their way, the oppressive nature of life within a hive devoid of any opportunities that a man does not make for himself. Positions within the system of control are one route a hive worlder can take, becoming part of the Administratum or Ministorum in an effort to live above the rules, or at least have some control over them. Equally, he might rise to the governance of his family house, trade cartel, or other group, though such a position is usually only coloured by another kind of obligation and duty. The alternative is to reject the trappings of society and embrace the criminal element or be branded an Outcast. Both can bring great wealth and personal freedom, but a man does this at his peril, for the hammer of hive justice is swift and heavy.

All of the great Imperial organisations have their place with the maintenance of a hive world. The Administratum governs its resources and sees it meets its tithes, the Ministorum cares for the souls of its citizens, and the Mechanicus oversees the ancient machines that clean its air, recycle its food and keep it running. Hive worlds also contribute large numbers to both the Imperial Guard and the Imperial Navy, and a hive worlder can often be found in these organisations. What he brings is an intuitive understanding of people, the nature of tightly packed societies, and a resourcefulness than only those that have had to struggle for every mouthful of food or breath of air could understand.

Where a hive worlder really comes into his own, and a path all too many of those who finally escape the hive take, is that of the criminal or Outcast. Whether he is a true recidivist or simply an anti-authoritarian, a hive worlder who rejects the world he has been given and tries to twist it to his own advantage starts down a path he can never turn back from. Outcast hive worlders might be petty crooks, grafting coin from their fellow citizens, or rise to become the heads of powerful organisations controlling all manner of vices and illegal enterprises throughout their hive. If they are set against authority they can become true dissidents, turning the means of control and oppression back on the oppressors, and, of course, making some coin at the same time. However, to really escape the shackles of hive life a hive worlder must travel away from structured society. This might be into the depths of an underhive, into the wastelands surrounding the city or even off world. Here he can live free, provided he is quick with a gun and willing to do whatever it takes to survive.

SAMPLE HIVE WORLD: HIVE KRAKEX

A huge edifice that pierces the polluted skies of Hulee V, Hive Krakex appears more mountain than building. Generations continually build new outer layers that roll off the surface layers like lava dripping down a volcano. Each new layer stretches its bulk across the surrounding wastelands and devours kilometres away from the ragged millions teeming outside its circumference. Billions more exist inside, transforming bulk-imported raw ores into the sheet plasteel that protects many of the tanks and fortresses across the sector. Most never see sky or sun, and cannot imagine a life without enclosed roofing, processed air, and immense crowds omnipresent on all sides.

SHRINE WORLDS

Born in the shadow of great saints, the light of the Emperor blinding and embracing since birth; pious and devout, they see the world through eyes of fanatical faith and righteous hatred.

"Tread carefully; and with each step reflect on the sanctified remains surrounding you."

—Yantho Carl, Thaur Caretaker

Shrine worlders grow up on planets that the Imperium and its galaxy-spanning church have deemed holy places, where the Cult of the Emperor's power is omnipresent in their lives. While their birthplace might range from cluttered, decaying cities to scattered farmlands, or their planet from a green paradise to a forbidding ball of baked rock, the power of the Emperor saturates it. Perhaps some great deed was committed here, a bold hero of the Imperium turning back the alien tide, or because it is the resting place for a saint with a hallowed grave dominating the surface of the world and drawing pilgrims from far and wide to gaze upon its glory. Shrine worlders are therefore more affected by the teachings of the Cult of the Emperor than most, and while all citizens are brought up to revere the Emperor they know the glory of His power more than most.

SHRINE WORLD RULES

Characters from shrine worlds apply the following benefits during their creation:

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

- + Fellowship
- + Willpower
- Perception

FATE THRESHOLD

1d5–2 (min 1)

HOME WORLD BONUS

Whenever a shrine world character spends a fate point, he rolls a 1d10. On a roll of a 1 or 2, the character's total number of fate points is not reduced.

SIGNATURE MENTAL TRAUMA

Lunatic's Denial (see page 253)

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUNDS

Adeptus Administratum, Adeptus Arbitres,
Adeptus Ministorum,
Imperial Guard

LIFE ON A SHRINE WORLD

Religious grace permeates every part of a shrine world, the very spirit of the Cult of the Imperial Creed embodied by the world itself and its citizens which embrace His divine worship. Shrine worlders live their lives with the strength of the Emperor in their hearts and exposed to His word in many aspects of their lives. It is one thing to acknowledge the might of the Emperor as all Imperial citizens must, but quite another to see His deeds and the deeds of His saints on a daily basis, knowing that the world exists because of the power of the Imperial Creed. The exposure to clerics, priests, and pilgrims also impacts upon their life, the higher proportion of these souls than on other worlds giving them greater veneration for the Imperial Creed which links all men together. Pilgrims especially offer a rare glimpse into worlds and sectors beyond a shrine worlder's home planet, and a taste of the Imperium beyond told from the lips of those who have travelled far distances just to visit the shrines. Each reflects the diversity of the Imperial Creed, with every world worshipping the Emperor in its own manner, and so pilgrims might incorporate all manner of unique rituals and clothing as part of their native practices. Some might wear elaborate masks, allowing none but the Sun-Emperor to gaze at their faces. Others might wear boots and gloves filled with burrs and thorns, the better to know the Emperor's lament for His peoples. Conflicts are

not uncommon between groups who perhaps have for the first time witnessed other ways to worship the Emperor; sects that insist on drab colours might clash with those displaying garish hues, for example.

Shrine worlds can vary greatly in the size and shape they take; just as the saints and holy men of the Imperium take many forms, so too do the places they touch and the worlds upon which they rest. There is no established norm for a shrine world, only that it was the place where a saint was entombed or committed some great deed, worthy of the attention of the Ministorum. A shrine world might have been a feral or a hive world with a well-established society before the coming of the saint, changing the focus of its citizens and bringing attention from off-world. Equally, many shrine worlds were only outposts or dead worlds before a saint fought a final battle, or came there to find his final rest, the trappings of the world coming later as priests and pilgrims set about constructing a society to honour the memory of the saint. In both cases the presence of the saint and the millions of pilgrims who make the trek have changed the world forever, giving it a new purpose and a new place within the Imperium.

There is another side to shrine worlds, a side that hides beneath the veneer of religion and masks another face of the Imperium. While the world exists for the glory of the saint and as a place to worship the might of the Emperor, the constant flow of pilgrims and visitors makes such places a breeding ground for criminals and smugglers. Either selling false relics to the faithful or using the pilgrim trail to transport illicit goods, the underbelly of a shrine world is as active and dangerous as any underhive. Many born on a planet dedicated to a saint are drawn into this shadow world, either aiding such illegal endeavours to make some more coin or seeing it as a chance to escape in an effort to get off-world and make their own fortune. Even so, while some succeed and go on to find a life on the fringes of the Imperium among vile company, they remain shrine worlders at heart, never forgetting the teaching of the saint, whether they live by them or not.

SHRINE WORLD CHARACTERS

A shrine worlder has a unique perspective on the Imperium, raised among the harsh realities of the Imperial faith but also exposed to a constant stream of travellers from strange and far off places. This can lead to a slavish devotion to the creed and a blind acceptance of those that claim to speak in the Emperor's voice. Alternatively the character might find inspiration in the Imperial Creed and rise up within the ranks of the faithful to do great things, buoyed up by the might of the Emperor and the glory of what Mankind has wrought upon the stars. Just as the inhabitants of a forge world are ideally shaped to enter into the ranks of the Adeptus Mechanicus, so too are those raised in the holy cities and domains of a shrine world well suited to a place within the Adeptus Ministorum. Many of the most renowned leaders of the Ecclesiarchy have their beginnings in such places, and retain the ties to their home world even should they travel far from home spreading the word of the Emperor.

Service within the Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, or even Adeptus Arbites are also fitting services for one born on a shrine world, there being no greater mark of devotion to the Emperor than sacrificing one's life to protect his realm from predatory xenos, insidious cults, or brutal criminals. Some of the greatest regiments ever to grace the ranks of the Imperial Guard are those founded on shrine worlds, known for their fervour in battle and their fearlessness in the face of terrible foes or insurmountable danger. Even those that find their way into the priesthood of the Ministorum seek out battle to prove their mettle and devotion, seconding themselves to the Imperial Guard or Navy to act as regimental priests or shipboard confessors.

Whether or not they remain on their world or choose to step out into the void to spread the faith, many born on shrine worlds follow in the footsteps of their patron saint. The population of a shrine world is also moulded by faith in the saint to which it is dedicated, and even those who do not join the Ministorum or choose religious vocations often carry the saint's teachings with them. This can also include the saint's venerated characteristics or legendary nature, and shrine world characters could reflect their unique saint in a particular recklessness in battle, an abiding hatred for a specific xenos, a disdain for technology, or an aversion to particular weapons.

SAMPLE SHRINE WORLD: OSSUAR

Located in the Pollom System, the Creed of Remembrance rules the planet Ossuar in the name of the Ecclesiarchy. A mausoleum covers much of the main continent, where several of the blessed saints who helped establish the sector are laid to rest in archeotech stasis chambers. Flocks of attendants work constantly to maintain the chronically entombed state, the idea of the saints becoming exposed to time too horrible to contemplate. Many more oil the gleaming statuary, lead prayer marches, and herd the many millions of faithful throughout the labyrinthian walkways within. After spending years to reach the planet, many pilgrims perish in the additional years it takes to make their way from the outskirts to the sanctified remains within.

VOIDBORN

Solar nomads and planetary outcasts living out lives in the inky blackness of the void between worlds; touched by celestial winds and their closeness to the Warp, they are often shunned by all but their own kind.

"Of course I want walls. How can you possibly live with all that nothing around you?"

—Unjo Re'Asmulle, after stepping onto the plains of Attila

Voidborn spend their lives in the expanses of space, growing up on ancient orbital stations, generation vessels, merchant freighters, or remote asteroid outposts. They spend much of their lives without the stability of a real world beneath their feet, knowing the cold deadly grasp of empty space is only a few metres of bulkhead away. This makes them exceptionally skilled when it comes to

VOIDBORN RULES

Voidborn characters gain the following benefits:

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

- + Intelligence
- + Willpower
- Strength

FATE THRESHOLD

1d5–2 (min 2)

HOME WORLD BONUS

Voidborn characters do not count zero gravity environments as difficult terrain.

SIGNATURE MENTAL TRAUMA

Midnight Visitation (see page 253)

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUNDS

Adeptus Astra Telepathica,
Adeptus Mechanicus, Adeptus
Ministorum, Outcast

living on voidships and space stations, more so than any who have spent their lives crawling around in the dirt of a world. It also often makes them strange, tall and willowy, hairless, or with large dark eyes. Living so close to the void also touches their souls. There is something deeply odd about the voidborn, something intangible which lurks below the surface, writhing in the dark like the Warp lurks below the void itself, waiting and watch for its moment to surface.

LIFE IN THE VOID

Void worlders live in perhaps the most hostile of all environments, the lifeless space between worlds where little if anything can survive. For the Imperium to emerge Mankind has conquered the stars, and so space travel is a constant across the galaxy. Billions cross the void as they travel from one world to the next or safeguard the shipping lanes of those that do. Over the millennia, more and more of the Imperium's infrastructure and control has extended into the void until many worlds boast dozens if not hundreds of transports, voidships, and orbital stations. On these drifting cities, generations are born and die among the stars, never setting foot on the surface of a planet, existing either as a tiny part in the immense Imperial system, or forgotten on an abandoned ship or station like so many human societies. Even those that spend long periods in the void, like the crew of a Rogue Trader's ship endlessly plying the stars in search of profit, cannot compare to the natural affinity a voidborn has with life between worlds.

Much like a hive city or the factories of a forge world, a voidship or space station can become a completely closed society for its inhabitants, and a voidborn might never consider what lies beyond the steel walls and sealed bulkheads of his world. Some voidborn might not even know that they are in space, or what the void is, growing up seeing the interior of their ship or station as the limits of their world and never questioning what lies beyond. It is possible for entire primitive civilisations to thrive in the void, drifting in the heart of a ship or station that has fallen to disrule, living by instinct and an intuitive understanding of how the ship's life support systems function that wise elders have handed down from one generation to the next. Even voidborn acquainted with the stars are indoctrinated into the ritual of maintaining their floating home, from an early age made acutely aware of the price that negligence and idleness can cost their family. This means that even more so than a hive city or factorum, those who make their life in the void must obey strict rules and regulations, the slightest error or reckless act putting everyone in peril. Death is the constant companion of the voidborn, the blackness of space a reminder of its finality. While others might have the comfort of high blue skies to protect them from the dark, the voidborn has only the honest plasteel and sturdy airlocks of his home. Living so close to the cold embrace of the void makes a man very conscious of his own mortality and the mortality of those around him, knowing that a broken seal, fractured bulkhead, or failed radiation shield could wipe out his society in a matter of minutes.

VOIDBORN CHARACTERS

Living in the void brings with it more dangers than the mere lack of gravity, oxygen, or warmth. It also brings one closer to the Warp and the malign touch of the dark powers that live just beyond the sight of man. Travel across the stars means travel through the Warp, and each journey leaves the soul one small step closer to daemonic perils. This grants voidborn unique advantages over his fellow man, beyond just an intimate understanding of life aboard a ship or station. Voidborn are naturally touched by the Warp, and many seem more sensitive to psychic powers and the stain they can leave upon the material universe. Voidborn also often have an innate sense for their artificial surroundings. With just a sniff of the air or a notice to the myriad of creaks and hums within a vessel, they can usually tell everything from the state of the air scrubbers to how well the plasma reactors are faring.

Voidborn often find themselves in vocations that operate in space, such as in the ranks of the Imperial Navy, the Adeptus Mechanicus, civilian merchant vessels, or as Outcasts adrift among the stars. A lifetime spent aboard decaying stellar craft can make the gravity of a world feel too heavy, the air too rich, and the light of a star too bright for sensitive eyes and pale skin. Fortunately, the Imperium has a significant presence in the emptiness between worlds, and whether it is aboard a constantly travelling pilgrim vessel or deep sector station, there is always a need for humans to live out their lives without ever descending into the gravity well of a world.

Voidborn that wish to be counted among prominent organisations like the Imperial Guard or Administratum. They are more naturally Outcasts, though; it is far easier for them to work those areas which allow them to be naturally alone, or which exist outside the structured classes of the Imperium. By this same token, voidborn know how to walk within the shadow of the Imperium, living beneath the notice of the great and the powerful to ply their trade as criminals, pirates, and scavengers. In both cases, the voidborn always find acceptance hard to come by, as the people of their home ship or station are the only ones who will ever truly understand them and welcome them without suspicion or precedence. Such is the lot of the voidborn, both restricted to the smallest corner of the Imperial hierarchy, and free from its constraints to choose their own fate.

SAMPLE VOIDBORN SETTING: ECHONIS AUGURY

Drifting along the sector's rim and away from regular traffic, this ancient void station originally served as a major Adeptus Mechanicus research site. Hundreds of Tech-Priests and servitors worked here to info-scour the surrounding parsecs in a secretive quest. Several centuries ago, a supply vessel arrived to find the station empty and barren. Since then it has become a popular trading post for Rogue Traders and common merchants alike. Hundreds live on it, with extended generations working to maintain and expand the site, all with occasionally concerns over the fate of the previous occupants.

STAGE 2: CHOOSE BACKGROUND

"I still remember the old regimental motto: With Las and Faith and Flamer, for Oath and Emperor and Desoleum! Simple, but it remains with me even now."

—Gex Avrille, from the private memoirs *Recollections of Service*

The Imperium operates on the blood and sacrifice of the untold billions who call the Emperor master, yet without organisation and focus their efforts would be wasted and Mankind would swiftly fall. Where once the Emperor walked amongst men and directed their actions, now impossibly massive bureaucracies administrate in his name. Backgrounds represent these organisations and other groups that Acolytes come from, and just as home worlds represent the birth and development of an Acolyte, backgrounds represent the organisations that drove his training and indoctrinations. While home worlds establish a place of origin, backgrounds indicate an Acolyte's previous life experience before an Inquisitor noticed the aptitudes and abilities he developed there, found them to be of use, and forever changed his life.

Acolytes come into these backgrounds in a variety of ways. Most are simply born into their station, fulfilling their place as their fathers and forefathers have done for generations. They might be fulfilling a hereditary debt that stretches back to the founding of their sector, or to when an Imperial organisation established itself on their world. Some might come from families dedicated to a particular function

within a voidship or manufactory, where members spend their entire lives devoutly maintaining a torpedo bay or reactor intake. Similarly, lineages might continue for many generations in pious duty with ensuring a shrine entrance is properly anointed, or the censers always lit with the correct blend of blessed flowers. For nearly all of the Imperium's teeming billions, this is life. There is not only no other way possible, but no other way imaginable.

Some come to their organisation through no action of their own, but due instead to outside circumstances. The Schola Progenium takes in countless children, all the orphaned offspring of those who died well in service to the Imperium. Trained from youth, these can represent the most zealous and loyal of the Emperor's servants. Many go on to join the grim forces of the Adeptus Arbites and other supremely dedicated services, such as the Commissariat or Stormtroopers.

For some, there is no choice, taken from their world and previous occupations to forcibly serve. They might be conscripted in planet-wide impressment to form new Imperial Guard regiments or to replenish the bloodstained decks of an Imperial Navy vessel. They might have been imprisoned criminals or dissidents, but now fight and die as the planet fulfils its tithe to the Imperial war engine. Others face a far worse fate as part of the other great tithe, to collect and offer up psykers. Taken aboard the Black Ships, they now face a lifetime in the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. This life might be a very short one, as some do not survive the journey to Holy Terra. As each world searches and determines suspected psykers in its own unique manner, it is possible many are also falsely captured, never to see their home again.

Like suspected psykers, some rare individuals may become part of an organisation through selection. Those with an affinity for communing with the machine spirits might be taken in as apprentices to the Omnissian priesthood, or those adept at transcription and recitation enfolded into the data-vaults of the Adeptus Administratum. A very small minority chose their occupation, perhaps naively volunteering for the glory of their local Imperial Guard regiment in a new founding or renouncing their estates and wealth to lead prayers at hive temples.

Then there are those who reject being part of any group, and make their own destiny as Outcasts. Not all do this of their own volition; many are forced out of disgrace, impoverishment, or other situations not of their making. Once separated from normal means, their new lives can move in directions never before imagined, for better or worse.

It is from these backgrounds that an Inquisitor has noticed exceptional skills, impressive competencies, or useful connections. It also illustrates how the character gained such distinction. For an Inquisitor to notice indicates aptitudes beyond the norm, and indicates someone who could be useful in his endless fight. This could come from formal training, practical experience, or most commonly a mix of the two. Imperial Guard recruits receive combat training, though this varies with the regiment, home world, and often the length of the journey to their first battlefield. Surviving that first battle usually means the recruit has also learned other important skills from veteran comrades, such

PLAYER NOTES: BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds allow a player to flesh out his character's previous life and experiences, and as such can either complement an established home world or be used to broaden him in unusual ways. Often at this stage, a player has formed a mental image of his character and possibly already has a role in mind. Selecting a background that strengthens this image, such as Imperial Guard for a Warrior or Adeptus Astra Telepathica for a Mystic, can lead to iconic *Warhammer 40,000* characters. There is certainly nothing wrong with this, and for new players it is often the best way to fight heresy in the Imperium for the first time. Veteran players, or those looking for unusual characters, can use alternative selections to perhaps guide their character into new directions.

Almost any background can be matched to a home world; the Adeptus Astra Telepathica for example, can originate in any world or setting, given that the Black Ships visit every habitation across the Imperium. Outcasts can be found everywhere. Selecting a background that deviates from the norm can offer a character skills, talents, and equipment he might not otherwise possess, and create a more well-rounded Acolyte for an Inquisitor.

Most backgrounds carry with them distinctive dress, mannerisms, and religious practices, and players should also consider these in their decision. These can offer interesting ways to roleplay a character, such as an Adeptus Mechanicus character who would rather converse with his servo-skull familiar than others in the warband, or a dour Imperial Guardsman convinced he should have died with the rest of his regiment. There are no incorrect

backgrounds as long as the selection further guides the character's history from home world and into role.

as the best way to fortify a mud-soaked trench or quickly recharge his lasgun, perhaps in ways not taught in the *Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer*. With time, he becomes someone who can impress an Inquisitor enough to be selected as an Acolyte. His background offers him the opportunity to develop connections, most commonly within that organisation but also to other agencies with which he worked. Often, these intangible assets are more powerful than any weapon when gathering force to combat heresy.

Backgrounds are also instrumental in a character's possessions: the weapons, armour, support gear, and other accoutrements an Acolyte has gathered as part of his life and occupation. These could range from a lovingly maintained lasgun used in wars across the sector, to a scavenged stubgun that has witnessed many an underhive gang fight. These can also be items such as his normal garb, from gang leathers to Arbitrator armour, primitive hides to perfumed clerical robes. Backgrounds can even guide hairstyle preferences, favourite foods, common speech patterns, and other details that make an Acolyte unique. An Acolyte's prior lifetime also helps mould how he views the Imperium and other agencies, sometimes reinforcing impressions from his home world or creating new ones. Each world in the Imperium is utterly unique, however, as is each background and even the variations within a background. Given the difficulties of Warp travel and interstellar communication, this is of little wonder. Though each member might appear identical, the Adeptus Mechanicus, for example, is represented differently across the Imperium. Factions within a forge are also unique on close inspection, one always wearing crimson tunics a shade precisely 37 Angstroms lower than their rival smelters or canting their prayers to the Ommissiah in a slightly different binary dialect. Each faction encompasses its own background as well, offering a myriad of possible Mechanicum backgrounds from a single forge. Similarly, almost all worlds are devoted to the Imperial Creed, but how each actually worships the Emperor can be radically different. Each background a character selects, though it might be the same as another character's, is actually singular, and even Acolytes from the same organisation might in fact bear little resemblance to one another.

Each background presented in the following pages includes a description of its role in the Imperium along with an example from the Askellon Sector. Each includes the following special rules that are applied to characters from this background:

Starting Skills: Each character starts the game with all skills at rank 1. This is a list of skills that a character of this background starts with at rank 2 instead.

Starting Talents: A list of talents that characters from this background gain at character creation. Note that the character does not need to meet the prerequisites for any talents granted by his background during character creation.

Starting Equipment: A list of equipment that characters from this background gain at character creation.

Background Bonus: A unique, passive ability that all characters from this background gain.

Signature Malignancy: This represents how characters from this background commonly react to the corrupting influence of Chaos (see page 255).

Recommended Roles: Recommended roles (see Stage 3 on page 41) that characters from this background would be likely to follow.

Each player chooses one background type for his character and creates his character's history. He can either draw on the example background for inspiration, creating a new, unique background history, or leave his character's exact story a mystery for now. After choosing a background, the character sets all of specified skills to rank 2 (and the rest to rank 1), gains the appropriate starting talents, acquires his starting equipment, and gains his background special ability.

ADEPTUS ADMINISTRATUM

The great bureaucracy of tithes and tallies that holds the Imperium together and keeps it running; they keep the lore, histories, and secrets of a million worlds so that the Empire of Man might prosper.

"Our records show that datum is located in the tertiary infocrypt of the fifth vault-level. I can arrange for an expedition to retrieve it, however."

—Honsa Illum, Data Warden of the Primary Tier

Such is the size and scope of the Imperium that it takes an innumerable legion of scribes, officials, and bureaucrats to maintain it. Connected across the stars on a web of scribbled notes and secret data caches, the Administratum is a lumbering behemoth, churning at a speed only slightly higher than deathly rest as it ensures that every planet has paid its due and contributed to the Imperium's continuation. Without the Administratum the Imperium would dissolve into madness and mayhem, cut off not only from those hidden hands that guide its wealth and resources, but also from its history and the centuries of secrets kept deep within the data vaults of the Imperium's largest organisation.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

The Adeptus Administratum, as the name implies, administers the operation of the Imperium. The Imperium survives on a system of tithes, where each world gives men and resources to the Emperor for the protection of all Mankind. The Administratum decides how to use the tithed goods, whether it is to raise an army, evacuate a world, or eradicate a xenos species, all for the betterment of the Imperium. So closely are the workings of the Administratum woven into the fabric of the Imperium that none can escape their attention, and every world has hundreds, if not thousands, of officials and adepts devoted to overseeing its obligations. In many ways, the Imperium is the Administratum, and more than the stern faces of Imperial Guardsmen or the zealous gaze of Ministorum clerics, it represents the hand of the Emperor and His control over all men.

The Administratum observes a rigid hierarchy within its ranks with a myriad of tasks. Some adepts are charged with record keeping, living out their lives in huge data tombs. Here they might spend their days cataloguing endless new texts, carefully recording everything so that after they are dead, another can catalogue their catalogues, and so on in an eternal cycle. Some may do the reverse, burning records deemed heretical or no longer in compliance with the Imperial truth. Most Administratum adepts spend their time sifting through reams of information or completing endless

ADEPTUS ADMINISTRATUM RULES

Characters from the Adeptus Administratum apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Commerce, Linguistics, Logic, Medicae, Remembrance

STARTING TALENTS

Quick Draw, Specialist (Adeptus Administratum),
Weapon Training (Las)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Laspistol, robes, auto-quill,
chrono, data-slate, medi-kit

BACKGROUND BONUS

When making requisition tests, Adeptus
Administratum characters gain a +10 bonus
to the availability of all equipment.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Curse of Decades (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Chirurgion, Hierophant,
Sage, Seeker

reports. These are passed on to other adepts, all in small ways contributing to the Administratum's greater—but still greatly limited—understanding of the Imperium and its status. This is still only poor glimpse of factual reality, and usually so out of date that it is worthless for practical use. Some Administratum lords are acutely aware of this, but still work on as they cannot imagine any other method to maintaining the Imperium. Many others blindly operate the same way, blissfully ignorant of the futility of their work.

Because the Administratum works on all levels of Imperial society, and processes such enormous quantities of information, those within its ranks can sometimes gain understanding into the workings of the Imperium unlike any other. However, this can be as incorrect or antiquated as the data they process. Often possessing talents unknown to others, such as the knowledge of arcane languages, data cyphers, and numerical manipulations, an Administratum adept can detect meaning where others only see random scribbles or base nonsense. This is due in part to the slow decay of knowledge into rote learning on many Imperial worlds, but it is also due to the Administratum's secretive nature. It jealously guards its holdings, and uses specialised codes, insular lexicons, and technical cant. An Administratum adept is the key to unlocking this secret world of records and information, and bringing the

considerable its might to bear can be vital to finding a single citizen among millions, clearing important cargo through quarantine, unravelling a strange local weather pattern, or performing any one of a thousand other tasks.

ADEPTUS ADMINISTRATUM CHARACTERS

Members of the Adeptus Administratum can come from any world or station. A certain degree of intelligence is desired, though more essential is a devotion to assigned tasks and an obsession to their rote completion. Advancement is, of course, only as fast as the Administratum itself; those who start by merely laying out parchment next to the autoquills, might one day have their descendants carry the completed scrolls away for filing. Even lesser worlds can have many scores of Administratum officials to oversee them, while larger worlds might have entire cities of scribes and adepts working tirelessly to review its government and maintain its tithes. Sometimes this might be done locally via Administratum datavaults maintained within capital venues, while some planets are so remote or uncivilised that only a scant few scribes might labour in small, forgotten sector-level offices to watch over the far-distant world.

The most common kind of Adeptus Administratum character is the adept or scribe, who has lived out his life surrounded by records, toiling endlessly in a data store or as part of the apparatus of governance and only connected to the outside world by the reports he receives and processes. These kinds of men and women can develop an almost preternatural relationship with data, able to sift through endless piles of information and find key words, phrases, and lines, which they can then weave together into in a coherent picture often invisible to others. Exceptional adepts like this know how the Imperium functions on a level unknown to even its sector and system lords, and are able to work their way into the great mechanisms of the Administratum to turn the wheels in their favour.

Less common, but also possible, are those which have fallen, the discontent with their lot who tried to enrich themselves or gain illicit power over local dominions. Even disgraced Administratum workers can have their use, and can find new purpose and service elsewhere.

SAMPLE ADEPTUS ADMINISTRATUM BACKGROUND: JOVUS INFOCRYPT REGIMENTUM

Dwelling deep within the bowels of the world's main city, this organisation is devoted to maintaining one of the planet's largest infocrypts. Here information dating back many millennia is stored, some records perhaps dating from the mythical days of the sector's founding. The loyal workers toil ceaselessly to preserve and organise countless parchments, dataslates, and scrolls. Each day tonnes of information are laid to rest here, but also each day towering mountains of parchment are lost to fire or mould, vermin and invading marauders destroy centuries of records, stacks of dataslates fail or crumble, and tomes are rendered useless as their languages fade and die. Even so, the Regimentum continues their battle in the name of the Adeptus Administratum.

ADEPTUS ARBITES

Keepers of the Imperium's laws, who see that the rule of the Emperor is brought to His worlds; they are judge, jury, and executioner against any—high or low—that would break the Imperial rule of law.

"Of course I know who you are. You were the governor here, until you turned your back on your rightful ruler. Now, you're dead."

—Marshall Ranx Wayner

Only through constant watch and the execution of brutal law can the Imperium survive, and it is the Adeptus Arbites who carry out this function. While the armies of the Imperial Guard struggle to hold back the aggression of alien empires and protect worlds from without, the Adeptus Arbites roots out rebels, recidivists, and threats to the stability of the Imperium from within. They operate as they best see fit, using their greater training and weaponry to tackle foes that might be beyond the scope of local enforcers, or in many cases to deal with a government which has itself become corrupted. Remorseless and single-minded, Arbitrators do not forgive or forget any crime, and pursue their quarry relentlessly until the Emperor's Justice has been served.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

The laws of the Imperium are a complex web of tradition, obligation, and local custom. Thus, they can vary from world to world or sector to sector, with each planetary governor, local prefect, or headman pronouncing his own laws. Arbitrators care little for such trivialities, and enforce the serious crimes against the Imperium while leaving such petty matters to local officials. Murder or theft, for example, are considered inconsequential unless they affect the Imperium directly, are perpetrated against Imperial officials, or somehow fundamentally threaten a world's security or safety.

Arbitrators have little pity or compassion for the transgressions of Imperial citizens. Years of dealing with the scum of the galaxy has made many of them cynical and bitter. Others have become zealots, seeing the Emperor's hand in the letter of the law and only death is deserved for those who would break it. A few might maintain idealistic notions for bringing order to the Imperium, but realities of endless, sometimes horrific crimes constantly erode such notions. The arrival of an Arbitrator patrol is seldom welcome, given the brutal way in which they operate during their investigations, arrests, and executions, even though it might mean an end to viscous criminal enterprises or corrupt officials.

Arbitrators must deal with ineffectual or corrupt local agencies. These are often an Arbitrator's greatest foes as he must clean up a local situation, taking over the enforcers of a hive city, orbital station, or even entire planet to purge it of crime and corruption in a series of bloody and unforgiving sweeps.

ADEPTUS ARBITES RULES

Characters from the Adeptus Arbites apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Investigate, Intimidate, Observe, Subterfuge

STARTING TALENTS

Keen Intuition, Specialist (Adeptus Arbites),
Weapon Training (Solid Projectile)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Shotgun, enforcer armour, 3 doses of stim,
manacles, 12 lho sticks

BACKGROUND BONUS

When damaging cover, Adeptus Arbites characters reduce the armour value of the cover by an additional 2.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Deathstight (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Assassin, Desperado,
Seeker, Warrior

On Imperial worlds the Adeptus Arbites are the last, most absolute law, answering only to their commanders and the Judges of systems and sectors, and not to local authorities. It is a thankless task, for the anonymous, helmeted Arbitrator usually only receives fear and hatred for his actions. They are the final bulwark against heretical uprisings and other major threats. Their precinct-fortress is the often last bastion of Imperial rule during revolutions or invasions, holding out to the very end whilst alerting outside agencies of the dire situation. Each member knows that should they fall, so follows the planet. To merely survive in such a hostile environment, Arbitrators must show no hesitation, regret, or compassion for those they protect, and they must consider every citizen guilty until they are proven innocent.

ADEPTUS ARBITES CHARACTERS

The Adeptus Arbites face a monumental task to enforce the law across countless Imperial worlds. Those that take the oaths, don the carapace armour, and take shock maul in hand are often obsessive and pitiless individuals, who see the law as an extension of the Emperor's will upon His subjects, and its enforcement their sacred duty. Whether they are skilled in combat or possessed of a keen mind, an Arbitrator knows he faces an implacable and remorseless

foe, one which he must counter with all the talents at his command. To be part of this agency is to be apart from their surroundings, for after training in the Schola Progenium, Arbitrators are never assigned to the world of their birth. They are beyond local authorities, serving none but higher Imperial law. Once a man puts on the distinctive dark armour he stops being merely a man, and is now a representative of the greater Imperium upon a world, there to ensure planetary compliance with Imperial law.

Arbitrators are always active with investigation and enforcement, for crime never sleeps. The surrounding populace overwhelmingly outnumbers them, so it is essential to detect and crush crime before it grows too strong. On many worlds, they bring massive firepower to bear at the slightest hint of resistance, often reacting to crimes before they occur, and preemptively arresting citizens who are "at risk" of become criminals. Skilled Arbitrators are masters of urban conflict and crowd control, with a natural understanding of Imperial societies and the nature of places such as the packed hab-blocks of an overpopulated hive world or the savage villages of a feral world, each requiring their own special tactics to police.

Arbitrators often tap local vox-networks, develop networks of spies and informants, and even infiltrate any suspect organisations to snare the lawless in surgical strikes where their superior weaponry and training can prevail over larger forces. Such investigations require long hours of dedicated detective work, patience, and cunning to root out violations of Imperial law against the myriad other offences against lesser authorities. Their lives are often at risk, and not just from their criminal quarry. During the course of an investigation all manner of things might come to light, including the secrets of powerful individuals. In these cases an Arbitrator can face more danger from supposedly loyal allies than the scum he is pursuing.

SAMPLE ADEPTUS ARBITES BACKGROUND: PRECINCT DELTA, HIVE DESOLEUM

One of several Adeptus Arbites precincts within this immense hive city, Delta is carefully hidden from normal passage, and even more heavily fortified than usual. Within are the most powerful of weapons, such as mobile lascannon emplacements and plasma cannonades, plus a small cache of priceless archeotech grenades, normally unnecessary unless the hive faces insurrection or worse. As none of the Arbitrators stationed here are native to the world let alone this hive, some take time acclimating to the crowded conditions but none let their guard down an instant knowing, what is stored behind the heavy plasteel doors of their precinct. This fortress-precinct, as well as one carefully hidden within the hive that houses their Astropathic choir, represents the last line of defence should the hive begin to fall.

ADEPTUS ASTRA TELEPATHICA

The ancient and sacred organisation vital to the survival of the Imperium and Mankind; guiding ships and transmitting information across millions of scattered worlds, they bind the Imperium with their web of minds.

"My eyes were a small price to pay for what I can now see."

—Astroth Leto Loi

Psykers are a vital part of the Imperium, linking its worlds together, aiding its soldiers in battle, and guiding its ships across the stars. Psykers are also dangerous, for the very gifts that allow them to draw power from the Warp, that otherworldly realm that exists beneath our own, is also the one that can make them conduits for its unholy power and gateways for Daemons. An untrained and potent psyker can bring doom upon an entire world if his abilities are not kept in check. The Imperium has a rigid structure in place to watch for anyone who displays even a hint of psychic talent and remove them from society, usually through force. Once in custody, they are trained to serve the Emperor or, if they prove too unstable, destroyed for the good of Mankind. The Adeptus Astra Telepathica oversees psykers within the Imperium, scouring the galaxy for new psykers and then examining and training their catches. Those that prove worthy live to lend their gifts to planetary governors, sector lords, and Imperial military commanders. Those that are not worthy instead serve the Emperor directly, their life energies sustaining His continued existence for one more day.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

Most within the Imperium rightfully fear psykers, and their terrible gifts are a constant cause for concern for those that must serve alongside them. It is the cruel jest of the psyker that even though he acts to protect the Imperium, his very existence is a threat, and his mere presence draws the attentions of the denizens within the Warp. The Imperium understands the importance of using psykers. They can be found at every level of command and on nearly every world, but psykers forever remain apart from the rest of humanity, no matter how useful they might be. Living with the constant fear of death (often at the hands of one's allies), or the terror that is daemoniac possession, frays all but the hardest of minds, and a psyker's life is one of constant stress and ostracism. Only the strongest can hope to survive against years of attack from the Warp each time they attempt to use its powers.

To ensure the Imperium's safety, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica oversees the recruitment of these dangerous individuals. Its fleet of Black Ships travel endlessly from world to world, gathering anyone that shows the merest hints of psychic talent back to Terra for testing. Only a fraction of those taken serve in the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. Most are sacrificed to sustain the Emperor, perhaps the most potent psyker even known. Others will fall during their training, either their minds or bodies torn asunder by the creatures of the Warp, or executed should their powers

ADEPTUS ASTRA TELEPATHICA RULES

Characters from the Adeptus Astra Telepathica apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Observe, Psyniscience, Remembrance

STARTING TALENTS

Cold Hearted, Resistance (Psychic Powers),
Specialist (Adeptus Astra Telepathica),
Weapon Training (Low-Tech)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Laspistol, staff, robes, psy focus

BACKGROUND BONUS

Adeptus Astra Telepathica characters start the game with the Sanctioned trait.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Witch Curse (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Chirurgion, Mystic,
Sage, Seeker

prove too uncontrollable or their minds unsuitable. Only after years of rigorous schooling in the Scholastia Psykana, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica's training facilities, will they be deemed fit to serve the Imperium either among its armies or as part of the great network of Astroths conveying messages across the stars. The cycle often repeats itself, and those psykers that become sanctioned to serve within the ranks of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica sometimes go on to work the Black Ships, scouring the Imperium in search of psykers. Others become trainers in the Scholastia Psykana, imparting their knowledge upon new generations.

Those who do not serve the Adeptus Astra Telepathica directly find themselves fulfilling duties elsewhere, as there is always demand for sanctioned psykers. This could be fighting in Mankind's constant wars, turning their powers against the foes of the Emperor. Alternatively, they might find relative safety ensconced in the palaces of a planetary governor, a novelty for the idle nobility as they send and receive messages for their master. No matter where they live, they are always viewed with suspicion and fear, no more so than from their fellow psykers, for all psykers are but one faltering mental defence from allowing the horrors of the Warp into reality.

ADEPTUS ASTRA TELEPATHICA CHARACTERS

Psykers are in reality mutants, a divergence of the human evolutionary process into something different and often terrifying. Characters from this organisation have lived their whole lives with this taint, while at the same time the Imperium exploits and uses their unique abilities. As conduits to the Warp, the character has also lived in constant fear of possession, or death at the hands of the terrible denizens of this unholy place. Their earlier lives may have been filled with unexplained accidents or mental breakdowns, and at some point, discovery and capture. Many do not live long enough to be discovered, destroying themselves in bursts of uncontrolled power. Untold others are never detected and culled, a constant worry within the Adeptus Astra Telepathica and the Inquisition as well. On Terra there is the painful process of sanctioning, where they are tested, branded, and broken to serve the will of the Emperor. Most are unfit for continued existence, and their service ends as their energies are used to fuel the Emperor's life force and the eternal light of the Astronomicon. Those remaining are admitted to the ranks of Adeptus Astra Telepathica, deemed safe and strong enough to serve the Imperium. It can be a harsh and thankless life which breeds bitterness, their minds in constant stress and surrounded with nothing but fear and hatred. Each day can push them further from humanity and closer to the whispering promises of the Ruinous Powers.

As part of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, a psyker has numerous areas where, though he might not be welcomed, his gifts are appreciated. A vital service is that of Astropath, the powerful psykers which psychically connect worlds and voidships across the galaxy, allowing the Imperium to exist. They are often more than just a transmitter, and act as accomplished diviners and telepaths as well. Sanctioned psykers are also employed in the regiments of the Imperial Guard or other Imperial forces. Such a life is often short and unforgiving; the psyker burnt out fighting mental battles no other human can imagine, or his commanders executing him for displaying a hint of possession or madness. This is the other fate that waits for most psykers, regardless of their role in the Imperium: a slow decay of the mind until the powers of the Warp consume them, and they are turned against those they once fought so hard to protect.

Though psykers dominate the bulk of this agency, there are others. Numerous unblessed humans act as warders and minders, all watching for any signs a psyker has become a deadly threat. Worse still for psykers are their opposites: the even more unnatural psychic blanks. These soulless humans can negate psychic energies, and their mere nearby presence can bring a psyker to his knees with intense waves of debilitating pain. No matter their role, any with the Adeptus Astra Telepathica are always seen as outside the normal ranks of humanity, and must prove themselves with every action.

SAMPLE ADEPTUS ASTRA TELEPATHICA BACKGROUND: PRIMARIS PSYKER DETACHMENT 14

Assigned to the Havarth 237th Heavy Infantry, one of the sector's larger Imperial Guard regiments, this organisation consists of several dozen battle-ready psykers and their support personnel. Many are veterans of countless combats, and even somewhat skilled in the use of their sidearms. While most are assigned to combat duties to support troops at the direction of tactical officers, it is customary that a specially selected psyker is made part of the regimental commanders' staff. This psyker provides not battlefield power, but instead uses his abilities to divine enemy actions, a practice that has caused some derision amongst other regiments in the sector.

ADEPTUS MECHANICUS

Keepers of the ancient secrets of technology and the Imperium's most venerable and treasured artefacts; they serve the Machine God in the quest for lost knowledge.

"Your assertion is flawed. It is you who venerate the Omnissiah, only you do so in his guise as the Emperor."

—Magos Tonnus Mu Kepplar

Much of Mankind's mastery over technology has been forgotten, and what remains are closely guarded secrets, held in jealous hands of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Wrapped up in superstitious beliefs and rites, the knowledge of how to operate the Imperium's most advanced devices falls to these followers of the Machine God. The Adeptus Mechanicus guards and oversees the ancient knowledge and the mysteries of making technology function, for even its dogmatic and superstitious understandings are far beyond that of anyone else in the Imperium. They embrace technology to such a degree that they try and transcend the flesh of their bodies with the purity of metal. To those outside the Mechanicum, they can appear unfeeling and emotionless, more akin to their blessed machines than other humans, and most would welcome such views.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

The Adeptus Mechanicus are the custodians of all Imperial technology. From the red planet of Mars, they maintain a parallel empire that venerates the Emperor in His guise of the Omnissiah. Their beliefs grant technology a mystic power which must be respected and maintained with prayer, ritual, and careful rites. In their worship of the Machine God, the Tech-Priests try to become more like their divine master. Their elders are more machine than man, even the majority of their brains replaced with cold logic circuitry and whirring cogitators. This is the ultimate ambition of any true devotee of the Machine Cult: to rise through the ranks of the Tech-Priesthood to become a Magos of the order, replete with metal skin and an iron heart.

The Adeptus Mechanicus is also the keepers of the greatest weapons known to Mankind. Foremost among these are the war engines of the Adeptus Titanicus, the Titan

ADEPTUS MECHANICUS RULES

Characters from the Adeptus Mechanicus apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Athletics, Commerce, Logic, Subterfuge, Tech-Use

STARTING TALENTS

Mechadendrite Use, Specialist
(Adeptus Mechanicus), Weapon Training
(Low-Tech, Solid Projectile)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Hand cannon, micro-bead, monotask servo-skull
(utility) *or* optical mechadendrite, robes,
staff, 2 vials of sacred unguents

BACKGROUND BONUS

When making requisition tests, Adeptus
Mechanicus characters gain a +20 bonus to the
availability of cybernetics.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Cursed Fleshmetal (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Chirurgeon, Hierophant,
Sage, Seeker

Legions. Towering humanoid battle engines standing as tall as a hab-block and carrying weapons capable of levelling entire hives, Titans are only employed against the most dire of foes. Each is an ancient and sacred piece of technology, venerated as walking expressions of the Omnissiah's might given form. The Mechanicum also controls other deadly weaponry, including virus bombs and vortex torpedoes, that can only be fabricated and deployed with their help. To this end Tech-Priests can be found in all Imperial organisations. Even the otherwise proudly self-sufficient Adeptus Astartes send Battle-Brothers to Mars for training in the secret ways of the machine. These Techmarines then return to their chapter and use their knowledge to maintain its arsenals.

There is little if any innovation or progress within the Imperium's technology; the principles of its power systems, weapons, and voidships are all based on designs and patterns often thousands of years old. This is in part because of the dangers such rampant technological advancement has brought down upon Mankind in the past, when legends tell of thinking machines and terrible planet-killing weapons that wrought havoc upon the galaxy. It is also because of the Adeptus Mechanicus itself. Every major Imperial organisation is

oath-bound to the Cult Mechanicus, which closely guards the secrets of technology; even the most powerful of rulers must defer to the Mechanicum in matters of technology. Such is the power of the Adeptus Mechanicus. They rule over entire forge worlds, have their own fleets, and even raise their own military forces to protect their manufactorums and research outposts.

Those that serve the Machine Cult are often obsessed with technology, seeing the divine glory of the Machine God in every circuit and rivet; treating the operation and care of such devices as a sacred duty. For the most part, the rest of the Imperium is content to allow the Mechanicus its mastery over their technology, raised to accept that the secrets of the machine are for them and them alone, though this does breed an aura of distrust. Their very appearance sets them apart; even in an Imperium where cybernetic replacement is not uncommon, their heavily augmented bodies are nearly inhuman. Many chose to voluntarily strip away healthy flesh and replace it with augments and bionics to the point where they no longer see themselves as human, but rather as something which has transcended mortal bonds. Their mental processes are also augmented, with emotional responses edited or removed altogether and leaving many incapable of normal human interactions. The result is often a contempt for the bulk of Mankind, seen as the wasteful by-product of evolution and an inefficient component in the divine precision of the Machine God.

ADEPTUS MECHANICUS CHARACTERS

From the depths of the Imperium's greatest cities to the engine rooms of its grand interstellar navy, it is the duty of the Adeptus Mechanicus to preserve and maintain the great technological works of man. Once a Tech-Priest has been trained and taken his oaths to the Omnissiah, he is dispatched to tend to some part of these great works, spending his years intoning the sacred prayers and rituals that keep a machine's spirit alive and functioning. Some move beyond these simple processes of maintenance, rising in the ranks of the order to take on more responsibility or expertise. Others aid war efforts directly as Enginseers for the Imperial Guard. They may rule one of the many forge worlds, vital to feeding the Imperium's insatiable appetite for war machines and other materiel. They could also serve as part of an Explorator Fleet in the holy quest for legendary System Template Constructs dating to the pre-Imperial Dark Age of Technology. Equally, they might engage in xenos research on the foes of the Imperium, such as the voracious Tyranids or the brutal Orks. A few might gain their own outposts and stations to command, becoming masters of their own domains and devoting their long lives to the personal pursuits of technological mastery.

Others from the Mechanicum, such as forge labourers or adept minions, have lesser functions. Most aspire to one day join the Tech-Priesthood so that they may better serve the Omnissiah. Rarely, some reject the Machine God and seek lives elsewhere, but still retain more skills and familiarity with technology than almost anyone else in the Imperium.

Many within the Adeptus Mechanicus usually aspire to become as close to the Machine God as possible, slowly replacing their body with mechanical components until it is

more metal than flesh. This can make him devoid of emotion, as he embraces the cold logic of the Machine God he serves, and can sometimes put him at odds with others around him. Like psykers, the Imperium could not function without the presence of the Adeptus Mechanicus, and whether or not its citizens favour a servant of the Omnissiah, or merely tolerate him, they could not function without his knowledge and skills.

SAMPLE ADEPTUS MECHANICUS BACKGROUND: CERIX MAGNUS REGIMEN AFFIRMATOR

Cerix Magnus is perhaps the greatest of the many forge worlds within the sector, and is strict in following only the most sanctified of technology patterns. The Tech-Priests of the Regimen Affirmator work there to ensure no forge strays from the correct dictates of the Omnissiah, and that all proper obsequences are made. This office carefully checks that each offering of holy oil is at the proper temperature and consistency before it is used to anoint a new machine spirit, monitors binaric prayer levels for proper frequency, checks manufacturing liturgies to verify none have attempted unconsecrated actions, and more, to confirm the taint of tech-heresy never gains a foothold.

ADEPTUS MINISTORUM

The great religious agency of the Emperor of Mankind; with shrines and cathedrals on a million worlds, they are dedicated to spreading and teaching the word of the Emperor so all might bask within His light and fear His wrath.

"So as you love and fear the Emperor, so must you love and fear those that carry His divine word."

—Cardinal Erasmus Pontium

The Adeptus Ministorum, also known as the Ecclesiarchy, is the religion that venerates the Emperor of Mankind. Powerful and ancient, it embodies the Imperial Creed, the myriad systems of belief that bind humanity together and gives it purpose, and keeps it safe from soul-imperilling threats both within and without. Its members are devoted servants of the Emperor, dedicated to bringing His word to the faithful, and rooting out any which would stand against Him. Whether with words or deeds, a member of the Adeptus Ministorum never forgets his ways. Even should he fall from grace the teachings of the church remain branded upon his soul and the fire of the Emperor's faith will burn strong in his belly.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

According to Imperial belief, ten thousand years ago the Emperor fell after ending the greatest civil war the galaxy has even known. As the unifier of the galaxy and father of the Imperium it took little time for a cult to rise in worship, idolising Him for saving Mankind and preventing the demise of humanity. This cult spread, maturing to become a religion. As the centuries passed it became the unifying creed of the Imperium, until every citizen could look up at the cold, fearful darkness of the night sky and know it was the Emperor that kept them safe. This religion exists

ADEPTUS MINISTORUM RULES

Characters from the Adeptus Ministorum apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Charm, Command, Investigate, Linguistics, Observe

STARTING TALENTS

Public Speaking, Specialist (Adeptus Ministorum),
Weapon Training (Flame)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Backpack, hand flamer, mesh armour,
glow-globe, monotask servo-skull (utility)

BACKGROUND BONUS

When spending fate points to gain a +20 bonus to any one test, Adeptus Ministorum characters gain a +30 bonus instead.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Dark-hearted (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Chirurgion, Hierophant,
Seeker, Warrior

in all levels of Imperial society, though the details of this worship are unique on every world and every society. This is a minor concern to the Ministorum, for so long as a citizen holds the Emperor as his god, then he is indeed a loyal worshipper. Fanatical missionaries, blessed saints, and preachers ensure the propagation of the Imperial Cult to maintain the Ecclesiarchy and its law, binding together the Imperium in devotion to the Emperor.

The Ministorum does not exist simply to ensure devotion to the Emperor; it also exists to ensure that His enemies are purged from humanity and only those of pure spirit and faith survive. This includes maintaining the faith among the Emperor's soldiers as they fight xenos and other threats; most Imperial forces have cadres of Ministorum clerics to see to their souls and stir them to righteous fury. They also serve to convert newly discovered pockets of humanity and transforming any native beliefs to the Imperial Creed. They seek to root out mutants, witches, and other heresies from among every population. These are the true enemies of the Ministorum, those who would hide within, masquerading as humanity when they are anything but. They are stains upon the purity of the Emperor's domain, and it is the sworn duty of all members of the Ministorum to uncover these unholy deviants and see them burn upon the pyres of holy retribution.

The Ministorum enjoys extensive power and influence due to its integration into almost all Imperial agencies. There is practically no place within the Imperium where one can be completely free of its presence and most lords and governors have at least one member close to hand to give them council. For some the presence of the Ministorum is a welcome one, a steady hand to augment their own faith and aid them in their decisions. For others, it is a hated reminder of the limitations of their own power. However, this is a battle that even the most powerful of lords is doomed to lose, as no planet or even sector can hope to stand for long against the influence of the Ecclesiarchy given their power to tar a man, or even an entire world, with the taint of heresy.

ADEPTUS MINISTORUM CHARACTERS

The Ecclesiarchy reaches out into every aspect of life within the Imperium, its presence the face, voice, and hand of Emperor's divine will on countless worlds and systems. Citizens are taught from birth to fear and respect the might of the Ministorum that keeps them safe, even from themselves. Those of the Ecclesiarchy are filled with even greater faith and zeal, knowing that the Emperor is the salvation of Mankind. Some might have been born into the Adeptus Ministorum, their family line forever melded to holy service. Others may have left behind their old lives and positions to enter as mere novitiates in local temples. Imperial worlds commonly feature imposing temples and chapels hosting Ecclesiarchy members, each devoted to the Emperor in their own manner. Their faith defines them, and they give themselves over completely to their service, swearing their lives for the betterment of the Imperium, to face the foes of the Emperor wherever they are found.

Most that rise within the Ministorum find a place as preachers, overseeing flocks of Imperial citizens and safeguarding their souls against the influence of witches, mutants, and foul xenos cults. They also act as teachers and guides to the generations that come after. Such a post is not without its dangers, and members of the Ministorum are frequently targets of dissidents and unbelievers, as killing or attacking them can be seen as a blow against the hated Imperium itself. More likely is that the character finds peril from within the Ecclesiarchy itself, the sprawling might of the Ministorum constantly struggling against itself for control of the minds and hearts of the Imperium's citizens. In time a priest or cleric might rise up to command the Ministorum's interests on an entire world, and become mired in system and sector politics.

Others might travel the wilder areas of the galaxy, spreading the word of the Emperor or maintaining faith for those that fight in His name. As, firebrands and witch-hunters, some members of the Ecclesiarchy seek out heresy and subversion where their brothers in the priesthood maintain the faith of the populace. Their travels can take them anywhere, from the frontlines of the Imperium's bloodiest wars tending to the souls of Imperial Guardsmen, to the depths of primitive worlds where they bring word of the might of the Emperor to feral savages. It is a task frequently fraught with danger, but one of little concern to

those that travel with the faith of the master of Mankind in their hearts and the glory of the Imperium at their backs.

SAMPLE ADEPTUS MINISTORUM BACKGROUND: THE BLESSED CHARNAVEN OF THAUR

The shrine world of Thaur is the resting place of billions, overflowing with the remains of the powerful and the saintly. Millions more of the humble and poor strive that their remains also find a place on this holy world, arranging in life that their dead forms be shipped there. It is at the Blessed Charnaven that their untold tonnes of flesh arrive for final rest. The Osseiates of the Charnaven inscribe into each bone a unique prayer before it is used to fortify a basilica or pave one of the kilometre-wide walkways that encircle the world. No bone is unused, and each becomes an eternal offering to the Emperor.

IMPERIAL GUARD

Vast armies drawn from countless worlds; skilled warriors and hardened veterans of mankind's many brutal and bloody wars, they are all that stands between the Imperium and its innumerable foes.

"Let the Hammer of the Emperor fall upon this world."

—Lord General Pollux Rhem

To protect the Imperium from its many enemies the Imperium maintains a massive fighting force known as the Imperial Guard. Tithed from the worlds across the galaxy, the Imperial Guard is an immense force of countless billions, always at constant war, and always recruiting more soldiers to replace the fallen. There exists no accurate records as to the exact size and strength of the Imperial Guard, and such is its nature that it is in constant flux, troops moving from system to system or scattered across the stars fighting wars long forgotten. Many Guardsmen do not live even a full day after entering battle, but those that survive become hardened combat veterans skilled in the bringing of death and facing the worse foes the galaxy has to offer. Scarred and broken, such veterans can hope for little comfort beyond the battlefield, but may find service in other parts of the Imperial war machine or more secretive duties in less overt wars.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

The Imperium covers much of the known galaxy, with borders stretching many thousands of light-years across, containing millions of worlds scattered across the darkness of the void. It struggles for survival against numerous alien foes as well as rebellion and subversion from within. Fighting these wars is the largest army Mankind has ever known: the Imperial Guard. Not even the Adeptus Administratum knows how many are serving at any given time, though in a single sector alone it can easily reach the billions, thousands dying each day to be replaced with thousands more. These soldiers form the thin line against a violent universe eager to scour the stars clean of all traces of humanity. When alien races and planetary uprising threaten, it is the weight of the Imperial Guard that is wielded like a mighty hammer blow intended to crush all resistance to the Emperor's rule. Even

IMPERIAL GUARD RULES

Characters from the Imperial Guard apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Athletics, Command, Evade, Medicae,
Navigate, Pilot, Survival

STARTING TALENTS

Brace for Impact, Weapon Training
(Las, Solid Projectile)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Lasgun, combat vest, flak armour, grapnel
and line, 12 lho sticks, magnoculars

BACKGROUND BONUS

Imperial Guard characters count their Strength
bonus as 2 higher for the purposes of determining
how much they can carry (see page 132).

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Bloodlust (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Assassin, Desperado,
Hierophant, Warrior

so, engagements can last for years, decades, and longer in seemingly endless wars of attrition where generations fight and die for the promise of future victory.

Service in the Imperial Guard follows many paths, some following in the traditions of their world to join famous regiments like millions before them. Others might enter via lottery, conscription, punishment, or blind chance. Each world is responsible for tithing a percentage of its population to this service, and a world that slackens in this duty often faces the fury of the Imperial Guard to bring it into compliance. Once a man becomes a soldier, he usually never sees his home world again, sent off across the void to fight wars on far-off worlds for strange peoples and foreign lords. Every Guardsman knows though that there is no real escape from service, and only in death is he free of this sacred duty to the Emperor. For their part, the regiments of the Guard combine both those dedicated and fanatical to the cause with those that serve only out of fear or penance. Thus, an Imperial Guardsman can be anything from a hero heaped with glory or a zealot ready to spend his life for unseen masters, to a self-serving coward merely trying to survive or a criminal running from his crimes, and all manners in between. All have their place in the Imperial

Guard's plan, sometimes as mere cannon fodder so that other more valuable assets might be protected. However, even the greatest of soldiers might still be squandered in the hands of a callous commander, of which the Imperial Guard has more than its fair share.

The rare veterans that survive to see life beyond the Imperial Guard are hardened fighters, the product of countless wars and engagements. Often trained in a variety of the Imperium's most deadly weapons and armoured vehicles, their skills are always in demand. Each is unique, but all share the common trait of being survivors, having come through the meat grinder that is Imperial war, and somehow survived where millions have not. This in itself is a valued ability, one that only those that have fought in the Emperor's service can truly understand. Within some regiments, however, veterans might find little chance of advancement or survival due to incompetent or careless commanders. They inevitably die in battle, their skills, like their blood, spent in another of the Imperium's endless conflicts to hold onto its fragile empire.

IMPERIAL GUARD CHARACTERS

Imperial Guardsmen come from many worlds and are masters of many skills, each combination of both often unique to their regiment or unit. A character who has served here is adept in the use of weapons and has likely tasted combat, seeing first-hand just what the Imperium must do every day to survive. This can fill him with a deep hatred of heretics and all xenos life. It has made him into a survivor. Often entire regiments are consumed only hours after their arrival in a warzone, and it is rare for a Guardsman to live through an entire campaign, sometimes even a single battle. That the character has lived through many such combats marks him as valuable and rare, though often few within his command structure would notice. Fortunately, there are often others that do and can put their talents to good use.

Imperial Guardsmen also can become specialists with a specific weapon or method of fighting, and it is likely such a character has one or more specialisations under his belt. These can include sniper training among the regiment's recon elements, driving Leman Russ battle tanks, or operating the gargantuan Imperial artillery pieces. A Guardsman might also learn less combat-oriented skills which are also essential to prosecuting wars, such as logistics and material support, or advanced intelligence gathering techniques.

Some might rise to a position of command, and learn something of the tactics and strategy of warfare along with logistics and politics. These skills can prove invaluable in other vocations, as an understanding of one's foes and how to best counter them can be applied to a myriad of situations. The Imperial Guard are among the few elements of the Imperium to face the alien threat head on, and a man that has spent time within the Guard has seen things few other citizens could even imagine. This marks him out from the majority of the civilian populace who have never heard of many of these threats, let alone seen them. His rank alone can also serve him well to others with similar service. Those still within the Imperial Guard, especially if they are aware

of the character's regiment, will often hold him in greater respect for his service knowing first-hand the price of duty he must have paid and the comrades he lost along the way.

**SAMPLE IMPERIAL GUARD BACKGROUND:
HRAX 33RD REGIMENTAL DEMOLITIONS SQUAD**

Part of the vicious Hrax Bloodknives, this unit specialises in infiltration and destruction, and has breached impassible fortifications and forced tank formations to a grinding halt. Like all Hraxian forces, their lasguns are fitted with chainblades for close-quarters fighting. Accompanied with Tech-Priest Engineeers, the demolitions squads venture deep behind lines to plant explosives and mines, but the 33rd is well known for always finding enemy units to rip apart with their silenced chainblades.

OUTCAST

Living in the shadow of the might of the Imperium, gangers, Outcasts, and dregs prosper and thrive; cunning survivors and experienced outlaws, they exist only for themselves and to those who have bought their loyalties.

"You're asking too many questions. That makes it cost extra."

—Rikko Delarn, previously known as Ricard Al'Delaroique IV

Even within the Imperium, where a man is often born into the same position for life, there are those that work their way free to make a life on their own terms. Some may have deliberately forsaken the role they were given, or slipped between the cracks of their ossified civilisation. They exist as criminals, vagabonds, and renegades on the fringes of Imperial life. Outcasts live in the shadowy areas of society, living by their wits and charm as well as knowing when to fight or run. They are able thieves, assassins, and bounty hunters; suspicion and fear often dogs their steps as others know that where they tread, crime follows. Despite the epithet, Outcasts can be connected to all levels of Imperial life, and while their concerns are primarily for themselves, they can be enlisted to larger pursuits. They have connections, knowledge, and skills unheard of for proper Imperial citizens, and the willingness to use them through bribery, coercion, or other base appeals are often more effective than simple calls to Imperial duty. They can also retain associations and bonds to their previous lives and organisations that allow them to operate across many strata of Imperial life.

ROLE WITHIN THE IMPERIUM

Every society has its margins, its underworld and forgotten peoples. This is the realm of the Outcast, where no true law reigns, where there is no justice other than that of the gun, where only the strong and insane prosper. On hive worlds and those with dense populations, these elements are usually criminal in nature, hiding among the ordinary citizens. On less-populated worlds or those on the fringes of the Imperium, they might simply be trying to maintain their independence from distant Imperial rule. More likely, these places are havens for crime and sedition, filled with illicit

OUTCAST RULES

Outcast characters apply the following benefits:

STARTING SKILLS

Acrobatics, Deceive, Evade,
Intimidate, Navigate, Stealth, Survival

STARTING TALENTS

Evasive, Weapon Training
(Chain, Solid Projectile)

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Autopistol, chainsword, hive leathers, injector,
2 dose of obscura, 1 dose of Desoleum fungus

BACKGROUND BONUS

Outcast characters count their characteristic
bonuses as one higher for the purpose of
determining if their characteristics are fatigued.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCY

Shadowdweller (see page 256)

RECOMMENDED ROLES

Assassin, Desperado, Seeker

organisations and heretical cults pushed to the remote edges of a sector to escape the wrath of Imperial authorities.

Though few would admit it, most worlds need Outcasts. They smuggle illegal but sought-after goods, and provide a semblance of order in abandoned and forgotten regions. Many worlds rely on them as their primary workforce, especially for those tasks unfit for even the lowest of citizens. While reviled and hated, Outcast mutants are sometimes enlisted or forced to work in toxic factories, dig radioactive ores, or till continent-spanning agri-fields with dangerous atmospheres or gravities. Outcasts also make prime recruits for the Imperial Guard, where their harsh lives make them well suited to the rigours of combat and criminal suppression. More commonly, authorities use them as scapegoats to blame for the ills of a world, whether or they are responsible or not.

While the Ministorum would have the citizens of the Imperium believe that all Outcasts are deviants, renegades, and heretics, in reality many simply dare to exist outside of the Imperium's dictates. In the eyes of most authorities, however, all who flout the Emperor's Law are the same. In some cases, Outcasts counter threats to humanity, as xenos hunters holding back the influence of alien powers on fringe planets, or vigilante executioners bringing a form of justice to lawless realms within civilised worlds. An Outcast may be shunned by the pillars of Imperial order but that

certainly does not mean he favours Mankind's enslavement or eradication.

Outcasts do not come only from the lowest reaches of the Imperium, or those that exist beyond its light. Some noble houses, or large portions of their families, may essentially become Outcasts through choice or force. These noble Outcasts sometimes cling to their power, even in the face of denouncement and exile, setting up their own private kingdoms where they continue to hold court. Inevitably, such concerns turn to criminal endeavours for enrichment or revenge. They often justify rejection of lawful society for no other reason than it allowed their own fall from grace. The distinction on the fringes of the Imperium between these kinds of Outcasts and those planetary governors and warlords is a thin one indeed, and is often of little consequence to human travellers who accept local power in whatever form it takes.

OUTCAST CHARACTERS

An Outcast character is not always a criminal, though many might view him as one. Many Outcasts, exiled from proper society, find themselves operating in the shadows, often among the very people who exiled him. Such is the fractured nature of Imperial powers and their goals that the powerful find uses for Outcasts. As they are rarely connected directly to such great agencies, Outcasts can operate beyond normal rules and resolve tasks in manners their masters could never authorise. Most though have no masters, and many live freely to act on their own. Hated or hunted, they can do business knowing that at some time or another even the lords they have turned away from might come calling for aid.

Many Outcasts are loners, solitary wanderers existing in the forgotten places of the galaxy. There are groups of Outcasts, though, that form and even prosper on the brutal borders of existence. Many Outcast factions are gangs that live at the bottom of the Imperial society in every sense. These can range from pirates plying merchant lanes and criminal cartels running entire hab-cities, to thuggish gangs for hire strutting around frontier outposts and info-brokers dealing in stolen whispers. Some of these are somewhat tolerated for their useful services. Others are continually opposed, engaged in endless struggles with the forces of law and order. With sufficient wealth and power, many gangs may rise to power and influence that rivals that of highborn princelings.

Other groups of Outcasts can be gathered together for survival. Worshipers of forbidden religions, nomadic tech reclaimers, violent secessionists, mutant gangs, xenos-worshipping infestations, and more band together against a universe that would see them dead if they live alone. The normal routes to power denied to them, or desiring not only power but the actual downfall of Imperial rule in their hive or planet, these factions are often more dangerous as they can breed individuals with little concern for the Emperor's Will. Outcasts of these groups can have access and skills useful for penetrating heresies far greater than mere criminal cartels.

Characters from Outcast backgrounds are in the end a breed apart from most others. Highly unique in outlook, form, and belief, their only common attribute is usually an

aim to ensure their own safety and profit first, and disposition to ignore or circumvent anything that stands in their way. An Outcast character always walks a fine line between enemy and asset of the Imperium, the very independence that sets him apart from the rest of their people and compels him to live apart makes him a useful operative for organisations like the Inquisition.

SAMPLE OUTCAST BACKGROUND:

THE PALE LEAGUE OF PORT AQUILA

While the Greater Askellon Trade Combine works a stranglehold over commerce across the asteroids that make up the port, the Pale League operates across the belt as one of the premier smuggling operations in the region. Made up of failed merchants and sometimes even Rogue Traders who saw their fortunes fall from catastrophic expeditions or piratical raids, it is a relatively recent formation but is growing in power. As the League begins moving xenos relics and other forbidden treasures, it has made rivals of other Faceless Trade groups such as Desoleum's Trade Sable.

STAGE 3: CHOOSE ROLE

"There wasn't much thought needed, other than just staying alive from combat to combat. Theft filled the time nicely, and I was so good at it, better than just shooting a lasgun. One mistake was all it took. The Commissar never discovered who made off with his shiny pistol, but someone else noticed and had me by the short ones. He pulled me out, and my new duties began. Ones much more dangerous than open war."

—Gex Avrille, from the private memoirs *Recollections of Service*

Roles illuminate an Acolyte's essence. Where a home world establishes where an Acolyte came from, and a background indicates his prior experiences, a role helps reveal who he really is underneath his clothing, armour, and cybernetics. It is an internal quality, a product of both a lifetime of training and his natural talents, and combines a great many things to help define him and how he fits into life in the 41st Millennium.

Each Acolyte has an image of himself that guides his actions, and this is a major aspect of his role. This image also guides how he views his surroundings and those around him, and most importantly how he interacts and resolves the many situations he faces. An Assassin is enraptured with death, and seeks to offer it as often as possible. When faced with recalcitrant hive functionaries, he might simply begin killing them one by one until he earns their cooperation. A Sage who relies on knowledge and research might view the same problem as requiring careful analysis to determine a more effective approach. He might instead suggest targeted bribes against one official he learns is corrupt, or blackmail against another who has a secret obscure addiction. Similarly, when a warband is on the trail of a suspected underhive cult, a Warrior could approach the problem with force and proffer violent questioning with unveiled threats of worse to come in order to gain information. A Seeker, however, might rely on stealthy surveillance and infiltration of nearby stickrat taverns in the same quest. Even within each role

exists a broad range of styles, and just as each home world and background is unique, even if of the same named type, each role can offer a wide range of approaches though. A Hierophant might approach a newly discovered tribe of humanity with stern words and burning flames, or might insinuate the Imperial Creed into existing beliefs with guile and subtlety. How each Acolyte carries his role is another facet of how he serves his Inquisitor and the Emperor.

Roles can come about in many ways, but while home worlds and backgrounds act externally on an Acolyte to form his previous life, roles more commonly emerge more from within as mental attitudes and outlooks develop over time. Some might even crystallise in childhood, or come about from life-altering experiences. It is possible that society, lineage, home world, or an organisation might mould an Acolyte into a preordained role, or seek out certain roles for service. The Imperial Guard needs Warriors for example, as the Hammer of the Emperor is nothing if not a brutal, violent agency devoted to crushing the foes of the Imperium. Some Guardsmen are likely of a Warrior mindset, but others might view themselves as elite killer Assassins or as Chirurgeons who are primarily healers. Someone born to a shrine world could be strongly guided to a Hierophant role, but could just as easily instead become a Warrior as a missionary for the Imperial Creed. Roles are internally developed, sometimes despite an Acolyte's surroundings or duties, and could come from other sources such as mentors or family members who have personally guided him earlier in life.

An Acolyte's role might be clear on the surface: many Warriors wear heavy armour and hold their weapons proudly, a Mystic could be covered with protective runes and icons to ward off the Ruinous Powers, and a Sage might carry reams of parchment and autoquill needles on his belt. This may be done without conscious thought; the Warrior mentioned above who is clearly a fighter dresses thusly as he is often fighting. His predilection for combat is the result of his often violent approach to challenges, which in turn defines his role. Other Acolytes might not reveal their role, again either through conscious decision or otherwise. An Assassin might wear drab, unremarkable clothing to aid in his stealthy infiltration before a kill. He might wear the same simply because it is what he enjoys wearing, or because it is the clothing people from his background or home world commonly wore, and his all-consuming passion for death is something only his dying victims see in his eyes.

Though the Acolyte can grow and change in the course of service to his Inquisitor, even perhaps becoming an Inquisitor himself, his role does not change. He can learn new abilities, acquire new wargear, and make new connections, but this does not change how he uses them. A Desperado might grow in influence and power, guiding a xenos artefact smuggling ring as a front to track down this illicit trade, gaining him enormous status across the sector, but he still watches for new angles to work and new targets to con. A Sage can become as proficient with the bolter and chainsword as the Arbitrator in her warband, but when a new cult is discovered, still acts to ensure this new threat is fully researched and investigated before any other action is

PLAYER NOTES: ROLES

Deciding on a character's role is perhaps the single most important stage of character creation, for it determines what type of Acolyte he plays in **DARK HERESY**. Home world and background contribute a great deal to the character's history before he became an Acolyte, but his role sets out his days to come and how he operates in the warband. Players who enjoy certain types of roleplaying experiences can use this to help guide their role selection; those who seek out mysteries to solve might favour a Seeker or a Sage role, for example. The role also helps a player determine how his character should react and progress as the adventure unfolds. These are powerful roleplay tools and a player should always remember his role and use it when deciding new courses of action.

Roles are also something the players as a group should consider together, as a solid warband is one that encompasses a wide range of roles. A warband filled with Warriors might excel at physical combat, but likely suffers with the investigations needed to find heretics to fight. Developing a good mix of roles makes for a more successful warband, and also allows each player a chance to shine during an adventure. This is not to say a warband dominated by only a few roles cannot be interesting to roleplay, but the players and GM should work together to ensure the characters face adventures that fit into the type of game desired.

It is commonplace parlance in the Imperium to mention someone as coming from a feral world, or working for the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. Roles, however, do not actually exist as titles or Imperial designations; they are more a mindset or attitude that any character adopts over his lifetime and operate only within the context of the game. There is no actual "Assassin" or "Seeker" as a real occupation or title in the 41st Millennium; there are instead Mortis Death Cult Skulltakers or Hive Desoleum Bondhound Sanctionaries. No character would refer to another using his role; players should use them as aids in roleplaying, but not have their characters use them as names or titles.

taken. Roles are an integral part of each Acolyte's identity, and, like duty itself, only end with death.

Each role presented in the following pages includes a description of the type of character it embodies along with an example of a character of this role from the Askellon Sector. Each includes the following special rules that are applied to characters from with this role:

Role Special Ability: A unique ability that all characters of this role gain.

Characteristic Costs: A character's role affects how much experience it costs the character to increase his characteristics (see Stage 4: Spend Experience Points on page 58). This table shows the proper experience numbers for each characteristic.

Skill Costs: A character's role affects how much experience it costs the character to increase his skill ranks (see page 58). This table shows the proper experience numbers for each skill.

Each player chooses one role for his character, and decides his character's function before and after joining the warband. The example characters included with each role offer narrative origins and motivations that players can use to help develop their own creations, and aid in deciding what kind of role best fits their planned character. After choosing his role, the character immediately gains the appropriate role special ability.

ASSASSIN

Talented murderers dedicated to the art of taking life; death merchants of the highest calibre, they are trained to kill and adept at slaying their targets in a variety of gruesome and grisly ways.

"Death has come for you, and will not be denied."

—Tallan Quot, Order of the Stilled Flesh

Even in a universe saturated with blood and death there are those which turn murder into a sublime art form. The Assassin is such a being, spending his life perfecting talents in the kill, rising to greater heights with each life he takes. While many who serve the Emperor are proficient in battle, Assassins revel only in the act of killing and often care little for commonplace combat. Driven with either an unhealthy thirst for the blood of others or a cold detachment leaving them bereft of their humanity, they can come in a variety of forms, linked together only by their desire to deliver death in the most efficient or grandiose way possible. They are inevitably drawn to those organisations which revere killing as much as they do or are in need of such artful killers. Many join death cults, societies devoted to the act of murder. Others might be recruited to mysterious Imperial organisations devoted to the art of sanctioned killing. In all cases it is the desire to take life and develop the skills of doing so which defines the Assassin, a journey which will end only when they themselves succumb to death.

THE ROLE OF THE ASSASSIN

Assassins are often not just masters at killing but also closing on their prey and striking without warning. Like the Imperium's most deadly predators, an Assassin stalks his quarry before he attacks, choosing the precise moment to inflict the maximum amount of damage and the best chance to make the kill. These techniques are the result of his skills in stealth and infiltration, slipping past sentries or guards and finding ways into seemingly impregnable fortresses. Like murderous ghosts they appear out of nowhere to silently

ASSASSIN SPECIAL RULES

Assassin characters can use the following action:

MANOEUVRE

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

If the next melee attack the character makes this turn scores at least one successful hit, the character may move his target a number of metres equal to half his Agility bonus. If the target is unable to perform movement actions, this has no effect.

take down their target before vanishing once again. A truly masterful Assassin can kill without detection, leaving only terror, confusion, and a corpse in his wake. In this capacity, an Assassin makes an excellent scout or skirmisher, gathering information and spreading discord among his enemies, while his fellow Acolytes conduct their mission.

Part of an Assassin's abilities extend to the arts of deception and disguise. When he cannot move about unseen or comes up against a barrier which he cannot breach, he can sometimes hide in plain sight. While not a staple of the role, the finest are often adept chameleons, changing their appearance to match surroundings and mimicking their enemies to hide amongst them. Here they can become talented liars, and learn to match the speech and mannerisms of their foes to slide into their ranks unnoticed. Such methods are excellent ways of getting close to a target, passing freely through security checkpoints and other barriers before attacking an unsuspecting quarry and using the confusion to fade into the background undetected.

Assassins are also skilled the application of precision violence, taking out specific foes or striking targets that might have otherwise considered themselves safe. Either close up with blades and poisons, or from afar with sniper rifles and remote explosives the Assassin can hit a foe swiftly and suddenly, killing out only what they need. Whereas a less subtle Acolyte can be forced to expend huge amounts of ammunition or saturate an area with explosives to eliminate a target, the Assassin needs but one shot or one thrust of the blade to do his work. This talent for precise murder can be useful when collateral damage must be kept to a minimum or only a key figure needs removal to crush an uprising or cult.

In addition to the ability to move about unseen, bypass security, and reach difficult targets the Assassin, also makes for a solid support combatant. Alongside the more heavily armed and armoured Acolytes he can offer long range assistance, covering the battlefield with sniper fire, or skulking around the flanks of his foes to take out stragglers and wounded enemies. Using his skills in death, an Assassin can do terrible damage in the right circumstances, and open

TABLE 2-2: ASSASSIN CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	100
Ballistic Skill	100
Strength	50
Toughness	100
Agility	50
Intelligence	150
Perception	50
Willpower	100
Fellowship	150

TABLE 2-3: ASSASSIN SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	100
Athletics	150
Charm	150
Command	150
Commerce	150
Deceive	150
Evade	100
Investigate	100
Intimidate	150
Linguistics	200
Logic	200
Medicae	150
Navigate	150
Observe	150
Pilot	150
Psyniscience	150
Remembrance	200
Stealth	100
Subterfuge	150
Survival	150
Tech-Use	150

the way for his fellow Acolytes to complete their goals. This could be taking out combatants unseen from kilometres away with sniper fire, the only evidence of his presence in the battle the exploding heads of his targets. It could be close and bloody with blades and pistols, appearing suddenly to tear open throats and exposed joints before rejoining the shadows.

ASSASSIN CHARACTERS

Assassins typically view most problems as solvable through precise and exact application of deadly force, and as such mould their bodies and minds to best execute it. Most delight in such applications and eagerly seek it out, or view them acts of devotion as part of their veneration to the Emperor. The worlds of the Imperium are home to numerous death cults, murder guilds, lifetaker orders and other places to train in these arts of murder. Surrounded by such death and destruction, and living in the shadow of constant danger, some sects revere death as a force of nature, a vengeful god, or fickle ally. An Assassin character can hail from any one of these divergent sources, or even have learned his skills alone after long hard years selling his talents as a mercenary.

Assassins born into a hive or as part of the factories of a forge world often favour guns and technological ways of killing. The death cults on these worlds often advocate training in advanced and exotic weaponry, such as elaborate micro-explosives and electro-garrottes. In contrast, the Assassins of a feral world rely on more primitive means. Even if they later trade a metal sword for a power blade, theirs is a talent for getting in close to cut their foes down. Living in such conditions also grants a greater understanding of the natural environment, and these Assassins may also be adept at the use of native poisons on their home world.

Highborn Assassins represent another facet of death, using not only the resources to those born on developed worlds, but also exploiting the subtle ways of social conflict, and mastering the skills of moving unseen by means of disguise and deception. He can also often call upon greater resources than his more humble brethren. The noble houses of the Imperium sometimes foster such men and women so that they might retain the services of trusted killers, tied to the family through bonds of blood. Many death cults venerate Imperial saints, and Assassins from shrine worlds can view their murderous art as an essential part of religious life, reinforcing their faith to the Emperor with each kill. Assassins across the Imperium are bound in their common devotion to death and murder, their varying origins all but of little matter to the dead they leave behind.

SAMPLE ASSASSIN: KARRIS TARYDRO

Karris is formerly of the Razor Angels, one of the deadlier Fleshcutter gangs of Desoleum. He left his gang on a quest to find his equally lethal sister Karinne, who disappeared after her own gang, the Bloodlines, was massacred several years ago. His search took him all across the hive. With each new kill to further the quest, he became more enamoured of the act itself, until it became equally important to his life. He now travels across the sector, killing as directed but

always finding opportunity for personal acts of murder in pursuit of his sister.

CHIRURGEON

Masters of the flesh, with a knowledge of sacred anatomy that lends themselves to both the arts of healing as well as torture; they are devoted to the study of biological forms and the limits of mortal bodies.

"You did well to stay alive long enough to reach me. I'll ensure you stay that way."

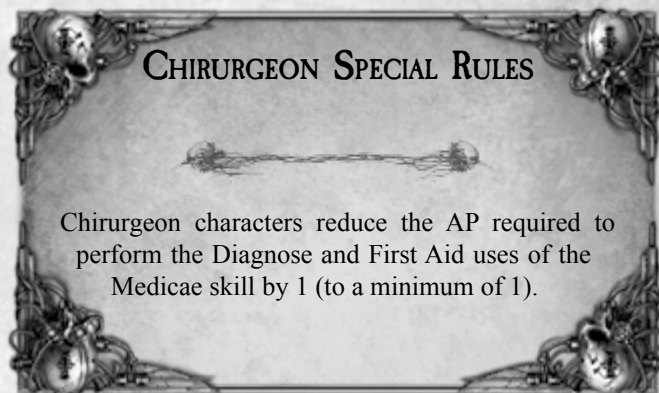
—Medicae Yu Attrin

The secrets of the body are closely guarded lore within the Imperium. Just as the Adeptus Mechanicus jealously protects the rites and rituals governing its technology, so too do others hoard knowledge about the human form. Chirurgeons have been ushered into these hidden ways, peeling back the skin of biological science to gaze upon its wet, raw, beating organs. They see the understanding of the blessed form of Man and other biologics as paramount to life, either to preserve it or control it, and can become obsessed with perfecting their understanding of such matters. Some may come from the ranks of the Adeptus Mechanicus Biologis, others serving as Imperial Guard medicae or Adepta Sororitas Sisters Hospitaliers. Some may have operated as unguilded hab-docs, feral shaman-healers, or personal medilords to spire rulers. Their abilities place them in a position of great power within the Imperium, gifted as they are with the talent to either heal or harm depending on their own whims and those of their lords. As such a good Chirurgeon can always find a place as a torturer or excoriator, his ability to cause pain a vital commodity within the hierarchy of Imperial society. More than a talent for torture or a skill at mending mangled bodies, the Chirurgeon is defined by his thirst for knowledge and a drive for experimentation, often at the expense of his patients and their wellbeing. It is a drive that can lead to great discovery and triumph, but also to the creation of abominations which were never meant to be.

THE ROLE OF THE CHIRURGEON

The science of the body and the mind are shrouded in mystery within the Imperium, secrets privy to a specialised few. As an Acolyte, the Chirurgeon gains free reign to practise his arts and finds no shortage of subjects, be they for healing or for harm. Principle among the gifts of the Chirurgeon is the ability to mend broken flesh, shattered bones, and twisted minds, either replacing them with augmentations or grafts before returning an Acolyte to service. Whereas a battlefield trooper or gang skin-stitcher might know the basics of lasburning to cauterise a wound or binding a bleeding limb, the Chirurgeon transcends these through devotion and skills to preserve and cure. In his hands, flesh can be made better than before. What the Chirurgeon does is often not just medicine but art, manipulating the flesh into new and superior configurations.

Healers also exist on all worlds though their form and ability can vary wildly depending on societal factors and local taboos. The Biologis of the Adeptus Mechanicus



contain specialised Chirurgeons entrusted with the secrets of the human form. Here they learn the mechanics of the flesh and how to emulate it with blessed technology, though some might heretically seek to better it where possible. The Imperial Guard perhaps has the greatest numbers through the sheer size of its armies across the galaxy, with each regiment containing many medics.

With the talent for healing also comes the talent for harm, and Inquisitors have great call for the Chirurgeon and his skills when it comes to bleeding the truth out of their prisoners. Many Inquisitors have a raw ability when it comes to putting someone to the question, trading pain for truth. The Chirurgeon, however, can keep a subject alive almost indefinitely and in constant, excruciating pain. A good Chirurgeon is inventive in his torments, as he must be to overcome the hatred and resilience of some of the Mankind's foes, and in time grows to have a large repertoire of tortures at his disposal.

Chirurgeons do not just heal the injured or interrogate prisoners, they may also be intellectuals and researchers plunging into the depths of Imperial secrets, or keeping the ancient lore of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Those that operate outside the boundaries of the Machine Cult must tread with care, the Mechanicum having little patience for those that dabble in the mysteries of science. This usually means they must conduct their research in secret, hidden from the eyes of the Imperium, safeguarded by their service to an Inquisitor. Many rogue Chirurgeons have found a place within warband when they were persecuted by the Mechanicum for their crimes, an Inquisitor finding a useful place for their talents. Others are hunted, leaving a trail of monstrous failures and stacks of hidden bodies in their wake, who find a refuge for their madness in service of a higher purpose.

CHIRURGEON CHARACTERS

The Adeptus Mechanicus is one source of those that have chosen the path of the Chirurgeon, plucking him from his upbringing to serve the Omnissiah and delve into the secrets of the Biologis. This is especially true should he come from a hive or forge world, working daily besides those that have taken their oaths to the Machine God. By the time a Chirurgeon comes to serve an Inquisitor, the stamp of the Machine Cult is often firmly upon him. Only the shadow of his former life remains, hidden under augmented limbs and artificial organs.

TABLE 2-4: CHIRURGEON CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	50
Ballistic Skill	150
Strength	100
Toughness	50
Agility	150
Intelligence	50
Perception	100
Willpower	100
Fellowship	100

TABLE 2-5: CHIRURGEON SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	200
Athletics	100
Charm	150
Command	150
Commerce	150
Deceive	200
Evade	150
Investigate	150
Intimidate	150
Linguistics	150
Logic	150
Medicae	100
Navigate	150
Observe	150
Pilot	200
Psyniscience	150
Remembrance	100
Stealth	150
Subterfuge	150
Survival	100
Tech-Use	150

A character who learns the skills of the Chirurgeon outside the rigid structures of the Machine Cult is often more an expression of the world that created them. Shrine world Chirurgeons master the healing arts as a divinely inspired path, tending to the flocks of faithful. Like the Inquisition, the Ministorum makes great use of Chirurgeons as torturers, though for very different reasons. A skilled Chirurgeon can make a name for himself as a redeemer, using pain as a tool not to extract the truth but to cleanse the soul, searing away the taint of sin with agonising precision.

Even without the use of advanced technologies a Chirurgeon can find a place in society. Many feral world shamans, witch doctors, and spirit-healers represent gifted minds. While their methods might seem antiquated and their means backward, these primitive Chirurgeons can still do wondrous things with the flesh of man, their stone blades and foul brews just as potent as many Mechanicum medicae technologies. Many of these kinds of Chirurgeons also find a home within the Imperial Guard as the medical officers for regiments raised on their worlds, given basic battlefield training and then thrust into the fires of war to tend to those maimed in combat. For Acolytes seeking to remain alive in their service to the Emperor, a Chirurgeon is a valued and essential member of the group no matter his origin.

SAMPLE CHIRURGEON: JOL POLLUX

Tech-Priest Pollux has been a Magos Biologis on Core Theta for five decades now, devoted from early age to the mysteries of the flesh. Like many of her colleagues on this extreme forge world, she worked on the edge of tech-heresy; in her case it is concerning the limits of the organic and not the technological. Constant experimentation on the rigours of flesh and limits of life have made her an excellent physician as well, a practice she often disdains but that others working with her have come to rely on.

DESPERADO

Rogues and mercenaries that live by their wits and the gun on their hip; talented thieves, outlaws, and criminals, they sell their services to the highest bidder to line their pockets with coin.

"Turn around slowly. I get less if you're dead, but I'm willing to take that cut."

—Jaz Kimba, guild-bounty collector

Every world has men and women that live out on its fringes or survive by their skills with a gun, selling their talents to those in need of a bit more muscle with no questions asked. Desperados are a motley group, comprising scum, bounty hunters, slavers, pirates, and renegades, who exist on the border or beyond the law. They can be charmers using roguish appeal to further their latest con, or harsh men who know nothing but violence. Most are singular individuals who know no allegiance other than the current best offer. Having found a talent for shaking down the rich and poor alike, some drift between semi-legitimate jobs as bodyguards and enforcers to outright theft and murder. Those that survive long enough become adept at sensing

DESPERADO SPECIAL RULES

When making a second attack action in the same turn, Desperado characters gain a +20 modifier to their attack test if their first attack scored one or more successful hits.

danger, dealing with others of their kind and knowing well when to cut and run. They can also become talented gunslingers, frequently using their weapons to protect their lives or take the lives of those in their way. Desperados are defined by their selfish natures and scorn for authority, choosing the path of the outlaw if it means living free and getting a quick score to see them though another day.

THE ROLE OF THE DESPERADO

Desperados thrive on a level of Imperial society that is harsh and unforgiving, and where a man must survive by his wits as well as his weapons. Most Imperial citizens are born into a place or position, and even those that must suffer the hard labour of toxic factories or the mindless drudgery know that as long as they do their work, they will always have a place and a corner in which to lay their head. Not so for the Desperado, who has slipped away from the castes and classes of his birth to find some semblance of freedom on the fringes of society. This life brings with it skills and talents that can be invaluable for Acolytes, who are often forced to follow their prey into such places or investigate crimes and heresy committed in these shadowy outlands.

Unconstrained with petty laws, Desperados can find a way to do most things, be it breaking into a secure building, fencing illegal goods, bribing enforcers into dropping an investigation, or tapping into contacts and contractors which only exist for those in the know. When skirting the law of a world, as Acolytes are wont to do, these abilities can mean the difference between blundering into a crime lord's den and being welcomed as potential clients.

Beyond the relative safety of Imperial society, Desperados are also adept at survival, having had to live their lives without the help of others. On a densely populated hive world, this can mean knowing how to find the purest water, the best kinds of fungus in the air tunnels, or which areas of the underhive are unstable and to must be avoided. On a wilder frontier world a Desperado quickly becomes schooled in which towns offer a welcome and which shoot first and then ask about him later. The most important skill a Desperado can have is determining who to trust, and just how far to trust them. This in turn makes him skilled at dealing with people, and also useful when trickery and deception is needed. A Desperado's skills with people can allowing him to obfuscate inconvenient truth into a more useful resource.

In combat, a Desperado's knack for survival is expressed with dirty fighting and a readiness to draw his

TABLE 2-6: DESPERADO CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	100
Ballistic Skill	50
Strength	150
Toughness	100
Agility	50
Intelligence	100
Perception	100
Willpower	150
Fellowship	50

TABLE 2-7: DESPERADO SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	150
Athletics	150
Charm	100
Command	150
Commerce	150
Deceive	100
Evade	150
Investigate	150
Intimidate	150
Linguistics	150
Logic	200
Medicacae	200
Navigate	200
Observe	150
Pilot	100
Psyniscience	150
Remembrance	150
Stealth	150
Subterfuge	100
Survival	150
Tech-Use	150

weapon. Any Desperado that has lived long enough knows that the difference between living and dying is often knowing when to run and when to fight. Hesitation can be just as deadly a mistake. While an Imperial Guard officer obsesses over the greater tactical situation, the Desperado tries to end the fight as quickly as possible and get out alive. They might think nothing of drawing and gunning down an unarmed foe if the target appears to be a threat. These traits serve them well in areas where only a quick gun and a quicker wit can see them through.

DESPERADO CHARACTERS

The Imperium is plagued with criminals at every level of its society, from Highborn crooks using legal authorities to crush their foes for a profit to baseborn scum knifing each other over a handful of meagre belongings. Desperados drift through these worlds surviving as best they can, turning adversity and ill fortune into opportunity and wealth. On developed worlds in the Imperium, like densely populated hive worlds, a Desperado lives in the shadows of society, among the gangs and street thugs making coin where he can. He is not a man to be crossed, as likely to gun someone down as show his hand in friendship, turned bitter by long years of betrayal and the worst that humanity has to offer. These Desperados from hive, forge, and shrine worlds are familiar with living in among the press of humanity and know human nature all too well, becoming skilled at turning it to their advantage. Those that excel can rise high, skipping along social strata though guile and force, using a charming tongue and smoking laspistols every step of the way.

Voidborn and feral world Desperados develop in different ways, the wild frontiers and empty spaces of their worlds and star-faring vessels a different environment for those that would reject the controls of society. In a primitive wilderness, a Desperado might become a bandit plying his trade in the lonely stretches of land between civilisations. Such a man might rise to become a rogue lord, the head of a criminal band or similar lawless group, until drawing the notice of an Inquisitor and turning his talents to the protection of the Imperium. In the depths of space, this story can unfold much the same, and Desperados might come to dominate the limited underworlds of their home station or vessel, or even break free to sail the void stellar marauders.

Highborn Desperados are perhaps the most indigenous of their kind, using the full weight of their families or the ample resources gifted to them by birth to aid them in their illicit endeavours. A Desperado from a well-positioned noble line might live for years uncontested on his world as he robs his people of their wealth, only coming to grief when his people rise up against him or he crosses someone more powerful than himself. In these cases, noble Desperados flee into the void to escape their crimes, sometimes turning up within the service of the Inquisition, where few questions are asked about their past provided they can prove their use.

SAMPLE DESPERADO: TIMO SAR'SE

Timo spent years serving in the Vigil on Juno, enforcing the capital city's many laws. It was after investigating a

murder that he discovered a cache of smuggled xenos relics and discovered how much others would pay for them. After making a deal that earned him more than he would have seen in his lifetime, he abandoned his post (but not his weapons) and quickly arranged for off-world transport to avoid the fury of the Vigil. As a smuggler and aquisitionist, he dealt both with the Trade Sable and the emerging Pale League in other unusual items until he attempted to cross the wrong man. As a somewhat reluctant Acolyte, his contacts in the shadow markets and eye for illegal actions now serve a higher cause.

HIEROPHANT

Zealous followers of the Emperor with an unwavering devotion to the faith; they are missionaries and priests whose sole purpose is to spread the word of the Emperor and bring righteous death to his foes.

"To live without the Emperor is to live a false life, and thus a life no one should be allowed to keep."

—Pastor Davos Po, before the Culling of Hive Fedilus

The Cult of the Emperor exists throughout the Imperium. The glory of the master of Mankind is found in the teachings of the Ministorum, the ancient secrets of the Machine God, and a million more faiths all linked to the veneration of the blessed Emperor. Hierophants are those dedicated to the Imperial Creed, as priests and confessors, clerics and wise men, or as orators and demagogues spreading His word and enforcing the tenants of the faith upon the teeming masses of humanity. As men of the Emperor, there is an aspect of the divine in all Hierophants, that spark of fervent conviction that drives them against the darkness and keeps the spirit of the Imperium alive even as it crumbles from without and within. With fire and swift justice the Hierophant stands with ten thousand years of faith at his back, ready to strike down any who would oppose him and his god. He is defined above all else by his certitude and his relationship to the Emperor; this is his shield and his sword against the enemies of the Imperium and where others succumb to doubt and fear the Hierophant charges on the word of the Emperor on his lips and an unshakable truth in his heart.

THE ROLE OF THE HIEROPHANT

Faith in the Emperor binds the Imperium together and gives it the purpose to move forward against corruption and the reckless aggression of xenos empires. A Hierophant embodies this faith and brings it to his service as an Acolyte. The Emperor is worshipped in endless aspects across the galaxy, and a hierophant might follow any one of the many branches of the Imperial Creed. More than mere words and deeds, the Imperial Creed is a living breathing thing with the power to inspire and fortify the human soul, as well as protect it from the horrors of the universe. It is the duty of the Hierophant to look after the souls of those around him, to keep them pure and shield them from the corruption of the Warp or the insidious lies of alien emissaries. They are often the only means of thwarting the fear and insanity that

HIEROPHANT SPECIAL RULES

In addition to the normal uses of fate points (see page 258), Hierophant characters can spend a fate point to automatically succeed at a Charm, Command, or Intimidate skill test with a number of degrees of success equal to their Willpower bonus.

lies in wait for Acolytes among the uncaring stars. Against foes whose very existence is unconscionable to the human mind, only faith keeps them alive and gives them the endurance to continue in their sacred duty to the Emperor. To this end, a Hierophant is a beacon of light to those he fights alongside, and his is the word of the Emperor which exists to give all men grace in their darkest hour.

Much like the talents of a psyker or a Tech-Priest, there are foes to which the Hierophant is ideally suited; namely those that use the Warp as a weapon or creatures that wither in the Emperor's burning light. A Hierophant is a weapon of the Emperor in this way, and anathema to all things from the great beyond. His conviction can sear the flesh of Daemon spawn, close rifts between the worlds, and cast down the witch along with other equally glorious miracles. It is also an ample shield against the fear sown by xenos races, which prey on primordial terrors. The Hierophant can steel a man's soul against these threats, and replace petty thoughts of mortality with inspiration for his duty to the Emperor and the glory of service to Him.

In their role as guides and indoctrinators, Hierophants often become great orators, weaving their words and speeches into a web of influence over all around them. A skilled Hierophant can shift the mood of a crowd with a few well-chosen phrases, or turn their minds to murder. Years of training in the Ministorum or other agencies of the Imperial Creed grant the Hierophant unique insight into the minds of Mankind, and how the will of a mob might be directed by those that know how. Few Imperial citizens do not respond to this kind of persuasion, especially when coming from a member of the Adeptus Ministorum. Something deep within their souls stirs to the sound of the Emperor's sermon, planted there through years of indoctrination and Ecclesiarchy teachings.

Hierophants are often invaluable when dealing with the Ecclesiarchy, knowing the methods and means to communicate with them or manipulate them as only once which have served among them can. Wherever the Acolytes go they will find the shadow of the Ministorum is never far away, its priests and clerics woven into the fabric of the Imperium, holding it together with the faith of the Imperial Creed. The Hierophant can excel in these situations, a guiding hand for his peers just as he in turn is guided by his faith in the Emperor.

TABLE 2-8: HIEROPHANT CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	100
Ballistic Skill	150
Strength	100
Toughness	50
Agility	150
Intelligence	100
Perception	100
Willpower	50
Fellowship	50

TABLE 2-9: HIEROPHANT SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	150
Athletics	100
Charm	100
Command	100
Commerce	150
Deceive	150
Evade	150
Investigate	150
Intimidate	150
Linguistics	100
Logic	150
Medicae	150
Navigate	150
Observe	150
Pilot	200
Psyniscience	200
Remembrance	150
Stealth	200
Subterfuge	150
Survival	150
Tech-Use	150

HIEROPHANT CHARACTERS

The worship of the Emperor comes in a myriad of forms, and each world reveres His might in a different way. Hierophants represent this diversity across the Imperium, from the primitive holy men of a feral world to the complex priesthoods of a prominent shrine world. As messengers of the word of the Emperor, a Hierophant exists to spread his faith. Provided it is the Emperor and the Imperial Creed that motivates his teachings, the Ministorum is not concerned overly with the presence of local beliefs. Thus, a Hierophant character can have his own complex interpretation of the Imperial Creed, woven into the ancient tenets of his world where the Emperor is represented by his world's sun and stars, or its saints are great sea creatures or flaming volcanos. He also often brings the trapping of his world's religion with him, bearing regalia that he wore as a member of his local sect, or conduct ritual and rites sacred to those of his own people.

Whereas a feral world Hierophant's belief in the Emperor might include natural phenomena and powerful beasts, those of a hive world or voidborn could translate into the spirit of the ship or city in which he lives. So ancient are these places that natives often attribute a soul to the hive or voidship, revering it as a god which watches over them, and carefully noting its many hums, creaks, and rumblings as signs of its assent or displeasure. When the Imperial Cult establishes itself in these worlds, these local superstitions are absorbed into the Imperial Creed and the hand of the Emperor is now seen at work behind the spirit of the hive or voidship. As a result, a Hierophant from such a place might see the divine in any city or ship he enters, treating it as a sacred place and taking care not to anger its spirit. Though puzzling to those that have never lived in a hive or on a void-going vessel, there is often common sense woven into these teachings, and they would be wise to heed the words of a Hierophant when it comes to leaving certain doors alone or respecting the colour of a glowing rune. All these and more are supremely important to Hierophants as signs of their faith, and for a Hierophant there is nothing more important.

SAMPLE HIEROPHANT: EIZEIL SKYSPEAKER

When the Missionarus Galaxia landed on the feral world of Rund, Eiziel was the first of her tribe with the courage to approach the still smoking comet and the terrible beings that emerged from within. In months, she left her people to spread the word of the Sky Father across Rund, eyes burning like the midday sun with her fiery conviction. She now serves the Sky Father across an even wider area, equally ecstatic to enlighten and preach, or burn and destroy any who would threaten her new god.

MYSTIC

Souls touched by the Warp and filled with its eldritch power; psykers, Warp-seers, and shamans both cursed and blessed with the power to manipulate the arcane energies of the immaterium and turn them against their enemies.

"Your power is fleeting. Mine is eternal, a flame that will burn long after my death."

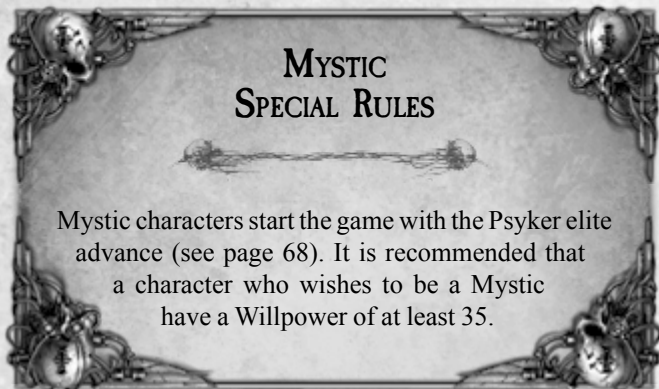
—Primaris Psyker Kalleen Ka,
beginning the Immolation of the Razored Cartel

Millennia of human evolution have given rise to whole generations of psykers within the Imperium, gifted souls with a talent for manipulating potent yet unpredictable power. Mystics are those the Warp has touched in some way, gaining a measure of control over its unnatural tides and a glimmer of insight into its use. Either as Primaris Psykers, primitive Warp-seers, or renegade sorcerers, the Mystic represents Mankind's connection to the Sea of Souls and the powers and denizens which dwell within. Their cursed gifts lead many to view all things as interconnected. Even the slightest occurrence can be seen as signs from beyond, and technology as an unreliable prop against the terrors unseen. To even glimpse what exists beyond the veil is to see the fragile nature of reality, and know of horrors no ordinary Imperial citizen can be allowed to see. The Immaterium and its use can offer a man salvation when he needs it most, a weapon to use against his enemies, or a glimpse of the future to guide his actions. However, like the ancient Terran sea of old, it is unpredictable, untameable, and can change in an instant. This is the peril that all Mystics must live with, the knowledge that for all the power their gifts might bring and the position it might grant them, eventually it will likely destroy them. Mystics are defined by their connection to the Warp, providing them with knowledge beyond that which man was meant to know, and of humanity's only true defence against the terrible entities which hungrily wait across this gulf in reality.

THE ROLE OF THE MYSTIC

Psykers are a constant within the Imperium, used to communicate across the Warp, fight wars, and probe the minds of its citizens. Mystics understand the nature of these psychic powers better than most, having powers themselves or some other rare insight into the nature of the Warp. Many Inquisitors are psykers themselves or employ them as Acolytes, using their powers to shift though minds in search of information. A Mystic understands that the galaxy is simply not a collection of stars and planets, but rather a skin over another realm of mental energy in which the souls of men burn like the flames of guttering candles. Those that understand such things can learn to see these energies, and eventually manipulate them, until reality becomes a fluid and changeable quantity no more of an obstacle than a dense fog.

The aid and support a Mystic can provide is often limited only by his own strength to manipulate the Immaterium. Unfortunately, with such power always



MYSTIC SPECIAL RULES

Mystic characters start the game with the Psyker elite advance (see page 68). It is recommended that a character who wishes to be a Mystic have a Willpower of at least 35.

comes a price, and Mystics may be as much the victim of their own forbidden knowledge and eldritch power as they are masters of it. In a heartbeat, a Mystic can lose control and become an open portal between reality and the Warp, releasing unfettered energies, rampaging Daemons, or worse. At best, this manifests as psychic phenomena with ghostly voices, breaking mirrors, and frost spreading uncontrollably around them. At its most violent, it can mean possession or wholesale destruction of everything and everyone present. Understandably, this can make other Acolytes nervous when dealing with Mystics, even those that exhibit complete control and have no history of instability. It is hard to ignore the possibility that a Mystic might lose control and turn his powers upon his allies.

Regardless of the risks, the value of a Mystic remains, and more than just a means of protecting against sorcery. The Mystic is often a font of hidden knowledge. Whether it is looking into the thoughts of others, testing their souls for taint and corruption, or peering into the Warp for some insight into the future, a Mystic can provide answers and council when none are available through normal means. Because time is a fluid concept within the Warp, a Mystic can gain knowledge of events far in the past or things which are yet to come. Such attempts can be perilous, as are all such interactions with the Warp, but the risk can be worth the reward, and many Inquisitors are not above resorting to such methods to defeat their foes.

The price for their gifts is that Mystics are often kept at a distance within the company of fellow Acolytes. It is natural for men to fear what they do not understand, and a Mystic embodies the unknown, both with his access to forbidden knowledge as well as his ability to manipulate reality, often in disturbing and violent ways. Few wish to spend time around someone who can read thoughts or disturb reality, even should he be a comrade in service to the Emperor. Mystics often emanate an unconscious, uncomfortable feeling in those around them. As a result, the path of a Mystic is usually doomed to be a lonely one, kept company only by the voices in his head and the creeping shadow of his eventual doom.

MYSTIC CHARACTERS

The psyker gift is indiscriminate, and a man or woman is often just as likely to develop psychic powers no matter where in the Imperium they reside. Some view it as a mutation, and thus posit that areas with higher mutation

TABLE 2-10: MYSTIC
CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	100
Ballistic Skill	100
Strength	100
Toughness	150
Agility	100
Intelligence	50
Perception	50
Willpower	50
Fellowship	150

TABLE 2-11: MYSTIC SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	150
Athletics	200
Charm	200
Command	150
Commerce	150
Deceive	150
Evade	150
Investigate	200
Intimidate	150
Linguistics	150
Logic	100
Medicae	150
Navigate	150
Observe	100
Pilot	150
Psyniscience	100
Remembrance	100
Stealth	150
Subterfuge	150
Survival	150
Tech-Use	150

rates also lead to greater numbers of those touched by the Warp. In reality it strikes more according to fate or the unfathomable whims of powers beyond the ken of Mankind. Mystics are treated differently depending on the nature of the society into which they are born, sometimes reviled as abominations and hunted to the edges of civilisation or given a place of position and influence as those honoured with the gift of sight. They always stand apart, for even if their society tolerates them there are few places in the Imperium where they can find welcome. Mystic characters are also likely to fall into two groups, those sanctioned on Terra and trained to use their gifts, and those which have somehow remained unsanctioned and unknown, living in secret as best they are able.

Sanctioned psykers that survive training can come from a variety of areas, serving in the Imperial Guard alongside its regiments, spread across the galaxy as Astropaths, or even acting as advisors to ruling councils and governments. Even in such positions, there are always others standing ready to act should their powers overwhelm them. A bolt round to the head has ended many a Mystic's career.

Unsanctioned psykers live a much more dangerous existence, to both themselves and those around them. They often learn their skills from the handed-down teachings of shamans and witches or from half-understood tomes, and live with the constant fear of discovery and death. On a frontier or feral world, a psyker can live for years in such a state, hidden away from society, protecting themselves by formulating a terrible reputation as a dark witch or wizard. Only the strongest of these live long into adulthood, their will powerful enough to ward off daemonic possession and maintain their sanity. An Inquisitor may recruit such an individual to his service for all manner of reasons, using his absolute authority to shield his unsanctioned servant from the rest of the Imperium.

SAMPLE MYSTIC: EOS DU AQUILA-14

Eos lived amidst the asteroids of Port Aquila, working in one of the many trading posts scattered around the belt. She grew enraptured with any fires she could find on the station. Dozens of candles dripped wax along her stall, offering warmth when unexplained cold frosted around her. She found staring into the flames revealed secrets to her, hints of things yet to happen. It came as no surprise when the oddly-dressed strangers arrived one orbit, their leader's face now familiar to her from countless appearances in her candles, and took her away with them to ensure the Emperor's fire is never extinguished.

SAGE

Brilliant minds with a talent for numbers, logic, and cyphers; dedicated scholars and savants brimming with knowledge and lore, they are keepers of truths and possess an unrivalled understanding of the galaxy.

"They thought the data-caches lost or destroyed, but I hold proof that neither is true."

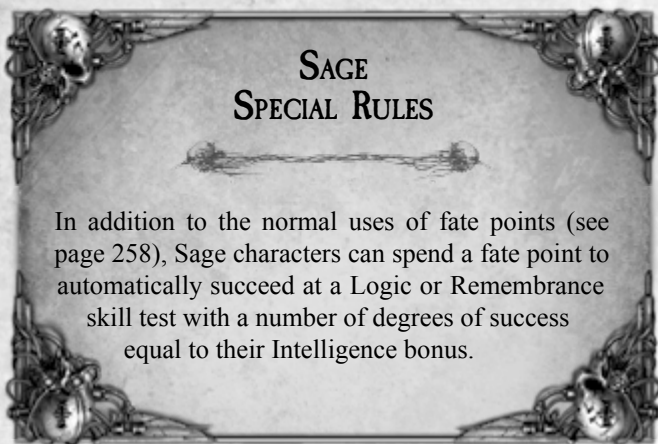
—Pellucidan Toom, Desoleum Infomagister

Such is the unimaginable depth of information the Imperium deals with that only Acolytes specially trained or augmented to understand can hope to use it with any degree of skill. Sages are talented individuals known by many names, such as Autosavants, Lexmechanics, and Calculus Logi. They are often members of the Adeptus Administratum or Adeptus Mechanicus, and trusted with the storing and cataloguing of huge amounts of data. Comprising millions of worlds and billions of souls, the Imperium exists in many ways only on the yellowing parchments of a scrivener's tally sheets, dusty dataslates piled in forgotten shelves, and gigantic data-crypts larger than many cities. Sages record, store, and navigate the mountains of data the Imperium accumulates each day. He can see patterns that others cannot, making connections to either retrieve or uncover data considered lost or unattainable, translating it into useful knowledge for those around him. It is a process that takes great mental strength and skill, and often the implanted aid of artificial cogitator arrays or logis circuits that provide swifter reasoning and retention of facts. Sages have the ability to access the thousands of years of sorted Imperial data to find missing secrets, or making leaps of logic to identify them when they remain illusive.

THE ROLE OF THE SAGE

Knowledge is power, and a Sage is a repository of much of the Imperium's knowledge, having spent his life sifting through reams of data and tracing the patterns that link the great organisations and sectors of the Imperium together. While the Hierophant concerns himself with the teachings of the Imperial Creed, and the Mystic looks into the beyond for answers, the Sage knows that truth already exists, one just needs to know where to look for it. There are few Acolytes with minds as keen as the Sage, able to process such huge amounts of information and weed out the gems of fact from the torrents of lies. A Sage knows not just how to read and comprehend endless streams of information, but where they came from and where they lead. The result of these talents is sometimes the ability to use logic to unlock things that seemingly have no answers, making leaps of reason to come to new conclusions, whether it is deciphering an alien tongue, or determining an opposing organisation's next move.

To a Sage, everything is a puzzle, a code to be deciphered and defeated piece by piece. They thrive on data, and see patterns where others only see chaos. A Sage becomes a store of information and a font of knowledge, using his craftiness and intelligence to guide the blunt instruments of those more focused toward combat. Even in open conflict, he



can find a place directing fire and identifying weaknesses in his enemies, proving that a modicum of knowledge applied at the right time can have devastating consequences. A Sage's own battlefield is in dealing with the Administratum, planetary government, and local authorities. Where others become lost or confounded with levels of bureaucracy, the Sage sees through the administrative entanglements and cuts right to the heart of things. Coupled with the absolute power of the Inquisition, there are few things the Sage cannot achieve within the framework of Imperial authority, be it bringing in reinforcements, diverting supplies, or even locking down entire cities through manipulation of planetary agencies.

Sages tend to know a little bit about everything; even if they have not studied the subject expansively, there is always a good chance that they have come across it in one of their other research endeavours. Even when presented with a subject which the Sage knows little or nothing about, it takes them little time to process new information or engage in extensive research. This often makes them exceptional strategists, their natural inclination to observe and report often more effective than the reckless violence most Imperial forces would advocate.

The common drawback of the Sage's obsession with data and information is that they can never be sated or feel they have learned enough, always seeking out the next piece of lore or next hidden fact to add to their great cache of secrets. It is a drive that sees them poring over inconsequential data and useless trivia, endlessly reading and researching, often at the detriment of the task at hand. The wealth of knowledge they keep within their heads can also leave them disconnected from current concerns, mix up past and present, or shift conversations to places and peoples unknown to company. It is a sickness to which there is no cure, only the steady stream of new information keeping it in check and the constant presence of one task after another to occupy the Sage's busy mind.

SAGE CHARACTERS

Information is everywhere, writ across the many worlds of the Imperium in the movements and structures of its societies and the staggering data stores of the Adeptus Administratum. Sage characters can draw upon this information, whether they are members of the Administratum or another of

TABLE 2-12: SAGE CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	150
Ballistic Skill	100
Strength	150
Toughness	100
Agility	50
Intelligence	50
Perception	50
Willpower	100
Fellowship	100

TABLE 2-13: SAGE SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	200
Athletics	200
Charm	150
Command	150
Commerce	100
Deceive	150
Evade	150
Investigate	150
Intimidate	200
Linguistics	150
Logic	100
Medicae	100
Navigate	150
Observe	150
Pilot	150
Psyniscience	150
Remembrance	100
Stealth	150
Subterfuge	200
Survival	150
Tech-Use	100

the Imperium's great organisations. Sages of the Adeptus Mechanicus on hive and forge worlds are constantly linked to the ebb and flow of figures that crosses their world, gigatonnes of parchment, or even purely aetherical information streams that exist without physical form. Drawn into the web of data, they exist only to learn and reach deeper and deeper into the lore of the Imperium. After coming to the notice of an Inquisitor, the Sage can move on to more valuable pastures of information, and should he prove mentally strong enough can immerse himself in the endless well of secrets over which the Inquisition resides.

Those with other origins often have different functions, becoming chroniclers and lore keepers of their own world's history and secrets. A voidborn Sage might have absorbed all there is to know about the class of vessel or type of station on which his clan lives, and much about the movement of the stars themselves. A feral world Sage might be a storyteller or bard to his people, collecting centuries of tales and legends as well as a wealth of lore about its plants, wildlife, and weather patterns. A shrine world Sage likely served as a scholar of the Imperial Creed and knows extensively about the saint his world is famed for, to the point where his specific knowledge on the subject outstrips even that of the local Ministorum hierarchy. In all these forms, a Sage is the most learned of his people, well-known if not necessarily well-respected for his obsessive gifts for analysing and extracting the endless data that defines the Imperium.

SAMPLE SAGE: HARLON ONNIS

Once a lowly Clerk-Ensign of the Muster, Harlon had lived his entire life on Laran 9k, and there worked several of the sector's largest regimental launches. Tens of thousands of men, tanks, and support vehicles regularly prepared for embarkment and outfitting here, and he carefully recorded each detail as well as engraving the regiment's name on the grand arch each marched through on their way to their shuttles. His life was unchanging, until a man emerged from the shadows of his tiny office along with the High Lord of the Muster, demanding information none of the senior clerks could produce. Harlon's immediate recall, as well as his ability to sequence and pick out the data the fierce man demanded, soon ended his time on Laran and began a life more exciting than he had ever desired.

SEEKER

Skilled hunters and investigators obsessed with the pursuit of their prey; they sift through the secrets of the Imperium seeing what others do not and using it to flush out their quarry before closing in for the kill.

"Clearly xenos blade marks, but then ripped wider to disguise the clean slices. Someone does not want others to know who was really here."

—Sebastin Natto, Arbitrator

An Acolyte that treads the path of the Seeker is driven by the hunt, relentless in his investigations. Where others might choose easy violence or give up the pursuit, the Seeker sees clues and signs as to the passage of

SEEKER SPECIAL RULES

In addition to the normal uses of fate points (see page 258), Seeker characters can spend a fate point to automatically succeed at an Investigate or Observe skill test with a number of degrees of success equal to their Perception bonus.

the prey, whether it is an individual fleeing from Imperial justice, or a secret hidden behind a web of lies. They can obsess over the unknown, never resting until a puzzle is solved or a chase completed. Sometimes the mystery or the manhunt can become more important to them than the actual eradication of a revealed heresy or capture of an escaped psyker, and they lose interest once they arrive at a solution or detain their prey. Seekers are natural detectives and interrogators, ferreting out the truth wherever it might hide among the byzantine power structures of the Imperium and its labyrinth of cities and societies. Where others find only dead ends and false leads, the Seeker's perceptive senses and keen insight discovers vital clues, deciphers plots, and resolves mysteries. It is this attention and obsession with detail which defines the Seeker, and whether or not he uses it to become a hunter or investigator it continually haunts him, pushing him on to uncover the next truth, unravel the next lie, and catch the most elusive of prey.

THE ROLE OF THE SEEKER

For an Inquisitor to eliminate enemies of the Emperor, he must first find them. A Seeker has a talent for the chase, which give him an edge in these investigations. He can root out the truth behind a secret or uncover the hidden nature of things with skill. Seasoned hunters, they are adept at gauging the strengths and weaknesses of their prey, learning how they think, how they operate, and how best to run them to ground. In all manner of environments, from the spires of a crumbling hive city to an ancient orbital installation, there are few places, if any, their quarry can hide. It is in the nature of the Seeker to adapt and evolve to counter the obstacles in his path, and in this function he makes an excellent guide and scout, sensing the best means of crossing hazardous terrain or finding what they seek in an alien environment. Often the Seeker will lead his group through these darkened places, the lives of his peers resting on his near preternatural instincts and sense of his surroundings.

The Seeker is always aware of his surroundings. He is often the first to find foes and foil ambushes, spotting danger where others see only their mundane surroundings or making an intuitive leap about the nature of his prey and anticipating an attack. In the wild, this translates into the role of hunter, tracker, and guide, while in the urban sprawl of more populous Imperial worlds the Seeker becomes a

TABLE 2-14: SEEKER CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	150
Ballistic Skill	100
Strength	100
Toughness	150
Agility	100
Intelligence	50
Perception	50
Willpower	100
Fellowship	50

TABLE 2-15: SEEKER SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	150
Athletics	150
Charm	100
Command	200
Commerce	150
Deceive	150
Evade	200
Investigate	100
Intimidate	150
Linguistics	150
Logic	150
Medicae	150
Navigate	100
Observe	100
Pilot	150
Psyniscience	150
Remembrance	150
Stealth	150
Subterfuge	150
Survival	200
Tech-Use	150

detective, investigator, and questor. As the Inquisition deals with investigating possible threats and tracking down wanted enemies, a Seeker's thirst for the hunt and his knack for uncovering the truth makes him a valued part in any Inquisitor's work. Many an Inquisitor has grown in influence and power due to the efforts of his Seeker.

It is this driving force that can be as much a boon as a curse for a Seeker, and the same obsession that propels him forward can be the same one which keeps him investigating areas he is unprepared to face. In the darkness of the galaxy there are uncounted horrors lurking between the stars, in the depths of cold, desolate worlds and ancient forgotten ruins. Many of these lonely domains are places man was never meant to tread, hiding things which have lingered in suspension from aeons long past and vanished from memory. Sensible citizens heed well the teachings of the Emperor and leave such places to the past, turning their minds from wondering what lies beyond the safety of their world. Not so for the Seeker. Once he has taken up a trail, he follows it to its conclusion, the dual nature of his gifts seeking out the truth but also leading him into danger. Those that survive such encounters can come to Inquisitorial notice, and join others with souls strong enough to face such threats.

Once part of such groups, they can be brought to bear against heresies, xenos infestations, and other dangers, but their searches can drift from desired directions. No mystery is so simple as to end with a single resolution, and often the investigation of one heresy uncovers other threats to Mankind. Maintaining proper focus becomes essential, and his fellow Acolytes may have to restrain a Seeker from moving to a new mystery before their current operation is complete. Seekers rarely abide secrets, and as many Acolytes have unsavoury pasts, a Seeker can cause friction unless his natural tendencies are curbed.

SEEKER CHARACTERS

Where there are criminals, there are those tasked with catching them and bringing them to justice. Whether a Seeker is a hive world hab-block enforcer or the head huntsman on a feral world, he forms a key part of Imperial society. Highborn Seekers, though some in their social class might frown on their activities, can work their way into positions of power where they can best use their talents and indulge in their obsessions. As overseers and overlords of hive levels or even entire worlds, they can direct the enforcers under their command to root out enemies and maintain desired order. More baseborn Seekers on these developed planets take a more frontline position and walk the habways or conduct investigations moving among the people as enforcers. In these instances and more, a Seeker who excels at his job may gain the personal interest of an Inquisitor. This could be by displaying a near unnatural sense about an investigation where his peers have come up short, or because of a powerful knowledge and understanding of the criminal mind that no institution can teach.

Seekers on more sparsely populated areas such as feral planets or void installations have fewer resources to call upon, and must make do with whatever their environment has to offer. This makes them hardy and resourceful, often

calling on superior knowledge of hostile environments to entrap or bring down their prey. These kinds of Seekers are also often adept at survival, having to live for long periods away from any comforts while hunting prey along its fringes.

Other have acted as explorers, serving in Rogue Trader vessels or the Explorator fleets of the Adeptus Mechanicus, often barely escaping with their lives after uncovering secrets for which their masters were ill-prepared. Some acted as scouts in the Imperial Guard, or witch-trackers in the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. In all cases they act as Seekers, ceaselessly investigating, searching, and tracking their targets and never stopping until their prey is brought down.

SAMPLE SEEKER: FARI GE'NA TAL

In a hive where oaths are sacrosanct, the harshest penalties in Desoleum are for those who abandon their debts and flee their obligations or worse, attempt to alter their oath-cogs to lessen their service time. First, the oathless must be found, and specialist Bondhounds within the Sanctionaries like Fari to track them down. Once assigned she was relentless, tracking her quarry across the underhive darkness or out into the wastelands. Her work to disrupt a major oathcog falsification sect brought new allies who also sought its end, in order to keep an offworld cult from infiltrating the hive. Impressing their leader (who also paid off her oathdebt), she left Desoleum to track even more dangerous prey.

WARRIOR

Hardened fighters and veterans skilled in all forms of combat; they are adept at both starting and ending conflicts, as well as the brutal application of violence to get the job done, no matter the cost.

"Enough talking. I'm getting the grenades."

—Jacindalee San, successfully negotiating release of Lord Hallipha

The one constant of life in the 41st Millennium is war. Ravenous xenos and hostile powers besiege the Imperium on all sides, and every facet of industry is turned to supporting armed combat. Warriors are the result of this constant conflict, either drawn from the frontlines or worlds racked with violence. He might be an Imperial Guardsman scarred by long years on a cursed alien battlefield, a brutal Arbitrator tempered by the mean streets of his home world, or a ganger eking out a living in the foul underhive. They have become inured to the sight of bloody wounds and the crack of lasgun fire. For a Warrior, life is conflict, and most solutions can be found through the direct and brutal application of force, usually at their own hands. In every case, he is a skilled fighter with an extensive understanding of the nature of battle. He is also a survivor, having lived long enough to learn a thing or two about getting out alive from even the most violent of situations. Warriors have a talent for combat and find it their most effective means of resolving matters; chainsword and hand cannon are their most reliable forms of communication. They leave a battle ragged but alive, their foes lying in pools of blood. As few targets of Inquisitorial investigation shy away from violent confrontation, a Warrior makes for

WARRIOR SPECIAL RULES

Warrior characters can use the following action:

EXPOSE

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

If the next attack the character makes this turn scores at least one successful hit, the target gains the Exposed condition. An Exposed character cannot use the Evade action against the next attack to target him before the end of the encounter. After the target is attacked once (successfully or unsuccessfully), he loses the Exposed condition.

an invaluable Acolyte even though he can rarely guarantee anyone's survival but his own.

THE ROLE OF THE WARRIOR

An Inquisitor is always in need of strong-arms and soldiers to enforce his judgements or protect his person, and any that offers up his gun in service never wants for work. Warriors are the hard edge of any combat encounter, using their skill and expertise to put down their enemies in a hail of fire. A good Warrior also understands warfare and can direct others in battle, acting as a commander and providing tactical leadership. When hard calls must to be made, the kinds that cost lives, it is the Warrior who can step up and make them. In this capacity, an Inquisitor might defer to his Warrior when dealing with these kinds of violent situations, trusting years of experience to deal with nuances of small unit tactics or battlefield dominance.

Warriors are often talented pilots, gunners, and drivers, having trained in the Imperium's most deadly weapons and most powerful machines. Whether it is sub-orbital craft, hover-vehicles, or walkers, it is likely a Warrior knows how it functions and how best to push its limits. Even those vehicles in which he has no training he can probably find his way around, the same sharpened reflexes and natural assurance he uses in combat making him skilled behind the controls of all manner of machines. Veterans from the Imperial Guard especially might be able to operate many heavy weapons, drive battle tanks, or fire self-propelled artillery pieces. A hive ganger may be able to drive or modify industrial vehicles, and usually has experience with many small and improvised weapons as well as homemade explosives. Fighters on feral worlds might only have access to primitive weapons, but the principles of violence are universal and many are utterly lethal combatants.

Having faced many a foe eye to eye, Warriors also can make for keen judges of character and demeanour. He is the one who can detect subterfuge through shifting gazes or twitching trigger fingers, and determine if an enemy is

TABLE 2-16: WARRIOR CHARACTERISTIC COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Weapon Skill	50
Ballistic Skill	50
Strength	50
Toughness	100
Agility	100
Intelligence	150
Perception	150
Willpower	100
Fellowship	100

TABLE 2-17: WARRIOR SKILL COSTS

SKILL	EXPERIENCE MODIFIER
Acrobatics	150
Athletics	100
Charm	150
Command	150
Commerce	200
Deceive	150
Evade	100
Investigate	150
Intimidate	100
Linguistics	150
Logic	150
Medicae	150
Navigate	150
Observe	200
Pilot	150
Psyniscience	150
Remembrance	150
Stealth	150
Subterfuge	150
Survival	100
Tech-Use	200

about to back down or stand resolute. Warriors live and die through force of arms, and can usually recognise others who deal in violence, despite disguise or guile. This judgement may appear superficial to others, but a Warrior lives or dies with only seconds between decision and action. What might appear to be snap appraisals are the result of many battles that have kept him alive.

He is also used to death. No one comes out of the Imperial Guard, the Adeptus Arbites, or brutal hive gangs without seeing scores of his companions fall along the way, and putting more than his fair share of bodies in the ground. Unlike Assassins, killing is not some great art or expression of devotion, nor is it something to be savoured and enjoyed. The taking of life is rather a necessary step in the preservation of his own, and when a Warrior sees his enemies fall in a spray of blood the elation he feels is that he has triumphed again to live another day.

WARRIOR CHARACTERS

Each world of the Imperium has its own unique kinds of conflict, from personal duels and gang skirmishes in otherwise-civilised planets to huge battles between massive armies. A Warrior is shaped as much by the environment in which he fights as by any personal talents or traits he possesses. When a Warrior joins an illustrious organisation like the Imperial Guard or the Adeptus Arbites, he brings with him these specialised skills. These colour his fighting styles and dictate much of his personal combat doctrine, staying with him no matter what additional training he later receives.

Feral worlders learn to fight on brutal and primitive worlds as savage tribesmen or nomadic marauders. Favouring melee weapons above all others for reliability and sometimes issues of honour, they respect physical strength and endurance in place of cunning and guile, coming as they do from societies where the weak are crushed and the strong survive. Even when a Warrior gains access to advanced technology such as powered weapons and modern armour, he usually retains some weapon of his home world, a blood-spattered axe or gore-stained club that always remains his preferred method of killing.

Hive world and forge world Warriors are by contrast masters of technology, and the former often excel at the close-quarters fighting that life in cramped hive tunnels can teach. Forge world Warriors are also prone to augment their bodies; following the teachings of the Machine God they discard weak, fleshy limbs in favour of those of steel and gears. They may even sometimes replace an arm with a lasgun or bolter so that they always have ready access to their weapon.

Voidborn Warriors share an acceptance of technology with their hive and forge world counterparts, but also learn methods of fighting in space, becoming skilled in boarding actions and airless engagements. The effects of low or zero-gravity are lessened on the voidborn, such is their natural gift from living in uncertain and artificial gravities. Though they might seem more slight and wiry than a heavy fighter from the blasted wastelands of a feral world, like all Warriors they are defined through the violence they live by and inflict on others.

SAMPLE WARRIOR: KARN WESLIN

Karn managed to survive and even thrive in one of the horrid undercities beneath Vesuna Regis on Juno, forging a powerful warband of mutants and scum through his martial skills in the blood pits. His renown spread, and a rival warlord ambushed his settlement to remove a possible threat. Karn barely survived, and swore vengeance. In his search, he fell upon a small warband of off-world strangers and a deal was struck: his aid to their quest for a fabled tech-relic, and their aid in destroying his nemesis. Both tasks accomplished, Karn found little reason to remain, and followed his new warband into the sun against enemies far worse than any mere mutant.

STAGE 4: SPEND EXPERIENCE POINTS, ACQUIRE

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

"He let me keep the pistol, at least. Sometimes he would allow us items from his private armoury. Most of the time, we found ways to get what we needed after we landed."

—Gex Avrille, from the private memoirs *Recollections of Service*

A character's starting characteristics, home world, background, and role define the core of who that character is, but do not exemplify the unique abilities and proficiencies of the various people who are called to serve the Inquisition. To reflect everything a character has and will learn across his career, each player character earns experience points (xp) periodically throughout the game. He can use these to increase his characteristics and skill, purchase new talents, and gain access to character-altering elite advances.

When a character earns experience points, they are added to his total. He can spend them at any point the GM allows, or he can save them to be used at a later time.

STARTING EXPERIENCE

Each player character starts with 500 experience points to spend at character creation. This experience represents everything the Acolyte has learned in his life before service to his Inquisitor, on top of what is granted from his other character creation options.

RANKS

A character's rank is a general measure of his experience and capabilities. It represents the progression of the character's abilities as he works for his Inquisitor. A character's rank is determined by the total amount of experience he has spent. See **Table 2-18: Ranks** to determine the rank of a character.

TABLE 2-18: RANKS

RANK	TOTAL SPENT EXPERIENCE
1	0–999
2	1000–2499
3	2500–4499
4	4500–6999
5	7000–9999
6	10,000–13,499
7	13,500–17,499
8	17,500–21,999
9	22,000–26,999
10	27,000+

CHARACTERISTIC ADVANCES

A characteristic advance represents a natural improvement to a character's body or mind. When a player purchases an advance in a characteristic, he adds +5 to that characteristic permanently. Characters are limited in how much they are allowed to advance a characteristic.

COST

The cost to purchase an advance in a characteristic is based on the characteristic's value and character's role. First, determine the experience modifier for the desired characteristic. This is a value between 50 and 150, and can be found in Characteristic Costs table under the character's role. Then, multiply the experience modifier by the characteristic's current bonus. The resulting value is the cost to advance that characteristic. For example, if the current value of the characteristic is 38, and the modifier was 50, then the total cost would be 150 (50 x 3).

LIMIT

A character cannot continuously increase one characteristic, as there is a limit to how fast a person can naturally improve. The lifetime total number of advances purchased in each individual characteristic cannot exceed the character's rank. For example, if a character starts with a value of 37 in a characteristic, at rank 1 he can purchase 1 advance for a characteristic of 42. Then at rank 2, as he has already purchased one advance in that characteristic, he can purchase one more for a characteristic of 47 and a total number of advances of 2.

SKILL ADVANCES

A skill advance represents an improvement to a character's expertise. When a character purchases an advance in a skill, he increases his rank in that skill by 1. A skill cannot be advanced higher than rank 5. For more information on skills, see **Chapter III: Skills**.

COST

Much like characteristic advances, the cost to purchase an advance in a skill is based on the skill's rank and character's role. First, determine the experience modifier for the desired skill. This is a value between 100 and 200, and can be found in the Skill Costs table under the character's role. Then, multiply this number by the skill's current rank to arrive at the cost for the skill advancement. For example, if raising a skill from 2 to 3, and modifier is 150, the total cost would be 300 (3 x 150).

TALENT ADVANCES

A talent advance represents a new ability the character has learned. To purchase a talent, a character must have access to it in the appropriate talent tree, and must meet all of its prerequisites. To access a talent, the character must be able to trace a line along the paths of the tree from the top-most talent down to the desired talent without crossing over a talent he does not possess. Characters automatically have access to the top-most talent in every tree, and the experience cost for each talent is listed in its entry. For more information on purchasing talents and using talent trees, see **Chapter IV: Talents**.

ELITE ADVANCES

Elite advances are specialised advances that set a character apart significantly. Many elite advances can only be acquired under special circumstances at character creation, and those that can be obtained through play represent large, fundamental changes to a character.

To obtain an elite advance, a character must have the permission of the GM, meet all of the prerequisites, and spend the specified amount of experience. For more information on this, see Elite Advances on page 64.

ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Each character starts with certain items based on his background, but can also select additional weapons, equipment, and gear as part of his initial creation. This represents other accessories the Acolyte brought with him, and help define his favoured combat methods and idiosyncrasies. An Acolyte can select a number of items up to his starting Influence bonus value from the Armoury that have an overall Availability of -10 or higher. For example, a character with an Influence of 37 could select 3 additional items.

During regular game play, Acolytes use the normal requisition system for acquiring additional items from the Armoury as per page 131.

STAGE 5: GIVE THE CHARACTER LIFE

"He told us another truth right before we assaulted the Locust Palace, so we would know what we faced if we were too late. After that, I could never sleep soundly while travelling through the Warp again."

—Gex Avrille, from private memoirs *Recollections of Service*

Once all of the raw data of a character is determined, it is time to flesh out his history, personality, appearance, and everything else that makes him a complete character instead of just a collection of numbers.

DETAILS

In Stages 1–3 of character creation, players decide what home world, background, and role fit with their character. These elements play into a character's origin and life up until this point, defining a great amount about who he is and what kind of person he will be. Beyond the archetypes of home worlds, backgrounds, and roles, all of these elements have unlimited possibility for storytelling potential. Each entry gives an example of how it can be used in the Askellon Sector, but players should not feel constrained to just the examples given. There are countless stars in the sector, and players are encouraged to come up with unique stories to explain their character's home world, background, and role.

GENDER, APPEARANCE, AND PERSONAL DETAILS

The wartorn worlds of the 41st Millennium are home to an unfathomable number of different types of people. Most Inquisitors are only interested in Acolytes who can perform their duty better than anyone else, and care little about their gender or appearance. A character can have any desired gender, unless the GM or a specific home world or background would preclude such an option otherwise. The same goes for appearance, which should follow any details made part of the character's creation, but otherwise be open to free construction.

As a player is creating the appearance of his Acolyte, he should keep in mind the descriptions given in the character creation options he has chosen, as those can often give ideas as to how those from that life might appear. For example, feral worlders are often large and muscular while the servants of the Adeptus Mechanicus are usually covered in cybernetics and the red robes of their order. Many hive worlders are pale, having never seen their sun. An Acolyte from the Adeptus Astra Telepathica could be uncomfortable in crowds, but an Outcast might welcome them as new sources of income. These are only suggestions, however, as there is no such thing as a typical character in **DARK HERESY**. There are commonalities within home worlds, backgrounds, and roles, and players should look to them to guide character creation, but fashioning Acolytes with their own unique details can be very rewarding and make for warbands that stand apart.

TABLE 2-19: MALE NAMES

d100 ROLL	PRIMITIVE	LOW GOTHIC	HIGH GOTHIC	ARCHAIC	INFORMAL
01–05	Arz	Aaz	Azararch	Alaric	Able
06–10	Barik	Canto	Baranoth	Barbosa	Bones
11–15	Carm	Darrial	Castess	Caradoc	Cutter
16–20	Farn	Enoch	Davrus	Draco	Dakka
21–25	Garak	Festus	Erioch	Eizen	Dokk
26–30	Horst	Gaius	Galliach	Ferris	Ergs
31–35	Imk	Harlon	Harthos	Grendal	Fanz
36–40	Jart	Irlven	Icharus	Harlocke	Flair
41–45	Kulem	Jaspar	Karpath	Jenquin	Garrit
46–50	Larl	Killian	Lothos	Karlos	Hons
51–55	Mok	Lazarus	Marius	Lemant	Ills
56–60	Narl	Mordicai	Noctine	Magnus	Jaq
61–65	Oort	Nicodemus	Octavius	Naveen	Lax
66–70	Pak	Quinten	Partheos	Oscarl	Meng
71–75	Ragaa	Rhaban	Quellus	Perrin	Nast
76–80	Salc	Silvanto	Ramalties	Romulus	Reddin
81–85	Tarl	Titus	Severan	Sabanth	Scab
86–90	Volc	Uriah	Tyruss	Urial	Shiv
91–95	Yarl	Xerxes	Ventium	Wolfe	Tranq
96–99	Zel	Zariel	Zarath	Zarkov	Wurm
00	Roll on Table 2–20: Female Names				

NAME

Just as the appearance and nature of people can vary infinitely across the countless worlds of the Imperium, so do names and what they mean. On one world, a certain name might indicate low birth or ignominy, while on another, the same might act as a mark of extreme power and fame. When deciding on a name for a character, players can roll randomly (or even multiple times to create compound names, surnames, or true names kept hidden from all) on **Table 2–19: Male Names** or **Table 2–20: Female Names**, or they can simply choose a name, mixing and matching options until they find something that they feel fits their character.

TYPES OF NAMES

Despite the unlimited variability of names from world to world, there are a few general styles of name found throughout the Imperium that players can use as a jumping off point for naming their character:

Primitive: Filled with hard consonants and the occasional guttural noise, character with primitive names typically hail from more barbaric parts of the Imperium.

Low Gothic: Debased forms of High Gothic names, Low Gothic names can be found amongst the many lowly citizens of the Imperium.

High Gothic: Drawn from the ancient High Gothic language, these names can be found amongst the shining spires of hive cities and members of the ruling classes.

Archaic: Drawn from the ancient past, these names are auspicious, though many are so old they have lost their original meanings and sources.

Informal: Informal names are not unique to one type of world or society. Instead, they reflect nicknames given to characters, usually by peers from their background or their fellow Acolytes.

TABLE 2-20: FEMALE NAMES

d100 ROLL	PRIMITIVE	LOW GOTHIC	HIGH GOTHIC	ARCHAIC	INFORMAL
01–05	Arda	Acadi	Araleen	Aennisse	Alta
06–10	Cil	Balida	Castella	Bianca	Blue
11–15	Dara	Cassa	Elleantra	Drusilla	Echo
16–20	Elphet	Darial	Fausta	Eos	Fatal
21–25	Frakka	Frennine	Flavia	Florenza	Flame
26–30	Garma	Galatia	Heras	Genevieve	Gamma
31–35	Halli	Hannette	Irissa	Hannette	Grace
36–40	Ing	Jinzia	Jucinda	Jocasta	Jaine
41–45	Julla	Karroleen	Lucindia	Katarina	Lho
46–50	Kelle	Liri	Mycandra	Lethe	Mini
51–55	Merra	Magdala	Novianna	Miranda	Nerva
56–60	Nimm	Narcia	Nuella	Pollonia	Newt
61–65	Nulla	Pennette	Palanza	Rosalind	Pris
66–70	Paz	Quineel	Praenta	Severine	Red
71–75	Russa	Rhia	Regia	Tessera	Steel
76–80	Sulle	Sesselie	Scythia	Tzarelle	Starr
81–85	Thima	Thesse	Temetria	Urania	Tanda
86–90	Vas	Uri	Thallia	Verity	Trix
91–95	Yanne	Xandra	Venria	Wynnif	Xina
96–99	Zanna	Zadori	Yemmise	Yasta	Zedda

00 Roll on **Table 2–19: Male Names**

TWIST OF DESTINY

Beyond the choices that have led a character to service in to his Inquisitor, that character's strange and twisted destiny has played a large part in his life. To represent the effects of this winding fate on the character's life, each character must roll 1d100 during character creation and compare the result to **Table 2–21: Divinations** (see page 62), immediately applying the listed affects.

NATURE

Once a character's appearance has been determined, and the details of his life worked out, the player should have a good idea of the personality he would like the character to have. To help in generating a personality for the character, the player can consider the following questions:

What does the character desire? The eternal fight never ends, but each Acolyte takes up the cause for his own reasons. Some Acolytes want only to stay alive, or fight to ensure their loved ones are saved. Others might be obsessed with power and riches, or the desire to see the sector cleansed of heresy or crime. Some might be devoted to Mankind's survival, caring little for individual lives so long as the species continues. Desire could be to gain the favour of a loved one, or even simply to relish a moment of quiet peace with a lho stick and a bowl of fine amasec.

What does the character hate? Hatred can motivate many an Acolyte in powerful ways, burning his passions and keeping him fighting when all else is gone. An Acolyte who lost his world to a xenos invasion might be consumed with hate, and eagerly seeks out aliens to kill no matter the species or their actual threat. Another might reserve his wrath for those who do not worship the Emperor in the correct manner, or for foul mutants who defy the holy form of Man. An Acolyte's hatred could also be within himself, for a moment of weakness on an otherwise-forgotten battlefield that only the Emperor witnessed.

TABLE 2-21: DIVINATIONS

d100 ROLL	PROPHECY	EFFECT
01	<i>Mutation without, corruption within.</i>	Roll once on Table 8-7: Malignancies (see page 256) with a –5 modifier and apply the result.
02–05	<i>Trust in your fear.</i>	Increase this character's Perception by 5. Roll once on Table 8-6: Mental Traumas with a +9 modifier and apply the result.
06–09	<i>Humans must die so that humanity can endure.</i>	This character gains the Cold-Hearted talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Willpower characteristic by 2 instead.
10–13	<i>The pain of the bullet is ecstasy compared to damnation.</i>	Reduce this character's Agility characteristic by 3. The first time this character suffers a critical wound each session, roll 1d10. On a result of 8 or higher, he does not suffer the critical wound and suffers a normal wound instead.
14–17	<i>Be a boon to your allies and the bane of your enemies.</i>	This character gains the Hatred (choose any one) talent. If he already possessed this talent, increase his Strength characteristic by 2 instead.
18–21	<i>The wise learn from the deaths of others.</i>	Increase this character's Agility or Intelligence Characteristic by 3. Reduce his Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill characteristic by 3.
22–25	<i>Kill the alien before it can speak its lies.</i>	This character gains the Quick Draw talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Agility characteristic by 2 instead.
26–29	<i>Truth is subjective.</i>	Increase this character's Perception characteristic by 3. The first time he would gain 1 or more Corruption each session, he gains that amount plus 1.
30–33	<i>Thought begets Heresy.</i>	Reduce this character's Intelligence characteristic by 3. The first time he would gain 1 or more Corruption each session, he gains reduces the amount gained by 1 (to a minimum of 0) instead.
34–38	<i>Heresy begets Retribution.</i>	Increase this character's Fellowship or Strength characteristic by 3. Reduce his Toughness or Willpower characteristic by 3.
39–43	<i>A mind without purpose wanders in dark places.</i>	Choose a mental trauma from a result of 10–25 or lower on Table 8-6: Mental Traumas that has a Stacking effect other than Signature Mental Trauma. That mental trauma becomes this character's Signature Mental Trauma instead of the one dictated by his home world.
44–49	<i>If a job is worth doing, it is worth dying for.</i>	Increase this character's Toughness or Willpower characteristic by 3. Reduce his Fellowship or Strength characteristic by 3.

What is the character willing to sacrifice? For many Acolytes, death is the final sacrifice, and to think otherwise is to turn away from the Emperor. Some might hold their lives dearly, knowing what might await them when the Emperor makes his judgement, and willing to sacrifice anything or anyone to forestall that final day. Others might care little for death, but fear the day their own honour is lost in their pursuits. When combating the Ruinous Powers, the loss of their very souls might be the supreme sacrifice to avert an apocalypse.

How did the character meet his Inquisitor? The first meeting between Acolyte and Inquisitor is a pivotal moment, and players should work out a suitable backstory for this. The character might have fought alongside the Inquisitor against invading xenos, saving his life. Perhaps the Inquisitor saved his own life, and now the character feels he owes a life-debt to his new master. He could have successfully tracked a heretic, capturing his target as the Inquisitor arrived. In almost all situations, the character impresses the Inquisitor somehow or offers an invaluable skill set, making him someone the Inquisitor wants in his service.

TABLE 2-21: DIVINATIONS (CONTINUED)

d100 ROLL	PROPHECY	EFFECT
50–54	<i>Dark dreams lie upon the heart.</i>	Choose a Malignancy from a result of 20 or lower on Table 8-7: Malignancies (see page 256) that has a Stacking effect other than Signature Malignancy. That malignancy becomes this character's Signature Malignancy instead of the one dictated by his background.
55–59	<i>Violence solves everything.</i>	Increase this character's Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill characteristic by 3. Reduce his Agility or Intelligence characteristic by 3.
60–63	<i>Ignorance is a wisdom of its own.</i>	Reduce this character's Perception characteristic by 3. The first time he would gain 1 or more Insanity each session, he reduces that amount by 1 (to a minimum of 0) instead.
64–67	<i>Only the insane have strength enough to prosper.</i>	Increase this character's Willpower characteristic by 3. The first time he would gain 1 or more Insanity each session, he gains that amount plus 1 instead.
68–71	<i>A suspicious mind is a healthy mind.</i>	This character gains the Heightened Senses (choose one) talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Perception characteristic by 2 instead.
72–75	<i>Suffering is an unrelenting instructor.</i>	Reduce this character's Toughness characteristic by 3. The first time that this character suffers a Wound or Critical Wound each session, he gains a +20 bonus to the next test he makes before the end of his next turn.
76–79	<i>The only true fear is dying without your duty done.</i>	This character gains the Resistance (Cold, Heat, or Fear) talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Toughness characteristic by 2 instead.
80–83	<i>Only in death does duty end.</i>	The first time this character would suffer fatigue each session, he suffers that amount of fatigue minus 1 (to a minimum of 0) instead.
84–87	<i>Innocence is an illusion.</i>	This character gains the Keen Intuition talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Intelligence characteristic by 2 instead.
88–91	<i>To war is human.</i>	This character gains the Evasive talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Agility characteristic by 2 instead.
92–95	<i>There is no substitute for zeal.</i>	This character gains the Public Speaking talent. If he already possesses this talent, increase his Fellowship characteristic by 2 instead.
96–99	<i>Even one who has nothing can still offer his life.</i>	When this character burns fate threshold to survive a lethal injury, roll 1d10. On a result of 10, he survives whatever grievous wound would have killed him but does not reduce his fate threshold.
100	<i>Do not ask why you serve. Only ask how.</i>	Increase this character's fate threshold by 1.

What does the Inquisitor mean to the character? Does he view him as someone he must follow without question, or a leader whose decisions he can question? Does he respect him as a fellow fighter or scholar, or only as the person issuing the orders? For some, the Inquisitor is second only to the Emperor in their eyes, and to serve such an august personage is worth any death that may come. Another Acolyte could view his “leader” as someone who got the drop on him, has sufficient blackmail material

that he cannot refuse his orders, or simply has threatened to have him killed unless he follows. He may be a clever manipulator but certainly no better a man than any other. How much value and meaning an Acolyte puts with his Inquisitor can often guide a great many details concerning how the Acolyte acts and performs his missions, or if he might even contemplate betrayal or assassination should his respect fall too low.

ESTABLISHING THE WARBAND AND INQUISITOR

Along with character creation, players should also create their warband, the grouping of their Acolytes that serves the Inquisitor. This is not strictly as necessary as character creation, but adds greater depth to their games and is highly encouraged.

It is possible their first adventure is the very first time they have met each other, and this is a newly-forged warband ready to burn their light onto a darkened sector. They may all be new to service to their Inquisitor, or have worked for him in the past but never with each other, and it is the first time they have gathered to fight heresy together. For new players, especially those new to the *Warhammer 40,000* setting, this is a recommended approach.

Alternatively, this warband may have fought for some time prior to this adventure, and all know and trust each other (or trust each other as much as any Acolyte could trust anyone). If this is the case, the players should decide how long they have been together, perhaps creating a history of past deeds, valued comrades lost in earlier missions, and other details that can bind them together. Some of the Acolytes might be new to the warband, and must prove themselves to the rest, which can make for both friction and good roleplaying.

The players should also establish if their warband has a location they make home,

or one where they recuperate between assignments. This might be a remote settlement outside a hive city, a familiar set of habs on a nondescript world, or even their Inquisitor's own void ship that also serves as their transportation. They may have no such luxuries, living only from mission to mission knowing the only rest comes with death.

Unless one (or more) of the players is an Inquisitor, they should also create their Inquisitor, who functions as the GM's character. It is possible the GM already has an Inquisitor in mind, complete with personality, methods of contact, and expectations for the warband. If not, such decisions can be made as a group, or the GM can solicit details to aid in this creation. Unless the players are all experienced and agree to it, efforts should be made to match the characters to their newly crafted Inquisitor to create a smooth gaming experience. Depending on player experience, an Inquisitor with his own unique personality and quirks can greatly enliven play. He might be overly haughty, contacting the Acolytes via dead drops and refusing any actual contact with his minions. He might be secretive, never offering reasons or explanations for his directives, or he may be trusting and gregarious to the point of suspicion as to his actual motives. He might even be forcing them into service, holding deadly blackmail or other threats to coerce their actions, and hoping once they see the real threats that exist they develop true loyalty. With work, the Inquisitor can become more than another NPC and become a full part of the group dynamic.

ELITE ADVANCES

"My eyes were closed, but suddenly the Emperor blessed me with Sight."

—Ollise Kwill, nascent psyker

Characters in **DARK HERESY** are not static: they change and grow over the course of their adventures, assuming they survive, of course. In the course of his lifetime, an Acolyte might evolve into someone his earlier self could not possibly imagine. Some changes radically alter a character, forever moving him onto a new path. These might be the result of unrevealed or manifested transformations, offering abilities no amount of training could produce. They can also come in the form of terrible new offices, granting him tremendous powers, but also burdens few mortals could comprehend. These life-altering changes are called elite advances, and characters blessed or cursed with one are never the same again. This section covers the rules for elite advances, including acquiring and using elite advances.

USING ELITE ADVANCES

Elite advances represent large, defining aspects of a character that separate him from his peers. Each elite advance is unique, and can represent various elements of a character's persona. An elite advance could be an aspect of a character that has been a part of him his entire life, an ability that emerged due to some sort of external stimuli. It could be a special rank bestowed due to great deeds, or one of many other possibilities. Note that the player's role remains the same; a Warrior, for example, still views violence as the best solution to problems, no matter if he becomes a Psyker. Roles define how a character views the galaxy around him and his position within it; elite advances can take him along different paths, but do not change how he walks upon it.

Not every character gains access to elite advances, and not every character needs to. Most elite advances simply represent a thematic difference in the characters that possess them, and rarely give a large gameplay bonus.

Each elite advance is comprised of three components: narrative changes, instant advances, and unlocked advances. When a character gains the elite advance, each of these three components change him in different ways.

NARRATIVE

The largest component to elite advances is the effect they have on the nature of a character. Elite advances represent a significant difference that makes him unique from his peers. This could be anything from being promoted to the vaunted rank of Inquisitor, to gaining the power to channel the twisted energies of the Warp.

Each elite advance description offers information on the narrative component of the advance, and guidance on how the specific advance affects characters that acquire it. In the end, however, it is up to the player to properly integrate the thematic components of the elite advance into his character concept. Just as each player decides the details of the different choices he makes during character creation, he also chooses how his character changes as he acquires elite advances.

INSTANT CHANGES

When a character acquires an elite advance, whether at character creation or during play, it can alter his characteristics, skills, and talents. Each elite advance entry outlines any instant changes that are applied to a character who acquires the advance. These can be in the form of positive or negative modifiers to characteristics or skills, talents that are gained or lost, or new, unique rules that are applied to the character. All of these changes are applied when the advance is acquired, and are permanent.

UNLOCKED ADVANCES

In addition to immediately changing his nature, most elite advances give that character new avenues through which he can grow in experience. These avenues are in the form of new advances which the character can purchase. These advances can be anything from new talents to potent psychic powers, and are purchased using experience points in the same way as for regular advances.

GAINING ELITE ADVANCES

Characters can purchase elite advances by spending experience points. However, acquiring an elite advance is much trickier than simply purchasing a new talent or a rank in a skill. These represent large changes and, if purchased outside of character creation, can have a significant impact on the flow of a campaign. Because of this, a character must fulfil two conditions to be able to acquire an elite advance. First, the character must meet all the prerequisites listed in the advance's entry, and second, the player must have permission from the Game Master, working out the details for how the elite advance fits in with the character and the overall narrative of the campaign.

PREREQUISITES AND RESTRICTIONS

Each elite advance requires the character to possess a certain natural ability or skill level before being able to acquire it. The character must have the indicated characteristic value, skill training, or other quality designated (or higher) in order to be able to acquire that elite advance.

WORKING WITH THE GM

The most important concern for a player to consider when acquiring an elite advance is how it will affect his character and the narrative of the campaign as a whole. Because of the impact these advances can have on a campaign, players must get permission from the game master before purchasing any elite advance for their character.

Each elite advance offers guidance for players and Game Masters on when it is appropriate for a character to acquire the advance, as well as how to properly integrate it into a campaign. Each advance has a varying level of restriction outlined.

FREE ELITE ADVANCES

Some character creation options grant characters elite advances for “free.” In these cases, the character automatically gains the elite advance without having to spend the required experience, meet any of the prerequisites, or gain permission from the GM.

ELITE ADVANCE DESCRIPTIONS

There are three elite advances that characters in **DARK HERESY** most commonly seek out but also fear: Inquisitor, Psyker, and Untouchable. To become an Inquisitor might be the ultimate path for an Acolyte desiring even greater power to combat heresy, but to actually serve in the Inquisition is to shoulder a burden no mortal should endure. Psykers wield terrible powers, but their connection to the Immaterium makes them forever a target of the Ruinous Powers and suspect to even their closest allies. The soulless Untouchables are puissant weapons against the horrors of the Warp, but they are anathema to normal humans and evoke indefinably unpleasant reactions wherever they go.

To take a character into these paths can bring greater attention from the Imperium and its enemies alike, and are sure to take their adventures into areas undreamed of when they first started their service to the Emperor. Future supplements will also introduce additional elite advances to allow players to take their characters into other directions as well, allowing for more ways to defend Mankind.

INQUISITOR

To be an Inquisitor is to know tremendous power and responsibilities impossible to imagine. An Inquisitor acts not to save a world, or a sector, or even the institutions of the Imperium; his actions are in the defence of humanity as a whole. He can condemn a world to death lest it contaminate surrounding regions, or raze a hive to rubble to prevent a daemonic outbreak. He does these terrible deeds and more, for the only thing more dreadful than such actions are the results should he shy away from the immense burdens of his position. Inquisitors are separate from Mankind, for they alone possess the strength to live with the awful truths of the 41st Millennium—that Mankind is beset on all sides by threats that may end its existence, that the Warp harbours soul-devouring Daemons, and that psykers may lead to the doom of humanity. Few minds can comprehend such horrible knowledge; even Acolytes might not be fully aware of them, told only what their master deems necessary. Inquisitors not only know these truths, but also act on them. They serve none but the Emperor of Mankind, and account for their actions to no one. Though an Inquisitor need not be individually powerful in arms, his authority is supreme. Each is unique and fights to defend Mankind in his own manner, and without them humanity would surely perish.

BECOMING AN INQUISITOR

Just as each Inquisitor is unique, so are the means by which each gains his office. Few who know of the true burden such power carries would desire such ascension; Acolytes might serve their Inquisitor their entire lives and never even consider it. Many Inquisitors are drawn from the ranks of Acolytes, for they may have at least a glimpse of what dread responsibilities it carries. Others might come from outside, discovered during investigations or battles and through deeds and fortitude proved themselves worthy. There is no standard way a new Inquisitor is named or to decide when one is ready to become an Inquisitor. Some are created via a master/apprentice relationship, but others might happen in a joint decision from a group of Inquisitors, or acclamation of peers. There could be grand ceremonies in opulent palaces, or a simple arm-clasp before the new Inquisitor departs. The constants are the truths they share, the power they wield, and the burdens they carry knowing that if they falter, Mankind is doomed.

INQUISITOR RULES

Experience Cost: 1,000xp

PREREQUISITES

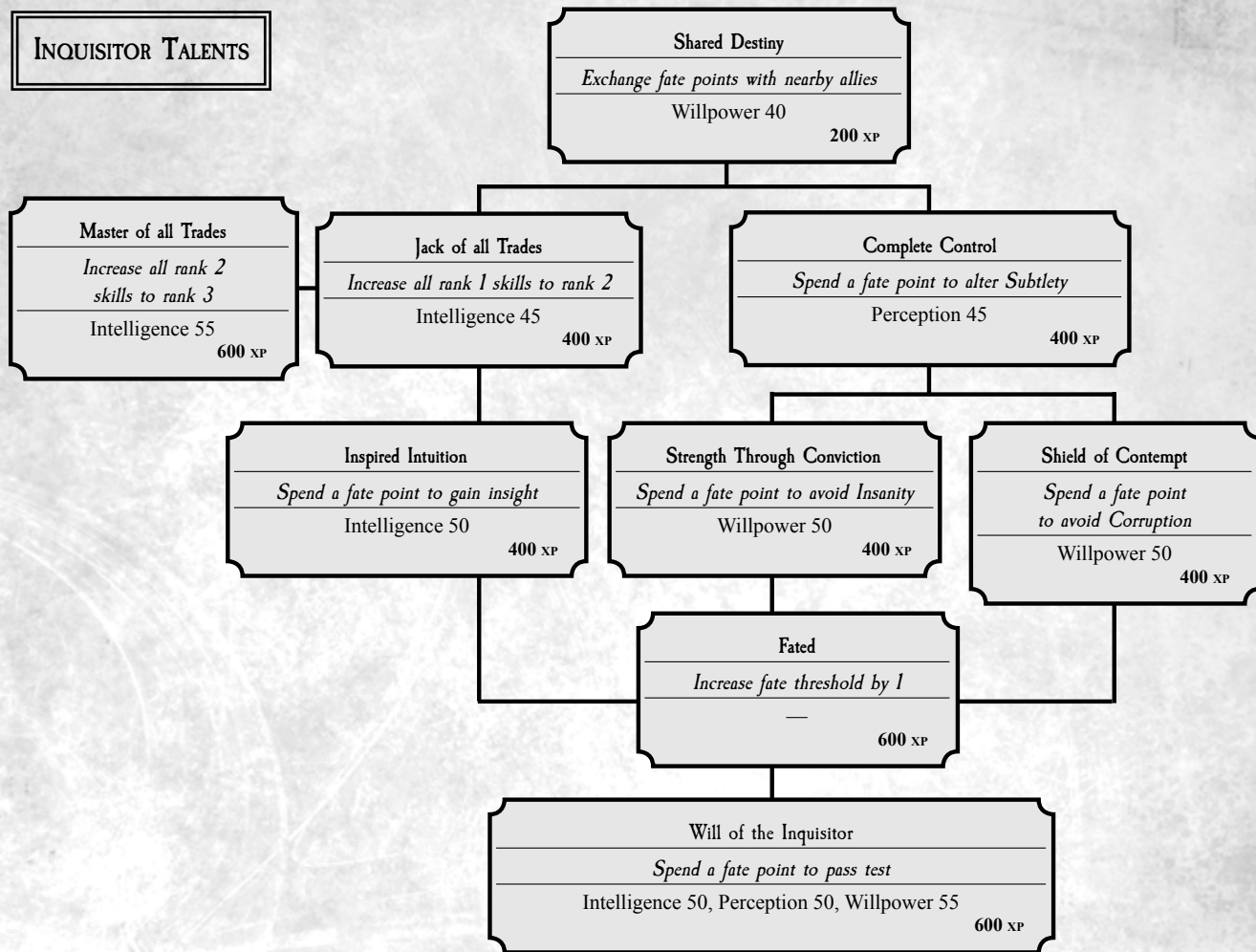
- **Influence:** 75
- **Emperor's Blessing:** Characters elevate to the this rank through the decision of an existing Inquisitor or some other suitably momentous occasion. Only utterly exceptional individuals who have performed mighty deeds and displayed sufficient courage might be gifted such power and authority, and it is not something that is offered lightly. See *Becoming an Inquisitor* (page 66) for more information on this unique occasion.
- **GM Guidance:** This elite advance should only be considered for characters not only of high Influence but also having displayed through their actions they are ready for the office. It not only changes the character, but also the group dynamic and the roleplaying experience as well. One or more characters playing an Inquisitor can have a range of effects on any campaign narrative, and Game Masters should carefully consider if having an Inquisitor player character fits with the campaign they want to run. Complete GM guidance on including Inquisitors in a campaign can be found in **Chapter XI: The Game Master**.

INSTANT CHANGES

Gain both the Peer (Inquisitors) and Specialist (Inquisitors) talents.

UNLOCKED ADVANCES

Inquisitor characters gain access to a special set of talents in the Inquisitor talent tree. The talents in this tree can be purchased with experience by Inquisitor characters in the same way as regular talents are purchased.



INQUISITOR TALENTS

The following talents are available to characters with the Inquisitor Elite Advance, and are purchased in the same manner as other talents (see page 97).

COMPLETE CONTROL

The Inquisitor uses his experience in the subtle dance of politics, manoeuvring social strata, and working contacts established across the sector to alter the awareness others have of a group, the better to aid in their goals.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Perception 45

Effect: The character can spend one fate point to increase or decrease his group's subtlety value by 1d10 + Willpower bonus at any time.

SHIELD OF CONTEMPT

Mental disciplines and rites to protect the flesh are essential to resist the foul temptations of the Ruinous Powers. His mind and body strengthened, the Inquisitor stands ready to repel the taint of Chaos.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Effect: When the character would increase his Corruption, he can spend one fate point to ignore the increase.

INSPIRED INTUITION

Having investigated all manners of heresies through the long years, the Inquisitor can gain insight into what might seem insolvable occurrences. Connections others might not consider suddenly leap to the fore, and heresies are laid bare.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 50

Effect: The character can spend a fate point to gain insight into his current situation. This is represented by the player asking the GM a question about the immediate situation the character faces, which the GM should answer as helpfully as possible.

FATED

Knowing that failure means a horrible end for Mankind, Inquisitors strive with unmatched zeal and refusal to despair. They often appear greater than other mortals, defying death and inflicting wondrous devastation on their enemies.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: —

Effect: When this talent is acquired, the character immediately increases his fate threshold by one.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

Each investigation is unique, as each heresy is a different, foul abomination upon the soul of humanity. With each investigation and the approach taken to eradicate it, the Inquisitor sharpens his abilities in ways normal practice could not accomplish.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45

Effect: When this talent is acquired, the character immediately increases all rank 1 skills to rank 2.

MASTER OF ALL TRADES

As the Inquisitor learns new abilities and hones his skills, with time he can master those to which he devotes his attention. His prowess in such areas might approach the finest specialists, greatly aiding in his struggle against Mankind's enemies.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 55

Effect: When this talent is acquired, the character immediately increases all rank 2 skills to rank 3.

SHARED DESTINY

Those who fight at the side of an Inquisitor know each battle can be their last, but a good Inquisitor watches over his own. With one eye on his Acolytes and another on their enemies, he ensures his people live to fight another day.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Effect: The character can spend two fate points to grant another character within 10 metres a fate point. Likewise, any character in 10 metres can spend two fate points to grant this character a fate point. This does not allow characters to gain fate points in excess of their fate threshold.

STRENGTH THROUGH CONVICTION

An Inquisitor is privy to terrible truths, and has been witness to things that would drive others to madness and beyond. His will steeled to adamantium levels, he can ignore that which would bring others to their knees in gibbering hysteria.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Effect: When the character would increase his Insanity, he can spend one fate point to ignore the increase.

WILL OF THE INQUISITOR

Perhaps the single most defining mark of an Inquisitor is his strength of will. Often it seems he can bend probabilities or shrug off lethal blows through sheer concentration, without the aid of arcane powers or ancient devices. For those who cannot accept defeat, surely anything is possible.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 50, Perception 50, Willpower 55

Effect: Before rolling the d100 when making a test, the character can spend one fate point to count as having rolled a 01 on that roll.

PSYKER

Psykers are humans able to access the terrible energies of the Warp and wield powers beyond those of other beings. Some claim them to be the next stage in humanity's evolution, a terrible curse that surely dooms it to damnation, or both. Without proper training, each might unknowingly rip apart reality in a fountain of rapacious Daemons or burn a world to bedrock, and they are rightly feared for the terrors they might unleash in a fit of weakness or insanity.

The Imperium realises both the dangers and usefulness that psykers represent, and demands each world scour its peoples for anyone showing signs of psychic abilities to be taken on the Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica to Terra for sanctioning. The testing they undergo reveals their future. Immediate death comes for those judged too inferior or dangerous to exist. Many become soul-fodder to the Emperor if they have power but lack control. Countless more are trained to offer their power to the Astronomican, the shining light in the Warp that allows navigation across the stars, and thousands perish each day as their souls are drained away to power the beacon. Psykers can also serve as Astropaths, their powers strengthened through soul-binding to the Emperor in a process that steals their sight forever. The most powerful and exceptional might go on to become Primaris Psykers serving on battlefields across the Imperium, or even join the Adeptus Astartes as mighty Space Marine Librarians.

Some escape this net, either carefully hiding themselves away or never actively displaying their powers. Many might live out their lives never realising they are a psyker, feeling only they are lucky at gambling, or able to walk through fire and death unscathed, or cursed with foul weather no matter where they travel. Inquisitors are keen judges of exceptional individuals, and might seek someone out with perhaps neither knowing psychic abilities are present, or perhaps only the Inquisitor truly aware of someone's hidden nature.

BECOMING A PSYKER

Some psykers are born in clouds of eldritch energies, their inhuman pedigree apparent to all. Others might not manifest themselves until many years later when impossible stress triggers their mutation. Every world in the Imperium must scour its peoples for any sign of psychic activity as part of their tithes, with the Adeptus Arbites stationed there keeping careful watch for compliance, but what each world considers a sign greatly varies. Some might test for corpus buoyancy or resistance to flame, or list tales of odd occurrences in their vicinity, or any one of endless indications the world holds as certainty for psychic taint. That many die from these tests is of little concern, for a world might burn if they are lax in searching.

PSYKER RULES

Experience Cost: 300xp

PREREQUISITES

- **Willpower:** 40

- Characters with the Untouchable elite advance cannot gain the Psyker elite advance.

- If characters who do not have the Adeptus Astra Telepathica background gain the Psyker elite advance, they are not sanctioned, and do not gain the Sanctioned trait. These characters count as rogue psykers (see the **Rogue Psykers** sidebar on page 69).

- **GM Guidance:** Psykers are rare, but many serve the Inquisition due to their useful abilities. The GM should feel free to allow characters to take the Psyker elite advance if they want; 1-2 Psykers per group usually creates a good balance, although if other Player Characters abhor psykers it can make for tense group dynamics. It is also possible for a character to become a psyker and strive to keep this hidden from his fellow Acolytes for a variety of reasons. This can lead to interesting roleplaying, and if desired a GM should work with the player to develop this narrative.

INSTANT CHANGES

- Gain a psy rating of 1.
- Can no longer gain the Untouchable elite advance for any reason.
- If the character does not have the Sanctioned trait, immediately gain 1d10+10 Corruption.

UNLOCKED ADVANCES

The character can now purchase psychic powers by spending experience points; see **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers** for full rules on purchasing and using psychic powers.

Characters with the Psyker elite advance can also purchase psy rating advances to increase their psy rating. When a character purchases an advance in his psy rating, he increases his psy rating by 1.

Cost: To increase his psy rating by 1, the character must spend an amount of experience equal to 250 multiplied by his current psy rating value.

For example, to increase a character's psy rating from 2 to 3 would cost 500xp.

ROGUE PSYKERS

Human psykers are collected in the millions each day across the galaxy and brought to Terra on the dread Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, as part of the binding tithes each world owes to the Imperium. Here they are tested for power levels, control, strength of will, and other factors to decide their fate. Once this sanctioning process is over, a psyker goes on to serve the Imperium either in life or death. All psykers are viewed with suspicion at best, and outright hatred at worst, and even sanctioned psykers are always suspect. Those psykers who never underwent this testing and training to help ensure the safety of those around them are deemed rogue, fugitives from Imperial law should they be discovered.

These psykers can represent anyone from a heretical magus who delves far into the Warp in search of greater power, to a fringe world shaman casting bones to divine the future, to a once-good man driven to foul deeds merely to survive, to an Acolyte using his powers under the aegis of his Inquisitor's authority. A rogue might even be an Inquisitor himself who discovered his powers late in life and never submitted to the testing of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. The only thing they share is that they were never taken aboard the Black Ships. Most end their short days in a fiery pyre or as a Daemon's plaything, but some become mighty forces for damnation or salvation.

Learning of psychic abilities is enough to drive many mad, and without mental defences others quickly fall prey to the Ruinous Powers. Those who survive their sanctioning and on Terra might gain protection and stability through a variety of means. Their training serves to strengthen their will, and many are also fitted with limiters or undergo psycho-surgery to help them control their abilities, lest a stray glance ignite a room or odd smell invoke a telekinetic storm. It does not make for an easy life, however, and no matter how or when it came about, a newly emerged psyker has a lifetime of constant scrutiny and horrific threats ahead of him.

UNTOUCHABLE

Untouchables are those soulless unfortunates who cast no shadow in the Warp, and represent an impossibly small fraction of humanity, far smaller even than the minuscule fraction with psychic abilities. They might subconsciously know they are different, noticing the way others treat them. Bereft of such an essential part of their humanity, they might look, think, and act as normal men but few are comfortable in their presence. Those around them often sense a miasma of nausea or grating sound to their voices; nothing an auspex would detect but something other humans subconsciously feel. Untouchables are anathema to psykers and others who call on the Warp for their powers. Those nearby might experience debilitating pain or worse, for such is an Untouchable's soul-void. Many Untouchables cancel a psyker's powers, either nullifying or negating all psychic abilities in a region. They are pariahs of humanity, shunned by their fellow men and living a wretched existence.

BECOMING AN UNTOUCHABLE

Untouchables are born with their terrible curse though inherited genetics. Many live for years before discovering what they really are, though often their lives are very short given the disagreeable feelings they invoke in all around them. A person believed to be anti-social but otherwise unremarkable, might actually be an Untouchable living out a miserable existence, divorced from his fellow men in ways no one can fully explain. Some are only found through the actions of planetary governors eager to cull anyone displaying the slightest hint of unusual behaviour as part of their tithes to the Black Ships. Inquisitors may discover them and use their abilities against powers from the Warp to repel the witch and counter the Daemon. Even though his life is now filled with mortal peril, an Untouchable so used might feel valued and a with a purpose greater than the shunned existence he once lead.

UNTOUCHABLE TALENTS

The following talents are available to characters with the Untouchable Elite Advance, and are purchased in the same manner as other talents (see page 97).

NULL FIELD

Untouchables of greater power present a stronger aversion to the Immaterium, encompassing into the wider area surrounding them. In this region psykers see their powers fail, and despair knowing an Untouchable is nearby.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Effect: The effects of Psychic Null apply to all characters within WPb metres of the character.

UNTOUCHABLE RULES

Experience Cost: 300xp

PREREQUISITES

- Characters with the Psyker elite advance cannot gain the Untouchable elite advance.

- **GM Guidance:** Psychic Untouchables are incredibly rare, and often live lonely and short lives due to the effect they have on all living beings that get near them. This advance could be part of character creation, given that it is something the character is born with, or can be something added later once the effects of the genetic curse become impossible to ignore. It is recommended that each play group have only one character with the Untouchable elite advance. Additionally, groups with both an Untouchable and a Psyker can often cause many problems as the Untouchable interferes with the Psyker's ability. This can be a great opportunity for interesting player interaction, but GMs should be careful to not allow their players to create a too-hostile play environment.

INSTANT CHANGES

- Gain the Soulless talent (see page 71).
- Can no longer gain the Psyker elite advance for any reason.

UNLOCKED ADVANCES

Untouchable characters gain access to a special set of talents in the Untouchable talent tree. The talents in this tree can be purchased with experience by Untouchable characters in the same way as regular talents are purchased.

PSYCHIC NULL

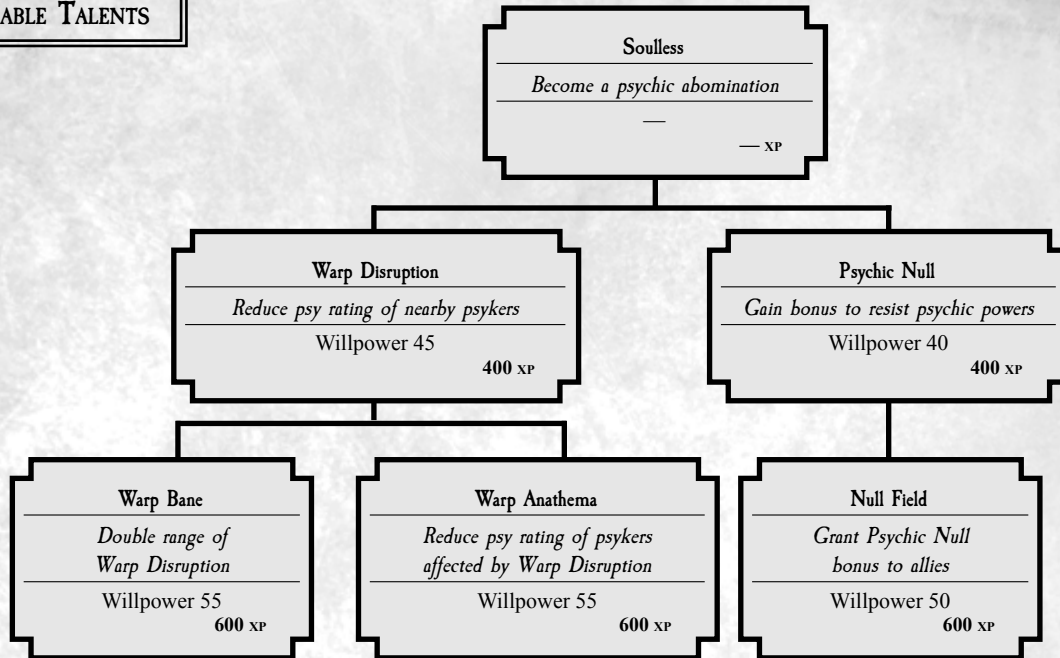
Psykers rightly fear an Untouchable, for their vaunted powers can fade away against the spiritual void that he reflects in the Warp. Even the mightiest arcane blasts can dissipate away when they strike a soulless one.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Effect: The character gains a +20 bonus when making opposed tests to resist psychic powers.

UNTOUCHABLE TALENTS



SOULLESS

An Untouchable's essential nature is that of the outsider. Those around him abhor his presence, for reasons they cannot explain. Psykers actively avoid or even seek his death, declaring him abomination.

Experience Cost: —

Prerequisites: —

Effect: The character has no presence in the Warp. He radiates a sense of unnaturalness and unease that is uncomfortable to any living being, and painful to any psykers, that gets with WPb metres of the character.

WARP ANATHEMA

Some Untouchables darken the void so much that psykers feel from their presence to even greater stygian depths. Those who draw their powers from the Warp can even be reduced to normal mortals, cut off from access to the Sea of Souls from a being without a soul.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 55

Effect: Characters affected by Warp Disruption reduce their psy rating by 2, instead of the normal amount.

WARP BANE

The void where the Untouchable's soul would be is unrelenting in its psychic haemorrhage, and increases the anathema he projects into larger areas. Psykers can suddenly find themselves diminished as an Untouchable charges forward, emanating a wavefront they find terrible to contemplate.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 55

Effect: The effects of Warp Disruption apply to all characters with a psy rating within two times WPb metres of the character, instead of the normal amount.

WARP DISRUPTION

Often a Psyker can sense that an Untouchable is lurking nearby simply through the lessening of his own Warp-based powers. Feeling his psychic abilities drain away, he knows his own death is perhaps close as well.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Effect: All characters with a psy rating within WPb metres of the character reduce their psy rating by 1 while they remain within range.



CHAPTER III: SKILLS

Characters in **DARK HERESY** begin the game with a number of skills as part of their origin. Players may select additional skills during the latter stages of character creation when they spend experience. Over the course of their careers, characters are certain to hone those skills and improve upon them through selecting skill advances with earned experience. These elements represent the accumulation of knowledge and expertise. Skills indicate abilities that a character has learned either through their education or through the more practical applications that are part of service to the Inquisition.

For some characters, the skills they possess at the beginning of their careers are a strong indication of those they may use throughout their lives. In other instances, an Acolyte's path might diverge as he explores new fields of expertise. Characters may be effective pursuing either path, but both are dependent upon a player identifying the most opportune ways and times to exploit the skills that they have developed.

USING SKILLS

"During your time here, you are fated to learn countless lessons that you may use in the service of the God-Emperor. Heed your teachers, or you may be forced to live outside of His light."

—Deacon Grigor van Dohring,
Proctor of Hive Desoleum Schola Progenium

Throughout the course of a game session, the Game Master frequently calls upon players to make skill tests for their characters. These should be conducted in any circumstance where success or failure might have a meaningful impact upon the scenario. Routine tasks attempted under normal conditions should never require a test. However, if there is a reasonable chance of failure due to environmental conditions or circumstance, even a routine test might be relevant.

When a character uses a skill to perform a task, he must succeed at a skill test. The procedure follows the test rules presented in **Chapter I: Playing the Game** (see page 13): the character rolls compares the result to the characteristic best suited to the task and if the result is equal to or less than the skill rating, the check succeeds. Modifiers are applied to take into account any environmental factors as well as the character's rank with the applicable skill.

TABLE 3-1: SKILL RANK TABLE

RANK	1 (BAD)	2 (AVERAGE)	3 (GOOD)	4 (VERY GOOD)	5 (AMAZING)
Modifier	-10	0	+10	+20	+30

EXAMPLE

Tom's character, Iosef, is ascending a flight of stairs in an abandoned hab. Under normal conditions, this would be a trivial matter, and not require a test. At the moment, a group of cultists hold the top of the stairs and are firing down on anyone who ascends. Their leader—a rogue psyker—is maintaining a ritual that triggered a rain of blood, which is currently lashing the staircase. The Game Master decides that due to the slick conditions and the incoming fire, Iosef must succeed at a +0 Athletics (A) test to maintain his footing as he ascends.

CHARACTERISTIC VALUES FOR SKILL TESTS

In **DARK HERESY**, each skill is a measure of a character's ability in several closely related areas. While learning one aspect of a particular trade, the character invariably learns some related information. Different skill uses are most commonly distinguished by a character's innate abilities, as measured by their characteristics.

Before a character performs a test using a specific skill, the Game Master must decide which characteristic is appropriate for the task the character is trying to accomplish. This decision should be based upon the conditions, and may substantially impact the character's chance of success. After all, characters are seldom equally gifted in all of the characteristics that may be associated with the skill. Each skill entry contains guidance on which characteristic to use when performing specific types to tasks with that skill. These lists are not exhaustive though, and the GM is encouraged to use the characteristic which best suits the situation.

Whenever a scene calls for a skill test, the text lists the skill and characteristic involved. It is simply written as the skill name with the appropriate characteristic's abbreviation in parenthesis after. For example, a Stealth skill test using the Agility characteristic would be a "Stealth (A)" test.

EXAMPLE

Jeanine's character Nadia had spent several years working with a merchant cartel, minding their illicit thornweave stalls and conducting trades with desert growers for bushels of fresh thornflax. This time is represented by her aptitude in the Commerce skill. Because Nadia has a higher Fellowship characteristic than her Intelligence characteristic, she is naturally more adept at Bartering using Commerce (F) for the price of an object than Evaluating with Commerce (I) for an object's actual value.

SKILL RANKS

Because a character's aptitude in each skill is based upon the ability of an associated characteristic, skill are not ranked as with a flat percentage. Instead, each skill is ranked on a scale from 1 to 5. Each of these ranks also has an associated modifier that is applied to all tests made using the skill. Some characters may also learn talents or acquire gear that grants additional bonuses to one or more skills, often under a specific set of conditions. Such modifiers do not alter the skill's actual rank for purposes of advancement, even though they may modify it when used.

All characters have a rank value for each of their skills. This value defaults to 1, enabling the character to test the skill with a -10 penalty to the associated characteristic. There is no cost associated with having the skill at this ranking. Rather, this is considered the basic level of implicit knowledge and intuitive understanding of the procedures associated with using that skill. Skill values only increase for characters who elect to increase the skill during character creation, by spending experience, or through other means.

ADDITIONAL MODIFIERS

Skills are almost never used in complete isolation. Assistance or hindrance from other characters can dramatically modify the difficulty inherent in using a skill. Similarly, environmental factors, including weather, temperature, and the availability of necessary skills may also make the test much easier or more challenging. To reflect this variability, skill tests frequently include additional modifiers to their difficulty. These modifiers are combined with the ones provided by skill ranks to determine the number which must be rolled under on a d100. Modifiers from difficulty, assistance, and other sources are explained in **Chapter 1: Playing the Game** (see page 13).

OPPOSED SKILL TESTS

Any time that a character uses a skill against another character, or in competition with another character, that use should be resolved as an opposed test. For skills that are commonly used opposed, the skill use entries indicate which tests most frequently are used in opposition to the skill. Game Masters may, at their discretion, choose to use alternative resistance skills when circumstances change the conditions for resistance. Most commonly, a change might be made due to the way that a skill is leveraged against the opponent. Similarly, if a resisting character reacts to the skill use in an unusual way, they might be able to resist its effects using an alternative characteristic. See page 14 for more information on opposed tests.

RANK 1 SKILLS

Having a rank of 1 in a skill means that the character has no formal training or experience at performing the tasks involved with the skill. For basic skills such as Athletics, this simply means the character is worse than other characters. However, for more advanced skills such as Tech-Use, this may mean that the character has no idea where to even begin performing the task in question. Thus, at the GM's discretion, characters with a rank of 1 in certain skills may not be able to even attempt a skill test due to their lack of knowledge.

TIME AND SKILL TESTS

The amount of time required for a skill test may vary substantially based both upon the skill used and the particular instance of its use. A Tech-Use test to unjam a weapon might take only a few moments, though one to perform a basic repair on a vehicle could take hours. Similarly, a Commerce test to negotiate the price of supplies for a journey might be resolved quickly but a complex negotiation to establish a trade agreement between two powerful mercantile groups could take days. For more information on time within the context of conflict, refer to see page 195.

Each skill entry includes values to provide guidance on the average amount of time that skill usually takes to perform. These values are either measured in action points (in the case of skills that can be performed during a round of structured time), minutes, or hours. Some skills are most commonly used in reaction to or in combination with another skill. In these instances, the amount of time required is identical to the skill it is used to oppose or assist. Keep in mind that these values serve as guidelines but are not always accurate. Game Masters must alter the time required for a skill use based upon the overall complexity of the task involved.

TRYING AGAIN

Many tasks can be attempted repeatedly with few consequences until a character finally succeeds. A character using Investigate to research critical information might be able to keep trying until he finally finds the vital clue necessary to answer a critical question. In such a situation the character's only cost might be the time and effort involved.

Other tasks can have serious repercussions if failed. A character attempting to bypass an alarm system might trigger a response on a failed Security test, and further attempts might have to be made while avoiding a patrol sent to investigate the first failure.

TABLE 3-2: SKILL LIST

SKILLS	RECOMMENDED CHARACTERISTICS
Acrobatics	Agility, Strength
Athletics	Strength, Toughness
Charm	Fellowship, Influence
Command	Fellowship, Intelligence, Strength, Willpower
Commerce	Fellowship, Intelligence
Deceive	Fellowship, Intelligence
Evade	Agility, Weapon Skill
Investigate	Fellowship, Intelligence, Perception
Intimidate	Strength, Willpower
Linguistics	Fellowship, Intelligence
Logic	Agility, Intelligence
Medicac	Agility, Intelligence, Perception
Navigate	Intelligence, Perception
Observe	Fellowship, Intelligence, Perception
Pilot	Agility, Intelligence
Psyniscience	Perception, Willpower
Remembrance	Intelligence, Perception, Willpower
Stealth	Agility, Perception
Subterfuge	Agility, Intelligence
Survival	Agility, Intelligence, Perception
Tech-Use	Ballistic Skill, Agility, Intelligence

Some tasks can only be attempted once. A character attempting to leap a chasm could face serious damage or even death on a failed Athletics test. If a character uses Pilot to land a shuttle and rolls poorly, the craft might crash into the landing bay, destroying the ship and its crew.

Each skill entry lists whether or not it can be attempted more than once, and gives suggestions for the consequences of failure. Game Masters must be familiar with these options, but may wish to temper them given the particular circumstance of the roll. A character who failed a test that normally only has a single opportunity might have an additional chance if there are mitigating circumstances. Similarly, a test that could normally be repeated indefinitely might have situational constraints that prevent further opportunities.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

"Only the insane have strength enough to prosper. Only those who prosper may truly judge what is sane."

—Anon

This section describes each skill. It also includes suggestions for characteristic associations, the time required to perform the skill test, and penalty for failure. Each skill is formatted using the following template:

SKILL NAME

This section gives a general overview of the skill and its primary usage. Each skill has multiple, more specific skill use entries, each of which are associated with specific attribute. The usage entries offer guidance on a selection of the most common tasks that can be performed using this skill. These lists are comprehensive, but are not exhaustive. Additional skill uses are likely to come up during game sessions.

SKILL USE

Characteristic: The characteristic used with the skill for this type of task.

Average Time: A rough suggestion of how much time this task typically requires.

Use: Guidance for this skill use, including the types of tasks it encompasses, as well as the requirements for performing that task.

Opposed: If the test can be opposed, this lists what characteristic or skill the opponent should use.

Re-attempt: Whether or not the task may be re-attempted, and recommendations on penalties for failure.

ACROBATICS

Characters who pursue activities dependent upon grace and agility are adept at Acrobatics. Its use requires the coordination of the character's entire body. Strength is sometimes required, but the skill depends as heavily upon leverage and careful application of force.

Often, characters develop a knack for Acrobatics as part of their training in another field. A courier or thief might learn these knacks as part of travel through densely populated areas. A gladiator, a survivalist, or a dancer needs to be able to perform acrobatic motions as part of their daily routines. Even a Tech-Adept accustomed to working in particularly confined quarters devotes his daily flesh-exhortations to improving flexibility, so that he might more effectively work within narrow ductwork.

CONTORTIONIST

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: 4 AP

Use: A character can make an Acrobatics (A) test to free himself from bonds, such as rope or manacles. Characters with an honest background seldom have the motivation to master this art. An entertainer might have learned this skill

legitimately, but it is very common with those who live in the shadow world of criminality and espionage. A criminal, for example, might push the flexibility of his joints to more easily escape his bindings when caught.

The difficulty of the skill test is proportionate to the materials used to bind the acting character. Particularly slippery or malleable materials may be easier to escape than materials that are either more sturdy or designed specifically to contain a prisoner. For every two degrees of success on the attempt, the character can reduce the AP required by 1. If he fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Agility bonus, the Acolyte makes a loud commotion and injures himself in the escape attempt, suffering 1d5 wound damage.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Subterfuge (A) test made by the opponent who secured the bonds.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted. If the character fails to get free, the bonds are simply too tight to escape.

EXAMPLE

When a heretical cult investigation goes badly, Joe's Enforcer Logon regains consciousness in a dark room, secured by his own wrist binders. Before he can try to find a light switch, he attempts to slip his hands free. The Game Master decides that the darkness doesn't affect the test, as the Logon's hands are behind his back, but the binders are quite secure. He calls for a -10 Acrobatics (A) test to slip his hands free. With 3 ranks of Acrobatics and Agility 31, Joe needs to roll equal to or under 31 for Logon to slip a hand free.

HORIZONTAL JUMP

Characteristic: Strength

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: A character can make an Acrobatics (S) test to jump horizontally over a gap or obstruction. If he succeeds, the character leaps a number of metres horizontally equal to his degrees of success. For every action spent on the same turn to move before the jump, the character gains a +10 to his Acrobatics (S) test.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. If the character fails the jump, he moves a number of metres forward equal to half his degrees of failure, and counts as having fallen that distance. See page 204 for rules for falling.

EXAMPLE

Pursuing a suspected rogue psyker, Logon leaps from an open hab window towards scaffolding on the nearby structure. The buildings are each over a kilometre high, and the prevailing winds leave a powerful updraft. The Game Master decides this is enough to call for a +20 Acrobatics (S) test to make the jump safely. With 3 ranks of Acrobatics and a 31 Strength characteristic, Joe needs to roll under a 61 for his character. When he rolls 84, Joe quickly checks Logon's character sheet hoping to find something that might mitigate the fall.

VERTICAL JUMP

Characteristic: Strength

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: A character can make an Acrobatics (S) test to jump straight up into the air. If he succeeds, he can jump vertically a number of metres equal to half his degrees of success (not rounded). When jumping to reach an overhead item like a ledge or a rope, the character can reach as high as his physical height, plus his jump height, plus one metre for average arm length. For every action spent on the same turn to move before the jump, the character gains a +10 to his Acrobatics (S) test.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. If the character fails the jump, he counts as having fallen a number of metres equal to half his degrees of failure (rounded up). See page 204 for rules for falling.

MANOEUVRING

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: Part of a disengage action

Use: Sometime a character needs to extricate himself from unwanted melee combat. He might be outmatched, seeking to attack another more worthy of his martial skills, or wish to fire a weapon at another. In such cases, a manoeuvring action can aid him greatly.

When taking a disengage action, a character can make an Acrobatics (A) test to leap nimbly away from the combat. If he succeeds, the character reduces the action points spent to disengage by one.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted for the same disengage action. If the character fails, the disengage requires the normal amount of action points. If this causes the character to no longer have enough action points to perform the disengage on his turn, he fails the disengage, and the remainder of his action points are spent.

ATHLETICS

Acolytes are often dependent upon their physical abilities, particularly when situations become violent. Athletics measures a character's ability to run long distances without tiring, climb sheer surfaces, and lift heavy loads. A thoroughly trained and prepared Acolyte might need to perform any of these actions with little or no preparation.

Any character with military training is certain to be familiar with these areas of expertise, as daily physical training reinforces them. Similarly, characters that live a lifestyle consisting of daily physical challenges would master these abilities in order to survive.

LIFTING AND PUSHING

Characteristic: Strength

Average Time: 2 AP

Use: At any time, a character may freely lift and move objects that are within the bounds of their physique and Strength characteristic. However, in stressful situations, a character can attempt an Athletics (S) test to lift or push an exceptionally heavy object. Under this circumstance, the

skill serves as a measure of the character's understanding of his physique and the best ways to apply leverage.

On a success, the character can push an object that weighs up to four times his carry limit (see page 132), or lift an object that weighs up to twice his carry limit (this is in addition to any weight the character is carrying as part of his gear). While lifting or pushing, the character gains the Slowed condition.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted to lift the same object. If the character's degrees of failure on the test exceed his Strength bonus, he suffers one point of fatigue.

EXAMPLE

As she explores the heretics' abandoned temple, Jeanine's Tech-Priest Minix notes scratches on the floor adjacent to a large bookshelf. Suspecting that it might conceal a hidden room, Jeanine indicates that her character attempts to push the shelving unit aside, along the worn marks. The Game Master calls for an Athletics (S) test, to see if she can succeed. With her Acolyte's 28 Strength characteristic and 2 ranks of Athletics, she must roll under a 28 to move the shelf.

CLIMBING

Characteristic: Strength

Average Time: Part of move action

Use: A character can make an Athletics (S) test to climb anything from a hanging rope to the outer wall of a hab-block. Modifiers for the difficulty test are derived from any appropriate gear, environmental conditions, and the nature of the surface. Climbing a steep slope with a rope during the day is far easier than climbing a sheer surface, during a nighttime rainstorm, with bare hands.

With a success, the character moves at half his normal speed plus a number of metres equal to half his degrees of success. This total movement speed cannot exceed the character's normal movement speed. Once the Athletics (S) test has been passed, all of the character's subsequent move actions spent to climb the surface during that round automatically succeed.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. If the character fails the test, he stays where he started and loses the time used to attempt the climb. If the character's degrees of failure on the test exceed his Strength bonus, he suffers one point of fatigue and falls. See page 204 for rules for falling.

EXAMPLE

Tech-Priest Minix needs to make her way up a coolant pipe in order to reach a shut-off valve before the voidship's engine compartment can flood with water. The pipe is slick with moisture, and water is spraying in her face. The Game-Master explains that the adverse conditions necessitate a -20 Athletics (S) test. Jeanine notes several pieces of gear that provide a +20 climbing bonus, to offset the conditions modifier. She needs to roll under a 28, due to her character's 2 ranks of Athletics and 28 Strength characteristic.

ENDURANCE

Characteristic: Toughness

Average Time: Part of narrative movement

Use: During narrative time, characters may attempt to push their movement speeds beyond their normal limits, in order to reach a destination more quickly. At other times, environmental conditions may exhaust characters during the course of their journey. In either circumstance, a character can make an Athletics (T) test when moving in narrative time (see page 244) to reduce fatigue suffered. If he succeeds, the character reduces the total fatigue suffered from the entire trip by an amount equal to his degrees of success.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted for 24 hours after the original attempt.

SWIMMING

Characteristic: Toughness

Average Time: Part of move action

Use: A character can make an Athletics (T) test to swim or tread water. The difficulty of the test is dependent upon the water conditions and may be modified if the character needs to push his swim speed or has swimming gear.

If he succeeds, the character moves at half his normal speed plus a number of metres equal to half his degrees of success. This total movement speed cannot exceed the character's normal movement speed. Once the Athletics (T) test has been passed, all of the character's subsequent move actions spent to swim during that scene automatically succeed, unless conditions change.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. If the character fails the test, he stays where he started and loses the time used to attempt swimming. If the character's degrees of failure on the test exceed his Strength bonus, he suffers one point of fatigue, sinks, and begins to drown (see page 204 for rules concerning suffocation).

EXAMPLE

After shutting off the valve, Minix needs to dive under the surface of the water to open a drain, so that the engine room can clear of water. The Game Master decides that because Minix is wearing her normal gear, this requires a -10 Athletics (T) test, even though the water is calm. She needs to roll under an 18, due to her character's 2 ranks of Athletics and 28 Strength characteristic.

CHARM

Charm is a measure of a character's knack for impressing people and swaying their reactions. The acting character's attitude is key in distinguishing between this and other types of Interaction skills. Charm requires the Acolyte to assume a non-hostile attitude and not make any explicit or implicit threats. Instead, the character's persuasive efforts are dependent upon generosity and good intentions.

Such an approach may be completely foreign to some characters, who find persuasion more appealing when

matched with force or logic. Others, particularly those who come from luxury or who are masters of manipulation might use this as their favoured approach to all problems. Often, bonuses or penalties can result from a character's appearance and style of dress. Refer to **Chapter VIII: Narrative Tools** for more information on social interaction.

BRAG

Characteristic: Influence

Average Time: One minute

Use: Among some social circles, a character's title is far more important than his natural abilities and assets. In other instances, a character's experience and aptitude are most highly regarded. Some Acolytes recognise different measures of prestige within different social strata and learn to exploit them.

A character can make a Charm (IF) test to win someone over by flaunting his importance and accomplishments. On a success, the person or people he is addressing are sufficiently impressed; however, the character's subtlety is lowered by 1d5. If the test fails, the character's subtlety is instead lowered by 1d5 + degrees of failure. At the Game Master's discretion, the target's reaction may even be hostile.

Re-attempt: A Brag test cannot be re-attempted on the same target.

EXAMPLE

Dominique's missionary Tarath wants to persuade a newly chartered Rogue Trader to carry the Acolytes to combat a xenos enclave on a feral world in another system. She regales the novice captain with tales of the many nobles she has dined with, mentions the lofty souls she knows by first name, and offers the higher status the captain would gain through carrying her on this holy mission. The Game Master decides that her charismatic performance means she needs to succeed at a +30 Charm (F) test to garner his assistance.

CAPTIVATE

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: One minute

Use: Social subterfuge, rather than technological mechanisms, is often the most effective way to bypass security or to uncover hidden information. For some characters, particularly those with a background in underhive deceit or Administratum bureaucracy, this may be their favoured approach to avoid conflict. When used effectively, a successful action can provide the basis for an extended mutually beneficial relationship.

A character can make a Charm (F) test to win someone over with a smile and some clever words. If the character succeeds, he can turn a hostile situation into a friendly one, or ingratiate his way into secure places past suspicious guards.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Willpower test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same person. If the test fails, however, a bad situation could be made even worse and the target may turn against the characters.

EXAMPLE

After working successfully with a local tribe to gather support against the xenos, Tarath realises that she must learn their customs to make certain that their beliefs are not heretical. She chooses to take a diplomatic tactic to further earn their trust. She meets with the tribal elders, and is lavish in her compliments and gratitude. The Game Master calls for a +20 Charm (F) test, to determine how cooperative they become.

COMMAND

Often, a single character is unable to adequately resolve a crisis. At times, even a team of Acolytes are inadequate to the challenge. Under these circumstances, characters may need to rally a much larger group to assist. Coordinating their allies so that everyone can work together effectively relies upon the Command skill. It represents the ability to effectively motivate and organise others.

Characters with military service or a noble background may have some training in this skill. Other characters might have learned it as a bureaucratic manager or a tribal leader. In contrast, characters accustomed to working independently may have little aptitude for Command.

COORDINATE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: 3 AP

Use: A character can make a Command (I) test to effectively lead or direct others in accomplishing a cooperative task. Not all of the characters need to use the same skills. In fact, it is often the case that different individuals work to complete different subtasks based upon their areas of individual expertise.

The difficulty for a coordinate task is based upon the overall complexity of the job at hand. Key factors include precision of timing and the order of subtask completion. On a success, the character can effectively coordinate a number of characters up to his degrees of success plus his Fellowship bonus.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted.

EXAMPLE

Minix is organising a group of servitors to assist her in upgrading a supply of autogun shells. The process is routine and the servitors are all capable of making the desired multi-step modifications. The largest challenge is making certain that the steps are completed at a consistent quality level and in the correct order. The Game Master calls for a +30 Command (I) test to organise the process, so that it can be completed quickly. With her character's rank 1 Command and 33 Intelligence characteristic, Jeanine needs to roll under a 53.

INSPIRE

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: 3 AP

Use: In some situations, it is not merely enough for a character to have allies working towards their cause. Instead, the stalwarts must give their all in order for success to be realised. To exhort others into giving their all, an Acolyte can make a Command (F) test to inspire through praise and careful direction. The difficulty for this test is generally modified by the number of allies involved and the overall degree of challenge they face.

If he succeeds, the character can inspire a number of allied targets up to his Fellowship bonus who are within 10 metres. Characters inspired in this way receive a +10 bonus to the next Skill or Characteristic test they make.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted.

EXAMPLE

Knowing that the bunker's machine spirit must be brought to full power before the cultists assault it, Minix extols the virtues of the Ommissiah as she directs a group of NPCs to repair the facility. The Game Master decides that her zeal and expertise could significantly aide the effort, and calls for a +20 Command (F) test based upon the character's expertise in the field. With her character's 28 Fellowship characteristic and 1 rank of Command, she needs to roll under a 38 to provide a bonus.

TERRIFY

Characteristic: Strength or Willpower

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: Different leadership techniques are appropriate for different situations and different groups. Within the Imperium, there are often occasions where a leader can only command his underlings through terror. A character makes a Command (S or WP) test after any of his allies fails a fear test, to make them more afraid of failing him than the entity that triggered the fear test.

If the Command test succeeds, a number of allied characters up to the acting character's Fellowship bonus and within 10 metres subtract the degrees of success earned by the Command test from the degrees of failure suffered on their fear test. The targets then determine the results of the fear tests using the reduced degrees of failure. If the result is zero or lower, the targets are more terrified of the acting character than the source of their fear, and are treated as if they passed the fear test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be attempted again against the same source that triggered the fear test.

EXAMPLE

When her assistants begin to flee from a charging Ork Boss, Minix turns her vox system to its loudest setting, ordering them to stand firm against the xenos. The Game Master calls for a Command test. Because her character's Willpower characteristic is higher than her Strength characteristic, Jeanine chooses to use its value of 31 with her 1 rank of Command. The assistants failed their fear test by two degrees, so Jeanine would need to roll at least an 11 to completely counter the fear effects from the advancing greenskin.

COMMERCE

The worlds of the Imperium are highly specialised, and woven together in a huge, interconnected web to transport goods and services to ensure mutual survival. Few, if any, could hope to survive on their own for more than a few months without external support. Forge worlds need food and raw materials from other systems, agri-worlds can seldom produce the machinery required for their harvests, hive worlds are often so densely overpopulated and polluted that their only local product is the world's population. The Commerce skill represents the understanding of trade, value, and exchange, which allows these worlds to continue to exist both at a planetary and also more local level at a habway marketplace.

Many within the Imperium's vast bureaucracy and even the military learn this skill. All humans must practise it to a certain degree, as they acquire the basic necessities for life. Ultimately, thieves and merchants are the most adept, as they must know the value of any goods they plan to sell.

ACQUISITION

Characteristic: Influence

Average Time: Part of a transaction

Use: Not every piece of gear is available at all times to every prospective buyer. Even if a seller has a desirable object, he need not sell it to every possible client—especially if its legality is questionable. A character makes a Commerce (IF) test to acquire a single piece of equipment and, if successful, he finds and acquires the gear sought.

This test's difficulty is determined by the availability and craftsmanship of the desired piece of equipment (see page 131) for full details). Additional degrees of success may produce the equipment more quickly or provide a bonus to future tests with that same merchant.

Re-attempt: This test can be immediately re-attempted to acquire a piece of equipment with an availability equal to or lower than the number of degrees of success achieved on the test. If the test is failed, the character cannot re-attempt the test for a number of days equal to the degrees of failure suffered on the test.

EXAMPLE

Dominique wants to have her Tarath acquire a higher-quality laspistol than the worn one she wields. The weapon normally has +20 bonus to the test at her character's current locale, a minor hive featuring a strong merchant guild. However, improving the quality adds a -10 penalty to the test. With her 1 rank of Commerce and 24 Influence, she must roll under a 24 to quickly acquire a weapon.

BARTER

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: Part of a transaction

Use: Even if an item is available for purchase, its price is not always within an Acolyte's budget. Other times a character wishes to obtain the highest possible profit when selling a newly recovered item. In either case, negotiating that best price is dependent upon the character's ability to judge a target's character and effectively apply salesmanship.

A character can make a Commerce (F) test when performing a trade (see page 131) to get a better deal. If he succeeds, the character adds his degrees of success to the availability of the item he is trading in. If the test is failed, the character subtracts his degrees of failure from the availability of the item he is trading in.

Re-attempt: A Barter test cannot be re-attempted for the same transaction.

EXAMPLE

Dominique decides that Tarath might as well discard her current laspistol when she replaces it. Given its condition, the Availability qualifies as +10, which is unlikely to benefit her. However, she chooses to make a Commerce (F) test, in the hopes of improving its value to a merchant and offsetting her costs.

EVALUATE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: Five minutes

Use: Experienced traders must often deal in objects with which they have no experience. To have any degree of success, both the seller and the buyer must have some notion of an artefact's purpose, rarity, and condition. In many cases, a relevant Specialist talent may assist a character with identifying the key information about an object.

A character can make a Commerce (I) test to examine an unknown piece of equipment to determine essential aspects of its nature. Each degree of success gained on the test reveals one entry in the equipment's profile to the character. If the character's degrees of failure on the test exceed his Intelligence bonus, he receives grossly inaccurate information instead.

Re-attempt: The evaluate test cannot be re-attempted on the same object.

EXAMPLE

When they broke up a heretical cult, Tarath recovered an unusual staff that she believes may have Warp-tainted properties. Because of her Specialist talents (she has spent many years analysing heretical relics), the Acolyte receives a +10 bonus to her Commerce (I) test to identify the staff's essential nature. With one rank of Commerce and a 31 Intelligence characteristic, she must roll under a 31 to successfully decipher its use.

DECEIVE

Acolytes often need to mislead those around them, as the Inquisition's cause involves secrets that could shatter the minds of unprepared innocents. Perpetrators are seldom cooperative, unless they believe that there might be some reward for their service. No matter the motive or the target, all of these untruths are spoken in the service of the Emperor.

Deceive measures a character's aptitude for fooling others into believing something that is not true. All who serve the Inquisition must have some ability in this field but some become far more specialised. Of course, a Deceive test is only required if the acting character believes he is lying. Relating inaccurate information that the Acolyte believes is true uses the appropriate skill for the situation.

BLATHER

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: One minute

Use: Under some circumstances, the best way to overcome resistance is through confusion. An Acolyte might issue a completely unreasonable command or query to an unsuspecting target, hoping to paralyse a subject into inaction or perhaps triggering an instinctive response consistent with the character's needs. Sometimes, a well-told (if irrational) tale spoken quickly or words spoken with authority can be enough to—at least briefly—solve a crisis or ensure a safe passage.

To do this, a character makes a Deceive (F) test against the target to stall for time, confusing and distracting his target and keeping him too occupied to act.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by an Observe (I) test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted against the same person.

EXAMPLE

Tarath needs to bypass a security checkpoint within a noble's residence. The investigation is in its early stages, and she cannot afford undue attention. She boldly swaggers to the guards and demands to know where the servants have left the heirloom brocades needed to redecorate the bedchambers, as she continues to walk down the hall past them. The Game Master calls for an opposed +20 Blather (F) test, granting the bonus because the guards are so taken aback by her approach.

LIE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: One minute

Use: Often, a character needs to establish a cover story to explain their apparent crimes or to prevent a suspect from realising the progress of an investigation. A veteran character recognises which stories are most easily believable to individuals of different social strata. Sometimes pretending to take a target into confidence might guarantee cooperation. In other situations, an aura of mystery or a believable application of blame is more effective.

A character can make a Deceive (I) test to tell a convincing lie or con another character into doing something. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more the individual believes the lie.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by an Observe (I) test.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted against the same person. However, each subsequent Deceive test suffers a -20 penalty for every Deceive test already failed against that target.

EXAMPLE

When the team makes initial contact with a feral world's population, Tarath takes the lead in the negotiations. Prior to their arrival, the Acolytes had agreed on a strategy for their first contact, and she relates their cover story. The warband is posing as prospectors seeking to find unusual minerals from the planet. They assume that a guide who could show them rock formations is likely to also direct them towards any signs of xenos activity. The Game Master decides that the story is feasible, and their gifts of food and primitive weapons have earned his trust. He calls for an opposed +30 Deceive (I) test from the acting character.

EVADE

When engaged in combat, avoiding an opponent's assault is often every bit as crucial as striking the critical blow. Evade encompasses the character's practiced knack for diminishing the effects of any attack. Depending upon the type of assault, this can include the ability to dodge, deflect the blow, or steel his mental defences.

Most characters are likely to have some aptitude in the Evade skill. For individuals with a background that involves military training, some portion of that time certainly involved studying the techniques necessary for combat survival. Characters that laboured under cruel factory supervisors might have learned to avoid or mitigate the crack of a whip. Those who learnt to fear the ways of a witch are bound to have some aptitude at mustering their willpower to resist assaults that target the mind. The galaxy is filled with those who would do harm; those who survive learn how to avoid, or at least mitigate, attacks against their person.

In combat situations, Evade is used as a reaction (see page 197) to another character's attack. Each Evade test requires the character to expend an action point (AP). If a character does not currently have any action points—either because he has already exhausted them or because he has not yet received any—the character may not make an Evade test.

DENY THE WITCH

Characteristic: Willpower

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: A character can make an Evade (WP) test after a successful attack test is made against him using a psychic power, but before hit locations are determined, to nullify or mitigate its effects upon him. This includes psychic attacks that target the character both physically and mentally.

If the Evade test succeeds, the character subtracts the total degrees of success gained on the Evade test from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attacker then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the character successfully evades, and the attack fails.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted against the same attack.

EXAMPLE

Abby's Highborn psyker Castor has a 32 Willpower characteristic and rank 3 Evade. A dangerous cult leader he has been hunting draws power from the Warp and hurls a fire bolt at her character, and hits with one degree of success. Abby spends 1 AP and makes an Evade (WP) test, against her character's skill of 42. Rolling a 25, she succeeds with two degrees of success. Subtracting this from the two degrees of success on the attack, results in less than zero degrees of success. The attack fails.

DODGE

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: A character can make an Evade (A) test after a successful attack test is made against him using a ranged weapon, but before hit locations are determined, to dodge the blow or roll with it, lessening its effects on him. A single Evade test is made against an attack test, even if that attack has the potential to inflict multiple hits against the character.

If the Evade test succeeds, the character subtracts the total degrees of success gained on the Evade test from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attacker then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the character successfully evades, and the attack fails.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted against the same attack.

EXAMPLE

Later, a cultist working with the enemy psyker fires his autogun at Castor. With a great roll and several situational bonuses, the foul heretic manages to score five degrees of success. Castor has a 27 Agility characteristic and rank 3 Evade. Abby spends 1AP and makes an Evade (A) test, against her character's 37 skill. She rolls a 15, scoring three degrees of success. The autogun attack is therefore reduced to two degrees of success, and the Game Master determines hit locations and damage.

PARRY

Characteristic: Weapon Skill

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: A character can make an Evade (WS) test after a successful attack test is made against him using a melee weapon, but before hit locations are determined, to deflect the blow, and lessen its effects on him. A character may only attempt this if he is wielding a weapon or carrying a shield that is capable of deflecting the attack. Unless the character has an appropriate ability or the weapon description indicates otherwise, ranged weapons or bare hands cannot be used to parry.

If the Evade test succeeds, the character subtracts the total degrees of success gained on the Evade test from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attacker then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the character successfully evades, and the attack fails.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted against the same attack.

EXAMPLE

Castor is prepared for melee when a grox, crazed from the gunfire, breaks out of its nearby pen and charges. After the Game Master tests for the creature's attack, the beast hits with two degrees of success. Using her character's 29 Weapon Skill characteristic and 3 Ranks of Evade, she makes an Evade (WS) test against a skill of 39. Rolling a 30, she succeeds with one degree of success. The grox still hits, but it is reduced from two to one degree of success.

INVESTIGATE

An Inquisitor is driven to identify those who act against humanity and the will of the God-Emperor. Most often, heresies are committed in secret, far from the prying eyes of the faithful. Identifying the perpetrators often requires the Acolytes to examine evidence, analyse patterns, and question witnesses as well as suspects. Investigate measures a character's aptitude for completing these tasks, whether it be among the crowds of a bustling hive or the rigorous analysis of a crime scene.

Investigate is important to successfully solving a mystery, but not all characters are necessarily accomplished in the field. Mastering this field requires a strong sense of curiosity, which can be very dangerous within the Imperium. Even among those charged with solving crimes, some prefer to follow a more expedient path. Often, this is accomplished by simply granting the Emperor's mercy to everyone involved in the crime. Such a solution also benefits the investigator by minimising exposure to heresy.

INQUIRY

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: One hour

Use: A character can make an Investigate (F) test to gain information from a group of people by asking questions, stimulating conversations, or simply eavesdropping. The test assumes the character does not know the targets and may be operating within unfamiliar territory. Some characters may take a direct approach, after providing proof of their authority. Others might prefer a more subtle approach, assuming the role of someone who better fits into the environment.

The difficulty for the test is based upon the subject's attitude towards the character as well as the approach used. The Deceive and Subterfuge skills may assist a character's Inquiry efforts, if he first attempts to establish himself as a peer of the targets. Of course, if the targets lack the desired information, no amount of success can provide the answers sought. If the group knows the relevant facts, one or two degrees of success reveals general information, while three or more degrees of success can uncover far more secretive knowledge.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted with the same group to ascertain the same information unless the game master decides the time spent on the first attempt was insufficient to speak to everyone.

EXAMPLE

After several labourers go missing from a flak armour manufactorum, Joe's Enforcer Logon poses as a worker, and begins asking others who labour at the manufactorum about the missing people. Everyone has been forbidden to talk about the incidents, but rumours and gossip are their primary distraction from the tedious labour. The Game Master decides that acquiring basic information calls for a +30 Investigate (F) test. With Logon's 2 ranks of Investigate and a 29 Fellowship characteristic, Joe must roll under a 59 to learn the popular rumours.

STUDY

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: Three hours or more

Use: A character can make an Investigate (I) test to sift through large amounts of information in search of relevant details. This information might be in the vaults of an Administratum info-tomb, the data stacks of an Adeptus Mechanicus cogitator, or some more bizarre or arcane form of information storage. Often, this involves research

into subject matters where the acting character has little background knowledge.

If the character has Specialist talents for the associated fields, then a Remembrance test can assist in the research. Alternatively, the character might consult with someone who has knowledge of the materials. Otherwise, the character might be unable to identify the relevant anomalies in the available data.

The storage material and the minutiae of the information sought determine the difficulty. Based on the available information in the specific resource, one or two degrees of success can reveal general information, while three or more degrees of success can reveal hidden data.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted on the same resource until the Game Master decides the character has accessed all available information, but each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous one.

EXAMPLE

Logon decides to review old case files, hoping that there might be historical evidence of a similar series of crimes. The local precinct's records are poorly organised, but readily accessible. He seeks a specific pattern of criminal activity concerning ancient relics and Ministorum reliquaries. The Game Master considers the information, and decides that sorting through the materials requires at least eight hours and a -10 Investigate (I) test. Then, he assigns a +20 bonus because of the character's familiarity with the specific crimes. With 1 rank of Logic and a 24 Intelligence, Joe needs to roll under a 24 for his character to succeed.

INTIMIDATE

The Imperium of Man is constantly at war. Seditious fools across its reach and xenos races from outside its boundaries all work to bring about the downfall of all humanity. It is not enough to stop those who have already taken action; it is also vital to prevent others from following these fools or dabbling in matters far beyond their understanding. Fear often serves as the preferred tool for preventing insurrection and heresy.

The Intimidate skill is a measure of a character's knack for instilling fear. He may use this ability to make someone perform an action against his will, or extract information from an unwilling subject. It is distinguished from the Command skill largely by the authority that the acting character presents. Refer to page 240 for more information on social interaction.

COERCE

Characteristic: Willpower

Average Time: One minute for use in conversations. Roughly three hours for use in long interrogations.

Use: When a character needs high-pressure negotiation tactics against an opponent, he makes an Intimidate (WP) test. More diplomatic techniques may involve subtle threats and mind games. When time becomes more of an issue, or if a target is not receptive to subtlety, then harsher and

more direct threats may be in order. Environmental cues, including the sounds of victims being tortured nearby, darkened rooms, blunt implements, or the odour of freshly spilled blood may all help to unsettle a target, making him more susceptible to the acting character's schemes.

The target's attitude towards the acting character can modify the test difficulty. Recent events and the number of individuals present on each side during the test are also relevant factors. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more control the character has over his target.

Opposed: This test is opposed by a Willpower test.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted on the same resource until the GM decides the character has accessed all available information, but each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous one.

EXAMPLE

After isolating a dockworker who knows his suspect, Logon decides to begin a thorough interrogation. He cuffs the subject to a chair in a cold and dank room. He burns a glow-globe at its highest setting, arranges it to hover directly in the worker's eyes, and then takes a seat across from him. Logon's bolter is plainly visible on his side as he begins asking the subject about the activities of his acquaintance. The Game Master decides that the circumstances leave the very confused suspect thoroughly unnerved. He calls for an opposed +40 Intimidate (WP) test. With his character's 3 ranks of Intimidate and a 27 Willpower characteristic, Joe needs to roll under a 77 for his first degree of success.

THREATEN

Characteristic: Strength

Average Time: One minute for use in conversations. Roughly three hours for use in long interrogations.

Use: When words alone are insufficient, a clear show of force may be necessary. This skill comes into play when the opponent is clearly incapable of resisting any sort of attack. If the target is willing and capable of physically resisting assault, then this may rapidly shift into a combat situation—or that may be more appropriate from the outset. A threaten attempt is often used against a bound target, or one who is already somewhat submissive.

The situation and the relevant show of force are key factors in determining the difficulty. The Game Master should consider whether the acting character has gear that is superior to the target's. Further, if the target has already suffered an ignominious defeat to the acting character's allies, he may already be more susceptible to threats. Demonstrating the efficacy of a particularly weapon may be particularly appropriate.

After the scene has been thoroughly described, a character makes an Intimidate (S) test to frighten individuals with the threats or implication of violence. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more frightened and cooperative the target becomes.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Willpower test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted against the same person.

EXAMPLE

As Logon hurries through Desoleum's lawless levels, he finds an intersection blocked by a mob of drunken labourers. He is hesitant to kill them all, but has little time to spare. He rushes towards the blockade and fires his three rounds from his pistol just above their heads as he yells, "Give way in the name of the Emperor!" The Game Master decides that the protesters were ill prepared for any such a demonstration and calls for an opposed +30 Intimidate (S) test. With his character's 3 ranks of Intimidate and a 31 Strength characteristic, Joe knows he has a distinct advantage.

LINGUISTICS

Linguistics represents the ability to speak, read, and write specific languages, codes, and ciphers. Talents determine the languages a specific character knows, such as the Low Gothic of the underclasses, a feral world's regional dialect, or even a xenos tongue. When attempting to communicate using a language the character knows, a Linguistics test is only required for a particularly difficult task such as translating an ancient version of the language or attempting to understand a garbled vox-intercept. Unknown languages, however, always require a Linguistics test to understand on even a basic level.

There are an enormous number of different languages humanity uses throughout the Imperium. These are only a small fraction compared to the array of different xenos tongues. Under some circumstances, a character may need to speak with a human from a newly discovered world, forgotten to the Imperium for millennia. In other instances, a researcher may need to comprehend the writings of an ancient prophet from a distant world, or a xenos prophecy that predates the Great Crusade. Communicating with those whose language is foreign depends upon a character's knowledge and aptitude in the Linguistics skill.

Two key factors play into determining the difficulty for a Linguistics test. The first is the complexity of the message; simple greetings or warnings are far easier to interpret than more complex philosophical or religious ideas. Such communications may not necessitate a test, even if the message is delivered in an entirely foreign tongue. The second difficulty factor is a measure of how foreign the language is to any the character knows. If the communication arrives in a pidgin or archaic dialect of the character's native tongue, then translation might be challenging, but feasible. Conversely, if the message is in a language that was developed in an entirely different part of the galaxy by a xenos race, deciphering it without additional context might be impossible.

COMMUNICATE

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: Free action

Use: A character can make a Linguistics (F) test to convey or comprehend a message that involves the use of an unknown language using subtext or a limited vocabulary. Alternatively, the character can use non-verbal signals to communicate silently with someone with whom they share a spoken or written language, but are only able to use gestures. This skill use becomes vital any time characters that might not share a common language need to pass concepts or ideas between one another.

The more degrees of success gained on the test, the better the characters on both sides are able to comprehend the message. A single degree of success is adequate for communicating a straightforward concept; if additional subtleties are required, or if the message is particularly complex, additional tests might be necessary.

Re-attempt: Characters cannot re-attempt to communicate the same message to the same group in the same way. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Fellowship bonus, the message not only fails, but is also misunderstood.

EXAMPLE

Logon is currently investigating a death cult he believes may be active among the deepest levels of Hive Desoleum. As he explores the lowest sections, he meets several gang members, who speak a broken dialect of Low Gothic he has never heard before, possibly the result of generations spent isolated from the rest of the hive. In order to successfully question them—and to understand their answers—he must succeed at a Linguistics (F) test. As the language is similar to Low Gothic, which Logon speaks, the Game Master decides the test is Challenging (0). Logon has rank 2 Linguistics and 29 Fellowship. He rolls a 35, which exceeds his difficulty of 29. To his dismay, Logon cannot understand the gang members.

TRANSLATE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: One hour

Use: A character can make a Linguistics (I) test to decipher a code or archaic text in a known language, or pull small details from a text in an unknown tongue. Fully deciphering text in an unknown language requires a substantially lengthier amount of time, based at least partly on its length and complexity. If the character has access to a lexicon for the language, this should grant a situational bonus. Some texts, particularly ones heavily laden with cultural references or colloquialisms benefit much less from the aid of a formal lexicon.

The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more information is gained from the text. If the text is laden with contextual clues, obscure references, or unusual notions it may require additional degrees of success to fully unravel this information. Texts written in poetic verse, laced with symbolism, or in the hand of a madman are all more difficult to translate than a more straightforward presentation.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same resource, unless the character has acquired further expertise in the language. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Intelligence bonus, the translation not only fails, but is mistranslated.

EXAMPLE

When Logon uncovers a bloodstained scroll at a murder site, Joe decides to have his character attempt to read it, before providing the evidence to the rest of his team. The Game Master explains that the work is written in a stylised form of High Gothic more commonly seen in the Apex—which Logon does not know. He decides that deciphering the work requires a –10 Linguistics (I) test. With rank 2 Logistics and a 24 Intelligence characteristic, Joe must roll under a 14 to achieve a basic understanding of the scroll's contents.

LOGIC

The Logic skill represents the ability to think logically, solve puzzles, and dissect information rationally and quickly. It may be applied to analyse complex statistics, architectural anomalies, or even achieve some degree of understanding with regards to complex technologies. This skill encompasses the character's basic functional understanding of mathematics, physics, and engineering. Note that this does not include an understanding of complex theories or the terminology involved—that would fall under Remembrance.

All characters have some inherent ability to exercise Logic, through the observation of cause and effect and inferences regarding likely outcomes. In many instances, a character's ability to comprehend logical phenomena might be impeded by his belief systems, including his faith in the Imperial Creed. Characters who frequently need to identify or resolve complex situations may hone this skill through frequent use.

The variables involved in any problem determine the inherent difficulty of a Logic test. If a character is provided with all of the necessary background information, a reasonably adept character should be able to successfully solve the problem. If there are too many unknown factors, the problem might only be solved after uncovering additional clues, or through prodigious luck.

DEDUCTION

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: Five minutes

Use: A character can attempt a Logic (I) test to sift a specific clue out of a large amount of seemingly unrelated information. This might be recognising an out-of-place detail in a trashed hab-block, or spotting the one forged entry in an Administratum record of thousands of shipments. Alternatively, the character might be able to identify a pattern in a series of seemingly unrelated incidents. This could be related to ancillary data, or might represent a particularly subtle clue that is well hidden.

If a player misunderstands a situation and pursues a particularly dangerous solution to an issue, the Game Master can choose to have the character to make a Logic (I) test to offer an alternative course of action. This option should be used sparingly; this approach is most appropriate if the GM feels the character might have understanding of the situation that the actual player lacks.

Difficulty for a Deduction test is based upon the amount of available information to decipher and the relative rarity of the key data. If the characters have taken the time to assemble supplementary data—such as maps, historical documents, or legends—this may alter the difficulty. Characters that have a relevant Specialist talent may be able to apply that bonus to a test, even if the character is not aware of its importance.

Re-attempt: A Deduction test cannot be re-attempted on the same information.

EXAMPLE

After Logon finishes recording recent murder locations on a map of Hive Desoleum, the Game Master tells Joe to make a +20 Logic (I) test for the character. With a 24 Intelligence characteristic and 2 ranks of Logic, Joe needs to roll under a 44. When he rolls 30, the Game Master reveals that the locations of the killings form a spiral pattern, suggesting the next likely site.

GAMBLING

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: One minute

Use: A character can make a Logic (P) test when participating in games of chance to improve their odds beyond simple, blind luck. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the higher the character's chance of winning becomes, as determined by the Game Master based on the specific game of chance. This assumes that the character is playing by the rules and not cheating; if the character is cheating, he should instead be required to make a Deceive (F) test.

Different games of chance may depend upon the support of other skills. If the game is one where the odds are purely mathematical, then no other skills need be involved, and the test is never opposed. Games that involve direct competition with other gamblers may be influenced by the

character's ability to read his opponent's intentions and falsely portray his own. These are most commonly affected by Deceive and Scrutiny.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Logic (P) test.

Re-attempt: A Gambling test can re-attempted for each round of gambling.

EXAMPLE

Logon engages in a quick game of fingerbones with a potential informant, a somewhat illegal activity in this particular level. He hopes that participation in some illicit, high-stakes dice-rolling might set the scum at ease, so that he could later interrogate him more directly. Reluctantly, Joe decides to have Logon play by the rules and ante up for the game. The Game Master decides that the odds significantly favour the informant, so he calls for a -10 Logic (P) test. With 1 rank of Logic and a 33 Perception characteristic, Joe must roll under a 13 for Logon to come out ahead.

MEDICAE

Medicae represents the ability to set broken bones, heal wounds, or even perform complicated surgeries such as attaching cybernetics. The techniques involved in treatment may vary substantially based upon the character's background. A character that learned basic survival skills on a death world might know substantially different treatment methods than one who dwelt within an Imperial hive. Varied backgrounds often lead to changes in the expected outcomes for medical conditions and treatments. A nutritional disease that is considered untreatable on a hive world might have a routinely available herbal solution on an agri-world, for example.

All characters who face frequent physical trauma achieve some degree of competence in Medicae. This may simply be enough to bind their own wounds, so that they do not leave an easily followed trail of blood. Those who specialise in this field may be viewed as saviours by their patients. Alternatively, some may see the healers as blasphemers who have dabbled in treatments that might only be the province of the God-Emperor or the Omnissiah. Superstition can play a major part in the use of Medicae. In some instances, such beliefs may conceal the presence of a psyker or the unexpected pharmaceutical value of a native treatment.

DIAGNOSE

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: 3 AP

Use: A character can make a Medicae (P) test to diagnose a disease or other ailment affecting an individual or group. If he succeeds, the character knows the name of the ailment, as well as basic treatments, if they exist. If the disease is untreatable, the character can make a prognosis on the patient's life expectancy and becomes familiar with the syndrome's natural progression.

The difficulty for a Diagnose test is proportionate to the character's familiarity with the particular illness, as well as the tools at hand. If the syndrome is one from a world with which the acting character is unfamiliar, the difficulty increases. If the character is using tools that are significantly different from those with which he is familiar, this can also increase the difficulty.

Re-attempt: This cannot be re-attempted on the same individual for the same ailment, until further information or diagnostic tools become available.

EXAMPLE

Tarath is present when Logon is bitten by an unknown spider-like creature in the depths of the hive. She examines the injury, and the Game Master has her make a +10 Medicae (P) test. She has rank 2 Medicae and a 29 Perception characteristic. She needs to roll under a 39. With a 28, she achieves an additional degree of success, and recognises that the bite is poisonous—a dose of de-tox should help with healing and prevent the venom from spreading.

EXTENDED CARE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: Variable

Use: For those with wounds requiring more than quick combat dressings, a character can make a Medicae (I) test to speed the natural healing process of a number of characters equal to his Intelligence bonus. When these characters remove wounds during six consecutive hours of rest, they can remove one additional wound of the same type (see page 207 for rules on natural healing). The character must be actively caring for his patients for this entire time, and does not count as resting.

Re-attempt: This cannot be re-attempted for the same extended rest.

FIRST AID

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: 2 AP

Use: A character can make a Medicae (A) test to perform first aid on a wound, quickly attempting to lessen the immediate damage from a lasgun blast or chainsword cut. If he succeeds, the character can either remove a normal wound, or change a critical wound into a normal wound. This does not remove any wound effects applied by the wound unless the effect specifies that is removed when it is healed.

Re-attempt: First aid cannot be re-attempted on the same wound, and can only be attempted on a wound that has been inflicted in the last hour.

NAVIGATE

Characters charged with investigating threats against humanity must often travel to foreign locations in order to perform their holy duties. Heresy can lurk anywhere, hidden within a planet's depths or even in the dank corridors of a voidcraft. At times, characters might even need to travel among inhuman passages designed by xenos sensibilities. Navigate represents the ability to plot and follow a course from one point to another, either on the surface of a planet or across the stars. In order to use this skill, the character must have access to a map of the relevant region.

Alternatively, Navigate may also be used to generate a map or to provide directions to someone unfamiliar with a route. In these cases, the character often starts with only a rough map or a blank parchment and must first construct one. The usability of the product created is directly proportionate to the success on the test made to create it.

All characters have some basic aptitude with maps, though the subject matter and complexity is relative to their background. A voidborn character is likely to recognise and understand the basics of maps that are completely foreign to a character that came to maturity on a death world. Similarly, a character that is used to the restrictions of travel within an Imperial hive may be confounded when travelling without landmarks, such as across a barren desert or a trackless sea.

PLANNING/MAPPING

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: One minute for simple location. Three hours for plotting courses or routes.

Use: A character can make a Navigate (I) test to get his bearing in an unfamiliar place or plot a journey across unfamiliar terrain. If he succeeds, the character successfully ascertains his location or plots a course. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more direct the route, or the better it avoids obstacles. Those might include terrain effects, enemy encampments, or other environmental hazards.

A Navigate (I) test can also be used to generate a map of the character's travels, or to recognise inaccuracies of an existing map. Inaccuracies might be deliberate choices or they could be due to the passage of time since the map's origin. A character may use Logic or Investigate skills in conjunction with Navigate (I) to identify anomalies in a map. This could reveal hidden locations, alternative routes, or a structure's points of vulnerability.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted for the same location, but each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous one.

EXAMPLE

After discovering a site he expected to be a cult's base of operations, Logon discovers that the hive subsection is apparently empty. After a thorough search, Joe decides to have the character sketch a map of the location. The Game Master decides that, because the complex is small and largely made up of right angles, this only requires a +20 Navigate (I) test. With rank 1 Navigate and a 24 Intelligence characteristic, Joe must roll under 34 for Logon to succeed at the test. If he succeeds, the Enforcer may be able to use Logic to recognise an unusually wide bulkhead, which might conceal a hidden passage.

STAYING ON COURSE

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: 1 AP

Use: A character can make a Navigate (Per) test when travelling along an unfamiliar route to avoid becoming lost or side-tracked. If he succeeds, the character manages to follow the route, and does not need to test again unless something changes (the path is washed away by weather or the character is forced to deviate from his route).

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted; if the character fails the test, he becomes lost. If he fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Perception bonus, he does not even notice he has become lost.

EXAMPLE

Logon decides to execute a methodical search through a region in the lower levels of Hive Desoleum. He recognises that in order to do so, he first needs to use a map to plot out his search path. With map and route in hand, the Enforcer begins his search through the hive's most treacherous reaches, which are in constant danger of hivequake and collapse. The Game Master recognises that an important clue may be found half way through the search, but only if Logon actually follows his intended route. As the map only poorly reflects the area's current configuration, the Game Master calls for Joe to make a -20 Navigate (I) test. With a 33 Perception characteristic and rank 1 Navigate skill, the character must roll under a 03 in order to stay true to his intended course—this region is plagued with shifting terrain, and is hopelessly confusing.

OBSERVE

Observe represents the character's general awareness of his surroundings and the ability to notice inconsistencies that others might dismiss. It encompasses a basic alertness to any changes that might be detected by the senses, including visual cues, sounds, odours, and even air pressure. A highly trained observer is just as capable of noticing and identifying the presence of a new factor as they are the absence of a common one.

Many who dwell in the Imperium of Man become worn down by their daily lives of constant drudgery. Fatigue can cloud their vision and a focus upon their immediate tasks might dim their awareness of the world about them. Ignorance is often championed as a virtue over curiosity and innovation. Those who demonstrate their faith in their daily lives may strive to deliberately remain unaware of the actions of their neighbours or changes to their environment.

Those in the service of the Inquisition can scarcely afford the luxury of such inattentiveness. Threats to the Imperium can lurk in the shadows of any location. Often, the subtlest of cues can reveal far deeper meanings. Any inconsistency may be a sign of other dangers; one sewer section lacking the foetid odour of the rest may be just as troubling as a suspicious bulge beneath a suspect's clothing.

Talents or gear can offer a significant degree of assistance with Observe tests that focus upon a particular sense. A character with a particularly keen sense of smell might be more prone to notice subtle odours, or a character equipped with infra-red goggles might notice a foe hiding behind a thicket. Refer to the relevant abilities and equipment descriptions for the circumstances when these bonuses apply.

AWARENESS

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: Free action

Use: A character can make an Observe (P) test to notice a small detail, sound, or smell before others and interpret what it might mean. This can be used to eavesdrop on a conversation or to spot hidden foes, ambushes, or concealed objects. Game Masters can choose to call for Awareness tests at any time, to reveal subtle factors that might offer critical clues.

The difficulty of an unopposed Observe (P) test is proportionate to the subtlety of the clue. In some cases, a relevant signal might be hidden in plain sight, simply obscured by countless other common signs and symbols. At other times, the clue may be distinctive, but barely within the range of human senses.

A character's familiarity with a location and information about the subject matter may also factor into the difficulty of the task. A character is far more likely to detect a change in the ventilation system of his home than a visitor might notice. Conversely, a character who is visiting a foreign temple might notice an unusual characteristic about a statue's portrayal of the Emperor that a native might intuitively ignore.

Degrees of success or failure are commonly indicative of the speed with which the character recognises and understands an anomaly. A character who succeeds with several degrees of success might recognise a suspicious individual in time to stop them for interrogation, while one who barely succeeds might have to first pursue the suspect. On failure, the character might not realise the anomaly until hours later or might instead notice a false lead.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Stealth (A) or Stealth (I) test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted.

EXAMPLE

As Tarath is bitten by enters a temple, the Game Master calls for an Observe (P) test. At the same time, he rolls a Stealth (A) test for a cultist within, who ducks into the sacristy as he sees her arrival. With a 29 Perception characteristic and 3 ranks in Observe, her target is a 39. Dominique rolls a 45 while the Game Master succeeds on the cultist's test with two degrees of success. The Game Master smiles to himself, and omits any mention of the cultist as he describes the temple's interior to her.

SCRUTINY

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: 2 AP

Use: A character can make an Observe (I) test to analyse an object in detail or to determine an individual's truthfulness, motives, personality, and temperament. This test may also be used to determine a character's success when methodically searching an area or object for clues or other inconsistencies. It is characteristic of a mental analysis of the person or object in question, to identify any inconsistencies between its appearance, signs of wear, and overall style.

In cases where the character is attempting to identify a hidden or out of place object, the difficulty of the test is proportionate to the subtlety of the clue sought. Of course, even an inconsistency hidden in plain sight may be difficult to notice, if it has been sufficiently well camouflaged. If the player indicates that the acting character is specifically examining an element closely related to the clue, Game Masters should permit the test to automatically succeed or offer a substantial bonus.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Deceive (F) test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same object or person, unless additional information regarding the object or person becomes available.

EXAMPLE

An informant led Tarath to believe that the temple might have been used for a series of heretical rituals over the course of the last week. She decides to examine the sanctuary area for indications that anything might be amiss. The Game Master calls for her to make a +10 Observe (I) test. With a 31 Intelligence characteristic and 3 ranks of Observe, she needs to roll at least a 41 to identify the traces of a chalky residue left between the sanctuary's cobblestones.

PILOT

The Pilot skill represents a character's aptitude to control and direct all manner of vehicles and heavy equipment. Through the remarkable consistency of Standard Template Construction, the control systems used to operate dramatically different vehicles are extremely similar. In many instances, this may be due to an interaction between the vehicle's machine spirit and the controlled systems used to direct the craft. In other cases, this is due to a simplification or approximation of controls, intended to reduce the effort required to learn to pilot the vehicle.

All characters who come from worlds with any degree of technology learn the basics of piloting. Essentially, the need to operate a craft of some sort is largely unavoidable. However, familiarity with a groundcar is scarcely adequate preparation for the nuanced art of flying an Imperial Valkyrie. Some characters may choose to take talents (see page 109) that are indicative of their ability with their craft.

Difficulties for Pilot tests are influenced by the type of craft, travelling condition, and the inherent conditions of the environment. Note that routine piloting tests are never required. Between the character's basic abilities and the vehicle's machine spirit, minor incidents are largely avoidable. Tests become far more appropriate when a character needs to push a vehicle's capabilities far beyond its designed intent. This may be to contend with severe environmental conditions, such as flying through a sandstorm or driving across an icy surface. Further tests could be necessary if a vehicle has become badly damaged, and its control surfaces become compromised.

AERONAUTICA

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: 2 AP

Use: A character can make a Pilot (A) test to successfully pilot any vehicle that operates in three dimensions. This includes atmospheric fliers such as the Imperial Navy Thunderbolt, but also includes small manoeuvrable voidcraft such as landers, shuttles, starfighters, and bombers. This test is only required in situations in which the driver is pushing their vehicle beyond its normal limits such as piloting through dangerous weather or flying in a combat situation.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, but if the test fails, the vehicle being piloted can falter, lose altitude, or even crash depending on the situation and degrees of failure.

EXAMPLE

Minix is flying a noble's shuttle she stole from one hive to another, desperate to reduce the normal travel time between them so she can aid in stopping a foul ritual. En route, a wastelands cultist launches a krak missile that destroys one engine and badly damages another. The Game Master rules that, in order to keep the craft aloft, Jeanine must pass a -10 Pilot (A) test. Jeanine's character has a 27 Agility characteristic and 2 ranks of Pilot. The shuttle normally provides a +20 bonus for manoeuvres. She needs to roll under a 37 to keep the wounded shuttle aloft.

SURFACE

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: 2 AP

Use: A character can make a Pilot (A) test to successfully pilot any vehicle that primarily operates on a planetary surface. This includes groundcars, walkers, treaded vehicles, boats, and skimmers. This test is only required in situations in which the driver is pushing their vehicle beyond its normal limits such as driving on rough terrain or navigating a combat situation.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, but if the test fails, the vehicle being driven can take damage, falter, or even crash depending on the situation and the total degrees of failure.

EXAMPLE

Tech-Priest Minix has landed her damaged shuttle, and is at the helm of a small dust trawler when a whirlpool unexpectedly emerges in the powdery terrain. The Game Master indicates that she must make a Pilot (A) to keep the vehicle from being drawn into it. Jeanine's character has a 27 Agility characteristic and 2 ranks of Pilot. The trawler suffers a -10 penalty to manoeuvres because of its sluggish response. She guns the engine, needing to roll under a 17 to avoid the danger.

VOID

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: Two minutes

Use: A character can make a Pilot (I) test to successfully pilot large void-faring vessels. This includes any space-going vessel that requires a captain and large crew and cannot be conceivably piloted by a single individual.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. If the test fails, the (poorly) piloted voidship can take damage, collide with obstacles, or become lost in the Warp depending on the situation and the total degrees of failure.

PSYNISCIENCE

Psyniscience represents the ability to sense the currents and eddies of the Immaterium. Any character may attempt to use the skill, but their abilities are limited by their senses. Only those characters who have the ability to properly sense and interact with the Warp can learn to properly focus this skill. Consequently, only characters with a psy rating (see page 171) may advance the skill beyond rank 1. Other characters might learn to recognise unnatural sounds, temperature fluctuations, or odours and associate them with unnatural activity, though their ability to do so are sharply limited. Refer to Perils of the Warp on page 173 for more information on psychic phenomena.

The difficulty for a Psyniscience test is based upon the potency of any nearby Warp activity. In general, the more powerful the activity, the easier it may be to sense, even for a character that lacks a psy rating. At the same time, by attempting to identify such a presence, a character must temporarily open his mind to its influence. Particularly potent threats may be able to seize this opportunity, and react aggressively to the probe. While subtler activity is far less dangerous to the acting character, it is also far more difficult to sense.

Few individuals without experience and training are even aware of the ever-present danger of the Warp. Unless they have reason to have learnt of its dangers, they are unlikely to even attempt such a skill test, much less attempt to master the skill. Conversely, characters who have developed their psychic powers become adept at Psyniscience during the earliest stages of their training. Typically, psykers make it a point to survey the Warp in their vicinity before invoking their abilities, so that they are aware of any potential threats. Otherwise, they run the risk of attracting the attention of any malignant entities that might be lurking nearby.

WARP NATURE

Characteristic: Willpower

Average Time: 4 AP

Use: The unnatural stench of the Warp permeates wherever the Immaterium breaches into reality, and as such a character can make a Psyniscience (WP) test to detect the nature of any Warp phenomenon currently in his presence. If he succeeds, the character can determine the psy rating of a nearby psyker, ascertain the identity of a Daemon attempting to break through into the corporeal, or identify any number of various Warp phenomena that may be affecting his immediate area.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same Warp phenomenon; if the test fails, the character cannot properly resist the power of the phenomenon as he tries to psychically analyse it. This can cause the character to receive fatigue, insanity, or even wounds depending on the severity of the Warp phenomenon he is attempting to analyse.

EXAMPLE

Castor fears that the planetary governor might be a cult leader, so she decides to have her character probe the Warp around him. The Game Master knows that the NPC is not a psyker, but there is a minor Daemon in the Immaterium observing the corporeal area around the governor. He decides that detecting its presence requires a +20 Psyniscience (WP) test. Abby's character has a 32 Willpower characteristic and 3 ranks of Psyniscience, so must roll under 62 to notice the Daemon's aetheric presence.

WARP POSITIONING

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: 4 AP

Use: If a character is already aware of a Warp phenomenon, he may wish to sense its location more precisely. This might be the faint trail of a psychic power linking the subject to the caster, or could be a nearby entity. To divine this information, a character can make a Psyniscience (P) test to detect the location of a Warp phenomenon.

If he succeeds, the character can determine the general direction of the Warp phenomenon from his current position, as well as a general feeling of its distance away. The difficulty of this test depends on the severity of the phenomenon, as well as its distance from the character attempting the test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same Warp phenomenon unless something changes, such as the phenomenon suddenly expanding.

EXAMPLE

The Daemon fled when Castor recognised its presence. She decides that it would be useful to identify its current location, and attempts to track it. The Game Master rules that this requires a -10 Psyniscience (P) test. Her character has a 29 Perception characteristic and 3 ranks of Psyniscience. She must roll under a 29 in order to follow its trail. When she rolls a 75, the Game Master decides that she instead detects the activities of a choir of Astropaths currently projecting messages from a nearby building.

REMEMBRANCE

Remembrance represents the ability to recall information, from random knowledge about Imperial society to any bizarre or arcane knowledge a character may possess. It serves primarily as a measure of the character's educational background. An exceptionally well-rounded individual is likely to have a high rank in Remembrance. Conversely, a character whose education focused upon a particular subject matter is more likely to have a talent devoted to that particular field.

When a character uses the Remembrance skill, he is actively recalling information that he has committed to memory. A character who uses a dataslate to identify the crucial bit of information would be utilising the Logic skill (see page 84). Similarly, a character who checks with contacts to find the important details could use their Investigate skill (see page 81).

In general, the difficulty for a Remembrance task is proportionate to the rarity of the information in question and the character's life experiences. Daily-used knowledge should never require a test. Conversely, a minor legend from a lost world in another sector might be unattainable information for a character who has never travelled. Degrees of success serve as a measure of the detail that the character can easily recall. Even a partially successful Remembrance test can offer a character enough data to track down more exhaustive information, if he has access to a library and the time to perform research.

COMMON LORE

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: Free actions

Use: A character can make a Remembrance (P) test to recall information he has learned throughout his life regarding a location, individual, or other common subject in the Imperium. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more information the character can recall regarding the topic. The test difficulty varies in proportion to an individual's life experience. For example, a hive-dweller would suffer a large penalty to any test regarding the nature of feral world tribes, whereas a character originally born on such a world would receive a large bonus.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same, specific subject until a great deal of time has passed.

EXAMPLE

Tarath agrees to meet with one of a planetary governor's advisors to discuss the mechanisms used to implement some of the hive's defensive systems. During the course of the discussion, the advisor casually drops a name of an influential member of the world's Machine Cult. The Game Master asks Jeanine to make a -20 Remembrance (P) test to see if the character is familiar with the individual mentioned. The penalty reflects the rarity of the name in question to those with a background of life in the Adeptus Mechanicus. With her 3 ranks of Remembrance and a 31 Perception characteristic, she must roll under a 21 to recognise the name.

FORBIDDEN LORE

Characteristic: Willpower

Average Time: Free actions

Use: A character can make a Remembrance (WP) test to recall information which is forbidden to the average citizen of the Imperium. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more information the character can recall regarding the subject. Which areas of forbidden knowledge a character has access to is determined by talents. A character can only attempt a Remembrance (WP) test on knowledge for which he has the appropriate Specialist talent. The difficulty of this test depends on both the specificity of the information required, and how secret the knowledge is kept.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same subject until a large amount of time has passed. If the test fails, the character can suffer Corruption at the GM's discretion based on the degrees of failure and the nature of the information being recalled.

EXAMPLE

As she investigates the tunnels beneath the city, Minix comes across some runic symbols in a language she does not recognise. The Game Master asks to see the character sheet, and checks to see if she has the Specialist (Daemons) talent. When he notes that she lacks the talent, he explains that her character does not recognise the symbols.

SCHOLASTIC LORE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: Free actions

Use: A character can make a Remembrance (I) test to recall information that he would need to learn in a formal setting from a knowledgeable mentor, a venerable organisation, or careful study of rare tomes. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the more information the character can recall regarding the subject. Which areas of scholastic knowledge a character has learned throughout his life are determined through talents, and a character can only attempt this test on knowledge for which he has the appropriate Specialist talent. The difficulty of this test depends on the specificity of the information required.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted on the same subject until a great deal of time has passed.

EXAMPLE

As she completes her sweep of the city's defences, Minix examines the cooling intake ducts for the isolated city's powerful and ancient void shield projectors. She performs a routine scan of the water system, and notices high levels of several contaminants commonly found in forge world reclamation pits. The Game Master checks her character sheet and notices that she has the Specialist—Adeptus Mechanicus talent. He asks her to make a +10 Remembrance (I) test, before he can reveal the effects the substances might have on the city's systems.

STEALTH

Stealth is a measure of a character's ability to remain unnoticed while moving through the dense crowds of a hive, the open croplands of an agri-world, or the blast craters of a scarred battlefield. In some environments, this requires the character to remain unseen, but in others it is far more important for the character to be inconspicuous. A character that can blend in amongst the labourers of a manufactorum might be just as adept at infiltrating a complex as one who might scale the walls in the dead of night.

Characters with a background focused on Deceive skills are often also trained in the arts of Stealth. The combination of these two skills can enable a character to infiltrate a facility and maintain their presence for the duration of an investigation. In some instances, this may also be a crucial step in eliminating an otherwise inaccessible target.

The difficulty for a Stealth test is generally based upon the environment where it is attempted as well as the character's outer wear such as clothing and armour. Some gear may assist a character in remaining unseen, though if this equipment is identified, it can often reveal the infiltrator's true nature. In some instances, defenders might use abilities and equipment that have the potential to offset the character's own equipment. In these cases, strategy and timing can be crucial to remaining undetected.

SHADOWING

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: Part of a move action

Use: At times, a character may wish to pursue another character or vehicle without being observed. To do this, a character makes a Stealth (P) test. The same test is made whether the pursuit occurs on foot, mounted, or using vehicles—even in immense voidcraft. If the acting character succeeds, he can follow the target unobserved for 5 minutes for each degree of success scored on the test.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by an Observe (P) test.

Re-attempt: This test must be re-attempted after the time determined by degrees of success has elapsed. If the test fails, the character is spotted by his target.

EXAMPLE

Logon attempts to trail a suspicious noble through a market on one of the hive's mid-levels, as he expects the possible heretic to lead him to a person of interest. The crowded marketplace offers many distractions for the target, but the Enforcer's uniform is rather distinctive. The Game Master calls for an opposed –10 Stealth (P) test. With his character's 33 Perception characteristic and 2 ranks of Stealth, Joe must roll under a 23 to succeed. He rolls a 40, with two degrees of failure. Fortunately, the target rolls even more poorly on his Observe (P) test, achieving six degrees of failure.

SNEAKING

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: Part of a move action

Use: When a character wishes to avoid notice, he makes a Stealth (A) test to move silently and conceal himself from others. The same skill is used regardless of environment, though a character's clothing may be more appropriate for specific environments; a cloak coloured to blend in with the forests of a jungle world may be wholly inappropriate for concealment within the metallic corridors of a hive.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by an Observe (P) or Survival (P) test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted if noticed.

EXAMPLE

After discovering the watering hole where the noble is meeting a suspected cult leader, Joe decides to have his Enforcer attempt to sneak through the back door. With his character's 27 Agility characteristic and rank 2 Stealth, he prepares to make the Stealth (A) test. The Game Master assigns a -20 penalty, due to the obvious nature of the character's uniform. Joe rolls a 50 on the test, failing and exceeding the 7 with four degrees of failure. The Game Master rules that the character inadvertently knocks down the back door, drawing the attention of everyone in the tavern.

SUBTERFUGE

The Subterfuge skill is a measure of a character's ability to use artifice, guile, and manual dexterity to circumvent normal restrictions. Individuals who have reasons to go where they are not wanted often become masters of this art; as do those who devote their lives to stopping them. Those who uses these skills against common labourers and merchants are branded as little more than common thieves. In contrast, if the same skills are employed in the service of the Imperium against its enemies, they may be hailed as master spies and assassins.

The Inquisition is not limited by the laws of Man—its cause is far too crucial for such strictures. During the course of an investigation, those acting in its name may undertake actions that would be deemed unlawful and even reproachable by common citizens of the Imperium. Acolytes bound to its cause have the authority and the motivation to perform actions that local authorities would be consider highly illegal or seditious. A few learned of the seskills as part of their informal family education amongst a hive's nobility, while many more practiced subterfuge as a necessary part of their survival among the less savoury portions of Imperial hive worlds.

Difficulty for Subterfuge tests is typically determined by the preparedness of the target. An unsuspecting and poorly secured target may be easily overcome, but are seldom the subjects of an Inquisitorial investigation. Those who have who have materials that they must hide are a cowardly and suspicious lot. Many choose to devote a significant portion of their assets to keeping their secrets secure behind sophisticated locks. As heretics become increasingly devoted to treachery, their paranoia forces them to suspect everyone they meet of committing similar crimes.

DISGUISE

Characteristic: Fellowship

Average Time: Varies

Use: A character can make a Subterfuge (F) test to disguise himself or another. This disguise can be as simple as donning an opponent's uniform or as complex as mimicking a specific individual exactly. Circumstance and availability typically dictate the costume required; its overall effectiveness is more measured by a character's ability to appropriately don it and play the associated role.

The character does not make the Subterfuge (F) test while creating the disguise, but instead makes the test the first time the disguise comes under scrutiny from an opponent. If he succeeds, the character does not need to test again unless something changes, such as suspicion is cast on the character or a more observant character arrives.

Note that Subterfuge covers only the physical aspects of costuming. If the acting character must socially interact with others, any required tests are governed by the other relevant skills—most often Charm or Deceive. Depending upon the situation, an effective costume may grant a bonus to the relevant interaction skills.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by an Observe (P) test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted against a person who is already aware of the disguise.

EXAMPLE

After an infiltration goes horribly wrong, Minix needs to escape a manufactorum. Her character replaces several of the insignia on her crimson cloak with icons taken from a fallen opponent, and explains to the GM that a casual observer might believe her to be simply just another Tech-Priest in the facility's employ. The Game Master agrees that many cannot distinguish between the heavily enhanced members of the Adeptus Mechanicus and calls for a Subterfuge (F) test when the character attempts to pass through a security checkpoint.

SECURITY

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: One minute

Use: A character can make a Subterfuge (I) test to overcome locks and safeguards or to implement comparable devices. Examples can include opening secured doors, subverting a cogitator's guarded machine spirit, or even laying traps to protect a facility. Note this does not include defeating other obstacles; a vault might have humans standing watch, or gun servitors could patrol a compound, and these require other skills to overcome.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Subterfuge (I) test.

Re-attempt: Whether or not the test can be re-attempted depends on the safeguard being bypassed. Some lock down upon a failed force entry, while others can be attempted multiple times. Each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous test.

EXAMPLE

Minix has attended subject's devotional verse recitation in order to search his manse. The character began to explore an upper floor when she discovered a locked door, and after waiting until a servo-skull has passed attempted to quickly pick the lock. Her character has a 33 Intelligence characteristic and 1 rank of Subterfuge. The Game Master indicates that the mechanical lock requires a +20 Subterfuge (I) test to bypass, so Jeanine needs to roll under a 43 before her character can enter the room to check its contents.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: One action

Use: A character can make a Subterfuge (A) test to palm a small object unnoticed, pick someone's pocket, or perform a task requiring trickery and dexterity. A charlatan or confidence man utilises very comparable skills to those of a pickpocket when committing their crimes. The test can substitute papers, remove jewellery, or obtain a target's identification. The difficulty of the test depends on the size of the object and the intensity of observation.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by an Observe (I) or Observe (P) test.

Re-attempt: This test cannot be re-attempted once noticed.

EXAMPLE

Minix later needs to plant a packet of Spook on her host's person. As she leaves the manse, her character cants a formal binaric congratulation on the recitation in harshly modulated tones, while she uses a mechadendrite to slip the illegal narcotics into his pocket. The Game Master decides that the NPC is so taken aback by the foreign language, and calls for a +30 Subterfuge (A) test. The Tech-Priest has a 27 Agility characteristic and rank 1 Subterfuge, so must roll beneath a 47 to avoid detection.

SURVIVAL

The Survival skill is a measure of a character's ability to subsist without the support of civilisation. It is absolutely vital for those who dwell in the untamed wilds, far from the protection of fortified encampments or cities. Those who live within the urban jungles of underhives or city ruins must also achieve some mastery of this field, as they cannot depend upon reliable sources of food and water. The knacks associated with this field often have applications even within structured society, especially for those with a more independent nature.

Acolytes who dwelt on one of the Imperium's more primitive worlds are certain to have this skill. Characters coming from more technologically advanced planets might also have it depending upon their backgrounds. Those who dwell in poverty, in the abandoned lower levels of a hive or in the forgotten holds of the mighty voidcraft of the Imperial Navy, might have had to scrounge for food amidst the predatory creatures that dwell alongside the dregs of humanity.

The difficulty for a Survival test is associated with the environmental constraints where it is made. If a planet's atmosphere, fauna, and water are laced with deadly toxins, then finding the materials necessary for life can be nearly impossible. Worlds more ideally suited to human life could conceal hungry predators. Use of the skill does not only indicate a knack for finding life's essentials; it can also indicate an aptitude for avoiding the deadliest of threats.

SCROUNGING

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: One Hour

Use: A character can make a Survival (I) test to attempt to find the food and water necessary to keep him alive in the planet's native environment. If the characters run out of food or water, they may begin to suffer from starvation and dehydration (see page 245). The difficulty for the test is dependent upon the world's environment; in places where there is no native water or life, the test may be impossible.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, though each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous one.

EXAMPLE

Tarath came from a feral planet, so is nominated to try to find adequate food for the group after a crash landing. The Game Master decides that food and water are readily available, so calls for a +20 Survival (I) test. With a 31 Intelligence characteristic and 3 ranks of Survival, she needs to roll under a 51 to succeed. When she rolls a 20, she achieves four degrees of success, enough to keep the whole group healthy today through some native fruits and easily caught wildlife.

TRACKING

Characteristic: Perception

Average Time: 4 AP

Use: Whether pursuing quarry through a planet's uncivilised wilds or a more urbane city, Acolytes often need to track down their suspects. A character can make a Survival (P) test to follow signs left by his quarry, allowing him to track the target's passage. The difficulty of the test depends on the time since the trail was left, the current weather, and the presence of darkness, smoke, or fog. Terrain conditions may also play into the matter, as any ground cover that might display tracks can offer a substantial advantage.

Opposed: This test can be opposed by a Stealth (A) test in situations where the quarry is attempting to cover up their trail.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, but each subsequent test suffers a -10 penalty for every one already failed to find that trail. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Perception bonus, he unknowingly is following the wrong trail.

EXAMPLE

Missionary Tarath needs to follow the path of a lizard-drawn wagon that left a trading community the previous night. The ground is still damp with dew, leaving the unpaved road malleable, but others have travelled the same path since then. The Game Master calls for a Survival (P) test. With a 29 Perception characteristic and 3 ranks of Survival, she needs to roll under a 39 to start following the trail.

WRANGLING

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: Multiple days depending on the nature and temper of the beast involved.

Use: A character can make a Survival (A) test to tame, train, and potentially ride animals he encounters in his travels. The difficulty of this test varies with the animal's nature and temperament; if he succeeds, the character bends the animal to his will—or at least forms a partnership with it—and can now direct it by spending 1 AP.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. Each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous test.



EXAMPLE

When the group finds a pack of wild bauler-lizards near their crash site, Dominique decides to have Tarath try to train one to use as a transport animal for carrying the group's prisoner. The Game Master recognises that the beasts are not domesticated, and are ornery to boot. He decides that even after the group manages to capture and subdue one, a character must first succeed at a -20 Survival (A) test. When Dominique considers her character's 27 Agility characteristic and 3 ranks of Survival, she realises that this would require a 17 or less. She decides on a different course of action.

TECH-USE

Tech-use is a measure of an Acolyte's ability to use and interact with all manner of technological devices, from proper implementation of the Rites of Striking to the temperatures of holy lubricants a machine spirit finds most soothing. Characters with appropriate Specialist talents can receive bonuses for working with devices related to their expertise; if an artefact is based upon principles that are completely foreign to the character's background, it may be harder to use even if the intended purpose is well understood.

The difficulty for this task is related to the complexity of the device and its design nature. A simple tool of Eldar origin, for example, might be every bit as dangerous as a venting plasma gun to the uninitiated. Conversely, no amount of familiarity with the design principals can make a Warp engine an easily-understood device.

COMMUNE

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: One minute

Use: A character can make a Tech-Use (I) test to tap into his understanding of the Blessing of the Ommissiah and commune with the machine spirits of a particularly complex or stubborn piece of technology. If he succeeds, the character can figure out how a piece of unknown technology works, or push a piece of technology far beyond its normal limits.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, but each subsequent test takes twice as long as the previous test. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Intelligence bonus, he causes some damage to the piece of technology he is attempting to use.

EXAMPLE

Tech-Priest Minix uncovers an unfamiliar device in the bowels of a cultist lair, some kind of oddly-shaped machinery. After the mission is complete, she decides to take the necessary time to commune with it so that she might understand its purpose. The Game Master knows its true dangerous purpose and obscure origin, so decides that understanding requires a -30 Tech-Use (I) test. With 3 ranks of Tech-Use and a 33 Intelligence characteristic, Jeanine must still roll under a 13 for her character to understand it. She decides to take her time, and proceed with caution.

DEMOLITIONS

Characteristic: Agility

Average Time: One minute

Use: Often it is not enough to burn the heretic, but also destroy his works. This sometimes requires first eliminating barriers, or safely placating the machine spirits inhabiting minefields. In these cases, a character makes a Tech-Use (A) test to set up and plan, plant, or defuse, an explosive charge. If he succeeds, he diffuses or plants the device with the trigger of his choice. Possible triggers can include trip wires, timers, proximity sensors, remote activators, or a variety of other options.

Opposed: When explosives are placed, the GM notes the total degrees of success and the roll. This is used when diffusing those explosives, with an opposed test using the noted roll and degrees of success as the roll to oppose.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted. If the test fails, the trigger will fail to go off when triggered, or the bomb has not been diffused. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Agility bonus, he has set off the explosive device, suffering the consequences of the explosion.

EXAMPLE

When the group needs to move through a well-secured door, Minix decides to use a small demolition charge to clear the lock. The bomb is pre-wired and already configured for just this purpose. The Game Master decides the equipment at hand necessitates a +30 Tech-Use (A) test. With her character's 27 Agility and 3 ranks of Tech-Use, she only needs a 67 for the charge to blow the lock.

OVERHAUL

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: 12 hours

Use: Vehicles are essential for travel across worlds and even within the colossal structures of a hive city or hab-block, but reliance on them means characters can be brought low when their transportation is damaged. Successfully repairing their vehicle can mean the difference between a heresy crushed or a world lost to the Ruinous Powers.

A character can make a Tech-Use (I) test to restore a single vehicle to working order, removing a number of normal breaches (or reducing critical breaches to normal breaches) equal to his degrees of success (see page 223 for details on vehicle damage).

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, though each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous one.

PATCH BREACH

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: 6 AP

Use: A quick repair is better than none, and often there is no time for proper rituals and anointments when the warband is under fire. Though such repairs might require many hours to placate the machine spirit at a later time, that it and the warband survives to do so speaks greatly for their effectiveness.

A character can make a Tech-Use (I) test to spot-weld or rewire a vehicle's systems and provide a short-term solution to a breach (see page 223). If he succeeds, he can either remove a normal breach or change a critical breach into a normal breach. This does not remove any effects applied by the breach unless the effect is specifically removed when the breach is repaired.

Re-attempt: Patch breach cannot be re-attempted on the same breach.

REPAIR

Characteristic: Intelligence

Average Time: 12 AP to multiple hours depending on the complexity of the device and the severity of the damage.

Use: Personal technology is highly prized, especially items an Inquisitor has bequeathed to his warband, or the rewards from a grateful noble. For such devices to fall to damage or misuse would be an insult to the Omnissiah, or worse a life-threatening event in many situations.

A character can make a Tech-Use (I) test to repair a broke piece of technology such as a weapon, tool, or cogitator. The more degrees of success gained on the test, the better the device functions and the longer the repair job lasts.

Re-attempt: This test can be re-attempted, but each subsequent test takes twice the time of the previous test. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Intelligence bonus, he causes additional damage to the piece of technology he is attempting to repair. At the Game Master's discretion, it may become irreparable at that point.

EXAMPLE

After Logon's favoured autopistol was damaged after using it as an improvised interrogation tool, he asks Tech-Priest Minix to repair it. A cursory examination revealed that the damage was largely superficial. As she already had the components on hand for the repair, the Game Master decided that this would only require a +20 Tech-Use (I) test. With 3 ranks of Tech-Use and a 33 Intelligence characteristic, Jeanine must still roll under a 63 to repair the damaged weapon.



CHAPTER IV: TALENTS AND TRAITS

A **DARK HERESY** character's talents are a representation of natural aptitudes and inherent knacks. In many cases, these are abilities that a character has learnt through experience or training. In others, they are characteristic of near superhuman abilities. Examples include the mysterious abilities associated with a psyker or Tech-Priest but also more mundane abilities that go with particular fighting disciplines or practiced data excavation techniques.

Characters begin play with a set of talents identified during character creation. They can garner additional ones as they develop further through the expenditure of experience.

USING TALENTS

"All of thy abilities come through the grace of the Emperor, and know that their use reflects back upon Him. Do not disappoint the saviour of all humanity."

—Interrogator Siobhan Reichmyn, training an assistant

Each talent grants a unique ability to characters possessing it. Once an Acolyte possesses a talent, it is always in effect. In most cases, the ability confers a bonus to certain tasks or allows him to perform special actions not available to other characters. Specific details for the abilities are described under the respective talents. Unless otherwise stated in the talent description, a character can only possess and benefit from each talent once.

FOCUSSED TALENTS

Some talents describe a group of comparable talents, each with a different focus. These are known as focussed talents. When a character acquires a focussed talent, he must choose one of the focuses listed within its description. The effect of the talent only applies to situations as described within the focus chosen. A character may possess and benefit from multiple instances of the same focussed talent, provided each instance uses a different focus.

GAINING TALENTS

"Each scar is a lesson. Learn them well."

—Anon

Characters start play with a number of talents determined during character creation. Later, Acolytes can acquire additional talents by spending experience points earned during play. Before a character can purchase a talent, he must have access to the appropriate talent tree and meet all its prerequisites. Each talent's entry lists the number of experience points required to purchase it. Until all of these criteria are met, a character cannot purchase or use a new talent.

TALENT TREES

The majority of talents are organised into trees. Each tree consists of a collection of talents linked by paths, and talents within a tree must be purchased in successive order. When a player decides to purchase a new talent for his character, he must first check if he has access to that talent in its tree. Then, the player must trace a direct line along the tree's paths from the top-most talent down to the desired talent. If there are any intervening talents that the character does not possess, those must be purchased first. A character may only purchase the desired talent after all intervening ones have already been acquired. Characters automatically have access to the top-most talent in every tree, though they must still meet its prerequisites prior to purchase.

GENERAL TALENTS

Some talents do not fall neatly into one specific area of expertise. These are identified as general talents and are not organised into trees. Characters automatically have access to all general talents, though they must still meet any prerequisites required prior to purchase.

TABLE 4-1: TALENT TREE TABLE

TREE NAME	PAGE NUMBER
Defence	98
Investigation	100
Melee	102
Mental Fortitude	105
Mobility	107
Pilot	109
Ranged	111
Resilience	114
Social	116
Technology	118
General	121

PREREQUISITES

Most talents require the character to possess one or more specific abilities to purchase a talent in addition to achieving access through tracing the appropriate talent tree, such as a characteristic value, skill training, or other quality at the value designated (or higher). These requirements must be met through the character's inherent abilities; if he can only achieve the prerequisite values through bonuses gained from other talents or equipment, they do not count as meeting the prerequisite. He must first spend experience to meet all prerequisites and then purchase the talent.

TALENT DESCRIPTIONS

"You hold the fate of all Mankind in your hands. Ensure they are strong enough."

—Inquisitor Johann Gerstmann

This section presents each talent, including its experience cost, any prerequisites it might have, and a full description of its effects. With the exception of general talents, each is listed as part of a talent tree progression. Descriptions are formatted as follows:

TALENT NAME

Experience Cost: The number of experience points which must be spent to purchase the talent.

Prerequisites: All requirements a character must meet to purchase this talent.

Effect: Full details on how the talent affects characters who possess it.

DEFENCE

In order to emerge victorious from a conflict, one must first survive the conflict. Defensive actions can help ensure an Acolyte not only eradicates heresies, but lives to fight other ones. Duty to the Emperor ends only with death, and proper use of the talents below can help an Acolyte keep performing his duty for as long as possible. Characters who master the Defence tree learn the talents essential for their survival and eventual triumph.

COUNTER-ATTACK

During the course of a melee, an attacker may overextend as he tries to make certain that an attack strikes home. A skilled warrior recognises these efforts and quickly moves to counter them. After swiftly dodging the incoming swing or beating the weapon aside a practiced warrior can swiftly strike his unprepared foe, leaving the erstwhile attacker at the mercy of his prey.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 50

Effect: After using the Evade (WS) skill to successfully cancel all degrees of success of an opponent's attack, the character can make an immediate Parting Blow reaction against the opponent (paying normal AP cost) even though the foe has not taken a movement action.

DEFLECT SHOT

A melee weapon can also serve as an effective tool in defending against both melee and ranged attacks, where it can block, bat, or destroy incoming projectile attacks from primitive weapons. With practice, it can effectively serve as a shield, improving a character's overall survivability when facing feral warbands, mutant enclaves, and underhive wretches.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 45

Effect: When the character is armed with a readied melee weapon, he adds his Weapon Skill bonus to his defence value on all hit locations when being hit by thrown weapons or ranged weapons with the Low-Tech quality.

DISARM

Skilled melee specialists can not only defeat a foe, but force him to drop his weapon as superior bladework or pounding hammer strikes overwhelm the foe. Bereft of his weapon, the foe is now ready for interrogation and even negotiation now that he has been neutralised as a threat.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 40

Effect: The character can use the following action:

DISARM

Type: Utility

Action Points: 2

Use: The character makes an opposed Weapon Skill test against a single target with which he is currently engaged in melee. If the character succeeds at the test, his target is disarmed

and drops the weapon he was fighting with at his feet. If the character succeeds with three or more degrees of success, he can instead take his enemy's weapon from out of his hands.

EVASIVE

Some Acolytes recognise that avoiding an attack is merely the first step in winning a combat engagement, particularly when facing a talented foe. A missed swing creates opportunities, especially if the attacker had to overextend or strain himself to attempt the strike. A defender can take advantage of this, keeping in motion and ensuring his foe wastes energy but never lands a blow. A series of missed attacks gradually slows an enemy, making him increasingly vulnerable to counterattack.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 35

Effect: Whenever the character succeeds on an Evade test, he adds one to the total degrees of success scored on the test.

HARD TARGET

A moving target is harder to hit with a ranged weapon than a stationary one. Acolytes who recognise this bob and weave as they move, avoid direct lines of travel, and thoroughly exploit all available cover. Such actions hinder an enemy from leading his shots or otherwise better targeting the Acolyte, allowing him to prepare his own attack.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Effect: After the character performs the Move action, opponents suffer a -5 penalty to all attack tests made with ranged weapons against the character for one round. This penalty stacks with multiple uses of the Move action.

NIMBLE

Where many characters employ raw physical integrity to resist the effects of an attack, other individuals recognise that sheer fortitude is not always the best way to overcome the potency of many weapons. Rather than actively resisting an attack, they learn to move with it, hoping to either reduce the force of impact or increase the chances of it deflecting off of armour. With sufficient experience, this response becomes intuitive and can often better protect an Acolyte than brute opposition.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 55

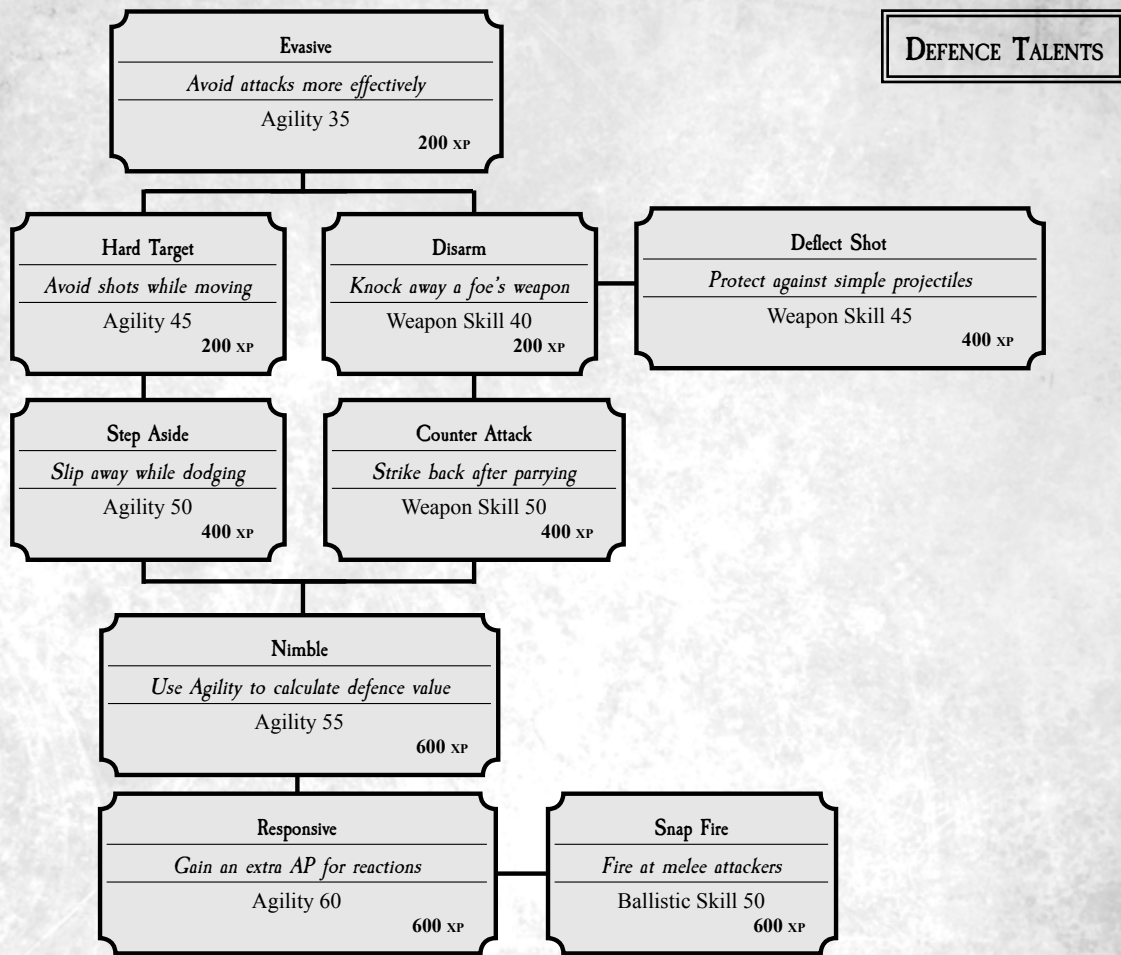
Effect: When calculating his defence value, the character uses his Agility bonus instead of his Toughness bonus.

RESPONSIVE

Some characters hone their instinctive reactions to a such a degree that they appear to react more quickly than the actual attack against them. Subconsciously recognising the cues of an impending attack, these Acolytes react based upon muscle memory, often diving for cover or stepping aside at a critical instant.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 60



Effect: At the end of his turn, the character gains 1 action point. This action point can only be spent to activate reactions, and is cleared at the start of the character's next turn like normal action points.

SNAP FIRE

Characters who favour ranged attacks might face enemies who choose not to remain distant and actively charge into combat. Such Acolytes often train themselves to fire short, close-range bursts to kill or at least wound such foes before they are forced into close quarters fighting.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 50

Effect: The character can use the following action:

SNAP FIRE

Type: Reaction

Action Points: 0

Use: If an opponent attempts to become engaged in melee with the character, the character can attack the opponent with a ranged weapon he is currently wielding by making a Ballistic Skill attack test against the approaching attacker. His rate of attack (RoA) is equal to the rate of Fire (RoF) of the ranged weapon being used. If the character spends 1 AP when using this action, he can treat a weapon with a RoF of 1/2 as having a RoF of 1. If the character spends 2 AP when using this action, he can treat a weapon with a RoF of 1/3 as having a RoF of 1.

If the attack test succeeds, the character scores a number of hits against the target equal to the degrees of success gained. This number cannot exceed the rate of attack. Only one snap reaction may be made in response to an enemy becoming engaged in melee with the character.

STEP ASIDE

An experienced combatant can recognise a foe's melee attack an instant before he makes it. Because the attacker has already committed to his swing the target can swiftly move away from the attack, often completely escaping its effects.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 50

Effect: The character can use the following action:

STEP ASIDE

Type: Reaction

Action Points: 1

Use: After a successful attack test is made against the character, but before hit locations are determined, he makes an Evade (A) test. If the test succeeds, the character moves a number of metres up to his Agility bonus. If this movement results in the character no longer being a legal target for the attack, the attack fails. Opponents engaged in melee with the character cannot perform the parting blow reaction in response to this movement.

INVESTIGATION

The forces of corruption are everywhere, and it is only due to the diligence of the Inquisition that their foul presence is revealed and their heretical plans put to the torch. Acolytes spend much of their time identifying suspects, following clues, and uncovering plots. The better their work here, the faster that foes of the Emperor can be punished. Investigative failures waste time and effort, and, worse still, allow cults to fester unchecked and the Ruinous Powers to multiply their terrible reach.

BLENDING

A successful investigation often involves trailing suspects without their knowledge, the better to follow them to hidden dens of heretical worship or criminal activity. From sparse wastelands on a feral world to a hive's densely packed habways, an Agent can ensure none notice his presence through careful replication of a crowd's mannerisms or even joining gatherings while still keeping a careful eye on his quarry.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 45

Effect: When using the shadowing use of the Stealth skill, the character can use his Fellowship characteristic instead of Perception.

CANVASSING

Often, it is difficult to extract information from groups such as hive gangs or Administratum scribes, as often numbers can bolster recalcitrance to questioning. Veteran Acolytes know that these groups can hold critical information to complete an investigation that no individual source could provide, and can throw more effective nets when interrogating groups and reveal clues that would otherwise stay obscured.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 40

Effect: Once per day, the character can re-roll a test made to gather information from a group of people. The second result must be used.

CONTACT NETWORK

Acolytes rely on a web of relationships, favours, debts, and obligations that can range from within a hab-block, to spanning an entire system. While some willingly offer support from a proper sense of responsibility to the Imperium, others might require future favours in turn or other trades. Developing and exploiting this network properly allows them to gain access to weapons, travel berths, personnel, and other resources when needed; those who maximise their connections can ensure the Acolytes are well armed and well prepared as they face a new heresy.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 50

Effect: The character can use his Fellowship characteristic in place of his Influence when making requisition tests (see page 131).

COORDINATED INTERROGATION

Skilful questioning is essential to extract useful information. Any Acolyte can conduct base torture but few can effectively use the implements of questioning to produce more than screams and blood. A trained Acolyte, especially when working in conjunction with fellow veteran Acolytes, can induce cooperation from even the most hardened of suspects and captured heretics.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Strength 40 *or* Willpower 40

Effect: The character gains a +5 bonus to all Intimidate tests made to interrogate a character, and gains an additional +5 for each other character participating in the interrogation who also has Coordinated Interrogation.

COVER-UP

During the course of an investigation, it is often to an Acolyte's benefit if the target is unaware of Inquisitorial involvement. Even the slightest whisper of the Inquisition's presence can be enough to scatter suspected heretics and drive cults into hiding. To prevent the growth and spread of rumours, Acolytes use combinations of well-placed bribes, dire threats, and other means to keep their activities as secretive as possible.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45

Effect: At the GM's discretion, the character can reduce his influence to increase his group's subtlety. For every point of influence lost in this way, the character increases his group's subtlety by 1d5.

DELICATE INTERROGATION

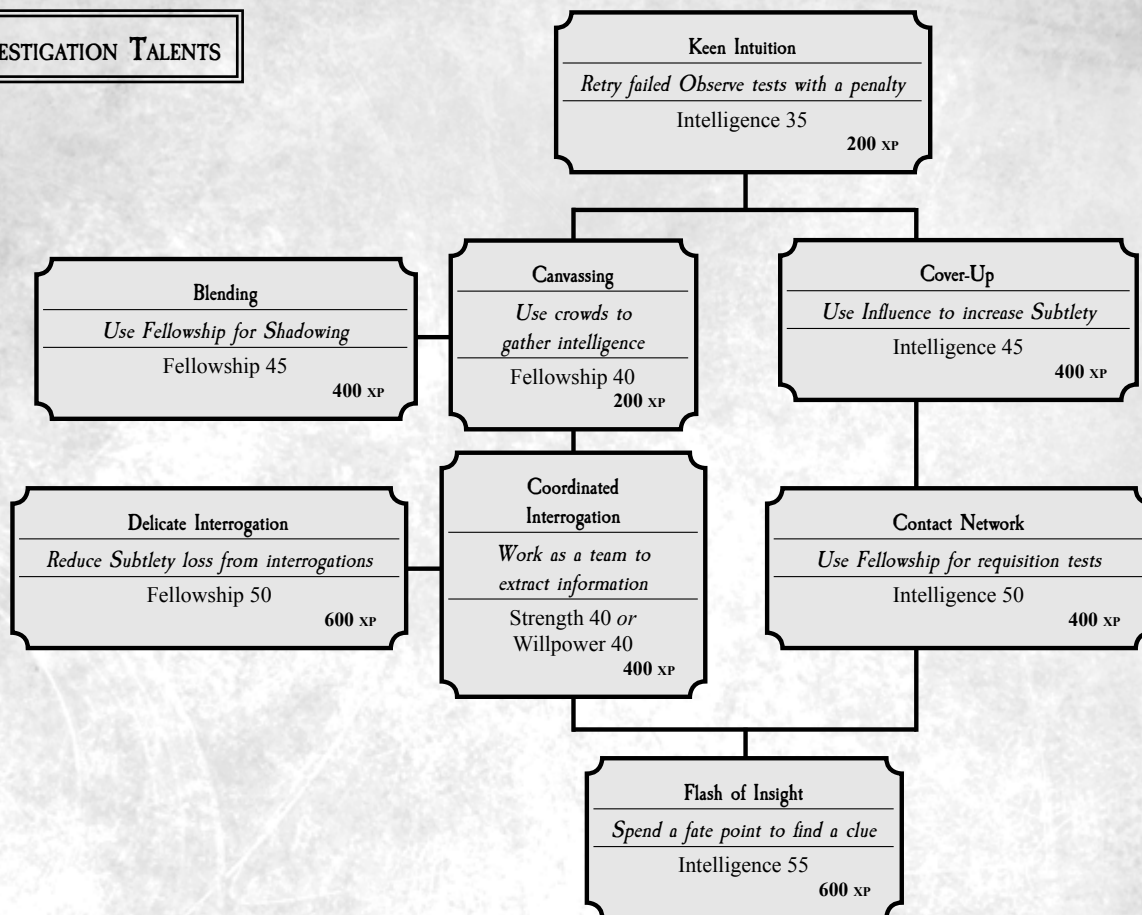
Questioning suspects and witnesses is always a necessary part of any investigation, as this not only uncovers useful information but also can reveal much about those questioned. Such sessions must remain secretive or obscured, lest others learn of the Inquisition's interest, and a variety of subterfuges, deceptions, and outright threats come into play to aid this effort. Clever interrogators sometimes even pose as representatives from other Imperial agencies or local governmental forces, calling on prior work in such groups.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 50

Effect: Whenever the character would decrease his group's subtlety due to an interrogation, the amount of subtlety lost is reduced by one.

INVESTIGATION TALENTS



FLASH OF INSIGHT

Despite steady application of logic and careful analysis, some conundrums remain insoluble. In such situations, an Agent might turn to inspiration from outside sources, such as reading patterns from wisps of lho smoke or even making direct appeals to the Emperor for guidance. Those who have trained their minds to process such lateral data can leap to conclusions that direct thinking cannot provide, and thus quash even the most hidden of heresies.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 55

Effect: When stuck in an investigation, the character can spend one fate point to reveal one of the next clues or leads.

KEEN INTUITION

Many Acolytes train extensively to notice objects that seem out of place or hidden, as well-hidden heresies are usually the most dangerous. This requires intense mental discipline as well as a thorough grounding in local lifestyles, religious practices, social norms, and other facets that can help bring even the smallest irregularity to prominence in a burst of insight, revealing the heresy festering below.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 35

Effect: After failing an Observe skill test, the character can re-attempt the test with a –10 modifier on each new attempt.

MELEE

Characters that focus on attacking opponents in close combat may choose to develop abilities within the melee talent tree. As Acolytes progress through this tree, they become increasingly lethal, accruing additional means for overwhelming their opponents. These talents represent refinements of a character's fighting style, which can only be effectively gained through practical battles where their lives are on the line. In many cases, Acolytes may incorporate techniques from other styles, including those learned from the opponents they have fought.

ASSASSIN STRIKE

A successful opponent in melee succeeds by never making the motion that their foe expects. Misdirection through weapon play and physical motion are both essential. In some cases, disengaging from a battle so that combat can be joined in a different fashion is ideal. Exceptionally acrobatic individuals can sometimes use their training and abilities in such a way that their enemies are unable to quickly respond to an unexpected situational change.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Acrobatics +0

Effect: Once per round, after making a melee attack, the character can make an Acrobatics (A) test. If he succeeds, he may immediately perform the disengage action without spending the required action points.

COMBAT MASTER

Every effective melee combatant must learn to engage multiple foes simultaneously, as many opponents become far more willing to tackle their enemy when they know that they have a numerical advantage. A significant part of a warrior's training must include lessons in facing multiple targets. Only through practice can an Acolyte learn the art of anticipating the moves from multiple opponents so that he can best dodge or parry their attacks without compromising his defences.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 40

Effect: When engaged in melee combat, opponents do not gain the bonus for outnumbering when making attack tests against the character.

CRIPPLING STRIKE

Knowledge of a target's physiological weaknesses can be crucial to achieving victory. Careful study of an opponent's techniques can reveal openings in his defences, but defensive weaknesses are seldom the same as the bodily parts most vulnerable to damage. A basic familiarity with anatomy can reveal the parts of a target that are most susceptible to injury, as well as the techniques that are best able to inflict those injuries. In certain cases, a slight change to the angle of attack can make the difference between a minor wound and a lethal blow.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Strength 45

Effect: When the character uses a melee weapon to successfully inflict a wound on an opponent, the opponent adds +5 to the value used to determine the wound effect, in addition to all other modifiers.

CRUSHING BLOW

In some situations an Acolyte must defeat an opponent swiftly, such as when one enemy has engaged the character so that another might safely escape capture. There are also times when a fighter knows that only through a decisive strike can he bring down his enemy. In these situations, the acting character may choose to apply all of his strength to a single, focused point in the hopes of quickly dispatching the current target.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Strength 50

Effect: Before making an attack with a melee weapon, the character can choose to add his Strength bonus to the damage dealt by the weapon for that attack, in addition to the weapon's normal damage. If he does so, the character must also lower his weapon's rate of attack by 1 for the attack.

DUELIST

Some cultures venerate warriors who are skilled at defeating an opponent in single combat, and honourable prestige is often associated with victories in these combats. In primitive feral settlements and hive spire society alike, duels are even a key part of settling legal disagreements and signify the divine providence of the Emperor. Such combats often feature elegant defensive swordplay and the ability to turn aside a blow, allowing the duelist to dispatch a target unready for a counterstrike.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 35

Effect: When the character is engaged in melee with a single enemy, he adds one additional degree of success to all successful Evasion (WS) tests.

FURIOUS ASSAULT

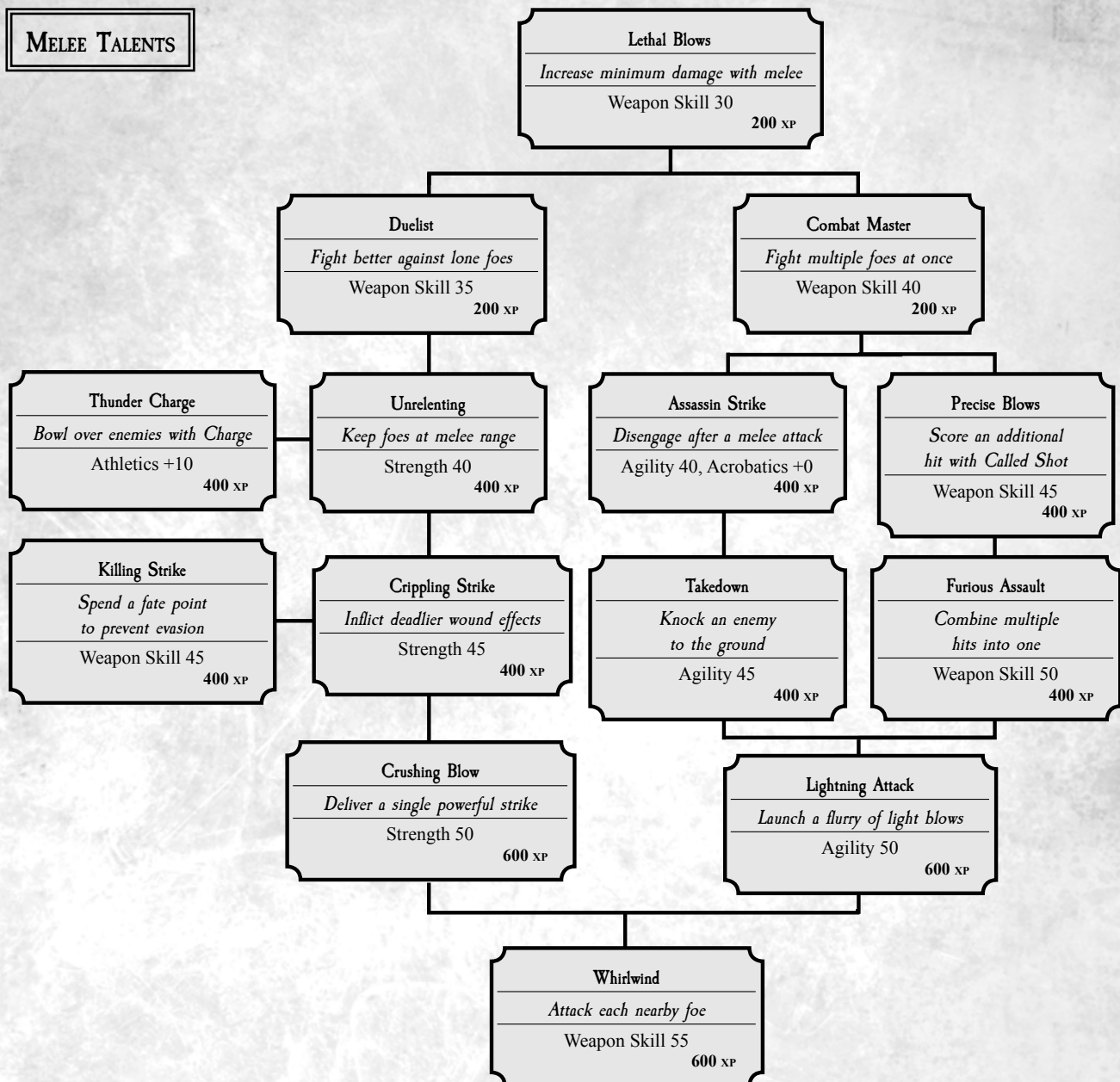
A series of repeated strikes against a single bodily location can help a character to overcome an enemy's defence; armour might crack or a minor wound might transform into a significant injury. In some cases, these combined strikes can even defeat a target who otherwise seems invulnerable.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 50

Effect: This talent comes into play when a character earns multiple hits with a single melee attack test. If two or more hits strike the same location, the character can choose to combine those hits into a single hit. Determine the damage for all of these hits separately, then add the values together to determine the damage value for the single combined hit. The target must consider the combined damage as a single hit for all purposes of reducing damage suffered.

MELEE TALENTS



KILLING STRIKE

Predictability is the surest path to defeat in combat, for an individual who moves in a methodical pattern—or even consistently uses a well-established style—becomes vulnerable to any opponent who recognises the pattern or style. An Acolyte can learn to predict his opponent's moves through familiarity with a broad range of techniques and practice at recognising patterns. Once a pattern has been identified, the character can deliberately time his strikes so that he only swings at the very instant that his foe is most vulnerable, completely bypassing the warrior's active defences.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 45

Effect: When the character succeeds at his attack test with a melee weapon, he can spend one fate point to make the attack unavoidable with the Evade skill.

LETHAL BLOWS

In a physical conflict, accuracy of attacks can play a major part in achieving victory. While a lucky hit can sometimes be decisive, veteran warriors recognise this is rare, and instead work to ensure that every swing is ideal. Consequently, every blow lands at the most vulnerable location so as to inflict maximum damage, even against a well-defended opponent.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 30

Effect: When determining the damage of a successful hit scored with a melee weapon, the character may choose to replace the result of a single damage dice of his choice with the number of degrees of success scored on his attack test.

LIGHTNING ATTACK

Acolytes are often willing to trade weaker hits for a greater number of strikes, especially when facing lightly armoured foes. In this way, they can dispatch their adversaries before their foes can bring all of their resources to bear. Sometimes an early strike can even be enough to change the fighting style of a more experienced opponent.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 50

Effect: Before making an attack with a melee weapon, the character can choose to increase his weapon's rate of attack by 1 for the attack. If he does, he must subtract 3 from the damage dealt by the weapon for the attack to a minimum of 0.

PRECISE BLOWS

A single successful strike may not be enough to fell the staunchest of rivals. This is particularly true of inhuman opponents and those who wear the sturdiest of armours, for even their weakest points remain extremely resistant to attack. When facing such enemies, an expert warrior combines knowledge of anatomy and armour design with the ability to make rapid strikes in quick succession. In this way, an Acolyte may bludgeon a foe repeatedly, forcing his defences to give way.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 35

Effect: When the character performs the Called Shot action with a melee weapon, his rate of attack cannot exceed 2 instead of the normal 1.

TAKEDOWN

Sometimes, an Acolyte needs to incapacitate an opponent without killing him. At other times, a target represents an inconvenient delay instead of a true challenge. When facing multiple opponents, temporarily incapacitating one or more targets can make the battle against the remaining enemies far easier. In any of these situations, quickly removing a target from the fight can be far more advantageous than actually slaying the foe.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Effect: The character can use the following action:

TAKEDOWN

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: On the character's next melee attack made this turn, his rate of attack cannot exceed 1. If the attack succeeds, the target immediately becomes dazed until the end of his next turn and is knocked prone.

THUNDER CHARGE

Cowardly cult leaders often hide behind rabid followers all prepared for martyrdom, sacrificing their lives to preserve the cause. Experienced Acolytes frequently learn techniques so that they can bypass intervening bodyguards such as these in order to reach their primary target.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Athletics +10

Effect: When making a charge action, the character moves a number of metres up to 2 + his Agility bonus in a straight line, instead of the normal amount. When making this movement, the character can move through all other characters as if they are not there, without provoking parting blows. After the charge is complete, all characters that the character passed through, as well as the target of the charge, must succeed at a Strength test or be knocked prone.

UNRELENTING

Victory often comes when one combatant makes a mistake, and a canny warrior often tries to induce these mistakes by exhausting his enemy. Over time, the blows that an opponent might have easily parried at the beginning of a conflict can become unavoidable as the fight nears its resolution. In extreme cases, a fighter might simply collapse from sheer exhaustion without his target striking a serious wound.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Strength 40

Effect: All opponents engaged with the character must spend 4 action points to perform the Disengage action instead of the normal 3.

WHIRLWIND

Some Acolytes focus on learning combat techniques that are particularly effective against hordes of attackers. When facing a crazed mob of cultists or a band of suicidal criminals, the character may be able to make a flurry of strikes that can fell a swathe of adversaries.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 55

Effect: The character can use the following action:

WHIRLWIND

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: On the character's next melee attack made this turn, his rate of attack cannot exceed 1. Instead of rolling a single attack test, he rolls an attack test for each opponent engaged with him in melee. Each of these attack tests are resolved as a separate attack against their target with all the properties the normal melee attack would have had. Target characters can individually evade the discrete attacks as normal.

MENTAL FORTITUDE

Experienced Acolytes know they must be strong not only in their bodies but also their minds. The forces of corruption work through subtle, insidious ways that demand strength of will and faith to resist. Those who utilise the powers of the Immaterium are especially at risk, and must steel their souls against the predations of Chaos. Shielding the mind can defend just as well as the finest carapace can the body, and allow an Acolyte to overcome and eradicate his foes.

BASTION OF IRON WILL

Acolytes cursed with psychic abilities must learn to resist the Warp-fuelled attacks of the Ruinous Powers through their strength of character. They often learn additional techniques and may be the only ones capable of resisting the most potent of foes—making their role absolutely vital to the warband's continued success.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 55

Effect: When defending against psychic powers, the character adds a bonus to his roll equal to 5 multiplied by his psy rating.

COLD HEARTED

Having faced the endless honeyed deceptions and festering lies of the enemies of Mankind, these Acolytes have hardened themselves against such blandishments and can resist even the most alluring of temptations. They are steadfast in their service, and can overcome attempts to dissuade or corrupt.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 35

Effect: The character is immune to all uses of the Charm skill. Additionally, when making an opposed Willpower test, the character adds 1 degree of success to the total degrees of success gained from the test.

FAVOURED BY THE WARP

The Warp is endlessly fickle, but it is clear that even among psykers some are less subject to its punishments than others. Many would view such individuals suspiciously, for such placidity from the Immaterium can only mean the Ruinous Powers guard them, but others might insist the Emperor instead shields their souls. Some might hold it is their own mental strength that allows them to master the Warp, though only the heretical would countenance such madness.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Effect: When rolling to determine psychic phenomenon, the character can add or subtract his Willpower bonus from the result of the roll.

IRON DISCIPLINE

Acolytes of the Inquisition must face mind-rending horrors as part of their duty to the Emperor. Though many are ill-prepared before their first encounter with heresy, with each encounter they fortify their minds against the terrifying insanities they must defeat. What would drive others mad, they can now push away and thus continue their service.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Effect: When rolling to determine a mental trauma, the character can add or subtract his Willpower bonus from the result of the roll.

JADED

Familiarity breeds contempt for the countless terrors that lurk within the galaxy. Acolytes who repeatedly face such foes can mitigate the impact of their horrendous natures upon their own psyches. Their sanity might still be lessened, but so long as they have faith their souls remain strong.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Effect: Whenever the character's insanity is increased, the amount it is increased by is reduced by 1.

NERVES OF STEEL

In combat situations, an Acolyte who perseveres under withering hails of enemy fire is one who can better live to continue service to his Inquisitor. While others might cower and seek cover, those who hold the Emperor as their shield can resist panic and fight onwards.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Effect: When making a Willpower test to resist becoming Pinned, the character can re-roll the test once. He must use the second result.

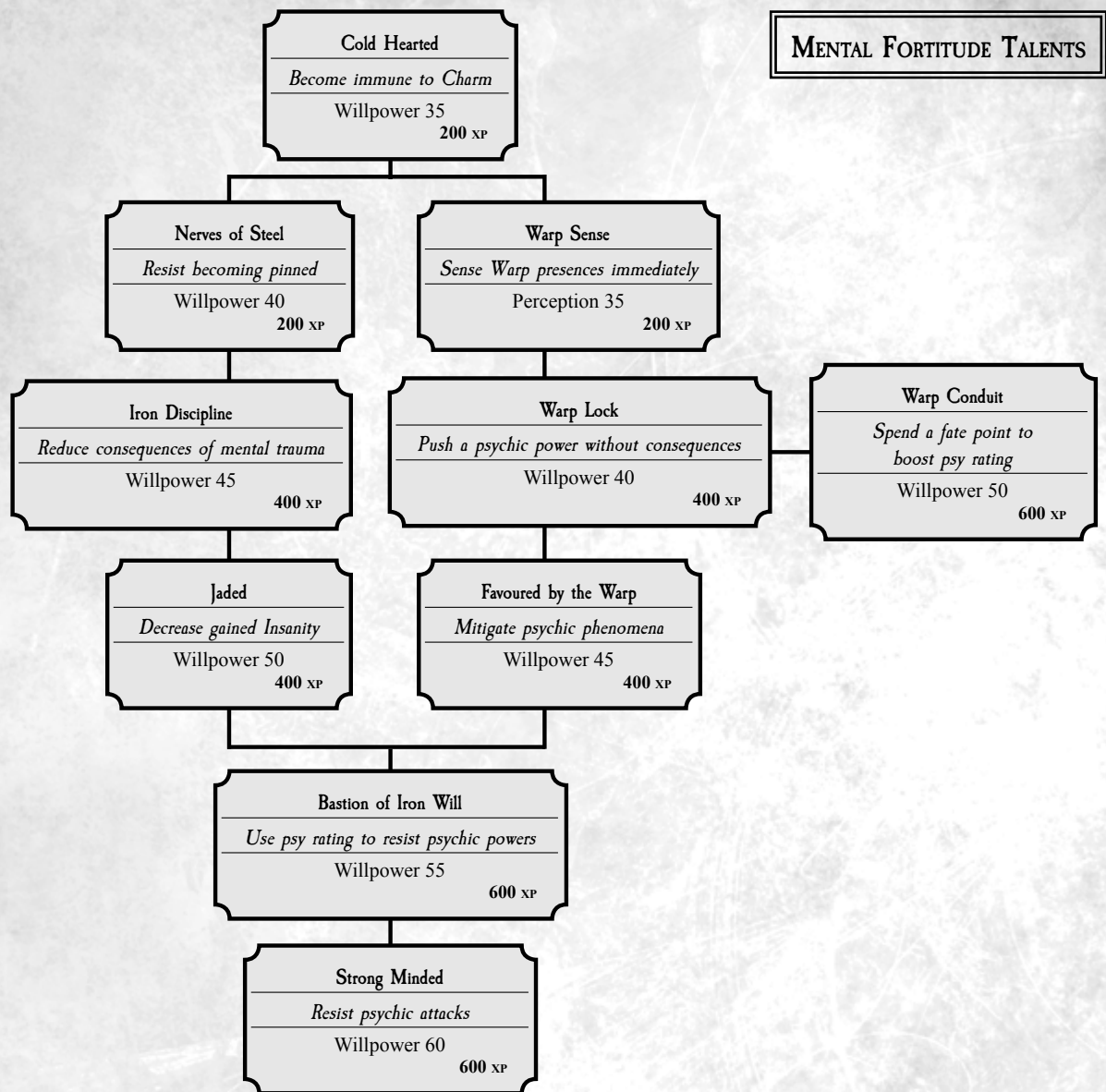
STRONG MINDED

The essence of the Warp is insidious, and the unholy denizens Immaterium strive constantly to corrupt and seduce. Faith in the Emperor and His cause is the most effective defence that any Acolyte could hope to wield against these abominations and their followers. Those who focus their minds can resist these effects, no matter the power of the psychic assault.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 60

Effect: When making an opposed test to resist psychic powers, the character can re-roll the test once. He must use the second result.



WARP CONDUIT

In times of extreme need, an experienced psyker can channel inhuman amounts of will, faith, and even a portion of his soul into deeper access to the Warp and thus manifest even more powerful forces into reality. Such feats always have a price, however, but when all would fail without their efforts, it is a price any would pay.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Effect: When channelling a psychic power, the character can spend one fate point to count his psy rating as one higher.

WARP LOCK

Despite the tremendous risks involved, through rigorous mental disciplines an Acolyte can focus his psychic powers to temporarily higher levels, finessing the Warp itself to enhance his connection to the Immaterium. His presence sheltered to a degree, he can avoid many of the predatory gazes from the terrors within.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Effect: Once per day, when channelling a psychic power, the character counts as channelling the power at the push level for purposes of determining the effects of the power. For determining the psychic phenomenon though it counts as being at the fettered level.

WARP SENSE

Psychically gifted Acolytes must regularly explore the Immaterium as they search for any signs of unsanctioned psykers or the taint of Warp-stench left upon reality. With practice he can recognise many signs of psychic activity, identifying them with little conscious effort.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Perception 35

Effect: The character can perform Psyniscience tests as a free action.

MOBILITY

Within the confines of a conflict, rapid movement and fast reactions can be just as important as superior firepower. While some might favour the better aim that a bunker vent might provide, others desire more flexibility and manoeuvrability to keep an enemy off balance and unready for their attacks. Using speed, nimbleness, and dynamic combat styles, these Acolytes can kill before their enemies even know a fight has started.

CATFALL

Acolytes who spent their lives manoeuvring through the branches of an overgrown feral world or climbing the structures of a hive world learn quickly to deal with the consequences of falling. Through adroit contortions, proper bracing on landing, and muscle techniques to soften impact, they can lessen any injuries they might suffer and allow them to continue fighting.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Effect: When suffering from the effects of falling, the character's Agility bonus (in metres) reduces the distance fallen for purposes of determining damage.

COMBAT FORMATION

Acolytes are constantly surrounded with those who would see them dead or worse. Surprise attacks can happen at any time, so many engage in regular training exercises to help maintain a state of constant vigilance. They watch for likely ambush locations and sniper dens while always calculating proper attack responses should fighting commence. Few catch them unprepared, and most wind up facing a fiercer battle than expected.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40

Effect: The character can choose to use his Intelligence bonus in place of his Agility bonus when rolling initiative.

COMBAT SENSES

For some, the sounds and smells of combat become second nature. They learn to recognise the scents of weapon unguents, the shifting dust of suspicious movements, and the sounds of readied weapons. This information can come to the character unconsciously, so that he is capable of sensing danger and reacting to it without thought with exceptional speed.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Perception 40

Effect: The character can choose to use his Perception bonus in place of his Agility bonus when rolling initiative.

LEAP UP

In most combat situations, an Acolyte knocked off his feet or lying prone is at a disadvantage. Unless in cover, he is easy prey to enemies assaulting his position. Those who are naturally light on their feet or undergo acrobatic training can rapidly right themselves and surprise their foes with blazing lasgun fire.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 35

Effect: The character may stand as a free action.

LIGHT SLEEPER

Though the body and the mind must rest, those who serve the Emperor can ill afford to be lax in their vigilance. Some can learn to remain extremely sensitive to any slight changes in their surroundings and are able to awaken from a peaceful slumber into a state of combat readiness instantly. A slight odour, a soft sound, or even a gentle shift in the room's air pressure can be enough for the Acolyte to respond.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Perception 35

Effect: The character always counts as being awake for the purposes of Observe tests and surprise, even while sleeping.

LIGHTNING REFLEXES

Many Acolytes relentlessly train to improve their reaction time, knowing that they often face enemies with inhuman physiologies or arcane powers that allow them to move faster than the norm for blessed humanity. With time and determination, a few are able to learn to react intuitively to almost any physical confrontation. Though this may only save a fraction of a second, that little time can be enough to determine the victor in a closely contested battle.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Effect: When making his initiative roll, the character can roll twice and choose the higher of the two rolls.

PRETERNATURAL SPEED

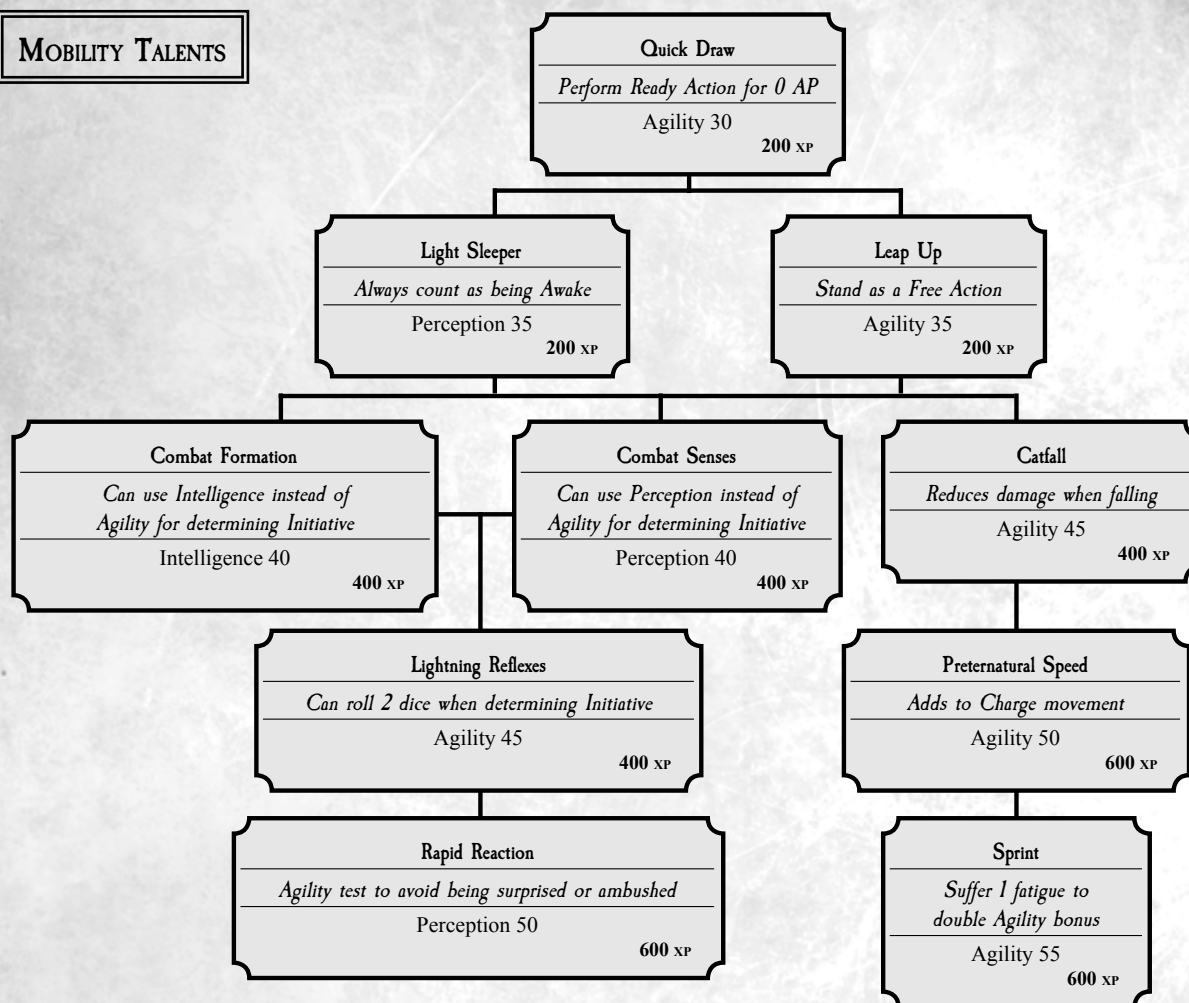
Acolytes that prefer melee combat are at greatest risk when they are out of reach of their foes, and often strive to enhance their running speed at all costs. A distance of only a few centimetres can make all the difference between being shot and getting in the first swing of a chainsword.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 50

Effect: When performing the Charge action, the character adds 1 metre to his total distance moved.

MOBILITY TALENTS



QUICK DRAW

Some situations do not permit Acolytes to keep their weapons or other suspicious items openly displayed, and those who rely on their guns to do their negotiating live and die in the moments it takes to draw their weapons or pull forth a needle. With extensive practice they can learn to move with a single fluid action, acting before their foes can act against them.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 30

Effect: The character can perform the Ready action without spending any AP, instead of the normal 1.

RAPID REACTION

Dangers to the Imperium of Man lurk around every corner and within every shadow, as heretics, xenos, and mutants constantly strive to corrupt and destroy. They frequently esort to traps and ambushes in their drive to eliminate the Emperor's servants. To survive against such attacks, Acolytes must prepare for an enemy assault at any instant and be ready to leap into action with even the slightest notice.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Perception 50

Effect: When surprised or ambushed, the character makes an Agility test. If he succeeds, he is not surprised and instead acts normally.

SPRINT

An Acolyte who cannot escape a foe or catch a fleeing heretic cannot effectively serve the Emperor. Many individuals incorporate extensive calisthenics into their daily training regimen so that they recognise their bodily limits and can push them to new extremes, trading speed for exhaustion once the chase is over. In this way they are far better prepared to act against the forces of corruption that they face as part of their sacred duty.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 55

Effect: When performing a movement action, the character can choose to suffer one point of fatigue to double his Agility bonus for the purposes of determining the distance moved.

PILOT

Acolytes are always on the move, for heresy is everywhere and can spread across wide areas. A cult might extend across an entire planet or stellar region, and many make use of their own military vehicles. While some Acolytes rely on outside aid for transportation or armoured combat, some excel in the role of vehicle operator themselves. Many of these feel complete only when controlling their craft, coaxing its machine spirit beyond what any official pattern designs might have ordained. With an experienced pilot at the helm, Acolytes can be sure of decisive speed, strong defensive manoeuvring, and overall greater survivability.

BRACE FOR IMPACT

A high-speed collision is an effective tactic, both in military combat as well as civilian chases, but it can be damaging to the pilot as well as his vehicle. With practice, a pilot can learn to recognise specific techniques to mitigate the effects of such a collision.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Pilot +0

Effect: The character can use the following action:

BRACE FOR IMPACT

Type: Reaction

Action Points: 1

Use: When the vehicle this character is riding in is involved in a crash (see page 224), but before the crash resolves, the character can use this action to reduce any damage he would suffer from breach effects the crash causes by his Agility bonus.

ADEPT MANOEUVRING

A master pilot recognises the strengths and limitations of his craft, such as the locations most resistant to damage and those more vulnerable to enemy fire. During combat, every adjustment of the controls acts to keep the vehicle's weaker areas less exposed and, with experience, a pilot can keep his craft functional far beyond any reasonable expectations.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 40

Effect: The character can now use the Adept Manoeuvring action as per below:

ADEPT MANOEUVRING

Type: Reaction, Operate

Action Points: 1

Use: After a successful attack test is made against the vehicle the character is operating, but before hit locations are determined, the character makes a Pilot test (based on the type of vehicle being operated). If the Pilot test succeeds, the character can change the facing struck by the attack to a facing of his choice. This does not affect the positioning of the vehicle.

DAMAGE CONTROL

Veteran pilots remain in constant communion with their crafts' machine spirits. When their vehicles suffer damage, they heed the information and identify ways to compensate for it. Relatively minor adjustments can be enough to compensate for damage that might otherwise be crippling. In other cases, a pilot recognises that the damage is less severe than appearances might suggest and must reassure the machine spirit of the situation, so that the craft does not become disconsolate.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40

Effect: When the vehicle the character is piloting suffers a breach or critical breach the character reduces the breach effect the vehicle suffers by his Intelligence bonus.

HOTSHOT PILOT

Experienced pilots can often perform feats that substantially exceed a vehicle's known handling as established in its Mechanicum-sanctioned pattern. Learning to perform such actions also allows them to recover from what would normally be fatal mishaps. Such occurrences are commonplace for those used to operating vehicles beyond the norm, as they have trained themselves to greater preparedness for any errors from pilot or craft.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Pilot +20

Effect: When the character succeeds at a Pilot test, he gains 2 additional degrees of success. When the character fails a Pilot test, he reduces his degrees of failure on the test by 2, to a minimum of 1

PUSH THE LIMIT

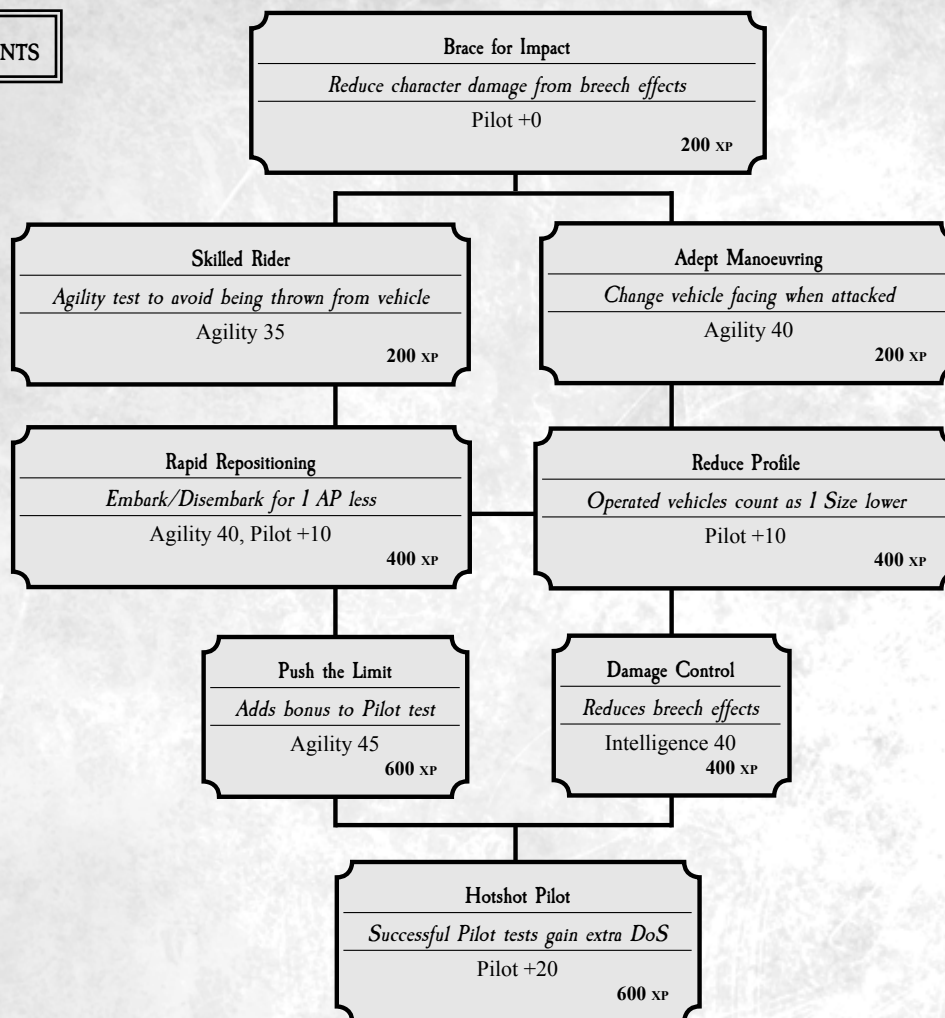
A veteran operator recognises how he can pilot it outside of its stable limits. When successful, his vehicle seems to have been touched by the Emperor's sure hand. Any errors at this level though can result in tragedy, and impart enough stress on the vehicle to rip its frame apart.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Effect: Once per round, the character can add a +20 bonus to a Pilot test. However, if he fails the test by a number of degrees of failure greater than his Agility bonus, the vehicle suffers an automatic breach to its motive systems. Roll 2d10 on **Table 7-16: Motive Systems** (page 226) for the associated breach effect, adding any bonuses or penalties from previous breaches and critical breaches

PILOT TALENTS



RAPID REPOSITIONING

Vehicles in the 41st Millennium are often huge, elaborate crafts with many crew positions to man. Acolytes often must move from vox station to weapon turret to helm in a stressful situation, especially when another operator has been wounded or killed. The faster they can do this, the less chance cultists might escape in a habway chase or their own tank fall to enemy bombardment attack.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Pilot +10

Effect: The Embark/Disembark action costs this character 1 action point instead of the usual 2 action points.

REDUCE PROFILE

Hitting an object in motion with a ranged attack is never easy, and the angles of attack can make a tremendous difference. From the pilot's perspective this means managing his vehicle's facing at all times, so that the foe is presented with the most narrow silhouette possible. Such actions can make a light civilian craft as robust as a heavily armoured tank, and greatly multiply the combat effectiveness of often out-gunned Inquisitorial forces.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Pilot +10

Effect: Any vehicle the character operates counts its Size trait as 1 lower for the purposes of determining modifiers to attacks made against the vehicle. This effect only applies as long as the character is operating the vehicle.

SKILLED RIDER

No ace achieves mastery without missteps, and learning how to deal with crashes or other mishaps is as important as learning new combat manoeuvres. Confidence in surviving such events through nimble egress or willingness to stay with their vehicle can diminish disaster into a minor annoyance, and allow the Acolyte to continue his mission.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 35

Effect: If the character would be thrown from or within his vehicle, he first makes an Agility test. If he succeeds, he can chose to remain in his original position, or to be thrown from his vehicle, landing on his feet and not suffering the normal penalties for being thrown.

RANGED

Many combatants prefer to eliminate their foes from range. This has the obvious advantage that an effective marksman may be able to overcome an enemy while offering little opportunity for reprisal. That advantage is particularly relevant for Acolytes who regularly face opponents that have vastly superior numbers or inhuman physiologies that penalise melee combat. With practice and experience, a character can learn to effectively exploit all of the advantages of his preferred ranged weapons, with unorthodox techniques can sometimes prove to be particularly effective methods of swiftly eliminating adversaries.

BARRAGE

Often, a ranged weapon's efficacy is the result of its rate of fire. Some Acolytes spend a substantial portion of their training working to develop accuracy with weapons that have high rates of fire, and through extended practice and experience can learn to take better advantage of the each of the rounds fired in any burst. In this way, the foes of the Emperor may be brought to justice with a minimum of effort, as each shell propels a target toward justice.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 55

Effect: After making a successful attack test with a ranged weapon, the character adds 1 degree of success to the total degrees of success gained from the test.

BULGING BICEPS

For the novice, heavy weapons are unwieldy devices which require a significant amount of time and effort to use effectively even under the best conditions. As characters become more experienced in wielding such weapons, they learn more about the design as well as implementation, and can exploit better leverage angles and grips. Through dedicated practice, even individuals who are less physically powerful can effectively manoeuvre and fire their heavy weapon to better effect.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Strength 45

Effect: The character only suffers a -15 penalty to firing an unbraced heavy weapon, instead of the normal -30. In addition, he only needs to spend 1 AP to perform the Brace Heavy Weapon action, instead of the normal 2 AP.

CONSTANT VIGILANCE

During a protracted engagement, characters sometimes need to maintain lines of fire to secure an area or to eliminate a high priority target. During these situations, sentries often come under attack, just as they attempt to shut down their enemies. Where a less experienced individual might lose his focus, a disciplined Acolyte learns to avoid distractions from any incoming attacks while still fulfilling his assigned duty.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Agility 55

Effect: The character can perform reactions without ending the effects of the Overwatch action.

CRIPPLING SHOT

Understanding a foe's armour as well as his anatomy can be a tremendous asset to anyone involved in a combat situation. A skilled marksman learns to direct his fire towards a target's most vulnerable areas; as a consequence, those attacks are far more likely to incapacitate the foe. Some veteran snipers develop an almost uncanny knack these attacks, regularly hitting scarcely noticeable seams and weak spots that even the most heavily armoured target possesses.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 45, Perception 50

Effect: When the character uses a ranged weapon to successfully inflict a wound on an opponent, the opponent adds +5 to the value used to determine the wound effect, in addition to all other modifiers.

EYE OF VENGEANCE

Over the course of an extended campaign, a shooter is certain to learn the intricacies of his opponent's armour, and hunt for design flaws to be exploited. A well-placed hit can not only negate armour but turn it against its user, as flak armour splits inwards or carapace plating fragments into deadly shrapnel.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 50, Perception 55

Effect: The character can use the following action:

EYE OF VENGEANCE

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: On the character's next ranged attack made this turn, his rate of attack cannot exceed 1. If the attack succeeds, the hit deals an additional amount of damage equal to the defence value on the hit location.

HAWK'S EYE

Characters with a particularly potent ranged weapon are often assigned lookout duties, while their compatriots are otherwise engaged. On some occasions, Acolytes might even need to patiently wait for days until their prey is revealed. They learn to remain completely aware of their environment, as they maintain their vigil. Where a novice might soon acquire tunnelled vision as he focuses tightly, a veteran learns to study a wider area and if needed target another, unexpected foe.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Perception 45

Effect: When performing the Overwatch or Brace Heavy Weapon action, the character's field of view encompasses a 90-degree arc in the direction that he is facing, instead of the normal 45-degree arc.

INDEPENDENT TARGETING

Particularly adept marksmen can learn to hit multiple targets with a single burst of fire, and may even be able to strike down more than one foe with an exceptional single shot.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 45

Effect: When making an attack with a ranged weapon, if the character scores more than one successful hit, he can choose to move any number of those hits to other opponents within 5 metres of the original target. These hits cannot be allocated to targets who would have been harder to hit than the original target. For the purposes of Evade reactions, each opponent that is allocated a hit in this way counts as having been struck by a ranged attack with a number of degrees of success equal to the number of hits assigned to them. The active character then subtracts a number of degrees of success from the original attack equal to the number of hits re-assigned to new targets.

MARKSMAN

In the hands of a master, a weapon's effective range can be far greater than what Tech-Adepts would detail in its sanctified specifications. Through extensive practice, knowledge of current environmental conditions, and exploitation of unintended design features, he can push the device to its very limits, greatly increasing its lethality.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40

Effect: Before making an attack action with a ranged weapon, the character can choose to increase the range of his weapon by fifty percent. If he does so, the attack test suffers a -20 penalty.

OVERWATCH

Experienced characters must learn to react instantly when a critical target crosses his field of fire.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 30

Effect: The character can use the following action:

OVERWATCH

Type: Attack

Action Points: Variable

Use: The character establishes a kill zone that encompasses a 45-degree arc in the direction that he is facing. He then establishes the conditions under which his Overwatch is triggered. Any time the specified conditions are met by an opponent within the established kill zone, the character can make a ranged attack action against that opponent. The character does not spend action points to use this Ranged Attack action and, instead, the action is executed as if the character had spent a number of action points on it equal to the those spent to activate Overwatch.

If this attack would occur at the same time as another character's action, the character with the higher Agility value acts first. If both characters have the same Agility, they must make an opposed Agility test to determine who acts first.

If the character performs any actions or reaction (other than free actions), or becomes stunned or unconscious while on Overwatch, his Overwatch immediately ends.

RAPID RELOAD

When under heavy enemy pressure, survival and victory depend upon the most effective use of every moment. Time spent reloading weapons is perhaps the most precious as the Acolyte cannot fire at his foes. Some Acolytes often put tactile markings on their magazines so they can quickly find the correct clip with no visual check needed, or always hold ammunition in easily accessible locations. Others simply practice the manoeuvre again and again, knowing the precious moments saved can mean the difference between triumph and tragedy.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Agility 40

Effect: When performing the Reload action, the character's AP cost is reduced to one less than the weapon's reload value, instead of its normal amount.

RITE OF CLEARING

A jammed weapon can be a death sentence—especially if it is the only one carried. While never being without another weapon would be the ideal solution, Acolytes are often in situations where this is not practical and must instead trust in their ability to quickly clear a weapon. This requires familiarity that only experience can breed as well as an intense and ongoing level of practice and study. For the master a weapon jam remains a worry, but no longer a deadly one.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40

Effect: The character does not have to make a Ballistic Skill test when reloading after a weapon jam.

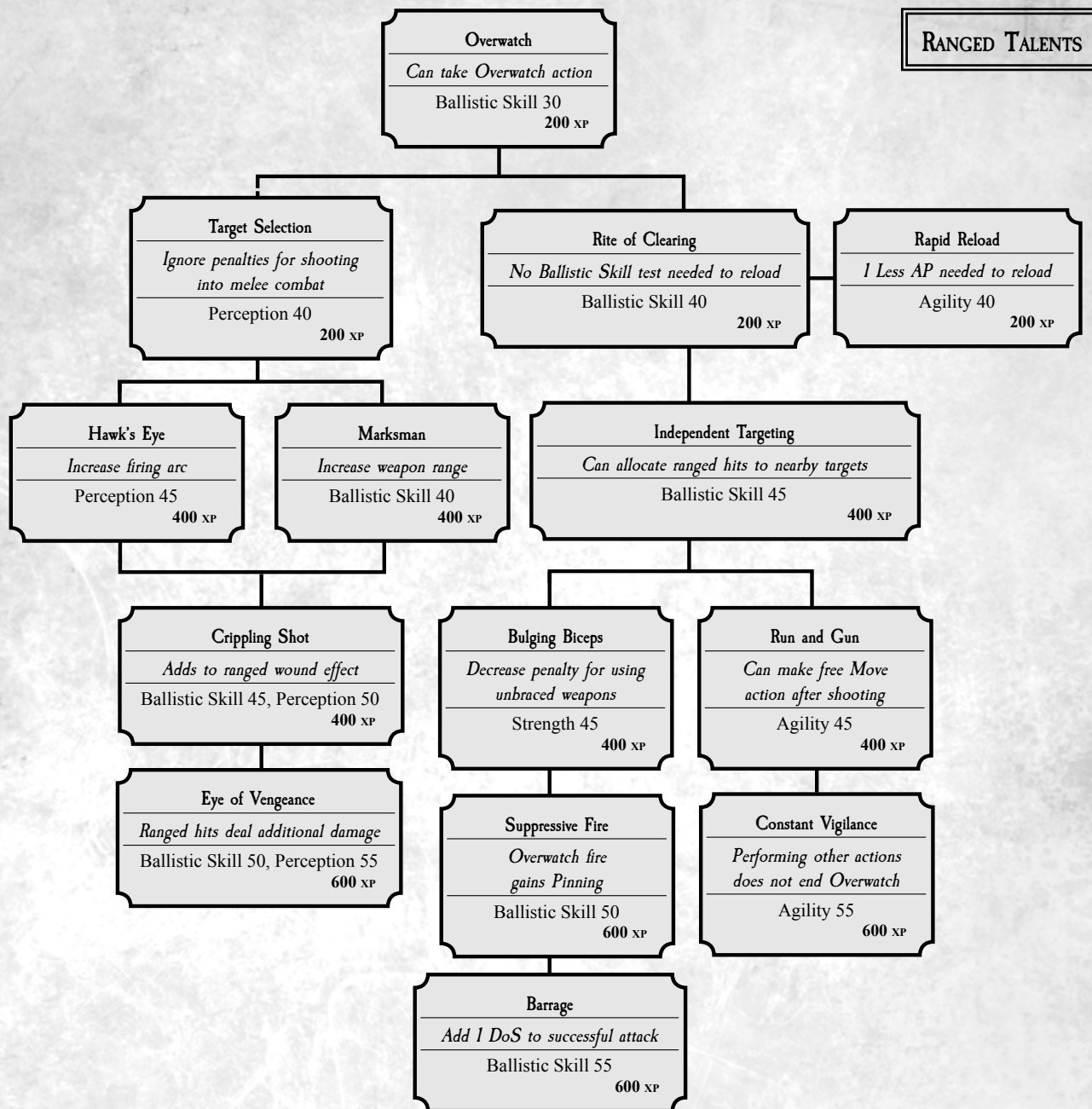
RUN AND GUN

In a ranged combat, constant motion is often an asset. Acolytes who move after firing may be able to completely avoid return fire. Experienced individuals learn to move after each shot they take, quickly setting into new positions and keeping their opponents off balance. Such movement allows Acolytes to engage their foes at close quarters, or escape an untenable position before they themselves are overrun.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Effect: Once per round, after making an attack with a ranged weapon, the character can immediately perform the Move action without spending the required action points.



SUPPRESSIVE FIRE

An experienced lookout can not only eliminate enemies, but send many more to the ground in a hail of lasblasts or heavy stubber shells. In such hands, the weapon can stop a charging cultist horde in its tracks, allowing fellow Acolytes to pick off the cowering foes or launch their own charge against them.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 50

Effect: When performing Ranged Attack actions as the result of triggering the Overwatch action, the character's weapon gains the Pinning quality.

TARGET SELECTION

Only in the most dire situations would an Acolyte fire into a close quarters fight where he might hit one of his allies, but such is their duty that this occurs far too often. Some develop skills to avoid friendly fire as part of their regular training procedures, incorporating specific manoeuvres to effectively provide firing lanes into melee. Others simply pray that the Emperor guides their hand, knowing that not taking the shot could lead to even worse outcomes.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Perception 40

Effect: The character ignores all penalties for shooting at targets engaged in melee combat.

RESILIENCE

Many heroes are renowned for their ability to persevere against overwhelming odds. Legends recount the holy saints of the Imperium who continued to serve the Emperor though their bodies bled from countless wounds and their minds spent from exhaustion. Their foes are seemingly endless and many are unencumbered by the limitations of a corporeal form. To combat this, Acolytes find new limits to their endurance, recognising that they can only rest in the embrace of the Emperor when their service is complete.

DIE HARD

During an extended combat, exhaustion is every bit as dangerous as actual weapon damage. Even minor wounds can slow a character's actions and reactions after time, allowing his enemy greater opportunities to exploit his weaknesses. An Acolyte can train to keep his body from betraying him during battle, ensuring he can fight longer at full effectiveness.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 40

Effect: The character continues to reduce the X value of the Blood Loss condition (see page 207) when unconscious.

HARDY

Those who serve the Emperor cannot afford to lay idle, even as they recover from injuries. Even after one enemy is vanquished, others continue in the path of corruption, for there is never an end to heresy. Through rigorous conditioning and willingness to ignore the normal pains of convalescence, Acolytes can lessen the impact of injuries or illnesses and devote more time to carrying out the Emperor's will.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 50

Effect: When removing wounds during six consecutive hours of rest, the character can remove one additional wound of the same type (see page 207 for rules for natural healing).

IRON JAW

Characters who have survived through countless battles recognise the dangers of shock and other debilitating injury, and learn to overcome them. An experienced Acolyte can shake off momentary incapacitation so that he can at least make an opportune strike against a gloating opponent or move to avoid a potentially lethal follow-through.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 45, Willpower 40

Effect: When suffering from the stunned condition, the character can make a Toughness test at the beginning of each turn. If he succeeds, he loses the stunned condition and proceeds with his turn, only gaining 2 AP for the turn instead of the normal 4.

MEDITATION

With adequate mental discipline, a character can learn to recognise and overcome the effects of exhaustion. With only a brief rest, an adept of one of the many techniques found throughout the Imperium feels sufficiently refreshed to pursue his goals undeterred once more.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Effect: By spending 10 minutes uninterrupted and succeeding at a Willpower test, the character can reduce his fatigue by 1.

NEVER DIE

Some maintain that luck and fate are every bit as important in a conflict as any amount of training. The grace of the Emperor may be enough to spare an Acolyte from a grievous injury and on countless occasions, individuals devoted to the their Inquisitor's service have emerged unscathed from seemingly-lethal attacks. The legends of saints are littered with such accounts—a fact that has strengthened the faith of countless followers of the Imperial Creed.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 60

Effect: When the character receives a new non-critical wound, he can spend one fate point to not gain the wound effect from that wound.

RAPID HEALING

Acolytes with high levels of physical conditioning can often shrug off injuries after the heat of a battle has died down, their well-maintained physiques helping to staunch minor bleeding or lasgun burns. Others might use combat drugs or other supplements to lessen their recovery time, but those who have disciplined themselves to the point they rarely need such artificial aids ensures they never are overly reliant on them.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 55

Effect: When the character spends a fate point to remove a non-critical wound, he removes two non-critical wounds instead.

RESISTANCE

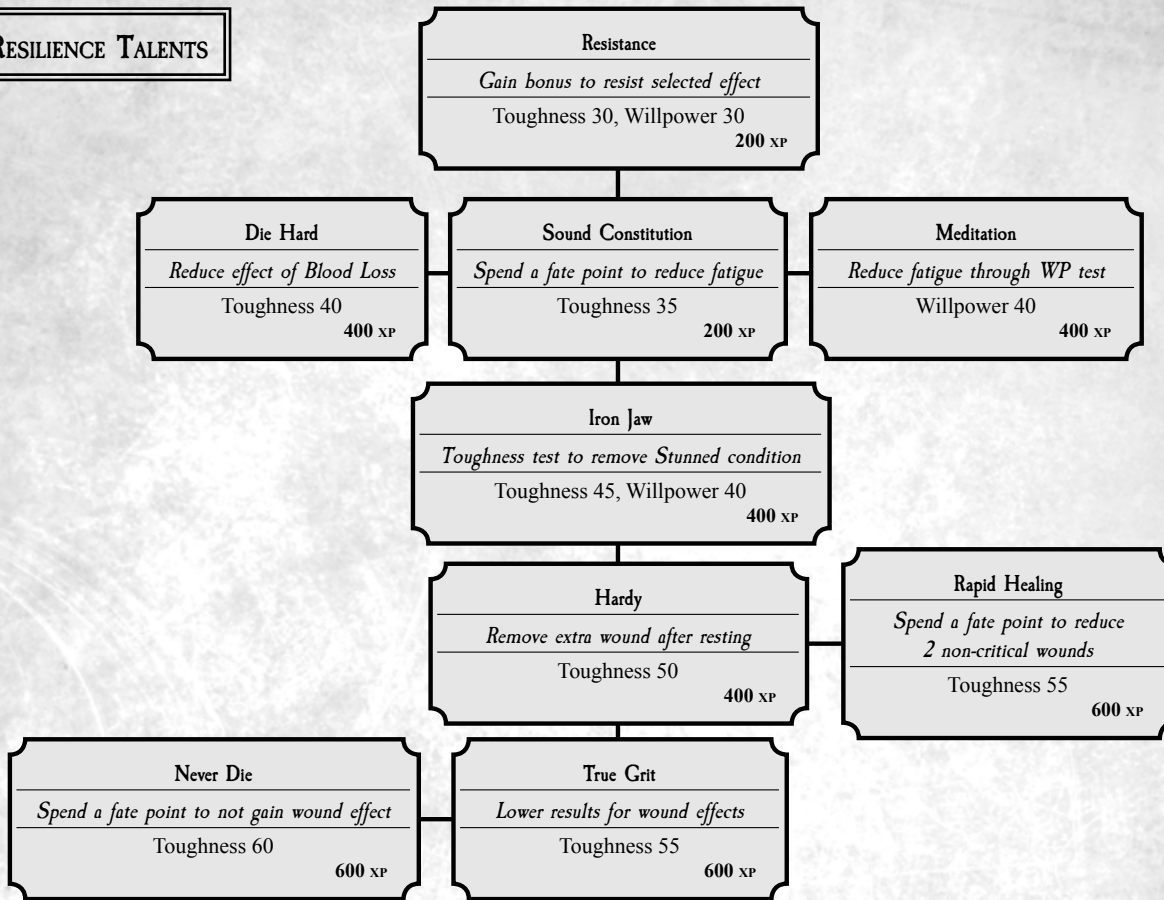
Many individuals have a history of exposure to a particularly dangerous substance. In many cases, this is due to the circumstances of their youths in hostile environmental conditions or in the presence of particular toxins. Others train extensively in the presence of specific dangers so that their minds and bodies can more effectively resist an insidious condition.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 30, Willpower 30

Effect: Each time the character selects this talent, he chooses one area of resistance. The character gains a +10 bonus when making tests to resist effects of the chosen type. Following are the most common areas of resistance:

RESILIENCE TALENTS



• **Cold:** In addition to dealing wounds, extreme cold may also trigger fatigue damage and induce various conditions. Resistance applies to all of these effects.

• **Fear:** Entities exist for the sole purpose of corrupting and devouring humanity, and characters with this resistance have a knack for standing up to them. See page 127 for more on fear.

• **Heat:** Environmental effects as well as Flame weapons can trigger wounds, fatigue, and conditions. The character has developed the ability to persevere through such effects.

• **Poison:** Horrific beasts and sophisticated assassins often rely upon toxins to slay an opponent who might be difficult to attack directly. A character with this resistance has an unusual physiology that is less susceptible to their effects.

• **Psychic Powers:** Those who wield the powers of the Immaterium can often use them to manipulate their environment as well as their foe's minds and bodies. Characters with this resistance are less susceptible to any psychic attacks that target them directly.

SOUND CONSTITUTION

For some individuals, a period of rest is not necessarily about recovery. Instead, it is also a time of preparation for the constant dangers that lay ahead. Some include a portion of focused meditation during their rest so that their minds and spirits are adequately prepared to resist the new day's challenges, while others choose to fortify themselves through more physical means. Once readied, they are prepared to operate without further rest for an extended period of time.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 35

Effect: The character can spend one fate point to recover 2 points of fatigue

TRUE GRIT

Through strength of will, physiological enhancements, or simply dedication to their Inquisitor, some characters refuse to fall. These Acolytes can shrug off the effects of wounds that might cripple or even kill a lesser person. Their bodies may be covered with scar tissue and burn marks, but they continue to fight on when others would fail in their duty from the same injury.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 55

Effect: When determining wound effects, the character adds +4 for each regular wound and +8 for each critical wound instead of the normal amounts (+5 and +10).

SOCIAL

Many individuals recognise that battle is not the only path to triumph over a foe. Sometimes, a reasoned negotiation can lead to a successful resolution, while misdirection or treachery can place an enemy at such a disadvantage that victory becomes equally assured. An investigation that relies upon social cues rather than bolter fire is also far less likely to attract notice or suspicion. This approach can often lead to greater cooperation and local support.

CHARMING

Some Acolytes recognise that a kind word and a smile may be a better path than a threat and a pointed weapon, especially when facing potentially hostile groups. Often social chameleons, they can recognise susceptibilities based upon planetary environs, clothing, and personal effects. With this approach, the target individuals typically believe the acting character to be a friendly peer rather than a potential enemy.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Charm +10

Effect: When using the Charm skill, the character can affect a number of other characters equal to his Fellowship bonus multiplied by his degrees of success on the Charm test.

COMMANDING

A talented leader can inspire individuals, and groups alike. Through effective delegation, stern glares, exhortations to the Emperor, or even a few well-targeted laspistol shots, he can motivate others to perform at their very highest levels for an extended period of time, often enabling a group to complete a task that might have initially seemed insurmountable.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Command +10

Effect: When using the Command skill, the character can affect a number of other characters equal to his Fellowship bonus multiplied by his degrees of success on the Command test.

DECEPTIVE

Misdirection is often a key element in the early stages of any investigation. Once a region's population recognises that the Inquisition has taken a direct hand in combating heresy, fearful suspects can go into hiding and leads can disappear. Newly arrived Acolytes often need to present false fronts or other prevarications as they gather evidence of corruption. On many worlds, a well-constructed lie can also bypass bureaucratic delays and reveal resources that do not officially exist.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Deceive +10

Effect: When using the Deceive skill, the character can affect a number of other characters equal to his Fellowship bonus multiplied by his degrees of success on the Deceive test.

DISTURBING VOICE

Some individuals have an unusual vocal mannerism, and through practice, psychic scarring, or even physiological enhancement can make it even more so. Their tone has a reverberation that feels wholly unnatural and gives chills to all who listen. Such characters might be remembered for their voice even more than they are for any elements of their physical appearance.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 45, Willpower 45

Effect: Once per day, when making an Intimidate test, the character can re-roll the test once; the second result must be used. However, the character always suffers a -10 penalty to all Fellowship tests when dealing with others in a non-threatening manner.

INTIMIDATING

At times, no amount of cajoling, appeals to authority, or misdirection is enough to guarantee cooperation, and harsher methods are needed. Through properly applied overt threats, brandishing of weapons, flexing of muscles, or even intense glares an Acolyte can cow entire groups to cease hostilities, reveal information, and return to proper respect for the Emperor's servants.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Intimidate +10

Effect: When using the Intimidate skill, the character can affect a number of other characters equal to his Fellowship bonus multiplied by his degrees of success on the Intimidate test.

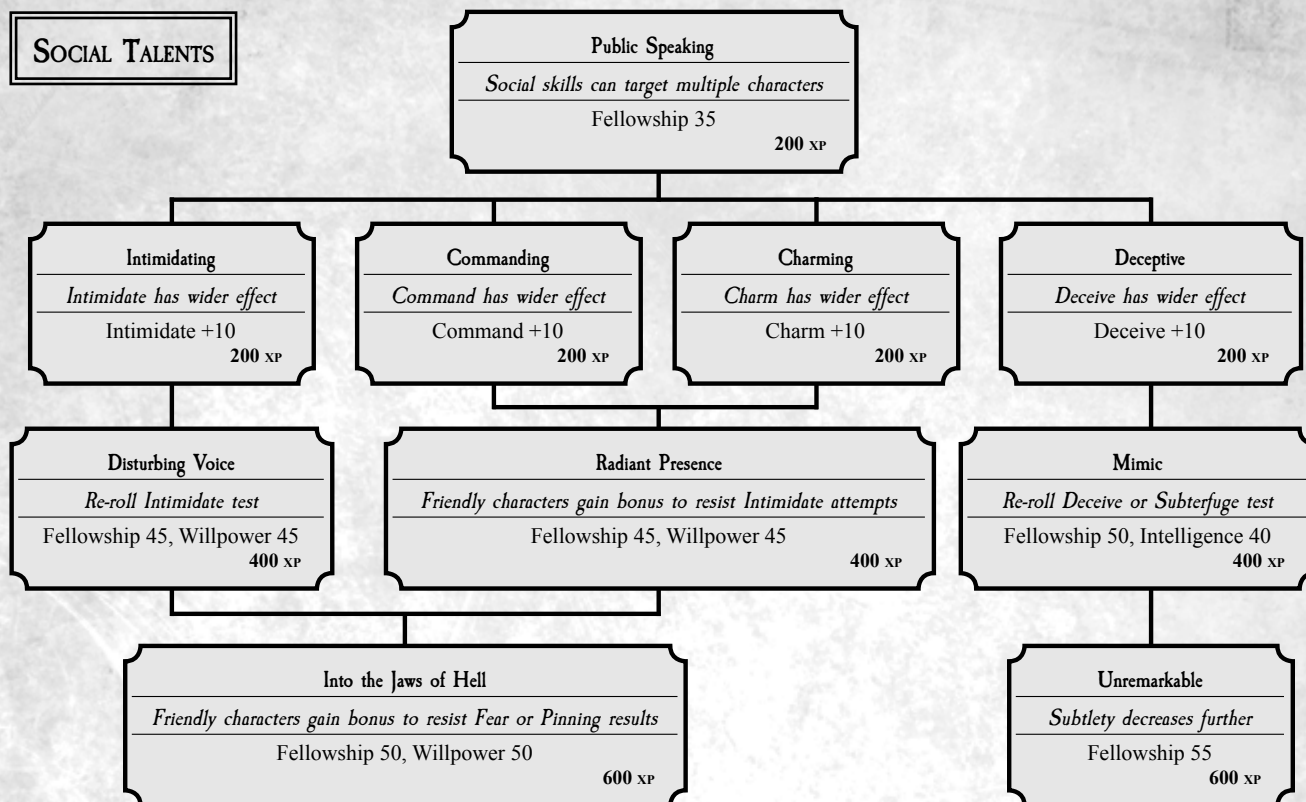
INTO THE JAWS OF HELL

Some leaders inspire their followers with an immeasurable degree of loyalty. Commands are followed without question in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. This may be due to a strong respect they have towards their commander, debts of honour, or the fear of punishment for failure. No matter the cause, such men can lead their forces against any foe no matter how dire the situation becomes.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 50, Willpower 50

Effect: All characters within 20 metres of the character gain +10 to all tests made to resist the Fear or Pinning. A character can only receive this bonus from Into the Jaws of Hell once.



MIMIC

The false impression of authority is often enough to ensure that a deception succeeds, and in many cases this requires impersonation. Disguising a voice is just as important as disguising the form, as often the impersonation need only be over vox channel or shouted into a hostile vehicle. Time spent perfecting the ability to pick up on accents, local dialects, and personal vocal mannerisms can greatly improve attempts at misdirection and subterfuge.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 50, Intelligence 40

Effect: The character can accurately mimic the voice of another. When making a Deceive or Subterfuge test to act and speak as another person, the character can re-roll the test once but must use the second result. This talent cannot be used when attempting to copy the voice of a xenos unless the character possesses the applicable Specialist talent.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Words can be more effective than massed firepower when facing crowds. Acolytes who learn to sway large groups through stirring oration, veiled threats, beguiling promises, or outright lies the size of a Baneblade tank can often avoid dangerous confrontations and even acquire unexpected allies.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 35

Effect: When using social skills (Charm, Command, Deceive, and Intimidate) the character can affect a number of other characters equal to his Fellowship bonus.

RADIANT PRESENCE

Even among the most devout agents of the Inquisition, there are those whose faith in the Emperor is truly distinctive. These individuals inspire their comrades to new heights of valour; their dedication intensified, those around such characters can spread their conviction and continue their duty against any who would stand in their way.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 45, Willpower 45

Effect: All friendly characters within 20 metres of the character gain +10 to all Charm tests and all Willpower tests made to resist the Intimidate skill. A character can only receive this bonus from Radiant Presence once.

UNREMARKABLE

It is often extremely helpful for an Acolyte to effectively blend into a local population. Some individuals master this trait, and can effectively fit in with virtually any society no matter the world. A few make it a point to alter their style of dress and appearance to better mesh with their environment, but others are masters of body language, mannerisms, social cues, and other methods that no matter their clothing, they are nondescript and easily forgotten.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 55

Effect: When the group would decrease their Subtlety due to the actions of the character, they decrease it by one less. Additionally, any attempts to recall the character's face suffer a -20 penalty, and the character gains a +20 bonus to any Deceive or Subterfuge tests used to appear harmless and ordinary or convince someone they have never before met.

TECHNOLOGY

The mysteries of the Ommissiah cannot be taken lightly. A follower of the Machine Cult must fully embrace the ways and techniques of that sacred order if he hopes to ever achieve true faith and understanding. As a Tech-Priest's experience with different aspects of the Ommissiah grows, his abilities to manipulate devices often advances as well. In many cases, this development coincides with the acquisition of additional cybernetic enhancements, and each new blessed replacement represents a further integration with the divinity of the machine.

ARMOUR MONGER

Through faith in the Machine God, binaric cants, and application of blessed unguents and sanctified reinforcing plates, armour can be made to resist those who would denigrate the works of the Ommissiah. Such protection, now dramatically more effective against fusillade of fire, can inspire others through this miraculous feat.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 55

Effect: The character can use the following action:

ARMOUR MONGER

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character increases the armour value of one piece of armour he can currently touch by an amount equal to his Intelligence bonus. This increases the armour value on all hit locations covered by the piece of armour. The effect lasts for one round. This action can only be used once per combat encounter.

FERRIC LURE

The ferric lure implant serves as a powerful reminder of an individual's connection to the Machine God, and a Tech-Priest can use it to feel the magnetic variations that attract and repel metals. Through practice and trust in the Ommissiah, an experienced Acolyte can gain greater control over the implant and learn to manipulate heavier objects at an ever-increasing range.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Ferric lure implant, Willpower 35

Effect: The character can call an unsecured metal object to his hand. He may summon objects of up to 2 kilograms per point of his Willpower bonus and may summon objects from up to 10 metres per point of his Willpower bonus away.

LUMINEN ARC

The luminen capacitor's impressive storage battery represents a powerful resource that a Tech-Priest can use in a myriad of different ways. In combat situations where opponents surround a Tech-Priest, he can discharge the luminen capacitor in a massive electrical arc. As the energy radiates outward, the character becomes a veritable avatar of the Ommissiah's wrath.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Luminen capacitors implant, Ballistic Skill 35

Effect: The character can choose to use his luminen capacitor implant to discharge a blast around him in combat. This attack uses the following weapon profile:

LUMINEN ARC				
<i>BASIC</i>	<i>160M</i>	RoF 2	<i>1D10 + T_B (E)</i>	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>SAPPING</i>				

If the character rolls a 96 to 100 on the attack test, he gains a point of fatigue.

LUMINEN BLAST

Tech-Priests blessed with a luminen capacitor implant can learn to direct its energy at their foes, smiting them through the blessings of the Ommissiah. With extensive training, an Acolyte can learn to detect ionisation potentials and dielectric weaknesses around him, and send electrical bursts from his capacitor in surges at his opponent. This effectively transforms the implant into a devastating ranged weapon to smite the enemies of the Mechanicum.

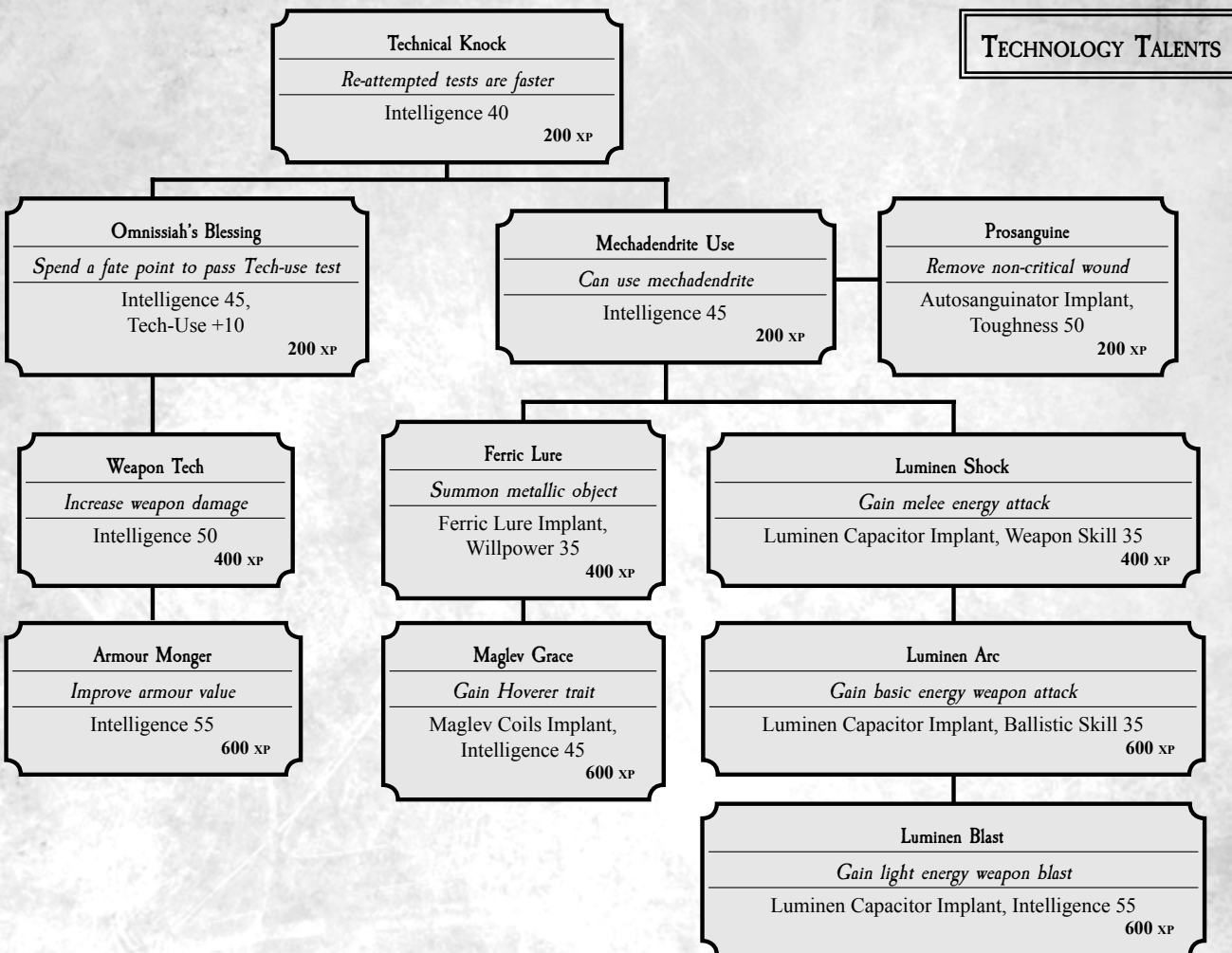
Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Luminen capacitors implant, Intelligence 55

Effect: The character can choose to use his luminen capacitor implant as a ranged weapon in combat. It has the following weapon profile:

LUMINEN BLAST				
<i>LIGHT</i>	<i>20M</i>	RoF 2	<i>1D10 + T_B (E)</i>	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>BLAST (T_B), SAPPING</i>				

If the character rolls a 96 to 100 on the attack test, he gains a point of fatigue.



LUMINEN SHOCK

A Tech-Priest can learn to use his luminen capacitor implant as an extraordinarily effective melee weapon. Tapping into the device's reserves, the Acolyte can unleash a blast of power as a direct manifestation of the Omnissiah's fury. Any who dare lay hands on a servant of the Machine God burn as energy courses through their body, disrupting nervous systems and scorching flesh.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Luminen capacitors implant, Weapon Skill 35

LUMINEN SHOCK				
LIGHT	—	RoF AB-2	1D10 + TB (E)	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: SAPPING				

Effect: The character can choose to use his luminen capacitor implant as a melee weapon in combat. It has the following weapon profile:

If the character rolls a 96 to 100 on the attack test, he gains a point of fatigue.

MAGLEV GRACE

Through understanding of the Machine God's blessing, the Tech-Priest has begun to master the use of his maglev coils implant. He can now fully activate the device and coordinate its pull in different directions, negating gravity itself through the power of the Omnissiah.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45, maglev coils implant

Effect: The character can gain the Hoverer trait for a number of minutes equal to 1d10 + his Toughness bonus. When the character activates this ability, he gains one point of fatigue and uses half the power reserves in the maglev coils.

MECHADENDRITE USE

Mechadendrites are a common augmentation for followers of the Machine God, and each new attachment grants the user greater melding of man and machine. The mind needs time to learn and adapt to those changes before they can be used as effectively as the body's native limbs, but with experience a Tech-Priest can master the alterations that come with these holy cybernetic enhancements.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45

Effect: Each time the character selects this talent, he chooses one class of mechadendrite. The character is able to control that type of mechadendrite like an extension of his body, and use all of its capabilities. There are two broad classes of mechadendrites, but characters with a particularly unusual mechadendrite must take the Mechadendrite Use (Exotic) talent to control it. Lacking the appropriate talent incurs a -20 penalty to any test using the limb.

- **Support:** These artificial limbs terminate in manipulators or speciality tools, and includes Optical, Medicae, Utility, and other non-combat mechadendrites.

- **Weapon:** These have an integral weapon, such as Ballistic mechadendrites. These do not suffer the -20 penalty for using that weapon untrained, but a mechadendrite simply holding a weapon would require the appropriate Weapon Training talent to use without penalty however.

OMNISSIAH'S BLESSING

The Ommissiah holds some individuals in particular favour: devout followers so gifted they are able to manipulate devices in ways that lesser beings cannot hope to replicate. They might have an intrinsic understanding of holy technology, a deft touch with their tools, or an ability to utter their binary appeals in a precise frequency most pleasing to the device's machine spirit. Such divine assistance may come at a price in later days, but when their efforts are crucial to crushing, a heresy few Acolytes would hesitate.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45, Tech-Use +10

Effect: When making a Tech-Use test, the character can spend one fate point to count as having rolled a result of 1.

PROSANGUINE

When grievously wounded, a Tech-Priest's autosanguinator implant can act to repair damage to the weak flesh he still carries. Acolytes frequently put their lives at risk through the course of their work. As they suffer additional injuries, many learn to control their autosanguinator much more precisely than those who lead more sedentary lives, and can swiftly recover from what would normally be lethal wounds.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Autosanguinator implant, Toughness 50

Effect: By spending 10 minutes uninterrupted and succeeding at a Tech-Use test, the character can remove one non-critical wound he is suffering from. If he rolls a 96 or higher on the Tech-Use test, he loses his ability to use his Autosanguinator for one week.

TECHNICAL KNOCK

Even the most accomplished of Tech-Priests sometimes encounter particularly recalcitrant machine spirits that fail to respond to the sacred rites. Those familiar with such matters know to review their sacred records, reapply blessed oils, carefully phrase their canted appeals to the Ommissiah to a more pleasing binary coding, or in other ways draw on their greater experience to ensure the device better respond to his efforts.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40

Effect: When re-attempting the commune and repair uses of the Tech-Use skill, the subsequent attempts take the same amount of time as the first attempt, instead of twice as long.

WEAPON TECH

The Tech-Priest calls upon the blessings of the Ommissiah, channelling his faith into his weapon and performing armament rituals to more readily smite his foes. Through his knowing manipulations, autogun rounds pierce deeper, flamers burn hotter, and all know they are witnessing the Machine God's metallic grace on the battlefield.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 50

Effect: The character can use the following action:

WEAPON TECH

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character increases the damage of one weapon he holds with by an amount equal to his Intelligence bonus. This action can only be used once per combat encounter, and the effect lasts for one round.

GENERAL

Acolytes often seek to develop themselves in a variety of ways, to better serve their Inquisitor. Many of these paths are commonly seen even in Acolytes of wildly differing backgrounds or specialisations; all so dedicated seek to better their prowess in combat, deepen their knowledge of the Imperium, and intensify their righteous contempt of the hated foes of the Emperor. Acolytes can progress in these areas faster and better both themselves and their service more quickly.

BLADE DANCER

Some Acolytes train themselves to rapidly follow up on their first attack with a fast strike using a chainblade or shock maul, either to finish off their foe or assault a new one. Such is their training that what would appear a wild swing is just as accurate as their initial blow, the secondary attack becoming more instinctual with no preparation needed.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 45

Effect: The character does not suffer the -20 penalty to his second attack made in the same turn when wielding two weapons as long as that attack is made with a melee weapon.

GUNSLINGER

Many fighting styles rely on a devastating ranged attack to come after an initial blow. Most who practice such disciplines use paired pistols, and are renowned for the speed and accuracy they can unleash hails of stubber shells or laspistol blasts.

Experience Cost: 600xp

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 45

Effect: When wielding two weapons, the character does not suffer the -20 penalty to his second attack made in the same turn, as long as his second attack is made with a ranged weapon.

HATRED

An Acolyte is often known by his enemies as much as he is for his devotion to the Emperor. Many rightly hate xenos, Daemons, and rogue psykers as they are directly responsible for the deaths of untold billions, but also as they have prevented countless souls from ever knowing the grace of the Emperor. Others might reserve their bitterest grudges for rival Imperial agencies; sometimes the actions of a single individual is enough to damn entire groups in the eyes of a fiercely devout Acolyte.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: None

Effect: Each time the character selects this talent, he chooses on group or organisation. The character despises the members of that group, and gains a +10 bonus to all Weapon Skill tests made when fighting members of the group in melee. Additionally, the character must make a Willpower test when attempting to flee such combats or surrender.

Characters can select the Hatred talent using any of the groups or organisations listed under the Specialist talent.

HEIGHTENED SENSES

Senses are an Acolyte's means to examine the world beyond his skin, and the better he can perceive his surroundings, the greater his chances of detecting heretics and their works. Some are born able to see enemies lurking in the dark, or sniff out the residue of a spent bolter shell. In other cases, an Acolyte might devote a portion of his ongoing training to further enhance his sensitivities to these and other sensory clues, practicing until he can discern differing fabrics by touch alone or pick out the click-crunch of a reloading autopistol amidst the bedlam of combat.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: Perception 40

Effect: When the character gains this talent, he chooses one sense, and gains a +20 bonus to all Perception tests involving that sense. This talent does not enable the character to develop a new sense, but characters with additional senses may take the talent for those as well. Following are the most common senses:

- **Hearing:** The character can screen out background noises while focusing on specific sounds and frequencies, enabling him to pick out a single conversation in a crowded room or hear a specific pattern of footsteps on a manufactorum floor.

- **Sight:** The character can train to notice objects at extreme range, detect exceptionally fine details, and even see in conditions of low lighting. Characters with this ability often notice subtle design elements and inconsistencies that others inadvertently ignore.

- **Smell:** Those who possess this talent are capable of detecting and identifying exceptionally diffuse odours. In environments where there are a variety of extremely pungent aromas, the character can recognise specific ones and even trace them back to their source.

- **Taste:** Most common in gourmands, the character recognises different flavouring elements and can associate them with their sources. Some researchers and investigators also learn to recognise particular chemical substances—including pharmaceuticals and arcane reagents—based upon their taste. Excessive use of this ability can be dangerous as many such substances are also poisonous.

- **Touch:** This talent empowers the character to notice subtle features that might not even be detected through close visual inspection. Some complex textures are indicative of xenotech, while others may provide a discrete way of delivering information.

PEER

Acolytes must become skilled at interacting with a wide range of Imperial agencies to further their investigations, and many can call members of such organisations close allies. Those who pursue their duties through darker methods might also develop dangerous ties to inhuman xenos, or even those who traffic with Daemons, to gain power and smite their unholy works. Having close associations in a variety of groups allows an Acolyte to readily draw upon favours and other assistance in many situations where his fellows might be otherwise isolated, and help ensure success in their mission.

Experience Cost: 200xp

Prerequisites: None

Effect: Each time the character purchases this talent, he chooses one group or organisation. The character knows how to deal with this group, and gains a +10 bonus to all Fellowship tests made when interacting with members of the group. Additionally, when the character acquires this talent, he increases his influence by 2. Characters can select the Peer talent using any of the groups or organisations listed under the Specialist talent.

SPECIALIST

Most Acolytes have a generalised understanding of the Imperium and its works, as frequent travels to different worlds and working with a myriad of agencies quickly exposes even a feral world dirt-fighter to a wider vista. Some seek greater knowledge, knowing the power this offers them when dealing with these groups or when investigating their actions. Through combat experience, careful study of forbidden parchments, exploration of sealed datacrypts, and other means an Acolyte can increase his expertise and become a valuable asset when dealing with Imperial agencies or the foes of Mankind. Such possibly forbidden knowledge should come with a sufficient tale of how the Acolyte came by this information however, either through prior experience or associations.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: None

Effect: Each time the character selects this talent; he chooses one area of expertise. The character possesses unique knowledge regarding that subject, allowing him to perform specific skill uses he would otherwise be unable to perform. The Specialist talent grants the character benefits when using the following skills:

- **Linguistics:** The character counts any languages associated with this area as known languages.
- **Medicae:** The character ignores any penalties for performing Medicae skill tests on characters associated with his area of expertise. For example, a character with Specialist (Eldar) would not suffer any penalty when performing Medicae tests on an Eldar character.

- **Remembrance:** The character can make Remembrance tests to recall any information associated with this area. The characteristic used with the Remembrance test depends on the type of information (see page 90).

- **Tech-Use:** The character ignores any penalties for performing Tech-Use skill tests on machines associated with his speciality.

In addition to the experience cost associated with the talent, some areas have associated costs that the character must pay when selecting them. Following are the most common areas of expertise:

- **Adeptus Administratum:** The immense bureaucracy of the Imperium charged with maintaining the stability of all the worlds of humanity across the galaxy. Characters who have interacted extensively with the organisation recognise its many information retrieval methods, arcane pidgin languages, and data storage devices.

- **Adeptus Arbites:** Charged with publicly enforcing all aspects of Imperial Law, the Adeptus Arbites are relentless in their pursuit of suspected criminals. Acolytes who have studied the studied them garner a familiarity with Imperial Law, their distinctive armaments, as well as the dialects used to enforce it.

- **Adeptus Astartes:** The physiologically and psychologically modified Space Marines are the Imperium's most potent defenders. Few outside their ranks have opportunity to study the culture and techniques of the many chapters. Those who do learn their of wargear, unusual physiology, battle chants, and elements of at least one chapter's unique history.

- **Adeptus Astra Telepathica:** The minds of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica provide the Imperium with their only means to communicate between worlds without the use of voidcraft. Acolytes who work closely with these psykers learn their culture, dialects, and the techniques required to heal a psyker overwhelmed by the Immaterium.

- **Adeptus Mechanicus:** Were it not for the support of the Machine Cult, the Imperium would have no technological basis for its galactic domination. Few outsiders can completely grasp their devotion to the Omnissiah, but some achieve familiarity as they interact with Tech-Priests and their creations. This organisation is an integral portion of the Imperium, even as it exists in isolation from it.

- **Adeptus Ministorum:** The Ecclesiarchy preserves and spreads the Imperial Creed across the galaxy. They work to protect every human's soul through devotion to the Emperor but also must insure that expressions of faith remain pure. Acolytes devoted to the Ecclesiarchy often learn to work well with others who follow its paths.

- **Adepta Sororitas:** The women of the Adepta Sororitas are devoted to the cause of the Ecclesiarchy at all costs. Best known for their Orders Militant Sisters of Battle, other divisions support the Imperial Creed in less warlike ways. Study of the sisters and their culture requires an understanding of their spiritual culture as well as their heavily specialised equipment.

- **Chaos Space Marines:** During the time of the Horus Heresy, fully half of the Space Marine Legions turned against the Emperor and embraced the Ruinous Powers. While much of their equipment and tactics are similar to those of the Adeptus Astartes, these traitors have been horribly corrupted, as have those Adeptus Astartes who have fallen to Ruinous Powers. Acolytes who focus on these traitors can learn the paths they embrace and the equipment they use.

- **Chartist Captains:** Merchant vessels complete centuries-long circuits through series of neighbouring worlds as the primary means of Imperial commerce. Chartist Captains, in accordance with their merchant charters, command these enormous voidcraft and the human populations that keep them functional.

- **Collegia Titanicus:** Members of the Collegia Titanicus control the enormous titans of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Merging their minds with the machine spirits of the massive war machines, these devoted warriors control some of the most potent planet-bound weapons known to the Imperium.

- **Craftworld Eldar:** Masters of the galaxy long before Mankind travelled beyond sacred Terra, these haughty and psychically-potent xenos are an unknowable force to humanity. Though sometimes allies against the fell powers of the Immaterium, the Eldar have their own incomprehensible motivations. Acolytes bold enough to study these xenos can seldom fully appreciate its many complexities.

- **Daemons:** There are countless violent entities that exist within the Immaterium. These abominations share a single goal: the corruption of the corporeal world. Some Acolytes believe that a degree of familiarity is required to defeat these creatures, but that familiarity comes at a tremendous price to mind and soul.

- **Dark Eldar:** Among the Eldar, there are some members devoted to endless violence and sensual pleasures beyond human comprehension. These cruel and remorseless xenos view humanity as little more than playthings for the taking. Acolytes who study these foes often begin to appreciate the dark paths that these xenos endlessly explore.

- **Heretical Cults:** Within the Imperium, many misguided souls improperly express their faith in the Emperor. Even worse, some place their faith in other entities or organisations, completely forsaking the Imperial Creed. These traitors often develop their own cultures and languages, as part of an effort to conceal their presence from the justice that is their due, and knowledge of these groups and the entities they follow can damage the very soul

- **Imperial Guard:** The armies of the Imperial Guard repress are the most common defenders of the Imperium against outside threats as well as any internal disruptions. With each regiment tithed from one of humanity's millions of worlds, these stalwart soldiers bravely fulfil their duty to the Emperor and Mankind. Acolytes who study their techniques recognise their tools and strategies.

- **Imperial Navy:** The Imperium's voidfaring vessels fall under the authority of the Imperial Navy. The organisation is responsible for transporting all of the Imperium's military assets as well as securing travel between the millions of worlds within its dominion.

- **Inquisitors:** Some information is so dangerous to the survival of Mankind that even awareness of this material is incredibly dangerous. Inquisitors exist to eliminate those threats, which must never be acknowledged. Acolytes who chose to study the history and nature of their authority often are exposed to information that can destabilise their minds.

- **Mutants:** Many humans exposed to the Warp are twisted in mind, soul, and body. Not every mutation is physically apparent, but they all transform their bearers into something else. Characters who study mutants can become adept at recognising the dangers they impose as well as methods some may use to conceal their true nature.

- **Navigators:** A breed of psyker as well as a stable hereditary line of mutants, Navigators are accepted within the Imperium. This is at least partly because the Navigator Houses are essential for the Imperium's survival. Warp travel only becomes practical with their assistance. Study of Navigators focuses on their lineages and methodology.

- **Necrons:** These dread mechanical life forms are ancient beyond Mankind's reckoning. They warred for control of the stars long before the dawn of humanity, and now they seek to reclaim their lost heritage. Little is known of these creatures, so any who choose to study them willingly exchanges incredible personal risk for data about their culture, language, and technology.

- **Officio Assassinorum:** Frequently the very existence of an individual can pose a significant threat to the Imperium. This could be due to the person's corruption, but it might simply be due to a significantly large group of followers or an immeasurable thirst for power. The Officio Assassinorum exists to silently eliminate such threats, and Acolytes who dare study the organisation may become familiar with their techniques and wargear.

- **Orks:** These irredeemably violent xenos exist for the sole purpose of making war. Present through the galaxy, they possess a thirst for violence that defines the species. Ork culture and history is one of endless clashes across the galaxy between them and anything they find, including other Orks.

- **Planetary Defence Forces:** Every Imperial world is responsible for maintaining a standing force capable of defending itself as well as assisting any nearby Imperial systems. Composition, tactics, and equipment vary substantially based on the culture and technological make up of their home world. Acolytes who study these organisations learn their most common technologies, tactics, and structures.

• **Rogue Traders:** The core Imperial philosophy is dependent upon uniting all of humanity, throughout the galaxy and beyond, under the authority of the Emperor. Rogue Traders exist to travel beyond the Imperium's boundaries. Some characters may have regular dealings with Rogue Traders, which can provide them with access to all manner of unusual resources.

• **Schola Progenium:** The Imperium acknowledges its responsibility to care for the orphaned children of those who have died in its defence. The Schola Progenium prepares these countless students for lives of service in the Commissariat or one of the Imperium's many other divisions, where their faith and zeal are examples to all around them. Those studying this organisation gain valuable insight into its training and indoctrination methods.

• **Tau:** The endlessly pretentious Tau believe that their path to enlightenment is wider reaching than that posed by the Imperial Creed. These foul xenos utilise technology that is anathema to humanity, while willingly working with a range of different types of xenos.

• **Tyranids:** The unceasingly ravenous hordes of the Tyranid race exist for the sole purpose of consuming and transforming all that lies before them. Their galactic invasion is characterised by the absorption and transformation of all organic life. Few Acolytes even have an opportunity to learn of these dread xenos; those who do can learn of their strategies and biological armaments.

WEAPON TRAINING

Throughout the Imperium, an individual's fitness for survival is constantly measured by his competency with arms. Though many have a natural aptitude for combat, attempting to use an unfamiliar weapon can significantly hinder their actions. Weapon familiarisation is paramount for fighters, allowing them to integrate a new weapon into their existing combat training, for even the finest weapon is of little practical use in unready hands.

Experience Cost: 400xp

Prerequisites: None

Effect: Each time the character selects this talent, he chooses a different weapon group. The character no longer suffers the -20 untrained penalty to all attack tests when using weapons from that group. Particularly rare weapons share little technique with more common weapons and require the character to take an appropriate Weapon Training (Exotic) talent. Following are the most common weapon groups:

- Bolt
- Chain
- Exotic Weapon†
- Flame
- Grenade
- Las
- Launcher
- Melta
- Plasma
- Power
- Low-Tech
- Shock
- Solid Projectile

†Each individual exotic weapon counts as its own weapon group. A character must purchase the Weapon Training talent for that specific weapon if he wishes to use it without the -20 untrained penalty.



TRAITS

“Ye firesticks are impressively red, verily enough. But nay impressive enough to darkly venture the forestways.”

—Elder Two-Claws, explaining the local wildlife to visitors

Life exists in many ways across the galaxy. The Imperium views all of these entities through the lens of the holy form of man; any outside this blessed norm are greeted with suspicion and hostility, especially if they dare claim sentience or superiority to Mankind. Many of these beings have integral abilities that are completely foreign to man, or even natural life as the Magos Biologis of the Adeptus Mechanicus classifies it. For the purposes of **DARK HERESY**, these abilities are quantified as traits.

While a person can learn an additional skill or talent through training and experience, traits cannot be learned. They are instead a consequence of one's existence. In some cases they might be an inherent feature of an improbable anatomy, the curse of foul mutation, a naturally occurring result of native evolution, or even the product of a Warp-tainted existence.

ACQUIRING TRAITS

Traits cannot be purchased through spending experience points and are primarily an aspect that NPCs possess. In some instances, a character may use a piece of equipment or undergo a bodily transformation—including a particularly grievous wound—that might grant the effects of a trait either temporarily or permanently. In rare cases, the Game Master might decide that an individual character has earned a trait and bless (or inflict) it upon him. Under either circumstance, there is no experience cost for this acquisition. Traits indicate a significant change for the character; they can substantially alter short-term motivations and even life goals.

TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

The rules for each trait can be found in the following descriptions. In some cases, a trait can have a variable level, or a special condition. In these instances, the trait has a “(X)” after its name, and the trait's description outlines how the variable X affects the talent.

AMORPHOUS

Not every entity is constrained by a rigid skeleton; some organisms possess a malleable shape that it can alter as desired or due to changing environmental conditions. While the precise mechanisms of this ability vary substantially, most have a unified mass with elastic skins, flexible internal organ arrangements, or even Warp-derived containment fields holding their form together.

Effect: The character permanently suffers from the Slowed condition, and can reform its body to slowly move through openings that are much smaller than its size suggests. Additionally, the character can use the following action:

REFORM

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character increases or decreases the X value of his Size trait by 1 until the end of the encounter. This cannot increase or decrease X more than one step above or below its original value.

AMPHIBIOUS

Some organisms are capable of dwelling with equal comfort in both aquatic and terrestrial environments. This could be an environmental adaptation, necessary to help find prey or to avoid predators, or even an artificially instilled alteration to improve survival or increase the productivity of an agri-world harvest animal.

Effect: The character can breathe water as well as air, but still suffers penalties for pollution, extreme temperatures, or other environmental hazards. Additionally, the character does not need to perform Athletics tests to swim, and moves normally through water.

AUTO-STABILISED

For exceptionally large creatures, even the most unstable of heavy weapons mean little to compared to their huge limbs, gripping talons, or sheer bulk. Others rely on specialised weapon mountings or harnesses to support their big guns. In all cases, such beings are dangerous foes in combat, and can rain down firepower down that can rival entire squads.

Effect: The character does not suffer the –30 penalty to Ballistic Skill tests made to fire a heavy weapon that has not been braced.

BLIND

Not all creatures in the galaxy share man's reliance on light for vision. Some might have evolved in underground caves or worlds perpetually in shadow, where normal eyesight never developed or became useless and withered away across generations. Many rely on other senses, or can only see higher or lower wavelengths of the spectrum, but few can ever know the true blessing of the Emperor's Light.

Effect: The character permanently suffers from the Blinded condition.

BURROWER (X)

Many organisms dwell beneath a planet's surface rather than atop it. For carnivorous predators, approaching surface bound prey through burrowing can offer a significant element of surprise. Many other creatures seek protection underground from harmful surface environments, such as solar flares or harsh acid storms. Some beings burrow for food, digesting rock for vital nutrients on worlds barren of normal organic sustenance.

Effect: The character can move through solid materials such as rock, sand, and dirt by burrowing through them. This includes. The number in parenthesis (X) replaces the character's Agility bonus for determining his movement distance while burrowing.

When burrowing, the character leaves behind a tunnel. Characters with a lower Size trait value than the character can enter these tunnels without impediment. Tunnels have a 10% chance of collapse each round after creation, or greater should the GM feels conditions (such as extensive combat or stress) warrant it.

CRAWLER

Terrain means little to surface creatures such as the sunworms of Luthor McIntyre that do not rely on legs for movement, or ones with so many legs like the underhive-infesting maw-flukes that any one misstep is inconsequential. Though they are sometimes slower than bipeds or those that travel higher on the ground, these beasts can negotiate areas that would leave others slowed or injured.

Effect: The character ignores the effects of difficult terrain.

DAEMONIC

Daemons are made of the very stuff of the Warp, and lack the weaknesses of true flesh and blood. Only through righteous prayer, the smite of blessed weaponry, or the application of powers derived from the Immaterium can hope to harm such beings.

Effect: The character is immune to the effects of Fatigue, and the Dazed, Stunned, and Unconscious conditions, and the Toxic and Hallucinogenic weapon qualities. It also counts as wearing a force field with a protection rating of 1d5-1 that rolls X 1d5s when activated (see page 153). This force field is ignored by psychic powers, other creatures with this trait, or weapons with the Force or Sanctified qualities.

DARK-SIGHT

Some species are sensitive to different wavelengths of light than man, and can detect sights otherwise invisible. This can be a vital survival trait for both predatory organisms as well as prey animals, as this ability can grant ample opportunity to swiftly strike or to escape an attack. Technological devices or physical enhancements can also be used to expand visual acuity, adding sensitivity to infrared light, echolocation, or other more esoteric senses to augment visual ranges.

Effect: A character with this trait ignores the effects of darkness and shadow.

DEAF

Many citizens of the Imperium have lost effective hearing due to the ferocious noise levels within manufactorum smelters, ordnance testing zones, prayer amplifactory halls, or other facets of Imperial life. Others might never had that sense due to mutation or injury, and some species might never have evolved such senses, instead using other means for normal communication.

Effect: The character permanently suffers from the Deafened condition unless fitted with bionic replacements.

ENEMY (X)

Every Acolyte develops rivals and foes among the servants of the Imperium as well as the forces it opposes. True enemies are not mere antagonists, but devoted to his complete annihilation. In his presence, they might react with intense disdain, but more likely with extreme violence and bolter fire, and often hunt him down to seek out his humiliating destruction.

Effect: The character is despised and possibly hunted by a group or organisation specified by X. The character suffers a -20 penalty to Fellowship tests when dealing with this group. Additionally, the GM can use the group or organisation to complicate the character's life from time to time.

The character can have this trait multiple times, each time for a different group or organisation. The group or organisation specified by X can be any of those listed under the Specialist talent (see page 122).

EXTRA ARMS (X)

Many inhuman species feature multiple arms in extent of the two of humanity's norm. Most come in pairs but some bizarre creatures can have odd numbers of upper limbs, the result of genetic tampering or unnatural selection.

Effect: The character has a number of extra arms beyond the normal 2 equal to X. For every extra arm, the character is allowed to perform an additional attack action each round. For every extra 2 arms, the character also gains an additional action point each round that can only be spent on making attack actions. Note that mechadendrites and other cybernetics have specialised rules reflecting their artificial nature; see page 163 for details.

EXTRA LEGS (X)

Just as some organisms violate the blessed form of humanity with additional arms, others pervert the norm with three or more legs. These can range from the basic quadruped shape found among many lower animals, to centauroid races or monstrous beings with many lower limbs. More legs usually means faster speed, a key to survival for both predators and prey.

Effect: The character has a number of extra legs beyond the normal 2 equal to X, and adds X to his Agility Bonus when determining movement speed. This bonus cannot exceed +10.

FEAR EFFECTS

Different terrifying creatures, environments, or events can instil different reactions. When a character fails a fear test, he immediately suffers the fear effect specified by the X of the fear trait that caused him to test. There are a variety of different fear effects, many of them unique. Following are some of the most common types of fear effects:

- **Cower:** The character becomes dazed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
- **Flee:** The character must flee the source of his fear as fast as possible for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure. If he is prevented from fleeing, he dazed for the duration, and suffers a -20 to all tests.
- **Mania:** The character immediately suffers a number of insanity equal to his degrees of failure.
- **Warp Shock:** The character immediately suffers a number of corruption equal to his degrees of failure.

The galaxy is filled with horrifying entities that constantly test the resolve of those who dare to oppose them. Some prey upon humanity's visceral terrors, while others depend on the inherent corruptive power of the Warp. Only the staunchest are capable of remaining true to their duty in the face of unrelenting terror.

Effect: The Fear trait can be possessed not only by characters, but by vehicles, environments, or anything else that could instil terror in another person. When a character first confronts something with the Fear trait, he must immediately make a Willpower test with a modifier equal to the modifier listed after the Fear trait. For more information on fear, see page 127.

If the character making the fear test fails, he immediately suffers one fatigue and suffers any Fear effects specified by X.

FLYER (X)

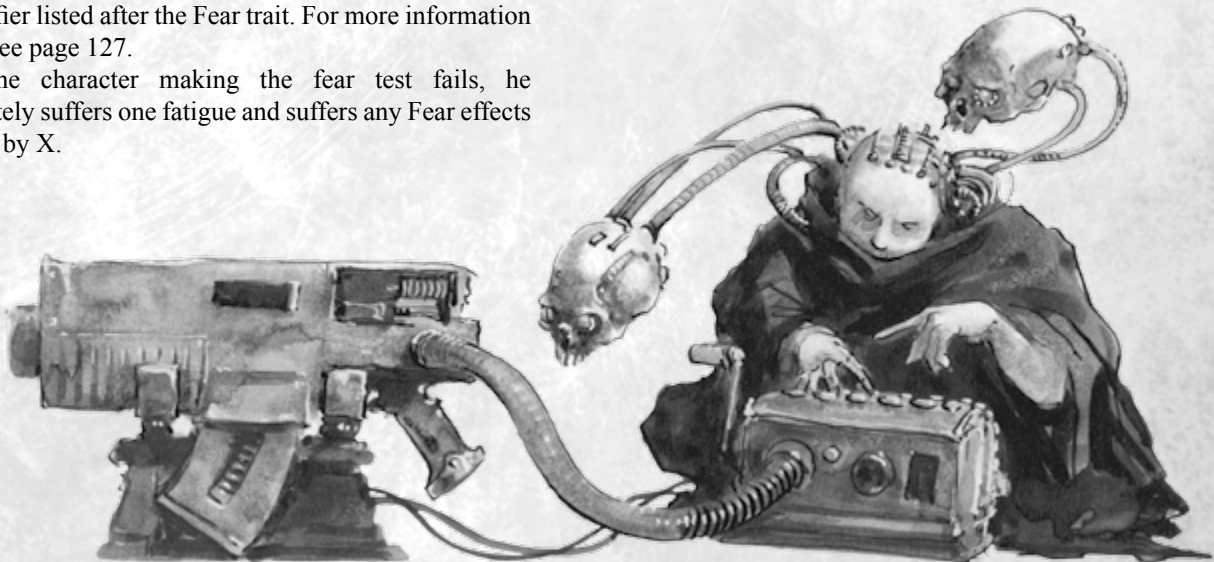
The sky represents an ecological niche that can offer tremendous advantage at the cost of serious physiological transformation. Uncontrolled interaction with the Warp, physiological enhancement, or a xenos heritage can all grant an organism the ability to travel on air currents. While some characters may learn to use technology to soar, those who have the natural ability to do so are far more adept.

Effect: The character can fly. When he performs a movement action, he can move vertically as well as horizontally. During each turn, the character starts flying, after he receives action points he must immediately spend 1 AP to maintain flight or he starts to fall (see page 204). The character cannot fly higher than the altitude specified by X.

ALTITUDE

On a typical Terra-like planet, there are three broad altitudes: hovering, low altitude, and high altitude. A character cannot travel higher than the altitude specified by the X of his Flyer trait.

- **Hovering:** No greater than 2 metres off the ground. Characters at this altitude can be engaged in melee.
- **Low Altitude:** No greater than 200 metres off the ground. Characters at this altitude can no longer be engaged in melee by characters on the ground.
- **High Altitude:** Anything higher than 200 metres. Characters on the ground cannot shoot at characters at this altitude, unless equipped with very specialised weapons.



FROM BEYOND

Some creatures are outside from the limitations of normal physiology, having emerged from the impossible realm of the Warp or perhaps using bodies forged from cold metal and circuitry. What would drive others into gibbering madness, cower in mind-numbing terror, or dissolve into diseased puddles of pestilent flesh has little effect on such unnatural beings.

Effect: The character is immune to the effects of disease, fear, insanity, pinning, poison, and psychic powers used to cloud, control, or delude his mind.

INSTABILITY

Many entities that force their way across the barrier from the Warp can only exist within corporeal reality for as long as they sow destruction. In the event that their rampage slows, their ability to maintain their physical form becomes limited. Sometimes, this can create a rapid downward spiral that banishes the entity back to the Immaterium from whence it came.

Effect: If the character receives a wound and does not deal a wound to another character by the end of his next turn, he receives an additional wound. This additional wound does not trigger a wound effect.

PSY RATING (X)

Many of the foul Daemons that reside in the Warp can draw unnatural power from the home, allowing them to hurl psychic energies at their foes. Many aliens and humans also have psychic abilities, all of whom can be a terrible threat to entire populations unless eradicated.

Effect: The character can channel the Warp into psychic abilities. The potency of his ability is represented by X, and affects the power of psychic powers the character uses (see **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers** for more details).

REGENERATION (X)

Physiological enhancements, mutations, xenos physiology, or even Warp-corruption can all result in organisms that heal from injury at a pace that seems incomprehensible to Terran sensibilities. Permanently stopping such a foe requires extreme measures—often including the complete destruction of their physical form through flame or acids.

Effect: The character can heal very quickly. Each round, at the start of his turn, the character makes a Toughness test; if he succeeds, he can remove a number of wounds equal to his degrees of success. The number of wounds removed this way each round cannot exceed X.



SIZE (X)

Threats can come in any size. Some adversaries conceal their minute form amongst mundane objects, while others can be so huge as to appear part of the scenery.

Effect: The size modifier, X, for a character dictates his size. This can be a positive or negative number, typically ranging between -5 and 5, though more extreme instances can occur. All characters possess the Size trait, but if it is not specified, the character has a size modifier of 0 (human average).

All attacks against the character receive a modifier equal to 10 times his size modifier. Additionally, the character receives a modifier to all Stealth skill tests equal to -10 times his size modifier. **Table 4-2: Sizes** below outlines the common size modifiers, as well as the attack and Stealth modifiers that go with them.

SANCTIONED

As part of the tithes every world owes the Imperium, each must collect all who show any sign of psychic abilities for the Black Ships to carry to Terra. There, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica conduct fearsome testing known as Sanctioning for power levels, mental strength, and other factors that decide each psyker's fate. To survive is to have become passed these tests, and gone on to serve the Emperor as a Sanctioned Psyker.

Effect: If the character gains the Psyker elite advance, he does not gain the Corruption normally inflicted.

TOUCHED BY THE FATES (X)

The hand of the Emperor is active in all things, and those who recognise his guidance are often capable of committing feats far beyond mortal limitations or surviving what would be otherwise lethal attacks. The foul talons of the Ruinous Powers might mark other beings, protecting them to live another day to plague Mankind. Where the naive might see only luck, those who have glimpsed the true nature of the galaxy can see when powers outside this realm have made their favour known.

Effect: Only Non-Player Characters can possess this trait. The NPC uses fate points in the same way as player characters, and has a fate threshold equal to X. The NPC can also burn fate threshold to avoid death.

UNNATURAL SENSES (X)

Humans perception uses the five common senses, but many creatures as well as those touched by the Warp taste reality in ways mortals cannot imagine. Through changes in atmospheric pressure, gravimetric fluctuation, faint vibrations, or even Warp-nuances viewed in colours that can damn the soul, these beings can navigate in what would appear total darkness or utter silence.

Effect: The character can perceive his surroundings using senses other than sight or hearing. For a number of metres equal to X, the character's senses ignore the effects of the Blind and Deaf conditions, as well as darkness, shadow, fog, mist, or smoke.

TABLE 4-2: SIZES

SIZE MODIFIER	INCOMING ATTACK MODIFIER	STEALTH MODIFIER
-5 (Autopistol shell, Insect)	-50	+50
-4 (Dataslate, Autoquill)	-40	+40
-3 (Servo Skull, Hand Cannon)	-30	+30
-2 (Heavy Stubber, corpse-ration ration container)	-20	+20
-1 (Ratling, Gretchen)	-10	+10
0 (Human)	+0	+0
1 (Armoured Space Marine, Ork Boy)	+10	-10
2 (Ogryn, Bike)	+20	-20
3 (Sentinel Walker, Autocarriage)	+30	-30
4 (Arvus Lighter, Chimera tank)	+40	-40
5 (Land Raider, Valkyrie gunship)	+50	-50



CHAPTER V: ARMOURY

Many things define Inquisitors and those who serve them in the defence of Mankind, such as their indomitable will, strength of character, and faith in the Emperor. While the especially devout would insist nothing more is needed, it is rare to find an Acolyte who does not also carry an arsenal of weapons, equipment, protective wear, and other devices. Such additions can allow him to fight more effectively, survive hostile conditions, and conduct better investigations. The nightmarish worlds of the 41st Millennium and the dangerous voids between them are each a hostile setting, with even placid agri-worlds or civilised palaces filled with unexpected threats and heresies. An Acolyte unprepared for such hazards becomes yet another who falls in service, mourned and forgotten.



AVAILABILITY AND INFLUENCE

"Ah, I haven't had anyone asking for one of those since... well, since the last time you were here. It's going to be bad again, isn't it?"

—Bonded Weaponsmith Septimo Mach,
before the Culling of Othim IV

There is no standard currency across the Imperium, and even in established sectors, few respect the coinage of some far distant world. For most this is no matter. Very few individuals travel between worlds in the 41st Millennium; the majority of humans spend their entire existence within a few kilometres of their birthplace as they toil and sweat for the Imperium in the countless billions. Acolytes might gain hordes of the precious coins on one world, only to find it worthless on the next. They must rely instead on other means to purchase goods, request aid, and offer material assistance.

In **DARK HERESY**, this is expressed through Influence, here representing tangibles including any accumulated local wealth, but also the intangibles of debts, favours, and reputation. This can sometimes vary from world to world depending on previous visits or the company currently

kept. An Inquisitor might establish credit on a world for his Acolytes to use in equipping themselves, or they could be left to develop their own means for greater covertness. Despite their often excellent weapons and equipment, the nature of their duties means they are always seeking alternative gear to fit local settings, restocks of ammunition, repairs to damaged armour, and other essentials. It is through using their Influence that they garner the resources they need to accomplish their missions.

ACQUIRING ITEMS

When a character wants to acquire an item or resource, he makes a requisition test. This test represents the character using all of the resources he has at his disposal to attempt to purchase, trade, or extort what he wants from his current location. This test takes into account the item or resources availability, the quality of the item, as well as how easy or difficult it is for the character to work at his current location.

AVAILABILITY

Every item has an availability modifier in its profile that represents how easy or difficult the item is to acquire on an average Imperial world. This modifier is applied to any requisition test made to attempt to acquire the item.

ITEM STATUS

The status of an item indicates its quality as well as its current state of repair. There are four levels of status an item can have, as shown in **Table 5–1: Item Status**.

All item profiles, unless noted otherwise, show the item at a status level of 2 (average). If a character wishes to acquire an item at a different status level, he adds the corresponding requisition modifier to the requisition test made to acquire the item.

TABLE 5–1: ITEM STATUS

STATUS LEVEL	QUALITY	REQUISITION MODIFIER	REPAIR MODIFIER
0	Wrecked	—	—
1	Poor	+10	+0
2	Average	+0	–20
3	Best	–10	–40

DAMAGING ITEMS

Different effects can damage an item, lowering its status. If an item’s status level ever reaches 0, the item is wrecked and cannot be used until it is repaired. In addition to rules effects that directly lower an item’s status, the GM can call for an item’s status to be lowered due to narrative effects such as a character mistreating the item.

REPAIRING ITEMS

Characters can increase the status level of an item by 1 by repairing it. To repair an item, the character uses to repair special use of the Tech-Use skill. He makes a Tech-Use (I) test and applies the repair modifier from **Table 5–1: Item Status** that corresponds with the status level to which he is attempting to repair the item. If the test succeeds, the item’s status level is raised by 1. If this brings the status level above 0, the item can be used again.

THE REQUISITION TEST

To acquire an item or service, a character must make a requisition test. To do so, the character makes a test (as outlined on page 13), rolling 1d100 and comparing the result to his Influence characteristic. This test is modified by the availability of the item being acquired, the status of the item being acquired, any items traded, as well as any modifiers decided by the GM due to location-specific conditions. If the test succeeds, the character acquires the item or service.

Each time a character makes a requisition test to acquire an item with a negative availability modifier, the group’s subtlety value is decreased by a number equal to the tens-digit of that availability modifier.

LOCATION MODIFIERS

The worlds of the Imperium are infinitely varied, and what is available on a crowded hive world can be very different than what is available on a back-water feral world. Some items might be impossible to obtain on certain worlds or locations. Lasguns, for example, are commonly used across the Imperium, but an Acolyte might not be able to find a working las power cell on a remote feral world. The GM can apply modifiers to the requisition test based on the economy and trade network of the current location, including native creeds and technological conditions. In cases where the character is not near any source from where he could acquire the item or service, the GM can even simply disallow him from even being able to make a requisition test.

TRADING IN ITEMS

When attempting to obtain an item or service, any bargaining chip is helpful. When a character is making a requisition test, he can offer up one item he has in his possession to trade-in, making the requisition test easier. The item selected to trade must have an availability lower than the item being requisitioned. For example, if the item being requisitioned has an availability of –20, the traded in item must have an availability of –30 or below.

When trading in an item this way, the character gets a bonus to his requisition test equal to the difference between the two items’ availabilities. For example, if the item being requisitioned has an availability of –10, and the item being traded in has an availability of –30, the character gains a +20 bonus to his requisition test.

If the requisition test succeeds, the offered item is traded away, and lost. If the test fails, however, the item is not traded, and the character keeps it.

TABLE 5-2 CARRYING CAPACITY

STRENGTH BONUS (Sb)	WEIGHT
0	1kg
1	5kg
2	10kg
3	20kg
4	30kg
5	60kg
6	120kg
7	250kg
8	500kg
9	1,000kg
10	2,000kg

CARRYING CAPACITY

A character's carrying capacity is based off of his Strength characteristic and measures how much he can comfortably carry without being slowed down and fatigued. **Table 5-2: Carrying Capacity** shows what a character's carrying capacity based on his Strength bonus. If a character is ever carrying more weight than his listed carrying capacity, he is considered encumbered.

Characters can lift or push up to twice their carrying capacity using the Athletics skill (see page 76), but can never lift or carry any more than twice their carrying limit.

ENCUMBERED CHARACTERS

A character attempting to carry more than his carrying capacity is encumbered. He gains the Slowed and Weakened (1) conditions, and for each hour suffers 1 point of fatigue from the strain.

WEAPONS

"Your words are indeed persuasive, but I believe my bolter can be just as eloquent."

—Annaleen Bought, Desoleum Bondhound

There is no peace in the nightmare galaxy of the 41st Millennium, and on every world, in every sector, there is the constant sound of lasgun cracks, grenade explosions, and countless wounded crying for relief. Weapons are everywhere, ranging from wondrous archeotech devices from the Dark Age of Technology to crude bows made from ancestral bone and sinew. Even on highly civilised worlds, few would be without a hidden pistol or sheathed blade. For Imperial citizens, weapons are as much an essential part of normal as breathing or faith in the Emperor.

Weapons in **DARK HERESY** are organised into several different groups based on the way each operates and the technology they use:

- Bolt
- Chain
- Flame
- Grenade
- Las
- Launcher
- Melta
- Plasma
- Power
- Low-Tech
- Shock
- Solid Projectile

WEAPON PROFILE

Each weapon profile is made of the following elements. If any characteristic bonuses appear in a weapon's profile, they refer to the characteristic bonuses of the character wielding the weapon.

Name: What the weapon is called.

Class: Determines how difficult the weapon is to wield, whether it requires one or two hands, or if it cannot be carried at all. There are four weapon classes:

- **Light:** These weapons can be easily wielded in one hand. All light weapons come with a basic holster or sheath to carry the weapon on hip, chest, or shoulder as desired.
- **Basic:** These are normally wielded in two hands, but can be wielded in one hand at a –20 penalty to attack tests made with the weapon.
- **Heavy:** Large and powerful, these weapons must be wielded in two hands. Ranged heavy weapons receive a –20 penalty to attack tests made with the weapon unless it is braced (see the **Bracing Heavy Weapons** sidebar on page 134). Carrying a heavy weapon also imposes a –10 penalty to a warband's Subtlety.

• **Mounted:** These weapons are a natural part of a creature, such as claws or teeth, or are affixed on a vehicle or emplacement. Generally, they cannot be removed or transported without large, sophisticated equipment.

Range: The maximum range at which the weapon can be fired. Attacks made with the weapon cannot target things beyond this distance,

Rate of Fire (RoF): Used to determine how many times an attack is capable of hitting its target. In the common ranged and melee attack actions, rate of attack is determined by multiplying the weapon's rate of fire by the number of action points spent to perform the action. However, other attack actions can use different methods to determine rate of attack.

Some weapons have a rate of fire that is a fraction such as "1/2," "1/3," or "1/4." In these cases, these weapons cannot be fired unless the action being used to attack multiplies their RoF above 1. For example, with the basic Ranged and Melee Attack actions, a weapon with a RoF of 1/2 would require 2 AP to achieve a rate of attack of 1, and 4 AP to achieve a RoA of 2. If the resulting rate of attack ever still includes a fraction after the multiplication, the result is always rounded down. An attack using a RoF

WEAPON NOISE

The myriad of bullets, bolts, and blasts of weapons in the 41st Millennium can be very loud, and this can be an inconvenience to Acolytes who want to keep their operations as secretive as possible. How loud each weapon is, and how far that noise travels, can vary incredibly from situation to situation and place to place. The end determination of how far the sound of a weapon travels is up to the Game Master. **Table 5-3: Weapon Volume** offers some guidelines on the average distances certain common weapons can be heard from.

TABLE 5-3: WEAPON VOLUME

WEAPON	AUDIBLE DISTANCE
Impact of a throwing knife	20m
Silenced autopistol	100m
Warhammer smashing in a skull	200m
Revving of a chainsword	500m
Lasgun burst	1km
Bolter fire	5km
Autogun fire	10km
Earthshaker cannon impact	20km

of 1/2 and 3 AP would still only have a rate of attack of 1. If the character does not spend enough AP to get the RoA of an attack action over 1, the attack fails.

Some effects may increase or decrease a weapon's rate of fire. If an effect would reduce a weapon's RoF to 0 it instead becomes "1/2." Every subsequent -1 applied to a fractional RoF increases the denominator (bottom number) of the fraction by 1. For example a RoF of 1/2 - 1 becomes a RoF of 1/3. Conversely, every +1 applied to a fractional RoF decreases the denominator by 1. Thus, a RoF of 1/4 + 1 becomes a RoF of 1/3, and a RoF of 1/2 + 1 becomes a RoF of 1.

Damage (Dam): The damage dealt when the weapon scores a successful hit. This is usually a dice roll, plus or minus an additional modifier. This also designates the type of damage dealt by the weapon by a letter in brackets after the damage value.

- **(E) Energy:** Using beams of electromagnetic power and concentrated bursts of photons, these weapons burn and scar with horrible effect.

- **(I) Impact:** Blunt force, brute explosions, and concussive strength mark these weapons.

- **(R) Rending:** These weapons slice and cut with razor-sharp edges or whirring chaintooths to lacerate flesh.

Penetration (Pen): How effective the weapon is at cutting through armour. When determining the defence value of a hit location struck by the weapon, the number of armour points added to the defence value is reduced by the penetration of the weapon.

Clip: The number of rounds/charges the weapon holds when fully loaded.

Reload (Rld): How many action points must be spent to perform a Reload action on the weapon.

Special: Any weapon special qualities the weapon has. Additionally, if this section includes "Special," the weapon has a unique ability explained in its description.

Weight (Wt): This indicated how much the weapon weighs in kg (kilograms).

Availability (Avl): This represents the general availability of the weapon. See page 131 for further information on item Availability

WEAPON SPECIAL QUALITIES

Some weapon types stand out from others and possess special attributes to represent unusual damage they cause or abilities they possess. Following are a list of the most widely used of these qualities.

ACCURATE

The weapon is crafted for precision attacks, with finely crafted las lenses or finely honed steel. Attacks made with this weapon gain a +15 bonus from each Aim action made before the attack, instead of the normal amount.

BALANCED

Carefully weighted, the weapon flexes naturally with the user making his parries more successful. Evade (WS) tests made using this weapon gain a +10 bonus.

USING A WEAPON WITHOUT A TALENT

Many of the weapons described in this chapter require a talent to use them effectively, and using them without sufficient training can prove as dangerous to friend as to foe. There are always circumstances when a character needs to use a weapon for which he does not have the appropriate talent, though, but doing so imposes a -20 untrained penalty on the relevant test.

BRACING HEAVY WEAPONS

Bracing a weapon takes 1 action point, and once braced, the firer cannot move without losing the benefits of being braced. He can, however, swivel his weapon depending on the kind of bracing used. For example, a simple pile of rubble would allow a 45 degree field of fire, as would simply lying on the ground. A bipod would allow a 90 degrees, a tripod 180 degrees, and a pintle mounting could be turned in any direction.

BLAST (X)

Attacks from this weapon explode on impact, hurling debris and shrapnel in all directions. After making a successful attack test with this weapon, but before any Evade reactions are made, all characters within X metres of the target count as being stuck by a separate attack with the same rate of attack, weapon profile, and degrees of success.

CLOSE QUARTERS

Close Quarters weapons are small and light enough to be used even when fighting in close combat, and attacking with this weapon while engaged in melee does not trigger Disruptive Blow reactions. Additionally, if engaged in melee with an opponent, attack tests made with this weapon do not suffer the -20 penalty to attack tests made against character engaged in melee with an ally.

CONCUSSIVE (X)

Concussive weapons strike with a powerful impact strong enough to temporarily knock a foe senseless. When this weapon hits, the target must make a Toughness test with a penalty equal to 10 times X; for example, a weapon with Concussive (2) would impose -20 on the test. If the target fails this test, he is Dazed for one round.

CRIPPLING

Designed for cruelty and viciousness, crippling devices are favourites amongst those who prize pain and suffering. If an attack made with this weapon successfully wounds a character, the hit location is Crippled until that wound is healed.

FELLING (X)

Felling weapons make a mockery of even the most resilient enemies, cutting dense tissue and bone with ease. When determining the defence value of a location hit by this weapon, the target's Toughness bonus count as half its normal value (rounded up).

FLAME (X)

Using materials such as flammable liquids and incendiary powders, this weapon ignites with primordial fire. When a target is hit, he must make an Agility test with a penalty equal to 10 times X. For example, a weapon with Flame (2) would impose -20 on the test. If the target fails this test, he gains the Burning (X) condition.

FLEXIBLE

Flexible weapons are often made of linked metal, rope, or other non-ridged materials that allow for few defensive counters. Evade reactions using the Evade (WS) skill cannot be taken against attacks made with this weapon.

FORCE

A force weapon relies on the user's mind to unlock its true potential, suddenly turning a sword or staff into a device burning with eldritch energies able to reave tanks. Characters with a psy rating who are wielding a weapon with the Force quality can use the following psychic power:

CHANNEL POWER

Type: Utility

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: Self

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker adds an amount of damage equal to the psy level of this power to his next attack made with a weapon with the Force quality this turn. This attack must be the next action performed after Channel Power, otherwise the bonus is lost.

HALLUCINOGENIC (X)

Where most weapons seek to harm the body, those with this quality seek to damage the mind with exotic chemicals and neurotoxic drugs. When the target is hit, he must make a Willpower test with a penalty equal to 10 times X. For example, a weapon with Hallucinogenic (2) would impose -20 on the test. If the target fails this test, he begins to hallucinate. He rolls 1d10 and compares the result to **Table 5-4: Hallucinogenic Effects** (page 135), and suffers any effects listed in the appropriate entry of the table.

HAYWIRE (X)

A foul affront to the Ommissiah in the eyes of many Tech-Priests, devices with this quality seek to cripple machine spirits and make metal as weak as flesh. When a target is hit by this weapon, a haywire field with a diameter of X metres lasting 1d5 rounds is created with its centre at the location hit by the attack. To determine the effect of the haywire field, the attacker rolls 1d5 and compares the result to **Table 5-5: Haywire Field Effects** (see page 135). If two haywire fields with the same effect overlap each other, the effect is only applied once.

TABLE 5-4: HALLUCINOGENIC EFFECTS

1d10 ROLL	EFFECT
1	“Bugsbugsbugsbugs!” The character claws his face and body to remove hordes of imaginary insects crawling over him. His manic actions consume all of his attention, and he counts as Stunned for 1 round.
2	“It is all for nothing!” Mankind is surely fated for eternal damnation, and depression blacker than any void envelops him. He is Dazed for 2 rounds while he slumps in lethargic collapse.
3	“No... not that!” His mind overwhelmed with visions of the Emperor’s final death or some equally horrific occurrence, the character’s eyes refuse to accept further input and shut down. He becomes Blinded for 1 round.
4	“Can’t you hear them?” Sounds rip into the character’s ears from all directions, cutting like a garrotte across his auditory senses. No other sounds can penetrate this illusionary cacophony, and he is Deafened for 4 rounds.
5	“I’ll kill you all!” The character is suddenly convinced that everyone around him is an terrible enemy to be destroyed. Filled with rage and fury, he gains the Frenzied condition for 3 rounds as he seeks out fresh blood.
6	“It’s got me!” The character feels enveloped in thick, fleshy tendrils and bands of smothering light, clenching him in a grip from which escape is impossible. He is Immobilised for 2 rounds as his mind struggles against the horrid embrace.
7	“You can’t step there!” Billions of tiny cherubic creatures straight from Ministorum temple frescos sprout up all around the character’s feet. With each step he can feel thousands shriek in agony as they are crushed, and the character is Slowed for 3 rounds to minimise his destructive, painful actions.
8	“It’s eating my brain!” The character feels his soul draining away, convinced a cranial leech has entered his mind or the Emperor has punished his insufficient faith. He loses the mental fortitude that previously drove him in his duties, and suffers Willpower Decay (1d10).
9	“I can’t think!” Each attempt to recall an old memory or analyse data becomes a sluggish process, as if his mind is filled with burrowing grubs eager to devour each thought. The character suffers Intelligence Decay (1d10), a mere echo of any previous intellect he once had.
10	“Get away from me!” His mind shattering, the character begins to lash out at everyone around him with paranoid delusions and hurtful utterances. He suffers Fellowship Decay (1d10), growing less comfortable with his comrades and more eager to use unprompted violence.

TABLE 5-5: HAYWIRE FIELD EFFECTS

1d5 ROLL	EFFECT
1	The False Flesh Fails: The connections between metal and tissue are disrupted, and all cybernetics in the affected area malfunction or stop functioning entirely. Characters cannot use any ability granted by a cybernetic augmentation, and any character with a cybernetic replacement on a hit location counts that location as lost without suffering from the usual Blood Loss condition (see page 207).
2	Trust in Bare Steel: The familiar cackles of lightning fade from weapons; all items in the affected area with the Power Field quality grow dim and lose that ability.
3	The Primitive Prevails: Chainswords spin down and stubbers refuse to aim. All attack tests made inside the affected area suffer a –20 penalty, except those made by weapons from the Low-Tech weapon group.
4	Only the Emperor Protects: The energy disrupts higher technologies, and all power armour and force fields within the affected area cease to function. Characters with these items no longer benefit from their effects (power armour still grants its armour points).
5	Anathema to the Omnissiah: Machine spirits flee in horror from the region, and all technology within the affected area completely ceases to function. Apply the effects of 1-4 above.

INACCURATE

Poorly manufactured with often shoddy construction, inaccurate weapons are common in underhive scum and heretical cults. Attacks from weapons with this quality do not gain any bonuses from the Aim action.

INDIRECT

Many weapons are designed to be fired in high arcs at unseen foes or thrown from protective cover at charging enemies. Indirect weapons do not require line of sight to their target, but the attacker must still be aware of his intended target's location, either through last known position, through use of a spotter, or other means. The GM makes the final determination on whether or not the character is aware of his target's location, and may add penalties to the attack test based on how aware the character of his target.

MELTA

These weapons rely on intense heat to negate protective armour, turning even the thickest to steaming liquid. When fired at a target within half the range or used in melee, the target does not add his armour points to his defence value.

OVERCHARGE

Many energy weapons have multiple settings, allowing the user greater tactical flexibility in combat. As a free action, this weapon can be switched between two modes: standard and overcharge. When in standard mode, the weapon uses its normal profile; when in overcharge mode, the weapon deals +2 damage but expends twice the amount of ammunition it normally expends per shot if the weapon uses ammunition. Additionally, when in overcharge mode, the weapon gains the Unreliable quality, or loses the Reliable quality if it already has it.

OVERHEATS

Through inefficient shielding, defective venting, or simply inherent design, the weapon often becomes overcome with the heat of its ammunition or firing methods. Whenever this weapon would jam (see page 202), it instead overheats, and the character wielding it can choose to spend 1 AP as a reaction to drop the weapon. If he does not, he receives a hit to the hit location of the arm currently holding the weapon. This single hit cannot be avoided using an Evade reaction, and deals energy damage equal to the weapon's damage. After it has overheated, this weapon cannot be used for 1 round while it cools down.

PIERCING (X)

These weapons are designed for puncturing armour with fractal edges or overthrusting rounds, and can penetrate defences to reach vulnerable flesh underneath. When determining the defence value of a location hit by this weapon, the target's armour points protecting that location count as half their normal value (rounded up).

POWER FIELD

Power fields form a cloud of disruptive energy, allowing a weapon to strike with terrible force. When this weapon hits an item without the Power Field quality, that item reduces its status by 1. This includes any armour on a hit location struck, melee weapons used to parry this weapon with an Evade (WS) test, or any item the character targets with a Called Shot action.

RECHARGE

Some weapons lack continuous power or ammunition supplies, and each strike drains capacitors or empties fuel reservoirs. After this weapon is used, it cannot be used for 1 round. Effectively it can only be used every other round while it recharges.

RELIABLE

Using ancient and well-consecrated designs, reliable weapons bring glory to the Omnissiah with each attack. This weapon does not jam on an attack roll of 96 to 100.

SAPPING (X)

Sapping weapons use electrical shock, numbing drugs, or even blunt force trauma to debilitate and exhaust a foe. When this weapon successfully wounds a target, the target suffers X points of fatigue.

SCATTER (X)

Some ammunitions can bounce or roll away from their target if not thrown carefully, or veer away if poorly aimed. If an attack test made with this weapon fails, the attack still goes off, but misses its intended target. The attacker rolls 1d10 and consults the scatter diagram on page 205 to determine the direction the attack deviates from the original intended target. He then rolls 1d5 and adds X to determine the number of metres the attack misses by.

If the new location struck by the attack contains a character, that character is hit as if the attacker had rolled 1 DoS on his attack test. If the new location is empty, the attack hits the ground at that location, resolving any qualities or special rules as if the attack had succeeded on that location with 1 DoS.

SILENT (X)

For those who rely on secretive kills, sneaking away before many might realise the target is dead, a silenced weapon is essential. Weapons with this quality use discharge baffles, finely tuned gearing, and other mechanisms to muffle their noise, and the distance it can be heard from is reduced by X kilometres.

SINGLE-SHOT

Some weapons cannot make multiple shots, such as ancient throwing weapons or poorly crafted modern ones. When making an attack with this weapon, the rate of attack can never exceed 1.

REGULAR AMMUNITION

Most weapons have a standard ammunition and ammunition storage device, the default type that often is as defining as the weapon itself. From lasgun charge packs and photonic hydrogen plasma flasks to basic shotgun shells and autogun rounds, these are generally as common as the weapons that use them.

The weapon characteristics listed in this chapter, such as damage and clip size, are from standard ammunition. Standard ammunition for a weapon has the same level of Availability as the weapon itself, so for example clip of 18 autopistol rounds is +0 Availability and a canister of flamer fuel good for 6 shots is -10.

SMOKE (X)

These weapons use clouds of smoke to hide either the target or the user, or simply to obscure an area from prying eyes. An successful attack with this weapon creates a smokescreen with a diameter of X metres at the centre at the target location (see page 204 for rules on smoke). The smoke lasts for 1d10+10 rounds, or less in adverse weather conditions.

SNARE (X)

These ensnaring devices use masses of fibrous webbing, adhesive fluids, and other entangling materials to bring an enemy down. When a target is hit, he must make an Agility test with a penalty equal to 10 times X; for example, a weapon with Snare (2) would impose -20 on the test. If the target fails this test, he becomes Immobilised. To free himself and remove the Immobilised condition, the character must spend 3AP and pass either an Acrobatics (A) test to wriggle free or an Acrobatics (S) test to break free.

SPRAY

Spray weapons use large area-effect shots to strike more foes, sacrificing range for wider coverage. When attacking with this weapon, the attacker decides on a direction in which he fires the weapon. He then makes his attack test as normal. All characters in the weapon's path, a cone-shaped area extending in a 30-degree from the firer out to the weapon's range, each count as being stuck by a separate attack with the degrees of success from the attack test. Called Shot actions cannot be made using weapons this quality.

STORM

Firing with hail of shots, storm weapons strike so rapidly that enemies are filled with metal in an instant. When making an attack test with this weapon, the attack hits its target a number of times equal to twice the degrees of success gained on the test, instead of the normal amount.

The total hits scored can still not exceed the total rate of attack from the shot.

TEARING

These weapons call on spinning chainblades, serrated claws, burrowing shells, and other vicious means to rip apart targets. When determining the damage dealt this weapon performs, the attacker rolls one additional dice, and discards the dice with the lowest result.

TOXIC (X)

Filled with all manner of malignant chemicals and fast acting poisons, toxic weapons bring down enemies through virulence and sickness. When struck, the target must make a Toughness test with a penalty equal to 10 times X or gain the Weakened condition (X); for example, a weapon with Toxic (2) would impose -20 on the test. If the target fails this test, he is Weakened (2) for one round.

TWIN-LINKED

A twin-linked weapon is commonly a paired set of guns that fire together with each pull of the trigger, but can also be a double-bladed chainsword or other melee weapon using the same principles. When making an attack, the attacker can re-roll his attack test one time; if he does, the second result must be used.

UNBALANCED

Cumbersome, awkward to use, and often heavy, these are usually powerful offensively but suffer in defence actions such as parrying. Evade reactions using the Evade (WS) skill cannot be taken while wielding this weapon.

UNRELIABLE

A clear affront to the Ommissiah, unreliable devices represent poorly designed, badly manufactured, or improperly consecrated weapons that are perhaps better than no weapon at all, but not by a great measure. Such weapons jam on an attack roll of 91 to 100.

RANGED WEAPONS

In the 41st Millennium, few would consider themselves properly (and safely) attired without some ranged weapon, from a concealed holdout stub pistol to a massive bolt gun or heavy flamer. Those who chose not to carry one often meet the same fate as the animals that ancient man conquered so many millennia ago.

BOLT WEAPONS

Fear acts to keep the Imperium of Man a rightfully dominant force across the galaxy, and few things are as fearsome as bolt weapons. They are devastating, firing self-propelled shells, known as bolts, which explode violently on target penetration. Bolters are a horrific mix of advanced technology and deliberate brutality, and have helped the Imperium survive for over ten thousand years.

Bolt weapons are superb, if temperamental, devices requiring skilled maintenance using the correct rituals and blessings. Many are centuries old, passed down along family or warrior lines through the long years, and have accumulated as many legends as their users. Though primarily the signature weapon of the mighty Adeptus Astartes, other, more human servants of the Emperor also have been blessed to use them, though their versions are much smaller and less massive. Bolter ammunition is equally as rare and difficult to manufacture, and few have the means to obtain it. The standard round has a super-dense metallic core with a diamantine tip, but more specialised shells can be used to deal with even greater threats.

BOLT PISTOL

Both a status mark and puissant weapon, bolt pistols are rarely seen but always feared. In the hands of an Imperial Guard Commissar, one can reverse a cowardly retreat; on the hands of an Inquisitor, it can stop a cult leader from summoning an unholy Daemon. Such is their power, both symbolic and physical, that many eagerly sacrifice all to possess one.

BOLTGUN

Boltguns, or bolters as they are often called, are the main weapon of the Space Marines, who carry versions so huge that few humans can easily lift one, let alone fire it. The lighter models others use to serve the Emperor are only slightly less destructive, but still powerful enough to destroy any who oppose His Will.

HEAVY BOLTER

This huge weapon is rarely seen outside of military forces, but sometimes is all that can stand against some of the terrors of the Ruinous Powers. The larger shells carry additional propellant and a stronger explosive charge, making it deadly against armoured foes at long ranges.

STORM BOLTER

Storm bolters combine the firing power of two boltguns into one compact weapon. They fire an unstoppable hail of metal that can tear apart groups of enemies in a single shot, and can bring a furious charge to a dead halt in moments.

FLAMEWEAPONS

As the name suggests, flame weapons fire goutts of flame at their targets. They are common in many Ecclesiarchy factions, as they not only kill but purify with cleansing flame. Each blast spreads into an inferno of liquid fire that burns even without air. Targets find themselves hard-pressed to extinguish the flames, and most perish while still attempting to batten out the blaze.

HAND FLAMER

Also known as flame pistols or burners, these small weapons are ideal for close-range fighting where their very short range and poor accuracy are less important than their furious effect.

COMBI-WEAPON RULES

Combi-weapons combine a bolter with a single other weapon to make one oversized device, allowing the user greater options in combat. Common versions use either a plasma gun, melta gun, or flamer as the secondary weapon, but this comes with a decreased firing capability.

A combi-weapon can fire its bolter as normal, but its secondary weapon has a clip size of 1, and so can only be fired once before needing a reload. This action reloads the bolter as well.

Combi-weapons have an availability equal to the highest of the two weapons, plus half that of the other weapon, and weigh 7 kg plus half the weight of the other weapon.

FLAMER

A common weapon in many gangs and cults, who savour the smell of burning flesh, flamers are ideal for attacking enemies in cover or confined spaces with indiscriminate conflagrations.

HEAVY FLAMER

Large and terrifying, heavy flamers use two muzzles to create huge blasts of fire than can incinerate entire squads in a single shot. Only the strongest can carry the weapon as well as the massive backpack of fuel, but their presence has turned the tide against many a heretical attack.

LAS WEAPONS

Las weapons are perhaps as common across the Imperium as humanity itself. They are reliable, cheap to manufacture, and easy to maintain. Forges and factories across the galaxy generate untold billions each year to supply the massive war engines of the Imperial Guard, with millions of the weapons making their way to criminal cartels, hive cults, and other sordid organisations as well. Each shot emits short, sharp pulses of laser energy from high-storage, fast-discharge capacitors, with a flash of light and a distinctive snap like the cracking of a whip.

LASPISTOL

Compact and reliable, laspistols are a favourite weapon for Imperial officers and gang leaders alike. They can range from elaborately crafted and embossed heirloom weapons of pearl and gryn-x-pelt, to brutally simple versions of solid metal and plasteel.

LASGUN

Lasguns are the basic weapon of Imperial Guard troopers, and as such are the most plentiful las weapon in existence. They come in many varieties and patterns, and the continued survival of the Imperium owes much to their reliability, simplicity of design, and ease of use.

HOT-SHOT LASPISTOL AND LASGUN

Higher-powered variants of the basic las weapon design, hot-shot weapons use stronger power packs that provide extra energy for each shot. High ranking military officers and elite forces such as Storm Troopers use them frequently, but other Imperial agencies with sufficient means also favour the extra stopping power they provide.

LONG LAS

The long las is a specialised version of the basic lasgun designed for snipers. The longer barrel and precise collimator allows for accurate shots at much farther ranges, with little of the signature loud crack of other las weapons. However, the barrel length and lack of a rapid-firing mode make it impractical for close range operations.

LOW-TECH RANGED WEAPONS

The war-torn reaches of the 41st Millennium feature the entire range of weaponry, from the wondrous relics of the Dark Ages of Technology and advanced xenos devices to primitive but effective armaments. Low-tech weapons can be just as deadly in the hands of skilled warriors. On many worlds, where technology has either collapsed or has yet to rise, many have been left bloody and dead from what they considered laughable hardware.

BOLAS

An ancient weapon often seen with hive city bounty hunters and feral worlders alike, bolas have swirling weights at the ends of ropes or wires to entangle a target and often knock him to the ground. Once wrapped up, the foe is easily dispatched or further bound for transport and delivery.

BOW

Though bows come in a multitude of shapes and are made from a wide variety of materials, their basic form and function has changed little throughout the millennia. Even where the Mechanicum may be ascendant, a well-placed and silent arrow can be just as effective as a revered boltgun. A bow always requires both hands to use.

CROSSBOW

Crossbows are more compact than regular bows, but require additional mechanical fittings and usually have a shorter range. They are relatively simple to use though and as they can be readied in advance can offer a fast shot when combat starts.

RECHARGING LAS POWER PACKS

One of the reasons las weapons are so prevalent is their power source. These dependable power packs allow for easy recharging, even in battlefield conditions, ensuring they almost never run out of ammunition for long. Players can make a Tech-Use (I) test to successfully charge any power pack if there is a suitable power source available, such as a standardised replenishment cell or even a running Chimera. The power output of the source determines the time the pack takes to charge, is ultimately up to the GM, but typically this takes several hours. Las packs can also be recharged through exposure to intense heat, even an open flame, though this takes much longer and degrades the pack permanently. The pack's clip size is reduced by half the first time this is done, and the weapon loses its Reliable quality (or gains the Unreliable quality if it was not already Reliable) when using this pack. Each time the pack is recharged in this manner, there is a 30% chance it fails to recharge and becomes permanently useless.

THROWING KNIFE

These ancient weapons have been refined through use over countless millennia, from crude metal shapes to aerodynamic blades of ceramic and plasteel. They are easily concealable, and a skilled user can slice apart a foe or inject poisons to a foe unprepared for an attack.

LAUNCHER WEAPONS

Unlike most ranged weapons launchers, fire large rounds with highly explosive or penetrating payloads, often in tall arcs designed to offer greater range or effectiveness. Most also allow for a variety of rounds, making the weapon more tactically flexible than most.

When acquired, launcher weapons come with one clip each of frag and krak rounds.

GRENADE LAUNCHER

This weapon uses compressed gas charge to fire grenades either directly or in indirect blasts against unseen foes, and is a common suppressive weapon in many battles.

The grenade launcher uses grenades as its ammo (see page 143). When the character reloads the grenade launcher, he can choose any 3 grenades of the same type that he has to load into the grenade launcher. For the next attacks before reloading again, the damage, penetration, and special sections of the grenade launcher's profile use the stats from the profile for the chosen type of grenade. However, the grenade launcher does not gain the Single-Shot quality from the grenade used.

TABLE 5-6: RANGED WEAPONS

BOLT WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Bolt Pistol	Light	80m	1/2	1d10+4 (R)	2	8	3 AP	Close Quarters, Tearing	4 kg	-30
Boltgun	Basic	160m	1	1d10+6 (R)	2	16	3 AP	Tearing	7 kg	-30
Storm Bolter	Basic	120m	2	1d10+6 (R)	2	32	3 AP	Storm, Tearing	9 kg	-40
Heavy Bolter	Heavy	200m	3	1d10+10 (R)	2	48	4 AP	Tearing	40 kg	-40
LAS WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Laspistol	Light	80m	1	1d10 (E)	0	12	1 AP	Close Quarters, Overcharge	2 kg	+20
Lasgun	Basic	160m	2	1d10+2 (E)	0	24	2 AP	Overcharge, Reliable	4 kg	+10
Long-las	Basic	300m	1/2	1d10+8 (E)	0	6	3 AP	Accurate, Overcharge, Silent (3)	5 kg	-10
Hot-shot Laspistol	Light	60m	1	1d10+2 (E)	1	18	1 AP	Close Quarters, Overcharge	4 kg	-20
Hot-shot Lasgun	Basic	120m	2	1d10+4 (E)	1	30	2 AP	Overcharge	6 kg	-20
SOLID PROJECTILE WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Autopistol	Light	60m	2	1d10 (I)	0	18	3 AP	Close Quarters	2 kg	+0
Stub Revolver	Light	80m	1/2	1d10+2 (I)	0	6	4 AP	Close Quarters, Reliable	2 kg	-10
Hand Cannon	Basic	60m	1/2	1d10+6 (I)	1	3	4 AP	Close Quarters	3 kg	-10
Autogun	Basic	120m	2	1d10+1 (I)	0	30	3 AP	—	5 kg	+0
Shotgun	Basic	30m	1/2	1d10+2 (I)	0	6	6 AP	Spray	5 kg	-10
Sniper Rifle	Heavy	400m	1/3	1d10+10 (I)	3	3	6 AP	Accurate, Concussive (2), Reliable	12 kg	-20
Heavy Stubber	Heavy	160m	3	1d10+2 (I)	1	60	8 AP	—	30 kg	-30
Autocannon	Heavy	300m	3	1d10+8 (I)	2	48	8 AP	Reliable	40 kg	-30
MELTA WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Inferno Pistol	Light	20m	1/2	2d10+2 (E)	3	3	3 AP	Close Quarters, Melta	3 kg	-50
Meltagun	Basic	30m	1/2	2d10+4 (E)	3	6	3 AP	Melta	15 kg	-30

TABLE 5-6: RANGED WEAPONS (CONTINUED)

PLASMA WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Plasma Pistol	Light	60m	1/2	1d10+10 (E)	2	6	6 AP	Close Quarters, Overcharge, Overheats	4 kg	-30
Plasma Gun	Basic	120m	1/2	1d10+12 (E)	2	12	8 AP	Overcharge, Overheats	18 kg	-30
FLAME WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Hand Flamer	Light	10m	1/2	1d10+3 (E)	0	3	4 AP	Close Quarters, Flame (1), Spray	3 kg	-20
Flamer	Basic	20m	1/2	1d10+3 (E)	0	6	6 AP	Flame (2), Spray	6 kg	-10
Heavy Flamer	Heavy	40m	1/3	1d10+7 (E)	1	9	8 AP	Flame (4), Spray	45 kg	-20
LOW-TECH WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Bolas	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	2 AP	Inaccurate, Single-Shot, Snare (1)	2 kg	+0
Bow	Heavy	30m	1/3	1d10 (R)	0	1	1 AP	Reliable, Single-Shot	2 kg	-10
Crossbow	Basic	30m	1	1d10 (R)	0	1	3 AP	Single-Shot	3 kg	+0
Throwing Knife	Light	20+Abm	1	1d5+Sb (R)	0	3	1 AP	Close Quarters, Reliable	1 kg	+10
LAUNCHER WEAPONS										
Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Avl
Grenade Launcher	Basic	100m	1/2	†	†	3	6 AP	Indirect, †	12 kg	-10
Missile Launcher	Heavy	300m	1/3	†	†	1	4 AP	†	35 kg	-20
† Damage, Pen, and Special Qualities are determined by the ammunition (grenade type) fired.										
EXOTIC WEAPONS										
Needle Pistol	Light	80m	1/2	1d10+4 (R)	1	3	2 AP	Close Quarters, Felling, Silent (5), Toxic (2)	2 kg	-30
Needle Rifle	Basic	200m	1/2	1d10+4 (R)	1	6	4 AP	Felling, Silent (5), Toxic (2)	4 kg	-40
Web Pistol	Light	30m	1	—	—	1	3 AP	Close Quarters, Single-Shot, Snare (1)	4 kg	-10
Webber	Heavy	50m	1/3	—	—	1	6 AP	Blast (5), Single-Shot, Snare (2)	8 kg	-30

MAN-PORTABLE MISSILE LAUNCHER

Missile launchers fire heavy shells with great explosive power, and are well suited to puncturing enemy armour or decimating assaulting cultists. The portable version is lighter than the regular military model, and is normally used shoulder-mounted or strongly braced against a wall or siding. Many users have someone nearby to aid in carrying the large shells and reloading between shots.

The missile launcher uses grenades as its ammo (see page 143). When the character reloads the missile launcher, he can choose any grenade that he has available. For the next attacks before reloading again, the damage, penetration, and special sections of the missile launcher's profile use the stats from the profile for the chosen type of grenade. However, the missile launcher does not gain the Indirect special quality from the grenade used.

MELTA WEAPONS

Melta weapons use intense, short ranged blasts of heat to roast enemies of the Imperium. Most combine highly pressurised gases into an unstable sub-molecular thermal state, forming a focused beam that can turn even tank armour into molten slag. The water vapour in the air is seared away along the path of the shot, creating a distinctive hissing sound as the target melts away.

INFERNO PISTOL

These pistols are nearly impossible to manufacture any more, and almost all that exist are ancient relics of ages long ago. Possessing an inferno pistol is a sign of status, and few but the powerful and influential have the honour of owning one of these valuable devices.

MELTAGUN

Meltaguns are a favourite weapon for anti-tank specialists, who use their close-range destructive power to cut through armour plate and heavy bulkheads alike.

PLASMA WEAPONS

Like much of advanced Imperial technology, plasma weapons represent an almost-lost art, making their manufacture and repair secrets known only to few within the Adeptus Mechanicus. They use a hydrogen fuel suspended in a photonic state within durable flasks to create an unstable plasma reaction. This is fired along the barrel of the weapon, barely contained though magnetic constraints, and emerges as a ball of rapidly moving energy. Leaking plasma heats up the weapon with each shot despite vents along the muzzle, requiring a pause between shots for high-powered blasts, but often the heat grows so intense that the user is badly burned as well.

PLASMA PISTOL

Each of these small weapons contains the fury of a burning star, and can rip apart even heavily armoured enemies in a single incandescent blast as if the Emperor had turned His Gaze upon the foes.

PLASMA GUN

Many plasma guns date back centuries or even millennia, and it is common for comrades to recover one rather than rescue their fallen user if there is no time for both. Despite the hazards a plasma gun can pose, those who carry one know it is a special honour few can know.

Instead of using regular fuel canisters, plasma guns can be fed through a backpack-mounted container. This doubles the clip size and adds 6 kg to the weapon weight.

SOLID PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Though there are many esoteric energy-based weapons throughout the Imperium, in many places the more basic solid projectile weapons still dominate. Also known as slugthrowers, they rely on firing heavy masses of metal at high velocities with deadly results. Easy to manufacture, they especially dominate the farther from advanced civilisations one ventures, such as feral worlds or dark underhives. In many regions, citizens commonly carry one kind or another for their basic protection or livelihood.

AUTOGUN

While not as commonplace as lasguns in military formations, many local forces rely on these sturdy and inexpensive weapons to defend their homeworld from threats within or without. They use common, low-calibre shells in standardised clips, and can be set to fire in single, semi-automatic, or full-automatic modes making them as versatile as they are simple to construct and supply.

AUTOPISTOL

Rapid firing and compact, many veteran Guardsmen carry a supplemental autopistol to supplement their regulation lasgun or other, less reliable weapons. They are also popular in gang hierarchies, and have settled many leadership disputes in an hail of shells.

HAND CANNON

This stub gun variant concentrates on stopping power above all else. It is a huge and brutal weapon, and those who use it generally do not care about the state of their target after the shot. Hand cannons kick like a grox, and unless fired with two hands or a Recoil Glove, it imposes a -10 penalty on Ballistic Skill tests when used.

HEAVY STUBBER

Heavy stubbers are common both on the battlefield and in the underhive, though of course many times there is little to difference between the two locations. Relatively simple to produce and maintain, they use standard ammunition that can provide a hail of suppressive fire against infantry and light vehicles. Few have the muscles to fire one, especially with its infamous recoil, so most users rely on a bipod or other support. Like all stub weapons, heavy stubbers come in many forms and use many ammunition intakes, such as long belt feeds, huge clips, or wide drums.

SHOTGUN

Shotguns are relatively easy to produce, and their wide area of effect makes them appealing for those unskilled in ranged combat. Their short range and low shot velocity can be detrimental in larger conflicts, but this also makes them the perfect weapon for shipboard combat. The standardised shell construction also allows them to take a wide variety of specialised ammunition.

SNIPER RIFLE

Less advanced than the elite needle rifles, sniper rifles are still very effective against most lightly armoured foes. When combined with tripod brace and telescopic sight, a skilled marksman can easily turn the tides of a battle with a single shot.

STUB REVOLVER

Revolvers use a rotary feed for fire single shots, with a small clip that must be manually replenished. Their open design though makes it easy to load in custom rounds for special situations, and thus many bounty hunters and trackers find them a useful backup weapon.

EXOTIC RANGED WEAPONS

Some weapons are so specialised or rare that even veteran warriors may never have seen one, let alone used one in battle. Others are alien and anathema to regular citizens of the Imperium, and only the desperate or radical would avail himself of such tainted devices. Exotic weapons are uncommon in the extreme, and often a foe is felled through being unaware of the peril he faces.

NEEDLE WEAPONS

Needle weapons use a thin laser beam to fire crystalline slivers coated with virulent toxins, each shot as silent as it is lethal. They excel against unarmoured foes, but almost

any protection can successfully blunt needle rounds. Those wounded often fall dead before they know they have been hit. Needle Pistols make for excellent backup weapons for infiltrating spies and thieves, while snipers prize the larger needle rifles which offer much greater range.

WEBBER WEAPONS

Webber weapons fire masses of jellied filaments, which expand in the air to form a web of sticky, near-unbreakable material. A favoured weapon for Adeptus Arbites and bounty hunters alike, they can easily subdue violent mobs who would dare violate the Emperor's Law. Once entangled, few can escape from the constricting threads.

GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Unless stated otherwise, all of the items below can be used in a grenade launcher or missile launcher.

FRAG

Frag grenades explode with a cloud of deadly metal shards, and make for excellent anti-personnel weapons. Many close-quarters combat specialists carry bandoliers of them to hurl into enemy positions as part of an assault.

HALLUCINOGEN

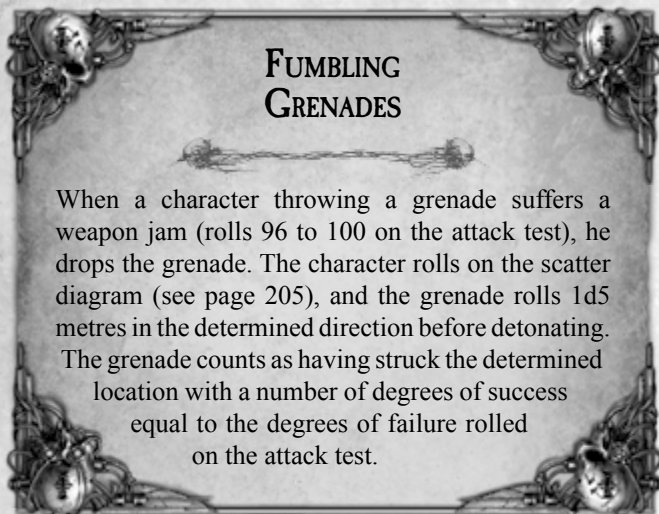
These grenades use mind-altering drugs or even exotic energies to induce a variety of short-lived psychological states and delusions. They are often used for crowd control or areas where non-lethal results are necessary.

HAYWIRE

Haywire grenades ignore the flesh and instead seek to injure machine spirits and technological devices through a shower of harmful electromagnetic radiation. Machines that suffer such indignities are often crippled, leaving their users helpless against attacking foes.

TABLE 5-7: GRENADES & EXPLOSIVES

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dam	Pen	Clip	Special	Wt	Avl
Frag	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	2d10 (E)	0	1	Blast (3), Indirect, Scatter (2)	1 kg	+10
Hallucinogen	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	Blast (5), Hallucinogenic (2), Indirect, Scatter (2)	1 kg	-20
Haywire	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	Haywire (10), Scatter (2)	1 kg	-20
Krak	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	1d10+14 (E)	0	1	Piercing, Scatter (2)	1 kg	-10
Melta Bomb	Heavy	5+Sbm	1/4	2d10+14 (E)	3	1	Blast (5), Melta, Scatter (0)	4 kg	-30
Photon Flash	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	Blast (10), Indirect, Scatter (2), Special	1 kg	-20
Smoke	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	Indirect, Scatter (2), Smoke (8)	1 kg	+10
Stun	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	Blast (3), Concussive (2), Indirect, Scatter (2)	1 kg	-10
Web	Light	10+Sbm	1/2	—	—	1	Blast (5), Scatter (2), Snare (2)	1 kg	+0



FUMBLING GRENADES

When a character throwing a grenade suffers a weapon jam (rolls 96 to 100 on the attack test), he drops the grenade. The character rolls on the scatter diagram (see page 205), and the grenade rolls 1d5 metres in the determined direction before detonating. The grenade counts as having struck the determined location with a number of degrees of success equal to the degrees of failure rolled on the attack test.

KRAK

Designed more for armour penetration, krak grenades focus their explosion into a concentrated effect that can punch holes in most tanks or bunker walls.

MELTA BOMB

Melta bombs are extremely powerful explosives that can rip apart even the thickest of tank hulls or bunker walls. Unlike other grenades, they adhere to their target then detonate with a shaped-charge blast similar in effect to a melta weapon. Their form makes them too unwieldy to easily throw, so each is usually slapped into place before the user quickly runs for safety.

Melta bombs cannot be used with launcher weapons and cannot be thrown.

PHOTON FLASH

These grenades explode with an intensely brilliant light, which can overload unprotected eyes with temporary blindness, and make for excellent non-lethal weapons.

When a target is hit by a photon flash grenade, he must make a -20 Agility test. If the target fails this test, he is gains the Blinded condition for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.

SMOKE

A relatively simple and easy to construct device, smoke grenades release huge gouts of thick, black clouds that obscure vision. They only block eyesight however, and provide no protection against scanners that might use heat or other means of detection, or spectral bands outside normal human vision.

STUN

Using a combination of loud noise and brilliant light, these grenades can incapacitate targets long enough for assault forces to apply non-lethal restraints, or to finish off the now-disabled foes with ease.

WEB

Web grenades use the same ensnaring filament-filled gel as webber weapons, and when they detonate can entangle masses of targets in moments. Web filaments becomes brittle and dissolves away after 1d5 hours.

MELEE WEAPONS

Despite the power of ranged armaments, there is always a demand for weapons designed to attack at arm's length. It might be a matter of honour, distrust of advanced mechanisms, local customs, or of a preferred fighting style, but for many across the Imperium travelling without a close combat weapon is unthinkable. This might vary from an ancient power sword that could date to the times of the Heresy, to a favoured bone knife used to foil a heretical plot. No matter the form, a fine melee weapon in the hands of a skilled wielder can be as deadly as any bolter or plasma gun.

CHAIN WEAPONS

The roar of a chainsword, along with the crack of the lasgun, is one of the signature sounds of the Imperium at war. Chain weapons have been found in human armies dating to the Great Crusades, when they helped unite Terra and then the galaxy under the rightful rule of the Emperor. They are brutal and horrific, using loops of rapidly moving metal teeth set along an edge to tear apart flesh and armour. Even when their engines are silent, the serrated chain can still be used to deadly effect.

CHAINAXE

While the chainsword can be wielded with finesse, the chainaxe is a more simple and savage affair. The added leverage of the long halt allows its wide chain edge makes for a heavier strike with each blow, but with less control or precision. Most users use the chainaxe for just these reasons, and savour the terror and destruction they cause.

CHAINBLADE

Chainblades are one of the smallest chain weapons, little more than a knife with a tiny chain around its edge. The size is deceptive, for the extra tearing the chain provides makes it much more effective than any ordinary dagger.

CHAINSWORD

The most common type of chain weapon, these heavy swords usually only have the tip and one edge exposed for the spinning, deadly chain fangs. Despite their barbarous nature, many elaborate fencing schools devoted to the artistic practice of the chainsword exist across the Imperium. For many users though, the power of the weapon is enough that any strike is enough to deal with most foes, leaving behind only torn flesh and blood.

EVISCERATOR

One of the largest chain weapons, the eviscerator is a huge, double-edged chainsword that requires both hands to use. The Priests of the Adeptus Ministorum often wield them with unrestrained fury against heretics, caring little if they themselves are injured themselves each wild swing.

POWER WEAPONS

These weapons generate a disruptive energy field along their edge or head, which can puncture even the thickest of armour with each explosive strike. Some appear only as ornamented variants of base metal, only revealing their true nature when activated, and crackles of lightning dance across the surface. They still function as dangerous weapons even when disabled or their power source is exhausted, or if the wielder prefers a more inconspicuous approach in combat.

POWER AXE

A common weapon amongst the followers of the Machine God, a power axe combines the heavy striking power of an axe with an energy field. While less artful than a power sword, many prefer its devastating attacks that few can withstand.

POWER FIST

One of the most devastating melee weapons in the 41st Millennium, a power fist encloses the user's own fist with a huge mechanical glove complete with articulated fingers. The entire device is sheathed in a power field generated from a source mounted on a backpack or contained within heavy armour, allowing it to crush tank hulls and tear apart barricades. Many are relics dating back centuries, with each user's accomplishments and lineage carefully enscrolled upon the shell.

POWER MAUL

Power mauls are elite weapons in many fighting formations, where their club-like form can blow apart reinforced hab doors or crack open armour. Even unpowered, these heavy devices can knock a heretic senseless.

POWER SWORD

Power swords are a sign of prestige within the Imperium, and many officials without skill wear one in public simply to demonstrate stature. Some of these weapons are handed down as heirlooms, carrying the family name across generations from battle to battle. They come in as many styles, and datavaults are filled with lectures and tomes concerning the varied fighting styles available depending on the blade and its user.

LOW-TECH MELEE WEAPONS

Some melee weapons have no need for any power other than the muscles the Emperor provides the wielder. Though they may now be made of plasteel and adamantium, their designs are as old as Mankind. Compared to a power sword or force staff a bare length of metal might appear insignificant, but many a corpse can testify that even such primitive weapons can be just as deadly as any other in the 41st Millennium.

GREAT WEAPON

Great weapons, such as huge axes and giant hammers, are oversized and cumbersome, but capable of smashing heretics to bloody pulp with each blow. Highly visible and obvious, the mere sight of one can lead to violence.

IMPROVISED

When proper weapons fail or run out of power, desperation turns to anything nearby that looks suitable: broken table legs, severed limbs, hab ductpipes, even severed limbs or rifle butts. None would match even the dullest of swords, but when facing a horde of cultists, they are better than nothing at all.

KNIFE

So common that almost everyone in the Imperium carries at least one as a backup weapon, knives can range from crudely sharpened metal daggers to elaborately inscribed blades of xenos crystal. Most are carefully weighted making them useful throwing weapons as well.

STAFF

Staffs are long rods of wood or metal, often taller than a man. They are commonly used as walking sticks amongst pilgrims travelling in the steps of the saints, but also make for handy weapons, as their long reach can strike an enemy before he can attack.

SWORD

Swords use sharp, bladed edges to cut and stab, and can be found from underhive gangs to spire nobility. They come in endless styles—from stiff blades to flexible foils, with edges on one side or both—each of which has millennia of fighting techniques and schools devoted to proper form.

WARHAMMER

An ideal weapon to pound armoured foes with strong impacts, a warhammer mounts a compact head on a long handle. It takes longer to swing than smaller weapons, but each hit strikes with concentrated force and can knock foes to the ground, insensate and helpless. Many of the Ordo Malleus favour such hammers, pouring their fury into each blow.

WHIP

Whips have existed across history, used for horrific punishments or merely to encourage worker productivity. Easy to create, many users fashion their own using materials found locally such as leather hides, vines, or stray wiring.

FORCE WEAPONS

Unlike any other type, force weapons have no special abilities unless a very special user wields it: a psyker. In the hands of anyone else, a force weapon is simply another sword or staff, though still extraordinarily rare and valuable beyond compare. When a psyker channels his mental energies through the psychoreactive circuitry and arcane runes covering the weapon, however, it becomes tremendously powerful. His will and rage multiplied into a force that can rend armour and reality alike, a psyker with such a weapon is a warrior to be rightly feared.

TABLE 5-8: MELEE WEAPONS

CHAIN WEAPONS							
Name	Class	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Avl
Chainaxe	Basic	1/2	1d10+4+Sb (R)	2	Tearing, Unbalanced	8 kg	-10
Chainblade	Light	Ab-1	1d10 (R)	0	Tearing	3 kg	+10
Chainsword	Light	Ab-3	1d10+Sb (R)	1	Balanced, Tearing	6 kg	+0
Eviscerator	Heavy	1/4	2d10+8 (R)	4	Crippling, Tearing	15 kg	-40
POWER WEAPONS							
Name	Class	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Avl
Power Axe	Light	1/2	1d10+6+Sb (E)	3	Power Field, Unbalanced	6 kg	-30
Power Fist	Light	1/3	1d10+(2 x Sb) (E)	3	Power Field	13 kg	-30
Power Maul	Basic	1/2	1d10+4+Sb (E)	3	Concussive (0), Power Field	4 kg	-30
Power Sword	Light	Ab-3	1d10+2+Sb (E)	3	Balanced, Power Field	4 kg	-30
LOW-TECH WEAPONS							
Name	Class	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Avl
Great Weapon	Heavy	1/3	2d10 (I)	0	Unbalanced	7 kg	-10
Knife	Light	Ab-1	1d10-2 (R)	0	—	1 kg	+20
Improvised	Light	Ab-3	1d10 (I)	0	—	—	—
Sword	Light	Ab-3	1d10+Sb (R)	0	Balanced	4 kg	+10
Staff	Heavy	1/3	2d10 (I)	0	—	6 kg	+20
Warhammer	Heavy	1/3	2d10+Sb (I)	0	Concussive (2)	8 kg	-10
Whip	Light	1/2	1d10+3 (I)	0	Flexible	4 kg	-10
Unarmed	Light	Ab	1d5+Sb (I)	0	—	—	—
FORCE WEAPONS							
Name	Class	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Avl
Force Staff	Heavy	1/3	2d10 (I)	1	Force	6 kg	-40
Force Sword	Light	Ab-3	1d10+Sb (R)	1	Balanced, Force	4 kg	-50
SHOCK WEAPONS							
Name	Class	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Avl
Electro-Flail	Light	1/2	1d10+5 (E)	1	Flexible, Sapping (X)	6 kg	-30
Shock Maul	Basic	1/2	1d10+Sb (E)	1	Concussive (1), Sapping (X)	4 kg	-20
EXOTIC WEAPONS							
Name	Class	RoF	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Avl
Hunting Lance	Basic	1/2	3d10 (E)		Felling, Piercing, Single-Shot, Special	6 kg	-20

FORCE STAFF

Many psykers prefer these staffs above other force weapons, as most resemble nothing but cleverly shaped lengths of exotic wood or metal. Some staffs mount an impressive Aquila or other signs of Emperor, whose psychic power lights the Astronomicon and illuminates the galaxy.

FORCE SWORD

A force sword is often mistaken for a highly ornate blade, though sometimes made of unusual metals or crystalline materials. Once infused with a psyker's Warp-based energies, it can cleave daemonic and mortal flesh with ease and many psykers, who are often not known as skilled warriors, have become excellent swordsmen to take full advantage of the weapon.

SHOCK WEAPONS

As the name suggests, shock weapons use violent electrical discharges to add additional power to each strike. Most are designed to harm rather than kill, leaving painful burns rather than corpses, and are ideal to encourage productivity in hive factories, and quell riots when workers rebel against their rightful lot in the Imperium.

ELECTRO-FLAIL

A combination of whip, flail, and electrical shock, the electro-flail is common wherever there are workers or slaves requiring additional encouragement to improve their efforts. Though rarely used in combat, the extra reach can mean the difference that halts a dark ritual or xenos incursion.

SHOCK MAUL

The signature armament of the Adeptus Arbites, shock mauls come in many designs, from elegant truncheons to heavy, brutal clubs that would injure even without the electrical discharge. They are primarily non-lethal, though enough blows can kill a heretic as easily as a battlefield chainsword.

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

In a galaxy that has known war as long as sentient life has existed, there are more weapons than can be imagined. Mankind alone has made more unusual killing devices than history remembers, and xenos races have created weapons that only their unique physiology can properly wield. Exotic weapons are often as specialised as the forces that carry them, and usually stand out for their form even if they are not readily recognised as weapons.

HUNTING LANCE

A mainstay weapon amongst the Rough Riders of the Imperial Guard, hunting lances mount a small but powerful explosive charge at the end of a metal spear. On impact, the charge detonates with force to rip apart armour and barricades alike, allowing the mounted riders to continue their assault.

After a successful attack is made with this weapon, its tip is destroyed and it becomes a staff.

APPLYING PERSONAL MODIFICATIONS

Some characters may wish to apply their weapon modifications personally. If a character decides to do this, he gains a +30 bonus to the modification's availability when making the requisition test to acquire it. If he succeeds the test, the modification is not applied to his weapon but instead, he receives all of the parts necessary to apply the modification himself.

Once a character has the parts for a weapon modification, he must then perform a Tech-Use (I) test to apply that modification to the desired weapon. This test receives a modifier equal to the availability of the customisation being applied. If the test succeeds, the modification is successfully applied. If the test fails, the modification is not applied, and the parts necessary to apply the modification are lost in the process.

REMOVING AND RE-USING MODIFICATIONS

A character can also recover the parts necessary to apply a modification by removing that modification from a different weapon. To do this, the character makes a Tech-Use (I) test with a modifier equal to the availability of the customisation being removed. If the test succeeds, the modification is successfully removed with its parts intact. If the test fails, the modification is removed, but the parts necessary to reapply the modification are lost in the process.

WEAPON MODIFICATIONS

Even with the untold billions that exist, each weapon becomes as unique as its owner in time. Some wielders might specifically acquire a specially modified weapon, or customise their own to better match their fighting style. Such changes can alter its precision, the damage it inflicts, and other factors to make it and its user even more valued servants of the Emperor.

Modifications and upgrades can be made when first acquiring a weapon, or later a character can use the Tech-Use (I) to integrate them into an existing weapon. When acquired, the weapon modification can be applied to any eligible weapon in the character's possession, and its listed effects are applied to the weapon until the modification is removed.

TABLE 5-9: WEAPON MODIFICATION

MODIFICATION	WT	APPLIES TO	AVL	EFFECT
Backpack Ammo Supply	+10kg	Bolt, Flame, Las, Melta, Plasma, Solid Projectile Weapons	-10	Increases ammo capacity.
Compact	x1/2	All weapons.	+0	Reduces weight and size.
Counter-weight	+2kg	Melee Weapons	+10	Adds Balanced or removes Unbalanced.
Custom Grip	+1kg	Basic Weapons	-10	Remove -20 penalty for using with one hand.
Expanded Magazine	+1kg	Ranged Weapons	+10	Increases clip size by %50.
Melee Attachment	+2kg	Basic Ranged Weapons	+20	Adds blade to weapon.
Mono	+0kg	Melee Weapons with blades	-20	Adds Sapping (X)
Motion Predictor	+1kg	Ranged Weapons with RoF of 1 or higher	-30	Removes situational penalties from attack test.
Omnissian Sanction	+0kg	Ranged Weapons	-40	Add Reliable or removes Unreliable.
Photo Sight	+1kg	Basic Ranged Weapons	-20	Ignore the effects of darkness.
Preysense Sight	+1kg	Basic Ranged Weapons	-20	Ignore the effects of smoke and fog.
Quick-Release	+0kg	Ranged Weapons	+0	Reduce reload by 1 AP.
Red-Dot Laser Sight	+1kg	Ranged Weapons	-20	Add Accurate or remove Inaccurate.
Reinforced	+3kg	All weapons	+10	Reduce status loss chance to %50.
Suppressor	+1kg	Solid Projectile or Bolt Weapons	-10	Add Silent (4).
Suspensor	x1/2	Ranged Heavy Weapons	-40	Brace anywhere for 1 AP.
Targeter	+2kg	Ranged Weapons	-20	-20 to all Evade tests.
Telescopic Sight	+1kg	Las, Solid Projectile, Bolt, or Plasma Weapons	-10	Increase range by %50.
Vox-Operated	+1kg	Non-Low-Tech Ranged Weapons	-30	Can be fired remotely.

The process of applying the modification is assumed to be part of the acquisition. Each weapon can only have one modification on it at a time, and once applied, the modification cannot be removed or switched to a new weapon except through use of the Tech-Use skill (see the **Applying Personal Modifications** sidebar on page 147). If a weapon's status ever drops to 0 (wrecked), any modifications currently applied to the weapon are lost.

BACKPACK AMMO SUPPLY

The weapon is fed from a backpack supply, which feeds ammunition along fuel lines, power cables, or linked shells to the weapon. Though the user can now fire much longer, its newly cumbersome form means reloading must wait until the combat is concluded.

Effect: This increases the clip size of the weapon to 5 times its current clip size but it cannot be reloaded in combat. To reload the weapon, the character must have the necessary amount of ammunition and spend 5 minutes reloading the backpack. If the weapon jams, it only loses one clip's worth of ammunition and does not need to be reloaded.

Applies To: Bolt, Flame, Las, Melta, Plasma, and Solid Projectile Weapons.

COMPACT

This upgrade is ideal in stealth missions, when concealing a weapon is more important than its lethality.

Effect: The weapon's shape is cut down and its clip size and weight is reduced by half (rounded up). Any tests made to detect the weapon when it is being concealed suffer a -20 penalty.

Applies to: All weapons.

COUNTER-WEIGHT

This modification changes the weight distribution on the weapon, as well as its chassis or hilt, to more attune it to the user's firing position or combat stance. When readied, the weapon flows along arms and shoulders in an effortless length, allowing greater precision with each strike.

Effect: If the weapon has the Unbalanced quality, loses that quality. Otherwise, it gains the Balanced quality.

Applies To: Melee weapons.

CUSTOM GRIP

Though minor, altering the weapon's grip to perfectly match its owner's hand can make the weapon feel like a literal extension of his arm. This alteration can be done for either the user's actual hand, or to match a certain glove or armour he wears, or even a special gripping action that the owner has made part of his attack style.

Effect: Attack tests made with the basic weapon in one hand do not suffer the usual -20 penalty.

Applies To: Basic weapons.

EXPANDED MAGAZINE

The ammunition storage device, such as drum cartridge or plasma flask, is increased, thus lessening the need to reload during a battle.

Effect: Increase the clip size of the weapon by half its current clip size rounded up.

Applies To: Ranged weapons.

MELEE ATTACHMENT

Millennia of combat has shown the worth of a bayonet and other close combat attachments, as often foes can close before a more specialised melee weapon can be drawn.

Effect: The weapon counts as a great weapon when used in melee combat.

Applies To: Basic ranged weapons.

MONO

Mono weapons have extraordinarily sharpened edges, making each blade an even greater threat. Melee weapons without an actual edge, such as mauls or hammers, can also use this upgrade; here the effect can be due to pneumo-shocks, inertial multipliers, or some other more fitting enhancement.

Effect: The weapon gains the Sapping (X) quality.

Applies to: Any melee weapon with a blade (or others at the GM's discretion).

MOTION PREDICTOR

The powerful cogitator within this device processes movement, and when the weapon is fired the machine spirit uses this data to follow its prey with a long, accurate burst.

Effect: Attack tests made with the weapon do not suffer situational penalties that would be added due to the target moving quickly or an unstable environment.

Applies To: Non-Low Tech ranged weapon with a rate of fire of 1 or higher.

OMNISSIAN SANCTION

The blessings of the Machine God fall upon the weapon through careful rituals and manipulations. It is rare for any outside the Martian Priesthood to acquire such modifications, and some ancient Tech-Priests denounce unauthorised sanctions as tech-heresy.

Effect: If the weapon has the Unreliable quality, it loses that quality. Otherwise, it gains the Reliable quality.

Applies To: Ranged weapons.

PHOTO SIGHT

This sight reveals enemies lurking in the night, using wavelengths human eyes cannot detect.

Effect: Attack tests made using the weapon do not suffer the usual penalties for attacking in darkness and shadow.

Applies To: Basic ranged weapons.

PREYSENSE SIGHT

The venerable machine spirits in a preysense sight seeks out targets attempting to hide behind obscuring clouds, registering body heat and movement to produce a target ready to face retribution.

Effect: Attack tests made using the weapon do not suffer the usual penalties for attacking in fog, mist, and smoke.

Applies To: Basic ranged weapons.

QUICK RELEASE

This customisation can encompass blessed lubricant oils, extra clips mounted along the weapon stock, revered ejection springs recovered from ancient weapons, and more, all designed to in create more time shooting and less time reloading.

Effect: The amount of AP required to reload the weapon is reduced by 1 AP to a minimum of 1.

Applies to: Ranged weapons.

RED-DOT LASER SIGHT

This small, crimson laser sight is common on many guns, where it aids in both targeting and intimidating foe. **Effect:** If the weapon has the Inaccurate quality, it loses that quality. Otherwise, it gains the Accurate quality.

Applies To: Ranged weapons.

REINFORCED

Most combat veterans know that no matter their skill with ranged weapons, there are always occasions where the enemy gets too close and there is no time to reload or ready a knife or chainsword. A suitably modified gun can be a surprisingly effective weapon in these situations, and turn a charging heretic into the makings for new CS Rations.

Effect: If the weapon would have its status reduced, the character rolls 1d10. If the result of the roll is equal to 5 or lower, the weapon's status is not reduced.

Applies To: All weapons.

SUPPRESSOR

These upgrades use sonic bafflers, blessed coolant oils, and other methods to muffle the weapon's discharge noise, preventing detection from nearby foes.

Effect: The weapon gains the Silent (4) quality. If the weapon already has the Silent quality, it increases its X value by 4.

Applies To: Solid projectile ranged weapons.

SUSPENSORS

Suspensors are similar to the grav plating on void ships, but instead seek to lighten loads. Weapons fitted with such a wondrous technology are much easier to operate, but are so valuable that often they are savaged before the weapon itself.

Effect: When used with the weapon, the Brace action only requires 1 AP instead of the normal amount. This can be performed anywhere, even if there is nothing to brace the weapon against.

Applies to: Ranged heavy weapons.

TARGETER

Heavy and precious, targeters are highly valuable devices that use a combination of guidance cogitators and sensors to improve accuracy. They are often linked directly into a gun's machine spirit, and allow a greater bond between wielder and weapon.

Effect: All Evade tests made to avoid attacks made by the weapon suffer a -20 penalty.

Applies to: Ranged weapons.

TELESCOPIC SIGHT

This sight magnifies images, allowing the user to better target enemies at greater distances, and are a common upgrade when precision shots are needed.

Effect: Increase the range of the weapon by half its current range rounded up.

Applies To: Any non-Low Tech ranged weapon.

VOX-OPERATED

Keyed into the user's vocal signature, these vox receptors are linked into a weapon's firing controls. With spoken commands, the operator can fire his gun, switch firing modes, and also change ammunition should it be fitted with a fire selector.

Effect: The weapon can be operated by voice-command from a remote location over vox. This can be done as a Free Action, with a range of 3 metres (though requiring a loud shout), but if held closely, a whisper can suffice. For security, the receiver is keyed to a single voice pattern.

Applies to: Any non-Low Tech ranged weapon.

CUSTOM AMMUNITION

Imperial ranged weapons wondrous indeed. Many are relics, claiming lineages greater than the dynasties that hand them down from generation to generation. Without ammunition, however, most are little more than ornate clubs. While standard ammunition is somewhat commonplace, at least as easy to acquire as the weapon itself, many Acolytes seek out more unusual and unique ammunition for their guns. An Acolyte can become infamous for the specialised rounds he uses in combat, with enemies running in fear from the inferno shells or bleeder rounds they know are coming their way.

Custom ammunition can be acquired with a requisition test like any other item. When a character attempts to requisition custom ammo, he specifies which weapon it is for, and each successful requisition test obtains up to 2 full clips of the desired ammunition.

When a character reloads his weapon, he can choose to reload it using a clip of custom ammunition suitable for the weapon. For all attacks made using the ammo in that clip, the effects listed in the custom ammo's entry are applied to the weapon. Custom ammo cannot be mixed in a clip with regular ammo.

AMPUTATOR SHELLS

These bullets are filled with explosive micro-shrapnel, shearing flesh and shattering bone in each limb-tearing hit.

Effect: The weapon gains the Felling quality and its range is reduced by 20m.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

BLEEDER ROUNDS

Each of these rounds burst on penetration, spreading chemicals that prevent coagulation and keep wounds bleeding freely.

Effect: The weapon gains the Sapping (X) quality.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

DUMDUM SHELLS

Heavy and blunted, these bullets tear apart tissue and cause terrible carnage against softly armoured targets.

Effect: A weapon using these shells gains the Inaccurate and Tearing qualities.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

EXPANDER ROUNDS

The dense shells shred open after impact to create horrific exit wounds that few survive, and are ideal when there is no care if the target lives or dies.

Effect: The weapon's damage is reduced by 1, and its penetration is increased by 2.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

TABLE 5-10: CUSTOM AMMUNITION

AMMO	USED WITH	AVL	EFFECT
Amputator Shell	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−30	Adds Felling but −20m range
Bleeder Rounds	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−20	Adds Sapping (X)
Dumdum Bullets	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−10	Adds Inaccurate and Tearing
Expander Rounds	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−10	+2 penetration but −1 damage
Fragmentation Rounds	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−10	Reduce RoF and add Storm
Inferno Shells	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−30	Adds Flame (1), Unreliable, and Overheats
Scrambler Rounds	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−20	Adds Recharge and Hallucinogenic (2)
Tox Rounds	Bolt or Solid Projectile Weapon	−20	Adds Toxic (1) but −2 damage

FRAGMENTATION ROUNDS

Separating into multiple pieces after firing, these rounds blast shards of deadly metal that serrate flesh into bloody strips.

Effect: The weapon gains the Storm quality and its rate of fire is reduced by 1 to a minimum of 1.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

INFERNO SHELLS

Filled with promethium and other highly flammable agents, inferno shells ignite on impact to cover their targets with an adhesive gel of fire.

Effect: The weapon gains the Flame (1), Overheats, and Unreliable qualities.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

SCRAMBLER ROUNDS

Specially designed to disorient and subdue, scrambler rounds are slower to use but can bring down foes otherwise impervious to regular munitions.

Effect: The weapon gains the Hallucinogenic (2) and Recharge qualities.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

TOX ROUNDS

Tipped with deadly poisons or loaded with pungent fungi, tox rounds inflict terrible harm when they pierce flesh.

Effect: The weapon gains the Toxic (1) quality but its damage is reduced by 2.

Used With: Bolt or solid projectile weapons.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

“Emperor protect my soul, flak protect the rest.”

—Common saying amongst the Havarth Heavy Infantry

Given the power and lethality of the weaponry, it is to be expected that many seek out as much protection as possible. Such protection generally comes in two forms: personal armour designed to absorb or redirect damage, and exotic field devices that rely on arcane technologies to shield the wearer from harm. Refraining from some sort of physical protection is to invite a speedy death, and while all servants of the Emperor trust in His Protection, all know that to die before doing their duty to the Emperor is to fail Him.

ARMOUR

Armour is everywhere. No matter the status or supposed security of one’s domicile, it is almost unheard of not to wear some form of physical protection. This can range from leathers tanned on some isolated feral world that can perhaps turn a knife’s edge to ancient powered suits that can withstand direct boltgun hits, and all manner of improvised or even xenos types.

Armour provides Armour Points (AP) to various locations on a character’s body, which can mitigate damage as per page 206. In addition, some kinds of armour have special properties noted in their description. Each type of armour has the following characteristics:

Name: What the armour is called.

Head: The number of armour points added to the defence value of the head hit location.

Body: The number of armour points added to the defence value of the body hit location.

Arms: The number of armour points added to the defence value of the left arm and right arm hit locations.

Legs: The number of armour points this armour adds to the defence value of the left leg and right leg hit locations.

Max Ab: This is the maximum value a character wearing this armour can count his Agility bonus. If the character’s Agility bonus is higher than this number, it counts as this number instead.

TABLE 5-11: ARMOUR

NAME	HEAD	BODY	ARMS	LEGS	MAX AB	WT	AVL
Robes	1	3	2	2	—	4 kg	+20
Manufactorum Coverall	1	2	3	3	5	6 kg	+10
Hive Leathers	2	3	3	3	8	7 kg	+10
Feudal Armour	4	4	4	4	2	35 kg	-10
Body Glove	2	2	2	2	—	2 kg	-30
Enforcer Armour	3	3	3	3	6	15 kg	-20
Flak Armour	3	4	4	4	5	12 kg	-10
Mesh Armour	3	4	3	3	8	4 kg	-30
Carapace Armour	4	5	4	4	4	18 kg	-40
Light Power Armour	5	6	5	5	5	65 kg	-50

Weight (Wt): How much the armour weighs in kg (kilograms). For information on how much a character can carry, see page 132.

Availability (Avl): This represents the general availability of the armour. For the full rules for availability, see page 131.

MIXING ARMOUR

Characters can wear multiple armours if desired, but the protective qualities are not additive. When an area covered by multiple pieces of armour is struck, the highest AP value is used and all other armours are ignored for purposes of determining damage.

BASIC ARMOURS

While not necessarily of poor defensive ability, this type of armour is generally of a straightforward nature. Thick leather coats, protective body gloves, xenos furs, heavy robes, quilted vests, and chainmail are common across the Imperium. On many remote planets, and also in isolated locations within civilised worlds, such wear is standard. They rarely offer adequate protection from lasgun fire or other advanced weapons, but are often inexpensive and usually enough to deal with the most threats.

ENFORCER ARMOUR

A lesser version of carapace armour, enforcer armour is part of the uniform for local policing forces on planets across the Imperium. Though lacking the well-crafted plating that Storm Troopers or Arbitrators wear, it is still effective enough to deal with most hive gangers or heretical scum.

FLAK ARMOUR

Just as the lasgun is the most common type of weapon in the galaxy, so too is flak the most common type of armour, both due to their standard usage in the Imperial Guard. Flak armour is made from multiple layers of ablative and impact absorbent materials, designed to deal with light weapon

attacks and proximity blasts. While not prepared to stop heavy weapons fire, it is relatively lightweight, simple and inexpensive to manufacture, and dependable in combat.

MESH ARMOUR

Mesh armour is made from thousands of tiny thermoplas rings linked together to create a fabric-like cloth. The material becomes momentarily rigid on impact, dissipating the attack. The finest types are of clear xenos origin, though even the crude hman versions offer excellent protection.

CARAPACE ARMOUR

Made from moulded plates of plasteel or ceramite, carapace armour is often a sign of status amongst Imperial officers and Acolytes. Elite formations such as Storm Troopers and Adeptus Arbites wear full body suits of the material, but it is more commonly used for chest protection, or woven into flak suits as modular plates which can be removed and replaced when damaged. Carapace comes in levels of protection, with the associated trade-off between effectiveness and weight.

POWER ARMOUR

This advanced form of armour consists of thick, ceramite plates and uses an integral power source for mobility as well as to augment the user's strength. Many suits are heirloom items hundreds, or even thousands of years old. They come in a variety of styles, from lighter suits befitting elite Acolytes to heavy versions designed for intense fighting. The huge and ancient versions of the Adeptus Astartes are a separate class of power armour, using special implants to link the armour to the user in a manner no human could wear or operate.

Light power armour requires a constant power supply, normally built into the suit, which offsets its weight so it does not count against the user's normal carrying limit (see page 132). It adds +10 to the user's Strength. Unless stated otherwise, the power supply functions for 1d5 hours before needing recharging or refuelling. Most suits feature a detachable helmet; when in place the wearer can benefit from an internal oxygen supply and standard vox systems.

FORCE FIELDS

While physical armour is often as effective as it is impressive (sometimes merely the sight of a heavily armoured Acolyte is enough to quell a would-be heresy), there are other times where a stealthy approach is required or the situation calls for a less combative presence. Force fields can provide protection in these instances, as they are usually more concealable and often much more effective as well. Most are small, otherwise unobtrusive devices that none even within the Adeptus Mechanicus fully understand. Some are impossibly ancient archeotech creations from the Dark Age of Technology, considered holy relics to be venerated and sanctified before each use.

Unless stated otherwise, force fields offer protection for the entire body. A character may only benefit from one field at a time, however, regardless of how many different fields are active. It takes 1 AP to perform a utility action to turn the field on or off.

If a successful attack test is made against a character with an active force field, and that character chooses to trust his field and not to attempt an Evade reaction, the force field absorbs an amount of the attack determined by the field's protection rating. A protection rating is usually a dice roll, plus or minus an additional modifier. The character rolls a number of d5s equal to the current status level of the force field (see **Item Status** on page 131) and takes the highest result, applying the listed modifier to the result. Subtract the this determined value from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attacker then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the force field successfully absorbs the attack, and the attack fails.

EXAMPLE

A heretic with a bolter shoots at Logon, scoring two degrees of success on the attack. The enforcer has an active Conversion Field of Average status (level 2), giving him 2 d5's to roll. He rolls a 4 and a 3, and takes the 4. The field has a -1 modifier, giving a final result of 3. This negates the attack, as the field provides 3 against the attack's 2 degrees of success.

OVERLOADING

If the final result of the highest 1d5 roll is a 1, the force field overloads. An overloaded force field ceases to function after the current attack is resolved, and its status is reduced by 1. An overloaded force field cannot be reactivated until it is recharged by a character spending 4 AP to perform a -30 Tech-Use (I) test.

FORCE FIELD PROFILE

Name: What the force field is called.

Protection Rating: The value used to determine how much of an incoming attack the force field absorbs.

TABLE 5-12: FORCE FIELDS

NAME	PROTECTION RATING	WT	AVL
Refractor Field	1d5-2	2 kg	-30
Conversion Field	1d5-1	1 kg	-40
Displacer Field	1d5	2 kg	-50
Power Field	1d5+1	50 kg	-50

Weight (Wt): How much the force field device weighs.

Availability (Avl): This represents the general availability of the force field. For the full rules for availability, see that section on page 131.

REFRACTOR FIELD

Refractor fields are small enough to be disguised as jewellery or other ornamentation. While active they can disperse an attack across the field's entire surface area to negate the damage, but also constantly envelops the user with a soft halo as the field interacts with the surrounding air.

The glow of an active refractor field makes the user more noticeable in low lighting or darkness, and imposes a -20 penalty on all Stealth tests he takes.

CONVERSION FIELD

Also known as flare fields, these devices convert the energy of an attack into radiated light, often strong enough to act as a disorientating visual blast against nearby foes. A more powerful version known as a Rosarius is often granted to members of the Ecclesiarchy to guard against the predations of heretics and the unholy.

If the final result of the highest 1d5 rolled is a 5, the coronal burst is strong enough to act as a photon flash grenade discharge centred on the wearer (see page 144). The character wearing the conversion field is unaffected by this burst.

DISPLACER FIELD

Displacer fields are powerful, but sometimes as dangerous to use as the actual attack. They operate not by absorbing or shunting away an attack's energy, but instead shift the user away using miniature Warp-jump technologies. This jump is normally triggered through sensors located with the device, though it can also be activated manually if desired. Each activation carries the supreme risk of unprotected travel through the Empyrean; even as the body is swept to safety, the soul risks damnation.

Whenever the displacer field is used against an attack, the character rolls on the Scatter Diagram (see page 205) and moves a number of metres in that direction equal to the determined protection rating—the user always emerges on solid footing and in a suitable empty space. If the field overloads, the user gains 1 Corruption point from exposure to the Warp's baleful energies.

POWER FIELD

Unlike most other field devices, power fields are large, bulky affairs that cannot be easily disguised. Personal versions must be worn as heavy backpacks, while larger units are fitted with motive mechanisms due to their weight and size. Power fields are very effective, projecting a force wall to negate incoming attacks, but drain energy quickly once active.

Personal units can only be active for an hour before depletion, and cause the air to visibly ripple and crackle with static discharge, imposing a -20 penalty to the user's Stealth tests. It also does not defend against ranged attacks made within 1 metre, or any attacks made in melee.

GEAR

"Pack it all. Once we're stuck in, there won't be time to get more."

-Yanto Ka'Wie, preparing for an assault on the Order of Purity

While weapons and armour are of paramount importance in combat, other equipment is needed for investigating heresies, infiltrating cults, and interrogating the guilty. From mundane needs such as clothing to advanced medicae supplies, the items in this section can help ensure an Acolyte can be as effective as possible in his service to the Emperor.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL GEAR

The following are items worn or carried for personal use, from types of clothing to precious keepsakes of previous, simpler lives.

BACKPACK

These personal carrying items can range from containers of heavy cloth to elaborate, body-conforming devices with internal bracing for comfort. They all allow the wearer to transport roughly 30 kg with relative ease and with little loss in mobility. Only one backpack or combat vest can be worn at a time.

CAMELEOLINE CLOAK

Cameleoline material is made up of mimic fibres that blend the coloration of the wearer into his surroundings, and are the garb of choice for many snipers. A character wearing one of these cloaks gains a +20 bonus to Stealth tests.

CHRONO

Chronos are small timepieces, usually hand-held or worn on the wrist, and are essential for Acolytes to properly time their actions. Basic versions simply indicate local time and require manual setting, but others can synch to external datastreams for the greatest possible accuracy.

TABLE 5-13:
CLOTHING AND PERSONAL GEAR

NAME	WT	AVL
Backpack	0 kg	+30
Cameleoline Cloak	1 kg	-30
Chrono	0 kg	+20
Clothing	2 kg	+40
Combat Vest	2 kg	+0
Concealed Holster	1 kg	+0
Explosive Collar	3 kg	-10
Filtration Plugs	0 kg	-20
Photo-contacts/Visor	1 kg	-20
Preysense Goggles	1 kg	-20
Rebreather	5 kg	-10
Recoil Glove	1 kg	+0
Void Suit	10 kg	-20

CLOTHING

Citizens across the sector wear a huge range of clothing, some as basic protection with no thought to aesthetics, some purely ornamental with no concern for environmental or other lesser worries. For some, clothing styles are set at birth or through factory dictates. Others adopt the styles of their gang, sect, house, or other affiliation. While basic clothing common to a setting should be simple to acquire, more elaborate garb of either higher status or specialised function should be more difficult, with the GM acting as final arbiter on availability or creation.

COMBAT VEST

While this outerwear vest offers no additional protection, it does include numerous pouches and straps to keep extra weapon clips, sidearms, and grenades within easy reach. Common styles include hip packs, holsters, bandoliers, and vests and can hold 15 kg comfortably. Items held in the combat vest can be drawn as a free action during the character's turn. Only one backpack or combat vest can be worn at a time.

CONCEALED HOLSTER

These conformal pouches can hold a small pistol such as an autopistol, stub automatic, or stub automatic, and are worn under obscuring clothing to disguise the weapon from observers. Attempts to detect such a weapon suffers a -20 penalty, but drawing the weapon requires the character to spend 1 additional AP.

EXPLOSIVE COLLAR

Ugly and obvious, explosive collars are used to give penal legionnaires extra incentive to fight and expunge their sins to the Emperor, as well as to keep captured prisoners in

line. Each comes with a remote, usually with a range of 1 km. The remote can either trigger the collar to release or explode, and the collar automatically explodes if out of range of the remote for longer than 5 minutes.

When triggered to explode, the explosive on the collar detonates. The wearer is instantly decapitated, and counts as having a frag grenade detonated at his location (see page 143). Removing an explosive collar without the remote requires a –20 Tech-Use (I) test. If the test fails by two or more degrees of failures, the collar is triggered to explode.

FILTRATION PLUGS

Worn in each nostril, filtration plugs screen out most pollutants and hazardous gases. When worn, a character gains a +20 bonus to any Toughness tests required to resist any harmful effects from airborne threats.

PHOTO-CONTACTS/VISORS

These can be worn as corneal lenses or as outer eyewear, and amplify any low-level light to allow the wearer to see as if normal lighting was present and ignore all penalties for darkness and shadows.

PREYSENSE GOGGLES

This eyewear device reveals thermal images so that the wearer can detect things that would be otherwise hidden in obscuring mists and shadow. Most models are ungainly and obvious, but advanced styles can appear as ornate eyewear without arousing suspicion. A character wearing these goggles suffers no penalties due to fog, mist, and smoke.

REBREATHES

These devices store and recycle breathable air via a mask and external supply tank, making the user immune to toxic atmospheres, or even allowing him to survive underwater. Typical air canisters last roughly an hour, and take 2 action points to replace. The canisters themselves weigh .5 kg and have an availability of –10.

RECOIL GLOVE

These heavy gauntlets use interlocking plates laced with memory wire to stiffen in a protective grip, absorbing the shock from powerful hand weapons. A character using a recoil glove can fire a basic weapon with one hand without suffering the normal –20 penalty.

VOID SUIT

These fully-sealed suits are essential for operating in the vacuum of space, but can also be useful in toxic or hostile environments. A void suit's helmet includes a rebreather and a photo-visor.

DRUGS AND CONSUMABLES

Millennia of experimentation and degradation has lead to thousands of drugs commonly available to humanity, from simple stimulants to arcane potions that can imbue unholy

EXCESSIVE DRUG USE AND ADDICTION

When the same drug is used too often in a short period of time, there is a chance for it to have a diminished effect as the user builds up an immunity or tolerance. A character who uses more than one dose of a drug before taking 6 consecutive hours of rest must make a +20 Toughness test for each use beyond the first, with a cumulative –10 penalty. Should he fail the test, the drug has no useful effect and further doses continue to be ineffective for the next 24 hours.

Excessive drug use can also lead to addiction. Every time the effects of an addictive drug wears off, the user must make a +20 Willpower test with a –5 modifier for every dose of the drug that he took over the course of the last week. If he fails, he suffers 1 fatigue as a result of his wracking cravings.

Failure means the user is Addicted and will suffer 1 fatigue unless he gets another dose (should this dose trigger the Excessive Drug Use test above, it must be successfully passed for it to overcome the fatigue loss). The character (should he so choose) can overcome the addiction by passing –30 tests for both Willpower and Toughness.

effects. These, along with more usual foodstuffs and drinks, are frequently part of any Acolytes travel kit when preparing for action.

Many drugs listed below are Addictive, and if so noted follow the rules from the **Excessive Drug Use and Addiction** sidebar on page 155.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is perhaps the oldest of Mankind's drugs and perhaps the most diverse in form, and as humans moved across the galaxy they discovered new flora and even more methods of fermentation. In its cheapest form, rotgut or void-sweat is the catchall term for the foul tasting but powerful brews that are also useful as industrial solvents and impromptu explosives. More refined distillations such as amasec and raenka represent the other end of the spectrum and are usually reserved for the powerful and wealthy. Alcohol is addictive.

AMASEC

This refreshment is made from distilled wine or other fermented beverages, and is popular in many regions of the Imperium. It is usually a fine quality product, with some well-aged vintages renowned across the sector for bouquet and flavour.

TABLE 5-14: DRUGS AND CONSUMIBLES

NAME	AVL
Alcohol†	+20
Amasec†	-10
Desoleum Fungus	-10
De-Tox	-20
Frenzon†	-30
Lho-sticks	+10
Obscura†	-20
Ration Pack	+20
Recaf†	+30
Sacred Unguents	-30
Slaughter†	-10
Spook†	-30
Stimm†	+0
†Drug is Addictive	

A character who fails his Toughness test from consuming too much amasec suffers Intelligence Decay (1d10), Perception Decay (1d10), and Willpower Decay (1d10). If he fails by five or more degrees of failure, he falls Unconscious for 1d10 hours instead. Amasec is addictive.

DESOLEUM FUNGUS

A hallucinogen made from the narcotic mushrooms that grow in certain ancient aquifers deep in Desoleum's underhive, this drug has an odd disorienting effect that causes users to stumble about despite retaining the full spectrum of their senses. Hive gangers particularly enjoy imbibing this narcotic and getting into extended gunfights, whirling about drunkenly and watching the havoc their wayward shots sow.

A dose of Desoleum fungus lasts 1d10 rounds. A character who imbibes Desoleum fungus immediately suffers 1 fatigue as his body spins wildly. However, a character under the effects of Desoleum fungus can take advantage of the skewed perspective this drug gives him; once during this time, he may invert the result of any 1d100 roll, exchanging the 10s digit for the 1s digit (turning a 73 into a 37 or a 91 into a 19, etc).

DE-TOX

A common item in most medi-kits, de-tox can negate most of the dangerous effects of other drugs or toxins. A dose immediately ends the effects, both positive and negative, for any chemicals the subject has inhaled, ingested, or injected, unless the item specifically states de-tox cannot work against it. Its use is extremely unpleasant, however, with common side-effects so extreme (excessive vomiting and diarrhoea being the mildest) that many would rather abide their current woes.

A character who takes de-tox is immediately purged of whatever toxin or drug side-effect was afflicting him.

However, he must make a +0 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Stunned for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure on the test.

FRENZON

Frenzon is a term for a number of combat drugs used in conscript and assault forces, especially in Penal Legions. A dose creates a fanatical and fearless state, leaving the user ready to fight any foe, no matter how suicidal it may seem.

A character who imbibes frenzon immediately gains the Frenzy condition for 2d10 minutes. When the effects wear off, he gains 1 fatigue and 1 insanity. Frenzon is addictive.

LHO-STICKS

A mild narcotic, each stick contains dried and cured plant leaves that release a scented, stimulating smoke when ignited and inhaled through a cheap tube that burns away with the drug. As the leaves vary with the planet, lho-sticks can vary from world to world as well, often making them useful trade items. Lho-sticks are addictive.

OBSCURA

Though often illegal, obscure is popular in many fighting units where combatants are eager for respite from constant battle, as well as civilians seeking relief from the drudgeries of harsh life. Each dose (either injected or inhaled) imparts a dream-like state in the user for 1d5 hours; roll once on **Table 5-4: Hallucinogenic Effects** (see page 135) and apply the result while he is under the effects of the drug. After this time elapses, the user falls into a deep, restful slumber and remains Unconscious for 1d10 hours. Obscura is addictive.

RATION PACK

These small pouches contain concentrated or dehydrated foodstuffs suitable for one complete meal, and also contain vitamin supplements, water puri-tabs, a protein bar, and heating pellets. Well-made packs are actually quite edible, but even a master Ratling chef would have difficulty with the poor ingredients used in cheaper packs.

Besides the benefits of holding off starvation, ration packs can help to keep an Acolyte effective in the field. Eating one or more ration packs (or other, comparable meals) during a period of rest of at least two hours removes an additional 1 fatigue. Not eating leads to starvation, which is not recommended for any loyal servant of the Emperor.

RECAF

These common beverages offer a mild stimulant effect as well as pleasing taste. Hot recaf starts many days across the sector, from Imperial Guardsmen fighting on combat lines against the xenos threat to Acolytes striving to stay alert on an all-night vigil near a suspected cult locale.

Consuming recaf helps to hone senses dulled by exhaustion, and a dose removes 1 fatigue from the character. The cumulative penalty to Toughness tests taken for consuming additional doses of recaf is -20 instead of the normal -10. Recaf is addictive.

SACRED UNGUENTS

Holy lubricating oils that have received the blessings of the Ommissiah, these liquids are highly sought after for their calming effect on recalcitrant machine spirits.

A character may apply sacred machine oil to a weapon for 1 AP as part of a successful Tech-Use (I) test. If the weapon is Jammed, the sacred unguents grant the character a +20 bonus on his Tech-Use test. If the weapon is not already Jammed, and the character succeeds on his Tech-Use test, the weapon becomes immune to Jamming and inflicts an additional 1 damage for a number of rounds equal to the character's degrees of success on his test.

SLAUGHT

This combat drug is also known as Onslaught, and is frequently taken to heighten awareness and improve reaction time. It literally speeds up the user, but causes neural and physiological damage with prolonged application.

A single dose of slaughter lasts 1d5 hours. A character under the effect of this drug rolls twice and selects the better result when making his Initiative roll at the start of combat. Additionally, during the first round of combat, a character on slaughter counts all opponents who have not acted yet as Surprised. When the effects wear off, the character suffers Perception Decay (1d10). Slaughter is addictive.

SPOOK

A highly proscribed drug, spook creates and augments that most hazardous of effects: psychic abilities. Even the briefest of connections to the Warp and the Ruinous Powers that dwell within can allow daemonic incursions or worse, but in desperate instances even these horrific effects are brushed aside.

If a character without a Psy-rating takes a dose of spook, he must successfully make a +0 Willpower test or gain 1d5 insanity points due to his mind being filled with terrifying visions of the Warp. If he succeeds, the user gains a psychic power from **Table 5-15: Spook Effects** (see **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers** for full descriptions and effects). The power lasts for 1d5 hours and the user makes all focus power tests as if he has a Psy-rating of 1.

If a character with a Psy-rating of 1 or more uses spook, he must make a +0 Willpower test. If he fails, he gains 1 insanity point and the drug has no further effects. If he passes, he adds 1 to his Psy-rating for the next hour but adds +2 to any rolls made on the appropriate Perils of the Warp table (see **Chapter VI: Psychic Powers**).

Spook is addictive, and depending on the setting, its use can incur intense punishment from local agencies.

STIMM

A dose of stim is enough to energise the weary and mask pain with short-term vitality, often enough to finally bring a protracted combat to a successful conclusion.

A character who takes stim ignores the effects of fatigue for 1d10 minutes. Additionally, when he suffers a critical effect while under the effects of this drug, a character

TABLE 5-15: SPOOK EFFECTS

1d100 ROLL	POWER GAINED
01-09	Influence
10-17	Smite
16-24	Warp Perception
25-32	Prescience
33-41	Manipulate Flame
42-49	Flame Breath
50-58	Telekinetic Control
59-66	Assail
67-75	Telepathic Link
76-83	Psychic Shriek
84-87	Roll twice, gaining both powers or effects.
88-90	Pick any one power.
91-96	Gain 1 Insanity Point and roll again.
97-00	Gain 1 Insanity Point and 1 Corruption Point.

may spend a fate point to ignore any one condition that critical effect causes for 1d10 rounds. When a dose wears off, the user suffers 1 fatigue. Spook is Addictive.

TOOLS

While most Acolytes refrain from becoming overly dependent on tools or other contrivances to prosecute their sacred duties, there is no denying that having the right tool and the right time can be vital to success. The following is but a fraction of the accessories, aids, and other implements that can aid in combating heresies or worse across the sector.

AUSPEX/SCANNER

These are the standard Imperial detection devices found across the galaxy. Each grants the user a +20 bonus to Awareness (Per) tests. With a successful Tech-Use (Int) test, it reveals things human senses could not normally detect, such as invisible gases, non-visible energy emissions, otherwise unseen motion, biological life signs, and other data depending on the pattern. The standard range is 50m, but walls of more than 50cm thickness or made of heavy shielding usually block the sensory probes.

AUTOQUIL

Often elaborate devices of ink-stained brass and vat-grown or artificial quills, these devices allow a user to copy text or transcribe speech with impressive speed and accuracy. Many scribes carry portable units, suitable for recording interrogation sessions or xenos translations.

TABLE 5-16: TOOLS

NAME	WT	AVL
Auspex/Scanner	1 kg	-10
Autoquill	—	-10
Combi-Tool	1 kg	-20
Comm Leech	1 kg	-30
Data-slate	1 kg	+10
Demolition Kit	4 kg	-30
Disguise Kit	2 kg	-20
Excruciator Kit	2 kg	-30
Forgery Kit	1 kg	-30
Glow-globe/Lamp Pack	1 kg	+30
Grapnel and Line	2 kg	+10
Grav Chute	15 kg	-20
Inhaler/Injector	1 kg	+10
Lascutter	4 kg	+0
Magnoculars	1 kg	+0
Manacles	1 kg	+20
Medi-kit	3 kg	+10
Micro-bead	—	-10
Monotask Servo-Skull	2 kg	-20
Multi-key	0 kg	-10
Null Rod	1 kg	-50
Pict Recorder	1 kg	+0
Psy-focus	1 kg	-30
Regicide Set	1 kg	+20
Screamer	2 kg	-10
Stummer	2 kg	-10
Vox-caster	4 kg	+0
Writing Kit	2 kg	+20

CLIP/DROP HARNESS

A simple but robust spooled safety line with a magnetic or hooked clasp at the end, these tools attach to the user's belt or shoulder straps. When deployed, they allow for relative safety in rappelling down vertical surfaces or preventing falls from unsteady rooftops. A clip harness adds a +30 bonus to Climb tests; should he fail he only falls 1m before the line catches him.

COMBI-TOOL

Most combi-tools are small, compact devices filled with foldout and extending probes, blades, hooks, and socket-plugs ideal for coaxing operation from recalcitrant

machinery, repairing damaged devices, and in general bending errant machine spirits to the will of the user. Using a combi-tool grants a +20 bonus to Tech-Use tests.

COMM LEECH

A somewhat heretical item in the eyes of the Mechanicum, comm leeches tap into vox signals or data transmissions. With a successful Tech-Use (I) test, the user can use the comm leech to receive a vox signal or data transmission for a number of minutes equal to his degrees of success. If the character fails the test by more degrees of failure than his Intelligence bonus, the transmitter and receiver of the signal become aware that someone is attempting to tap in.

DATA-SLATE

These are common across the Imperium, and the primary means of storing and reading printed text and other data forms such as pict or audio recordings. Well-crafted models can also re-record new information, or transmit and receive data from other devices.

DEMOLITION KIT

Some investigations end with explosive results, and these kits are essential for such a conclusion. They contain the tools for a character to more easily set up sophisticated detonation devices and explosives. Each kit includes the following:

- **Five demolition charges:** These detonate with the same profile as krak grenades (see page 144), and can be used in close combat.
- **100 meters of det-cord:** Can be lit with any fire source or detonator and burns at a rate of 10 seconds per metre, useful for setting a delay on an explosive or activating it at a distance.
- **Five pressure-release detonators:** Can be used to light a det-cord or trigger explosives directly.

All of the materials in this kit can be refilled to these quantities without the use of a requisition test as long as the character is in a location they would be available.

DISGUISE KIT

Acolytes often conceal their true identity as part of their investigation, either to create new personas or impersonate others. These kits contain the following:

- **Basic makeup:** Grants a +10 bonus to Subterfuge (F) tests made to visually disguise the character.
- **Prosthetic appliances:** Allow the character to impersonate individuals with different facial structures.
- **Skin dyes:** Allow the character to impersonate individuals with different skin colours.
- **Vocal augmenter:** Grants a +10 bonus to Subterfuge (F) tests made to impersonate another voice.
- **Retina lenses:** Allow the character to impersonate individuals with different eye colours.

All of the materials in this kit can be refilled to these quantities without the use of a requisition test as long as the character is in a location they would be available.

EXCRUCIATOR KIT

While all such kits are used in the gathering of information from the unwilling and unrepentant, each is as unique as its user. Most contain a wide range of blades, needles, chemicals, drugs, barbed hooks, neural probes, thermal prods, and other essential tools needed to extract the truth.

Using an excruciator kit grants a +20 bonus to all Intimidate tests.

GLOW-GLOBE/LAMP PACK

Just as the Inquisition acts to as a light against the soul-devouring darkness of the encroaching heretics and xenos threats, so these small portable lamps act against the physical darkness of night. Each can illuminate roughly 20 metres in all directions, and last 1d5 hours before the power cell needs recharge or replacement.

GRAPNEL AND LINE

A combination of clip-harness and gas-powered pistol, this can fire a hook or magnetic clasp attached to a thin, strong wire at an overhead target up to 100m away. The character must succeed at a +20 Ballistic Skill test to successfully secure the rope to the target. Once secured, the line can support 150 kg, and the character can ascend the wire manually (using the Athletics skill) or via powered winch.

GRAV CHUTE

Used by the Imperial Guard to drop onto the battlefield from the air, grav chutes use anti-grav fields to slow a rapid fall into a controlled (and safe) descent, with small attitude jets allowing for extra braking and directional finesse. Unlike jump packs, grav chutes are only useful for safe landings and not for bounding aerial leaps.

When falling, the character makes a +20 Pilot (A) test. If the test succeeds, the grav chute allows for a safe, guided fall from any height. If the test fails, the descent is less controlled and the character counts as having fallen 2 metres for each degree of failure (see page 13).

INHALER/INJECTOR

Many drugs require a device to administer a dose such as a syringe, spray-injector, or gas flask. Each can be pre-loaded with a single dose, which can then be administered for 2 action points.

MAGNOCULORS

These powerful vision aids can magnify distant items into clear focus, helping ensure no heresy goes unspotted. They add +20 to vision-based Observe tests made to watch something in the distance, and can also display ranges, provide targeting data, and take pics for later analysis.

MANACLES

No bounty hunter or enforcer would be without several sets of these solid restraints, though they are often used to ensure sacrificial offerings do not stray from a cult's altar

or for other, darker purposes. Manacles can be removed without the key through multiple means:

- **-10 Acrobatics (A)** test made by the manacled character to contort free.
- **-20 Athletics (S)** test made by any character to rip the manacles off.
- **Subterfuge (I)** test made by any character to overcome the lock.

MEDI-KIT

Medi-kits contain synth-skin patches, contraseptics, self-sealing bandages, pressure tourniquets, and other medical aids. Advanced kits can also contain diagnostic cogitators to aid in care, tox wands, synth-skin spray, and additional high-quality supplies. A kit grants a +10 bonus when used in conjunction with the Medicae skill.

MICRO-BEAD

Also known as a bead-comm, these small devices are worn in the ear and allow for short-range communications out to roughly 1 kilometre depending on weather and terrain. They are unobtrusive and reliable.

MONOTASK SERVO-SKULL

Servo-skulls represent the honoured remains of valued Imperial servants and Tech-Priests who continue their service even after death. The skull is carefully cleansed and engraved, then fitted with a machine spirit to guide its actions, and tiny grav plating to sustain it in flight. Monotask models are dedicated to a single, basic function and are a ubiquitous sight on many worlds. Each responds to basic verbal commands, and unless otherwise commanded, always hovers near its master. The types below represent only a fraction of the countless patterns found across the sector.

- **Auger:** The skull carries an scanner and vox-data systems to relay its findings. The character gains the benefits of an auspex as long as the servo-skull is nearby and active.
- **Illumination:** The skull is fitted with a glow-globe or burning brazier to light an area 20m in radius.
- **Loud Hailer:** The servo-skull carries a powerful audio projector, which can play recorded speech or amplify its master's spoken words.
- **Medicae:** The skull is fitted with a medicae scanners and tools. The character gains the benefits of a medi-kit as long as the servo-skull is within 2 metres and active.
- **Utility:** The skull is equipped with probes, plugs, and tools to aid in technical tasks. The character gains the benefits of a combi-tool as long as the servo-skull is nearby and active.

MULTI-KEY

In the right hands, a multi-key can open most standard Imperial locks and is thus highly suspect for honest citizens to possess. This also makes it very desirable for criminals or those operating outside normal channels. A character using a multi-key gains a +20 bonus to any Subterfuge (I) test when trying to open physical locks.

NULL ROD

Few things invoke terror as a psyker calling on the unholy powers of the Warp to twist reality and rend souls. While faith in the Emperor is always essential, a null rod can also be effective to negate such threats. Most null rods appear as short obsidian cylinders often crawling with arcane icons and glyphs. All characters with a psy rating who are within 10 meters of a null rod reduce their psy rating by 2 while they remain in range. This does not stack with the effects of Warp Disruption (see page 71).

PICT RECORDER

A relatively simple recording device, pict records or picters can capture audiovisual media. Most models can also display recorded data on integrated screens, with advanced models using holographic imagery. Specialised pict-servitors are essentially ambulatory recorders, brought on hazardous events or missions to autonomously capture occurrences for later codifying.

PSY-FOCUS

Many psykers use these small, personalised items to steady themselves before accessing the terrible powers of the Warp. Each is different; some might be no more than a carved finger bone or pressed flower while others could be a softly glowing crystal or void-iron glyph. All, however, are specially attuned to their bearers through long meditation or ritual, allowing them greater control over their abilities. When sustaining a psychic power that requires the psyker to spend a number of action points, he spends one less action point each turn to sustain the power, to a minimum of 1.

REGICIDE SET

A two-player game played across all classes from lowly refresher-scrubbers to spire nobility, regicide is simple to learn but difficult to master. Many Imperial Guard officers hone their tactical senses in games with small sets that can fold into their combat kit. A typical regicide game takes 1d5 hours, and while it typically has no in-game effects, the GM can offer benefits to well-roleplayed games such as a +10 bonus to Fellowship-based tests with the opponent for the following day.

SCREAMER

These proximity alarms set off a piercing wail when intruders are detected. Screamers can detect sound, movement, and even odours. A screamer counts as having a Perception characteristic of 50, which it uses for tests to detect intruders. A character sets up a screamer through a +0 Tech-Use (I). If the test succeeds, each degree of success adds 10 to the the Perception of the screamer. If the test fails, each degree of failure subtracts 10 from the Perception of the screamer. When the screamer detects something, it sounds the alarm which can be heard 500 metres away.

STUMMER

The reverse of a screamer, a stummer blankets sound within 5m through sonic detection and dampening projectors. Carrying a stummer grants a +20 bonus to Stealth (A) tests, but the machine spirit within drains power quickly and can only function continuously for 20 minutes (recharging takes roughly an hour at a power source).

VOX-CASTER

A standard Imperial long-distance communications device, vox-casters can transmit and receive to other units within 100km, and can reach most orbiting vessels overhead. Higher craftsmanship models have increased ranges, and can include encryption and other security settings.

WRITING KIT

Simple and basic, standard writing kits contain parchment, inks, and quills for Acolytes to transcribe confessions, diagram important finds, and leave messages for fellow Acolytes.

SERVICES

These represent the many mundane requirements that Acolytes need to not only exist from day to day, but also to travel across the sector to prosecute their holy charge. Necessities such as a base of operations, food and provisions, and modes of transportation: all these and more are perhaps less thrilling than combat, but just as essential to a successful investigation.

These are near limitless in scope, and can vary wildly from world to world. As such, Game Masters should create appropriate services and their levels of availability to match the adventure. The examples on page 161 can be used as guidelines for this process, to give Acolytes a rough idea of what they may face. Note that some can, at the GM's discretion, increase or decrease the group's Subtlety level.

Accommodations: This covers all manner of rented lodgings for a single night's stay, from crude tavern dosses to the glittering suites of a high spire.

Provisions: The foodstuffs and beverages needed for a single meal

Transportation: This includes travel across a world or to points in orbit, but not including interplanetary or interstellar journeys (see below for extended void travel). The duration and destination can also modify standard examples.

TRAVEL THROUGH THE VOID

The eradication of heresy can take Acolytes far from their home world, or even home region, to new systems on the far side of the sector. Unless the Acolytes or their Inquisitor have access to a dedicated vessel (perhaps under arrangement with a captain, or even their own ship), they need to manage their void travel just as they must manage travel across a world. Much of the time this is relatively straightforward as most ships, even those not dedicated

TABLE 5-17: SERVICES

ACCOMMODATIONS	
Type	Avl
Low Grade (hab capsule, grox barn, taproom hammock)	+30
Mid Grade (basic hab room, main cabin quarters, mid-hive hostelry)	+0
High Grade (grand hall lodgings, high berth billet, spire suite)	-10
PROVISIONS	
Type	Avl
Low Grade (stickrats, fungus loaf, void sweat ale)	+30
Mid Grade (vatmeal cakes, grox stew, glass of wine)	+0
High Grade (braised heffen tongue, vintage amasec, jewelled eggs)	-10
TRANSPORTATION	
Type	Avl
Low Grade (rickshaw, dust sailer, hab conveyer)	+30
Mid Grade (basic autocarriage, short-range cutter, intra-hive tramway)	+0
High Grade (orbital shuttle, dedicated groundcar with driver, furnished palanquin)	-10

to passenger travel, can take on travellers in spare berths. **Table 5-18: Finding a Ship** (page 161) covers examples of typical vessels and the availability to find passage on a routine voyage (per passenger on one passage). Berthing and shipboard meals can vary, but the examples in **Table 5-17 Services** on page 161 for Accommodations and Provisions can serve as suitable representations for their ship-board equivalents. Note that not all ships have all levels of accommodations, and the GM should adjust berthings depending on the nature of the vessel.

Travel to dangerous destinations, forbidden worlds, and other unwelcome locations are another matter, and the GM should modify the examples in **Table 5-18: Finding a Ship** accordingly. Illegal cargo or passengers can also cause problems, as can requests for expeditious speed. In many circumstances, the Acolytes may need to book special passage, or convince a captain to travel on a special voyage, and this should be reflected in a much higher availability requiring more difficult negotiations and Influence tests. Inquisitorial commandeering is always a possibility, though this should impact the Acolyte's Subtlety and possibly their Inquisitor's Influence as well.

TABLE 5-18: FINDING A SHIP

SHIP TYPE	AVL
Bulk transport	-30
Passenger ship	-10
Pilgrim ship	-20
System ship (intra-system only)	+0
Tramp freighter	+0
Void jumper (intra-system only)	-10

MEDICAL CARE

Service to the Emperor is never easy, especially for Acolytes who must singularly enforce His Will. The aftermath of many a battle can leave them near-death, and only with proper medicae attention can they live to serve another day. **Table 5-19: Medical Care** can serve as a guide for Acolytes seeking such assistance.

Type: This indicates the level of care to be found, ranging from poor to excellent.

Availability: Good medicae or other healers are often hard to find; their availability here indicates a single attempt to care for an injured character. The GM should modify this as needed to reflect extended care as well as accommodations for lengthy stays.

Effect: This represents the medicae's skill level and any bonuses or training to use on his skill tests heal his patient. See **Chapter III: Skills** for information on medical attention and relevant skill usage.

TABLE 5-19: MEDICAL CARE

TYPE	AVL	EFFECT
Poor (underhive bonecutter)	+0	Int 30, Medicae skill
Average (factory medic)	-10	Int 40, Medicae skill
Good (trained medicae, med-servitor)	-20	Int 50, Medicae skill +10
Excellent (spire medicae)	-30	Int 60, Medicae skill +20, Master Chirurgeon

CYBERNETICS

"The Flesh is Weak."

—Common Adeptus Mechanicus litany

Cybernetics are a highly visible part of the Imperium. It is rare for the powerful to not have at least one mechanical implant, given the dangerous nature of life in the 41st Millennium. Age and wear also contribute to the substitution of organs or other body parts. The Adeptus Mechanicus holds that the replacement of flesh with blessed technology acts to move one closer to the purity of the Omnissiah. Many bionics are indeed superior to the organics they replace, though some would argue that with each alteration of flesh to metal there is a price to be paid in humanity, and perhaps also sanity.

The process of surgically installing the cybernetic is assumed to be part of the acquisition, and having a cybernetic installed in this way takes 2d10–Tb days during which the character cannot do any stressful activity.

BIONIC REPLACEMENTS

Bionic replacements come in two broad classes: those that replace limbs, and those that replace other parts such as eyes or internal organs. These bionics normally operate at the same level of strength, dexterity, and precision as the organics they replace, but can offer short-term improvements through Overcharging the bionic.

Each bionic replacement corresponds to a hit location:

- Bionic Arm: Left and right arms.
- Bionic Leg: Left and right legs.
- Bionic Senses: Head.
- Bionic Organ: Body.

When a hit location is replaced with a bionic replacement, the character counts his Toughness bonus as 6 on that hit location for purposes of determining its defence value. The location is treated as normal for other combat resolution situations. The character takes hits on that location that apply wounds and wound effects as normal. Any result that indicates bleeding or some other organic result, functions the same. Hydraulic fluid leaks out or other key systems malfunction due to the damage, causing the same effect to the character. See **Chapter VII: Combat** for more on hit locations and wound effects.

Because they are treated as the body part they replace, these bionics cannot have their status lowered like augmentation cybernetics. Instead, the status of a bionic replacement tracks its overall quality, not its state of repair. This value reflects the overall quality of the cybernetic, and scales any abilities the cybernetic grants to the character.

BIONIC ARM

Bionic arms are a common replacement, and can mimic normal hand and arm functions, including dexterity and even sense of touch. Some are visibly false, while superb models perfectly duplicate the appearance of flesh.

INSTALLING CYBERNETICS

Some characters may wish to have one of their fellow Acolytes install their cybernetics. If a character decides to do this, he gains a +30 bonus to the cybernetic's availability when making the requisition test to acquire it. If he succeeds the test, the cybernetic isn't installed into his body. Instead, the character receives all of the parts necessary to have the cybernetic installed himself.

Once a character has the parts for a cybernetic, he must then have another character perform a Tech-Use (I) or Medicae (I) test to install the cybernetic. This test receives a modifier equal to the availability of the cybernetic being installed. If the test succeeds, the cybernetic is successfully applied, and the character must wait the normal 2d10–Tb days to recover. If the test fails, the cybernetic is not applied and the character receives a single hit to the hit location the cybernetic was being installed in that deals 1d10 + DoF rending damage ignoring armour. The parts used in the attempt to install the cybernetic are also lost in the process.

Overcharge Strength: A number of times per day equal to the status level of the bionic arm, the character can add a +20 to his Strength characteristic for one turn (or roughly 10 seconds in narrative time).

BIONIC LEG

These bionics are fully integrated into the hip with a spinal link and allow the user to walk, run, and climb at normal human levels.

Overcharge Agility: A number of times per day equal to the status level of the bionic leg, the character can add a +20 to his Agility characteristic for one turn (or roughly 10 seconds in narrative time).

BIONIC SENSES

Eyes, ears, and even noses are often lost through combat or accident, and replacement versions use cranial interfaces to allow a very close approximation to natural senses. Bionic eyes in particular are frequently seen amongst senior Imperial Guard officers, Rogue Traders, and other powerful individuals.

Overcharge Perception: A number of times per day equal to the status level of the bionic sense, the character can add a +20 to his Perception characteristic for one turn (or roughly 10 seconds in narrative time) for all tasks related to using the replaced sense.

BIONIC ORGANS

These artificial systems replace organs such as lungs or hearts. They take the place of damaged or defective organics, and can sometimes be more effective than natural ones.

Overcharge Toughness: A number of times per day equal to the status level of the bionic organ, the character can add a +20 to his Toughness characteristic for one turn (or roughly 10 seconds in narrative time).

BIONIC AUGMENTATIONS/IMPLANTS

Not all cybernetics are designed to replace human limbs or organs; others are integrated into the holy form of man purely to add functionality, or create entirely new abilities. Most are highly visible and act as clear indications of the Ominissiah's blessing. Those that extend outside the body, such as mehadendrites, are more akin to weapon than limb for purposes of targeting, and only cease functioning when indicated in Critical Damage-Body results.

The maximum number of bionic implants a character can have installed is equal to his Toughness bonus.

AUGER ARRAY

These implanted devices go beyond normal human senses, and effectively grant the user the same sensory capability as an auspex (see page 157) but with the data sent directly into his brain. Using these new senses requires 1 action point.

AUTOSANGUINE

This ancient and blessed microscopic technology flows as a metallic liquid within the character's bloodstream, repairing minor injuries and accelerating healing. When the character removes wounds during six consecutive hours of rest, he can remove one additional wound of the same type (see page 207 for rules for natural healing).

FERRIC LURE IMPLANT

The character is implanted with powerful electromagnets allowing him to cast forth a net of invisible energy, and can use the following action:

FERRIC SUMMONS

Type: Utility

Action points: 2 AP

Use: The character makes a Willpower test. If he succeeds, the character summons a specified unsecured metal object within 20m to his hand. The object cannot weigh more than WPb kg plus 1 kg for each degree of success scored on the Willpower test.

INTERFACE PORT

Via a mechanical adapter commonly implanted in the rear of the neck or head, the character can now use a data cable to connect himself to cogitators, data crypts, and other sources. This allows faster and smoother access to

TABLE 5-20: CYBERNETICS

BIONIC REPLACEMENTS	
Name	Availability
Bionic Arm	-10
Bionic Legs	-10
Bionic Senses	-10
Bionic Organ	-20
BIONIC AUGMENTATIONS/IMPLANTS	
Name	Availability
Auger Array	-20
Autosanguine	-40
Ferric Lure Implants	-30
Interface Port	-20
Luminen Capacitor	-30
Maglev Coils	-40
Mechadendrite	-30

the valuable information within and grants a +20 bonus to Investigate, Remembrance, and Tech-Use tests with which the connected data source would aid.

LUMINEN CAPACITOR

This implanted energy source charges internal capacitors, allowing the character to recharge devices or even unleash powerful energy blasts. With roughly a minute of mental focus, plus a successful Toughness test, he may channel power to machines with which he is in contact. The difficulty of the Toughness test varies depending on the nature of the machine.

+10: Simple power cell, glow-globe

+0: Lasgun charge pack, dataslate

-10: Shuttle electronics, servo-skull

-20: Lascannon charge pack, servitor

-30: Cogitator core, xenos technology

MAGLEV COIL

Using powerful gravimetric coils based on archeotech designs, this device allows the user to negate gravity itself, if only for a short time. For 2 action points, the character can hover 20-30cm above the ground for a number of minutes equal to 1d10 plus his Toughness bonus. Each turn, the character must spend 2 AP after receiving action points for the turn, otherwise he immediately stops hovering.

This implant can also be used to slow the character's rate of descent when falling. If it is activated during a fall, the character reduces the number of metres fallen by his Toughness bonus for the purpose of determining damage.

Each time this implant is activated, its power stores are drained, and requires 24 hours to recharge.

MECHADENDRITE

Mechadendrites are mechanical attachments of brass and steel that act as additional arms. They are normally mounted on shoulders, though some within the Mechanicum also project these cybernetics from their waists or chests. Each is roughly 2 metres in length when fully extended, and has a specialised function based around the mechanisms affixed at their end. The number of mechadendrites coiled or folded around a Tech-Priest's crimson-robed figure is often an excellent indicator of his rank within the Priesthood of Mars.

Mechadendrites can only be used to perform tasks that the owner already knows how to do. 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. A character must have the appropriate Mechadendrite Use talent to operate his mechadendrite.

These cybernetics can only be obtained by characters with the Adeptus Mechanicus background, or by characters who have explicit permission from the Cult Mechanicus. A non-Mechanicum character can attempt to install these implants without their permission, perhaps finding a heretek who might risk the Machine Cult's wrath to implant crude versions in those willing to pay his price. To do so, the Acolyte must follow the rules in the Installing Cybernetics sidebar, but does not gain the +30 bonus to his requisition test. If he succeeds, he also gains the Enemy (Adeptus Mechanicus) trait.

BALLISTIC

Designed for ranged combat, this mechadendrite is fitted with a sleek weapon that functions as a laspistol with the Reliable quality that does not require recharging. The user does not need weapon training in this weapon class to fire the mechadendrite's weapon without the normal untrained penalty.

MANIPULATOR

A heavy and powerful attachment, this mechadendrite is designed for heavy lifting and handling of industrial gear. When used to lift or carry objects it grants the user a +20 bonus to Strength tests. The large, indelicate pincers at the end of the limb can grip onto suitable anchor points for 1 AP to tether the user and keep him from falling in unstable locales or drifting away in zero-gravity settings.

This mechadendrite can be used as a melee weapon in combat, and counts as a warhammer.

MEDICAE

This model hosts a variety of medical and surgical tools ideal for combat first aid, and when used grants a +10 bonus to Medicae tests. It contains six injectors, each of which may be pre-loaded with one dose of a drug (these drug doses must be procured separately). Each injection takes 1 AP to accomplish.

The integral flesh stapler can staunch Blood Loss for 2 action points, and the small chainscalpel attachment grants a +10 to a test to amputate limbs. This blade can be used as an improvised weapon doing 1d5 Rending damage on each hit. The assortment of blades and needles have other uses as well, and grants a +10 bonus to Interrogation tests.

OPTICAL

Often consisting of highly flexible, snake-like tubing, an optical mechadendrite contains pict-capture and other sensory devices for inspection and detection. It is long for a mechadendrite, and extends 3 metres. It can perform microscopic or telescopic examinations, and the infrared sensors allow the user to ignore penalties for darkness as well as fog, mist, and smoke. It can record a number of hours of pict data up to the user's Intelligence bonus, which the character can later review mentally. Each also mounts a glow-globe or other light source, ideal for other Acolytes the Ommissiah has not blessed with such superior vision.

UTILITY

The most common type of mechadendrite, these are tipped with a variety of mechanisms for the repair and succour of blessed technologies, and act as a combi-tool (granting +10 to all Tech-Use tests). The limb houses six injector pistons, each of which may be filled with one dose of sacred unguent (these doses must be procured separately, and each use requires 1 AP).

The censer attachment emits incense designed to sooth machine spirits, but can also be used to distract and choke in melee combat. Once per encounter, it can be set off in a large gust for 1 AP; for 1 round, all other living creatures engaged with the user suffer a -20 to their Weapon Skill.

VEHICLES AND MOUNTS

"Plating looks thick enough. It comes with the turret-mounted heavy stubber, correct?"

—Overheard in Desoleum bazaar

The investigation and elimination of heresy often requires extensive travel, not only across a city or world but sometimes across the stars to other worlds across the sector. Vehicles and other modes of transportation, including living steeds, become necessary in such times, but they can also offer Acolytes greater speed and firepower in their quests. The following section describes how these are used in **DARK HERESY**, including some common versions found across the Askellon sector. Like weapons and armour, these represent only a fraction to be found, as each world and locale is sure to have unique mechanical and living transportation.

VEHICLE PROFILES

Each vehicle profile is made up of the following elements.

Name: What the vehicle is called.

Movement Vectors: The vehicle's ability to move in various different directions, and the speed with which it can move in these directions. There are four movement vectors, each of which has its own movement rate.

Forward: The vehicle's movement rate when moving horizontally within its 90-degree forward arc.

Backward: The vehicle's movement rate when moving horizontally within its 90-degree backward arc.

Side: The vehicle's movement rate when moving horizontally within its 90-degree left and right arcs.

Vertical: The vehicle's movement rate when moving vertically off of the ground. This vector dictates its ability to move both up and down.

Cruising Speed: The velocity at which a vehicle can move in any of its movement vectors during narrative time.

Manoeuvrability: The difficulty of controlling the vehicle, expressed as a modifier to all tests the operator makes for actions with the Operate type and other tests to control the vehicle's movement.

Armour Facings: The armour value on each of the vehicle's armour facings. There are three armour facings for vehicles:

Front: The 90-degree arc in front of the vehicle.

Side: The 90-degree arcs projecting from the vehicle's left and right sides.

Rear: The 90-degree arc in behind of the vehicle. This value is also used for any facings not covered elsewhere.

Weapons: The weapons mounted on this vehicle.

Complement: The number of operators and passengers that the vehicle can hold.

Vehicle Traits: The special abilities that the vehicle possesses (see page 165 for more details).

Threat: The danger this vehicle poses to a group of Acolytes (if operated by an enemy or group of enemies).

Availability: As most vehicles are items (albeit large and potentially dangerous ones), this reflects the difficulty of acquiring a vehicle (see Availability on page 131).

VEHICLE TRAITS

Much like characters, vehicles possess traits that modify their base rules, granting them new abilities or setting new limitations on the feats they can be used to perform. Vehicle traits include various means of locomotion, and also include other characteristics of vehicles.

AERONAUTICA

This encompasses vehicles that maintain true flight, unlike those that hover over the ground like skimmers. These vehicles typically fly more than 5 metres above the ground, and can ascend to any height (provided that they remain within the atmosphere). If a vehicle with the Aeronautica trait is also capable of void travel, it will also possess the Voidcraft trait, and uses this trait while outside of an atmosphere.

As they do not travel on the ground, Aeronautica vehicles do not usually suffer penalties for moving through difficult terrain. Atmospheric conditions such as turbulence, cloud cover, and storms can, however, replicate these effects at the GM's discretion.

At the end of each round, if a vehicle with this trait is not moving, it immediately falls 2d10+10 metres toward the ground and gains the Out of Control (1d5) condition. This descent does not count toward it moving in the new round. If this descent causes it to collide with the ground, it crashes (see page 224). The object it hits counts as having a Size trait with a value equal twice that of the vehicle's Size trait.

A character typically uses the Aeronautica use (A) of the Pilot skill to control a vehicle with this trait.

ALL-TERRAIN (X)

This vehicle is designed to handle a variety of different kinds of terrain, from desert sands to watery swamps to craggy scrap mountains at the bottom of a hive city.

Whenever this vehicle's operator fails a test associated an action with the Operate type in difficult terrain, he reduces his degrees of failure on the test by the value of X (to a minimum of 1).

LIVING

This vehicle is a flesh and blood creature (or at the very least incorporates such a being into its chassis). It behaves as a vehicle in almost all respects from a rules standpoint, but the Game Master should modify the way some effects occur for them, especially on breach effects (see page 222). For instance, if a horse suffers a hit to its "motive systems" location, it might suffer a vicious gash in its leg rather than having a tyre explode. Further, rather than needing promethium to keep it functional and repairs to restore lost function, a horse would require feed and rest to continue carrying its rider, and time and care to recover from injury.

Living vehicles can sometimes be repaired with the Tech-Use (I) skill if they have cybernetic components. For fully organic creatures, however, the GM should treat breaches as wounds and critical breaches as critical wounds for the purposes of healing, which can occur via natural healing (see page 207) or with use of the Medicae (I) skill. If a Living vehicle suffers particularly grievous harm (a breach or critical breach with a result of 26 or higher), it perishes.

Unlike a metal autocarriage, a steed of flesh and blood might also take the initiative and act on its own at times, fleeing from danger or even protecting its owner, depending on the specifics of its personality. Most of these changes are a matter of presentation rather than mechanics, but the Game Master should use common sense when dealing with Living vehicles.

Operators of Living vehicles use the Survival (A) skill in place of the Pilot (A) skill for actions with the Operate type and any other relevant tests he must make while riding it.

NIMBLE

Many vehicles are lumbering constructs that tend to barrel over obstacles rather than avoiding them. Some, however, are better at weaving around objects in their way.

This vehicle ignores the usual requirements for turning (see page 221). Its pilot can freely rotate it as he desires when undertaking any action with the Operate type.

OPEN-TOPPED

This vehicle has an open compartment (or no covering compartment at all) that allows the crew and passengers to freely engage with their foes while riding in this vehicle.

Operators and passengers in a vehicle with the Open-Topped trait can make ranged and melee attacks against targets outside the vehicle, and those foes can target them with the Called Shot action. When a weapon or attack that affects an area rather than a single target (such as one with the Blast or Spray qualities) strikes a vehicle with the Open-Topped trait, it can also hit any operator or passenger of the vehicle who falls within its range.

POWERED (X)

This vehicle has an engine, drive system, or some other form of artificial power generator that allows it to function. This system could require refillable fuel or might be connected to an essentially inexhaustible power source of archeotech origin. Whatever the case, without its engine, a Powered vehicle is of extremely limited use to anyone.

Vehicles with this trait have two states: online and offline. The character operating the vehicle can change this state by starting up or shutting down the vehicle. To do this, he must spend AP equal to the X value of the trait. This is a Utility action.

While the vehicle is offline, the operator of a vehicle with this trait cannot undertake actions with the Operate type. Additionally, on certain Powered vehicles, the main weapons and other systems that passengers can operate might not function unless the vehicle is online. In these cases, the Game Master is the arbiter of whether a given system requires power or can be operated manually.

REINFORCED (X)

This vehicle's hull is heavily augmented with thick plates of metal, ablative armour, or some other form of protection that substantially increases its resilience. It can shrug off blows that would shatter a more fragile vehicle.

When a vehicle with the Reinforced trait suffers a critical breach, roll 1d10. If the result of the roll is lower than the X value of the trait, the vehicle does not suffer the critical breach and suffers a breach instead.

RUGGED (X)

This vehicle's design is simple (or even crude). What it lacks in complexity, though, it more than makes up for in reliability and it becomes easier to repair and maintain.

When using the Tech-Use skill to repair a vehicle with the Rugged trait, a character gains a bonus equal to ten times the value of X.

SEALED

Drivers and passengers inside a sealed vehicle are not only protected from enemy fire, but also the elements, lack of breathable air, and other adverse conditions that happen to be present outside the vehicle. If an attack that strikes this vehicle's hull inflicts a breach or critical breach, it loses this trait until the breach is repaired.

SKIMMER

Skimmers are vehicles that hover over the ground, floating from place to place as their whirring engines stir up the dust below. Thanks to their ability to defy gravity, Skimmers can be extremely fast and nimble—though they also tend to be more fragile than slower, ground-based vehicles. These vehicles typically hover 2 metres above the ground at all times, but can ascend to 10 metres for short periods.

As they do not travel on the ground, Skimmers do not usually suffer penalties for moving through difficult terrain, though foul weather conditions can replicate this effect at the GM's discretion.

At the end of each round, if a Skimmer's movement rate in its vertical movement vector is 0 or lower, it plummets 1d10+5 metres toward the ground and gains the Out of Control (1d5) condition. If it strikes the ground this way, it crashes (see page 224). The object it hits counts as having a Size trait with a value equal twice that of the vehicle's Size trait.

Characters use the Surface use (A) of the Pilot skill to control a vehicle with this trait.

TRACKED

While tyres are easy to manufacture and replace, many Imperial war machines make use of massive, grinding treads instead. Tracks allow a vehicle to barrel forward through difficult terrain without losing traction and are much more resilient to small arms rounds. Unless otherwise noted, vehicles with this trait must remain on the ground at all times while moving.

When a Tracked vehicle gains the Stalled or Out of Control condition, it reduces the X value of that condition by 3 (to a minimum of 1).

A character typically uses the Surface use (A) of the Pilot skill to control a vehicle with this trait.

VOIDCRAFT

Although this trait does not include the massive, kilometres-long Imperial voidships, it does include various kinds of smaller craft that these mighty vessels employ in the void, including Aquila landers, Arvus lighters, and Fury interceptors. If a vehicle with the Voidcraft trait is capable of atmospheric flight, it will also possess the Aeronautica trait, and uses this trait while in an atmosphere.

As they do not travel on the ground, Voidcraft do not usually suffer penalties for moving through difficult terrain, though some hazards of space travel such as debris, radiation might make operating a Voidcraft harder in a comparable manner at the GM's discretion.

At the beginning of each round, if a vehicle with this trait was moving at the end of the previous round, it drifts 1d10+10 metres in the direction that it moved the last round. When a Voidcraft moves this way, it counts as moving until the end of the round. If it strikes an object of comparable or larger size this way, it crashes (see page 224).

A character typically uses the Void use (I) of the Pilot skill to control a vehicle with this trait.

WALKER

This vehicle's motive systems are not wheels or treads, but legs. Whether these be of steel, grafted synthmuscle, or even flesh and blood, this vehicle moves more like a creature than a standard vehicle. Walkers are typically not as fast as Wheeled or Tracked vehicles, but are often more agile and more capable of negotiating difficult terrain. Unless otherwise noted, vehicles with this trait must remain on the ground at all times while moving.

Walkers do not normally suffer penalties for moving through difficult terrain.

When a vehicle with the Walker trait suffers a critical breach to its motive systems location, its pilot must make a +20 Pilot (A) test. If he fails this test, the vehicle immediately falls. Treat this as a crash (see page 224) with an object with a Size trait equal to its own plus an amount equal to the pilot's degrees of failure on the test.

A character typically uses the Surface Use (A) of the Pilot skill to control a vehicle with this trait.

WHEELED

The wheel is one of humanity's most versatile inventions, and many vehicles still benefit from the means of transport it provides. Wheeled vehicles are also easier to repair than their more resilient tracked counterparts. Replacing a damaged wheel takes far less time and expertise in the ways of the machine spirits than resetting a fouled set of treads. Unless otherwise noted, vehicles with this trait must remain on the ground at all times while moving.

Tests to remove the Stalled condition and to repair a breach or critical breach affecting a Wheeled vehicle's motive systems require half as many AP as normal (rounded up) to complete (see Repairing Vehicles on page 223).

When a Wheeled vehicle suffers a critical breach to its motive systems location while it is moving, one of its tyres blows out. In addition to any other effects from the breach, it gains the Out of Control (1d5) condition.

A character typically uses the Surface use (A) of the Pilot skill to control a vehicle with this trait.

SAMPLE VEHICLES AND MOUNTS

There are endless types of vehicles in highly mechanised areas within Hive Desoleum, and even more unconsecrated patterns found in its remote or unlawful regions as well. Feral and agri-worlds also host numerous riding beasts as well in reaches where technology is scarce or unreliable. Below are a sampling of common forms found on Desoleum, though Acolytes will undoubtedly find more in their adventures.

CHIMERA ARMoured TRANSPORT

A commonly used military vehicle, the Chimera is found on battlefields across the galaxy where it acts as the mainstay Imperial Guard personnel carrier. Each features a hull-mounted gun along with a turret mounted weapon, both designed to soften up foes before the passengers attack. Its ancient design is versatile enough to act as the basic chassis for a number of other tanks, and many other Imperial agencies such as the Adeptus Arbites use it as well. The Desoleum Involute Cadres use them in combat training in the surrounding wastelands. In especially violent uprisings, Chimeras can also be found inside the hive, eradicating all those who would disturb the bonded order.

MOVEMENT VECTORS			
Forward	Backward	Side	Vertical
20	15	0	0
ARMOUR FACINGS			
Front	Side	Rear	
15	10	8	

Cruising Speed: 70 kph

Manoeuvrability: +0

Weapons:

One turret-mounted weapon that can be fired in any horizontal direction (select one):

AUTOCANNON				
HEAVY	300M	RoF 3	1d10 + 12 (I)	
PEN 2	CLIP 48	RLD 8AP	WT 40 KG	AVL-30
SPECIAL: RELIABLE				
HEAVY BOLTER				
HEAVY	210M	RoF 3	1d10 + 10 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 48	RLD 4AP	WT 40 KG	AVL-40
SPECIAL: TEARING				
HEAVY FLAMER				
HEAVY	40M	RoF 1/3	1d10 + 7 (E)	
PEN 1	CLIP 9	RLD 8AP	WT 45 KG	AVL-20
SPECIAL: FLAME (4), SPRAY				
MULTI-LASER				
HEAVY	200M	RoF 6	1d10 + 8 (E)	
PEN 1	CLIP 60	RLD 6AP	WT 50 KG	AVL-30
SPECIAL: OVERCHARGE				

One hull-mounted weapon that can only be fired in the forward arc (select one):

HEAVY BOLTER				
HEAVY	210M	RoF 3	1D10 +10 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 48	RLD 4AP	WT 40 KG	AVL-40
SPECIAL: <i>TEARING</i>				
HEAVY FLAMER				
HEAVY	40M	RoF 1/3	1D10 +7 (E)	
PEN 1	CLIP 9	RLD 8AP	WT 45 KG	AVL-20
SPECIAL: <i>FLAME (4), SPRAY</i>				

One pintle-mounted weapon set atop the turret which can be fired in any horizontal and vertical direction (select one):

HEAVY STUBBER				
HEAVY	160M	RoF 4	1D10 +5 (I)	
PEN 1	CLIP 60	RLD 8AP	WT 30 KG	AVL-30
SPECIAL: —				
STORM BOLTER				
BASIC	120M	RoF 2	1D10 +7 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 32	RLD 3AP	WT 9KG	AVL-40
SPECIAL: <i>STORM, TEARING</i>				

Complement: 3 crew, 12 passengers.

Vehicle Traits: All-Terrain (4), Powered (4), Reinforced (2), Sealed, Size (4), Tracked.

Passenger Weaponry: A Chimera has several firing ports running along its flanks (3 per side) for passengers to fire personal weapons through (Basic or Light only). These may be replaced with hull-mounted lasguns, also for passenger use. Passengers can also use the large hatch on top of the hull as a method of entry and exit as well as a firing point (if the Chimera is stationary, Heavy weapons can also be used).

LASGUN				
BASIC	160M	RoF 2	1D10 +4 (E)	
PEN 0	CLIP 24	RLD 2AP	WT 4KG	AVL+10
SPECIAL: <i>OVERCHARGE, RELIABLE</i>				

Threat: 30

Availability: -80

HECTIN AUTOCARRIAGE

A common Desoleum groundcar, the Hectin is commonly used to quickly shuffle personages not suited to the normal transport methods, moving them across the lanes and habways of the hive levels in relative safety. Most have enclosed passenger areas, but some lesser-quality or converted models feature open areas in the rear. They are also seen outside the hives, racing to drop points or roaring away from pursuing Sanctionaries.

MOVEMENT VECTORS

Forward	Backward	Side	Vertical
15	10	0	0

ARMOUR FACINGS

Front	Side	Rear
30	22	16

Cruising Speed: 70 kph

Manoeuvrability: +1

Weapons: None. If Open-topped, the Hectin can be upgraded to carry any separately acquired Basic weapon to be Mounted on the chassis and fired in any horizontal direction.

Complement: 1 driver, plus 5 (if Enclosed) or 8 (if Open-topped) passengers.

Vehicle Traits: Open-topped or Sealed, Powered (2), Rugged (1), Size (3), Wheeled.

Threat: 5

Availability: -30 (-60 if upgraded†).

†**Hectins from the Dawn:** Ancient and rare Hectin models use skimmer technology. This variant replaces the Wheeled and Rugged traits with Skimmer and Nimble, and adds a Vertical Movement Vector of 10.

VELOXIC BIKE

A common sight in the mid-levels of the infamous hive, the Veloxic features an oversized, roaring engine that heralds its arrival. They have excellent handling, a must in the hive's crowded areas. Many have made their way to lower levels where many gangs use them for sport or combat, often both.

MOVEMENT VECTORS			
Forward	Backward	Side	Vertical
25	0	0	0
ARMOUR FACINGS			
Front	Side	Rear	
8	8	8	

Cruising Speed: 90 kph

Manoeuvrability: +2

Weapons: None. Converted models found in lower levels can mount a single autogun that can fire in the forward arc.

AUTOGUN				
BASIC	120M	RoF 3	1D10 +3 (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP 30	RLD 3AP	WT 5KG	AVL +0
SPECIAL: —				

Complement: 1 driver, 1 passenger (carrying a passenger lowers the Manoeuvrability to +1).

Vehicle Traits: Nimble, Open-topped, Powered (1), Size (2), Wheeled.

Threat: 4

Availability: -10 (-20 with autogun mounting)

GLASSTEED

Found in the wastelands outside the Desoleum hives, glassteeds are tall, elegant quadrupeds that appear more crystalline than organic. Many assume them to be mutated reminders of the ancient wars on the planet. They are well adapted to the irradiated plains, and can survive for long periods with little or no food or water through unknown means. Though not as durable as other steeds, they are quick-footed, fast, and many archeotech explorers favour them ahead of mechanical vehicles. Some can even be found in the hive itself, where they are ridden as part of elaborate bond-renewal rituals or serve as display creatures in exotic collections.

MOVEMENT VECTORS			
Forward	Backward	Side	Vertical
20	5	0	0
ARMOUR FACINGS			
Front	Side	Rear	
1	1	1	

Cruising Speed: 30 kph

Manoeuvrability: +3

Weapons:

DAGGER TEETH				
MOUNTED	—	RoF 2	1D10 +4 (R)	
PEN 1	—	—	—	—
SPECIAL: —				

Complement: 1 rider.

Vehicle Traits: All-Terrain (3), Living, Nimble, Open-Topped, Size (2), Walker.

Survivor: Glassteeds are naturally resistant to the radiated and toxic wastelands that surround the hives, and can thrive even when their rider must wear protective gear.

Threat: 3

Availability: -20



CHAPTER VI: PSYCHIC POWERS

Certain humans are born with the innate ability to access the power of the Warp, drawing on it to achieve an array of impossible feats. These individuals, gifted or cursed, might be called witches, shamans, necromancers, wyrds, or any number of terms according to local custom, but are most commonly known as psykers.

Most psykers first exhibit their unnatural powers at a young age, but psychic ability can reveal itself later in life. In many cases, psykers first manifest powers when under great duress or threat; this is particularly true for those who discover their abilities at a more advanced age. Psykers evince a bewildering array of abilities, for the source of their power is bound to no law or rule. Indeed, the Warp-spawned powers of psykers can break the very laws of physics; defying gravity, creating flame from nothing, and stopping bullets in mid-air. This power does not come without a price, however. The Warp is unpredictable, and home to malign intelligences and beings who are drawn to the soul-light of a psyker like ravenous moths to a luminous morsel.

PSYKERS IN THE IMPERIUM

"Watch him carefully, and always keep your pistol ready if he goes wrong."

—Overheard near Keppler Jaq, Primaris Psyker

Psykers are both vital to the Imperium's survival and amongst its greatest threats. The Warp entities that are drawn to psykers are, without exception, hostile toward mankind and almost always extraordinarily dangerous as well. Many of these beings, including Daemons and the dreaded Enslavers, seek to use psykers to gain entrance to the material universe, from possessing the psyker to literally reshaping his body into a grotesque gateway to the hellish otherworld of the Warp. Even aside from these threats, psykers possess great powers that pose a terrible danger; a psyker who is not under the Imperium's control might turn his powers against it. Such rogue psykers can be extremely difficult for ordinary enforcers and even military groups to contain. Even those of a seemingly benign nature can be overcome with their power and destroy all around them with uncontrolled Warp-energies.

Despite the risks, psykers are an invaluable asset to the Imperium, fulfilling a wide variety of functions. The Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica endlessly travel the Imperium, collecting psykers as an important component of each world's tithe both to gather new subjects and remove potential dangers from the planet. Those psykers already corrupted by their abilities, or who are simply too dangerous to live, are summarily executed. Most of the rest go on to serve the Adeptus Astronomica and sustain the Astronomicon, the Warp-beacon that guides all Imperial vessels through the seas of the Immaterium. Ten thousand souls fire this beacon, and hundreds perish each day to keep it lit. The few remaining serve in other ways, from interstellar communications Administratum support, to actual combat roles fighting alongside the Imperial Guard or as part of the Adeptus Astartes. To survive testing by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica is to become sanctioned, and these psykers serve an Imperium that grudgingly tolerates their essential existence and is ever wary of their stability.

ASTROPATHS

Astropaths are the only means of interstellar communication the Imperium possesses, and the most common type of sanctioned psyker. They lack sufficient will and strength to control their powers or withstand the Scholastica Psykana's rigorous training, and so undergo Soul-Binding, whereby the Emperor shares a minuscule fraction of His power. This ritual allows them to serve the Imperium at the cost of their eyes, which are forever burned away in the process. They bind the Imperium together in a galactic web of communication, casting their thoughts into the Warp for fellow Astropaths to intercept and decipher. This is not to say, however, that astrotelepathic communication is simple, safe, or widely available, but it is essential for the Imperium to survive. For this reason, Astropaths are always in high demand by all branches of the Imperium organisations.

PRIMARIS PSYKERS

Seen with Imperial Guard regiments across the galaxy, Primaris Psykers are rare psykers who are capable of wielding the power of the Warp as a weapon. Their comrades hold them in awe, fear, and suspicion because of the unnatural powers they command.

UNSANCTIONED PSYKERS

An unsanctioned psyker is one that has never undergone testing by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, perhaps never realising his powers or carefully avoiding detection and capture. Those that remain unsanctioned are forever wary that one day they may be bound unto the Black Ships, never to be seen again. A very rare few may find shelter in the service of a radically-inclined Inquisitor, relying on his authority for protection. Most, however, are a danger to the Imperium more terrible than any xenos invasion or heretical uprising, as each can become a portal through which the Ruinous Powers can breach reality.

PSYKERS AND THE INQUISITION

Inquisitors often have special need of psykers, for they are particularly suited to hunting others of their kind and even Daemons. Generally, Inquisitors employ psykers for a wide variety of purposes, from incinerating heretics en masse, to divining the location of a cult, to plucking secrets from the mind of a suspect. Indeed, an Inquisitor may himself be a psyker. As in all things, Inquisitors do not allow the bureaucracy of the Imperium to stifle their work; as such, an Inquisitor who discovers an individual with psychic potential in the course of his duties might take the fledgling psyker into service without recourse to Imperial testing and training. At the other extreme are the most ruthless of puritanical Inquisitors, such as those of the Monodominant belief, who see all psykers as witches and abominations. Such Inquisitors never requisition the services of psykers, and barely condone their very existence.

PSYKERS IN DARK HERESY

"You think you know of terror? You fear mortality, while I know of things far worse than mere death."

—Astropath Galatia Hox

Psykers are beings with the ability to manipulate the power of the Immaterium, bending the chaotic energy to their will to manifest potent psychic powers. In **DARK HERESY**, characters can become psykers by taking the Psyker elite advance (see page 68). This grants them the ability to purchase psychic powers with experience, and gives them access to a new resource: psy rating.

PSY RATING

Psy rating (abbreviated PR) is the raw measure of a psyker's ability to draw power from the Warp. The higher a psyker's PR, the more powerful he will be. Psy rating is measured on a scale of 1–10. In special cases, it can go even higher. Psyker characters tap into their PR to fuel their psychic powers, investing more of their ability to increase the effects.

PSYCHIC DISCIPLINES

Psychic powers are divided into different disciplines based on how they use the energies of the Warp. Each discipline corresponds to a tree that determines its availability to a character. In addition, each discipline has a unique table the psyker rolls on to determine any psychic phenomena triggered while using the power. This book covers the following five disciplines:

- **Biomancy:** Biomancy is the art of affecting living flesh. Biomancers can push their own bodies beyond human limits and even control the biological processes of others. These powers allow a psyker to enhance his own abilities and aid his allies, but can also be used to stop a foe's heart with but a thought.
- **Divination:** Perhaps the most ancient of psychic disciplines, divination foretells the future. Though diviners

may seek answers by scattering animal entrails or studying the movement of stars, it is in fact the timeless realm of the Warp to which they turn. Though of negligible use in the midst of combat, the powers of divination are of inestimable use to an Inquisitor and his Acolytes in the pursuit of their duties.

- **Pyromancy:** The most destructive discipline, pyromancy allows a psyker to control and create flame using his mind. These powers focus on combat, from incinerating foes from within to summoning walls of flame to shield allies. Pyromancers are greatly feared, for their powers are often difficult to control once released, and can inflict great collateral damage.

- **Telekinesis:** Through the power of the Warp, telekineses translate mental impulses into physical force. Powers from the telekinesis discipline can defy gravity, blast opponents with invisible bolts of force, and even tear holes in the very fabric of reality. Such powers offer great utility in a variety of situations, for they allow a psyker to affect the world around him without the constraints of his physical body.

- **Telepathy:** Perhaps due to Astropaths being amongst the more common types of psyker, many individuals equate all psychic ability with telepathy. In fact, only certain psykers possess the talent to enter the minds of others, and even fewer the strength of will to maintain their own themselves in the face of constant exposure to others' thoughts. These powers may not inspire awe in the same way as other, less subtle, disciplines, but a skilled telepath can end a battle before a single shot is fired.

USING PSYCHIC POWERS

Psychic powers are the manifestation of the Warp energy controlled by psyker characters. When a character uses a psychic power, he determines how much of his psychic ability to commit to the power and then he makes a test to determine if he successfully bends the fickle energies of the Immaterium to his will.

Using a psychic power follows three steps:

Step 1 – Determine Psy Level: The psyker decides how much of his psy rating he wants to commit to the power. The amount of psy rating the psyker commits can affect the power's likelihood of success, and the potency of its end results.

Step 2 – Make Focus Power Test: The psyker makes a focus power test to determine if the psychic power succeeds.

Step 3 – Power Results: The psyker applies the effects of the power and any psychic phenomena that may have been triggered by the focus power test.

STEP 1 – DETERMINE PSY LEVEL

When drawing on the powers of the Warp, psykers can choose how much energy to commit to the specific psychic power they are trying to manifest. The amount of energy committed to a psychic power in this way is called its psy level (abbreviated as PL). When using a psychic power, the psyker must choose a psy level for the power that is equal to or below his psy rating. This value must be at least 1.

For each point lower the chosen psy level is than the psyker's psy rating, the psyker receives a +10 bonus to his focus power test. Additionally, the psy level of a psychic power determined how potent the effects of the power will be as well as potency of any psychic phenomena (see Stage 3).

PUSHING

When determining the psy level of a psychic power, a psyker can choose to push. If he does so, he strains his own limits, and may set the psy level of the psychic power up to 2 higher than his psy rating. Pushing is dangerous, however, for when a psyker draws from the Warp so deeply, he may be unable to control the energies released. When pushing a psychic power in this way, that power triggers psychic phenomena on any focus power test roll that does not produce doubles, instead of the normal condition.

For each point higher the chosen psy level is than the psyker's psy rating, the psyker receives a -10 penalty to his focus power test.

STEP 2 – MAKE FOCUS POWER TEST

To determine if the psyker successfully manifests the psychic power, he must succeed at a focus power test. The power being used determines what skill or characteristic the test uses. This test receives a +10 bonus for each point the power's psy level is under the psyker's psy rating, or a -10 penalty for each point it is over. The Game Master can also apply situation modifiers to the test where needed.

If the focus power test succeeds, the psyker successfully manifests the power and applies the effects detailed in its description. Additionally, if he rolls doubles (that is, both the tens dice and the units dice come up with the same number) on the focus power test, the power triggers psychic phenomena (see *Perils of the Warp* on page 173). This can occur even if the focus power test fails. If the psyker pushed when attempting the power, psychic phenomena instead occurs on any roll other than doubles.

FOCUS POWER ATTACK TESTS

When specifying what type of focus power test to make, some offensive psychic powers call for an attack test (e.g., "Willpower attack test"). For these powers, the psyker does not make a normal focus power test. Instead, he makes an attack as outlined in **Chapter VII: Combat**, using the weapon stats and rate of attack determined by the psychic power, and making the specified focus power test for the attack test in step 3 in place of a normal attack roll. This test is still modified by psy level and can trigger psychic phenomena just like a normal focus power test.

If the character uses a psychic power with the attack action type, that is the only attack action the character can make that turn, even if he is wielding two weapons.

OPPOSED FOCUS POWER TESTS

When specifying what type of focus power test to make, some psychic powers call for an opposed test (e.g., "Opposed Willpower test"). For these powers, the psyker and his target make an opposed test (see page 14): the

psyker using the specified skill or characteristic, and the target using a skill or characteristic specified in the psychic power's description. The psyker is still affected by all of the normal modifiers from psy level and can still trigger psychic phenomena as in a normal focus power test. Only the psyker's roll can trigger psychic phenomena.

STEP 3 – POWER RESULTS

After the psyker successfully manifests a psychic power, he triggers the effects specified in the psychic power description and, if psychic phenomena were triggered by the focus power test, rolls for the effects of the psychic phenomena.

PERILS OF THE WARP

If the psyker rolled doubles (or if the power was pushed, any roll except doubles) during his focus power test, a psychic phenomenon is triggered. This represents the eldritch powers of the Warp leaking into reality, and can range from mere hoarfrost forming on nearby objects to sanity-ripping daemonic attacks. To determine the resulting psychic phenomenon, the psyker rolls 2d10, and adds the psy level of the power to the total. He then compares the determined number to the appropriate Perils of the Warp table for the psychic discipline the power is from, and suffers any effects listed in the appropriate entry of the table. These effects can be instant, last a defined period of time, or be permanent depending on the duration listed in the table entry.

SUSTAINING PSYCHIC POWERS

Some psychic powers can be sustained, prolonging their effects for a period of time as noted in their description. After successfully using a sustainable power, the psyker can choose to sustain it by reducing his psy rating by 1 for the duration of the sustained power. This psy rating is restored once the power is no longer sustained.

Each sustainable psychic power has a cost listed in the “sustained” entry of its description. This can either be a condition or a number of action points. If it is a condition, the psyker suffers from this condition as long as he continues to sustain the psychic power. If the cost is a number of action points, the psyker sustaining the power must spend the specified number of action points after receiving action points for the turn, otherwise he immediately stops sustaining the power, and its effects stop. The psyker can sustain multiple powers at one time as long as he can fulfil the conditions required to continue sustaining each power. However, the psyker cannot attempt to use a power he is already sustaining a second time. The psyker can choose to stop sustaining a psychic power at any time as a free action, and unless specified by the power, powers stop being sustained once the target leaves the power's range.

If used outside of structured time, the amount of AP required to sustain a power represents the amount of focus the psyker must dedicate to keeping the power going. Each 1 AP requires 25 percent of the psyker's focus, with 4 AP meaning the psyker can do nothing else but sustain the power.

When rolling to determine the effects of psychic phenomena while sustaining one or more psychic powers, the psyker adds +2 to the roll for each psychic power he is sustaining.

GAINING PSYCHIC POWERS

A character can only use psychic powers he has purchased. Any character with a psy rating of 1 or higher can purchase powers by spending experience points gained during play. To purchase a psychic power, a character must have access to it in the appropriate discipline tree, and must meet all its prerequisites. The amount of experience points spent to purchase a psychic power is listed in that power's entry.

DISCIPLINE TREES

All psychic powers fall under one of the many psychic disciplines, and are organised into discipline trees. Each tree consists of a collection of psychic powers linked by paths. When a character wishes to purchase a new talent, he must first check if he has access to that power in its tree. To access a psychic power, the character must be able to trace a line along the paths of the tree from the top-most power down to the desired power without crossing over a power he does not possess. Characters automatically have access to the top-most psychic power in every tree.

DISCIPLINE LIMIT

Once a character purchases the top-most psychic power in a discipline, he possesses that discipline and can purchase powers freely from that tree (provided he meets all of the aforementioned requirements). A character can only possess a number of disciplines equal to his current psy rating. Once he possesses a number of disciplines equal to his psy rating, the character cannot purchase the top-most power in an unpossessed disciplines until he raises his psy rating.

PSYCHIC POWER DESCRIPTIONS

POWER NAME

Experience Cost: The amount of experience points a character must spend to purchase this power.

Prerequisites: All requirements a character must meet to purchase this power.

Type: The type of action used to attempt this power.

Time: The amount of time that must be spent to attempt this power. This value is presented in Action Points for powers that can be quickly attempted, and in minutes for powers that take more time. If used out of structured time, each action point required equates to roughly three seconds.

Focus Power: The type of test used to perform the focus power test.

Range: The maximum distance over which the psyker can use this power. If the target of the power is beyond this range, the character cannot use the power. Sustained powers stop when a target leaves the range of a power, unless otherwise stated.

Sustained: The cost to sustain this power. This is either a number of action points that the psyker must spend each round to keep the power going, or a condition the psyker suffers from while the power remains sustained.

Effect: A description of what this power does if successful.

BIOMANCY

Biomancy focuses on manipulating biological energy, thereby altering the structure of form of living creatures. Because of this, the majority of these powers alter the characteristics of the character, his allies, and enemies.

ENFEEBLE

The biomancer draws forth the ravenous power of the Warp, directing it towards his foe. Whether in the form of a subtle ripple of the air, shimmering black tendrils of energy, or ethereal leaches, the power springs forth from the psyker and drains the victim's vitality.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 20m x PL

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Toughness test. If the target fails, his Strength and Toughness are reduced by 5 x PL for the duration of the power. A single target can only be affected by one instance of the Enfeeble power at a time.

ENDURANCE

Focussing his mind on the injured bodies of his allies, the psyker energises their biology, initiating rapid cell growth. In moments, shattered bones re-knit, gaping wounds close and heal, and the effects of combat disappear.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 55

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: -10 Willpower test

Range: 3m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a number of targets in range and line of sight up to the psy level of the power. These targets, plus the psyker himself, immediately remove one non-critical wound. The psyker then suffers fatigue equal to half his PL (rounded up) due to the strain of using this power.

HAEMORRHAGE

Drawing on his mastery of the living body, the biomancer accelerates his victim's heart rate beyond the bounds of biological possibility. Betrayed by his own body, the target's blood boils over, flooding his brain and bursting his over-taxed veins. Those nearby have their own hearts caught in the unnatural rhythm, suffering the same fate.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 55

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The character chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Toughness test. If the target fails, he immediately suffers one wound with an energy effect of 1d5. If this wound successfully kills the target, the psyker may immediately recast this power as a free action on any legal target within PL metres of the original target.

INFLUENCE

The psyker uses his abilities to reach into other minds, altering perceptions and manipulating attitudes. This can be dangerous, not only for the psyker should he accidentally invoke daemonic attentions, but also from his targets should they discover this mental manipulation.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 35

Type: Utility

Time: Part of social skill check

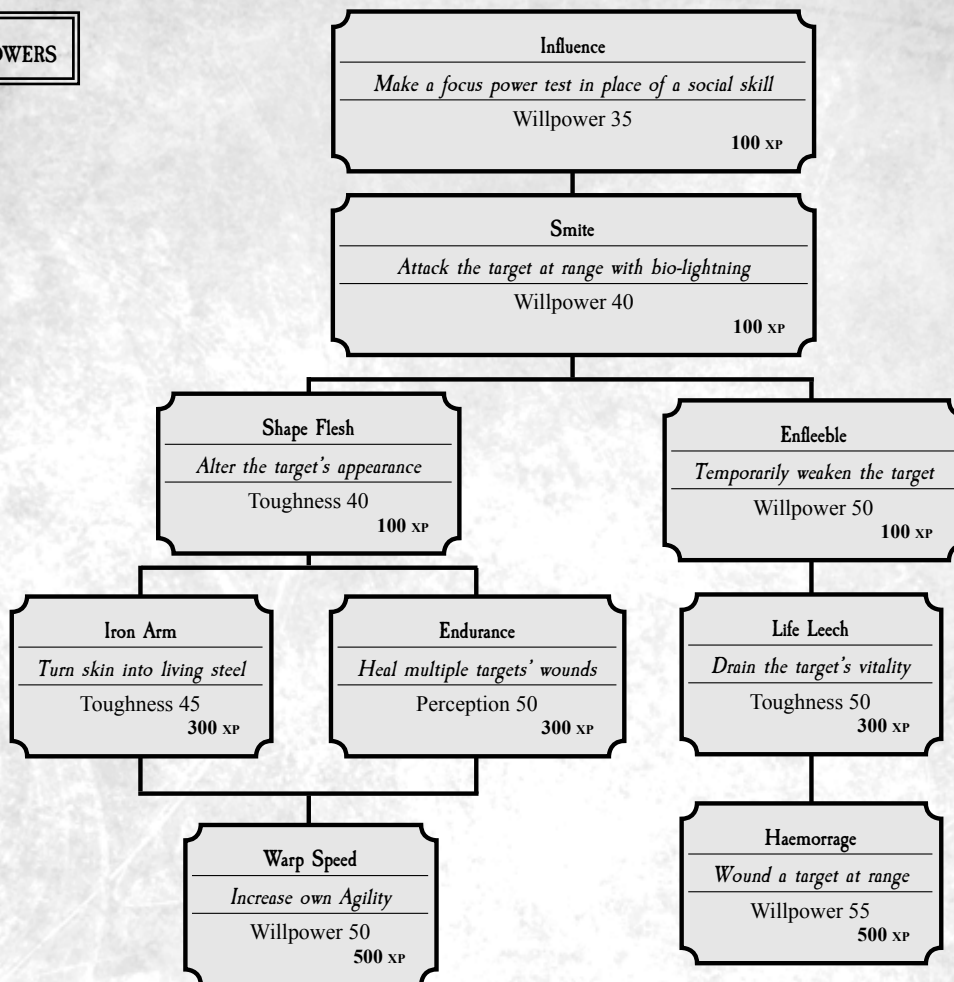
Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: Self

Sustained: No

Effect: When making a social skill test to influence another person, the psyker can roll this focus power test in place of the normal skill test required. This test gains a bonus equal to +5 multiplied by the psy level of the power. The effects of success and failure, as well as the time to complete the skill test, all behave according to the rules of the original skill being tested and scale off of DoS and DoF as normal. This test can trigger psychic phenomena just like a normal focus power test.

BIOMANCY POWERS



IRON ARM

The biomancer uses his Warp-spawned power to impossibly modify his own cellular structure, morphing his flesh into living steel. In his new form, he can shrug off gunfire and shatter enemy bones with his fists. The psyker's superdense form restricts his movement though as his muscles strive to cope with the unnatural flesh.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: +10 Willpower test

Range: Self

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: The psyker increases his Strength and Toughness by 5 x PL for the duration of the power. However, the weight of his hardened flesh weighs him down, reducing his Agility by 5 x PL, to a minimum of 1.

LIFE LEECH

Perverting the connection between mind and body, the psyker drains his enemy's very life essence. Drawn on psychic currents, the stolen energy invigorates the biomancer's own mind and flesh.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 50

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: 2 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Toughness test. If the target fails, he gains the Weakened (X) condition for the duration of the power, where X equals half the psy level of the power. For the duration of the power, the psyker gains a bonus to all tests equal to 5 times half the power's psy level.

SHAPE FLESH

Powerful biomancers are able to bend the living body to their will with great finesse. At the heights of ability, a psyker can mould flesh with an expertise any sculptor would envy.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Toughness 40

Type: Utility

Time: 2 Minutes

Focus Power: +10 Willpower test

Range: 2m

Sustained: Weakened (2)

Effect: The psyker chooses himself or an organic target that he can physically touch. The target's physical appearance changes to a new form of the psyker's choosing for the duration of the power. The amount and precision of the alterations depend on the PL of the power. Following are some broad guidelines, but GMs can further alter the range of the power within each of these categories based on the PL:

- **Psy Level 1-3:** The psyker can alter subtle flesh shapes, tones, and colours to distort the appearance of the target. He does not have direct control over what the end result looks like.

- **Psy Level 4-6:** The psyker can alter flesh, hair, eyes, and any other physical features. He can choose how the features will be altered, but does not have the precision to mimic others.

- **Psy Level 7-9:** The psyker can change any physical feature of the target to resemble another individual. However, the psyker must have a picture of the individual, or seen him before.

- **Psy Level 10+:** The psyker can shape his target to exactly mimic another individual. Additionally, he can use the power to morph the target into a form that no longer appears human.

All tests to identify the target's true identity suffer a penalty equal to $-5 \times \text{PL}$ for the duration of the power. The effects of the power on a target other than the psyker remain in effect for the duration of the power, regardless of how far away from the psyker the target becomes.

SMITE

Drawing on the electric field of his own body, the psyker projects crackling bolts of bio-lightning, transforming his very life force into destructive energy. Diviners often claim that one can tell much about the state of a biomancer's soul from the colour and appearance of this power.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Type: Attack

Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: Willpower Attack test

Range: 30m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker makes an attack against a target in range and line of sight by making a Willpower attack test. The attack has a rate of attack equal to the psy level of the power, and uses the following weapon profile:

SMITE				
MOUNTED	30M+PL	RoF PL	1D10+PL (E)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: —				

WARP SPEED

Tapping into the power of the Empyrean, the psyker suffuses his body with energy, pushing himself beyond physical limits. While under the effects of this power, the psyker moves with unbelievable speed, ensuring that no heretic is swift enough to escape justice.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Type: Utility

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: +10 Willpower test

Range: Self

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: The psyker increases his Agility by $5 \times \text{PL}$ for the duration of the power.



TABLE 6-1: BIOMANCY PERILS OF THE WARP

2d10	EFFECT
2 or lower	Warp Twitch: The psyker's muscles spasm for a moment, rippling to unnatural extremes before settling back to normal.
3-4	Stolen Breath: A hot, choking breeze billows forth as the air rips its way out of the psyker's lungs. The psyker must make a +30 Toughness test; if he fails, he suffers 1 fatigue, plus additional 1 fatigue for every three degrees of failure after the first.
5-6	Ceaseless Rhythm: The psyker's heartbeat is magnified a thousandfold in his mind, thrumming tirelessly and drowning out all other thought. The psyker cannot use psychic powers for 1 round, and must make a +20 Willpower test or suffer 1 Insanity.
7	Ethereal Stench: The air around the psyker fills with a distracting aroma, which might be pleasant or noxious, but is always overwhelming. Each character within 1d10 metres (including the psyker) is Weakened (1) for 1 round.
8	Trail of Blight: Plants around the psyker wither and die, writhing as if in agony for a moment before collapsing into rotting piles. All plant life within 2d10 metres immediately perishes. The psyker must make a +0 Willpower test or suffer 1d5 Corruption.
9	Spectral Rot: Food and drink within the nearby area spoils, and everyone's stomach sours at the ensuing smell. Each character within 3d10 metres (including the psyker) must make a -10 Toughness test or be Weakened (1) for 1 round.
10-11	Ragged Spurs: The psyker's bones rattle and shake as calcified spurs erupt from them, tearing painfully into his flesh. The psyker suffers Willpower Decay (1d10) and 1 fatigue. His unarmed attacks inflict an additional 1d5 damage for 2d10 rounds.
12	Sanguine Corruption: The psyker disgorges gouts of crimson blood discoloured with metallic streaks. It flows down his body and spreads 1d5 metres around him. The psyker must make a -30 Toughness test or suffer 1d5 Corruption as his flesh warps and twitches. Any other character who touches the blood must make a -30 Toughness test or suffer 1d5 Corruption.
13	Localised Ageing: As his power runs out of control, one of the psyker's limbs temporarily becomes wizened and bent, as though aged decades in a single moment. One of the psyker's limbs (chosen at random) becomes Crippled for 1d10 rounds.
14	All is Rust: Vital energy rushes forth from the psyker in great gouts, spilling invisibly around him and accelerating catalytic processes. This decay is impossibly voracious, corroding inorganic objects nearby. Items within 2d10 metres become Damaged.
15	Infectious Strength: For the next 1d5 rounds, characters in 3d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker) deal an additional 1d5 damage with melee attacks. When a character inflicts damage with a melee attack in this area, he suffers 1 Corruption.
16	Vile Phlegm: The psyker's pores begin to exude a viscous mucus that bubbles and twists with tiny, mocking faces even as it sears his flesh. The psyker suffers Toughness Decay (1d10) and 1d5 Corruption.
17	Vital Drain: As the Warp lashes back upon him, the psyker instinctively siphons the vitality of the nearest living thing. The psyker makes an Opposed Willpower test against the nearest character within 30 metres, which the affected character resists with Toughness. If the affected character loses the Opposed test, he suffers one wound with an energy effect of 1d10 to a randomly chosen body part and the psyker heals one wound he is currently suffering, and suffers 1d5 Corruption. If there are no characters within range, the psyker suffers one wound to a randomly chosen location with an energy effect of 1d10.
18	Choleric Outburst: The psyker enters a sightless rage, coppery sweat pouring from his body and a howl of fury upon his lips. His muscles swell and bulge, and he instantly lashes out with all his unnatural might at those unfortunate enough to be within the range of his distended limbs. The psyker suffers Strength Decay (1d10+5) and 1d10 Corruption. Each other character within 1d10 metres must make a +0 Evade (A) test or suffer 2d10 impact damage to a randomly selected location.
19-20	The Flesh Rebels: The psyker suffers the Organ Loss condition for one of his vital organs and suffers Blood Loss (5).
21	Shaper's Melancholy: Black slime pours from his eyes and mouth as the twisted desire to work dark deeds upon his body overcomes him. He is Stunned for 1d5 rounds, suffers Willpower Decay (1d10+5), and suffers 1d10 Corruption. If this causes him to roll on Table 8-7: Malignancies , he adds +10 to the result. If questioned, he has no memory of why he performed this act.
22-23	Warp Spasm: The psyker's flesh torques painfully, his countenance and his musculature wracked by unbridled fury. The psyker gains the Frenzy condition until the end of the encounter. When it ends, he suffers 1d5 fatigue and 1d5 Insanity.
24	Warp Regression: The psyker's form is invigorated, and his appearance shifts like wax, as years fall from his face in a matter of moments. However, with this outward boon comes internal rot. The psyker gains a +10 bonus to Fellowship tests for the remainder of the game session. The psyker suffers Perception Decay (1d10+5) and 1d10 Corruption.
25	Unspeakable Hunger: The psyker suffers 1d10 Insanity. If he would roll on Table 8-6: Mental Trauma because of this Insanity, he automatically receives the Cannibalistic Urge result (see page 257).
26	Lifedrinker Curse: The psyker makes an Opposed Willpower test against 1d5 of the nearest characters within 100 metres, which the affected characters resist with Toughness. Each affected character who loses the Opposed test suffers one wound to a randomly chosen body part with an energy effect of 2d10. The psyker heals that many wounds that he is currently suffering, but suffers 1d5 Corruption for each one he heals this way. If there are no characters within range, the psyker suffers one wound to a randomly chosen location with an energy effect of 2d10.
27	Permanent Mutation: The psyker's flesh begins to shape itself, recoiling against this will and settling into a new and terrible form. The psyker rolls on Table 8-7: Malignancy , adding +15 to the result, and suffers 1d10 Insanity. The psyker's Fellowship characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
28	Cursed Appendage: The psyker shrieks in horror as one of his limbs explodes in a splatter of gore. He suffers the Limb Loss condition for a randomly chosen limb and suffers Blood Loss (8). His Agility characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
29	Biological Collapse: The psyker suffers the Organ Loss condition for 1d5 major organs and he suffers Blood Loss (12). Should he survive this gruesome mishap, his Strength and Toughness characteristics are permanently reduced by 1d10.
30 or higher	Chaos Spawn: The psyker's body explodes in a mass of writhing tentacles and dripping ichor. His Corruption becomes 100 and he is replaced with a Chaos spawn (see page 303) that promptly tries to devour his erstwhile comrades.

DIVINATION

Divination centres on seeing the unknown and the future. Most of these powers have primarily narrative effects, but some can provide combat advantages.

FOREBODING

The psyker gains an unnatural sixth sense. With this inexplicable insight, he knows how and where his enemies will attack, dodging blows and lasblasts with contemptuous and frightening ease.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Perception 40

Type: Reaction

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: Psyniscience (P) test

Range: Self

Sustained: No

Effect: After a successful attack test is made against the psyker, but before hit locations are determined, the psyker can use this power. If the power succeeds, subtract the PL of the power from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attack then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the psyker successfully evades, and the attack fails.

The psyker does not need to be aware of the attack to use Foreboding, and Foreboding may only be used once in response to a single attack.

FOREWARNING

Foreseeing his foes' intentions, the psyker taps into the Warp and, like dropping a small pebble into a pool, sends ripples to slightly shift the course of events. Without moving a muscle, the psyker saves his ally from certain injury and leaves his enemy baffled.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Perception 50

Type: Reaction

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: -10 Psyniscience (P) test

Range: 2m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: After a successful attack test is made against a character in range, but before hit locations are determined, the psyker can use this power. If the power succeeds, subtract the PL of the power from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attack then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the character successfully evades, and the attack fails.

The psyker or the affected character do not need to be aware of the attack to use Forewarning, and Forewarning may only be used once in response to a each single attack.

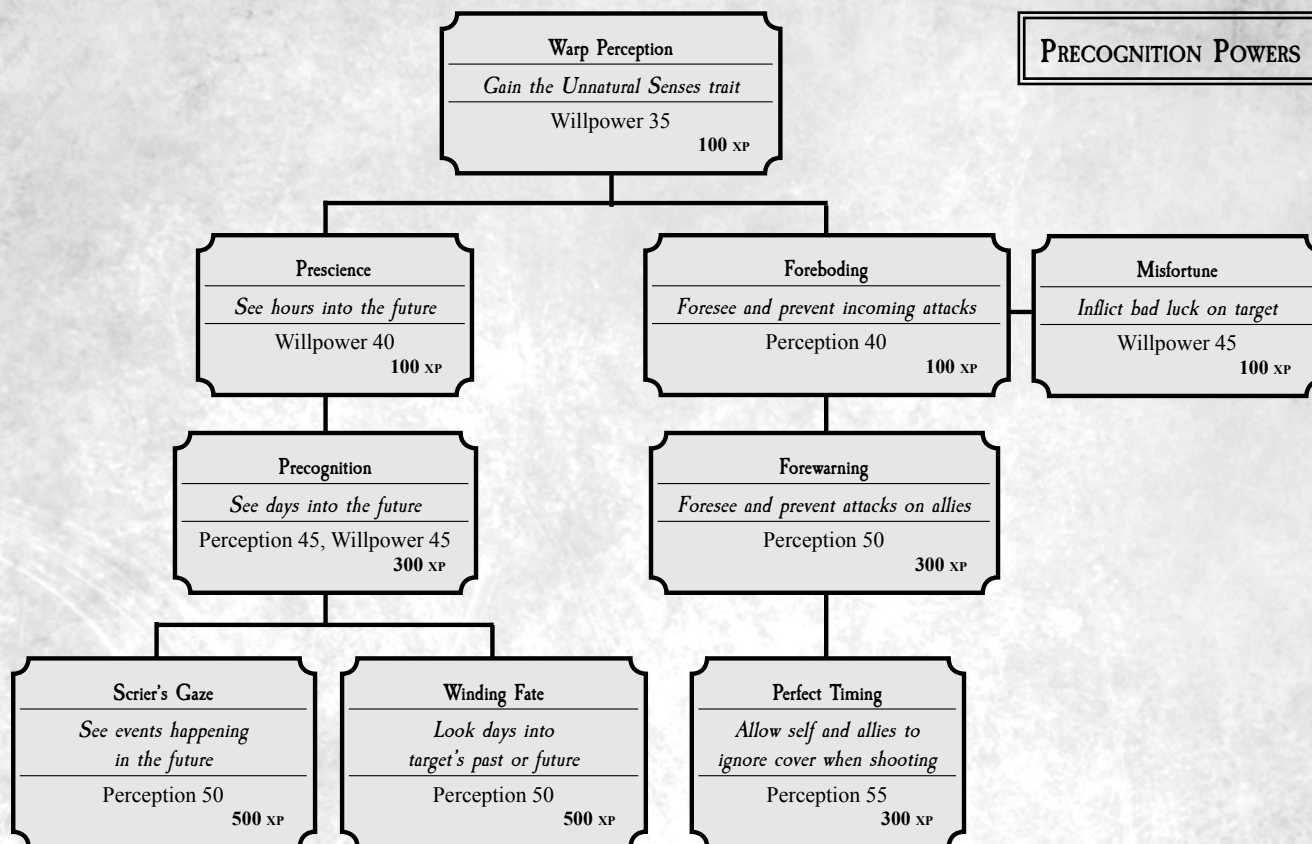
GM GUIDANCE: DIVINATION

A number of Divination powers allow a psyker to see visions of the future. Because these powers function primarily in a narrative fashion, their use could pose difficulties; no matter how well he prepares, no GM can be certain of how the events of the game will proceed. GMs have options when it comes to adjudicating players' use of these powers. It is helpful for the GM to first determine what the player is trying to accomplish through using the power. Depending on his goals, it may not be necessary for the GM to describe the character's visions in detail. Just because the character knows exactly what will happen, does not necessarily mean the player needs to. In some cases, it is sufficient to grant the psyker a bonus to any tests to which his vision is relevant.

Another difficulty comes from the very nature of divination. Investigations are a major part of **DARK HERESY**, and it wouldn't do to allow an Acolyte to solve a mystery through the single use of a psychic power! Fortunately for the GM, the Warp and fate are fickle and mutable things. This fact also deals with the aforementioned problem of the GM's own imperfect foresight. Particularly in the case of Prescience, a lower-tier power, visions are fuzzy and indistinct. The GM can and should be vague in his descriptions of the vision; faces, environments, and other details may be hazy and indistinct. Bearing this in mind, the GM can provide enough information to assist the player, without giving away any plot-breaking details. The GM should also remember that the psyker does not necessarily see visions pertaining to his goal. However, GMs should take care to ensure that a player gains something through successful use of Divination powers. After all, any use of psychic ability includes an element of risk. Visions are often devoid of complete context, which poses the danger of a psyker acting against his best interests based on incomplete information.

In the end, GMs should view players' use of Divination not as a problem, but as an opportunity. The GM has complete control, ultimately, over what information players obtain. By giving some thought to it, a GM can provide information to keep the players on the right track, or even introduce new plot seeds, without making things too easy.

PRECOGNITION POWERS



MISFORTUNE

Twisting fate, the psyker focuses his inner eye to ensure that his foe suffers every possible calamity that ill-fortune could provide. From embarrassing mishaps to life-and-death struggles, chance itself betrays the target at every turn.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Type: Attack

Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 20m x PL

Sustained: Free Action

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, he is plagued by misfortune for the duration of the power. The target is constantly tripping over himself, dropping and forgetting things, and generally fumbling in everything he does; the exact effects of this are up to the GM's discretion. Additionally, any weapons the target uses gain the Unreliable quality for the duration of the power.

PERFECT TIMING

So accurate are the diviner's premonitions, that he can predict the exact moment his foe will expose himself. Further, the psyker can forge a link with his allies, momentarily intertwining their fortunes, so that they might fire in perfect unison, already squeezing their weapons' triggers before the foe is aware.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Perception 55

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Psyniscience (P) test

Range: 2m x PL

Sustained: 2 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a number of targets in range and line of sight up to the psy level of the power. These targets, plus the psyker himself, ignore a certain amount of cover when firing ranged weapons at targets. When determining the defence value of locations hit by these characters with a ranged weapon, the total armour value added by cover is reduced by half the psy level of this power.

PRECOGNITION

In one of the most viscerally intense applications of the Divination discipline, the psyker witnesses solid and perfectly lifelike visions of his own future. Peering into days yet to come, he can use this information to ensure or avoid future fates.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Perception 45, Willpower 45

Type: Utility

Time: 2 Minutes

Focus Power: Psyniscience (P) test

Range: Self

Sustained: No

Effect: This vision lasts for a number of seconds equal to the twice the psy level of the power, and can look into the psyker's future a number of days equal to the psy level of the power. Additionally, the higher the psy level, the more the psyker can control what his flashes focus on, at the GM's discretion.

PRESCIENCE

The psyker sees brief, fuzzy flashes into his immediate future, which can aid in deciding his next action. Though the glimpses are short, such foretelling can mean the difference between life or death.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Type: Utility

Time: 1 Minute

Focus Power: +10 Psyniscience (P) test

Range: Self

Sustained: No

Effect: This vision lasts for a number of seconds equal to the psy level of the power, and can look into the psyker's future a number of hours equal to the psy level of the power. Additionally, the higher the psy level, the more the psyker can control what his short flashes focus on, at the GM's discretion.



SCRIER'S GAZE

The most accomplished diviners are not only able to see into the future, but also the present. Unbound by the limits of mere physical vision, his mind peers far and wide with little to hide from his sight.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Perception 50

Type: Utility

Time: 5+PL Minutes

Focus Power: -10 Psyniscience (P) test

Range: 50km x PL

Sustained: 4 AP

Effect: By invoking this power, the psyker sees events currently happening somewhere in range of the power. The vision lasts for a number of minutes equal to the psy level of the power. The higher the psy level, the more the psyker can control what his vision centres on, at the GM's discretion.

WARP PERCEPTION

The psyker opens his senses to the Warp, allowing unnatural tendrils of energy to augment his own perceptions. His flesh no longer limited, he casts his gaze wider and hungrily scents prey from farther afield.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 35

Type: Utility

Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: +20 Willpower test

Range: Self

Sustained: 2 AP

Effect: The psyker gains the Unnatural Senses (X) trait. The X value of the trait is equal to the psy level of this power multiplied by 10.

WINDING FATE

By touching a character or item, the psyker sees visions into that subject's future and past. Though ghostly and laced with tendrils of Warp-smoke, these images reveal not only what was, but what is yet to be.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Perception 50

Type: Utility

Time: 2 Minutes

Focus Power: -10 Psyniscience (P) test

Range: 2m

Sustained: No

Effect: The vision lasts for a number of seconds equal to the twice the psy level of the power, and can look into the subject's future or past a number of days equal to the psy level of the power. Additionally, the higher the psy level, the more the psyker can control what his flashes focus on, at the GM's discretion.

TABLE 6-2: DIVINATION PERILS OF THE WARP

2d10	EFFECT
2 or lower	Dark Foreboding: A faint, chilling breeze whispers past the psyker and those near him, and everyone shudders as they know somewhere else in the galaxy, something too terrible to fully contemplate has just occurred.
3–4	Spinechill: Animals within 2d10 metres of the psyker become spooked for 1d5 rounds. If a character uses a psychic power in the affected during that time, he triggers a psychic phenomenon (see page 173) regardless of his focus power test's result.
5–6	Inscrutable Omen: The psyker notices a pattern of shadow, a drifting smog cloud, or some other mundane effect in the exact shape of a sign of inevitable doom. If he attempts to point this sign out to anyone else, it vanishes. The psyker is Stunned for 1 round and must make a +10 Willpower test or suffer 1 Insanity.
7–8	Nightmare Sign: The psyker is wracked by a dread vision. He must immediately make a –20 Perception test; if he succeeds, he receives foreknowledge of an event to come and suffers 1 Insanity, but also gains a +10 bonus on his next test this encounter. If he fails, he is overwhelmed by the horrible vision, and suffers 3 Insanity.
8	Swallowed by Darkness: Shadows surge forth and devour the psyker's vision temporarily, leaving him in sightless for a moment. The psyker is Blinded for 1d5 rounds and suffers 1d5 Insanity.
10–11	Bloody Tears: For 1d10 rounds, trails of dripping crimson weep from statues, stones, and trees within 3d10 metres of where the psyker received this result. If a character uses a psychic power within the affected area during that time, he triggers a psychic phenomenon (see page 173) regardless of the result of his focus power test, adding +3 to the 2d10 roll on the Perils of the Warp table.
12	Distorted Reflection: All mirrors and reflective surfaces within 2d10 metres of the psyker display him as an eldritch terror whenever he peers into them. The psyker suffers 1 Insanity every time he sees his twisted reflection until the end of the session.
13	Weapon Jinx: With an ominous set of clicks, the interior mechanisms of all firearms and explosives are upset by the Warp's caprices. For the next 1d5 rounds, ranged weapons in 1d10+5 metres of the psyker Jam on any failed Ballistic skill test.
14	Ætheric Synesthesia: The psyker's senses become scrambled; he hears battlefield cacophonies as a splatter of shuddering colours and feels the stench of the Warp crawling under his eyeballs. The psyker suffers Perception Decay (1d10) and 1d5 Insanity.
15–16	Obsessive Fear: The psyker perceives countless tiny, daemonic hands tugging at his skin and comes to believe that without a constant repetition of a minor, meaningless ritual, his very soul will be dragged screaming into the Warp. For 2d10 rounds, the psyker must spend 1 AP on each of his turns satisfying this minor compulsion or suffer 2 Insanity at the end of that turn.
17	The Tarot Shuffles!: The psyker watches the skeins of fate unweave themselves before winding into a new pattern. For each character within 1d10 metres (including the psyker), the psyker rolls once on Table 2-21: Divinations . The psyker then chooses which fortune or misfortune applies to each affected character; these immediately replace any previous divinations.
18–19	There Lurks Despair: The psyker spots the portent of his final doom! Choose an inanimate object within 1d100 metres at random; until the end of the encounter, whenever the psyker moves toward the object (or it moves toward him), he suffers 1d5 Insanity.
20–21	Rain of Blood: The heavens tear open and blood pours forth. Until the end of the encounter, blood falls from the skies within 30 metres of where the psyker received this result. If a psyker uses a psychic power within the affected area during that time, he triggers a psychic phenomenon (see page 173) regardless of the result of his focus power test, adding +5 to the result.
22	Irrepressible Fear: A dark sign briefly burns its way into being upon the psyker's brow, and primal instinct clutches at the minds of everyone around him. The psyker gains the Fear –30 (Cowering) Trait until the end of the encounter.
23	The Gibbering: The psyker's speech is corrupted and fraught with foul blasphemies. Until the end of the encounter, at the end of each of his turns in which the psyker spoke or used a psychic power, each other character who can hear him suffers 1 Corruption and must make a –30 Willpower test or be Dazed for 1 round.
25	Catastrophic Hex: The psyker suddenly realises that he has made a hideous miscalculation in his divinations, but does not know when or where. For the next 2d10 rounds, all ranged weapons within 1d100 metres of the psyker automatically Jam and become Damaged on any failed Ballistic Skill test. Grenades that jam in this way instantly explode.
26	Vicious Loathing: Hatred wells up in the minds of all around the psyker, and each person independently draws the conclusion that the psyker is at fault for all of their current problems. All other characters within 4d10 metres must make a +0 Fear (Warp Shock) test. Any character who fails this test gains the Frenzy condition and must attempt to bludgeon the psyker to death (or at least into submission) for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
27	Damning Spot: The psyker sees a seething Warp-stain on his arm, a mark of irrefutable damnation, and attempts to part himself from this curse—violently. He must make a –30 Perception test to pinpoint the maddening illusion. If he succeeds, he must choose either to suffer 1d10 Insanity or to hack off the “affected” flesh, suffering a wound with a Rending effect of 1d10+5 on one of his arms (chosen at random) and Blood Loss (3). If he fails, suffers both effects.
28	Struck Blind: The psyker's eyes fall upon the visage of a Daemon within the Warp and are blasted from his head, leaving only seared flesh-pits. The psyker suffers the Lost Eye condition for both (or all) of his eyes, 1d5 Corruption, and 1d10 Insanity.
29	Horrendous Knowledge: The true name of a Daemon springs fully-formed into the mind of the psyker. The psyker suffers 1d10 Insanity and 1d10 Corruption and must immediately make a –30 Willpower test. If he fails, he becomes Stunned for 1d10 rounds, during which time he ceaselessly chants the name. At the end of each of the psyker's turns spent this way, each character who heard his infernal chanting suffers 2 Corruption and 2 Insanity.
30 or higher	Beyond the Veil of Sanity: The psyker sees into the root of the universe itself, beholding the hideous truth hiding behind sanity-preserving lies such as time and reason. The psyker goes irrevocably mad, and begins to endlessly babble a horrid torrent of words. The psyker's Insanity becomes 100, and any character who can hear the psyker's reality-shattering truths must make a –30 Evade (WP) test or suffer 1d10 Insanity at the beginning of each round until the psyker is silenced.

PYROMANCY

Pyromancy concerns the manipulation of fire. The ability to create and control flame provides great capacity for destruction, and the majority of Pyromancy powers serve to allow the psyker to directly attack his foes, unleashing the deadly power of psychic flame in combat. The abilities of a skilled pyromancer are truly astounding, providing a spectacle that exceeds any other discipline.

CAUTERISE

With careful application of his powers, the psyker applies intense heat to a wound on his own flesh or an ally's, quenching the flow of blood. The effect is quite painful, but certainly preferable to bleeding to death. The use of this power generates a focussed and intense heat that rivals advanced medicae equipment, and certainly far exceeds the effects of ordinary battlefield cauterisations.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: +20 Willpower test

Range: 2m

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses himself or another character he can physically touch. If the target is suffering from the Blood Loss (X) condition, the psyker reduces the X value by an amount equal to the psy level of the power.

FIERY FORM

Unnatural flame engulfs the psyker's entire body, cloaking him in sheets of fire that somehow does not burn yet frightens all around him.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Agility 40

Type: Utility

Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: +10 Willpower test

Range: Self

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: For the duration of the power, flame surrounds the psyker; it appears real and produces light, but generates no heat, and cannot actually cause anything else to burn. The psyker gains the Fear (Fleeing) trait, and gains a bonus to all Intimidate skill tests equal to +5 x PL.

FIRE SHIELD

With but a gesture, the psyker summons a wall of shimmering, unnatural fire in the air before him. Any who would strike the pyromancer must contend with fiery retribution, as flames leap outward, travelling in reverse down the path of the bullet or lasbolt to strike the psyker's assailant.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Type: Attack

Time: Utility

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: 20m x PL

Sustained: Weakened (1)

Effect: For the duration of this power, any character in range and line of sight that successfully hits the psyker with an attack is immediately attacked back in turn. Fire Shield's effect can only trigger once per turn, and the fiery attack strikes a rate of attack of 1, degrees of success equal to the DoS gained on the focus power test, and the following weapon profile:

FIRE SHIELD				
<i>MOUNTED</i>	<i>20M+PL</i>	RoF —	<i>1D10+PL-2 (E)</i>	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>FLAME (1)</i>				

FLAME BREATH

Using his body as a conduit for his Warp-drawn power, the psyker expels a torrent of flame from his mouth and eyes. Even his allies can find the sight terrifying as his foes are burned with his unnatural exhalations.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Willpower attack test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker makes an attack with a rate of attack of 1 that uses the following weapon profile:

FLAME BREATH				
<i>MOUNTED</i>	<i>10M+PL</i>	RoF —	<i>1D10+PL (E)</i>	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>FLAME (1), SPRAY</i>				

INFERNO

Focussing his power, the psyker ignites the very atmosphere surrounding his target, placing his foe in the midst of a sudden and violent conflagration.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 55

Type: Attack

Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: -10 Willpower attack test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker makes an attack against a target in range and line of sight by making a Willpower attack test. The attack has a rate of attack of 1, and uses the following weapon profile:

INFERNO				
<i>MOUNTED</i>	<i>10M+PL</i>	RoF —	<i>2D10+PL (E)</i>	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>BLAST (PL), FLAME (4)</i>				

MANIPULATE FLAME

Reaching out with his mind, the psyker grasps nearby flame and moulds it to his desire. The flames dance to his tune, moving to untouched areas or falling quiet at their master's command.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 35

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: +20 Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a patch of fire in range and line of sight with a radius no greater than PL metres. Each round, he can either extinguish or control the fire. If he extinguishes the fire, this power ends and the fire goes out. If he controls the fire, he can move it up to one metre per round along a flammable surface.

MOLTEN BEAM

The pyrokinic projects from his hands a blindingly bright beam of sun-hot energy. At the touch of this blazing ray, plasteel liquefies and flesh bursts into ash.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Willpower attack test

Range: 5m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker makes an attack against a target in range and line of sight by making a Willpower attack test. The attack has a rate of attack of 1, and uses the following weapon profile:

MOLTEN BEAM				
<i>MOUNTED</i>	<i>5M+PL</i>	RoF —	<i>2D10 (E)</i>	
PEN PL	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>MELT</i>				

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

In one of the purest displays of his power, the psyker ignites his enemies, burning them alive. The target of this power usually senses a growing sensation of heat just before combusting; if strong of will, he can try to bring his body back under his control before it erupts in flame.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Type: Attack

Time: 1 AP

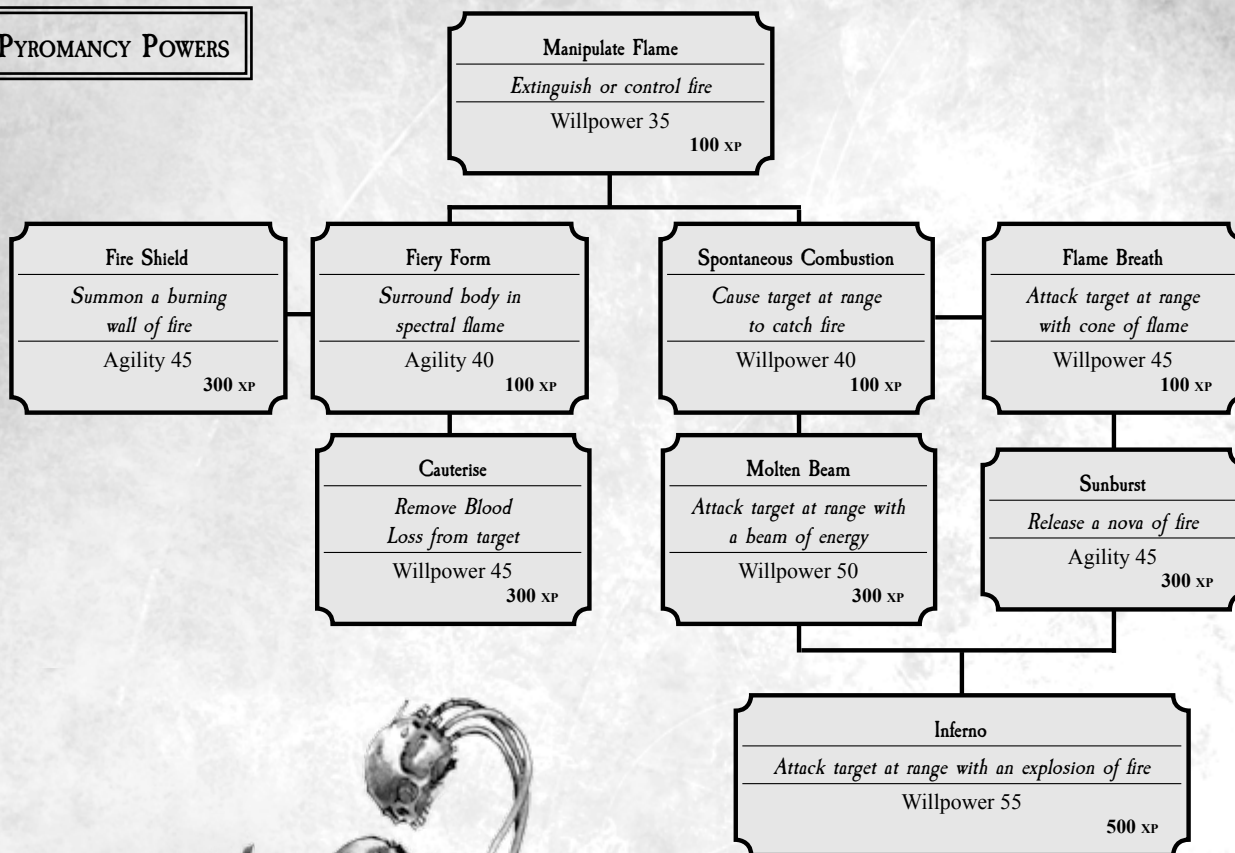
Focus Power: +10 Opposed Willpower test

Range: 20m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, he gains the Burning (PL) condition.

PYROMANCY POWERS



SUNBURST

The psyker releases a nova of fiery energy from his body. As the psyker focusses his power, a blazing aura coalesces around him, growing brighter and hotter before rapidly expanding outward in all directions. As the calm at the eye of the firestorm, the psyker is untouched, while all around him is reduced to ash and cinder.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Agility 45

Type: Attack

Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: 3m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: All characters in range of the power are struck by an attack with a rate of attack of 1, degrees of success equal to the DoS gained on the focus power test, and the following weapon profile:

SUNBURST				
<i>MOUNTED</i>	<i>3M x PL</i>	<i>RoF —</i>	<i>1d10+2+PL (E)</i>	
<i>PEN 0</i>	<i>CLIP —</i>	<i>RLD —</i>	<i>WT —</i>	<i>AVL —</i>
SPECIAL: <i>FLAME (2)</i>				

TABLE 6-3: PYROMANCY PERILS OF THE WARP

2d10	EFFECT
2 or lower	Cinderflare: Sparks snap into existence within 2d10 metres around the psyker, setting everyone's hair on end (and possibly on fire for a brief moment) and leaving sooty ashes on clothes, furniture, and nearby objects.
3-4	Hungering Sparks: Seeds of flame drift from the psyker's hands, eyes, or mouth, seeking a surface on which to take root. Each character within 1d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker) must make a +30 Agility test or suffer the Burning (1) condition.
5-6	Warp Static: The air around the psyker crackles with writhing energy that threatens to combust at any moment. They psyker adds +1 to the result of his rolls on Perils of the Warp tables until the end of the encounter.
7	Hoarfrost: The psyker pulls all ambient heat in the area into his body, causing the temperature to plummet, and coating everything within the area in ice. The area within 2d10 metres of the psyker becomes difficult terrain for 1d5 rounds.
8	Darkness of the Soul: All sources of light within 2d10 metres of the psyker suddenly vanish. This area is filled with disturbing blackness for 1d5 rounds. Any character who enters this area must make a -10 Fear (Cowering) test. Any character inside this area when the light returns (or who leaves it) must make a -10 Agility test or suffer the Blind condition for 1 round.
9-10	Leaping Flames: Fire dances forth from the psyker's hands, spilling out of control and igniting anything or anyone flammable. Each character within 2d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker himself) must make a -20 Agility test or ignite and suffer the Burning (2) condition.
11	Crackling Energy: A thunderhead of Warp energy rages around the psyker, warning those nearby of the coming storm. The psyker must make a -30 Willpower test. If he succeeds, add +2 to the result of the psyker's further rolls any Perils of the Warp tables until the end of the encounter. If he fails, add +3 to his rolls on these tables until the end of the encounter instead.
12	Mind Sear: Scorching fire bursts from the psyker's skull, creating a blazing pillar that spouts from his head. The psyker suffers 1d5 Insanity. If the psyker suffers a mental trauma because of this Insanity, he automatically suffers the Kleptomania trauma (see page 253), except that he feels an overwhelming compulsion to burn any item he pilfers.
13	Foul Soot: Where the psyker treads, a dread pall of ash follows. Until the end of the encounter, whenever a character within 30 metres of the psyker gains the Burning condition or increases the value of this condition, that character suffers 1 Corruption.
14-15	Warp Burn: The psyker ignites and suffers the Burning (1d5) condition. Each other character within 3d10 metres of the psyker must make a -30 Agility test or catch fire as well and suffer the Burning (3) condition.
16	Voracious Tongues of fire: Blazes of hungry fire flare around the psyker. Until the end of the encounter, when a character within 30 metres of the psyker fails an Agility test by three or more degrees of failure, he suffers the Burning (3) condition.
17-18	Greedy Warfire: Flames around the psyker begin to burn darkly, blazing with the wicked radiance of the Warp. These fires become even more avaricious than normal, seeing to consume all life as they burn the world to ash. Until the end of the encounter, whenever a character within 30 metres of the psyker suffers energy damage, he suffers the Burning (1d5) condition.
20	Warp Smoke: Foul smoke billows forth from the psyker and anything he has set ablaze in that encounter, choking anyone who inhales it. Each character within 30 metres of the psyker suffers Agility Decay (2d10) and 1 Corruption.
21	Chill of the Grave: A deathly chill falls over the area, freezing liquids, turning vapour to frost, and assailing the lungs of all. The area within 3d10 metres of the psyker becomes difficult terrain for 1d10 rounds. Whenever a character takes an action within this area during this time, he suffers 1 fatigue and Agility Decay (1d5).
22	Cinderstorm: Burning particles fall from the psyker, leaving a wake of fire wherever he treads as a portent of fiery doom. Add +5 to the result of the psyker's further rolls on Perils of the Warp tables until the end of the encounter.
23	Soul Sear: Blistering Warp energy shoots from the skies in a piercing pillar. Each character within 2d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker himself) must make a -30 Agility test or suffer 2d10 energy damage to a randomly selected location.
24	Fires of Madness: The flames around the psyker take on a blueish hue, burning flesh and leaving madness behind in its place. Until the end of the encounter, whenever a character within 30 metres of the psyker gains the Burning condition or increases the value of this condition, he suffers 1d5 Insanity. If a character suffers a Mental Trauma as a result of this Insanity, he automatically receives the Phobic Flight (Fire) result (see page 253).
25-26	Cackling Balefire: Orbs of ghostly flame burst into existence around the psyker, their mocking mouths dripping fiery trails as they follow him. The psyker suffers a -30 penalty to Stealth tests until the end of the encounter. Add +7 to the result of the psyker's future rolls Perils of the Warp tables until the end of the encounter.
27	Daemonic Flames: Daemonic faces form within the psyker's fire, racing forth to sear the souls of those nearby. Each character within 5d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker) gains the Burning (1d10) condition and suffers 1d5 Corruption.
28	Cataclysmic Blast: The psyker explodes, a wall of flame rushing out from him and searing all it touches. Each character within 3d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker himself) suffers 2d10 energy damage to a randomly selected location and is knocked Prone. The psyker's equipment is also destroyed, the scraps of his armour and other items raining down in blazing bits around him.
29	Powder Keg: The psyker instantly combusts, his mind straining with all its might to contain the power trapped within. Lightning roils around him as the tempest mounts. The psyker ignites and suffers the Burning (1d10) condition. Add +10 to the result of the psyker's further rolls Perils of the Warp tables until the end of the encounter.
30 or higher	Soul Pyre: Spectral flames shoot forth from the target's eyes and mouth, consuming him from within as his very soul burns away. The psyker is instantly and definitively annihilated, but the ball of fire continues to grow into what seems a small sun, rapidly expanding and carbonising anything it swallows. All terrain is incinerated, leaving behind a smoking pit filled with moulten slag. Each character within 1d100 metres suffers 2d10 energy damage to a randomly selected location, ignoring armour and Toughness bonus, and suffers the Burning (2d10) condition.

TELEKINESIS

Telekinesis is the ability to manipulate the physical world with mental power. The pursuit of this discipline offers many versatile abilities to psykers, allowing them to affect their environment far beyond the reach of their physical selves. Some telekines come to view the universe very differently from others, as the distinction between the mental and physical realms becomes less and less distinct in their own mind.

ASSAIL

The psyker reaches out with his mind to pluck up whatever objects are available and hurl them at his target. If there is nothing suitable nearby, the psyker can direct his mental energies directly at his foe, pounding him with bolts of invisible force.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: +10 Willpower Attack test

Range: 20m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker makes an attack against a target in range and line of sight by making a Willpower attack test. The attack has a rate of attack of 1, and uses the following weapon profile:

ASSAIL				
<i>MOUNTED</i>	<i>20M+PL</i>	RoF —	<i>1D10+5+PL (I)</i>	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: <i>CONCUSSIVE (0)</i>				

CRUSH

Rather than using his abilities to turn inanimate objects into weapons, the telekine focuses directly on his enemy to squeeze him in an invisible fist of power. Unless he can repel the psychokinetic assault, the target is bludgeoned horribly. Even should he survive, the overwhelming psychic force nonetheless pins him place under a tremendous weight.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight, who opposes this power with a Toughness test. If the target fails, he suffers a single, unavoidable hit to the body hit location that deals 1d10 + PL impact damage with a penetration of 1. Additionally, the target is Immobilised for 1 round.

GATE OF INFINITY

Though it offers no physical attack, this power is nonetheless one of the most dangerous uses of the Telekinesis discipline. With it, the psyker tears open a hole in space so that he might pass through the Warp. Others might refuse to pass through the unreal pathway, however, fearful of any proximity to the Immaterium and its terrible denizens.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 50

Type: Utility

Time: 5 Minutes

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: 1km x PL

Sustained: 3 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a point anywhere within 5m x PL, and opens a gate at that location. He then chooses a point in range of the power, and opens a second gate at that location. The psyker must be aware of the location in which he is opening the second gate, either having visited it before, seen it from afar, or studied it on a map.

Each of these gates is a circular portal wreathed in Warp energy with a radius equal to the psy level of the power in metres. Anything that passes through one of the gates comes out the other as if the two areas of space were seamlessly connected. There are no restrictions on what can pass through the gate, provided it is small enough to fit through. However, each time a character travels through the gate or passes or throws an inanimate object through the gate, that character suffers 1 corruption. The gates remain linked in this way for the duration of the power. When the power stops, both gates collapse, leaving no physical trace of their existence behind.

Once the power stops, the psyker suffers fatigue equal to half his PL (rounded up) due to the strain of keeping the gates open.

OBJURATION MECHANICUM

With this power, the psyker reaches into and disrupts the inner workings of nearby machines, jamming gears, blowing fuses, and severing power couplings. Those who rely on technology find themselves bereft of their support and helpless.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40

Type: Utility

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: +10 Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a point in range and line of sight. A haywire field (see page 134) is created at that location with a radius equal to the psy level of the power. The psyker does not roll 1d10 to determine the level of the Haywire field; the psy level of this power is used in place of the roll, with a psy level higher than 10 counting as a 10.

SHOCKWAVE

The psyker uses his unnatural control of the physical world to amplify a sound to impossible levels. From clapping his hands together, stamping on a hab floor, or even shouting, the psyker creates a sound that transforms into a powerful shockwave, bursting eardrums and knocking people off their feet.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: 3m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker releases a concussive blast from his body. All characters in range of the power are struck by an attack with a rate of attack of 1, degrees of success equal to the DoS gained on the focus power test, and the following weapon profile:

SHOCKWAVE				
MOUNTED	3M x PL	RoF —	1D10+PL (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (2)				

TELEKINE DOME

The psyker shields himself and nearby allies with a dome of mental force, large enough to surround his group and protect them from harm. The protective shield deflects bullets and lasblasts, sending them ricocheting in all directions.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45

Type: Utility

Time: 4 AP

Focus Power: +0 Willpower

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: 2 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a point in range and line of sight, and creates a domed shield of energy centred on that point with a radius of PL metres. The shield is transparent, and characters and objects can pass through it unimpeded. All characters inside the dome count as being protected by cover with an armour value equal to half this power's psy level on all locations. This shield can be damaged just like normal cover by damage that exceeds the shield's armour value (see page 203). If the shield is reduced to 0 armour points, the power stops, and is no longer sustained.

TELEKINE SHIELD

Using the energy of the Warp, the psyker erects a wall of tangible force that moves with him. The shimmering barrier stops bullets and deflects blades, but as more and more kinetic energy is directed at him, the psyker's mental shield wears down.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Intelligence 35

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: +20 Willpower

Range: Self

Sustained: Free Action

Effect: For the duration of the power, all of the psyker's hit locations count as being protected by cover with an armour value equal to half this power's psy level. This shield can be damaged just like normal cover by damage that exceeds the shield's armour value (see page 203). If the shield is reduced to 0 armour points, the power stops, and is no longer sustained.

TELEKINETIC CONTROL

The telekine calls on his powers to reach out farther than his flesh can extend, distorting reality to grasp objects with eldritch hands. With invisible fingers perhaps only betrayed with frosted rime or whispered breezes, few can notice his subtle manipulations.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 35

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

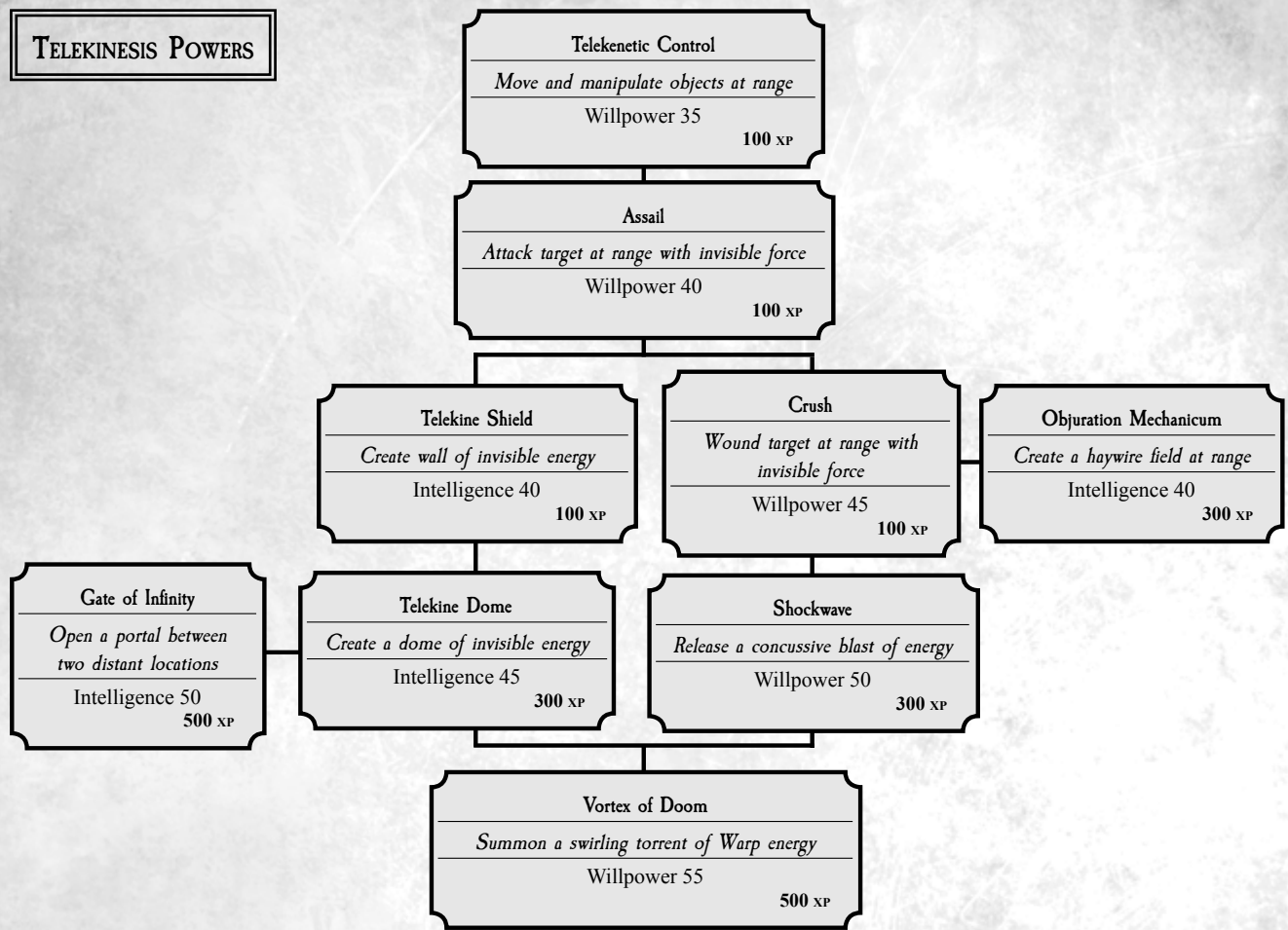
Focus Power: +20 Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses an object in range and line of sight with a weight no greater than 2 x PL kilograms. Each round, he can move the object up to 2 metres in any direction. If the object ever leaves the range of the power, the power ends.

TELEKINESIS POWERS



VORTEX OF DOOM

In perhaps the ultimate display of his mastery of both the physical world and the Warp, the psyker tears open a hole twixt the two. Around the roiling vortex, the laws of physical space are undone as the ravenous predations of Chaos devour all in the vicinity. This power is extraordinarily dangerous, and not only to the psyker's enemies. The Vortex of Doom feeds on itself and can sustain its power without need of the psyker.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 55

Type: Attack

Time: 4 AP

Focus Power: -10 Willpower

Range: 5m x PL

Sustained: 2 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a point in range and line of sight, and creates a vortex of energy centred on that point with a radius of 2 metres. Any character touching the vortex at the end of the psyker's turn are struck by an attack with a rate of attack of 1, degrees of success equal to the psy level of this power, and the following weapon profile:

VORTEX OF DOOM				
MOUNTED	5M X PL	RoF —	2D10+(2xPL) (E)	
PEN †	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: SAPPING, †PEN=CURRENT VORTEX RADIUS				

The psyker cannot voluntarily stop sustaining this power. Instead, at the beginning of each turn the psyker is sustaining to vortex, he must make Willpower test with a -5 penalty for each metre in the vortex's current radius. If he passes the test, he may perform one of the following actions:

- Increase the vortex's radius by one metre.
- Decrease the vortex's radius by one metre.
- Move the vortex any direction a number of metres up to the psy level of the power.

If the psyker fails the test, or if he is unable to make the test due to other circumstances, the vortex's radius increases by one metre and it moves a number of metres equal to the psy level of the power in a random direction (use the Scatter Diagram on page 205).

If the vortex's radius ever decreases to zero metres, the power ends and the vortex disappears. If the vortex's radius ever grows larger than the psy level of this power, it explodes, ending the power and destroying the vortex. All characters within a number of metres of the centre of the vortex equal to 2 x PL are struck by an attack with a rate of attack of 1, degrees of success equal to the radius of the psy level of the power, and using the Vortex of Doom profile listed above. This attack hits the psyker regardless of his proximity to the exploding vortex as the energy of the Warp he was channelling lashes back into him.

TABLE 6-4: TELEKINESIS PERILS OF THE WARP

2d10	EFFECT
2 or lower	Haunting Breeze: A light wind whips within 3d10 metres around the psyker, hurling light objects such as leaves and sheets of paper into the air and causing the clothes and hair of everyone around him to billow dramatically.
5–6	The Earth Protests: The ground beneath the psyker's feet grows quarrelsome, rattling all who have the audacity to stand up on it. Each character within 2d10 metres (including the psyker) must make a +20 Agility test or be Immobilised for 1 round.
7–8	Warp Tempo: Time around the psyker begins fluctuating inconsistently, stagnating in some places and accelerating in others. Each character within 1d10+5 metres (including the psyker) must make a –10 Intelligence test to adjust to the unnatural pace. Each character who succeeds gains a +30 bonus to Evasion tests for the next 1d5 rounds.
9	Spatial Lurch: The world seems to stretch for a several seconds as if made of an elastic substance before hurling individuals and unsecured objects into new locations at a dizzying velocity. Each character within 1d10 metres (including the psyker) is hurled 3d10 metres in a randomly chosen horizontal direction (see the Scatter Diagram on page 205).
10–11	Falling Upwards: Gravity lapses, and people and objects tumble skyward. Each character within 2d10 metres (including the psyker) is immediately hurled 1d5 metres into the air before crashing back to earth with a crunch.
12	Mind Maze: Until the end of the encounter, the psyker's imagined mindscape spills over into reality, and walls of force solidify in the 2d10 metres around him. The psyker suffers 2 fatigue. Until the end of the encounter, this area counts as difficult terrain (see page 204) and provides 2 APs of cover to anyone within.
13–14	Shearing Thoughts: Invisible blades hack into anyone near the psyker, slicing apart bodies as he looks on in horror (or possibly manic glee). Each other character within 1d10+5 metres of the psyker suffers 1d10 rending damage to a randomly selected location that ignores armour. The psyker suffers 2 Corruption for each character he wounds this way.
15	Tech Scorn: With a crackle of static, the psyker's mental disruption causes all machine-spirits to flee the area. Complex machines within 3d10 metres shut down and become Damaged. Each character with one or more cybernetic replacements or implants suffers 1d10+5 energy damage to the body location that ignores armour. Ranged weapons in the area become Jammed.
16	Psychic Mirror: The psyker's power twists, mercilessly assailing him instead of his intended target. Its effects resolve as normal, but target the psyker himself instead of his original target. If the power is beneficial, it inflicts 1d10+5 energy damage to a randomly chosen location that ignores armour instead of granting its normal effect.
17	The Furies: The psyker's unchecked emotions roil into existence in the form of a clawed hand that grasps a randomly chosen being within 1d10 metres of the psyker (potentially including the psyker) and slams it against the ground. The target suffers 2d10 impact damage to the head location with the Concussive (2) quality. If the psyker is not the target, he suffers 1d10 Corruption.
18	Banshee Shriek: The psyker looses an unearthly wail that cracks mirrors, pierces eardrums, and chills the soul. Each other character within 4d10 metres must make a –30 Toughness test or be Deafened for 1d5 rounds and suffer 1d5 fatigue.
19	Ethereal Storm: Bolts of mind-force fly from the psyker's head. Each other character within 2d10+5 suffers 1d10+5 Impact damage to the body location and is knocked Prone. The psyker suffers 1d5 Corruption for each character he wounds this way.
20–21	Forceful Impact: A randomly selected large object in the area (or a chunk of a large object) hurls high into the air; 1d10 rounds later, the object lands 2d10 metres in a randomly selected direction (see page 204) from where it was originally launched, inflicting 2d10+5 Impact damage to a randomly selected location of each character caught beneath it.
22	Shadow Killer: The psyker's shadow wells up, rising off the ground into an orb of darkness that cracks like an egg. An eerily familiar figure slides forth from the oozing umbra, screaming curses upon the psyker for some unidentified misdeed or betrayal. The shadow has the profile of one randomly chosen character within 4d10 metres of the psyker (potentially including the psyker himself) and takes its turn immediately after the psyker, making every effort to kill him. The figure vanishes after 1d10+2 rounds or when slain; if it kills the psyker, it gloats over his corpse for the remainder of its time.
23	Chronological Incontinence: Inky hands reach through a seam in reality, grabbing a randomly chosen character (potentially including the psyker) within 4d10 metres and pulling into a prison of time outside of reality for 1d10 rounds. When he returns, he has aged 1d10 years, suffers 1d10 Corruption, and remembers being somewhere that he steadfastly refuses to discuss.
24	Mass Reflection: The psyker attempts to stammer out a word of warning as he feels his power rebel. Bolts of energy fly from his mind, striking everyone except the individual he intended to affect. The power's effects resolve as normal, but affects all targets within 2d10 metres of the psyker (including himself) except for his original target. If the power is beneficial, it deals 1d10+5 Energy damage to a randomly chosen location that ignores armour instead of granting its normal effect.
25	Mind Realm: The psyker instinctively reshapes the world around him to match his imagined mindscape. The aesthetics depend on the individual and his mood, but the 4d10 metres around the psyker are difficult terrain to all other characters (see page 204). Each other character must make a –30 Willpower test upon entering this area or suffer Insanity equal to the psyker's Cor-B.
28	Gravity Unbound: The bonds of earth are severed with a jolt, and gravity within 1d100 metres reverses for 1d10 rounds. All creatures and unattended objects lift off the ground at a rate of 5 metres per round. At the end of this time, reality reasserts itself and everything comes crashing down. Characters who fall this way suffer falling damage as normal (see page 204).
29	Brain Lighting: A blast of psychic energy rips its way out of the psyker's skull. The psyker is Stunned for 1d10 rounds and suffers Intelligence Decay (2d10). The nearest character within 30 metres must make a –30 Willpower test or suffer a wound to the head location with an energy effect of 2d10+5. If a character fails this test, the psychic arc continues on to the next character within 30 metres who has not already suffered the attack.
30 or higher	Warp Rift: A point of fathomless darkness appears in the psyker's forehead, rapidly expanding until it opens into a full-fledged portal to the Immaterium. The psyker is Stunned for 1d10 rounds. Until the rift is closed (almost invariably through the psyker's death), 2d10 Chaos Furies (see page 306) or other appropriate Daemons rip their way into reality via his mental causeway at the beginning of each of his turns and set about wreaking destruction on anyone nearby.

TELEPATHY

Telepathy focusses on contacting and controlling the minds of others. Unlike certain other disciplines, Telepathy does not involve the psyker exerting his will on the physical world; its powers are confined to the mental realm. Consequently, this discipline has few powers that are directly suited to combat. However, with the ability to cloud and steer the minds of others, a savvy telepath can settle a fight without ever drawing his weapon.

DOMINATE

Demonstrating the superiority of his mutant mind, the telepath subverts his foe's will and forces him to act against his every inclination. Few psychic abilities are so rightly feared.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 50

Type: Attack

Time: 4 AP

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 5m x PL

Sustained: 4 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight with a Willpower characteristic no higher than 10 x PL who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, he must follow the command; examples might include "flee," "tell me what cult you are a part of," or "attack your friend" though the GM has final say over applicable commands. If the command is a potentially suicidal act, the target receives a +20 to his Willpower test. When used in structured time, the command must be achievable in a single Round.

ERASURE

With a surgeon's skill, the psyker opens up his target's mind and slices away a memory, removing it forever. This power is of immense utility to an Inquisitor's work, particularly one who wishes to operate discreetly without the usual mess of an execution.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 40

Type: Utility

Time: 1 Minute

Focus Power: Opposed Willpower test

Range: 5m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a single foe in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If he fails, the psyker removes a memory of a recent event from the target's mind. The psyker can only remove an amount of time from the target's memory up to 10 x PL minutes, and the event removed cannot have occurred more than PL hours prior to the use of this power. The enemy is left with a gap in his memory, with no recollection of what occurred during that time.

HALLUCINATION

The human mind's grasp on reality is fragile and easily manipulated with sufficient power. With his own psychic senses, the telepath touches the psyche of his target and severs its connection to normal existence.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 45

Type: Attack

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, he must roll 1d10 and compare the result to **Table 5-4 Hallucinogenic Effects** on page 135, suffering any effects listed there for a number of rounds equal to half the psy level of this power. The psyker may add or subtract up to half the psy level of this power from the value of the roll after it is made.

INVISIBILITY

Clouding enemy minds, the psyker obscures his allies from their foes' senses. Though eyes and other senses detect them as normal, their minds do not perceive them save for a slight distortion in their vision.

Experience Cost: 300xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 45

Type: Utility

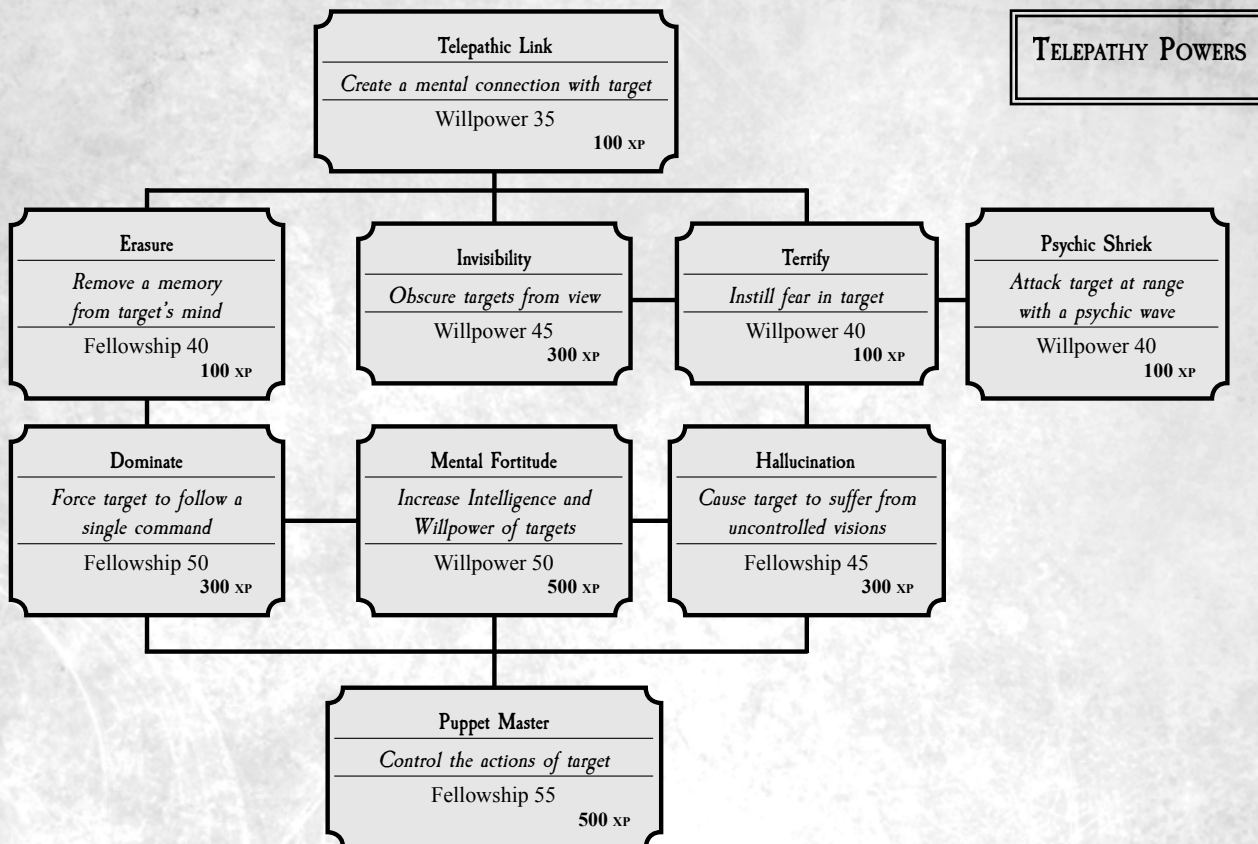
Time: 3 AP

Focus Power: -10 Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: 2 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a number of targets in range up to the psy level of this power (this can include himself). The targets all become partially invisible for the duration of the power. Light appears to distort slightly around them, leaving behind a faint shimmer that can still be detected by those with keen senses. All character affected by this power gain a bonus to all Stealth tests equal to +10 x PL, and all attack tests made against them suffer a penalty equal to -5 x PL.



MENTAL FORTITUDE

Drawing from the limitless potential of the Warp, the psyker augments the mental abilities of his targets, providing defence against the stresses of combat, the terrors of the galaxy, and even the psychic assaults of enemy psykers.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 50

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Willpower test

Range: 3m x PL

Sustained: 1 AP

Effect: The psyker chooses a number of targets in range up to the psy level of this power (this can include himself). The targets all increase their Intelligence and Willpower by 5 x half this power's psy level for the duration of the power.

PSYCHIC SHRIEK

Drawing a deep soul-breath, the psyker unleashes a rippling Warp tide that sears the souls and blasts the minds of those in its path. The violent psychic wave is enough to overwhelm and shut down the minds of those it strikes, while those not slain outright are left reeling.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 40

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: Willpower Attack test

Range: 5m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker makes an attack against a target in range and line of sight by making a Willpower attack test. The attack has a rate of attack of 1, and uses the following weapon profile:

PSYCHIC SHRIEK				
MOUNTED	5M x PL	RoF —	1D10+PL (1)	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (0), SPRAY				

PUPPET MASTER

In the ultimate expression of telepathic power, the psyker utterly crushes his target's will, locking him away in a dark corner of his own mind to take complete control of his body. After recovering their wits, those subjected to this power are often struck with bouts of insecurity, never certain again if their actions are truly their own.

Experience Cost: 500xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 55

Type: Attack

Time: 4 AP

Focus Power: -10 Opposed Willpower test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: Special

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight with a Willpower characteristic no higher than 10 x PL who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, he is controlled by the psyker like a puppet. For the duration of the power, the psyker may divide his AP on his turn between performing actions himself and making his target perform actions. The target uses his own characteristics and skills, but has the Weakened (1) condition for the duration of the power. If at any point the psyker would make the target perform a potentially suicidal action, the target can attempt an opposed Willpower test to try and break free of the control, ending the power.



TELEPATHIC LINK

In this, the simplest yet purest expression of his powers, the telepath establishes a mental connection to another, linking their minds and allowing him to receive or transmit thoughts. When stealth is essential, such silent communication is ideal.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Willpower 35

Type: Utility

Time: 1 minute

Focus Power: -10 Opposed Willpower test

Range: 20m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a person in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, the psyker can either read the person's thoughts or send them a message.

- **Thought Reading:** The psyker reads the target's thoughts. The nature of the information gained from the target's mind is up to the GM's discretion. The more degrees of success scored on the focus power test, the more information is gained overall. The higher the PL of the power, the more secretive the information gained.

- **Thought Sending:** The psyker causes a message to appear in the target's mind as if he has just heard it spoken aloud. The message can be no longer than 5 x PL seconds long.

If the target of this power is aware of what the psyker is trying to do, he can voluntarily fail the opposed Willpower test, counting as having rolled a 100.

TERRIFY

Turning an eldritch key, the psyker unlocks his target's deepest and strongest fears, exposing him to the worst recesses of his own psyche. These nightmarish visions are enough to drive even the strongest helplessly mad.

Experience Cost: 100xp

Prerequisites: Fellowship 40

Type: Attack

Time: 1 AP

Focus Power: +10 Opposed Willpower test

Range: 10 x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker chooses a single target in range and line of sight who opposes this power with a Willpower test. If the target fails, he counts as having failed a Fear (Cowering) test with degrees of failure equal to the psy level of this power.

TABLE 6-5: TELEPATHY PERILS OF THE WARP

2d10	EFFECT
2 or lower	Memory Worm: Everyone within 4d10 metres of the psyker (including the psyker) forgets something trivial, such as the name of a brief acquaintance, the scent of a particular place, or an exact schedule of a transit post.
3–4	Fleeting Shadows: The psyker subconsciously projects flitting shades in the corners of the eyes of all around him. Each other character within 3d10 metres suffers Fellowship Decay (1d5) from the constant distraction of these ill-defined shapes.
5–6	Truths Untold: The psyker learns a horrible secret about a randomly chosen character within 50 metres and suffers 1 Insanity. Further, that character becomes aware of the psyker's intrusion, and knows what the psyker has learned. If there are no other characters within 50 metres, the psyker instead learns a horrible secret about himself and suffers 1d5 Corruption instead.
7	Synaptic Overload: The psyker's mind begins to scour the brains of everyone around him, causing synapses to misfire and burn out. For the next 1d10 rounds, whenever the psyker uses a Telepathy psychic power to communicate with or affect another character, roll 1d10. On a result of 9, that character suffers Fellowship Decay (1d10) and 1d5 Insanity.
8	Gullibility: The psyker's power backfires, causing him to become extremely susceptible to suggestion by others. For the next 1d5 hours, the psyker suffers Fellowship Decay (1d10) and suffers a –30 penalty to Opposed Interaction tests.
9–10	Psychic Chains: The psyker's mind becomes bound to all nearby, unable to shut out their emotional suffering. Until the end of the encounter, whenever any other character within 10 metres of the psyker suffers Insanity, the psyker suffers 1 Insanity.
11	Lost in Thoughts: Ambient thoughts wash over the psyker, flooding him with unwanted insight. The psyker learns what each person within 1d10 metres is currently thinking and suffers 1 Insanity for each mind he reads this way.
13	Chorus of the Dying: The ghosts of the fallen assemble before the psyker, wailing and gnashing their teeth in an escalating dirge. Until the end of the encounter, whenever a character dies within 50 metres of the psyker, the psyker suffers 1d5 Insanity.
14	Psychic Cage: The psyker becomes locked in the prison of his mind, taking on the role of both zealous jailor and penitent heretic. He must make a –30 Fellowship test to appeal to his own better nature to escape self-inflicted chastisement. If he fails, he is Stunned for a number of rounds equal to his Corruption bonus and suffers that amount of Insanity.
15–16	Shared Delusion: The psyker falls prey to a mad delusion, behaving erratically. The psyker rolls on Table 5-4: Hallucinogenic Effects (see page 135). Each other character within 2d10 metres must make a –30 Willpower test or also suffer the hallucination.
17	Droning Eternity: The psyker's mind expands, briefly trying to process the untold billions of voices living, breathing, and dying around him. The psyker suffers 1d5 Insanity and 1 fatigue, and cannot remove fatigue, even through resting, for 1d5 days.
18	Vice Versa: The psyker and a randomly chosen living being (which cannot be a Daemon, psychic blank, or other "soulless" creature) in line of sight swap bodies for 1d10 rounds. Each one retains his Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Intelligence, Perception, Willpower, and Fellowship characteristics, but uses the Strength, Toughness, Agility, and other characteristics of the new body. At the end of the effect, each mind returns to its own body. Each character suffers 1d5 Insanity and feels uncomfortable looking the other in the eye for 1d5 days. If either body is slain, the effect ends; the survivor returns to his body, suffering 2d10 Insanity. If there are no living beings in range, the psyker falls Unconscious for 1d10 rounds and suffers 1d5 Corruption as he wanders the Warp.
20	Out of Sight: Darkness swallows the psyker, pulling him into a shadowy realm for several terrifying moments. The psyker becomes utterly invisible to all creatures within 30 metres for the next 3d10 rounds and suffers 1d5 Insanity.
21	Daemonic Assassin: The psyker's mental intrusion into the Immaterium provokes the wrath of the denizens within, and a Chaos Fury (see page 306) or other appropriate Daemon blazes into existence to smite him. The Daemon acts immediately after the psyker's turn ends, focusing only on the psyker until either is slain and ignoring all others.
22	Memory Leech: Each other character within 4d10 metres of the psyker forgets a crucial fact (such as a pass-code, the name of a dear friend, or what he was doing). The lost thoughts flood the psyker's mind, and he suffers 2 Insanity for each one he acquires.
24	Warp Whispers: Daemonic voices intone formless words into the ears of each other character within 3d10 metres. Each of these characters suffers 1d5 Insanity and learns the psyker's darkest secret, that which he most wishes to conceal.
25	Descent into Darkness: The psyker and each character within 1d10+10 metres become trapped within the psyker's mindscape. They are all Stunned until the effect is broken, but each character (other than the psyker) may make a –30 Fellowship test on his turn to try to threaten, cajole, or otherwise convince the spasming psyker to release them. Each time a character fails this test, he suffers an amount of Insanity equal to his degrees of failure. When a character succeeds on this test or if all other trapped characters fail the test at least once, the effect ends and the trapped minds escape.
26	Out of Mind: Each other character within 2d10 metres must make a –30 Willpower test. Any character who fails this test forgets everything he knows about the psyker and suffers 1d10+5 Insanity as the memories rip free from his mind.
27	Ego Crisis: For 1d10 rounds, each living creature (including the psyker) within 2d10+5 meters temporarily swaps minds with the nearest living creature in the same way as the "Vice Versa" result (chosen randomly if two or more creatures are equidistant). If a mind cannot find an unoccupied body, that character falls Unconscious for 1d10 rounds and suffers 1d5 Corruption.
28	Identity Erosion: The psyker's self-image is obliterated away by the Warp's roiling tides. The psyker suffers 1d10+5 Insanity and loses all memories. His skills and training remain on a subconscious level, and he can still use them—but does not recall why.
29	Dark Summoning: The psyker's mind extends too far into the Immaterium, and something follows it as it returns to the mortal realm. 1d5 Chaos Furies (see page 306) or other appropriate Daemons rip free of the psyker's mind. They act immediately once the psyker's turn ends, each one attacking the closest foe. The psyker suffers 1d10 Corruption and Fellowship Decay (2d10).
30 or higher	Daemonhost: The psyker's Corruption is set to 100 and he is permanently possessed, becoming a Daemonhost. He immediately rolls 3 times on Table 8-7: Malignancies with a +15 modifier, gaining the The Warp Made Manifest result in addition to any other effects. This possession can either overt, with the new Daemonhost attacking his former comrades, or the Game Master and the possessed psyker's player can conspire to bring about the utter ruin of the other Acolytes through more subtle means.



CHAPTER VII: COMBAT

Life in the Imperium is filled with brutal violence, especially for those devoted to the preservation of Mankind. The galaxy abounds with threats ranging from heretical thugs to antagonistic xenos races to Daemons of Chaos eager to devour the souls of every human alive. Acolytes seeking to eradicate them must be ready to fight. Combat is an ever-present part of their duties, and even the least warlike of Acolytes must always be ready for battle. Cultists frequently spring out in ambush during what was hoped to be a secretive investigation, loyal enforcers might turn on the Acolytes they are escorting, and heretical powers are always ready to eliminate Acolytes should their true identities be uncovered. To fight is to survive, and characters who master combat stay alive far longer than those who do not. This chapter presents the rules for combat in **DARK HERESY**, including structured time, actions, environmental effects, wounds, and conditions, plus rules for fighting with vehicles.

STRUCTURED TIME

"The candles are burning low. We must act quickly before the ritual grows deeper."

—Tech-Adept Mu Grentille

In combat (or during other time sensitive tasks), every second counts and the order in which things happen is crucial. While the members of a warband actually spend most of their time in investigation and other non-combat pursuits, the time spent fighting a xenos cult or chasing escaped heretics often defines their existence. These periods of exploding grenades and reality-tearing Warp intrusions are mad scrambles where the Acolytes' training and practice come to the fore, and their teamwork is tested to the extreme.

To help maintain order in the chaos of battle and other events where time is of the essence, a combat encounter is broken down into rounds, turns, and actions.

TACTICAL COMBAT MAPS (OPTIONAL)

During large combats, some players might want visual references to help keep track of enemy positions, as well as their own. The GM can accomplish this by sketching out simple overhead maps on paper, or using pre-made terrain mats that can be drawn on with dry-erase markers. These mats usually have squares grids or hex patterns to make measuring distances quick and easy. Tactical combat maps can be created in any scale, and some roleplayers like to combine large-scale maps with miniatures where each map square represents one square metre. While tactical maps can be very useful, they are not necessary to play **DARK HERESY**. Many roleplayers prefer to use rich narrative descriptions to allow fellow players to simply imagine all the action. This requires players to keep a snapshot of the relative positions of all combatants in their heads, but it also allows for greater freedom in detailing the events of a combat. There is no “right” method though, and any method that works best for the entire group is indeed the best.

ROUNDS

A round consists of each character in the encounter taking one turn. Although the characters each take their turns in an order in the game system, it is assumed that they are all acting more or less simultaneously in the game world. Each round represents approximately five seconds, regardless of how many characters are involved.

TURNS

Each character involved in an encounter takes one turn each round. During a character’s turn, he can perform a number of actions. All of the turns in each round are performed in a specific order determined by initiative at the start of combat.

ACTIONS

On his turn, a character has four action points that he can use to perform a number of actions. Actions represent tasks the character might want to undertake, from moving down the hall or into cover to firing his gun at the enemy. When performing multiple actions, the character can execute them in any order he chooses.

COMBAT OVERVIEW

Combat is usually resolved using structured time divided into rounds, turn, and actions. Each character, including non-player characters, takes one turn each round. Although the action during combat is happening nearly simultaneously in the game world, the different turns during a round are taken in a specific order to keep things organised. The order of these turns is determined by initiative at the beginning of a combat encounter.

When a new combat begins, follow these steps to determine what happens:

STEP 1: SURPRISE

At the beginning of combat, any characters who are unaware of their opponents count as being surprised. All characters who are not surprised gain 2 action points at the beginning of the combat that they can use to perform reactions before their first turn; surprised characters do not. This happens only once at the very beginning of combat.

STEP 2: SET THE SCENE

Before the characters can begin taking their turns, the players need to be aware of everything going on in the scene. The Game Master outlines the scenario, or at least the parts that the characters can observe: the combatants they face, the relative positions of everyone involved in the combat, and the environment they are fighting in.

STEP 3: DETERMINE INITIATIVE

To determine the order in which the characters take their turns during each round, all characters involved in the combat make an Initiative roll. The Game Master rolls for all Non-Player Characters.

STEP 4: COMBATANTS TAKE TURNS

Starting with the character highest in the initiative order, each character takes a turn. The character currently taking his turn is known as the active character. During his turn, the active character can perform a number of actions. Once that character has finished all of his action, the next character in the initiative order becomes the active character and takes his turn. This continues until all characters have taken their turns.

STEP 5: ROUND ENDS

Once each character has taken a turn, the round is over. Any lingering effects that specify a duration of “until the end of the round” now end.

STEP 6: ENCOUNTER ENDS

Continue to repeat Steps 4 and 5 until the combat is finished, or until the event that triggered the switch into structured time is resolved.

INITIATIVE

Initiative determines the order in which all the characters involved in an encounter take turns during each round. To determine the initiative order, each character rolls 1d10 and adds his Agility bonus to the result. The GM rolls initiative for all NPCs involved in the encounter. After each character has determined his initiative, the GM makes a list, placing them in order from highest to lowest. This list is known as the initiative order, which is the order in which characters take turns each round, until the end of the combat.

If more than one character has the same initiative score, the one with the higher Agility characteristic is placed higher in the initiative order. If they also have the same Agility characteristic, they both roll 1d10, and the character with the higher roll is placed higher in the initiative order.

If a new combatant joins in the middle of the fight, he determines his initiative normally and the GM inserts him into the appropriate location in the initiative order.

To keep things simple for everyone, it is recommended that the GM make one initiative roll for each group of similar enemy characters.

SURPRISE

When a combat begins, some of the characters involved might be unaware of their opponents' presence or hostile intentions. Usually, a character is allowed an Observe skill test to attempt to avoid being surprised—using Perception to detect a hidden opponent or Intelligence to detect hostile intentions. There are some situations, however, where almost any character would be hard-pressed to see the threat coming. Examples of this include:

- Heavy rainstorms, nearby artillery barrages, void-ship launchings, and other sustained durations of loud noises.
- Carefully constructed ambushes (gained from successful Stealth tests to sneak up on the Acolytes).
- Settings that allow the Acolytes to let their guard down, such as a governor's reception or Ministorum service.
- A sudden appearance of torch-wielding fanatics, mass hysteria in a crowded hab tavern, or other distracting events.

At the start of combat, each character gains 2 action points that he can use to perform reactions before the start of his first turn that combat. If a character is caught unaware and is surprised, he does not gain these action points at the start of combat and thus cannot perform any reactions before his first turn. A surprised character still gains action points on his first turn as normal. This can affect Player Characters and NPCs alike, depending on the situation.

THE TURN

"Round loaded and blessed. I have the shot. Emperor guide my aim."

—Intercepted vox-communication before the assassination of Governor Flavioux the First

Acolytes are exceptional individuals, and are expected to perform exceptional deeds in their defence of Mankind. They are faced with foes no other humans could sanely imagine, and in combat or other stressful situations they must each strive to their utmost lest the Emperor judge them lacking. Each action must be taken not only for himself, but also for his fellow Acolytes and the success of their mission, or failure will surely follow.

When the initiative order reaches a character, it is time for him to take his turn and perform actions and other activities. Each turn is broken into three distinct parts: the start of the turn, performing actions, and the end of the turn. An Acolyte spends most of his turn performing actions, and these actions usually have the greatest impact on combats and adventures.

THE START OF THE TURN

Before a character can act, he must suffer the effects of any ongoing conditions affecting him or the battlefield, and clear all of his action points from the previous round. The start of a character's turn takes place even if the character is incapacitated. The following things occur at the start of a character's turn:

- **Condition Triggers:** Any ongoing conditions affecting the character that trigger at the start of his turn apply their effects now.
- **Clear Action Points:** If the character has any action points still remaining from a previous turn, these are cleared away, leaving him with zero action points.

PERFORM ACTIONS

The bulk of a character's turn involves spending action points to perform a number of actions. This stage of the character's turn does not take place if the character is incapacitated. The following things occur during this stage of a character's turn:

- **Receive Action Points:** Before any actions can be performed, the character receives four action points (APs) to spend to execute a number of actions.
- **Perform Actions:** The character may spend any number of his action points to perform a number of actions. He can carry out these actions in any order.
- **Combatant's Actions:** Other characters involved in the combat can take free actions at any point during this stage of the character's turn. They might also execute reactions that trigger in response to actions the character performs.

THE END OF THE TURN

After the character has performed all of his desired actions, his turn ends. The end of a character's turn takes place even if the character is incapacitated. The following things occur at the end of a character's turn:

- **Maintain Action Points:** The player can no longer spend his action points to perform actions. However, his action points are still maintained, and can be spent to trigger reactions during other characters' turns.

- **Condition Timers:** Any ongoing conditions local to the character that last for a set number of rounds count down their timers now. If the timer for an effect has run out, that effect immediately ends.

ACTIONS

Actions represent everything a character does over the course of a combat: running down a dark corridor, firing a lasgun at an enemy, fixing a piece of arcane technology while under fire, or even summoning the dangerous powers of the Warp.

On his turn, a character gains four action points that he can spend to perform actions throughout the round. Actions are categorised into different types. These types determine what function they serve, as well as when they can be used. **Table 7-1 Combat Actions** on page 198 contains a list of standard actions available during battle.

ACTION TYPES

Every action is categorised into one of the following types.

ATTACK ACTIONS

Attack actions are used to injure or subdue opponents. A character can only perform one attack action per turn, and can only perform attack actions on his turn. If a character is wielding two weapons, one in each hand, he can perform two attack actions per turn instead, one with each weapon. The second attack made in this way each turn suffers a -20 penalty.

MOVEMENT ACTIONS

Movement actions are used to manoeuvre from one place to another. A character can only undertake movement actions on his turn. Characters who have the Immobilised condition cannot perform movement actions.

UTILITY ACTIONS

Utility actions are used to execute a variety of tasks such as aiming or using skills. A character can only perform utility actions on his turn.

REACTIONS

Reactions are a special type of action that can only be made in response to certain events, such as being attacked. Because of this, they are usually not made on the character's turn, but instead on the turns of other characters involved in the combat. Reactions can only be used in response to trigger events specific to each action. They can be used on any character's turn.

EXTENDED ACTIONS

Some actions require longer than a single round to complete, and thus require more than four action points to use. This could include repairing a damaged cogitator, reloading an bulky weapon, or translating a dead race's language. A character can only begin extended actions on his turn. Once a character commits to completing an extended action, he is considered to be working towards completing it as long as necessary. He can continue spending his APs on the action until it is complete. If the character executes any other action, or is interrupted by another effect, the extended action fails, and action points spent towards completing it are lost. Extended actions are initiated on the character's turn, and are the only type of action that can be undertaken across multiple rounds.

FREE ACTIONS

Free actions take only a moment to complete and usually require no real effort from the character. These can include calling out a short warning to a fellow Acolyte, removing a vision-restricting hat, or dropping an unneeded item. Free actions cost no APs, and can be carried out on any character's turn. There is no formal limit to the number of free action one character can take in one turn. However, the GM should use common sense to set reasonable limits on what can be done in the five seconds of each round.

ACTION POINTS

Every action has a listed cost of action points. This is the amount of APs a character must spend to perform the action. The character first removes the number of APs required to perform the action from his pool of available points, then he enacts the listed effects of the action. If a character does not have enough APs to activate an action, that action cannot be taken.

If the character does not spend all of his available action points, he retains them even after his turn has ended. He may then spend these action points on other characters' turns to activate reaction-type actions in response to events, such as being attacked.

All action points left at the start of the character's next turn are lost. All characters start with only four action points at the start of every turn.

ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

These actions provide characters with options in combat. This list is far from exhaustive; it simply covers the most common actions a character may use. Players are encouraged to use their imagination, coming up with new and unique feats to perform. Each action is formatted using the following template:

Type: The action's type. This determines what function it serves, as well as when it can be used.

Action Points: The number of action points that must be spent to perform this action.

Use: A description of what the action does. This includes requirements that must be met, as well as the end effects of the action.

TABLE 7-1 COMBAT ACTIONS

ACTION	TYPE	AP	USE
Aim	Utility	1	+10 bonus to next attack
Brace Heavy Weapon	Utility	2	Negates –20 BS test penalty for heavy weapons
Called Shot	Utility	1	Attack a specific location on target
Charge	Movement	1	Move and enter melee combat
Delay	Utility	1	May take actions in subsequent characters' turns
Disengage	Movement	3	Break from melee combat
Disruptive Blow	Reaction	0	Attack melee opponent as he leaves combat or attempts to shoot
Drop Prone	Movement	1	Gain the Prone condition
Evade	Reaction	1	Avoid an enemy attack
Melee Attack	Attack	Variable	Make a melee attack
Move	Movement	1	Move distance equal to Agility bonus
Ranged Attack	Attack	Variable	Make a ranged attack
Ready	Utility	1	Prepare a weapon or item for use
Reload	Extended	Variable	Reload a ranged weapon
Stand	Movement	1	Lose the Prone condition
Use a Skill	Extended	Varies	Use the specific abilities associated with a skill

AIM

Carefully readying his weapon, an Acolyte can take extra time to help ensure his next attack hits true.

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character gains a +10 bonus to his next attack made this turn. This bonus is cumulative with other Aim actions made on the same turn.

BRACE HEAVY WEAPON

While heavy weapons provide welcome firepower, most find them cumbersome and difficult to aim. Only when a huge gun is properly supported can it be used to full effectiveness.

Type: Utility

Action Points: 2

Use: The character braces a heavy weapon he is currently wielding. This weapon remains braced until the character performs a movement action, is moved involuntarily, or is forced to drop or stow his weapon.

A braced heavy weapon does not suffer the normal –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill tests made to fire it while unbraced. Once braced, the heavy weapon is only capable of targeting objects or opponents that fall in a 45 degree arc pointed in the direction the character was facing when he braced the weapon. If the character wishes to change the direction his weapon is pointed, he must perform this action again while facing the desired direction.

CALLED SHOT

Often an Acolyte must pick out one particular spot to dispatch his foe, such as a weak chink in his armour or the external power conduit keeping a power field active. Shots like this can often end a conflict in spectacular fashion.

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character declares a hit location on his target (e.g. head, body, left arm, right arm, left leg, or right leg). On his next attack made this turn, the character's rate of attack cannot exceed 1. If the attack succeeds, the character does not roll to determine the hit location struck by the attack, and instead automatically hits the declared location. At the GM's discretion, this action can also be used to aim at specific locations or items within an environment, such as shooting a lock or auto-picter from across the room.

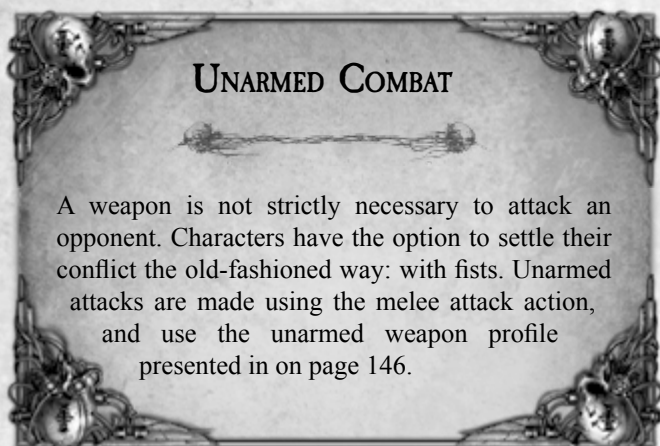
If this action is used multiple times before an attack is made, the most recently declared hit location is used.

CHARGE

While shooting is a relatively safe manner to end a heretic's life, melee combat can both allow for the surety of a kill as well as a certain visceral enjoyment. Rushing forward towards his foes, the Acolyte raises his weapon to strike with the wrath of the Emperor Himself.

Type: Movement

Action Points: 1



UNARMED COMBAT

A weapon is not strictly necessary to attack an opponent. Characters have the option to settle their conflict the old-fashioned way: with fists. Unarmed attacks are made using the melee attack action, and use the unarmed weapon profile presented in on page 146.

Use: The character moves a number of metres up to his Agility bonus in a straight line. On his next melee attack made this turn, the character's rate of attack cannot exceed 1, and the character adds the number of metres moved with this use of the charge action to the damage total of the attack. This melee attack must be the next action performed after the charge action, otherwise the bonus is lost.

If the character ends this movement next to another character, he can choose to become engaged in melee with that character.

EXAMPLE

Julla, a Desoleum Sanctuary, spots a lurking member of the Purple Flowers pleasure cult who is about to shoot a fellow Acolyte, and leaps into action. Her chainsword already drawn, she charges forward with 1 action point. As her Agility is 34, her bonus is 3 and she can move forward 3 metres, enough to reach her enemy. With her remaining action point, she plans to swing her chainsword at the cowardly foe with a +3 on her damage total from the distance she moved.

DELAY

Pausing, the Acolyte holds back to study his foes and better prepare for his next actions. When he launches into action, he can often catch his enemies unawares.

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character must immediately end his turn after performing this action. Until the start of his next turn, the character may—after the end of another character's turn, but before another character's turn starts—spend his remaining actions points as if it were his turn's perform actions step. This delayed perform action step counts as being a part of the same turn in which the delay action was used, so there is not a second end of turn step for the character.

DISENGAGE

Sometimes an Acolyte finds himself unprepared for the ferocity of his opponent, or must engage a more important foe. Leaving an active combat is risky, but can be vital to his goals.

Type: Movement

Action Points: 3

Use: The character moves a number of metres up to his Agility bonus in any direction, with normal movement modifiers. Opponents engaged in melee with the character cannot perform the disruptive blow reaction in response to this movement.

DISRUPTIVE BLOW

Cowardly foes often flee combat when an Acolyte faces them with chainsword or warhammer. A well-placed blow can end the fell heretic's life before his can threaten others.

Type: Reaction

Action Points: 0

Use: If an opponent attempts to perform a movement action or fires a ranged weapon while engaged in melee with the character, the character can attack the opponent with a melee weapon he is currently wielding by making a Weapon Skill attack test. His rate of attack (RoA) is equal to the rate of attack of the melee weapon being used. If the character spends 1 AP when using this action, he can treat a weapon with a RoA of 1/2 as having a RoA of 1. If the character spends 2 AP when using this action, he can treat a weapon with a RoA of 1/3 as having a RoA of 1.

If the attack test succeeds, the character scores a number of hits against the target equal to the degrees of success gained. This number cannot exceed the rate of attack.

A character can only make one disruptive blow reaction in response to a single action.

DROP PRONE

A wise Acolyte knows when it is advantageous to drop to the ground, either to avoid fusillades of enemy firepower or sneak up on a den of cultists. Movement is sacrificed, but he can better ensure he lives to reach his foes.

Type: Movement

Action Points: 1

Use: The character gains the Prone condition.

EVADE

A skilled Acolyte can avoid injury through not allowing his enemy's attacks to hit him. Using his superior combat skills, mental fortitude, or sheer physical deftness, he can hopefully ensure his enemy's strikes win only frustration, and not his blood.

Type: Reaction

Action Points: 1

Use: After a successful attack test is made against the character, but before hit locations are determined, the character makes an Evade skill test, using the Weapon Skill characteristic to avoid melee attacks, the Willpower characteristic to avoid psychic power attacks, or the Agility characteristic which can be used to avoid any type of attack.

If the Evade test succeeds, subtract the total degrees of success gained on the Evade test from the degrees of success gained on the attack test. The attacker then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his degrees of success. If the result is zero or lower, the character successfully evades, and the attack fails.

The character must be aware of the attack to make an Evade reaction, and only one Evade reaction can be made in response to a single attack.

EXAMPLE

The Purple Flowers, seeing the Acolytes are attacking, open fire on Mavus Tu, a Tech-Priest who has a remaining action point. One of the cultists fires on him with a heavy stubber and scores 4 degrees of success. Mavus seeks to avoid the hail of bullets. He has a Agility of 43 and has the Evade skill with 3 ranks, so gains a +10 to his Evade attempt. He rolls a 56 for a total of three degrees of success (one for succeeding the test, plus two more for rolling 10x2 points lower than her modified characteristic). He evades 3 of 4 hits, and takes one heavy stubber strike.

MELEE ATTACK

Many Acolytes actively seek out their foes in close combat, forsaking the opportunity for a distant kill. There are few things as satisfying as ending a threat with a final stab of a dagger or swing of a chainsword.

Type: Attack

Action Points: Variable

Use: The character attacks using a melee weapon he is currently wielding by making a Weapon Skill attack test against a target within range of his melee weapon (usually 2 metres). His rate of attack is equal to the rate of fire of the melee weapon being used, multiplied by the number of action points spent to use this action.

Regardless of the result of the attack, the target of the attack and the attacker become engaged in melee.

EXAMPLE

A cultist engaged in close combat with Julla attacks her with a chainsword, spending 3 action points for the attack. The weapon's rate of fire is Ab-2; with his Agility Bonus of 4 this results in a 2, so he has a rate of attack of 6 (3 action points x rate of fire of 2). He rolls a 66 on his attack with his Weapon Skill of 33, a very successful attack with 4 degrees of success. As this is less than his rate of attack, he can apply all 4 hits.

MOVE

With every step, an Acolyte can come closer to eliminating a threat or removing himself from one. In the dynamic stress of combat, those who stay in constant motion often increase their chances of survival.

Type: Movement

Action Points: 1

Use: The character moves a number of metres up to his Agility bonus in any direction, with normal movement modifiers applying.

If the character ends this movement next to another character, he can choose to become engaged in melee with that character.

RANGED ATTACK

Weaponry in the 41st Millennium is devastating, and the many guns, cannons, and pistols available can ensure a threat is quickly reduced to a cursed memory. An Acolyte fires his weapon knowing each round carries the Emperor's Fury.

Type: Attack

Action Points: Variable

Use: The character attacks using a ranged weapon he is currently wielding by making a Ballistic Skill attack test against a target in range. His rate of attack is equal to the rate of fire of the ranged weapon being used, multiplied by the number of action points spent to use this action.

EXAMPLE

Mavus has reached a weapon emplacement and has a braced heavy stubber ready to fire at the retreating Purple Flowers. He uses 1 of his action points to shoot, giving him a rate of attack of 4 shots with the weapon's rate of fire of 4. His Ballistic Skill is 67, and with a roll of 12 he scores 5 degrees of success. The maximum amount of hits he can score is limited to his rate of attack of 4, so one hit is ignored. If he had spent 2 action points, his rate of attack would have increased to 8 and he would have scored the 5th hit.

READY

In the heat of battle, an Acolyte needs to perform all manner of actions beyond firing a gun or chopping his foes. Ignoring such needs can result in ill-preparedness for fighting, disastrous wounds, and likely failure in his mission.

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The character draws a weapon or retrieves an object stored in a pouch or pocket. This can also be used to do things such as coat a blade in poison, inject a stim or other drug, and so forth.

RELOAD

A gun is only as good as its ammunition, and a gun without ammunition is little better than a club. Taking time to replenish a bolter or heavy stubber with fresh rounds can leave an Acolyte momentarily vulnerable, but not taking that time is even worse.

Type: Extended

Action Points: Variable

Use: The character reloads a ranged weapon he is currently wielding. The number of AP required to fully reload the weapon is equal to the weapon's reload value.

STAND

An Acolyte not on his feet is an Acolyte vulnerable to charging enemies or sustained weapons fire focusing in on his position. Once afoot, he is ready to take the fight to his foes.

Type: Movement

Action Points: 1

Use: The character loses the Prone condition.

USE A SKILL

Specialised actions can often spell the difference between blessed victory and terrible defeat. Acolytes who put their many hours of training to use can vanquish unwary enemies unschooled with tactics beyond charging en masse.

Type: Extended

Action Points: Variable

Use: The character uses a skill to perform a specialised task. This usually requires passing a skill test to accomplish. The number of AP required to perform the skill is determined by the skill used (see **Chapter III: Skills**).

THE ATTACK

While there are many actions an Acolyte can take when in combat, the primary actions involve attacking opponents. This could involve making a well-aimed las shot or violently swinging a chainsword, and one successful attack can collapse a heresy.

When making an attack, the character makes an attack test to determine if he hits his target, and if so, how well it strikes. He then determines the part of his target's body he hit, and rolls damage against his target's defences on that location to see if the target is wounded by the attack.

An attack follows five steps:

- **Step 1 – Choose Attack:** The attacker decides which attack action he is going to use. The action he chooses determines the weapon used, the rate of attack, and the characteristic used against for the attack.

- **Step 2 – Choose Targets:** The attacker decides who he is targeting with the attack. He must be able to see the targets, and all targets be in range of the attack.

- **Step 3 – Make Attack Test:** The attacker makes the attack test using the characteristic determined by the attack action, and determines how many times the attack hits.

- **Step 4 – Determine Hit Locations:** If the attack is successful, the attacker determines where on his target's body the attack hit.

- **Step 5 – Attack Results:** The attacker rolls for the amount of damage dealt by the attack, and determines if the damage inflicts a wound on his target. He also applies any other effects the attack action or weapon causes to the target.

OTHER ACTIONS

If a player wants to do something not covered by the usual actions, the GM should make a judgement call 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: a characteristic test, skill test, or opposed test. The GM should keep in mind that a round is only about five seconds long, which is a very limited amount of time to accomplish a task.

STEP 1 – CHOOSE ATTACK

There are a variety of attack actions that characters can choose to perform on their turns. A character can only perform one attack action per turn. The two most common attack actions are the melee attack and the ranged attack. However, these are not the only options players can choose; **Table 7-1 Combat Actions** on page 198 contains a full list of standard actions available during battle.

What action a character uses determines three things about the attack: what weapon can be used, the rate of attack, and the characteristic used for the attack test.

WEAPON

Most attack actions require that the character use a specific type of weapon to perform the attack. The weapon used determines a great deal about the attack, and must be readied for the attack action to be performed. The weapon can factor into the range, rate of fire, and damage of the attack, and can apply conditions and other special effects to the target with a successful attack. For more regarding weapons see **Chapter V: Armoury**.

RATE OF ATTACK

The rate of attack (RoA) determines how many times an attack can strike its target. The number of hits scored by an attack can never exceed the attack's rate of attack. RoA also determines how much ammo is expended by weapons with ammo when making the attack, regardless of how many hits were achieved.

In the common ranged and melee attack actions, rate of attack is determined by multiplying the weapon's rate of fire by the number of action points spent to perform the action. However, other attack actions can use different methods to determine RoA.

CHARACTERISTIC

Which attack action a character uses also determines which characteristic is used when making the attack test in Step 3. For the common ranged and melee attack actions, this is Ballistic Skill and Weapon Skill respectively. However, other attack actions can use a variety of characteristics depending on their nature.

STEP 2 – CHOOSE TARGETS

To attack an opponent, a character must be both in range of, and actively observing, his target. If he is targeting multiple opponents, all targets must meet these conditions.

RANGE

Range is the distance between the origin of an attack (usually the character) and its target. Each ranged weapon has a maximum range at which it can be fired. If the target of the attack is beyond that range, the attack cannot be performed.

Unless stated otherwise in the weapon profile, the range of all melee weapons is two metres.

SIGHT AND TARGETING

Whether in the depths of a pitch-black hive city or the thick foliage of a death world, it can often be hard to spot opponents. To make an effective attack, the character must be capable of observing his target. If the Game Master determines that the character's view of his opponent is completely obscured, the attack cannot be made against the target except for special situations such as the Spray and Pray rules on page 205.

STEP 3 – MAKE ATTACK TEST

To determine how many times an attack hits its target, or if it even hits at all, the attacker must succeed at an attack test. To do so, the character makes a test as outlined in **Chapter I: Playing the Game** by rolling 1d100 and comparing the result to the characteristic determined by the action used to make the attack. This test can be modified by other actions the character took during his turn before making the attack. The GM can also modify it with any situational modifiers deemed appropriate for the encounter.

If the attack test succeeds, the attack hits its target a number of times equal to the total degrees of success gained on the test. This number cannot exceed the attack's total rate of attack.

EVADE REACTIONS

After a successful attack test is made against a character, he has the chance to spend action points to make an evade reaction. To do so, the character makes an Evade skill test, using the Weapon Skill characteristic to avoid melee attack, the Willpower characteristic to avoid psychic power attacks, or the Agility characteristic to avoid any type of attack.

If the Evade test succeeds, subtract the total degrees of success gained on the Evade test from the DoS gained on the attack test. The attacker then proceeds to determine the number of hits scored by the attack using the resulting number as his DoS. If the result is zero or lower, the target successfully evades, and the attack fails.

WEAPON JAMS

Even an ancient relic weapon dating back to the Great Crusade, blessed many times over the centuries, might still falter in combat; such is the capricious nature of fate in the 41st Millennium. A gun that unexpectedly jams is a horrifying occurrence, and the character must quickly resolve the problem before his enemies realise his vulnerability.

When making an attack test with a ranged weapon, a roll of 96 to 100 indicates the weapon has jammed. This has the following effects:

- The attack automatically misses.
- The remainder of the ammo in the weapon's clip is lost.
- The weapon must be reloaded before it can be used again. This reload requires a Ballistic Skill test. If the test fails, the reload does not succeed, the weapon's status is decreased by 1, and the reload must be re-attempted.

STEP 4 – DETERMINE HIT LOCATIONS

On a successful hit, the attacker needs to determine where the hit landed. To do this, he compares the 1s digit of his attack roll to **Table 7-2: Hit Locations** on page 202. The determined hit location is struck by the first hit of the attack. For each subsequent hit, the attacker adds 2 to the previous hit's value and compares that number to the table to determine the location struck by that hit. If adding 2 in this way results in a value greater than 10, the value "rolls over" to the beginning of the table (subtract 10 from the value).

For example, if the attacker hit 3 times with an attack roll of 17, his first hit strikes the target's right leg with 7, then his second hit strikes the target's left leg with 9, finally his third hit would strike the target's head with 1.

TABLE 7-2: HIT LOCATIONS

1d10 ROLL	LOCATION HIT
1	Head
2	Right Arm
3	Left Arm
4-6	Body
7-8	Right Leg
9-10	Left Leg

STEP 5 – ATTACK RESULTS

At the end of a successful attack, the attacker determines whether or not each hit caused a wound, and applies any conditions or effects caused by the attack.

INFLECT WOUNDS

After hit locations have been assigned, the attacker rolls the damage dealt by each of his hits, and compares it to his target's defence on the hit location to determine whether or not it is enough to wound his target.

- **Determine Damage:** Each weapon has a damage listing, which is usually a dice roll, plus or minus an additional modifier. For each hit, the attacker rolls the indicated damage dice and applies the modifiers to determine the total damage dealt by the hit.

- **Determine Defence:** The target's defence value on the location struck by the hit is equal to the target's Toughness bonus, plus any armour points that protect the location.

- **Compare Damage and Defence:** To determine whether or not the target is wounded by the hit, compare the damage value and the defence value. If the damage value exceeds the defence value, the hit causes the target to suffer one wound. See Injury on page 206 for more detail on wounds.

APPLY WOUND EFFECTS

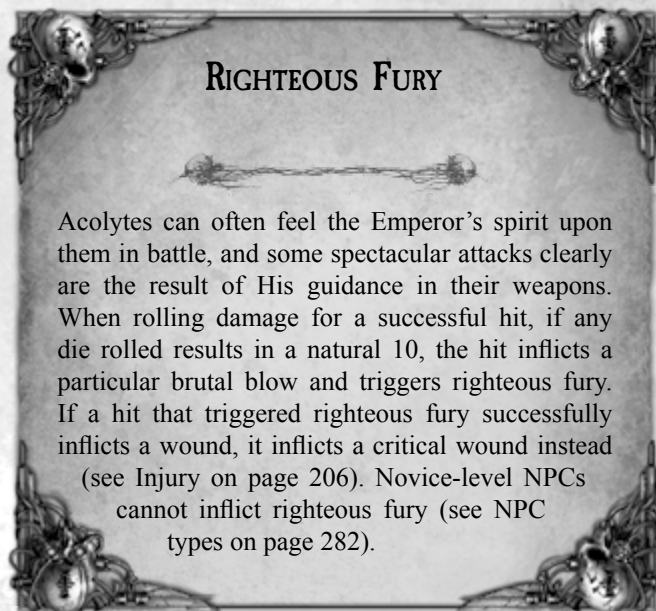
If a hit inflicts a new wound on the target, it also applies a wound effect. To determine the wound effect, the target takes the total damage dealt by the attack (damage value minus defence value) and adds modifiers for any wounds the character was suffering from prior to the attack:

- **Wound:** +5
- **Critical Wound:** +10

The target then compares this value to the wound effect table appropriate for the hit location struck and the type of damage dealt by the hit. He immediately applies the effect listed in the appropriate entry of the table. (See Injury on page 206 for more information on wounds and wound effects).

In some cases, wounds can be applied to a character without any damage being dealt (such as from certain psychic powers). In these cases, the source that inflicted the wound indicates the number that determines the wound effect and the damage type to use for the effect. This number acts as the damage the attack deals for determining the wound effect. Wounds the character is currently suffering from can modify it as normal.

Wound effects are cumulative. Any wound effects added from new wounds do not override or negate any existing wound effects, unless the two effects are mutually exclusive; in this case, the most recent wound effect takes precedence. All wound effects should be tracked separately from the wound that caused them. If the wound that caused an effect is removed, the effect it caused is not also removed unless specified otherwise in the effect description.



INFLECT CONDITIONS

The final step in completing a successful attack is for any conditions inflicted by the attack to be applied to the target. These conditions are usually determined by the action or weapon used for the attack, and always apply to the target upon a successful hit, regardless of whether or not the target was wounded. For a full list of conditions, see page 207.

COMBAT CIRCUMSTANCES

No two combats ever unfold in the same way; each one is a unique experience with different terrain, environments, weather, and a variety of other factors. Combat circumstances cover any situational effects that have an impact on combat outside of the actions the characters are performing.

Many circumstances offer modifications to tests, making them easier or harder to achieve, and often there can be multiple modifications such as fighting in a night-time rainstorm, or a muddy field on a high-grav world. When these combinations occur, simply add the modifiers together (remembering that positive and negative modifiers can sometimes cancel each other out). This might bring the overall modifier to a very high number, making the test ridiculously easy or essentially impossible, and in these cases the GM can simply declare the test succeeds or fails with no dice roll needed.

COVER

Given the extreme lethality of weapons in the 41st Millennium, taking cover in combat is often an excellent way to survive. When a character hides behind cover in a firefight, he conceals a portion of his body, protecting it from enemy fire. What areas of a character's body are protected by cover are broken down by hit location. Whenever a character enters cover, the Game Master determines which hit locations are protected. This is commonly 3 total hit locations. For example, a character firing over cover might have his body and legs concealed, where a character firing around a corner with a pistol could have his body, left arm, and left leg concealed.

Each type of cover has an armour value based on its density and durability. If a hit location protected by cover is struck by an attack, the character adds the cover's armour value to the hit location's defence value in addition to all other modifiers when resolving the hit. **Table 7-3: Cover Examples** above provides a list of example cover armour values.

If a hit location would benefit from multiple cover bonuses, the character chooses which one he would like to use, and only gains the benefits from that one source.

TABLE 7-3: COVER EXAMPLES

COVER TYPE	ARMOUR VALUE
Light wood, glass plating, thin metal	5
Storage crates, flakboard, sandbags, sheet ice	10
Rockcrete, stone, thick metal	20
Plasteel, Armourplas, voidship bulkheads	30

DAMAGING COVER

As attacks strike cover, they can wear it down, reduce its effectiveness, and eventually even destroy it. Whenever an attack strikes a piece of cover and deals damage that exceeds the cover's armour value, that piece of cover has its armour value reduced by 1. Cover that has its armour value reduced to 0 is destroyed and offers no further protection.

DARKNESS AND SHADOW

All attack tests targeting a character in darkness suffer a -20 penalty. Additionally, all Stealth (A) tests made by characters concealed by darkness receive a +20 bonus.

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

While in difficult terrain, all characters suffer the Slowed condition. Additionally, all Evasion skill tests made while in difficult terrain suffer a -20 penalty.

ENGAGED IN MELEE

If an attacking character is adjacent to his target, both the character and his target are considered to be engaged in melee. Attempting to leave a melee engagement, or firing a ranged weapon while engaged in melee, allows any opponents engaged with the character the opportunity to use a Disruptive Blow reaction.

When using a ranged weapon against a character engaged in melee with an ally, characters suffer a -20 penalty to their attack test.

FALLING

When a character falls from a height in metres greater than his Agility bonus, he can become wounded from the impact. The character suffers one hit to each of his leg hit locations, each of 1d10 Impact damage. Add +1 to the result for each metre in excess of his Agility bonus that the character fell.

FOG, MIST, AND SMOKE

While in fog, mist, or smoke, all characters can only see a number of metres equal to their Perception bonus.

HIGHER GROUND

Characters standing on higher ground than their target gain a +10 bonus to all melee attack tests. Additionally, characters firing ranged weapons from higher ground than their target can ignore the bonus armour provided by cover on certain locations, depending on the vantage point granted from the higher ground. What hit locations are revealed by the higher ground are up to the Game Master's discretion.

OUTNUMBERING

Multiple characters ganging up on their opponents in melee can gain a serious advantage. When engaged in melee with one or more opponents, a character counts the number of his allies also engaged with the same opponents in melee. The character gains a +10 bonus to his melee attack tests for every ally he has beyond the total number of opponents engaged with him.

SCATTERING

Many effects in combat can end up flying in random directions, from errant grenade throws to spurts of lava spewing from a feral world's surface. Whenever something moves in a direction that needs to be randomly determined, the GM rolls 1d10 and consults the Scatter Diagram on page 205 to determine the direction. He then rolls 1d5 to determine the number of metres it moves, adding or subtracting modifiers based on the situation.

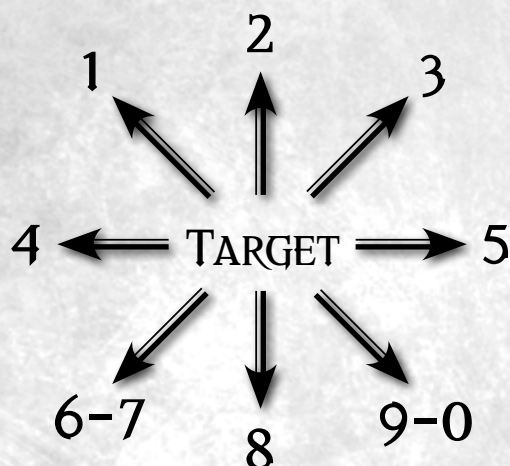
SUFFOCATION

When a character becomes unable to breathe—whether from drowning, choking, or exposure to vacuum—he begins to suffocate. A character can suffocate for a number of rounds up to his Toughness bonus before suffering any ill effects. Once that time expires, the character begins suffering 1 fatigue each round (roughly every five seconds in narrative time) until he can breathe again.

SCATTERING IN ZERO GRAVITY

When something scatters in a zero gravity environment, it can travel up and down in addition to its other movement. To determine the vertical movement, the GM rolls 1d10-5 to determine the number of metres it moves up or down, with any negative numbers resulting in the object moving that many metres down, and positive numbers resulting in the object moving that many metres up.

SCATTER DIAGRAM



UNUSUAL GRAVITY

The innumerable worlds and void-ships of the Imperium can have gravity that varies greatly. This can have an effect on how far characters are able to move, and how much weight they can carry.

LOW GRAVITY

In low gravity environments, characters gain a +20 bonus to their Agility for the purposes of determining movement distances. They also gain a +20 bonus to their Strength for the purposes of Acrobatics tests, Athletics tests, and determining carrying capacity.

HIGH GRAVITY

Characters in high gravity environments suffer a -20 penalty to their Agility for the purposes of determining movement distances, and a -20 penalty to their Strength for the purposes of Acrobatics tests, Athletics tests, and carrying capacity determination.

ZERO GRAVITY

Zero gravity environments count as difficult terrain. Additionally, while in zero gravity environments, a character can only determine the direction he wants to move with a movement action while adjacent to a floor, wall, ceiling, or other object he can push off of. Otherwise, when using movement actions, the character can only move in the same direction he moved with his previous movement action.

WEATHER

Harsh weather and other unnatural conditions can make combat incredibly difficult as characters attempt to battle the elements as much as their opponents. Characters in harsh weather suffer the Dazed condition.

SPRAY AND PRAY

Situations might arise where a character is aware of a danger stalking him, but is unable to see it. In these cases, a character can use his attack for the turn to wildly fire or strike out in hopes of hitting his hidden antagonist. In these cases, it is up to the Game Master to determine a number between 1 and 100 that represents the character's percentage chance of hitting his target, or if the character is even firing in the correct direction at all. Then, during Step 2 of the attack, the Game Master rolls 1d100 and compares the result to the percentage chance. If he rolls equal to or under the number, the attack proceeds as normal. If he rolls over the number, the attack misses the hidden opponent, and has no effect other than perhaps drawing even more unwanted attention to the character!

INJURY

"That's nothing. Let me show you the scars I got from that Ambull attack."

—Zam Reddor, death world native

The life of an Acolyte is filled with physical stress. Devastating weapons effects, horrid creature attacks, baleful mental tortures, and more can reduce a character to a bleeding lump of flesh in desperate need of medicae assistance. Other actions, such as sprinting across a minefield, can also lessen a character's effectiveness. In **DARK HERESY**, exhaustion, injuries, and other conditions that can afflict characters are represented by three systems: fatigue, wounds, and conditions.

FATIGUE

Fighting heretics, dodging las blasts, and withstanding psychic assaults can all tax an Acolyte's fortitude. The amount of stress a character's body and mind have undergone since he has last been able to rest is measured by his fatigue score. Starting at zero, fatigue slowly ticks up as the character performs strenuous activities, fights in combat, and faces the horrors of the galaxy. It is very difficult to remove fatigue except through rest.

EFFECTS OF FATIGUE

All characters can handle a certain amount of fatigue without slowing down. However, once fatigue starts building up, it can have a detrimental affect on that character's abilities. As it grows, it slowly starts to affect the character's faculties, starting with the areas in which the character is the weakest.

Any time a character gains or loses fatigue, he compares his new fatigue score to his characteristic bonuses. Any characteristic with a bonus lower than the character's current fatigue score becomes "fatigued." Fatigued characteristics affect the character in different ways depending on if the game is currently in narrative time or structured time:

- **Structured Time:** Any time the character wishes to perform an action that includes a test of a fatigued characteristic, the character must spend 1 additional action point to perform the action.

- **Narrative Time:** Any time the character performs a task that includes a test of a fatigued characteristic, that task takes twice the normal time to attempt.

FATIGUE THRESHOLD

A character's fatigue threshold is equal to his Toughness bonus and Willpower bonus added together. If a character's fatigue value ever exceeds this threshold, the character passes out, gaining the Unconscious condition until his fatigue is reduced beneath his threshold.

If a character's fatigue ever exceeds double the amount of his fatigue threshold—such as from suffering from Blood Loss while unconscious—the character dies.

GAINING FATIGUE

Fatigue is gained whenever a character pushes himself beyond his normal limits or is subjected to strenuous or stressful situations.

Fatigue from Combat: Certain weapon qualities and wound effects can cause characters to gain fatigue during combat.

Fatigue from Fear: Whenever the character fails a Fear test, he suffers 1 fatigue.

Situational Fatigue: Many other situations that characters find themselves in can cause fatigue, from running long distances to disarming an explosive. It is up to the Game Master to decide whether or not a character suffers fatigue based on the situation.

REMOVING FATIGUE

Fatigue goes away with time and rest. At the end of each hour of rest during which a character does not participate in combat, use psychic powers, or engage in other forms of strenuous activity, he removes 1 fatigue. If he rests for six consecutive hours this way, he removes all of his fatigue.

WOUNDS

Wounds represent physical trauma to a character's body. They are primarily caused by damage inflicted from weapons or environmental effect. They are tracked based on the hit location to which they are inflicted, have varying severities, and can cause additional effects based on their nature.

HIT LOCATIONS

Each character's body is divided into a series of hit locations, different parts of the body that can be hit by attacks or other effects. Hit locations each have their own defence value. The majority of characters use the typical

human hit locations, but some mutants and bizarre xenos have different, unique hit locations.

Whenever a character is hit by an attack or effect, he has to determine which hit location on his body is struck by the blow. For attacks made in combat, the attacker compares the 1s digit of his attack roll to either the diagram presented here or **Table 7-2: Hit Location** (see page 202). When an effect without an attack roll would hit a character, the character instead rolls 1d10 and compares the value to the diagram presented here or **Table 7-2: Hit Location** to determine the hit location.

There are some situations where the location struck by the hit is much more obvious (such as stepping into a pool of lava). In situations such as these, the Game Master determines the hit location, and no roll is made.

DEFENCE VALUE

Each hit location has a defence value, representing that location's ability to resist incoming damage, and protect itself from becoming wounded. To determine the defence value of a hit location, add together the character's Toughness bonus and the armour value of any armour covering that location.

DAMAGE

Damage represents the potential of an attack, weapon, or effect to overcome a character's defences and wound that character. When a character is hit by an attack or effect in one of his hit locations, the attack or effect deals an amount of damage to that location. The amount of damage that is dealt to a hit location is compared against that location's defence value to determine whether or not that location is wounded.

Typically, damage is determined by a dice roll, plus or minus a modifier. A full list of weapon damages can be found in **Chapter V: Armoury**.

DAMAGE TYPES

All damage is divided into three different types:

- **Energy** (las weapons, fire, plasma)
- **Impact** (clubs, bullets, falling)
- **Rending** (shrapnel, chain weapons, claws)

The type of damage determines what kind of wound effects that character suffers if wounded. Additionally, certain types of armour are weaker or stronger against specific types of damage. If a source of damage does not specify a damage type, treat it as impact.

RECEIVING WOUNDS

Characters can receive wounds from being hit in combat, navigating dangerous environments, and braving other dangerous situations. Receiving a wound can have negative effects on the character that can be temporary or permanent, depending on the severity of the hit that caused the wound. The more wounds a character is suffering, the more severe the effects of subsequent wounds are, and the more likely a character is to die from his injuries.

When struck by an attack or effect, the affected character compares the total damage to the defence value of the hit

location struck. If the damage value exceeds the defence value, the hit causes the character to gain one wound. The character then determines and applies the wound effect for that wound (see page 207).

CRITICAL WOUNDS

If the attacker scores righteous fury on a hit (see page 203) and successfully inflicts a wound, that hit inflicts a critical wound instead. Critical wounds are treated the same as a normal wound, and generate a wound effect in the same way. However, critical wounds have three differences from normal wounds:

- Critical wounds add +10 to subsequent wound effects, instead of the normal +5.
- Critical wounds are more difficult to heal than normal wounds (see Healing Wounds on page 207).
- Critical wounds instantly kill or incapacitate novice and elite adversaries (see **Chapter XII: NPCs and Adversaries**).

WOUND EFFECTS

Even minor wounds represent detrimental damage to a character's body, and can have more far-reaching effects beyond the simple gashes and cuts. Whenever a character receives a new wound, he also suffers one or more effects from that wound. To determine the wound effect, the character takes the total damage dealt by the hit (damage value minus defence value) and adds modifiers for each wound he was suffering from prior to the attack:

- **Wound:** +5
- **Critical Wound:** +10

The target then compares this value to the appropriate wound effect table based on the affected body location (Head, Body, or Limb) and the damage type of the attack (Energy, Impact, or Rending). He then suffers any effects listed on the appropriate entry of the table. These effects can be instant, last a defined period of time, or even be permanent depending on the duration listed in the table entry. The wound effect tables can be found starting on page 210.

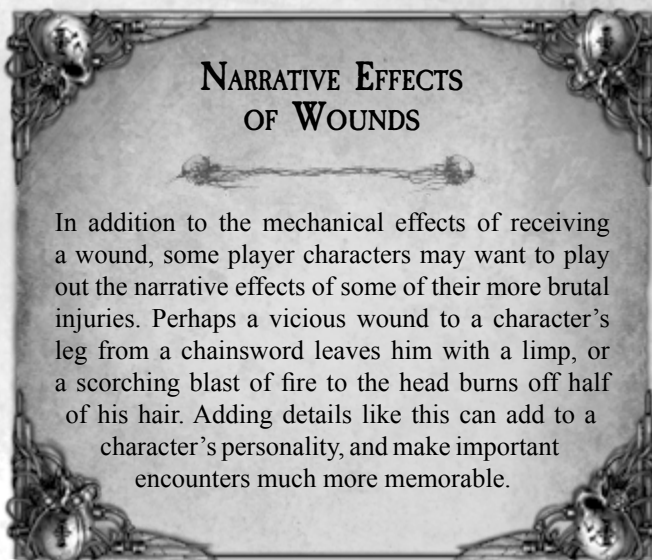
Wound effects are cumulative. Any wound effects added by new wounds do not override or negate any existing wound effects unless the two effects are mutually exclusive, in which case, the most recent wound effect takes precedence. All wound effects are tracked separate from the wound that caused them; if the wound that caused an effect is removed, the effect it caused is not also removed unless specified otherwise in the effect description.

HEALING WOUNDS

A character who has received wounds can recover them slowly through his natural healing, or more quickly with assistance of a medicae or someone else trained in medicinal support.

NATURAL HEALING

Waiting on the gradual progression of natural healing is much slower for a character than trusting his body to the hands of the surgeons, but sometimes it is the only option. Once per day (24 hours), when performing six consecutive



In addition to the mechanical effects of receiving a wound, some player characters may want to play out the narrative effects of some of their more brutal injuries. Perhaps a vicious wound to a character's leg from a chainsword leaves him with a limp, or a scorching blast of fire to the head burns off half of his hair. Adding details like this can add to a character's personality, and make important encounters much more memorable.

hours of rest, the character removes one wound. This cannot be a critical wound. If the entire day is entirely devoted to bed rest, the character removes one critical wound instead.

MEDICAE

A character trained in the use of medicae can quickly patch up wounded characters, and help them recover more quickly over extended periods of time. This requires the use of the Medicae skill (see page 85).

CONDITIONS

Various attack actions, weapons, and environmental effects can inflict conditions on a character. Conditions impose a negative effect or vulnerability onto the character, and can last for second, minutes, hours, or even be permanent.

BLINDED

The character loses all vision. Blinded characters suffer the following penalties:

- Cannot see anything.
- Cannot target opponents with attacks (see the **Spray and Pray** sidebar on page 205).
- Automatically fail any tests that rely on sight.

BLOOD LOSS (X)

The character bleeds uncontrollably. The severity of the Blood Loss affecting the character is determined by a number (X).

- **Start of Turn:** At the start of his turn, a character affected by Blood Loss suffers one fatigue. He then reduces X by one. If X is ever zero, the character loses the Blood Loss condition.
- **Passing Out:** If a character becomes Unconscious while suffering from Blood Loss, he no longer reduces X by one at the start of each turn. He still suffers one fatigue at the start of each turn.
- **Stacking Blood Loss:** A character can only be suffering from one instance of Blood Loss at a time. If a second instance of Blood Loss is inflicted on a character already suffering from Blood Loss, the two values X are added together to determine the single Blood Loss X value.

• **Removing Blood Loss:** A character suffering from Blood Loss, or any other character next to him, can spend 2 AP to perform a *Medicae* (A) test to reduce the Blood Loss. If the test succeeds, the character reduces the Blood Loss value of X by one for each degree of success he scores.

BURNING (X)

The target becomes engulfed in flames, with the intensity of the fire on the character determined by a number (X).

• **Start of Turn:** At the start of his turn, a Burning character suffers a single hit of X energy damage to a random hit location, rolling 1d10 and comparing the result to **Table 7-2: Hit Locations** (see page 202) to determine the location. He then increases X by one.

• **Stacking Burning:** A character can only be suffering from one instance of Burning at a time. If a second instance of Burning is inflicted on a character already suffering from Burning, the two values X are added together to determine the single Burning X value.

• **Putting It Out:** A burning character or an engaged ally can attempt to extinguish the flames by spending 2 AP and making an *Agility* test. The burning character becomes Prone and, if the test succeeds, loses the burning condition.

CHARACTERISTIC DECAY (X)

The character's natural characteristics are reduced due to poison, disease, Warp energy, or some other hazard. The severity of the characteristic decay is determined by a number (X). A character can have multiple instances of this condition simultaneously, each instance affecting a different characteristic.

• **Characteristic Loss:** Each instance of Characteristic Decay affects a different characteristic. The specified characteristic has its score reduced by X. This cannot reduce a characteristic below zero.

• **Recovery:** Characteristic Decay is never permanent. Each instance of Characteristic Decay reduces the value of X by one every hour. If X is ever zero, the character loses that instance of the Characteristic Decay condition.

• **Stacking Characteristic Decay:** A character can only be suffering from one instance of Characteristic Decay per individual characteristic at one time. If a second instance of Characteristic Decay is inflicted on a characteristic already suffering from decay, the two values X are added together to determine the single Characteristic Decay X value for that specific characteristic.

• **Zero Characteristics:** Characteristic Decay can reduce a characteristic to zero. If a characteristic is ever zero, all tests using that characteristic automatically fail, regardless of other modifiers.

CRIPPLED BODY PART

A piece of the character's body has been so damaged that it has been rendered temporarily useless. A character can have multiple instances of this condition simultaneously, each

instance affecting a different hit location—as well as the part of his body associated with that hit location. Any body part that has been Crippled suffers all of the same penalties as if it had been lost (see the *Lost Body Part* condition on page 208)—using lost eye if the head location has been Crippled, and *Lost Internal Organ* if the body location has been Crippled.

DAZED

The character is staggered and confused, unable to operate at his normal efficiency. Dazed characters suffer the following penalties:

- Immediately lose 2 AP upon becoming Dazed.
- When gaining action points on a turn, gain 2 less.

DEAFENED

The character loses the ability to hear. Deafened characters suffer the following penalties:

- Cannot hear anything.
- Automatically fail any tests that rely on hearing.

FRENZIED

The character is flung into an uncontrollable rage. Frenzied characters gain the following rules:

- Must perform an attack action on the nearest enemy each turn, if able.
- If not engaged with the nearest enemy, must move towards that enemy and engage if possible.
- May not perform reactions or the *Disengage* action.
- Gains a +20 bonus to Strength, Toughness, and Willpower.
- Suffers a -20 penalty to Ballistic Skill, Fellowship, and Intelligence.
- Automatically passes all fear tests.
- Does not suffer the effects of fatigue, though still gains fatigue as normal.
- Immune to the effects of the Dazed and Stunned conditions.

HELPLESS

The character is rendered unable to defend himself; this is usually due to being Unconscious. Attacks made against a Helpless character gain a +30 bonus.

IMMOBILISED

The character is unable to move. Immobilised characters are unable to perform any actions with the movement type.

LOST BODY PART

The character loses a piece of his body. A character can have multiple instances of this condition simultaneously, each instance affecting a different body part. When rolling to determine the hit location of an attack or effect, if the attack would hit body part that has been Lost, the attack hits the body location instead. This condition applies additional penalties that vary based on the body part, and can be removed by acquiring cybernetic body replacements (see page 161).

LOST EYE

The character has his eye removed or destroyed, and suffers the following penalties:

- Suffer a –20 penalty to all tests that rely on sight (this includes Ballistic Skill tests).
- If both eyes are lost, he becomes permanently blinded.

LOST FOOT OR LEG

The character has had his leg severed somewhere between the ankle and the hip. Characters with a lost foot or leg suffer the following penalties:

- Become Slowed permanently.
- Suffer a –20 penalty to all tests that rely on the use of two legs (such as Stealth).
- If both legs are lost, the character becomes Immobilised permanently, and he automatically fails all tests that rely on the use of legs.

LOST HAND OR ARM

The character has had his arm severed somewhere between the wrist and the shoulder, and suffers the following penalties:

- Can no longer use two-handed weapons or dual-wield.
- Suffer a –20 penalty to all tests that rely on the use of two hands.
- If both hands are lost, no weapons can be wielded, and the character automatically fails all tests that rely on the use of hands.

LOST INTERNAL ORGAN

The character has one of his internal organs destroyed, removed, or irreparably damaged. This could be anything from his spleen, one of his lungs, or even his heart. Characters with this condition can no longer recover fatigue by resting.

PRONE

The character is lying on the ground.

- **Entering and Leaving Prone:** A character can use the Drop Prone action to enter Prone or the Stand action leave Prone.
- **No Reactions:** A Prone character cannot perform any actions with the reaction type.
- **Small Target:** A Prone character reduces the X value of his Size trait by 1 for the purposes of shooting attacks (see page 129). For average humans, this applies a –10 modifier to the attacks.
- **Slowed:** A Prone character has the Slowed condition.

SLOWED

The character's movement speed is reduced. A Slowed character suffers the following penalties:

- Agility bonus counts as half of its normal value (rounded up) for the purposes of determining distances moved both for both movement actions in structured time, and Athletics test made to move in narrative time.

STUNNED

The character is overcome by a mental or physical trauma, and is unable to act. A Stunned character suffers the following penalties:

- Immediately lose all AP upon becoming Stunned.
- Do not gain any action points.

UNCONSCIOUS

The character is knocked out and loses consciousness. An Unconscious character suffers the following penalties.

- Become helpless until consciousness is regained.
- Become Prone if possible.
- Become Stunned until consciousness is regained.

WEAKENED (X)

The character is drained, both mentally and physically. How severely a character is Weakened is determined by a value (X).

- **Test Penalty:** Suffers a penalty to all tests equal to –10 multiplied by X.
- **Stacking Weakened:** A character can only be suffering from one instance of Weakened. If a second instance of Weakened is inflicted, the two values X are added together to determine the single Weakened X value.

EXAMPLE

Mavus was struck with 3 hits with an attack roll of 23 for a melee attack from a vengeful cult leader (Master) wielding an elegant, iridescent staff. This results in the first attack striking the left arm (from the one's digit of 3), then the second to body (3+2=5), and the last to the right leg (5+2=7). The sword does 1d10+5 Impact damage, and the cultist scores damage totals of 6, 11, and 15 (the last a righteous fury result!). Mavus has a Toughness of 43 and so a Toughness bonus of 4, and wears a custom bodyglove for 3 points of armour on all locations for a total defence of 7. This results in two wounds (as only latter two damage results exceeded his defence value), one of which is a critical wound from the Righteous Fury effect.

Mavus looks on Table 7–8: Impact Wound Effects – Body for his first wound (body) for the 4 result (the difference between his defence level and the weapon's damage). This has no direct damage, but the second one to his leg does, as the damage of 15 and his total defence of 7 results in an 8 for Table 7–7 Impact Wound Effects – Limb. The attack had three degrees of success, and Mavus has an Agility bonus of 4, so he is not does not fall Prone. Note that all the wounds in this attack are resolved simultaneously, so there is no +5 for this second wound, but this will be added the next time he is wounded.

TABLE 7-4: ENERGY WOUND EFFECTS - LIMB

RESULT	EFFECT
6 or lower	The blast collides with the target's limb, diffusing upon his armour and any exposed skin. Aside from superficial flash-burns and loss of any hair on the limb, the harm is fairly minor.
7-8	Energy races across the target's limb, melting a furrow into his armour and scorching the skin beneath. If that limb is supporting the target and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he is Immobilised for 1 round.
9	The target's limb recoils instinctively as the strike burns into him, causing him to stagger back in pain clutching his scorched limb. If the limb is holding anything and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he drops anything he is holding in that limb. Anything dropped this way scatters 1d5 metres in a randomly determined direction.
10-11	In a flash of energy, the attack sears its way into with the target's limb, shocking him and blasting him off balance. If that limb is supporting the target and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he is Immobilised for 2 rounds.
12	The shot crackles into the target's limb, wracking him with agony for a moment and leaving a fearsome burn on his skin. If the limb is holding anything, and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he drops anything he is holding in that limb. Anything dropped this way scatters 1d10 metres in a randomly determined direction.
13-14	The strike superheats the armour and skin on the target's limb, burning a long swathe of his flesh and starting to cook the muscle and fat beneath. The target suffers 1 fatigue and suffers Agility Decay (1d10-WPb). If this would result in a value lower than 0, it is treated as 0 instead.
15	The shot fries the majority of the limb, leaving it wreathed in cinders and the smell of cooking meat. The target suffers 1 fatigue and suffers Agility Decay (2d10-WPb). If this would result in a value lower than 0, it is treated as 0 instead.
16	The target's skin blisters and pops as energy seethes and sparks across it the length of his writhing limb, threatening to engulf it completely if he loses his cool and flails about wildly. The target suffers 1 fatigue and must make a Willpower test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
17-18	The attack melts the target's flesh and armour where it strikes, digging a deep pit of steaming gristle and pain into the limb. The limb is Crippled for one round and the target must make a -10 Willpower test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
19	The target fights to avoid letting loose a shriek as the blaze rips into his limb, incinerating his armour and flaying the limb beneath. The limb is Crippled for 2 rounds and the target must make a -20 Willpower test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
21	With the whoosh of oxygen kindling the fire, the target's limb immediately combusts, flames seething out from where the attack landed. The target suffers Agility Decay (2d10-WPb). If this would result in a value lower than 0, it is treated as 0 instead. Further, the target gains the Burning (1d5) condition.
22	The blast of energy punches a hole straight through the target's limb, burning a hole through the muscle and out the other side as it wracks the limb. The target suffers Agility Decay (3d10-WPb). If this would result in a value lower than 0, it is treated as 0 instead. Further, the target gains the Burning (1d5) condition.
23-24	Energy writhes across the target's limb, burning away the skin to reveal the red, spasming mass of muscle and bone beneath. The limb is Crippled until the wound is healed and the target gains the Burning (1d5) condition. Further, the target's Agility characteristic is permanently reduced by 1.
25	The strike collides with the end of the target's limb, burning off a number of digits or other protrusions. 1d5 of the limb's digits are seared off (if it has any). The limb is Crippled until the wound is healed and the target gains the Burning (1d5) condition. Further, the target's Agility characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
26	The heat of the attack boils the marrow in the target's limb, exploding shards of burning bone into his shoulder and chest. The limb is Crippled until the wound is healed and the target gains the Burning (1d5) condition. Further, the target's Agility characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
27	The blast consumes the first segment of the target's limb, leaving the target with a smouldering stump and an expression of shock plastered across his face. The target suffers the Lost Limb condition, gains the Burning (1d5) condition, and must make a -30 Willpower test or be Stunned for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
28	With the terrifying roar of burning air and flesh turning to ash, the strike carbonises half of the limb, ceasing just below the elbow, knee, or other relevant joint. The target suffers the Lost Limb condition, gains the Burning (1d10) condition, and must make a -30 Willpower test or fall Unconscious for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
29	The ravaging energies of the attack eat away the entire limb and a chunk of his chest to top it off, devouring armour, flesh, muscle, and finally bone as the target screams in incoherent agony. The target suffers the Lost Limb condition, gains the Burning (1d10) condition, and must make a -30 Willpower test or fall Unconscious for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
30 or higher	With a bonfire's roar, the blazing energy incinerates the target's limb and no small part of his torso, hurling his charred remains to the ground in an ashy heap. The target must make a -30 Willpower test or perish outright. If, by some miracle, he survives, the target suffers the Lost Limb condition, gains the Burning (1d10+5) condition, and becomes Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, his Agility characteristic is permanently reduced by 2d10.

TABLE 7-5: ENERGY WOUND EFFECTS - BODY

RESULT	EFFECT
8 or lower	The blaze catches the target full in the chest, scorching his armour and leaving him gasping for breath and unpleasantly warm, but otherwise mostly unharmed.
9	The strike grazes the target's shoulder, leaving a burning trail where it passed. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he is Weakened (1) for 1 round.
10	The shot strikes the target's chest and combusts, briefly shrouding him in a fireball and filling his lungs with smoke before sputtering out. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he gains 1 fatigue.
11	Scorching heat pulses out from the target's chest, causing him to grip at the painful burn involuntarily. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he is Weakened (2) for 1 round.
12	The blast sears his armour, scorching his skin where it strikes. The target gains 1 fatigue. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he is Weakened (2) for 1 round.
13	The strike rips across the target's chest, charring a vertical line of embers into his armour or skin that threatens to spread to his whole chest. The target suffers Willpower Decay (1d5). He must make an Agility test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (1) condition.
14	The target lets out a grunt of pain as a painful blaze sprouts upon his chest, burning his armour and blistering his skin where it passes. The target suffers Willpower Decay (1d5+1). He must make a -10 Agility test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
15	The scent of charred skin and burning fat wafts up from where the blast burned through the target's armour to cook the skin from his chest beneath. The target suffers Willpower Decay (1d5+2). He must make a -20 Agility test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
16	His chest set ablaze by the strike, the target staggers backward, attempting to prevent the fire from spreading. The target suffers Willpower Decay (1d5+3). He must make a -30 Agility test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
17	Flames ripple out from where the shot strikes the target, hungrily seeking to turn his torso into a blazing pyre. The target suffers Willpower Decay (1d10). He must make a -30 Agility test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degrees of failure on the test.
18	The attack washes over the target, superheating his armour and igniting the skin beneath. The target gains the Burning (1d5) condition.
19	The target screams and claws at his smoking flesh where the blaze struck him, flailing madly as the tormenting fire spreads up his chest. The target gains the Burning (1d10) condition.
20	Energy sears across the target's chest, melting a gaping hole in his armour and frying the exposed skin underneath. The target gains the Burning (1d10+1) condition. The armour on his body location has its AP reduced by 1 until it is repaired.
21	Every nerve in the flesh of the target's torso screams out in agony as the energy greedily laps at his flesh, burning away all skin it touches. The target gains the Burning (1d10+2) condition. The armour on his body location has its AP reduced by 2 until it is repaired.
21	With a hiss of vaporising flesh and the crackle of burning bone, the target's chest is completely consumed in flame. The target gains the Burning (1d10+3) condition. Further, his Willpower characteristic is permanently reduced by 1.
22	The strike plunges deep into the target's chest, turning his skin to ash and igniting the raw muscle and bone beneath. The target gains the Burning (1d10+4) condition and must make a -30 Agility test or fall Unconscious for 1 round. Further, his Willpower characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
23	The blistering shot slams into the target's ribcage, superheating it and cooking the organs beneath. The target is set on fire. The target gains the Burning (1d10+4) condition and must make a -30 Agility test or fall Unconscious for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure. Further, his Willpower characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5+1.
24	Energy surges into the target's abdomen and acrid smoke billows forth from the burning crater that once contained vital organs. The target gains the Burning (1d10+5) condition and must make a -30 Agility test or fall Unconscious for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure. He suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition. Further, his Willpower characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5+2.
25	The shot burns a hole in target's chest, incinerating large chunks in fire and passing clean out the other side. The target gains the Burning (1d10+5) condition and falls unconscious until the wound is healed. He suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition for 1d5 of his major organs. Further, his Willpower characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
26-27	Most of the target's chest is burned away by the attack, his organs and bones sputtering and popping as the heat violently boils the blood and marrow within. The target is slain instantly in this foul manner.
28	The target's whole torso vanishes in a hiss of energy and a cloud of boiling red mist, his ignited body parts dispersing in random directions and colliding with those nearby. Anyone within 1d5 metres must make a +10 Evade (A) test or be struck with a chunk of burning limb or skull and gain the Burning (1) condition.
29 or higher	The target is entirely carbonised by the attack, his melting flesh briefly falling from his crumbling bones before the whole of his mortal shell collapses in a ash heap. The target is slain, and anyone within 1d10 metres must make an Evade (A) test; if a character fails, he gains the Burning (1d5) condition as he is splattered in flaming charnel. Those who witness this terrible demise must make a -20 Fear (Fleeing, Mania) test.

TABLE 7-6: ENERGY WOUND EFFECTS - HEAD

RESULT	EFFECT
5 or lower	The shot blazes over the target's head by mere millimetres, setting his hair on fire for a brief second. Although his eyebrows might never fully grow back, these injuries from this attack are negligible.
6-7	The blast of energy ripples across the target's head, causing superficial but agonising burns all across his face and neck and overwhelming his eyes with painful radiance. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he is Blinded for 1 round.
8	The attack narrowly misses the target's head, showering him in dazzling sparks that leave a series of tiny craters pitting his face. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he is Dazed for 1 round.
9	The strike sears past the target's face, burning his eyes and grazing a thin, smouldering scar into his cheek. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he is Blinded and Dazed for 1 round.
10-11	In a roar of ignited air, the rushing energy collides with the target's forehead, where it painfully scorches a small patch of flesh and then disperses in a blinding flash. The is Blinded for 1 round. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's WPb, he is Dazed for 1 round and falls Prone.
12	The target tries desperately to shields his eyes an instant before the shot strikes him in the forehead, knocking him off balance and temporarily blinding him. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (1d5). He must make a Willpower test; if he fails, he is Blinded for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure.
13	The scent of burning and skin hair fills the air as the target slaps at his scorched head, attempting to prevent the fire from swallowing him. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (1d5). He must make a Willpower test; if he fails, he gains the Burning (1) condition.
14-15	The blaze smashes square into the target's nose, energy rippling across his face and robbing him of his senses for a harrowing moment. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (1d10). He must make a -10 Willpower test; if he fails, he is Blinded for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure and gains the Burning (1) condition.
16	The target rocks backwards as the shot careens into his forehead, his vision briefly muddled by the blistering display. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (1d10). He must make a -20 Willpower test; if he fails, he is Blinded for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure and gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degree of failure.
17-18	The wave of energy crashes on the target's jaw, leaving an enflamed and ugly set of burns across his neck. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (1d10). He must make a -30 Willpower test; if he fails, he is Blinded for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure and gains the Burning (X) condition, where X is equal to his degree of failure.
19	Acrid smoke wafts upward as sparks pour from the target's head where the attack struck him, choking him. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (2d10) and gains the Burning (1) condition.
20	Deadly energy incinerates most of the target's hair and causes his scalp to blister into a splotchy red patchwork of painful abscesses. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (2d10) and gains the Burning (1d5) condition.
21	The target collapses, clutching his scorched and swollen face, which now bears a scarred patch just beneath the eyes. The target suffers Fellowship Decay (2d10) and gains the Burning (1d5+1) condition. He is Dazed for 1d5-Pb rounds (to a minimum of 0).
22	The attack roars past the target, narrowly missing his skull, but charring his skin. The target is Stunned for 2 rounds and gains the Burning (1d5+2) condition. Further, the target's Fellowship characteristic is permanently reduced by 1.
23	The target clasps his face and cries out, holding the newly scorched flesh on one side of his face that surrounds one eye. The target is Stunned for 3 rounds and gains the Burning (1d5+3) condition. He suffers the Eye Crippled condition until the wound is healed. Further, the target's Fellowship characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
24	The strike burns a scorching path into the target's eye. The target clutches his face and reels, blood and other fluids from his incinerated eye weeping out of the blistered socket. The target is Stunned for 3 rounds and gains the Burning (1d10) condition. He suffers the Lost Eye condition. Further, the target's Fellowship characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
25-26	The target lets out a bloodcurdling scream as fire devours half his face, instantly burning away one of his eyes and ears, and much of his nose. The target is Blinded until the wound is healed and gains the Burning (1d10+1) condition. He suffers the Lost Eye condition. Further, the target's Fellowship characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
27	With a sickening series of pops, the target's eyes burst and his flesh boils as an inferno fully envelops his face. The target is suffers the Burning (1d10+2) condition. He suffers the Lost Eye Condition for both (or all, if he has more than two) of his eyes. Further, the target's Fellowship characteristic is permanently reduced by 2d10+5.
28	A roaring spout of energy consumes the target's head, blasting it to fleshy shards. When the surge of power finally passes, the target's now-headless, smouldering corpse collapses to the ground.
29	The strike catches the target full in the face, his flesh sloughing away before his skull ignites. Screaming wordlessly, he stumbles forward for several seconds before expiring. The character dies in horrific agony, and his corpse stumbles 1d5 metres in a randomly chosen direction (see the Scatter Diagram on page 205). If he collides with any other characters during this movement, that character must make a -10 Fear (Fleeing, Mania) test.
30 or higher	A wave of energy strikes the target's skull, burning its way inside before splattering his ignited brain-matter across anyone unfortunate enough to be nearby. Each character within 1d5 metres must make a +0 Evasion (A) test; if a character fails, he gains the Burning (1) condition, ignited by the blazing chunks of cranial tissue. Further, any who witness this horrendous display of misfortune must make a -20 Fear (Fleeing, Mania) test.

TABLE 7-7: IMPACT WOUND EFFECTS - LIMB

RESULT	EFFECT
6 or lower	The shot deflects off a dense clump of bone or muscle in the target's limb, leaving a painful welt where landed.
7	The strike catches the limb near a nerve, causing it to go numb for a moment. If the limb is holding anything and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he drops anything he is holding in that limb. Anything dropped this way scatters 1d10 metres in a randomly determined direction.
8-9	The shot pummels the limb, forcing it back and throwing the target off-balance. If that limb is supporting the target and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he falls Prone.
10	The strike slams into the end of the limb, and the target recoils from the stinging blow. If the limb is one he uses to attack, and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he cannot attack with that limb for 1 round and falls Prone.
11	The target staggers as the attack catches a nerve in the limb, sending pain shooting through the extremity. The target must make an Agility test; if he fails, he is Slowed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure and falls Prone.
12	With a crunch, the blow slams into the limb near where it connects to the body, leaving it deadened from the impact. The target must make a -10 Agility test; if he fails, the limb is Crippled for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
13	The shot punches deep into the muscle of the limb, straining it and causing the target excruciating pain where it struck. The target must make a -20 Agility test. If he fails and the limb is one that supports him, he is Slowed for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure; if he fails and the limb is one he uses to attack, the limb is Crippled for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure.
14	The blow pounds the limb, causing it to twist well beyond its limits and tearing the muscles and ligaments within. The target must make a -30 Agility test. If he fails and the limb is one that supports him, he is Slowed for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure; if he fails and the limb is one he uses to attack, the limb is Crippled for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure.
15	The strike resounds with a meaty thump that carries throughout the target's entire body and causes the limb to fall limply at his side. The target suffers Ballistic Skill Decay (1d5). The limb is Crippled for 1d5 rounds.
16	The target lets out an involuntary cry as the impact causes the muscles in the limb to spasm uncontrollably. The target suffers Ballistic Skill Decay (1d10) and the limb is Crippled for 1d5+1 rounds.
17	The shot fractures the largest bone in the target's limb and rips the attached muscles, causing the target severe pain any time he moves. The target suffers Ballistic Skill Decay (1d10) and the limb is Crippled for 1d5+2 rounds.
18-19	The strike enters the limb and punches out the other side, snapping the bone and carrying a chunk of muscle out in a small spray of gore. The target suffers 1 fatigue and the limb is Crippled until the wound is healed.
20	The shot punctures the limb, shattering the bone into several jagged pieces and driving it through the target's straining muscle. The target suffers Blood Loss (1) and the limb is Crippled until the wound is healed.
21	The blow tears open one of the target's limbs or joints and wrenches it to a new and inventive angle it was never meant to reach. The target is knocked Prone and suffers Blood Loss (1), and the limb is Crippled until the wound is healed.
22	The target suddenly finds himself airborne as the shot punches into him, fracturing one of his limbs and lifting him off of the ground before gravity drags him back down. The target is knocked Prone and suffers Blood Loss (2), and the limb is Crippled until the wound is healed.
23-24	The attack bashes into the target and smashes its way deep into his flesh, bowling him over and smashing the limb it struck to pieces. The target suffers Blood Loss (3) and Ballistic Skill Decay (1d10+5). Further, he must make a -30 Agility test. If he succeeds, the limb is Crippled until the wound is healed. If he fails, he suffers the Lost Limb condition.
25	Pain overwhelms the target for a moment as his very bones snap like twigs under the force of the blow. The target is Stunned for 1 round. He suffers Blood Loss (3). Further, he must make a -30 Agility test. If he succeeds, the limb is Crippled until the wound is healed. If he fails, he suffers the Lost Limb condition.
26	The sickening sound of bone splintering reverberates from the impact as the limb is turned into a bloody, unusable ruin. The target suffers Blood Loss (4) and is Stunned for 2 rounds. Further, he suffers the Lost Limb condition, and his Ballistic Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
27	With a violent snap, the target's bones are shattered, emerging as jagged, broken spears from the pulverised limb as the target collapses under the brutal strike. The target suffers Blood Loss (5), is hurled 1d5 metres away from the source of the attack, and is knocked Unconscious for 1d5+2 rounds. Further, the target suffers the Lost Limb condition and his Ballistic Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
28-29	In a shower of blood and gore, the target is permanently and messily parted from his limb. The target suffers Blood Loss (6), is hurled 1d10 metres away from the source of the attack, and is knocked Unconscious for 1d5+3 rounds. Further, the target suffers the Lost Limb condition and his Ballistic Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
30 or higher	With the horrendous and wet echo of muscle, viscera, and bone being torn asunder, the attack rips into the target's limb and threatens to continue on into more vital targets in his chest. The target must make a -30 Agility test or die (in indescribable agony) as the attack messily tears his limb off and pierces his heart. If, by some miracle, he avoids being slain, he suffers Blood Loss (12), is hurled 1d10 metres away from the source of the attack, and is knocked Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, he suffers the Lost Limb condition and his Ballistic Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10+5.

TABLE 7-8: IMPACT WOUND EFFECTS - BODY

RESULT	EFFECT
7 or lower	The strike impacts the target's body, colliding with his ribs instead of hitting something more vulnerable. It leaves him in pain and bruised, but otherwise unharmed.
8	Whirring narrowly past a more vital spot, the shot grazes across the target's chest, leaving an extremely unpleasant welt as a sign of its passage. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he is Weakened (1) for 1 round.
9-10	The blow clips the target's shoulder, creating a harsh furrow upon armour or a gash in his flesh. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he suffers 1 fatigue.
11	The brutal strike smashes into the target's solar plexus, causing him to double over in pain and leaving him vulnerable for a moment. The target suffers 1 fatigue and is Dazed for 1 round
12	The target's stance and focus shatter as the blow hammers into him, and he stumbles and coughs. The target is Dazed for 1 round, and must make a Strength test or be pushed 1 metre away from the source of the attack per degree of failure.
13	The attack slams into the target with such force that it sends him reeling. The target is Dazed for 2 rounds, and must make a Strength test or be pushed 1 metre away from the source of the attack per degree of failure and fall Prone.
14	Muscles strain and ribs creak as the shot pummels the target's chest, crushing the air from his lungs as they rapidly collapse. The target gains 1 fatigue and is Dazed for 1d5-Sb rounds (to a minimum of 0).
15	The target's chest caves slightly as the impact plows into him. He staggers before retching up something unpleasant and flecked with blood. The target gains 1 fatigue and is Dazed and Weakened (2) for 1d5-Sb (to a minimum of 0) rounds.
16	The strike thuds loudly against the target's midsection, violently rearranging his internal organs. The target gains 1 fatigue and is Dazed and Weakened (2) for 1d10-Sb (to a minimum of 0) rounds.
17-18	The sudden blow catches the target in his side, denting his armour, rattling his ribs, and hurling him to the ground. The armour on the target's body location suffers 1 level of damage (see page 131). The target is knocked Prone and must make a -10 Strength test or be Dazed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
19	A thump echoes out from the target's chest as the blow pounds into him, cracking his armour and punching a shallow wound into his flesh. The armour on the target's body location suffers 2 levels of damage (see page 131). The target is knocked Prone, and must make a -20 Strength test or be Dazed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
20	A sizable hole opens in the target's armour and rapidly fills with seeping blood. The armour on the target's body location suffers 3 levels of damage (see page 131). The target is Stunned for 1d5-Sb rounds (to a minimum of 0) and suffers Blood Loss (1).
21	With a solid crunch, the strike plows into a soft spot, forcing the target to double over in pain and hacking up a surge of blood. The target suffers Toughness Decay (1d5) and Blood Loss (1).
22	The strike perforates the target, passing through muscles and organs with a terrible squelch and a wailing shriek. The target suffers Toughness Decay (1d5+1) and Blood Loss (2).
23	The attack bashes into the target and crushes deep into his flesh, bowling him over and snapping several of his ribs in the process. The target suffers Toughness Decay (1d5+2) and Blood Loss (3). He is Weakened (1) until the wound is healed.
24	With a grunt, the target drops to one knee and grits his teeth against the pain, struggling to stay conscious as he rasps for breath. The target suffers Toughness Decay (1d5+3) and is Weakened (2) until the wound is healed. He must make -30 Strength test or be Stunned for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
25	Pain overwhelms the target for a moment as he feels his ribs snap under the weight of the blow and stab painfully into the organs they once protected. The target suffers Toughness Decay (1d10) and is Weakened (3) until the wound is healed. He must make -30 Strength test or fall Unconscious for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
26	The target collapses in a heap of tangled limbs and protruding ribs as the blow bowls into him like an enraged grox. He suffers Toughness Decay (2d10) and Blood Loss (4), and falls Unconscious for 1d5 rounds.
27-28	The strike impales the target, piercing one of his lungs and causing him to violently cough up a pool of his own blood and then collapsing into it. The target suffers Blood Loss (5) and falls Unconscious for 1d5+2 rounds. Further, the target's Toughness characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5 and he suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition.
29	The shot impacts with the target's abdomen, passing through his organs and exploding out of his back, followed by a torrent of viscera and screams. The target suffers Blood Loss (6) and falls Unconscious for 1d10+5 rounds. Further, the target's Toughness characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10 and he suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition.
30	The target lets out a guttural cry of pain as the attack perforates his armour, smashes his ribs to pieces, and directly pierces into his heart. The target suffers Blood Loss (12) and falls Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, the target's Toughness characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10+5 and he suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition for 1d5 of his major organs.
31 or higher	With a horrendous and wet echo of muscle, viscera, and bone being torn asunder, the attack blasts the target apart completely. His head and limbs fly off in all directions like so much bloody shrapnel. Characters within 1d10 metres must make a -10 Evade (A) test or be struck with a chunk of flesh that inflicts a single hit for 1d10 Impact damage to a randomly selected location (with penetration of 0 and number of degrees of success equal to the character's degrees of failure on the test). Anyone struck by one of these gruesome missiles must also make a -10 Fear (Cowering) test.

TABLE 7-9: IMPACT WOUND EFFECTS - HEAD

RESULT	EFFECT
6 or lower	Miraculously, the strike glances off the target's head without causing serious harm. The attack does, however, leave an angry bruise on his face.
7	The strike smashes into the target's cheek, straining his neck as it is violently snapped to the side. If the degrees of success on the attack roll are greater than the target's Tb, he suffers is Dazed for 1 round and suffers 1 fatigue.
8	The blow lands upon the target's brow, slamming his head down and leaving a deep bruise on his forehead. If the degrees of success on the attack roll are greater than the target's Tb, he suffers 1 fatigue and is knocked Prone.
9	The shot smashes into the target's upper lip, breaking one of his front teeth and filling his mouth with blood and agony. If the degrees of success on the attack roll are greater than the target's Tb, he is Dazed for 1 round, is knocked Prone, and suffers 1 fatigue.
10	With a crunch, the blow slams into the target's temple, causing him to reel backward as searing spots of light fill his vision. The target suffers 1 fatigue. He must make a Toughness test; if he fails, he is Stunned for 1 round.
11	The strike clangs off the target's skull, rattling his brain and leaving his ears ringing. He must make a -10 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Deafened for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
12	The strike catches the target in the throat, crunching his trachea. The blow is not enough to crush his windpipe, but the experience is agonising and terrifying nonetheless. The target suffers 2 fatigue. He must make a -10 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Dazed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
13	The target staggers and fights for concentration as the attack smashes into the bridge of his nose, shattering the cartilage and shaking his skull. The target suffers 2 fatigue and must make a -20 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Dazed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
14-15	The blow cracks into the target's jaw, knocking out several of his teeth. The target spits out 1d5 of his teeth. He suffers 2 fatigue and must make a -20 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Dazed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
16	A resounding thump echoes through the target's skull as the shot catches him in the back of the head, the pain blinding him for several seconds of horrendous agony. The target suffers Intelligence Decay (1d5). He must make a -20 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Blinded for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
17	The shot smashes into the target's forehead and his skull creaks under the pressure. The target suffers 2 fatigue and Intelligence Decay (1d5+1). He must make a -20 Toughness test; if he fails, he is Stunned for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
18-19	With a sickening crack, the blow puts a hairline fracture in the target's skull, the intense pressure briefly shutting down his optic nerves. The target suffers Intelligence Decay (1d5+2) and is Blinded for 1d5 rounds.
20	The shot punches the target's temple, cracking his skull on that side and leaving him vulnerable as his mind scrabbles to right itself. The target suffers Intelligence Decay (1d10) and becomes Stunned and Helpless for 1 round.
21	With a crunch and the wet ripping of flesh, the strike slams into the target's ear, crushing the delicate organ or tearing it off entirely. The target loses the ear in question, suffers Blood Loss (3), and must make a -30 Toughness test or become Unconscious for 1 round. Further, the target is Deafened until the wound is healed.
22	The blow robs the target of his sight temporarily, shattering the back of his skull and disrupting the optic nerve. The target Blood Loss (4) and must make a -30 Toughness test or become Unconscious for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure. Further, the target is Blinded until the wound is healed.
23	The shot pummels the target's forehead, shredding away the skin and smashing a shallow rut in the bone beneath, stopping just before it would enter his brain. The target suffers Blood Loss (5) and becomes Unconscious for 1d5+2 rounds. He is also Dazed until the wound is healed.
24-25	The strike pierces into one of the target's eyes, gouging it out and cracking the socket with the force of the impact. The target suffers Blood Loss (6) and becomes Unconscious for 3 rounds. Further, the target suffers the Lost Eye condition.
26	The bridge of the target's nose shatters under the weight of the blow, pulverising his nose and hurling piercing spurs of bone up into his skull. The target becomes Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, his Intelligence characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
27	The shot hammers into the target's jaw just beneath his ear, the force of the impact breaking his jaw and causing blood to spurt from both of his ears. The target suffers Blood Loss (7). He becomes Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, his Intelligence characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10 and he becomes permanently Deafened.
28	The shot punctures the target's skull, sending bits of bone and chunks of brain-matter flying in all directions. The target suffers Blood Loss (12). He becomes Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, his Intelligence characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10 and he becomes permanently Blinded.
29	The impact pierces the target's skull, smashing directly into his brain and pulping it. The target is slain instantly.
30 or higher	The impact obliterates his skull, spraying brains and bits of bone onto anyone nearby as his recently-headless corpse staggers for a moment before collapsing. Characters within 1d5 metres must make a -10 Evade (A) test or be struck by this skull shrapnel, which inflicts a single hit for 1d5+2 Rending damage to a randomly selected location (with penetration of 1 and number of degrees of success equal to the character's degrees of failure on the test). Any character who witness his awful demise must make a -10 Fear (Cowering, Mania) test.

TABLE 7-10: RENDING WOUND EFFECTS - LIMB

RESULT	EFFECT
6 or lower	The stroke glances off the limb, its edge turned aside without biting. The flesh that it struck turns a sickly shade of brown as a bruise rapidly forms, but the target is otherwise mostly unharmed.
7-8	The slash catches the target's limb and leaves a superficial cut surrounded by a large, unpleasant swollen patch of flesh. If that limb is supporting the target, and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he is Slowed for 1 round.
9	The strike smashes into a joint on the target's limb, cutting a shallow gash in the skin and twisting the limb out of position. If the limb is one the target uses to attack, and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, it is Crippled for 1 round.
10	The blow hews into the target's limb, nicking the tendons as it passes. The target suffers Blood Loss (1). If the limb is supporting the target, and the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he is Slowed for 2 rounds and falls Prone.
11-12	The attack shears a deep cut in the limb, the stroke terminating when it collides painfully with a joint. The target suffers Blood Loss (1). He must make a -10 Strength test. If he fails, and the limb is one he uses to attack, he suffers Weapon Skill Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure. If he fails and the limb is supporting him, he is Slowed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
13	The downward stroke gouges through the meat of the limb, ripping apart the muscle in its path and creating a long, bloody gash. The target suffers Blood Loss (2). He must make a -20 Strength test. If he fails, and the limb is one he uses to attack, he suffers Weapon Skill Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure. If he fails, and the limb is supporting him, he is Slowed for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
14-15	The target grunts a ragged breath through his teeth and retreats as the blow rends the limb and smashes into the bone beneath, fracturing it. The target suffers Blood Loss (2). He must make a -30 Strength test. If he fails, the limb becomes Crippled for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
16	The weapon's edge flicks out and a trail of crimson spurts up where it passes, severing veins and cutting a long gash in the muscle of the limb. The target suffers Blood Loss (3). He must make a -30 Strength test; if he fails, the limb becomes Crippled for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
17-18	A deep cut emerges near where the limb joins the body, passing through a chunk of muscle and perilously near to a vital artery. The target suffers Blood Loss (3). He must make a -30 Strength test. If he fails, the limb becomes Crippled for a number of rounds equal to his degrees of failure.
19	The blow severs one of the target's digits (fingers, toes, or just the end of the limb if it lacks these). The target suffers Blood Loss (4), Ballistic Skill Decay (1d5), and Weapon Skill Decay (1d5). The limb becomes Crippled for 1d5+2 rounds.
20	The target lets out an involuntary cry as the slash cuts a bloody path through the major tendons of the limb, leaving the limb to sag useless at his side. The target suffers Blood Loss (4). The limb becomes Crippled until the wound is healed.
21	The attack bites deep into the limb and the target staggers back, a scream ripping its way past his lips as he grips the slashed appendage. The target suffers Blood Loss (5) and Weapon Skill Decay (1d5+1). The limb becomes Crippled until the wound is healed.
22	The tip of the limb fly into the air, severed from the shrieking target. The target loses 1d5 digits from the limb (fingers, toes, or just the tip of the limb if it lacks these). The target suffers Blood Loss (5) and Weapon Skill Decay (1d10). The limb becomes Crippled until the wound is healed.
23	The stroke rends the limb near where it attaches to the body, slashing flesh and fracturing the bones at the joint. The target is Dazed for 1d5 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (6). The limb becomes Crippled until the wound is healed.
24-25	The attack severs the last segment of the limb, leaving the target staring in agonised wonderment at the red river flowing from his bloody stump. The target is Stunned for 1d5 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (6). Further, the target suffers the Lost Limb condition.
26	The stroke neatly bisects the limb and the severed half drops to the ground and lands twitching in a pool of the target's blood. The target is Stunned for 1d5+2 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (7). Further, the target suffers the Lost Limb condition and his Weapon Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
27-29	With the sickening splatter of muscle and bone part before steel, the target is parted from his limb near where it joins the body. The target is Stunned for 1d10+2 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (8). Further, the target suffers the Lost Limb condition and his Weapon Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
30 or higher	The slash hacks off the limb entirely and passes through, heading towards the target's torso. An arterial jet spews forth from the dismembered individual, coating the area around him in slick, crimson blood, and he collapses. The target must make a -30 Strength test to avoid being completely bisected after the attack cleaves through his limb; if he fails, he is slain instantly. If the God-Emperor smiles upon him and he survives, the target suffers Blood Loss (16) and is knocked Unconscious until the wound is healed. Further, he suffers Lost Limb condition and his Weapon Skill characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10+5. The 1d10 metres around the target are sprayed in blood and becomes difficult terrain (see page 204) until the end of the encounter.

TABLE 7-11: RENDING WOUND EFFECTS - BODY

RESULT	EFFECT
6 or lower	With the unsettling sound, the strike deflects off of the target, leaving a long, thin line across his armour or flesh. The noise is unpleasant, but the blow does not inflict acute injury.
7	The slash parts the air and the target's armour alike, passing across his shoulder. As the target instinctively moves his hand to cover the stinging wound, he feels his shed blood welling up beneath it. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he suffers 1 fatigue.
8-9	The blow slices into a gap or vulnerability in the target's armour beneath his arm, cutting a shallow, bloody furrow along his side. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he suffers Blood Loss (1).
10-11	Scarlet agony flares from the target's side as the attack slices a shallow gash across his flank. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Sb, he suffers Blood Loss (2).
12	The strike lacerates the target's side, cutting just beneath his ribs and tossing a plume of blood into the air. The target suffers Blood Loss (3). He must make a -10 Toughness test; if he fails, he suffers Strength Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
13	The blade whistles through the air before squelching into the target's shoulder, tracing the line of his collarbone with its cruel edge. The target suffers Blood Loss (3). He must make a -20 Toughness test; if he fails, he suffers Strength Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
14	The strike impales the target through the shoulder before withdrawing in a spurt of blood. The target suffers Blood Loss (3). He must make a -30 Toughness test; if he fails, he suffers Strength Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
15	The slash parts the flesh of the target's neck, narrowly missing an artery. The target is Dazed for 1 round. He must make a -10 Toughness test. If he fails, he suffers Blood Loss (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
16	The target recoils in agony as the blade hacks into his side, spilling gouts of his blood. The target is Dazed for 2 rounds. He must make a -20 Toughness test. If he fails, he suffers Blood Loss (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
17	A grinding crunch reverberates from the target's chest as the blade cuts directly into the target's sternum and sticks for a moment before being wrenched out. The target is Dazed for 3 rounds. He must make a -30 Toughness test. If he fails, he suffers Blood Loss (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
18-19	With a bloody squelch that immediately sours all but the most degraded of appetites, the cruel strike opens a vicious rent in the target's abdomen. The target is Weakened (1) and Dazed for 1d5+2 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (5).
20	The slash hews into the target's flesh and nicks one of his lungs, leaving him to painfully hack up blood as it slowly drains into the breach. The target is Weakened (1) and Dazed for 1d5+3 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (6).
21	The target finds himself contemplating the copious amounts of blood on his hands, wondering for a moment of sanguine reverie if it is his own before the pain seizes his mind and alerts him of the spurting gash in his chest. The target is Weakened (1) and Dazed for 1d5+3 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (6).
22-23	The slash contemptuously shreds the target's armour and slides under his arm and into his chest, gutting him painfully, if perhaps not (yet) fatally. The target is Weakened (2) and Dazed for 1d10 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (7).
24	With the clomp of a cleaver severing meat and bone, the slash parts several of the target's ribs, causing him to spurt blood, convulse, and stagger screaming. The target suffers Blood Loss (7) and must make a -30 Toughness test or fall Prone. He is Weakened (1) until the wound is healed.
25-26	A flood of blood, viscera, and excruciating pain spills forth as the brutal cut opens the way through target's abdomen, leaving him doubled over in pain and scrambling for his guts. The target suffers Blood Loss (8) and must make a -30 Toughness test or fall Prone. He is Weakened (2) and Dazed until the wound is healed. Further, his Strength characteristic is permanently reduced by 1.
26	The upward slash hews through the target's armour and underbelly. The target suffers Blood Loss (9) and falls Prone. He is Weakened (2) and Dazed until the wound is healed. Further, his Strength characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5, and he must make a -30 Toughness test; if he fails, he suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition.
28-29	The target lets out an involuntary and blood-curdling shriek of agony as the strike cuts him stem to stern. Blood sprays from the red canyon that was once his chest and leaves his still-beating heart exposed. The target suffers Blood Loss (10) and falls Unconscious for 1d5+2 rounds. Further, he suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition and his Strength characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10+5.
30	The spine-severing stroke halves the target's organs and parts the target's vertebrae permanently, leaving his two halves attached by what might seem comically little flesh. The target suffers Blood Loss (20) and falls Unconscious until the wound is healed. If he survives the initial effects of the wound, the target suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition and the Lost Limb condition for any organs and limbs below the waist, and his Strength characteristic is permanently reduced by 2d10+5. Additionally, blood sprays out 1d10 metres around him, making this area difficult terrain (see page 204) for the remainder of the encounter.
31 or higher	The target is shorn completely in half by the ferocity of the slash, eviscerated beyond any hope of repair. The target is dead, and the 1d10 metres around him are bathed in a veritable sea of gore. Anyone within this area is sprayed with blood and viscera and must make a +0 Fear (Mania) test. This area now is considered difficult terrain for the remainder of the encounter (see page 204).

TABLE 7-12: RENDING WOUND EFFECTS - HEAD

RESULT	EFFECT
4 or lower	In a hiss of air, the blade caresses the target's cheek, cutting a red line just below his eye. Although hardly pleasant, this minor cut's effects are largely cosmetic.
5	The strike deflects off the target's jawbone, leaving a small cut and a purple bruise around it. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he suffers 1 fatigue.
6	A bloody gash appears across the target's forehead in the attack's wake, causing the target to clutch at his bleeding scalp. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he suffers Blood Loss (1).
7	With a crack and the wet swish of blood flying through the air, the hit glances painfully off the target's jaw, sending him stumbling. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he suffers Blood Loss (1) and is Dazed for 1 round.
8	The edge slices through the target's cheek, causing a distracting spike of pain in his face as blood blurs his vision. If the attack test scored a number of degrees of success greater than the target's Ab, he suffers Blood Loss (1) and is Blinded for 1 round.
9-10	The edge nicks the target's temple, causing pain to shoot through his skull, forcing him to fight through the agony to find his balance. The target suffers Blood Loss (1) and is Dazed for 1 round.
11	The target is left with a gash that divides his ear in half as the vicious blow shears down the side of his head. The target suffers Blood Loss (2). He must make a -10 Agility test or suffer Perception Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
12	The slash rips open the target's eyelid and cuts a notch in his brow, narrowly missing his eye itself but filling the socket with blood. The target suffers Blood Loss (2). He must make a -20 Agility test or suffer Perception Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
13-14	The blow cuts a bloody path just under the target's eyes. It slices through the bridge of his nose and disrupts his balance, leaving him vulnerable to following attack. The target suffers Blood Loss (3). He must make a -30 Agility test or suffer Perception Decay (X), where X is equal to his degrees of failure.
15	With a resounding crack, the blow fractures the target's skull and cuts a chunk out of his forehead. The target is Dazed for 1d5 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (3).
16	The slash swipes across the target's skull and shears off a great deal of his hair, leaving a bloody rent in his scalp that gushes into his eyes and ears. The target is Blinded for 1d5+1 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (4).
17	The hit flays open the target's face, opening a line from above his eye to his jaw, the force of the blow resounding in his skull. The target is Dazed for 1d5+2 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (4).
18	The target stumbles backward, his hands clutching the sizeable gash now dividing his nose and the red waterfall spilling forth from it. The target is Stunned for 1 round and suffers Blood Loss (5).
19-20	The slash opens a bloody furrow in the target's brow just above his eyes, shearing away part of his skull and flooding him in agony. The target is Blinded for 1d5+3 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (5). Further, his Perception characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5.
21	The downward stroke catches in the target's scalp and scrapes roughly down the side of his skull, peeling off one of his ears and some of the flesh from his jaw. The target is Dazed for 1d5+3 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (6). Further, his Perception characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d5+1.
22	The attack catches at the edge of the target's eye socket, fracturing his skull and threatening to flay the delicate organ within. The target is Blinded for 1d10 rounds and suffers Blood Loss (6). Further, he must make a -30 Agility test; if he fails, he suffers the Lost Eye condition.
23-24	The stroke slices through the target's eye socket and gouges out his eye, ruining the eye and leaving him thrashing in agony with his hands covering his eyes. The target suffers Blood Loss (7). He is Blinded until the wound is healed. Further, he suffers the Lost Eye condition.
25	The target is wracked with pain as the blow shears through his jaw on one side, leaving it to hang agape as blood and silent shrieks both pour forth from his ragged throat. The target suffers Blood Loss (7). He is Dazed until the wound is healed. He also suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition for his vocal cords.
26-27	The slash robs the target of his sight, cleaving through both of his eyes and the nerves behind them in a single bloody sweep that dashes the front of his skull. The target suffers Blood Loss (8), is Stunned for 1d5+2 rounds. Further, he suffers the Lost Eye condition for both eyes and his Perception characteristic is permanently reduced by 1d10.
28	The swing gouges through the target's neck with disconcerting ease, sliding through his trachea with a hollow thwack followed by a gurgling, bloody scream. The target suffers Blood Loss (20) and falls Unconscious until the wound is healed. If by some harsh miracle he survives, the character suffers the Lost Internal Organ condition for his vocal cords.
29	The top of the target's head flies off, blood pooling around his brains (or at least the half that remain). The target is slain instantly by the attack, but remains standing for a moment before his muscles go slack and he collapses for the last time. Anyone within 5 metres who witnesses his gruesome demise must make a Fear (Mania) test.
30 or higher	With a wet, hacking sound, the blade slices through the target's neck and lops his head clean off. The target dies instantly, and a geyser of scarlet gushes forth from where his head once rested, coating an area of 1d10 metres around him in slick, red blood. Anyone within this area is sprayed with blood and must make a -10 Fear (Mania) test. This area is now considered difficult terrain (see page 204) for the remainder of the encounter.

VEHICLE COMBAT

"Strap in and ready your weapons; we're about to ram!"

-Hermes Dag, moments before impact

Combat is not limited to battles between personal opponents. On habways and battlefields alike across the galaxy, vehicles of all manner of sizes and power are part of Mankind's struggle for survival. This chapter describes how players use vehicles in combat situations, including firing vehicle weapons, ramming, and resolving vehicle damage.

Vehicles in **DARK HERESY** are designed to be integrated directly into structured time. Characters using vehicles in combat still occupy a normal slot in the Initiative order, still act during their turn, and still use action points to take actions. A character embarked in a vehicle can perform many of his normal actions, and can also perform a number of actions exclusive to characters embarked in a vehicle (see page 219). The actions that pertain to direct control over the vehicle usually require the character to be the vehicle's operator (the main driver), while other actions can be performed by a passenger in the vehicle.

EMBARKING IN A VEHICLE

Unless controlled remotely, or a heretical self-guided machine from Mankind's darker ages, all vehicles have the capacity to accommodate an operator and many can hold passengers as well. When a character enters a vehicle (using the Embark/Disembark action, as described on page 219), he is considered to be embarked in that vehicle.

While embarked in a vehicle, a character is either classified as an operator, who controls the vehicle's primary systems, or a passenger, who rides in the vehicle and can use auxiliary systems such as mounted weapons, scanner arrays, and vox equipment. Each vehicle lists how many operators and passengers it can seat. Only an operator embarked in a vehicle can undertake actions with the Operate type with that vehicle.

TARGETING CHARACTERS IN A VEHICLE

Most vehicles provide some form of defence to those riding inside, protecting their operator and passengers by obscuring them behind with thick plasteel walls, metal shells, or even arcane force fields.

By default, characters embarked in a vehicle cannot be targeted with attack actions made by characters not embarked in that vehicle. Some traits and abilities allow characters to fire into or out of vehicles, and, at the Game Master's discretion, certain attack actions (such as mental assaults from psychic powers) might bypass even the thick hull of an armoured tank.

ACTIONS IN VEHICLES

Most vehicles only move as an embarked operator directs them to. The following actions pertain to the use and control of

ATTACKING FROM A VEHICLE

Much as characters embarked in a vehicle cannot normally be attacked from outside, characters embarked in a vehicle cannot normally make attack actions against characters outside of that vehicle with their personal armaments. Vehicle weapons, however, are designed for this exact purpose, and so characters embarked in a vehicle can operate the mounted weapons in the same way they would any other weapon and fire on external targets with them. Each vehicle weapon can only be used for attack actions by a single character each round.

vehicles, however only the embarked character acting as the operator of a vehicle can take actions with the Operate type.

VEHICLE ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

These actions provide characters with options specifically designed for controlling and interacting with vehicles. Certain talents provide characters even more options for operating vehicles (such as those in the Pilot talent tree on page 88). Characters can also use a number of general actions when in a vehicle (see page 220).

EMBARK/DISEMBARK

Type: Movement

Action Points: 2

Use: The character enters the vehicle as an operator or passenger, switches to an empty operator or passenger position, leaves the vehicle, or otherwise repositions himself with regard to the vehicle.

If the vehicle is not moving, this action does not require a test, but if the vehicle is moving the character must attempt a +20 Acrobatics (A) test with a penalty equal to the number of metres the vehicle has moved during this round. If he succeeds, he enters, leaves, or changes seats inside the vehicle as intended. Failure means he tumbles or is merely jostled about within the moving vehicle, and is unable to reach his intended position. He becomes Prone and suffers impact damage equal to two times the degrees of failure by which he failed the test to a randomly selected location.

RAM

Type: Operate

Action Points: 4

Use: The vehicle moves a number of metres up to twice its movement rate in one of its movement vectors (see page 220). The vehicle must move at least a number of metres equal to half of its movement rate in one direction its movement vector allows before turning up to 90 degrees in any direction. Until the end of the round, the vehicle counts as moving.

ON THE GO

Certain Operate actions cause a vehicle to begin moving. Once it has gained momentum this way, the vehicle counts as moving until the end of the round or until something stops it (such the driver using the Regain Control action on it, an attack inflicting a specific breach effect that stops the vehicle, or a violent crash). Whenever direction is relevant, a vehicle in motion is considered to be moving in the direction that it last moved.

A vehicle in motion imposes a penalty equal to the number of metres it has moved this round on attack tests characters outside of the vehicle make targeting it or characters embarked in it (if applicable). A moving vehicle also imposes the same penalty on any attack tests characters embarked in the vehicle make against outside targets.

If the vehicle ends this move engaged in melee with one or more targets, the operator then makes a Pilot attack test. If he succeeds, the vehicle crashes into each target, inflicting the listed hit against the targets and the vehicle (see *Crashing* on page 224). This hit has a number of degrees of success equal to the DoS the operator scored on his Pilot attack test rather than the normal amount. If the operator fails the test, the vehicle failed to strike the target with a ram, and no it inflicts no damage.

When a vehicle is involved in a crash using this action, it reduces the damage it suffers from the crash by an amount equal to the operator's DoS on the attack test.

REGAIN CONTROL

Type: Operate

Action Points: 1

Use: The character brings the vehicle to a controlled speed (or, just as often, a screeching halt). The operator of the vehicle can only use this ability if the vehicle is moving, and makes a +20 Pilot (A) test. If he succeeds, he may choose to have the vehicle stop moving immediately. If the vehicle has the Out of Control condition, he may also choose to reduce the value of the vehicle's Out of Control condition by an amount equal to the DoS scored on the test.

STEER

Type: Operate

Action Points: 2

Use: The vehicle moves a number of metres up to its movement rate in one of its movement vectors (see page 220). The vehicle must move at least a number of metres equal half of its movement rate in one direction allowed by its movement vectors before turning up to 90 degrees in any direction. Until the end of the round, the vehicle counts as moving.

GENERAL ACTIONS IN VEHICLES

In addition to the actions specifically meant for driving vehicles, a character can also perform many actions when embarked in a vehicle.

- If the vehicle has a mounted weapon, he can use any action associated with firing that weapon. Each of the vehicle's weapons can only be used for an attack action once per round.
- He can perform the overhaul or patch breach uses of the Tech-Use skill to attempt to repair breaches that the vehicle has suffered (see *Repairing Vehicles* on page 223).
- He can make attacks against targets within his line of sight as normal (note that unless a vehicle has the Open-Topped trait, the passengers do not normally have line of sight to anyone outside of the vehicle).
- He can use Evasion reactions to avoid attacks that target him (but not to attacks that target the vehicle itself).
- He can take other appropriate actions (including most actions without the Movement type) while embarked a vehicle as the Game Master sees fit, such as using psychic powers or issuing commands.

VEHICLE MOVEMENT

The very purpose of a vehicle is to transport a character from one place to another. Unless external forces are at work, a vehicle can only move via the actions available to its operator that allow him to move the vehicle (see *Vehicle Action Descriptions* on page 219).

MOVEMENT VECTORS

From common groundcars to small vessels that can operate in the void, different vehicles can vary wildly in their modes of locomotion and the resultant directions they can travel. The **Vehicle Arcs Diagram 7-1** on page 222 indicates the three main vehicle facings and directions.

To reflect this diversity, vehicles possess movement vectors, each of which has a movement rate. A vehicle's movement rate in a vector and the action used dictate its speed when moving into that arc.

Forward: When moving in its backward vector, the vehicle can move into its 90-degree forward arc. Almost all vehicles possess this movement vector.

Backward: When moving in its forward vector, the vehicle can move into its 90-degree rear arc. Most ground vehicles possess this movement vector.

Side: When moving to the side, the vehicle can move into its 90-degree left and right arcs. Some ground vehicles (such as most walkers), some skimmers, and many voidcraft possess this movement vector.

Vertical: The vehicle's movement rate when moving vertically off of the ground. This vector dictates its ability to move both up and down. Though technically there is no "up" or "down" in the void, humans tend to organise themselves around such terms. Typically, only skimmers, aeronautica, and voidcraft possess this movement vector.

If a vehicle's movement rate in a given vector is ever 0 or lower, it simply cannot move in the direction that vector would allow. If a vehicle's movement rate in all movement vectors is 0 or lower, it cannot move at all.

TURNING A VEHICLE

Although vehicles are often far faster and vastly more resilient than the average human, they are also usually less nimble. Most vehicles require forward momentum to rotate and thus cannot simply turn in place.

While moving, a vehicle must move a number of metres equal to half of its movement rate in one of its movement vectors before turning up to 90 degrees in any direction. Except as noted, vehicles cannot turn while stationary.

MANOEUVRABILITY

Each vehicle has a manoeuvrability value, which dictates the difficulty of controlling that vehicle. When a vehicle's driver makes a test for an action with the Operate type (or any other test to control the vehicle's movement), he modifies his test by the vehicle's manoeuvrability, applying a modifier depending on whether the value is positive or negative.

VEHICLES AND DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Although vehicles can provide considerable mobility and protection, many vehicles are more susceptible to the dangers presented by hazardous terrain than characters on foot.

When making a test for an action with the Operate type in a harsh environment, a vehicle's operator suffers a penalty as outlined in **Table 7-13: Difficult Terrain and Hazards**.

While manoeuvring in difficult terrain, if the operator of a vehicle fails a test associated with an action with the Operate type by three or more degrees of failure, the vehicle immediately suffers a crash (see page 224). The vehicle is considered to be colliding with an object with a Size trait equal to the degrees of failure by which the operator failed the test.

TABLE 7-13 DIFFICULT TERRAIN AND HAZARDS

MODIFIER	TYPES OF TERRAIN
+0	Clear ground, open ground, paved roadway, or other ground prepared for vehicles.
-10	Deep mud or standing water, drifting sand, ash wastes, or dense undergrowth.
-20	Deep flowing water, rocky or unstable terrain, thick forests, or ruined cityscapes.
-30	Volcanic terrain, quicksand, craggy cliffs, cyclonic winds, or acidic wastes.

ARMOUR FACINGS

One of the primary advantages of vehicles, especially in the scale of combat that typically occurs in **DARK HERESY**, is that they are usually far more resilient than most characters thanks to their armour plates, thick hulls, or resilient construction.

Armour facings have associated armour values, much like the ones characters use. A vehicle has three relevant values that reflect the durability of its armour on its front, its sides, and and its rear. If a vehicle is struck from above, below, or any other angle not covered by these three facings, the shot is considered to strike its rear armour.

ATTACKING VEHICLES

When attacking vehicles, characters follow most of the same steps as when attacking any other target (see **The Attack** on page 201). The differences in the process are noted below.

STEP 1 – CHOOSE ATTACK

This step proceeds exactly as it would for any other attack.

STEP 2 – CHOOSE TARGETS AND DETERMINE ARMOUR FACING

This step proceeds exactly as it would for any other attack, except that the attacker must determine the vehicle facing that he is striking. Vehicle armour is usually distributed in an uneven fashion across a vehicle's chassis, to better protect the passengers or give the vehicle added protection on the facings that are exposed to the most fire. The armour values associated with a vehicle's different armour facings (front, side, and rear) are listed in its profile. When a character chooses to fire upon a vehicle, he must determine the facing upon which he is firing.

Vehicles are divided into four quarters, each of a 90-degree angle (see **Diagram 7-1: Vehicle Arcs** on page 222). The angle in front of the vehicle is the front facing. The two angles to the left and right of the vehicle are its side facings (left and right). The angle behind the vehicle is its rear facing. Attacks that strike a vehicle from above or below are treated as striking its rear facing.

Note that the armour facing is different from the hit location that an attack strikes, which is determined in Step 4 – Determine Hit Locations on page 222.

RIGHTEOUS FURY AND VEHICLES

If a hit inflicts righteous fury (see page 203) against a vehicle, it causes particularly serious damage. If a hit that triggered righteous fury successfully inflicts a breach, it inflicts a critical breach instead (see Apply Breach Effects on page 223).

STEP 3 – MAKE ATTACK TEST

Attack tests to hit vehicles are made in the same manner as attack tests to hit any target, and are resolved as such. Vehicles tend to be larger than characters, and so attackers should take into account any bonuses that the Size trait of the vehicle grants to attacks against it. However, hitting a moving vehicle can be quite difficult, and so the attacker should also be mindful of any penalties that the vehicle’s momentum incurs upon attacks against it (see the **On the Go** sidebar on page 220).

STEP 4 – DETERMINE HIT LOCATIONS

Vehicles have a different set of hit locations than characters, and so this step proceeds as follows. On a successful hit, the attacker needs to determine where the hit landed. To do this, he compares the 1s digit of his attack roll to **Table 7-14: Vehicle Hit Locations**. The determined hit location is struck by the first hit of the attack. For each subsequent hit, the attacker adds 2 to the previous hit’s value, and compares that number to **Table 7-14: Vehicle Hit Locations** to determine the location struck by that hit. If adding 2 in this way results in a value greater than 10, the value “rolls over” to the beginning of the table (subtract 10 from the value).

TABLE 7-14: VEHICLE HIT LOCATIONS

1s DIGIT	LOCATION HIT
1–5	Hull
6–8	Motive Systems
9–10	Weapons Systems

For example, if the attacker hit 4 times with an attack roll of 25, his first hit strikes the target’s hull with 5, then his second hit strikes the motive systems with 7, then his third hit strikes the target’s weapons systems again with 9, and then the final strike hits the target’s hull again with 1.

If a particular vehicle does not possess a motive systems or weapons systems hit location (either due to its absence, such as on an unarmed groundcar, or its prior destruction), any hit that would be applied to these locations is applied to the hull location instead. If a vehicle possesses multiple weapons, apply any hit to the weapons systems location to one specific weapon of the attacker’s choice.

STEP 5 – ATTACK RESULTS

At the end of a successful attack against a vehicle, the attacker determines whether or not each hit caused a breach, and applies any conditions or effects caused by each attack.

INFLECT BREACHES

After hit locations have been assigned, the attacker rolls the damage dealt by each of his hits, and compares it to the defence value of the vehicle facing that he struck to determine whether or not it is enough to breach the armour.

- **Determine Damage:** Each weapon has a damage listing, which is usually a dice roll, plus or minus an additional modifier. For each hit, the attacker rolls the indicated damage dice and applies the modifiers to determine the total damage dealt by the hit.



- **Determine Defence:** The vehicle's defence value on the armour facing that was struck by the hit is equal to the armour value of that facing. Note that, unlike with characters, the hit location that was struck has no impact on the defence value the vehicle uses. A vehicle's defence value is always determined by the armour facing that was struck.

- **Compare Damage and Defence:** To determine whether or not the vehicle suffers a breach from the hit, compare the damage value and the defence value. If the damage value exceeds the defence value, the hit causes the vehicle to gain one breach. (See Apply Breach Effects below for more detail on breaches).

APPLY BREACH EFFECTS

If a hit inflicts a new breach on a vehicle, it also applies a breach effect. To determine the breach effect, the target takes the total damage dealt by the attack (damage value minus defence value) and adds modifiers for any breaches it is currently suffering:

- **Breach:** +5
- **Critical Breach:** +10

The vehicle then compares this value to the Breach Effect table appropriate for the hit location (hull, motive systems, or weapons systems) struck. It immediately applies the effect listed in the appropriate entry of the table.

REPAIRING VEHICLES

Unlike characters, most vehicles (excluding some vehicles with the Living trait) do not recover from the harm with time alone. They must be repaired with the Tech-Use skill. Full rules on using the Tech-Use skill to repair machines and vehicles can be found in **Chapter III: Skills**.

INFLECT CONDITIONS

The final step in completing a successful attack is for any conditions inflicted by the attack to be applied to the target. These conditions are usually determined by the action or weapon used for the attack, and always apply to the target upon a successful hit, regardless of whether or not the target was wounded.

If a weapon quality or other ability would affect a characteristic or require a test in a characteristic that a vehicle does not possess, the vehicle is unaffected by that ability.

COMBUSTING (X)

The vehicle becomes engulfed in searing flames that give off blinding smoke and threaten to ignite anyone inside. The intensity of the fire is determined by a number (X).

Start of Round: At the start of the round, each character inside the vehicle must make an Agility test with a penalty equal to ten times the value of the Combusting condition. If he fails, he gains the Burning (1) condition.

Stacking Combusting: A vehicle can only be suffering from one instance of the Combusting condition at a time. If a second instance of Combusting is inflicted on a vehicle already suffering from this condition, the two values X are added together to determine the single Combusting X value.

Putting It Out: A character inside or engaged with a Combusting vehicle can attempt to extinguish the flames by spending 3 AP and making an Agility test. If he succeeds, the vehicle loses the Combusting condition.

STALLED (X)

The vehicle is stuck, damaged, or otherwise moving at a reduced capacity. The degree to which this is affecting its performance is determined by a number (X).

Immediate: A vehicle with the Stalled condition has the number of metres it can move in all movement vectors reduced by the value of X (to a minimum of 0). If any vector's movement speed is reduced to 0, the vehicle cannot move in the directions that movement vector normally allows (see page 220).

Stacking Stalled: A vehicle can only be suffering from one instance of the Stalled condition at a time. If a second instance of Stalled is inflicted on a vehicle already suffering from the Stalled condition, the two values X are added together to determine the single Stalled X value.

Getting it Moving: A character embarked in or within three metres of a Stalled vehicle can mitigate this condition by spending 4 AP and making a Tech-Use (I) test. If he succeeds, he reduces the value of X by a number equal to his degrees of success.

OUT OF CONTROL (X)

The vehicle spins uncontrollably, metal shrieking against the ground (or air resistance). The difficulty of regaining control is determined by a number (X).

Start of Round: At the start of the round, the vehicle moves Xd10 metres (to a maximum number of metres equal to twice its highest movement rate) in the direction it moved the previous round. If it did not move in the previous round, it does not move this way.

Stacking Out of Control: A vehicle can only be suffering from one instance of the Out of Control condition at a time. If a second instance of Out of Control is inflicted on a vehicle already suffering from the Out of Control condition, the two values X are added together to determine the single Out of Control X value.

Ongoing: The operator of the vehicle suffers a penalty equal to ten times the value of the Out of Control condition to all tests he makes for actions with the operate type.

Regaining Control: The character driving an Out of Control vehicle can attempt to wrest back control over the vehicle with the Regain Control action (see page 220).

CRASHING

Imperial vehicles tend to be rugged and unsubtle, and slamming them into other objects often does little more than scratch the paint. However, some impacts are more catastrophic than others, and even the robust, boxy vehicles of the Imperium can be destroyed by particularly cataclysmic collisions.

Vehicles can crash for any number of reasons, such as if the engines fail at an inopportune moment, or the operator decides the best course of action is to ram his foe. When a vehicle collides with one or more objects, the vehicle and objects it hits are struck by an attack with a rate of attack of 1 and 1d5 degrees of success.

The object being struck by the vehicle cannot parry using the Evade (WS) skill to avoid this attack. If all targets successfully avoid the attack in some other manner, the vehicle does not suffer damage from the crash. This attack strikes the armour facing of the vehicle that hits the object, and can result in Righteous Fury. It is applied to a randomly selected location for the vehicle (and the object, if applicable), and has the following profile:

CRASH				
MOUNTED	ENGAGED	ROF 1	Xd10 † (1)	
PEN X	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
†X is a number equal to the value of the Size trait of the object or vehicle minus the value of the Size trait of the object with which it collided (minimum 1).				

If the vehicle was moving when it crashed, this attack inflicts additional damage equal to the number of metres the vehicle has moved this round. If a vehicle hits more than one object this way, use the Size trait of the largest object for resolving effects of the crash on the vehicle.

If the vehicle suffers a breach or critical breach from a crash, it immediately stops moving; if a vehicle does not suffer a breach or critical breach from crashing, it gains the Out of Control (1d10) condition (unless it would be entirely impractical for it to continue moving, as determined by the Game Master).

EXAMPLE

Faced with a massive Daemon, a horrific entity he cannot hope to fell with his normal sidearm, enforcer Logon the optimal course of action is to crash the warband's recently acquired groundcar into the creature and hope for the best. He spends 4 AP and uses the Ram action to move the vehicle 12 metres and smash it into his foe.

After he makes his Pilot (A) attack (see page 88), Logon ends up with 3 degrees of success and is able to manoeuvre his vehicle into the monster. The creature attempts dodge, using the Evade (A) skill, but only scores 1 degree of success on its test, and the crash occurs.

Since the vehicle's Size trait is 6 and the Daemon's Size trait is 8, the crash inflicts 1d10+12 damage upon the Daemon and 2d10+12 damage upon Logon's groundcar. Logon rolls an 8, for a total of 20 and compares this damage to his foe's defence value, which it surpasses, inflicting a wound and an appropriate wound effect. The beast makes a -10 Toughness test, which it passes, resisting the Concussive quality of the attack. The Daemon then rolls a total of 9 on his 2d10 result against the groundcar that slammed into it, for a total of 21 damage. Even reduced by 3 for Logon's 3 degrees of success on the attack test, this significantly surpasses the groundcar's defence value (its front facing armour of 15), inflicting a grave breach upon the vehicle that stops its momentum and reduces it to a flaming hunk of metal.

Logon crawls from the wreck, having inflicted a wound on his foe (at the cost of his vehicle)! However, the creature was not slain outright by this attack. The Daemon is now enraged—and Logon is the nearest Acolyte upon whom it can vent its anger...



TABLE 7-15: BREACH EFFECTS - HULL

RESULT	EFFECT
6 or lower	The shot plinks into the vehicle's hull. It puts a narrow, ominous hole in the chassis, but has no further impact upon the vehicle.
7-8	The strike pierces the hull and rips a noticeable hole in it, reducing the overall effectiveness of its armour. Reduce the armour value on the facing breached in the attack by 1 until this breach is repaired.
9-10	With a painful, ringing echo, the shot crashes into the vehicle, reverberating throughout the hull. Each character within the vehicle must make a +20 Athletics (T) test or gain the Deafened condition for 1 round.
11-12	A sizeable chunk of the vehicle's armour is blown away by the breach, flying off in a random direction. Reduce the armour value on the facing breached in the attack by 1d5 until this breach is repaired.
13-14	The attack impacts off of the power systems, briefly overloading them. A brilliant surge of light flashes across the chassis, and then the vehicle goes dark. If the vehicle has the Powered trait, it shuts down until restarted. Each character within the vehicle must make a +10 Athletics (T) test or gain the Blind condition for 1 round.
15-16	The strike tears away a larger part of the hull. Reduce the armour value on the facing breached in the attack by 1d5+2 until this breach is repaired.
17-18	The attack pierces the hull and strikes the power systems, sending sparks and deadly fragments of metal showering across the vehicle. If the vehicle has the Powered trait, it shuts down until restarted. Each character within the vehicle suffers 1d5+5 Rending damage.
19-20	The chassis caves and buckles as the shot punctures it and exposes much of the inside of the vehicle. Reduce the armour value on the facing breached in the attack by 1d10+2 until this breach is repaired.
21-22	The shot penetrates the vehicle and hits one of the unfortunates within. One character (chosen at random) is struck once by an attack with a profile identical to the one that caused this breach, with its damage reduced by the armour value of the facing that breached in the attack.
23-24	With the ominous groan of metal being shorn apart, the top of the vehicle is torn completely open, exposing the passengers inside. The vehicle gains the Open-Topped trait until this breach is repaired. Each character inside of the vehicle suffers 1d5+5 Rending damage. If the vehicle already had the Open-Topped trait, each character within the vehicle suffers 1d10+5 Rending damage instead.
25-26	The strike flays the vehicle, tearing off an entire side and leaving its inner workings completely exposed in a cascade of sparks and howling steel. Reduce the armour value on the facing breached in the attack to 0 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle must make a -20 Athletics (T) test or be Blinded and Deafened for 1d5 rounds.
27-28	The vehicle is torn apart by the impact, rendered little more than a flaming wreck. If the vehicle has the Powered trait, it shuts down until this breach is repaired. If it has the Living trait, it expires.
29 or higher	The vehicle explodes in a deadly fireball, sending flaming hunks of metal in all directions. Each target within 3d10+5 metres of the vehicle (including those inside it) suffers 1d10+8 Energy damage and must make a -30 Evade (A) test or gain the Burning (1) condition. The area affected by this blast becomes difficult terrain (see page 204) until the end of the encounter.

TABLE 7-16: BREACH EFFECTS - MOTIVE SYSTEMS

RESULT	EFFECT
4 or lower	The shot skims across the vehicle's motive systems, passing dangerously close to several key element, but seems to cause only aesthetic harm.
5-7	The attack grazes the motive systems, rattling controls in the pilot's hands and forcing him to fight to maintain direction. The vehicle gains the Out of Control (1d5) condition.
8-10	The vehicle shakes under the weight of the hit, discombobulating its passengers. Reduce the Manoeuvrability of this vehicle by 5 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle must make a +20 Evade (A) test or gain the Dazed condition for 1 round.
11-13	With a brutal crunch, the shot smashes harshly into the motive systems and their output dips accordingly. The vehicle gains the Stalled (1d5+5) condition.
14-16	The strike punches into the motive systems, damaging key components and sending the passengers spinning. Reduce the Manoeuvrability of this vehicle by 10 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle must make a +10 Evade (A) test gain the Dazed condition for 1d5 rounds.
17-18	The vehicle shudders under the impact, weaving precariously forward as the pilot struggles to keep it in his grasp. The vehicle gains the Out of Control (1d10) condition.
19-20	The shot fouls something critical within the motive systems, and the vehicle's controls whine and grind with concerning frequency. Reduce the Manoeuvrability of this vehicle by 15 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle must make a -10 Evade (A) test or gain the Stunned condition for 1 round.
21-22	With a loud bang and a disturbing swirl of smoke, the attack smashes into the motive systems and damages an important system. The vehicle gains the Stalled (1d10+5) condition.
23	The strike batters the vehicle's motive systems, causing it to careen to one side. Reduce the Manoeuvrability of this vehicle by 20 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle must make a -20 Evade (A) test or gain the Stunned condition for 1d5 rounds.
24	In the wake of the attack, the vehicle begins to spin wildly, quickly swerving out of the pilot's control. The vehicle gains the Out of Control (2d10) condition.
25	The vehicle quakes as the shot tears into its motive systems, shredding them and dashing the passengers about. Reduce the Manoeuvrability of this vehicle by 30 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle suffers 1d10 Impact damage and gains the Stunned condition for 1d5 rounds.
26	The strike pierces into the motive systems, which briefly flare up in protest before coughing violently and sputter out a cloud of smoke. The vehicle gains the Stalled (2d10+5) condition.
27 or higher	The vehicle's movement rate in all movement vectors becomes 0 until this breach is repaired. Each character within the vehicle suffers 1d10+5 Impact damage and must make a -30 Evade (A) test or gain the Unconscious condition for 1d10 rounds.

TABLE 7-17: BREACH EFFECTS - WEAPONS SYSTEMS

RESULT	EFFECT
3 or lower	With a clang, the shot ricochets off of the weapon. It leaves an unsightly dent in the metal, but probably has no impact on the armament's performance.
4-6	The shot rattles the weapon, causing the clip in the chamber to fall out alignment and jam the gun. If it has ammunition, the weapon immediately jams (see page 202).
7-9	The strike clangs off the barrel or edge of the weapon, denting it and reducing the weapon's precision of fire. Until this breach is repaired, the weapon gains the Inaccurate quality.
10-12	The shot hits the body of the weapon, cracking the frame. The weapon is damaged, reducing its status by 1 (see Damaging Items on page 131).
13-15	With a loud thump, the attack collides with the loading system and cracks it. Until this breach is repaired, if the weapon uses ammunition, it gains the Unreliable quality. If the weapon does not use ammunition, it gains the Inaccurate quality instead.
16-17	The weapon becomes damaged, reducing its quality level by 1 (see Damaging Items on page 131). The weapon's operator must make a +20 Tech-Use (BS) test or the vehicle gains the Combusting (1) condition.
18-19	The shot impacts with the weapon's ammunition feeder or coolant system, slowing its rate of fire considerably as the operator is forced to manually perform this task. Until this breach is repaired, the weapon gains the Recharge quality.
20	The attack smashes into the body of the weapon and ricochets into its ammo or power stores, sending up telltale whips of smoke where it lands. The weapon is badly damaged, reducing its status by 1 (see Damaging Items on page 131). The weapon's operator must make a +10 Tech-Use (BS) test or the vehicle gains the Combusting (1) condition.
21	The shot punctures a coolant tank or other critical system with a deadly hiss, causing the weapon to sputter as it leaks heat, flammable chemicals, or even lethal radiation onto its operator. Until this breach is repaired, if it uses ammunition, the weapon gains the Overheats quality. If it does not use ammunition, the weapon gains the Recharge quality instead.
22	The shot strikes the weapon's ammunition or power supply, setting the weapon ablaze. The weapon is badly damaged, reducing its status by 2 (see Damaging Items on page 131). The weapon's operator must make a -10 Tech-Use (BS) test or vehicle gains the Combusting (1d5) condition.
23	The shot punches directly into the the weapon itself, tearing out a large chunk of important components and making it extraordinarily volatile when fired. Until this breach is repaired, if it uses ammunition, the weapon gains the Overheats, Single-Shot, and Unreliable qualities. If it does not use ammunition, it is badly damaged, reducing its status by 2 (see Damaging Items on page 131).
24	The weapon explodes in a shower of blazing sparks that threaten to ignite its operator (and everything else within the vehicle).The weapon is wrecked, reducing its status by 3 (see Damaging Items on page 131). Its operator must make a -20 Evade (A) test or gain the Burning (1) condition. The weapon's operator must make a -20 Tech-Use (BS) test or the vehicle gains the Combusting (1d5) condition.
25 or higher	With an agonising shriek, the weapon is ripped free of the vehicle by the force of the attack. It then promptly detonates, showering the vehicle (and anyone unfortunate enough to be exposed) with blistering shrapnel and bits of superheated ammunition. The weapon is completely destroyed beyond any hope of restoration. The vehicle gains the Combusting (1d5) condition, and any exposed characters within 2d10 metres must make a -30 Evade (A) test or gain the Burning (1) condition.



CHAPTER VIII: NARRATIVE TOOLS

While tense, exciting combat is an important component of **DARK HERESY**, it represents just a fraction of the events that Acolytes experience in the course of their investigations and adventures. Travelling between interesting locations, engaging in delicate social manoeuvring, and the effects of exposure to terrifying events and the corruption of the Warp are all covered in this chapter, as are rules and guidelines for investigations.

NARRATIVE TIME

"We are at war with forces too terrible to comprehend. We cannot afford mercy. Mercy destroys us, it weakens us and saps our resolve. Put aside all such thoughts. They are not worthy of Inquisitors in the service of our Emperor. In our resolve, we reflect His will."

—The Verses of Inquisitor Enoch, canto XLVII

In the frenetic whirl of combat, each moment can mean life or death for the characters involved. Thus in combat and during certain other time-sensitive tasks, gameplay is managed in structured time, with events broken down into rounds during which each character receives a turn to act. Outside of combat, this level of structure is unnecessary and would simply prove cumbersome and impede, rather than

enhance, gameplay. When the characters are not fighting, **DARK HERESY** is handled in a more freeform manner, with the GM describing scenes and events and the players stating their reactions and making tests at critical moments to further shape and guide the narrative. This approach is called narrative time. Narrative time is a broad category that includes almost any events occurring with the Acolytes' involvement that are not combat. This encompasses a wide range of activity, which can be broken down into encounters.

ENCOUNTERS

In narrative time, the focus of the game is free to shift focus in response to the tasks and activities the Acolytes perform. A hallmark of narrative time is that, unlike structured time, there are no set units of time or set order in which activities occur. Depending on the needs of the story, the GM may carefully describe the details of the Acolytes' surroundings and the NPCs and events going on around them, or he may paint in broad strokes to progress the story to a more important moment. For instance, a GM might describe each room in detail as the Acolytes carefully make their way through the ancient ruins of a xenos temple complex, carefully checking for antediluvian traps and other hazards. At the other end of the spectrum, the GM may use only a few sentences to describe

weeks or months of uneventful Warp travel aboard a voidship (for which any Emperor-fearing citizen should breathe a sigh of relief and a prayer of gratitude). The action in a roleplaying game moves between segments called encounters. Encounters can cover time periods ranging from a few minutes to many hours or longer, but are usually delineated by the Acolytes attempting to accomplish a specific objective.

Returning to the examples above, each room of the xenos temple might be approached as a separate encounter, perhaps leading to a new encounter when the Acolytes meet an enemy or particularly fiendish trap, while the entire interstellar journey may be handled as a single encounter, with the simple objective of reaching their destination without causing too much trouble along the way.

The GM determines where one encounter ends and another begins, which usually occurs very naturally and without the need for bookkeeping or a specific announcement. As a general guideline, one encounter ends and another begins when the Acolytes move to a new location (though the definition of a location depends on the needs of the story), or when the category of encounter changes in response to the Acolytes' actions. For example, pulling a gun is a good way to begin a combat encounter! The Acolytes are sure to engage in a staggering array of activities of all kinds during their time serving the Throne, but for ease of reference, encounters are considered to primarily fall into one of five categories: social, exploration, travel, combat, or downtime.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

During social encounters, the Acolytes interact with NPCs primarily through conversation. These interactions may be positive or negative, ranging from friendly banter to barely-concealed threats. A social encounter might involve the Acolytes convincing a guard to accept their forged identification and grant them access to a restricted area, or questioning the patrons of a hive tavern to find information about a notorious crime lord. The stakes in a social encounter can be every bit as high as in combat, with the fate of a world depending on the Acolytes' success in questioning an Arch-Heretic, or the Acolytes facing execution unless they adequately defend their actions before planetary magistrates in a formal tribunal.

Social encounters often play a major part in the Acolytes' investigations. While snooping and researching musty tomes can be just as integral, almost all investigations require the Acolytes to ask questions or converse with a live human (or approximation). Many investigations begin with the Acolytes asking around, perhaps inquiring amongst the locals while undercover, or discussing the details of a crime scene with the authorities. As servants of an Inquisitor, most Acolytes are no strangers to interrogation. In combat, wise Acolytes seek to take prisoners whenever possible. Live prisoners can yield important information under questioning, progressing the investigation in significant ways.

Social encounters usually end amicably enough, with all parties involved excusing themselves and parting ways (perhaps already formulating plans for revenge), or by escalating to the point that a combat encounter begins. More details on social encounters can be found on page 229.

EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS

Exploration encounters occur when the focus of the action moves to the Acolytes' interaction with the environment, such as navigating through a dangerous marshland or searching for clues at a gruesome murder scene. As always, the GM sets the scene for the players when an exploration encounter begins, so that the players can make informed decisions as to their Acolytes' actions. Depending on the situation, the GM may or may not call for tests—walking to the other side of a chapel can easily be accomplished, but manoeuvring through a death world's arboreal canopy above a toxic swamp may call for a number of Agility-based tests. Once any tests, if necessary, have been made, the GM narrates the results and describes any changes in the environment due to the Acolytes' actions, or describes a different location newly revealed. Exploration encounters are likely to arise frequently in the Acolytes' investigations, often as a prelude to combat or another type of encounter.

Exploration encounters are almost always completed in narrative time, as the action is usually driven by the Acolytes' actions. This is not to say that time is not of the essence; exploration encounters have the potential to be every bit as deadly as combat, from the Acolytes trying to avoid an avalanche, to being trapped in a voidship's cargo bay as it vents atmosphere. However, these sorts of situations usually depend on how the Acolytes respond, rather than in what order, and do not feature the back-and-forth of a struggle against foes. In some rare cases, the GM may find it appropriate to utilise structured time, if the order of actions becomes necessary. Since the Acolytes are not actively opposed by their environment (at least not usually), Opposed skill tests are rarely used during exploration encounters.

More details on exploration encounters and navigation can be found on page 245.

TRAVEL ENCOUNTERS

Travel encounters occur when the Acolytes must move from one location to another. While some journeys are as simple as the players declaring their intended destination, other may consist of encounters in their own right. This is the case when a journey involves some element of risk, whether of bodily harm or simply of becoming lost or delayed. Travel encounters might require the Acolytes to navigate their way through unfamiliar terrain, such as a dense forest or tumbledown underhive. Many skills can be useful during travel encounters. In particular, many travel encounters require Navigate (P or I) tests, in order to read a map, stay on course, and judge direction when there is no reliable trail to follow. Observe (P or I) tests may be called for to determine if the Acolytes are able to spot danger in time, such as hostile creatures or NPCs, traps, or natural hazards.

The nature of the challenges in a Travel Encounter are largely influenced by the environment through which the Acolytes are attempting to travel. Travel Encounters are likely to be interrupted by other types of encounters, which the Acolytes must complete before returning to their journey. These could range from asking for directions through the maze-like depths of a hive city, stopping to battle a xenos predator, or halting to explore a particularly interesting location.

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Combat encounters occur when the Acolytes are involved in time-sensitive conflict where every moment counts and the timing of each character's actions greatly impact the outcome. Most often, combat encounters are life-and-death fights featuring guns, blades, or even bare fists. Combat encounters might also include high-speed autocarriage chases or a race against time as Acolytes attempt to stop a damaged shuttlecraft plummeting to the ground.

When a combat encounter begins, the game transitions from narrative time to structured time. One sign that a combat encounter has begun, for example, is when the GM calls for an Initiative Roll. Full details on combat encounters can be found in **Chapter VII: Combat**.

DOWNTIME

Players engage in all manner of exciting events during the course of a game of **DARK HERESY**, but between harrowing combats, dramatic arguments, and intrepid exploration, there are often lulls in the action. Frequently, Acolytes must travel aboard a vehicle or void-ship from one location to another in order for the next important encounter to occur. The distinction between this scenario and a travel encounter is that in the case of downtime, the Acolytes are merely passengers, and their actions do not directly or otherwise impact the journey. The story may also require the Acolytes to wait for a period of time, perhaps having arranged a clandestine meeting with an informant, or prepared an ambush for their enemies. Downtime encompasses all such lulls.

Most downtime encounters can be completed very quickly, as there are almost never any tests or other rolls needed. The GM simply describes the journey, wait, or events in as much detail as he feels appropriate. The players may also wish to describe the sorts of activities their Acolytes do to keep busy during the interim; this is an excellent opportunity to explore the characters' personalities, by showing how they spend their time when not actively engaged in activities related to an investigation. For Acolytes, this often means poring over information related to the investigation, training with or maintaining weaponry, or otherwise ensuring they are prepared for whatever comes next.

Usually, Acolytes do not move directly from one adventure or investigation to another, if for no other reason than the need for rest and recovery from injuries. Whether days, months, or years, such "off-screen" periods between adventures fall under the category of downtime. As with other periods of downtime, it is a good idea for players and the GM to work together to describe, broadly, the manner in which the Acolytes spend their downtime, and any notable life events. This helps reinforce the distinct personalities of the Acolytes, and helps to immerse the players in the campaign and the universe of the 41st Millennium.

NOT SO FAST!

In the course of a **DARK HERESY** session, the Acolytes are sure to face all number of intense and exciting situations, and events can unfold quite rapidly as the GM describes the action occurring around them. As such, it can sometimes be easy to get caught up in the action without stopping to ensure everyone has had a chance to react, if desired. Any time a player sees an opportunity for his Acolytes to act, he should not hesitate to interject with his actions before the opportunity is gone. GMs and players should do their best to accommodate such requests, even if it occasionally means "rewinding" a few seconds' worth of time.

DECISIONS, TESTS, AND CONSEQUENCES

The story of each **DARK HERESY** game unfolds through a collaborative process, with the GM guiding the narrative and the players making decisions about the actions of their Acolytes—the protagonists of the story. When those decisions have important consequences for the story and the outcome is not certain, tests are used to determine the results of the Acolytes' actions. These decisions and tests are what determine the resolution of an encounter, and lead, either directly or indirectly, to subsequent encounters. Fundamentally, encounters unfold through the repetition of three steps:

- **Define the Situation:** Before the players can decide what actions their characters take, they must be aware of the environment around their Acolytes and the situation confronting them. The GM sets the scene by describing the Acolytes' surroundings, including any relevant details of the environment, any present NPCs, and what the Acolytes' senses tell them. Such details may include the appearance of stains on the rockrete walls around them, the bolt pistol holstered at the NPC bounty hunter's side, or the smell of rotting meat coming from behind a rusted iron grate. Some details have a direct impact on the Acolytes' actions, while others serve to help immerse the players in the grim future of **DARK HERESY**.
- **Player Decisions and Character Actions:** Once they understand the situation facing the Acolytes, the players decide how their characters act. This could include anything from examining the environment more closely, to drawing a weapon, to making a wry aside. The players can also ask the GM questions to ascertain further details about the environment, the NPCs present, or any on-going events, to be sure that they are properly informed to make good decisions.
- **Results:** Once the players determine how their characters want to proceed, the GM narrates the results of their actions, while calling for any relevant tests. Depending on the situation and the actions on which the players

decided, tests may be needed to determine how well the Acolytes perform at their chosen tasks, or if they are able to complete them at all. If the actions are not difficult or have no real bearing on the story, tests are not necessary, and the GM simply tells the players the results of their characters' actions. The group repeats these steps until the encounter is resolved.

EXAMPLE

After a tense combat encounter with a group of cultists, the players begin looking around the cultists' chamber, thereby beginning an exploration encounter. The GM previously described the chamber before the fight, but now that there is no imminent danger, he repeats the explanation, taking additional time to answer the players' questions about the details of the cold, candlelit stone chamber. Jeanine and Tom both declare that their characters are searching the room, and the GM calls for Observe (P) tests. Tom's character, Josef, discovers a loose stone block that he easily removes, revealing a hidden compartment with a small iron-bound chest, inscribed with occult markings. The GM explains that the chest is locked, and Joe says he will use his character's Subterfuge skill to pick the lock. Opening the chest reveals a misshapen humanoid skull daubed with dried blood. The Acolytes decide to hang on to the skull for now, and that it would be safer left in the chest. The GM secretly makes a Psyniscience test for Harry's psyker character, but it fails, so he doesn't tell the players anything about the Warp presence emanating from the skull. Convinced that there is nothing left for them in the room, the Acolytes head back out the door and continue investigating the tower.

INFLUENCE AND SUBTLETY

"Just big talk, ignore it. There is no way any Inquisition lackeys could have gotten here without us knowing about it."

—"Rotten" Crokken, aka Kalepha Ummentine, Inquisitorial Acolyte

Though an Inquisitor may be a fearsome psyker, a shrewd manipulator, and a deadly warrior, the most important tool at his disposal is not his weapon or his mind, but his influence over the people of the Imperium. Each Inquisitor is vested with the ultimate authority in order to accomplish his mission to safeguard Mankind, but how he uses the resources available and the image he presents to the wider Imperium greatly impact his effectiveness. This is at least as true for the Acolytes serving an Inquisitor, who cannot always rely on the name of the Inquisition to ensure cooperation. These considerations are represented in **DARK HERESY** by Influence and Subtlety, which, respectively, track how much sway the Acolytes have with the citizens and institutions of the Imperium and how well-known their activities are to both their allies and enemies.

INFLUENCE

Influence is a characteristic, and like other characteristics, is measured on a scale from 0-100. Influence represents an Acolyte's reputation, connections, resources, and other factors that allow him to obtain desired results from the citizens and institutions of the Imperium. The higher a character's Influence, the better he is able to exert control over others, and hence the easier it is for him to get items delivered, services performed, and other actions taken at his request. All Acolytes start with a certain amount of Influence, which they can increase through gameplay.

USES OF INFLUENCE

Whenever an Acolyte attempts to use his reputation or resources within the Imperium, the GM can call for an Influence test. As with other characteristics, there are numerous ways in which a character may utilise his Influence, but some common uses include the following:

- **Requisition:** When an Acolyte attempts to obtain equipment, supplies, or rare and valuable items, it is his Influence that determines if he has the resources, connections, or funds to track down and acquire or purchase the item. This use of Influence represents an Acolyte calling on his contacts, pressuring merchants, relying on his reputation with the relevant Imperial organisation, or even retrieving the necessary funds from a financier. Full rules for using Influence to requisition equipment can be found on page 131

- **Social Interaction:** Dropping the right names or invoking a fearsome reputation can go far in convincing others to reveal information or acquiesce to a character's wishes. Indeed, merely invoking the name of the Inquisition is enough to have many loyal citizens falling over backwards to obey. An Acolyte can use his Influence to manipulate others into doing his bidding, revealing information, or otherwise offering assistance. **Chapter III: Skills** contains rules for using Influence to manipulate others.

- **Investigation:** In the course of an investigation, Acolytes often need to access resources and information beyond their personal abilities and assets. Characters can use their Influence to cast a wider net and expedite the investigation. This can include leaning on contacts for information, gaining access to restricted archives, or ensuring cooperation by local authorities. Leveraging Influence can greatly smoothen the investigation, though using it too often can lessen Subtlety greatly.

GAINING INFLUENCE

Unlike other characteristics, players cannot increase their Acolyte's Influence by spending xp on advances. Influence can only be increased through an Acolyte's actions. An Acolyte's Influence increases as the character succeeds at his duty, or as a result of specific actions the Acolyte takes to increase his reputation and resources. The following are some of the most common reasons for an Acolyte's Influence to increase:

CONJUNCTION OF SUBTLETY AND INFLUENCE

In many ways, Subtlety and Influence are connected. While Influence represents, in part, how well-known each individual Acolyte's careers and achievements are on a sector-wide level, Subtlety represents knowledge of the group's current activities and whereabouts on a local level. Generally, the effects of Subtlety are short-term, while Influence is long-lasting and more permanent. Influence changes more slowly and infrequently, with major changes happening over time, whereas Subtlety can fluctuate quite a bit within a relatively short period. Influence and Subtlety have different effects on the game and usually come into play in different situations. However, sometimes both Subtlety and Influence can be relevant to a single test or encounter. Similarly, there are ways in which Subtlety can affect Influence and vice versa. It is up to the GM to determine when Subtlety and Influence are both relevant, or when one impacts the other. Throughout this section, sidebars such as this one offer examples and suggestions for GMs on handling the combination of Subtlety and Influence.

- **Connections:** Knowing the right people can be instrumental in getting things done. Taking one's request straight to the best person to act on it, cutting through the layers of Imperial bureaucracy and avoiding the worst of the communication delays can achieve results more quickly and with more impact. Whether looking at a single hive city, a star system, or a sub-sector, ties of fealty, responsibility, and authority construct a tangled web and an almost crippling inertia. For an Acolyte to be able to contact the right individual directly to put the wheels of Imperial society in motion can mean the difference between a world's salvation and its damnation. Even when dealing with individuals lower on the ladder, dropping the right names can achieve prompt results. Connections can come from earlier shared experiences, such as common service in the Imperial Guard or aboard the same void-ship, or can occur during the course of gameplay as an Acolyte meets new people and establishes relationships. Organisations for which an Acolyte has the Peer talent indicate strong connections as well. It is up to the GM to determine how much Influence a connection is worth. Forming a close bond with a merchant group operating on a single planet may potentially be worth a point or so of Influence, while simply having one's name known to the Lord Sector may be worth several.

- **Debts and Favours:** Perhaps the most effective way to gain assistance from an individual is by calling in a favour or settling a debt. Doing so provides an immediate incentive for the person or organisation to act in accordance with the Acolyte's wishes. This is particularly true when it is undesirable or unthinkable to explain the reasons behind the request, a situation in which Acolytes often find themselves. By accomplishing tasks for an individual or organisation, or otherwise benefitting it through their actions, an Acolyte's Influence can increase. The amount of the increase depends on the power and Influence of the person or organisation, as well as the importance of the task or benefit.

- **Reputation:** Acolytes often achieve their wishes by relying on their reputation, whether fearsome or esteemed. By accomplishing his duties and performing impressive feats, an Acolyte can increase his Influence as his name becomes known to the great and powerful, as well as the toiling masses of Imperial governance. Uncovering and foiling a plot by Chaos cultists, saving a powerful noble from certain doom, or even sentencing a world to Exterminatus are all actions that can raise an Acolyte's Influence. The degree of increase depends both on the importance of the action, and on how overt or subtle the Acolyte is in this performance. Executing a heretic in a great spectacle can spread an Acolyte's name across a world and beyond, but saving a planet from certain destruction may do little for a character's wider reputation beyond those few privy to the act.

SUBTLETY AND CHANGE IN INFLUENCE

Oftentimes, events that result in an increase or loss of Influence for an Acolyte occur in the midst of an investigation or assignment. An Acolyte can perform an impressive and monumental feat, but the boost to his reputation could be much less if only his closest companions know of it. Conversely, even an abysmal failure could do little to affect an Acolyte's reputation if no one can link him to the incident. When an Acolyte stands to gain or lose Influence, the GM can decide that the group's current Subtlety has the potential to mitigate the change. If so, he makes a Subtlety test against the group's current Subtlety. If the test succeeds, the GM reduces the amount of Influence gained or lost by 1 for every 2 degrees of success. A group's Subtlety is temporary in comparison to an Acolyte's Influence; if the nature of the event is such that the Acolyte can be easily connected to it after the fact, the group's current Subtlety should not have an impact.

TABLE 8-1: INFLUENCE INCREASES

INFLUENCE GAINED	ACCOMPLISHMENT
1	Bringing a minor heretek to justice and stopping his production of unhallowed weapons; disrupting a lesser Faceless Trade operation.
2	Uncovering and purging a coven of xenophilous nobles; gaining the esteem of a High Marshal of the Adeptus Arbites.
3	Saving the life of a Lord Admiral; detecting and alerting a planet of a forthcoming xenos attack.
4	Impressing the Lord Sector at a formal banquet; successfully denouncing a radical Inquisitor.
5	Saving a sub-sector capital world from certain destruction; banishing a Greater Daemon.

TABLE 8-2: INFLUENCE DECREASES

INFLUENCE LOST	REASON
1	Becoming embroiled in a shoot-out with Hive Desoleum Sanctionaries; failing to exhibit the proper decorum at a formal gathering of sector nobility.
2	Failing to prevent the minions of the Callers of Sorrow from releasing a deadly pathogen in the lower levels of Hive Desoleum.
3	Destroying the sacred thigh bone of Saint Koriol while fighting to defend the basilica.
4	Commandeering a company of Imperial Guard, directly resulting in the loss of their intended destination to Ork invasion.
5	Declaring Exterminatus on a world without proper cause.

LOSING INFLUENCE

Just as certain actions and results can increase an Acolyte's Influence, so can his decisions and even simple chance result in decreases to his Influence. Reputation is fickle, and Acolytes must take care to protect theirs. At the GM's discretion, an Acolyte's Influence can decrease when something happens to weaken his resource network and reputation, whether through his own fault or due to outside agency. The following are just some examples of events that might decrease an Acolyte's Influence:

Failure: Just as success in their duties increases an Acolyte's Influence, so does failure decrease it. Failing in their attempts to stop the Imperium's enemies harms the Acolytes' reputation in the eyes of the Imperium's rulers and leaders, and may also decrease the confidence their Inquisitor has in their abilities. In the most extreme cases, failing to stop a heretical plot may even lead some to suspect the Acolytes of treachery. Similarly, when performing a task for an individual or organisation that would result in an increase in the Acolyte's Influence, failure can have the opposite effect, particularly in the case of very egregious failure that harms the interests of the would-be benefactor. The amount by which failure decreases an Acolyte's Influence depends on the severity of the failure, and how subtle or overt the Acolyte's actions.

- **Excessive or Reckless Use:** Amongst other things, Influence measures an Acolyte's standing in Imperial society and reputation in the eyes of his peers and betters. Abuse or misuse of an Acolyte's authority can swiftly turn opinion against him. When an Acolyte fails an Influence test by more degrees of failure than his Fellowship bonus, his Influence bonus decreases by 1.

- **Sacrifice:** In desperate situations, an Acolyte may be forced to sacrifice his resources or reputation to accomplish a goal. This could mean calling in a major favour, requesting an onerous task of, and thereby alienating, an ally, or even sending allies or servants on a suicide mission. When attempting an Influence test, before rolling, an Acolyte may choose to decrease his Influence by 1d5 in order to automatically succeed. If degrees of success are important, the Acolyte is considered to have achieved a number equal to his Fellowship bonus.

- **Atrophy:** An Acolyte must continuously attend to his Influence, lest it slip away with the passage of time. If an Acolyte goes long enough without any new achievements to bolster his reputation, he risks his name being forgotten by contacts, his achievements overshadowed by others, and his reputation tarnishing as those who remember his name reflect on his absence from the stage. For each year that passes during which the Acolyte does not perform any work for his Inquisitor, his Influence decreases by 1.

The loss of Influence represents actual shifts in attitudes toward the Acolyte, or a loss of resources. While it can serve as a simple setback, the loss of Influence can also act as the impetus for exciting encounters or entire game sessions. If a player wishes to recoup lost Influence through in-game activities, the GM should try to accommodate this. For instance, an Acolyte who loses Influence because he failed to save the life of a respected preacher could go before the Ministorum to seek atonement. This could be represented by an in-depth social encounter, or the GM could use the opportunity as a springboard for a new adventure, giving the Acolyte an opportunity to redeem himself by performing a dangerous task for the deacon.

TABLE 8-3: THE SUBTLETY TRACK

SUBTLETY	EXAMPLE
0-10	The Acolytes wear ostentatious armour and outfits, emblazoned with icons of the Inquisition, and a trio of tiny, winged servitors trumpet the group's every entrance. The Acolytes accomplish most tasks by giving direct orders to others in the name of the Inquisition.
11-20	The Acolytes rely on their reputations to accomplish their goals, openly wearing symbols of their affiliations and loyalties. When questioning suspects or the general populace, the Acolytes are blunt and direct, and ready to respond with violence should anyone attempt to flee or deceive them.
21-30	When dealing with a suspected Chaos cultist, the Acolytes attack with the goal of subduing him for later interrogation.
31-40	While refraining from invoking the name of the Inquisition, the Acolytes nonetheless favour the direct approach, and respond to violence in kind. The heavy weaponry they tote draws some attention, particularly from the local Enforcers.
41-50	The Acolytes take no great pains to hide their weapons and armour, nor to conceal their business. However, neither do they draw extra attention to themselves or announce their true allegiance.
51-60	When dealing with a suspected Chaos cultist, the Acolytes trail him, observing his behaviour and asking around amongst his acquaintances.
61-70	The Acolytes go to great lengths to keep their presence unknown to their enemies, and to avoid drawing the attention of local authorities. They do their best to avoid violent engagements, even involving the lower ranks of the heretics' organization.
71-80	The Acolytes go undercover to conduct the investigation. Even before their arrival in-system, the Acolytes operate under thoroughly detailed false identities in order to infiltrate the heretics' ranks and bring them down from within.
81-90	Surprise is amongst the Acolytes' primary weapons. They operate with great stealth, concealing their presence until it is time to strike.
91-100	The Acolytes are neither seen nor heard.

INQUISITOR INFLUENCE

Powerful though they may be, it is all but impossible for Acolytes to wield Influence even close to that of the Inquisitor who leads them. Much of what marks an Inquisitor worthy of the title are his achievements and ability to get results, but it is a simple fact that to be an Inquisitor is to wield limitless authority. Only the foolhardy, desperate, or treasonous dare to defy an Inquisitor's will. In the performance of their duties, Acolytes often invoke the authority of their master in order to succeed. Using the Inquisitor's influence can be of great benefit to an Acolyte, granting him access to resources otherwise far out of reach.

Before attempting an Influence test, an Acolyte can choose to reduce the group's Subtlety by 2 in order to use the Influence value of the Inquisitor in place of his own. If the test results in loss of Influence, it is the Inquisitor's Influence that is decreased, rather than the Acolyte's.

SUBTLETY

Subtlety represents how secretive or overt the Acolytes are in their behaviour as they prosecute an investigation. Subtlety ranges from 0-100 and can be used as the basis for a test, just like a characteristic. Unlike characteristics, there is a single Subtlety value for the group of Acolytes, which the GM tracks in secret, so that the players never know exactly what their Subtlety score is. The higher the Acolytes' Subtlety is, the less their enemies and potential allies know of their actions. The more their Subtlety decreases, the more transparent their actions become and the more others know. Inquisitors and their Acolytes take many different approaches to accomplish their duties, and a high Subtlety is not necessarily better. While many Inquisitors prefer to move unseen throughout the Imperium, the better to take their enemies by surprise, some operate openly, trusting in the populace's fear of the Inquisition to smoke out the heretics amongst them. High and low Subtlety both have benefits and drawbacks, depending on the situation and the Acolytes' methods.

USE NOT LIGHTLY THY MASTER'S NAME

Using their Inquisitor's Influence can be greatly beneficial to the warband, but comes at the risk of angering the Inquisitor. Some Inquisitors prefer to see their Acolytes succeed on their own merits, but even one who encourages his servants to wield his authority openly cannot abide damage to his reputation, which has likely taken decades—or longer—to build. If the Acolytes repeatedly misuse or harm his Influence, an Inquisitor should take action to show his disapproval and remind them of the consequences for repeated failure. The forms this may take are as varied as Inquisitors, but some possible punishments include the following:

- Stripping one or more Acolytes of the ability to use the Inquisitor's Influence.
- Ceasing all communication with and support of the Acolyte or group.
- Removing a finger, toe, eye, or limb, possibly with the promise to replace it once the Acolyte has redeemed himself.
- Sending an assassin or kill-squad after the Acolyte as a warning.
- Consigning the Acolyte to excruciation or an act of dedicated penance.

TRACKING SUBTLETY

Each group of Acolytes begins with a Subtlety of 50. Certain choices the players make during character creation can modify this value. During the game, the Acolytes' actions serve to increase and decrease the group's Subtlety. The more obvious and direct they are, the lower their Subtlety, while the more cautious and secretive, the higher the value. Subtlety is likely to both increase and decrease throughout the course of an investigation, in response to the Acolytes' decisions and the vicissitudes of fate. **Table 8-3: The Subtlety Track** on page 234 provides examples of the behaviour of a group at different Subtlety values.

EFFECTS OF SUBTLETY

Subtlety is a crucial concern for the Acolytes of the Inquisition, with a number of far-reaching effects, yet neither a low or high value is necessarily "better," as both can be beneficial under different circumstances. Whether low or high, Subtlety mainly affects the game in two ways. Firstly, Subtlety impacts the game narratively, affecting the reactions of NPCs, shaping what resources the Acolytes can access, and determining how much their enemies and allies know of their activities. Secondly, the group's Subtlety can modify certain tests, either lowering or raising the difficulty based on its current value and the purpose of the test in

question. Some tasks are more easily accomplished if the Acolytes are unknown, while others benefit from others' awareness of the Acolytes' activities.

NARRATIVE EFFECTS

The transparency or secrecy of the Acolytes' behaviour can have any number of effects on the narrative of a game of **DARK HERESY**. A group that acts too openly could betray their presence to the cult for which they are searching, allowing the heretics plentiful time to flee or prepare an ambush. Conversely, if the Acolytes are too subtle in their investigation, when the time comes, they could have extreme difficulty convincing local authorities of the seriousness of the threat or even the true power the Acolytes represent.

When an encounter arises that depends significantly on how overt or subtle the Acolytes are, the GM makes a Subtlety test using the group's current value. If the Subtlety test succeeds, the Acolytes are considered to be subtle for the purposes of the event or encounter, remaining hidden from the cult or unknown to the Enforcers, for instance. If the test fails, the Acolytes are overt; their actions revealed to a cult, or their reputation known to local Enforcers.

Depending on the potential consequences for the narrative, the GM can roll the Subtlety test when the Acolytes take a particular action, or only once the results become evident. For instance, if the Acolytes are attempting to disguise themselves as off-world scholars in order to investigate a guild suspected of trading in proscribed texts, the GM could roll a Subtlety test when they introduce themselves, in order to determine if the guilders have heard rumours of an Inquisitor's Acolytes in the area or of unknown persons investigating their operations. The guilders might offer a round of vintage amasec to the Acolytes—but if the Subtlety test had failed, the amasec is perhaps laced with a poison, or they have alerted their henchmen to intercept the Acolytes. When to make a Subtlety test ultimately comes down to the GM's preference and instinct. As with other tests, a Subtlety test is only necessary if the outcome has an impact on the story.

Through its effects on the narrative, Subtlety can provide great opportunities for roleplaying. If they are openly operating as Acolytes of an Inquisitor, even powerful and influential individuals are likely to show the utmost respect and deference (at least to their faces), while these same NPCs may respond to the Acolytes with disdain or outright contempt if their authority is unknown. Even in the case of an NPC offers the same services or information regardless of the Acolytes' Subtlety, the nature of their interaction may be very different. A barkeep serves drinks to the Acolytes and offers the latest gossip in either case, but if the group is Subtle, he may water down the drinks and make jests at the Acolytes' expense, whereas if he knows who they are, he might behave in an overly obsequious manner while serving the best amasec in the house and refusing to accept payment, clearly revealing that what might have been a carefully crafted disguise is all for naught. The Acolytes can then either try to continue with the charade, or utilise their reputation to their advantage.

SUBTLETY AND INFLUENCE TESTS

Effective use of Influence requires an Acolyte to use his name and reputation. While it is possible to use Influence while remaining incognito, such as by dropping names or making vague threats, it is often more difficult. Similarly, if an Acolyte has been acting subtly, others may not believe him when he finally does reveal his true identity. When an Acolyte attempts to use his Influence whilst engaged in an investigation, the GM should determine if the group's Subtlety has any bearing on the attempt. If so, then the GM can make a Subtlety test to determine the modifier to the Acolyte's Influence test, just as for any other test the outcome of which depends on Subtlety.

TEST MODIFIERS

Often, the success of an Acolyte's actions depends on how secretive or overt the group has been prior. Infiltrating the local underworld can be much more difficult if everyone is watching over their shoulders for signs of the Inquisition. When an Acolyte attempts a test and the outcome depends on how well-known the group is, the GM can choose to have the group's Subtlety modify the test. To do so, the GM first decides if the action the Acolyte is attempting benefits from overtiness or from subtleness. The following examples demonstrate tasks that benefit from subtlety and from overtiness:

Examples of Tasks Benefitted by Subtlety

- Using the Disguise and Lie uses of the Deceive skill to conceal an Acolyte's identity.
- Using the Inquiry use of the Investigate skill to ask around in the criminal underworld or questioning other untrusting individuals.
- Using the Shadowing use of the Stealth skill to follow a suspected cultist.
- Using the Tracking use of the Survival skill to locate a suspected killer.

Examples of Tasks Benefitted by Overtiness

- Using the Brag use of the Charm skill to impress an Adeptus Arbites Judge.
- Using the Terrify use of the Command skill to stop a squad of enforcers running from a xenos monstrosity.
- Using the Inquiry use of the Investigate skill on Emperor fearing citizens.
- Using the Interrogate skill to pry information from a recalcitrant cultist.

The GM then rolls a test using the group's Subtlety. If the Subtlety test is successful, the Acolyte gains a +20 bonus to tests relevant to a task that benefits from subtlety, or a -20 penalty if the task benefits from overtiness. Conversely, if

the Subtlety test is failed, the Acolyte suffers a -20 penalty if the task benefits from subtlety, but a +20 bonus if the test benefits from overtiness. Depending on the circumstances and nature of the task at hand, this modifier could apply to a single roll, or to a series of tests using different skills.

Of course, not every test should be affected by Subtlety. Before making a Subtlety test in order to modify an Acolyte's skill use, the GM should consider if the target NPC could possibly be aware of the Acolytes, and if so, if it makes a significant difference. When used appropriately, this effect of Subtlety significantly reinforces the importance of the Acolytes' choices. It reminds players that each of their actions has consequences, and that the world responds to the decisions they make.

GAINING SUBTLETY

As already stated, a group's Subtlety is not fixed, and changes based on the Acolytes' actions. Unlike characteristics, Subtlety often fluctuates, and usually changes numerous times during the course of an adventure in response to the players' decisions and the course of action taken by the Acolytes. The Acolytes increase their Subtlety by acting in a manner that conceals their presence or misdirects their foes. By using stealth, guile, and generally maintaining a low profile, the Acolytes can ensure a high Subtlety value, and the effects—both beneficial and detrimental—that entails.

When the Acolytes gain Subtlety is at the GM's discretion. Any time an Acolyte acts to conceal his presence or to provide misinformation about the group and its plans, the GM can choose to increase the group's Subtlety. While Acolytes sometimes act with the specific intent of increasing their Subtlety, it can also occur as a side effect of their actions. When deciding how to go about a task, the Acolytes must consider the potential ramifications for future encounters; concealing their presence and identities could prevent the local authorities from interfering with an investigation, but those same authorities might not believe the Acolytes' story if they catch them breaking into a corrupt noble's manse. There are many ways that a group's Subtlety might increase, such as the following examples:

- **Deception:** Lies, disguises, and false identities can help to conceal the Acolytes' presence and wrong-foot their enemies. All too often, the Acolytes have little or no knowledge of their true opponents when beginning an investigation, and can gain an advantage by ensuring their enemies are no better off. As all Inquisitors know, information is power. When an Acolyte successfully accomplishes an act of deception, the GM may raise the group's Subtlety. The amount gained depends on the scale of the deception and who it is being deceived. If the target of the deception is crucial to the investigation, the group's Subtlety could increase quite a bit. If, on the other hand, the target is only tangentially related to the main thrust of the action, the effect should be fairly minimal. The GM may also wish to consider the personality and reputation of the NPC involved. If the person has a reputation for outrageous exaggerations and falsehoods, perhaps no one believes him when he starts ranting about Acolytes of the Inquisition visiting him.

- **Stealth and Subterfuge:** Perhaps the best way to keep a low profile is to simply never be seen. When an Acolyte completes a relevant task while avoiding notice, the group's Subtlety could increase. Similarly, an action taken with the express purpose of concealing the Acolytes' presence also might increase their Subtlety. As the Acolytes cover their tracks and generally act in such a way as to hide their activities, they can avoid tipping off their enemies as to their presence. Setting up a base of operations in a forlorn and abandoned hab instead of a well-known inn, going about their business while wearing disguises, and even using psychic powers to conceal their presence from the minds of others are all possible ways Acolytes could increase their Subtlety.

While the Acolytes' actions play a strong part in determining their Subtlety, any number of factors beyond their control can also contribute, such as the methods of communication available to their enemies and allies, or the tendency for the local citizenry to gossip. When the group's Subtlety increases, it does so by a random amount, which the GM determines in secret. Recall also that the GM secretly tracks Subtlety, and the value is always hidden from the players. Consequently, though the players know their Subtlety at the beginning of the game, as soon as events start to modify it, they can never be sure of the exact value. When the GM decides that something has occurred to raise the Acolytes' Subtlety, it usually increases by 1d5. For major accomplishments or pivotal events, however, the Acolytes may gain 1d10 Subtlety. In either case, the GM may add positive or negative modifiers to these rolls based on the circumstances and the actions of the Acolytes. For instance, an Acolyte securing lodgings for the group under a fake name might gain 1d5–2 Subtlety, while conducting business under an assumed identity complete with a detailed cover story, thorough disguise, and falsified documents might increase the group's Subtlety by 1d10+1.

EXAMPLE

The Acolytes are in the Apex of Hive Desoleum investigating signs of unsanctioned psychic activity in the vicinity of the Nello family estate. Dave decides his character, Lorr, will pose as a distant relative, visiting from another world, with the other Acolytes posing as his servants and bodyguards. When Lorr introduces himself as Garbon Hrave, Dave makes a Subterfuge (F) test, achieving four degrees of success. The GM decides that Lorr's disguise and cover story convince the family, leaving them and their neighbours with no suspicions (at least at this time). The GM secretly rolls 1d5+1 and increases the group's Subtlety by the resulting 3.

LOSING SUBTLETY

Just as the Acolytes' actions can increase their Subtlety, so can they reduce it. When the Acolytes act in a way that reveals their presence or intentions, the GM can reduce their Subtlety value in much the same way that he raises it for their covert actions. It is difficult to maintain a high Subtlety if the Acolytes conduct their investigation using intimidation, direct confrontation, relying on their reputations and authority, and generally broadcasting their presence. Such tactics may be effective in the short term, but the Acolytes must be wary that they do not hinder their ultimate goals. When the Acolytes' behaviour calls attention to their presence, activities, or plans, the GM secretly lowers their Subtlety value by a random amount appropriate to the situation. The following examples illustrate some of the common actions that decrease a group's Subtlety:

- **Exercising Authority:** From the most primitive feral world to the most populous hive city, word of an Inquisitorial presence spreads swiftly. If the Acolytes use their connections to the Inquisition to open doors, loosen tongues, or detain suspects, it can quickly reveal their presence to the populace and their enemies, even if such uses of power were made in private. The amount of Subtlety lost due to exercising authority is affected by the trustworthiness and discretion of the people they reveal themselves to, as well as how public the circumstances of the event.

- **Intimidation:** Whether threatening the wrath of the Emperor or just a bloody lip, intimidation tends to get an Acolyte noticed, whether the target knows who the Acolyte really is, or not. The amount of Subtlety lost due to intimidation depends on factors such as the severity of the threat, the importance and reputation of the threatened party, and if the Acolyte follows through, as well as anything else the GM deems relevant.

- **Combat:** Any time the characters engage in conflict their Subtlety may be reduced. Even if the Acolytes leave no direct witnesses and cannot be tied to the fight, dead bodies and collateral damage lead to people talking, which makes it more difficult to lay low. Again, this holds true whether the locals view the Acolytes as representatives of the Inquisition or merely as no-good outsiders. The amount by which the Acolytes' Subtlety is reduced depends on the scale of the conflict, as well as how likely any witnesses are to talk. The types of weapons the Acolytes use and their appropriateness to the environment might also contribute. A shoot-out with laspistols and stubbers in the underhive is unremarkable, but plasma pistols and force swords stand out.

When the Acolytes lose Subtlety, the amount lost is random, just as with increases to Subtlety. Depending on the importance and scope of the action, the Acolytes' Subtlety can decrease by either 1d5 or 1d10, modified at the GM's discretion. As the Acolytes engage in subtle and overt actions, their Subtlety fluctuates. Small steps taken to hide their presence can be undone when a fight breaks out. A warband loudly arrives in the name of the Inquisition, then soon fades into the shadows, might cause their enemies to wrongly believe the Acolytes have given up and moved on. Consequently, Subtlety is fluid and, to an extent, self-

determining. As Acolytes operate overtly, it becomes more difficult for them to conceal future actions. Likewise, a group that has thus-far behaved subtly may have trouble getting noticed, even if they want to.

EXAMPLE

While Lorr subtly questions the patriarch of the Nellos family, the rest of the group sneaks away in order to break into a neighbouring manse and look around. Their attempt at stealth goes disastrously wrong, and the Acolytes end up shooting their way out, killing or wounding several guards in the process. The GM decides that the incident draws a lot of attention and puts all of the households in the area on high alert. He decreases the group's Subtlety by 1d10+3. The GM does this in secret, but the players are fairly sure their bungled attempt caused a sizeable reduction in Subtlety.

CHANGING LOCATION

The Imperium is a fractured empire, spread thinly across the immensity of the galaxy. While worlds within a single system can communicate via a number of conventional methods, interstellar communication requires messengers or Astropaths, methods which are usually costly, slow, or unreliable, and often all three. Further, whether astropathically transmitted or carried by a courier aboard a void-ship, interstellar communication must rely on the vagaries of the Warp, with all the unpredictability and danger that entails. For these reasons, it is difficult for a group's reputation to spread from one star system to another with any rapidity. In fact, the Acolytes may very well reach a destination before word of their latest exploits.

When the group travels to a new system, roll 2d10. If the Acolytes' Subtlety is above 50, subtract the result of the roll from their Subtlety, to a minimum of 50. If the group's Subtlety is below 50, add the result of the roll to their Subtlety, to a maximum of 50.

The GM can modify this roll depending on the situation. For example, if the group is travelling to a system that maintains frequent contact with the world they just departed, the GM might modify the roll by -5, while if the Acolytes travel to a feral world that has only the most sporadic of contact with the wider Imperium, he might add +10 or more to the result. Additionally, at the GM's discretion, character creation options that affect starting Subtlety can apply during a change in location.

DETERMINING SUBTLETY

One element that distinguishes Subtlety from the other characteristics and resources at the players' disposal is the fact that, once events have modified the group's starting Subtlety, they are not aware of its exact value. Players are usually aware when their Subtlety changes, and if it increases or decreases, but they do not know by what amount. In some cases, however, the GM can modify the warband's Subtlety without telling the players. For instance, if the Acolytes were unaware that an enemy had intercepted their communications. As events further modify their Subtlety, it becomes more and more difficult for the players to guess at its current value. This reflects the uncertain nature of undercover or otherwise covert investigations, and it helps to reinforce the air of mystery and paranoia that is an important part of **DARK HERESY**. However, while the Acolytes cannot be certain of exactly how well-known their presence is to enemies and potential allies, this information is nonetheless an important factor in many decisions. For instance, if the Acolytes are deciding whether to approach a cult's hideout stealthily or in force, it helps to know that the cult is expecting intruders and has heightened security. Acolytes can get a rough idea of how successful their efforts at going undetected have been by asking around, observing the populace, or monitoring enemy communications. In game terms, by taking actions such as these, players can obtain limited information from the GM regarding the group's current Subtlety.

MAKING THE ATTEMPT

When attempting to determine their current Subtlety, the players must first decide what exactly the Acolytes are trying to discover, and how they are going about it. For instance, the Acolytes might wish to determine if locals are gossiping about the new outsiders, or if a crime lord knows that several of his lieutenants are recently amongst the dead after a shootout. Based on the Acolytes' planned actions, the GM decides on an appropriate skill test to determine the outcome. There are numerous ways the Acolytes can attempt to discover their Subtlety, but likely skills include Observe (P or I) or Investigate (F). The following are examples of common methods Acolytes can employ in an attempt to discover their Subtlety:

- **Asking Around:** Often, the best way to determine how well-known the group's activities are is to simply ask around. Acolytes must walk a fine line when pursuing such a course of action, however. If they are not careful, they could inadvertently draw attention to themselves through their questions; individuals whom the Acolytes question may have their curiosity piqued and begin making inquiries of their own. For this reason, Acolytes must keep their questions vague or general. This precaution, however, runs the risk of dredging up inaccurate information. This approach relies primarily on use of the Investigate skill, in particular the Inquiry use.

TABLE 8-4: SUBTLETY DETERMINATION EXAMPLES

The Acolytes are attempting to...	SKILL TEST RESULT			
	3 Degrees of Failure	1 Degree of Failure	1 Degree of Success	3 Degrees of Success
Monitor suspected cultists of the Amethyst Hand to determine if the cult realises it is under investigation— Observe (Int)	The Acolyte accidentally tails the wrong person. The players (wrongly) believe that the cult is unaware of them, and so are not prepared for the next day's attack.	In order to avoid alerting the cultist to his presence, the Acolyte prematurely ends his surveillance.	The Acolyte tails the cultist to a meeting of the Amethyst Hand and learns that the cult is indeed aware that someone is investigating them. The Subtlety bonus is 2.	Additionally, the Acolyte overhears the cultists making plans to preemptively strike against the Acolytes.
Ask around the local taverns and markets to find out if anyone is aware of the Acolytes' presence— Investigate (F)	The GM tells the players that their Subtlety bonus is 1 (when it is really 4); the Acolytes believe that their activities are well-known, causing them to act hastily and recklessly.	After a day, the Acolytes are no wiser. Unfortunately, their reputation as generous spenders and drinkers spreads, decreasing their Subtlety.	Spending a day hitting the local taverns, the Acolytes determine that their presence is mostly unknown, and their current Subtlety bonus is 4.	The Acolytes also discover the name of a certain person who is looking for them—a new potential lead.

- **Observation:** Acolytes can attempt to determine their Subtlety by observing others. This could range from making general observations of the populace and eavesdropping on conversations, to trailing a suspected heretic to see if his behaviour gives anything away. This strategy poses less risk of backfiring, as the Acolytes do not become directly involved. By the same token, if the Acolytes observe the wrong persons or locations, they may find themselves spending a great deal of time with little payoff. This approach commonly calls for Observe (P or I) tests.

- **Inspection:** Particularly on more advanced worlds, Acolytes can discern a good deal of information about the relative covertness of their activities by inspecting records and data. This approach covers everything from remotely infiltrating a data-net to examining records at the local Administratum officio. Accessing or understanding such information usually requires specialised skills and knowledge, for the Acolytes must often bypass security measures or decrypt coded information. As such, it calls on an eclectic group of skills such as Tech-Use, Subterfuge, or Linguistics.

Attempts to determine Subtlety are not to be undertaken lightly. They require the Acolytes to distil information from a number of sources, which generally takes a considerable amount of time. Exactly how long it takes is at the GM's discretion, but should generally be the better part of a day, or longer. Additionally, the Acolytes must proceed cautiously, lest their efforts to verify the success of their covert attempts actually backfire and tip off their enemies to the Acolytes' presence. Under many circumstances, Acolytes can choose to spend extra time on the attempt, or alternatively to complete it in less than the amount of time the GM states. Taking additional time on the attempt provides a bonus to the skill test, while rushing the attempt provides a penalty.

Unless the GM determines otherwise, only a single Acolyte makes the skill test to determine Subtlety, although he can benefit from assistance from other Acolytes if circumstances warrant. Having too many Acolytes working to determine Subtlety can be counter-productive, making it impossible to get an accurate picture as the various efforts create a sort of "echo chamber" in which the Acolytes own inquiries get back around to them, giving a false impression that others are asking around regarding the Acolytes. As a rough guideline, Acolytes can attempt to determine their Subtlety in as little as half of the time which the GM quotes, but with a -30 penalty to relevant tests, while spending twice as long grants a +20 bonus.

Normally, the Acolytes make a single skill test when attempting to determine Subtlety. Depending on the circumstances and the Acolytes' plan, however, the GM can require multiple skill tests, perhaps by different Acolytes. Additionally, the attempt may take place through several encounters. For instance, if the Acolytes decide to examine the records at the local Sanctionary precinct to see what the local authorities know about the Acolytes' activities, they must first gain access to the records without being caught, which would defeat the purpose. This could include multiple encounters, as the Acolytes break into the precinct house, search for the proper documents, avoid a patrol, and attempt to escape undetected. In this way, determining Subtlety can become the focus for a night's play and make for an exciting adventure in its own right.

The GM secretly rolls skill tests to determine Subtlety, so that the players do not know the result. If the skill test is successful, the GM describes the results, narratively providing the players with some idea of their Subtlety. In addition, the GM reveals the group's current Subtlety bonus (the first digit of their Subtlety score).

THE RISKS OF FAILURE

If the skill test fails, the GM still provides a narrative description of the results. If the test fails by one degree or less, the GM can, at his discretion, declare that the Acolytes' attempts are simply inconclusive. However, if the test results in 2 or more degrees of failure, the Acolytes' attempts garner misleading results, and the GM provides an inaccurate number for the group's Subtlety bonus. Just how misleading the results are depends on the number of degrees of failure and the specifics of the situation. The number that the GM provides to the Acolytes is off from their actual Subtlety bonus by an amount equal to the degrees of failure scored on the test. The GM decides if the false result is higher or lower than the Acolytes' actual Subtlety bonus, corresponding to the narrative description he provides. There are many potential outcomes depending on what method the Acolytes used. **Table 8-4 Subtlety Determination Examples** on page 239 provides some examples based on the result of the test and the circumstances.

The GM should describe the results of a failed attempt in the same manner as a successful attempt, so that the players do not become suspicious. This lack of certainty for the players adds an exciting degree of tension to the game, and can make for some very dramatic turns if the Acolytes proceed based on a misunderstanding of the situation.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

"Your gun might kill a man, but my words can sway a world."

—Cleric Leedo Phrexin

Fierce warriors though the Acolytes may be, conversation and non-violent interaction is an important part of **DARK HERESY**. Asking questions is a big part of most investigations, and a group that lets their guns do all the talking is likely to end up with many corpses but few answers. Inevitably, the Acolytes find themselves interacting with varied and often strange inhabitants of the Imperium, whether by choice or necessity. For the GM, the responsibility of portraying the numerous NPCs with whom the Acolytes interact may seem daunting. To assist the GM in determining how characters respond to the Acolytes, each NPC has a Disposition and Personality. Disposition and Personality serve as useful guidelines for the GM when portraying an NPC, but also provide a way to determine his reaction to the queries, bribes, and threats of the Acolytes. Disposition represents an NPC's opinion of the Acolytes, while Personality affects his behaviour during conversation and defines the effects of interaction skills used by the Acolytes.

DISPOSITION

Disposition is a characteristic possessed only by NPCs. Like other characteristics, Disposition is measured on a scale from 0-100. Disposition represents an NPC's current temperament and his feelings toward the Acolytes. The higher this value, the more likely an NPC is to trust or assist the Acolytes. Conversely, an NPC with a low Disposition is likely to be unhelpful or even hostile toward the Acolytes. At the beginning of a conversation, an NPC's Disposition is based more on his general mood and, potentially, his initial reaction to the Acolytes. As the conversation progresses, Disposition is shaped by what the Acolytes say and how they present themselves.

Disposition is generally used in two ways by the GM. Firstly and more importantly, Disposition determines an NPC's behaviour toward the Acolytes in conversation, thereby serving to guide the GM in roleplaying the character. The GM accounts for Disposition when portraying an NPC, bringing it through in his words and tone. A low Disposition means the NPC may be rude, standoffish, or terse, while the GM may portray an NPC with a high Disposition as friendly, open, and honest.

Secondly, Disposition may be used as the basis for a test, just as with other characteristics. Disposition can be tested for a variety of reasons in order to determine how the NPC reacts to the Acolytes. The GM may test Disposition to determine what decision the NPC makes when given a choice by the Acolytes, or to discover if he is fed up with the Acolytes and ready to abruptly end a conversation.

TESTING DISPOSITION

Often during the course of a conversation, an NPC makes decisions based on his feelings and opinions regarding the Acolytes. In these situations, the GM may roll a Disposition test for the character. If this test is successful, the NPC decides in favour of the Acolytes, but if the test is failed, the character makes the decision against the best interests of the Acolytes. The decision could be in response to a direct choice offered by the Acolytes, or may arise out of the conversation and the NPC's thoughts. For instance, if the NPC is secretly a member of the Chaos coven the Acolytes are investigating, the GM might periodically test Disposition in response to the Acolytes' questions, in order to determine if the NPC continues to feign cooperation, or decides to cut and run before the Acolytes wise up.

DETERMINING STARTING DISPOSITION

Most NPCs are indifferent toward the Acolytes when first encountered, reflected by a Disposition between 40 and 60, depending on the character's mood. However, in the case of some NPCs there are specific factors that can modify his starting Disposition:

- **Servants of the Imperium:** An NPC affiliated with the Adeptus Terra or Inquisition begins with a Disposition equal to the highest Influence amongst the Acolytes. If the Acolytes have taken steps to hide their identities, the GM may first make a Subtlety test to determine if the NPC knows who the Acolytes are.
- **Hatred of the Inquisition:** When the Acolytes encounter an NPC who is hostile towards the Inquisition, the GM makes a Subtlety test. If the test fails, the NPC's starting Disposition is reduced by 20, or more at the GM's discretion.
- **Awe of the Inquisition:** When the Acolytes encounter an NPC who is friendly toward or respectful of the Inquisition—as any good Imperial citizen should be—the GM makes a Subtlety test. On a failed test, the NPC's starting Disposition increases by 20, or more at the GM's discretion.

PERSONALITY

No two people behave in the same way. One person may be a boisterous conversationalist who responds well to flattery, while another may be a quiet introvert who is easily intimidated. An NPC's response to social interaction is based on his Personality. Personality is a profile that provides general guidance to the GM on how a character behaves during conversation, responds to uses of different skills, and acts when his Disposition reaches zero.

Personality is a tool to assist the GM in running social encounters, and he should not feel restricted by it. GMs should feel free to alter any aspect of a character's Personality based on the situation, his interpretation of that particular character, or the needs of the story.

PERSONALITIES AND SOCIAL SKILLS

The primary function of Personality is to determine the effectiveness of different Interaction skills on an NPC, and their response to the use of those skills. Each Personality includes a table with entries for the Interaction skills. The Modifier column shows the modifier applied to all uses of that skill on the NPC, in addition to any other situational modifiers. The Effect column shows how use of each skill affects the NPC's Disposition. The effect, if any, permanently increases or decreases the NPC's Disposition by an amount based on the degrees of success (DoS) or degrees of failure (DoF) resulting from the skill test.

Personalities also include a description of the action taken by the NPC once his Disposition reaches zero. This is only a suggestion, and the GM should feel free to modify it or select a different response entirely if he deems it appropriate for the individual NPC or the specific circumstances.

EXAMPLE PERSONALITIES

Below are several example Personalities that GMs may find useful. These Personalities are fairly general and represent only a small number of the possible Personalities that NPCs might evince. If the GM finds himself in need of a Personality for an NPC in an unexpected social encounter, he might use one of these. These Personalities also offer a good starting point for a GM when designing unique Personalities for his own NPCs. GMs are encouraged to modify these Personalities as they see fit.

AGGRESSIVE

The character is openly hostile, bluntly fending off inquiries and other attempts to obtain resources or information from him. This NPC may be very demanding, and can rapidly escalate from discussion to argument in order to meet his own goals for the conversation, even if that is simply to deny whatever the Acolytes want. This Personality is well suited to NPCs with high Strength or Willpower, but low Fellowship.

Skill	Modifier	Effect
Charm	−20	+5 x DoS
Command	+0	+5 x DoF
Deceive	+10	−10 x DoS
Interrogate	−10	+5 x DoF
Observe	+20	n/a

Zero Disposition: Once reduced to zero Disposition, this NPC lashes out at the Acolytes. The aim of his attack is probably to scare the Acolytes off, but under some conditions it may be to injure or kill them.

CLEVER

An NPC with this Personality is evasive and misleading, and his speech is often filled with quips and wry asides. Even in the midst of a deathly serious conversation, the character often responds with sarcasm and wit, which he uses to avoid answering unwanted questions. Quick-witted Acolytes garner a positive response from the NPC, while dull conversationalists receive only sharp rebuffs. The Clever NPC succumbs easily to intimidation and brute force, his wall of jocularly collapsing. He generally sees right through lies and deceit.

This Personality is appropriate for NPCs with high Intelligence or Fellowship, but low Strength. This is not to say that the character might not be a worthy adversary, but this sort of NPC generally views violence as an undesirable outcome.

Skill	Modifier	Effect
Charm	+20	+5 x DoS
Command	+10	-10 x DoS
Deceive	-20	+10 x DoS
Interrogate	+10	-5 x DoF
Observe	-10	n/a

Zero Disposition: When the NPC's Disposition reaches zero, he ends the conversation with a curt remark or misdirection, after which he is dismissive of the Acolytes, refusing to give up any useful information or interact much at all. He might even attempt to move to get away from them. The NPC takes effort to avoid future interaction with the Acolytes, going to great lengths to avoid encounters.



CONFIDENT

An NPC with this is thoroughly certain of the rightness of his actions, and reflects his conviction in strong and decisive speech. Threats and commands are likely to only strengthen his opposition, but he is often blind to subtle deception or manipulation. This Personality is appropriate for NPCs with high Willpower or Toughness.

Skill	Modifier	Effect
Charm	+0	+5 x DoS
Command	-10	+5 x DoS
Deceive	+20	-5 x DoF
Interrogate	-20	-10 x DoF
Observe	+20	n/a

Zero Disposition: When the NPC's Disposition is reduced to zero, he ends the conversation forcefully, likely directly telling the Acolytes to leave him alone. In future encounters, the NPC flatly refuses to speak with them.

SUBMISSIVE

The NPC speaks softly and uncertainly, always giving the impression that he expects someone else to interrupt him at any moment. He is agreeable to almost anything asked of him, and tries to appease everyone, telling them whatever he thinks they want to hear. The NPC is easily pushed around, but it is difficult to obtain useful information or action from him. This Personality is appropriate for NPCs with low Willpower or Fellowship.

Skill	Modifier	Effect
Charm	-20	-5 x DoS
Command	+20	+5 x DoS
Deceive	+0	n/a
Interrogate	+20	-5 x DoF
Observe	+0	n/a

Zero Disposition: When the NPC's Disposition reaches zero, he attempts to flee from the Acolytes, departing with a whimper or other suitably meek behaviour. In future encounters, the character again flees at the sight of them. If cornered, he babbles useless appeals to the Acolytes for mercy, forgiveness, or whatever seems appropriate.

UNHINGED

An Unhinged NPC is completely unpredictable in conversation. His answers are often cryptic, and he constantly derails and muddles the conversation with rambling, unrelated tangents.

This Personality is appropriate for NPCs with a high number of Insanity Points or who are suffering from madness, but it can also work for eccentric geniuses or other “quirky” characters. With some modification, this Personality can be used to represent an inscrutable xenos, whose responses are unpredictable and bizarre in the eyes of humans.

Skill	Modifier	Effect
Charm	+2d10	+1d5 x DoS
Command	+2d10	-1d5 x DoF
Deceive	+2d10	+1d5 x DoS
Interrogate	+2d10	-1d5 x DoF
Observe	-2d10	-1d5 x DoF

Zero Disposition: When the NPC’s Disposition reaches zero, he can do any number of unexpected things. He could become catatonic, assault the PCs, or adopt another Personality entirely at his starting Disposition. The GM should examine the nature of the NPC and decide on an original response that thematically fits him.

CONVERSATION STRUCTURE

Conversation in **DARK HERESY** is usually very organic, and a game session may seamlessly transfer from narrative to conversation and back again. During a conversation, the GM takes on the roll of all the NPCs in the scene, acting out their part of the dialogue (some GMs even use different voices to help distinguish different NPCs). Players, of course, portray their own characters, responding to NPCs and each other, as well as describing any actions they take.

Unlike structured time, there is no Initiative order during conversation, and the action is not divided into turns. As in any conversation, the participants interject their own contributions as appropriate. Some conversations may become pretty intense, and characters may even talk over each other. In such cases, the GM may wish to “pause” the action and allow each player to restate their contribution, to make sure nothing important gets missed in the excitement. The GM may also sometimes need to briefly pause the conversation in order to resolve events occurring during it, such as a player narrating his Acolyte’s movements and body language, the GM describing changes to the environment or the actions of NPCs. A common reason for the conversation to pause is for one of the participants to make a Social skill test. This does not mean that the characters involved in the conversation are actually pausing (although it might, in certain dramatic moments), but is a concession to the needs of game mechanics.

SOCIAL SKILL TESTS

Many things can happen in the course of a conversation. In such situations, Acolytes rarely take the time to stop and make small talk—there is almost always a goal in mind with any conversation. As the characters speak, they may attempt to influence, coerce, convince, or trick another character in a significant way. In these cases, the results are determined by Social skill tests. As with other activities, a test is only necessary if there is a chance of failure and the result has some impact on the story. An Acolyte telling a dreg that he has no money to spare does not call for a Deceive test, unless the GM plans for the insane dreg to seek revenge on liars.

Before making a Social skill test, the player describes or acts out how he intends to perform his appeal, trick, or threat. If the GM feels that a test is needed to determine the outcome, he and the player work together to determine a skill and characteristic most appropriate for the circumstances (as always, the GM has the final word). The GM then tells the player the Difficulty of the test, determined both by the NPC’s Disposition and any other applicable modifiers for the situation, just as with any other test.

There are five Interaction skills primarily used in conversation: Charm, Command, Deceive, Intimidate, and Observe. A character uses Charm when he wants to make a good impression or convince an NPC to assist him, Command to issue orders, Deceive to lie or cheat, and Intimidate to frighten or coerce a target. Observe is usually used as a response to another character’s actions; for instance, to detect if a character is lying, or to subtly study a conversation in order to find some detail he can use to his advantage. The above are just examples of common uses; each of these skills has a variety of different uses based on different characteristics, the situation, and the characters involved. As always, players are encouraged to come up with new and creative uses for skills, and they are not necessarily restricted to those described here. For instance, in order to impress a hardened gunslinger, an Acolyte might make a Ballistic Skill test to shoot a coin out of the air or perform some other feat of trick-shooting, with the degrees of success or Failure influencing the NPC’s Disposition as the GM feels appropriate. Although Ballistic Skill is normally used in combat, in this case the Acolyte is using it in order to influence an NPC during a social encounter, rather than to injure or kill an enemy.

Social skill tests are used during a conversation to represent important turning points and pivotal moments, and should only be called for when there are consequences for success or failure that would serve to advance the narrative in some way. If an Acolyte’s lie, threat or trick is not capable of having a significant effect, the GM can simply act out the NPC’s response according to his Personality and Disposition, as normal.

INTERACTION AND GROUPS

Often, an Acolyte finds himself in a situation where he needs to convince, mislead, or command multiple NPCs simultaneously. When using a Social skill to affect a group, a player resolves the skill test as normal, with the following changes:

- The test is only modified once for Personality. It is rare for an entire group to possess the same Personality, so the GM should choose which to use. This is usually the most vocal or commanding person in the group, but it might also be a quiet but respected elder, or a character holding a position of authority within the group.
- The test affects a number of NPCs equal to the Acolyte's Fellowship bonus. Regardless of which Personality was used to modify the test difficulty, each NPC reacts according to his individual Personality.

NPCs AND SOCIAL SKILL TESTS

Normally, NPCs do not make Social skill tests. Many players do not enjoy having their characters' actions decided by a roll of the dice. If a player has established his Acolyte as a tough and no-nonsense Arbitrator, he may not like a poor roll to result in his character being intimidated by a strung-out underhive scum. In some cases, however, it might be very appropriate and useful. For instance, if a player suspects that an NPC is lying to his character, the GM may make a Deceive test for the NPC, opposed by the Acolyte's Observe skill. Even if the player does not suspect the deception (some GMs develop a very good poker face), the GM may call for an Opposed test to determine whether or not the Acolyte suspects. Different groups may have different preferences when it comes to NPCs using Social skills, and GMs and players should work together to figure out what works best for them. The success or failure of the test determines the change to the NPC's Disposition based on his Personality. The NPC's Personality also provides a guide for the GM to determine the NPC's reaction, whether a snappy comeback for a Clever character, or a subtle threat for a Confident NPC.

MOVEMENT IN NARRATIVE TIME

"Mount up. It'll be a hard flight if we're to catch them afore the suns set."

—Merritt Hadrax, pilot of the shuttle Brazen Grox

In combat, movement and positioning can be very important, and a number of actions are available to characters related to movement. It can also be important to know how far a character can move in a given amount of time during narrative time. During narrative time, a character's speed is broken down by how far he can move in a minute and in an hour, and GMs can use these benchmarks to determine any other amount of time. As with structured time, a character's movement in narrative time is based on his Agility bonus. **Table 8-5: Narrative time Movement** on page 245 lists the speeds at which a character with a given Agility bonus walks under ideal conditions. These speeds can be adjusted by a character running, or based on difficult terrain, and adverse or unusual conditions. Of course, when travelling long distances, Acolytes are likely to use a vehicle or riding beast whenever possible. For information on vehicles and mounts, see page 164.

Extended periods of travel can be exhausting, and without rest, a character may become tired and worn-out. For every hour of travel in narrative time, a character suffers 1 fatigue.

RUNNING IN NARRATIVE TIME

When time is of the essence, a character may wish to increase his pace, exerting himself further in order to increase his speed. When moving narrative time, a character can choose to increase his Agility bonus for purpose of determining his narrative movement speed, up to 2 higher than his normal Agility bonus. If he does so, the character suffers an additional 1 fatigue per hour travelled in narrative time.

ADVERSE CONDITIONS

Adverse conditions such as treacherous terrain or harsh weather can slow and put extra strain on a character travelling over distance. When moving in narrative time, each adverse condition affecting a character decreases his Agility bonus by 1 for the purpose of determining his narrative movement speed, but cannot reduce his bonus to below 0.

Examples of adverse conditions that affect a character's narrative time movement include the following:

- Hard, driving rain.
- Travelling on a high-gravity world.
- Moving through a dark underhive area.
- Traversing the streets of a shrine world during an important holy day.
- Travelling through an ash waste or desert without proper supplies.
- Travelling at night without a light source.

TABLE 8-5: NARRATIVE TIME MOVEMENT

AB VALUE	PER MINUTE	PER HOUR
0	12m	1km
1	24m	2km
2	48m	3km
3	72m	4km
4	96m	6km
5	120m	7km
6	144m	9km
7	168m	10km
8	192m	12km
9	216m	13km
10	240m	14km
11	264m	16km
12	288m	17km

NAVIGATION AND EXPLORATION

Movement is often more than simply getting from one place to another. For Acolytes in a new environs, travel can become difficult even when the destination is known. Simply living long enough to make the journey can be an issue, as many investigations can take them into hostile areas where the environment itself poses dangers. In these situations, characters often have to use skills to successfully traverse a wasteland between hive cities, or orient themselves in the depths of a death world acid-forest. These actions are predominately done in narrative time, though in certain circumstances the GM can move to structured time for especially tense occurrences.

Navigation comes into play on many worlds and in many settings, especially for new Acolytes yet to visit many locations outside their home world. Intelligence based Navigate skill tests can allow characters to determine where they are after their Aquila Lander has crashed en route to a desert rendezvous or they have successfully eluded an ravenous underhive beast through hours of running in the dark. These also come into play to determine the course across a seemingly endless ocean to a port before emergency rations are depleted, or to establish a route through a winding series of valleys to reach a cache of Faceless Trade xenos relics. The Navigate skill can also be used with Perception to avoid becoming lost and keeping on the correct path or route once it is established. Unfamiliar settings can often provide deceptive sidetracks or meanderings that would lead characters away from their destination, especially in a densely forested wilderness or the endless ruins of an ancient xenos cityscape.

STARVATION

While it is usually assumed that Acolytes can find basic food and water on most Imperial planets with a degree of civilisation, they often find themselves in hostile environments such as hive wastes or death worlds. When in an environment where food and water is scarce, GMs can choose to have the PCs track their total amount of consumable resources.

Once a character runs out of food and water, he begins to starve. A character can starve for number of days up to his Toughness bonus before suffering any ill effects. Once that time expires, the character can no longer recover fatigue for any reason and begins suffering 1 fatigue each day. While starving, the character also gains the Weakened (5-Tb) condition if his Toughness bonus is 4 or less. These effects last until the character recovers with a substantial amount of food or water.

Unfamiliar and challenging environments also often call for exploration beyond that which might be used to uncover clues or other objects of an investigation. The Survival skill using Intelligence allows characters to search areas for vital items like potable water and non-irradiated food. This might come from scrounging through the ruins of a huge tank battle for still-edible ration packs, or locating pockets of rainfall in the cavities of sessile carnivorous flora. Like Navigate tests to ensure the warband maintains its course while travelling, this Survival test might come up periodically to ensure the Acolytes maintain health if they do not have their own supplies. If they are actively tracking someone, Perception can be used to pick up tracks and successfully follow their quarry and again may be required in intervals to ensure they do not lose their target. Agility can also be used for a Survival test to convert native fauna into beasts for travel, a process that might take days or longer but could result in a very useful means to cross dangerous settings. Such beasts might even be sold or gifted to valued aids after a mission is completed, possibly increasing the Acolyte's Influence there and forming useful contacts should they return.

INVESTIGATION

"The heretic cannot be perfect, for he has rejected the Emperor. Being imperfect, he cannot perfectly hide his foul deeds. Unhidden deeds means we cannot fail to detect them. Once detected, he is dead. The logic is unassailable."

—Arbitrator Gynt Rapphus

As Acolytes of an Inquisitor, the impetus behind most **DARK HERESY** adventures is investigation. As the game proceeds, the story is guided by the Acolytes finding evidence and following leads as they work to root out the enemies of the Imperium and halt their sinister plots. This is usually a very natural process, with the GM setting the scene and providing clues for the Acolytes to find, and the players guiding the investigation as they decide which leads to pursue and how to go about doing so.

The structure of an investigation can be broken down into two fundamental components: clues and leads. Clues are the physical evidence or information that directly relate to whatever the Acolytes are investigating. Leads are the hints each clue provides on the direction the Acolytes should turn next in the course of their investigation. Each clue the Acolytes find offers multiple leads. Some might be dead ends, while others lead to additional clues. As the Acolytes follow leads and uncover additional clues, they create a web that forms the structure of the investigation, and reveal what is really happening in the story—or at least enough to lead them to their quarry.

CLUES

Clues represent all the evidence Acolytes find in the course of an investigation, whether physical or informational. Clues are the most important part of an investigation, for they provide answers to the Acolytes' questions, as well as opening new questions that guide the Acolytes closer to solving the mystery, halting the heretics, and completing the investigation. A clue might be anything from a bolt casing found at the scene of a crime, to a name pried telepathically from the mind of a captured heretic, to even the absence of the correct amount of blood from a brutally murdered noble. Everything can be a clue, so it is not only up to the Acolytes to gather them, but also sift through them to determine which are truly relevant to the investigation. Some might even lead them into other directions, and become the basis for new adventures.

Each relevant clue creates at least one new lead for the Acolytes to follow. Some leads are readily apparent, while others can be discovered by using a variety of different skills to further inspect the clue.

TYPES OF CLUES

Clues can be broadly divided into three categories: physical, informational, and correlational. Each clue is described further below, along with possible skill uses to acquire clues of each type. For more information on skill uses and how they can be applied to an investigation, see **Chapter III: Skills**.

PHYSICAL

Physical clues are any tangible evidence found in the course of an investigation. Physical clues tend to be the most reliable for advancing an investigation, as they are least open to interpretation, harder to falsify, and more easily shared with allies and subjected to further scrutiny. Witnesses may lie or make mistakes, and deductions can be incorrect, but physical evidence is difficult to fake. Acolytes can usually rely on their skills or on the abilities of others to authenticate physical evidence.

Perhaps as important as the presence of a physical clue is its absence. When an object expected to be found in a certain place is missing, it is often of significance to the investigation.

The following skill uses are helpful in locating physical clues, or verifying the lack thereof:

- **Deceive (I):** Deception can gain access to clues that would otherwise be out of the Acolytes' reach. For instance, an Acolyte posing as a magistrate in order to access the local Enforcers' evidence locker, so that the Acolytes can examine a strange statue confiscated during a raid. While invoking the authority of their master or drawing on their own Influence can often obtain the same results, these approaches are more likely to reduce the group's Subtlety.

- **Investigate (P):** Perhaps the most basic method for locating clues is to carefully search the scene of a crime or heresy. Skilled investigators can often find hidden or concealed clues which others overlook, such as searching a room and discovering an rune-encrusted amulet hidden beneath a loose floorboard.

- **Observe (P):** Keen-eyed Acolytes can identify the relevance of seemingly innocuous details and their importance to the investigation, such as footprints on a dusty floor, or recent scratches on a hiver's arm. Acolytes should always be alert for suspicious objects or behaviour, for heresy lurks everywhere. Though constant vigilance, Acolytes can uncover important clues to the current investigation, or even the seeds of an unrelated heresy.

- **Subterfuge (A):** When acting subtly, Acolytes often need to obtain physical clues without tipping off suspects or others. Acolytes can use sleight of hand to swap out fake placeholders in order to buy more time, or simply to lift an incriminating or informative piece of evidence from an unsuspecting owner. For instance, an undercover Acolyte speaking with a nobleman suspected of trading in xenos goods might use the Subterfuge skill to surreptitiously take a dataslate from the noble's desk.

- **Survival (I):** Acolytes who feel at home in natural surroundings can often detect clues that others might ignore. For instance, an Acolyte could use the Survival skill to discover claw prints belonging to no native species near a mutilated corpse, showing what seems a simple animal attack to be much more.

INFORMATIONAL

Information clues include any knowledge or data acquired in the course of an investigation. Acolytes may obtain informational clues by any number of means, including questioning witnesses, interrogating suspects, and reading musty old tomes. Informational clues are most easily faked, and Acolytes must often authenticate or prove these clues through physical or corroborating evidence before acting upon them.

As with physical clues, the absence of information can be a clue in itself. If a data-slate has been wiped clean, or a person refuses to give certain information, the Acolytes may rightly become suspicious. The knowledge that someone has deliberately concealed or destroyed information can be used to great effect in an investigation, yielding many new leads.

The following are some of the skills most commonly used to find informational clues:

- **Charm (F):** In the course of an investigation, Acolytes often need information from individuals who, while not heretics or enemies, are recalcitrant to reveal much. Whether this is due to fear, greed, hostility, or simple disinterest, Acolytes can learn much by simply winning their way into the good graces of these NPCs.

- **Deceive (F):** For Acolytes acting covertly, interrogation of suspects is often not an option. By posing as a potential or current ally, Acolytes can fool heretics into revealing damning information about themselves and accomplices. For instance, Acolytes may pose as criminal thugs in order to trick a recidivist into revealing his boss's identity.

- **Logic (I):** To locate informational clues, Acolytes must often sift through vast amounts of data. Acolytes might use Logic when examining star charts to determine the timing of a celestial conjunction that is prophesied to herald the return of a powerful Daemon Prince, or listening to hours of vox recordings to identify code words.

- **Intimidate (WP or S):** Threatening or interrogating suspects and witnesses is, unsurprisingly, a common tactic for Acolytes in service of an Inquisitor, particularly once the time for Subtlety has passed. When threats of the Emperor's wrath are not enough, careful application of the principles of excruciation can loosen even the most stubborn heretic's tongue, such as interrogating a cultist to discover where his brethren gather.

- **Remembrance (I):** It is often existing knowledge that illuminates the relevance or meaning of clues. An Acolyte could make a Remembrance (I) test to recognise words scrawled in blood on a hab wall as referencing the legend of the Stalking Crimson, opening up an important new lead.

UNNATURAL CLUES

In addition to the three basic types of clues, there is a fourth, rarer variety of clue: the unnatural clue. Fundamentally a type of information clue, unnatural clues are gained by looking beyond the material world to ascertain information unattainable through normal means. This usually means a psyker drawing on powers of divination, but could also be obtained through means such as reading of the Emperor's Tarot. Because it often includes harnessing the power of the Warp, unnatural clues can be the most dangerous to pursue.

CORRELATIONAL

Correlational clues are a special kind of informational clue that are discovered by drawing conclusions based on the comparison of multiple other clues. By looking at the relations and connections of other clues, an Acolyte may come to important conclusions regarding the investigation. Collecting multiple physical and informational clues and cross-examining them to find correlational clues can produce some of the most effective leads. In fact, correlational clues are often those "breakthrough" moments in the investigation that precede the final, climactic encounters.

The following skill uses are often helpful in discovering correlational clues:

- **Investigation (I):** Once a group of Acolytes collects multiple clues, it is often necessary to deduce the connections and "fill in the blanks." Acolytes might examine the details of several ritual murders and conclude that more than one malefic group is at work. An Acolyte could use Investigation (I) to match the group's knowledge of a Chaos cult's activities to a seemingly innocuous statement by the local parish preacher, thus realising that he is a hidden cultist.

- **Logic (I):** Before they can make sense of the clues they acquire, Acolytes must often conduct intense research or study. Acolytes would use the Logic skill to examine decades' worth of Administratum records to find discrepancies regarding the Luftius Rogue Trader dynasty, whose name comes up repeatedly during the investigation.

LEADS

Leads are what drive an investigation onward, pointing the Acolytes to various potential paths and solutions. A lead gives the Acolytes guidance on where and how to go about searching for the next clues in their investigation. Each clue that the Acolytes discover reveals one or more new leads. Some leads could be dead ends or irrelevant red herrings, but others reveal new clues, bringing the Acolytes closer to the successful completion of their investigation.

Leads can potentially be one of the more difficult aspects of an investigation for the Acolytes to follow. Since a single clue can present multiple leads, the agents could have difficulty deciding which course to pursue. Some clues can produce many leads, only one of which connects back to the investigation, making it easy for the Acolytes to get sidetracked on a course of action that has no chance of resulting in further clues (see the **Dead End Leads** sidebar on page 249). To steer the investigation back in the right direction, Acolytes can use various skills to determine which leads are the most promising.

The following are examples of the many skill uses that can help the Acolytes to determine leads and choose which to pursue:

- **Investigate (F, I, or P):** The Investigate skill is, of course, invaluable for discovering and following leads. For example, successful use of Investigate (P) prompts an Acolyte to take a pocket chrono from the scene of a murder. Asking around amongst the deceased's acquaintances reveals that the chrono did not belong to him, from which the Acolyte deduces that it must have been torn away from the murdered during the struggle; if he finds the chrono's owner, he finds the killer.

- **Logic (I):** Application of the principles of logic can reveal many leads from a clue, whether physical or informational. For instance, after intercepting a coded message sent by heretics, the Acolytes must utilise the Logic skill to decipher its meaning before they can act on it. If they are unable to crack the code, the Acolytes realise that their enemy is a highly intelligent and educated person, leading their investigation towards the nearby universitariat.

- **Observe (I or P):** Close observation is often an effective means of prising leads from a physical clue. An Acolyte could use Observe (I) to determine that a reliquary found in the temple of a murdered cleric is actually a fake. This could prompt the Acolytes to research the cleric's past—perhaps he was not the honest and pious man he seemed.

TYPES OF LEADS

Leads can take any number of forms, but the following are the most common types which Acolytes may pursue in an investigation. These descriptions are broad, and many clues offer effective leads of more than one type. Indeed, many approaches that the Acolytes can take, whether the GM expects it or not, incorporate several types of leads. Leads are a resource to aid GMs in constructing their own mysteries for Acolytes to solve, and GMs should never feel restricted when it comes to types of leads. Sometimes,

a lead arises either due to player actions, or while the GM prepares an adventure that does not fit neatly into a single category. In such instances, it is usually not strictly necessary to classify the lead, so long as the GM knows how it can advance the story.

ASSOCIATION

Nearly every clue found in the course of an investigation ties back to a person in some way. It may not be the character the Acolytes are looking for, or even an individual directly involved in the subject of the investigation, but the person almost always has some new information to contribute to the investigation, even if they fail to realize its significance. Looking into who owned an object, originated a piece of information, or knew a victim, might vary greatly depending on the planet on which the investigation is taking place. On a developed Imperial world, there may be extensive Administratum records to search, while tracking down a clue's source on an undeveloped frontier world might require days of footwork. Of course, this can also vary by location—searching for a source in the Main Hive of Hive Desoleum might yield adequate records and cooperative witnesses, while doing so in the lawless underhive might be wrought with peril as the Acolytes search through mountains of refuse and collapsed corridors.

Such individuals may be entirely ignorant of the heresy the Acolytes are investigating, but this may not stop the Acolytes from holding suspicions about the character's link to the case. If the individual is important or influential, this may be a problem, but usually a hefty dose of suspicion is appropriate. If a few innocents burn in the course of an investigation, so be it.

AUTHENTICATION

Not all clues are as they first appear. Many clues can be falsified, perhaps by a guilty party attempting to avoid justice or misdirect the Acolytes. Informational clues, as already discussed, are the most easily faked, and characters may lie for all number of reasons, whether to conceal guilt, or out of fear or malice. Physical clues, while more difficult to fake, can still be fabricated. However, Acolytes can often discern a forgery by relying on their various skills, especially the Observe skill.

Even a faked clue can provide valuable leads in the right direction—if the Acolytes identify it as such. Discovering who is responsible for the planted evidence can often bring the Acolytes that much closer to completing their investigation, for whoever did so is surely involved. Conversely, confirming that a clue is authentic can verify the Acolytes are on the right track.

TRACKING

Some clues inform the Acolytes of the next clue they need, but not how to locate it. Tracking down a particular object or piece of information in the depths of a sprawling hive city or unfamiliar, hostile landscape (which may, of course, be one and the same) can make for one of the most challenging and time-consuming aspects of an investigation. Acolytes

DEAD-END LEADS

While some players may enjoy the challenge and excitement of dead ends, false trails, and counter-productive leads, others may simply find them frustrating. GMs should be prepared to work with their players on this subject, as it is important for everyone at the table to have a good time. For groups that do not enjoy dead-end leads, GMs should work to ensure that any lead the Acolytes follow advances the story in some way, even if it is simply a minor clue that points back to the “correct” lead the Acolytes originally decided against. Often, some minor adjustments to the plot can serve to keep the investigation moving forward, even when the players pick the “wrong” lead, or go off in a direction the GM never foresaw. This can also apply to clues. Perhaps the Acolytes fixate on an object or piece of information that the GM included simply to help set the scene and further immerse the players in the setting of **DARK HERESY**. Players, particularly in a group, have a tendency to latch on to something insignificant and convince themselves of its importance. In these cases, it may be more fun for everyone if the GM modifies the adventure plot so that one of the leads from this “false” clue in fact does serve to progress the investigation in some way, either leading to the next clue, or leading back to the “correct” clue the players originally ignored.

can employ any number of approaches to this task, drawing from a variety of skills. While one Acolyte might use his Survival skill to follow the physical trail back to its source, another might hit the streets, asking around for information. An Acolyte with understanding of the mysteries of technology might access decaying cogitator-stacks, or use arcane instruments of detection to locate the next clue. Poring through the stacks of an ancient library, interrogating a suspected heretic, and even calling on the esoteric abilities of a psyker are just some of the possible methods Acolytes may use to find their way to the next clue.

HISTORY

Learning the history of a clue is often an effective way to uncover further information to progress the investigation. Whether physical or informational, knowing where a clue originated and how it came to be in the Acolytes’ possession can uncover new revelations to aid the investigation. Unearthing such details can be very challenging, depending on the specific clue. Tracing a rumour back to its source might take many days of inquiring amongst the populace at all manner of locales. Discovering the origin of an object may require the Acolytes to consult experts on similar items,

or even to access the secret lore of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Psychic powers can also be an effective and expeditious way to uncover such information, but as always, drawing on the power of the Warp is dangerous in itself.

MOTIVATION

Getting inside the head of an investigation’s target to attempt to understand his motivation can be a potent, if dangerous, tool. By their very nature, the Acolytes’ foes are heretics or even inhuman, and to ponder overlong on the thought processes of such individuals is to risk corruption and heresy. Nevertheless, in order to stop the plots of the Acolytes’ enemies often requires some degree of understanding, for if the Acolytes can predict their opponent’s next move, it is that much easier to stop them. By comparing physical clues connected to the target, or informational clues that describe him, a rough profile can be developed, outlining the motivations and goals of the foe. The Acolytes can use this profile to better guide their own efforts, making educated guesses about their target’s next moves and future plans. If such predictions hold true, the Acolytes may be able to stop their foe before his plan comes to fruition.

METHOD

Many investigations begin with the Acolytes looking into an event that has already occurred and attempting to determine how it was accomplished. This may mean locating individual clues and figuring out how they were involved and contributed to the event. This process is closely tied to a clue’s history, and these two types of leads often go hand in hand.

CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION

Investigations can come in many forms. Some follow a linear progression, where a clue develops into a lead, which then results in a new clue, continuing in this form until a final confrontation that resolves the investigation. This can be expanded where multiple clues direct leads, running in parallel where any one path might point to the same destination. Some have a single major clue, such as a recovered heretical tome, with multiple leads branching out from it, and each lead offering new clues and information, such as the tome’s origin or ways to decipher its mysterious glyphs. Once the original clue is fully unravelled, then the warband might know enough to conclude the investigation.

As the Acolytes gather more information, they start to form hypotheses to explain what they have learned, which can then direct their actions to resolve (often violently) the matter. They must take care not to act too early, however. A swift raid against a xenos weapon dealer might take him down permanently, but more time observing his actions could lead to uncovering his supplier and trace down more of the illegal items. Waiting too long could allow them to spread further, and even introduce foul relics that corrupt souls. Timing major actions to greatest benefit is the mark of a veteran warband, but even skilled Acolytes might find their hand forced and have to act early. In the example, if

a cult planned a raid on the dealer to steal the weapons and launch a major attack, the Acolytes might want to shut down the dealer quickly before the cult became too powerful.

Acolytes typically begin an investigation through the direction of their Inquisitor, either from a received message or direct assignment. In such cases, unless they are consumed with a more pressing concern (such as an imminent daemonic incursion or other extraordinary event), this generally decides the focus and direction for their following actions such as where to start their inquiries. Acolytes often uncover conspiracies and possible heresies in the course of other actions, allowing for other options should they wish to pursue them. This might require their Inquisitor's approval or at least notification, depending on his personality and how the GM wishes to guide the ongoing campaign. Allowing the Acolytes to choose their investigations can make for interesting new adventures, and GMs are encouraged to always plant the seeds for new adventures in the course of their current storyline to allow for this. This also can make for good roleplaying as the warband, faced with several possible new possible investigations, might have to determine which to attack. They might go for one that seems more direct, with the fastest resolution but also perhaps with the least actual threat if left unresolved. They could instead go after one that might turn into nothing more than rumours and smoke, but could also be a wide conspiracy that might have tendrils across the sector. Minor, seemingly unrelated investigations might even turn into a large network of connected heresies and introduce a new arch-nemesis who has been guiding them for years.

Each warband also generally develops its own investigative style as they work together and develop group and individual strengths. Some might favour an obvious presence, using this to help flush out suspects. Others prefer stealth, perhaps infiltrating suspect groups. Some work with local authorities, using connections and influence to aid their efforts; their opposites could always work alone, distrusting anyone not part of their warband. It is important to note there is no right or wrong style, only what is effective. Above all, the Inquisition prizes results and the ends justify the means.



FEAR, MADNESS, AND DAMNATION

Only the insane have strength enough to prosper; only those that prosper truly judge what is sane.

—Anon

In their service to Mankind, Acolytes face innumerable horrors—more than enough to shred the sanity and soul of a normal man. In combating the servants of Chaos, Acolytes risk corruption from the very forces they seek to defeat. Being present at profane ceremonies, reading profane texts, and mere exposure to the powers of the Warp can corrupt the body and soul of an Acolyte. Acolytes encounter many horrific sights, from grisly murders to terrifying xenos creatures. Fear can be a powerful obstacle to overcome, and repeated exposure to experiences of this sort slowly but surely erode the sanity of even the strongest of wills. More than intellect or skill at arms, it is perhaps the capacity to face such horrors with one's sanity and soul intact that most distinguishes an Acolyte amongst the countless servants of the Imperium. Indeed, it is perhaps the ability to comprehend and fight on in the face of such threats that is the very making of an Inquisitor.

The following rules provide game mechanics to represent the threats to mind and soul which Acolytes must face. These rules are separated into two primary sections, dealing with Fear, and with Insanity and Corruption. The Fear rules deal with the Acolytes' immediate, visceral response to horrifying events, creatures, and experiences. Insanity explores the long-term effects of fears; even after an Acolyte overcomes his fear, the damage to his psyche remain, and as horror piles upon horror, he may eventually succumb to madness. Even more insidious, Corruption represents the lasting effects of exposure to Chaos and the Warp. Even the stoutest heart cannot face exposure to the impossible energies of the Warp unchanged, and though the effects can remain hidden for many years, eventually slow corruption can damn an Acolyte as surely as a daemonic bargain.

FEAR

The nightmarish galaxy of **DARK HERESY** is inimical to humanity, and Acolytes must battle against terrifying aliens, perversions of science, unholy entities from beyond the veil, and innumerable other horrors in the course of their duties. The mere knowledge that such things exist is deathly terrifying to the average citizen of the Imperium. In the course of their investigations, Acolytes come face-to-face with horrific creatures and experience terrifying events, from bloody mass sacrifices in the name of dark gods to impossible xenos monstrosities from the darkest void. Overcoming their fear in order to fight on against such terrors can be amongst the greatest challenges Acolytes must face.

MAKING FEAR TESTS

When an Acolyte confronts a creature, event, item, or environment with the Fear trait, he must immediately make a Willpower test with a modifier based on the degree of Fear of the source; this is called a Fear test. If the Acolyte fails the Fear test, his mind gives in to the horror with immediate effect; he immediately suffers 1 fatigue and suffers the full penalties of the Fear's specific effect. If the Acolyte passes the Fear test, he resists the terror and maintains his composure. He suffers no fatigue, however, he may still suffer a lesser result, depending on the Fear's specific effect.

After making a Fear test, successful or not, an Acolyte does not need to make another test for the same source of Fear during that encounter unless specific circumstances warrant. However, if the Acolyte leaves the presence of the Fear source and later returns, he must test again. Fear is a powerful and natural response, and despite his best attempts, a character's response to a fearful sight is unpredictable.

DEGREES OF FEAR

Not all frightening sights are equal. The scene of a grisly murder could cause a rookie enforcer to lose control of his bowels, while being as nothing to a veteran Arbitrator. Such scenes of shocking violence are amongst the least concerns of Acolytes in the service of an Inquisitor, who must face entities and events the very sight of which can sear one's soul to the core. The relative horror of experiences is represented by a Fear source's degree of Fear. The base difficulty of a Fear test is based on the degree of Fear of the source, given as a positive or negative modifier with the Fear trait, just as with other sorts of characteristic or skill tests. For instance, a Chaos temple with Fear (–20) would require Acolytes to make a Fear test with a –20 penalty to their Willpower when they first see it, and each time they return to its unholy halls.

As with other tests, the GM should feel free to further modify the Fear test based on the situation or on a particular Acolyte's phobias. For instance, if the Chaos temple mentioned above features a pit of mutant serpents with the Fear (–10) trait, an Acolyte with a crippling phobia of snakes could suffer an additional –20 to the test, thus requiring a –30 Fear test.

ONLY THE INSANE SHALL PROSPER

The more mad or jaded a character becomes, the easier it is for him to resist the “mundane” horrors of the galaxy. When making a Fear test, the character receives a bonus equal to 5 times his current Insanity bonus. If a character has an Insanity score of 34, for example, he would gain a +15 bonus to all Fear tests.

FEAR EFFECTS

Endless terrors wait in the darkness, ready to confront Acolytes in the course of their duties. These different sources of Fear elicit many different reactions. After all, witnessing a gruesome murder scene is quite a different experience from being witness to a Daemon clawing its way into reality through a tear in the very fabric of existence, liquid fire spilling from the gash in reality.

Whenever an Acolyte makes a Fear test, even if he passes, he must consult the effect of the Fear trait that triggered the test. On a failed test, the Acolyte suffers the full penalties described, as well as 1 fatigue for each degree of failure. However, in the case of more potent sources of fear, even if he succeeds, the character may suffer a lesser effect. The description of the Fear effect clearly states where this is the case.

The most common effects are described under the Fear trait in on page 131. However, Acolytes are likely to encounter many strange and unique sources of Fear during their careers, and some creatures or locations possess a Fear trait with unique effects. In such instances, complete details for the effect are described with the Fear trait in the relevant entry. Of course, GMs should feel free to devise their own, original Fear effects with which to confront their players. The possibilities are as endless as the terrors of the galaxy, and everything from hysterical blindness to death are possible.

INSANITY AND CORRUPTION

Insanity (IS) and Corruption (C) are characteristics measured from 0-100 just as with other characteristics. However, unlike other characteristics, Insanity and Corruption begin at 0 and increase over time as an Acolyte suffers damage to his state of mind (Insanity) and purity of soul (Corruption). Unlike standard characteristics, players generally want their characters' Insanity and Corruption to remain as low as possible. The higher his Insanity and Corruption, the more tainted, damaged, and debilitated an Acolyte has become and the closer he draws to an early and ignoble retirement. If an Acolyte's Insanity or Corruption ever reach 100, he is hopelessly driven mad or tainted, and removed from play. GMs and players should work together to develop a suitably dramatic and horrific end for the Acolyte, such as launching into a self-destructive frenzy, throwing himself into a plasma furnace to purge his imaginary infestations, or transforming from the weight of his mutations into a horrific Chaos spawn.

INSANITY

Insanity represents the strain on an Acolyte's mind caused by his experiences confronting the horrors of the galaxy. The higher an Acolyte's Insanity, the more fragile his mind becomes. As an Acolyte's Insanity increases, it results in mental traumas that affect his behaviour. He also becomes less and less affected by the horrors around him, and his current Insanity can affect Fear tests that he takes (see Only the Insane Shall Prosper on page 251).

There are countless ways that an Acolyte may gain Insanity, such as encountering grotesque xenos monstrosities, hearing the honeyed words of a cult leader, or discovering the existence of Daemons. A common cause of Insanity is the Fear (Mania) effect. The exact amount of Insanity gained from a source is determined either by the rules text or the GM, as appropriate. Some experiences are so far beyond reason and understanding that they automatically cause Acolytes to gain Insanity. In other cases, Acolytes may be able to reduce the amount of Insanity gained or resist entirely, most often by passing a Willpower test. The following examples should help guide GMs in adjudicating the amount of Insanity gained by different experiences:

- **Fear (Mania):** If the Acolyte fails a fear test with the mania effect, he immediately suffers a number of insanity equal to his degrees of failure on the test (see page 127). Some particularly mind-bending terrors could cause an Acolyte to gain a small amount of Insanity even if he passes the Fear test.
- **Sundering the Veil:** An Acolyte in the presence of full-blown intrusion of the Warp into reality could gain Insanity as well as Corruption (see page 255), as he witnesses impossible sights and sounds that simply cannot be. A waking vision of the Warp could inflict 1d5 Insanity, while being aboard a void-ship during a catastrophic Gellar Field failure could increase an Acolyte's Insanity by 1d10 or more.
- **Unbearable Truths:** There are truths of existence that can blast the sanity of a man, and to shoulder such terrible knowledge is the burden of an Inquisitor. Gaining understanding of the true breadth of threats arrayed against Mankind could inflict 1d5 Insanity on an Acolyte, or more if he fails a Willpower test. Learning the true nature of Chaos should inflict 1d10 Insanity or more. Truth is elusive and fleeting, and certain knowledge can destroy a man's mind so long as he believes it, whether or not it is truly factual. An Acolyte who comes to firmly believe that the Emperor is truly dead, for instance, and naught but a desiccated corpse sits on the Golden Throne, could easily gain 2d10 Insanity.

MENTAL TRAUMAS

Mental traumas represent the damage, both short- and long-term, an Acolyte's mind suffers due to his increasing Insanity. As an Acolyte experiences mind-shattering events in the course of his investigations, his sanity erodes, until he eventually exhibits changes in behaviour. These changes could be temporary shock or permanent madness. When an Acolyte's Insanity value increases by 10 points, he suffers a mental trauma.

When a character receives a mental trauma, he rolls 2d10, and adds his Insanity bonus to the total. He then compares the determined number to **Table 8-6: Mental Trauma** on page 253, and suffers any effects listed in the

appropriate entry of the table. These effects can be instant, last a defined period of time, or be permanent depending on the duration listed in the table entry. When a mental trauma effect refers to "the event that caused the trauma," this is whatever occurrence caused the Insanity gain that pushed the character over another 10 points.

SIGNATURE TRAUMA

When created, each Acolyte's home world determines his signature trauma. This represents the unique way in which that character's mind attempts to deal with the horrors of the wider galaxy, influenced by his upbringing and heritage.

If, when rolling to determine which mental trauma affects his character, a player rolls doubles (both dice show the same number), the character does not receive the mental trauma corresponding to the result, but instead, suffers the effects of his signature trauma.

STACKING TRAUMAS

Many traumas are permanent, and when randomly determining a new trauma for an Acolyte, the result may indicate a permanent mental trauma already affecting the character. Character can only suffer from one instance of a single type of trauma at any given time, therefore, when an Acolyte would receive a trauma from which he is already suffering, the original trauma becomes worse. This represents the fact that as an Acolyte's mental state further deteriorates, his ability to control his madness slips, with the result that his madness has a stronger impact on his behaviour.

The descriptions of most traumas provide guidance on how the character is affected when the trauma worsens. However, these are intended as guidelines for the GM, and he is free to modify the effect, or add new effects to the trauma, based on the situation and the personality and background of the Acolyte affected.

REMOVING INSANITY

With the GM's permission, a player may spend xp to reduce his character's Insanity once his Insanity value is greater than 10. To lower an Insanity value by a single point it costs an amount of xp equal to the character's Insanity bonus multiplied by 100. An Acolyte's Insanity bonus can never be reduced in this way; if lowering the character's Insanity would cause the Insanity bonus to decrease, the player cannot spend the xp for that purpose.

Reducing Insanity represents time and effort spent by the Acolyte to improve his mental state and heal his damaged mind. The player should have a good reason for his character to lower his Insanity, such as spending several months in contemplation at a shrine world, or receiving limited engrammic flensing to remove traumatic events from his memory. If the Acolyte is not in a situation that allows for appropriate treatment, which is often the case when an investigation is underway, the GM may require that the player wait until an appropriate opportunity arises.

TABLE 8-6: MENTAL TRAUMAS

2d10 ROLL	MENTAL TRAUMA
3 or lower	Unseemly Shrieking: The character begins uncontrollably shouting in terror at the top of his lungs. Until he is brought under control (or incapacitated), he suffers a –60 penalty on all Stealth tests and generally attracts a great deal of attention. Remove this trauma after 1d10 minutes. Stacking: This trauma persists for an additional 1d10 minutes.
4–5	The Shudders: This character's mental scarring takes the form of violent shaking in his limbs for until he can calm himself. He suffers Weapon Skill Decay (10) and Ballistic Skill Decay (10). Whenever he fails a Weapon Skill test, he suffers Weapon Skill Decay (1). Whenever he fails a Ballistic Skill test, he suffers Ballistic Skill Decay (1). When he is no longer suffering from the Weapon Skill Decay and Ballistic Skill Decay conditions, remove this trauma. Stacking: This character suffers Weapon Skill Decay (10) and Ballistic Skill Decay (10).
6	Wracking Nausea: This character responds to the traumatic event by doubling over and retching uncontrollably. For the next 1d5 hours, this character suffers 1d5 fatigue whenever he uses more than 2 AP in a single turn. At the end of this time, remove this trauma. Stacking: signature mental trauma.
7	Frantic Terror: This character's legs become unsteady and rock beneath him, threatening to turn an ankle or hurl him to the ground at the most inopportune moment. For the next 1d10 hours, this character counts all terrain as difficult terrain (see page 204) and suffers an additional –20 penalty while moving through true difficult terrain. At the end of this time, remove this trauma. Stacking: signature mental trauma.
8	Blind Eye: Exposed to fear beyond his ken, this character lapses into temporary blindness, shutting the horrifying world away with comforting darkness. This character gains the Blind trait. At the end of every hour, he may attempt to force himself to see again by making a +0 Willpower test. If he succeeds, he regains his sight and removes this trauma. If he fails, he remains in darkness and gains 1 Insanity point. Stacking: signature mental trauma.
9	Catatonic Collapse: The character collapses into a troubled, fevered coma. This character become Unconscious for 1d10 hours. He does not remove fatigue during this restless period. At the end of this time, remove this trauma. Stacking: Should he somehow manage to accrue more insanity points while catatonic, this character receives his Signature mental trauma.
10	Haunting Memories: This character is plagued by intrusive memories of the event that caused this trauma. For the next 1d5 weeks, whenever this character fails a test by five or more degrees of failure, he is Dazed for 1 round as he becomes lost in reminiscence. When the effect ends, remove this trauma. Stacking: This trauma becomes permanent.
11	Obsessive Hoarding: This character feels the need to surround himself with trinkets, charms, and other detritus, clutching these talismans of protection to himself at all times. This character must make a +30 Willpower test to permanently part with any item in his possession (besides ammunition, food, and other items normally consumed in one's daily routine). Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to his Willpower tests to leave behind any item of his.
12	Kleptomania: This character becomes obsessed with petty theft; whenever this character fails a test by five or more degrees of failure, he must find something small with which to abscond. If he cannot find an appropriate object to appropriate, he gains 1 insanity point. Stacking: Whenever he cannot find a suitable object to steal, he gains 1 additional Insanity point.
13	Lunatic's Denial: The character utterly denies the existence of whatever event or creature caused this trauma. He suffers a –30 penalty to Remembrance tests to recall anything about to it or directly related events. Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty on Remembrance tests to recall anything related to the event.
14	Phobic Flight: The character becomes deathly afraid of whatever inflicted this mental trauma upon him (or something that he associates with the experience). Whenever he sees the object of his terror, he must make a +30 Fear (Fleeing) test (or suffers an additional –10 penalty to his Fear test if the object of his dread naturally causes Fear tests). Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to Fear tests related to the object of his phobia.
15	Survivor's Paranoia: The character becomes highly alert at all times, ever watchful for the object of his fear (or anything else suspicious, about which he frequently mutters), as if expecting it to explode through the walls or ceiling. When this character succeeds on a Perception test, he gains one additional degree of success. Whenever he fails a Perception test, he suffers 1d5 fatigue.
16	Writhing Phobia: The character becomes deathly afraid of whatever he saw, or something that he associates with the experience. Whenever he sees the object of his terror, he must make a +30 Fear (Cowering) test (or suffers an additional –10 penalty to his Fear test if the object of his dread naturally causes Fear tests). Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to Fear tests related to the object of his phobia.
17	Midnight Visitations: The character is unable to rest, his mind tormented by the ghosts of the past, present, and dreaded future each time he closes his eyes. When this character rests, he removes all of his fatigue except for an amount equal to his ISb. Stacking: Increase the amount of fatigue the character cannot remove through rest by an amount equal to his ISb.

TABLE 8-6: MENTAL TRAUMAS (CONTINUED)

2d10 ROLL	MENTAL TRAUMA
18	Maniacal Phobia: The character becomes deathly afraid of whatever inflicted this mental trauma upon him (or something that he associates with the experience). Whenever he sees the object of his terror, he must make a +30 Fear (Mania) test (or suffers an additional –10 penalty to his Fear test if the object of his dread naturally causes Fear tests). Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to Fear tests related to the object of his phobia.
19	Wracking Agony: The character suffers from recurring, stabbing pains that pierce his very soul. Whenever he fails a Toughness test by three or more degrees of failure, he is overcome with this agony. One of his limbs (chosen at random) is Crippled for 1d5 rounds. Stacking: Increase the number of rounds by which his limb is Crippled on a failed test by 1.
20	Muttered Appellations: This character mutters constantly under his breath, praying, cursing, or otherwise speaking to individuals and entities not present at varying volumes. Often, but not always, he speaks half-intelligibly of the event that left him with this restless voice. This character suffers a –5 penalty to Stealth tests. Stacking: This character suffers an additional –5 penalty to Stealth tests.
21	Split Personality: To cope with the traumatic event, this character develops a second, distinct personality. Roll 3d10+10 for the second personality's Intelligence, Fellowship, Perception, and Willpower. Whenever the original personality fails an Intelligence, Fellowship, Perception, or Willpower test by four or more degrees of failure, an alternate personality (chosen randomly if more than one exists) asserts itself, replacing the previous personality's characteristics with its own until the character fails another test this way or rests. Stacking: Create one additional alternate personality for the character (as above).
22	Forbidden Word: The first time that this character hears the name of the person, creature, or event that caused this trauma during each game session, he must make a +30 Fear (Cowering) test. Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to Fear tests related to the forbidden word.
23	Inconsolable Fury: In response to his feelings of fear and helplessness, this character is driven into a frothing, insensible rage whenever he sees the person, creature, or event that caused this trauma. Whenever he sees the object of his hatred, this character flies into a berserk fury. He must make a +30 Willpower test; if he fails, he must attempt to shoot or bludgeon the object of his ire to death (or something else unlucky enough to be nearby) for a number of rounds equal to his degree of failure. Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to the Willpower test to resist flying into a rage.
24	Logic of Delusion: Whenever this character fails a Perception test by three or more degrees of failure, he must roll on Table 5-4: Hallucinogen Effects and apply the result. Stacking: Permanently reduce his Perception characteristic by 1d5.
25	Psychosomatic Curse: This character believes himself to be suffering from an unfortunate malediction (and he certainly is, though probably not of the variety he thinks). Beyond blaming this "curse" for what are most likely incompetence or everyday accidents, whenever this character fails a test by five or more degrees of failure, he is Weakened (ISb) for 1 round. Stacking: Whenever he fails a test by five or more degrees of failure, this character is Weakened (ISb) for 1 additional round.
26	Self-Mortification: This character takes to scourging himself, lacerating his own flesh, or otherwise inflicting significant pain upon himself to atone for what he views as a failure of his faith. Once per day, this character must engage in his particular brand of pain, inflicting a minor wound on one of his own body parts. Until he does so, he suffers a –10 penalty to all Perception and Willpower tests for the day. Stacking: This character suffers an additional –10 penalty to all Perception and Willpower tests whenever unless he has recently flayed away the impurity of his failed faith.
27	Dead Comrade: This character comes to believe that one of his fallen comrades is speaking to him from beyond the veil of mortality, possibly even to offer advice. Whenever this character fails an Intelligence test, he adds a number of DoF equal to his ISb. His (living) comrades can dissuade him from whatever terrible idea this brought about with a +0 Fellowship test. Stacking: Any other character attempting to divert this character from any goal derived from his madness suffers an additional –10 penalty to his Fellowship test.
28	Righteous Invulnerability: This character knows that so long as his faith holds true and his blade is steady, no force in the galaxy can lay him low. He automatically passes all Fear tests with 1d5 degrees of success. However, he must make a +0 Willpower test to retreat from any foe, no matter how terrible. If he fails and is forced to withdraw anyway, he gains 1 Insanity point. Stacking: This character suffers an additional –20 penalty to Willpower tests to retreat from the enemy.
29	Boundless Despair: This character is emotionally demolished by the event, left a shell-shocked ruin of a person driven to the edge by loss, grief, and fear. Reduce this character's Fellowship, Intelligence, Perception, and Willpower characteristics by 1d10. This character gains the Jaded talent. Stacking: signature mental trauma.
30	Prophet of Madness: The character's grip on reality slips away, leaving him capable of seeing the hideous truth of the universe. This character may use his Insanity characteristic for any Intelligence or Willpower test he makes. Each time he succeeds on a test this way, he gains 1 Insanity. Stacking: signature mental trauma.

CORRUPTION

Even the most stalwart of Imperial servants cannot walk away unblemished from an encounter with the Warp. Corruption represents the taint on a character's soul and body, left by exposure to the stuff of Chaos. The higher an Acolyte's Corruption, the more afflicted he is in soul and body, and the more likely the taint to evidence through abnormalities of behaviour and even physical mutation. There are many ways by which an Acolyte may gain Corruption, including exposure to sorcery, unchecked psychic manifestations, dark rituals, cursed artefacts, and the Daemons of Chaos. As an Acolyte's Corruption increases, he suffers Malignancies reflecting his slide toward damnation.

The exact amount of Corruption inflicted by a source is determined either by the rules text or the GM, as appropriate. There are many methods by which a character's Corruption might increase, and the following examples should help guide GMs when determining the impact from a source of Corruption:

- **Fear (Warp Shock):** When an Acolyte fails a Fear test with the effect of Warp Shock, his Corruption increases by an amount equal to the degrees of failure resulting on the test.

- **Rending the Veil:** A character in the presence of a full-blown intrusion of the Warp into corporeal reality is sure to be affected by the raw exposure to the Immaterium, suffering Corruption as well as damage to his mind. Smaller Warp intrusions inflict 1d5 Corruption, while larger intrusions inflict 1d10 or more.

- **Forbidden Lore:** Knowledge itself can corrupt. If a character fails his Remembrance (WP) test when attempting to recall or research certain forbidden lores (see page 90), he can suffer Corruption based on his degrees of failure and the nature of the information.

- **Sorcery:** Witnessing or performing dread rituals and incantations causes Corruption to all characters present. Minor rituals inflict 1d5 Corruption, while larger rituals inflict 1d10 or more.

- **Profane Relics:** Chaos devices and amulets are seeped with terrible energies. Merely handling a rune-encrusted weapon or wearing gore-soaked armour that a servant of the Ruinous Powers used can corrupt a character. Minor instances should inflict 1d5 Corruption, while prolonged use can inflict 1d10 or more.

- **Vile Persuasion:** Many Daemons and powerful cult leaders use their influence to plant ideas in the minds of men, worming their insidious temptations into faithful hearts. Holding an extended conversation with such a being, or losing opposed interaction tests against them, can inflict 1d5 or more Corruption on a character, at the GM's discretion.

MALIGNANCIES

As an Acolyte succumbs to the corrupting influence of the Warp, his body and soul twist and revolt against the unnatural influence. Each time a character's Corruption increases by 10, that is, whenever his Corruption bonus increases, he suffers a Malignancy.

When an Acolyte receives one of these horrid mutations, the player rolls 2d10 and adds his character's Corruption bonus to the total. He then compares the result to **Table 8-7: Malignancies**, and suffers the listed effects. The effects can be instantaneous, linger for a set period of time, or permanently afflict the character, as described in the entry for the specific Malignancy. The GM can also deal with NPCs in this manner, or simply have them collapse into tentacled abominations when Chaos touches them.

SIGNATURE MALIGNANCIES

When created, each Acolyte receives a Signature Malignancy based on his Background. This represents the unique way in which that character's upbringing and life have shaped the form his corruption takes. Time has no meaning in the Warp, and perhaps the character's damnation was predetermined even before his birth.

If, when rolling to determine the Malignancy an Acolyte gains, the player rolls doubles (both dice show the same number), the character does not suffer the corresponding result, but instead suffers the effects of his Signature Malignancy.

STACKING MALIGNANCIES

The effects of many Malignancies are permanent, and as the Warp further corrupts an Acolyte, it may worsen the severity of his existing Malignancies. Character can only suffer from one instance of a single type of malignancy at any given time. Therefore, when the roll to determine what Malignancy an Acolyte gains indicates a Malignancy from which he is already suffering, the original Malignancy worsens.

Most Malignancy descriptions provide guidance for increased severity. GMs should feel free, however, to alter these effects or add new effects entirely, based on the specifics of the situation and the character.

REMOVING CORRUPTION

The insidious touch of the Ruinous Powers represents a permanent taint on the soul, and is normally impossible to remove. It is this permanence that makes Chaos so difficult to combat, for once it is within someone, it grows and festers like a tainted wound. It is possible though, in extraordinary situations, for the effects of corruption to be lessened. This is always an extraordinary occurrence, and might happen once in a campaign at most. It could represent a visitation from a Living Saint after her shrine was successfully purged of a despoiling Chaos force, the blessing from an Arch-Cardinal for the respectful recovery of a holy relic used millennia ago to banish a Greater Daemon, or some similarly powerful and singular event. This can only reduce Corruption by a small measure, usually no more than 1 or 2 points though the GM can modify this depending on the nature of the event.

TABLE 8-7: MALIGNANCIES

2d10 ROLL	MALIGNANCY
3 or lower	Dark-hearted: This character becomes increasingly cruel, callous, and vindictive. Permanently increase this character's Willpower characteristic by 5 and decrease his Fellowship characteristic by 1d5. Whenever this character gains corruption points, he gains the normal amount plus 1 instead. Stacking: Permanently increase this character's Willpower characteristic by 1 and decrease this character's Fellowship characteristic by 1.
4-5	Shadowdweller: This character's flesh becomes pallid, and his pupils become large; light causes him increasing discomfort. This character gains the Dark-Sighted trait. He suffers a -10 penalty to all Perception tests when in direct light. Stacking: Permanently increase this character's Perception characteristic by 1. This character suffers an additional -10 penalty to Perception tests when in direct light.
6	Bloodlust: Wrath wells up in this character, causing him to give in to savagery more and more. The first time this character inflicts a wound upon an enemy during a combat encounter, he must make a +0 Willpower test. If he fails, he increases his damage with melee attacks until the end of the encounter by Cb. At the end of the encounter, he gains 1 Corruption point for each wound he inflicted during the encounter. Stacking: Permanently decrease this character's Willpower characteristic by 1.
7	Phantom Malady: An ineffable illness plagues this character, causing him to weep blood, wracking him when he tries to sleep. Whenever this character would suffer fatigue, he suffers the normal amount +1 instead. This character only suffers a -30 penalty to tests made with a fatigued characteristic instead of automatically failing those tests (see page 205). Stacking: Whenever this character would suffer fatigue, he suffers the normal amount +1 instead.
8	Malleable: This character's flesh becomes unnaturally fluid and his joints bend in directions they assuredly should not. This character gains the Amorphous trait. Whenever he uses the Reform action, he gains 1 Corruption point. Stacking: Permanently increase this character's Agility characteristic by 1. He gains 1 additional Corruption point whenever he uses the Reform action.
9	Curse of Decades: Lines crease this character's skin and he takes on a wizened and increasingly bitter appearance as his Corruption robs him of his youth with unnatural speed. He ages 1d5+Cb years. Permanently reduce this character's Strength and Agility characteristics by 1d5. Permanently increase his Intelligence characteristic by 5. Stacking: Permanently reduce this character's Strength and Agility characteristics by 1. Permanently increase this character's Intelligence characteristic by 2.
10	Sightless Orbs: This character's eyes become sightless, cracked windows into a soul afflicted with a growing corruption. He gains the Blind and Unnatural Senses (Cb+10) traits. Stacking: Increase the value of this character's Unnatural Sense trait by 5.
11	Witch-Curse: A small stigmata in the shape of a maddening rune appears on this character's body, marking him as touched by Chaos. He gains the Psyker talent and learns 1 psychic power that costs 100xp or less. Whenever he uses this power, he gains 1d5 Corruption points. Stacking: This character learns 1 psychic power that costs 100xp or less. Whenever he uses this power, he gains 1d5 Corruption points.
12	Deathstight: This character's mind becomes warped, his eyes showing him countless possible annihilations of anything or anyone he gazes upon for more than a few moments. Once per game session, this character may increase the damage of one attack he has made by Cb. If he does so, he gains 1 corruption point. Stacking: The character may use this ability one additional time per game session.
13	Cursed Fleshmetal: This character's armour and cybernetic implants become fused with his flesh, and even regenerate. Removing any of these items requires a +0 Medicae test; if the test fails, he suffers 1d5 damage to a randomly selected limb that ignores armour. When repairing any items merged with his body this way, this character may make a +10 Toughness test in place of the Tech-Use test. If he does so, he gains 1 corruption point. Stacking: Any character attempting to remove the fused items suffers an additional -10 penalty on is Medicae test. This character gains an additional +10 bonus to Toughness tests he makes to repair items fused with him.
14	Razor Fangs: This character's teeth grow long, turning into tearing fangs. This character gains an unarmed attack with the following profile: 1d5+Cb Rending. Permanently reduce this character's Fellowship characteristic by 1d5. Stacking: Permanently increase the damage of the weapon by 1. Permanently reduce this character's Fellowship characteristic by 1.
15	Gilled Horror: Gills sprout from this character's neck, his eyes become bulbous, and his face takes on a distinctly piscine appearance. This character gains the Amphibious trait. He suffers a -10 penalty to all Perception tests when out of the water. Stacking: signature malignancy.
16	Unnatural Limbs: Twisted appendages (shriveled arms, razored talons, or fleshy tendrils) emerge from this character's spine or torso. This character gains the Extra Arms (Cb) trait. Stacking: Increase the value of this character's Extra Arms trait by 1.

TABLE 8-7: MALIGNANCIES (CONTINUED)

2d10 ROLL	MALIGNANCY
17	Bone-Blades: This character's bones grow long, twisted spurs that sprout painfully from his flesh on his command. This character gains an unarmed attack that inflicts 1d10+Cb Rending damage. Whenever he makes an attack with this weapon, this character suffers Blood Loss (Cb). Stacking: Increase the damage of the weapon by 1. Increase the value of the Blood Loss this character suffers when using the weapon by 1.
18	Searing Blood: Acid boils in this character's veins in place of blood. By some Warp-born miracle, it still performs its previous functions and does not harm the character himself despite its potency. Whenever this character suffers Blood Loss, each other character within 1d5 metres must make a +0 Evade (A) test or suffer 1d5+Cb energy damage. Stacking: Evade tests to avoid this character's burning blood suffer a -10 penalty.
19	Unnatural Vigour: This character's flesh is reinvigorated, he becomes 1d5+Cb years more youthful (at least on the outside). Permanently increase this character's Strength and Fellowship characteristics by 5. Permanently decrease his Willpower characteristic by 1d10. Stacking: Permanently increase this character's Strength and Fellowship characteristics by 1. Permanently decrease his Willpower characteristic by 1 Cb.
20	Swollen Brute: This character becomes bloated, his muscles expanding and his form becoming excessively corpulent or disturbingly muscular (or perhaps both). This character's Toughness and Strength characteristics are permanently increased by 10. He must spend 1 additional AP as a part of any movement actions he makes. Stacking: signature malignancy.
21	Cannibalistic Urge: Blood and marrow become as wine and bread to this character, and normal food no longer sates the hunger of his soul. Once per game session, this character may heal a minor injury by consuming human flesh. Each time he does so, he gains 1 Corruption point. Stacking: This character can use this ability one additional time per game session.
22	Degenerate Mind: This character's corruption manifests as a twisting of the mind that leaves him prone to casual violence, and extraordinarily off-colour humour at the most inappropriate times. This character automatically passes all fear tests with 1d5 degrees of success. His Willpower and Intelligence characteristics are permanently reduced by 1d10. His Fellowship characteristic is permanently increased by 1d10. Stacking: signature malignancy.
23	Serpentine Tail: This character's spine elongates into a serpentine tail that supports his body (whether his legs wither entirely or merely diminish in size to accommodate this new mode of transportation varies by case). This character gains the Crawler trait and gains an unarmed attack with the following profile: (Light, Ab, 1d10+Sb I, Pen 0, -). Stacking: signature malignancy.
24	Wings: Massive wings erupt from this character's spine. This character gains the Flyer (Cb) trait. Stacking: Increase the value of this character's Flyer trait by 1.
25	Warp Regeneration: Corruption seethes through this character's flesh, sewing his body back together time and time again whether he wills it or not. Whenever this character suffers a Wound, he makes a +0 Toughness test. If he succeeds, he gains the Regeneration (Cb) trait for 1 round and gains 1d5 corruption points. Stacking: Increase the value of this character's Regeneration trait by 1.
26	Excessive Legs: This character develops extra legs that support his body, suspending his torso above a centauroid lower body. This character gains the Extra Legs (Cb) trait. Stacking: Increase the value of this character's Extra Legs trait by 1.
27	It Will Not Die!: This character is touched by the power of the Warp, and fortune twists to keep him alive regardless of the terrible wounds he suffers, as if it is the will of some dark being that resides beyond the veil of reality. This character can no longer burn fate threshold to survive lethal injuries. Whenever this character would die, he survives by the narrowest margin as if he had burned fate threshold and gains 1d10+5 corruption points. Stacking: signature malignancy.
28	Corrupted Flesh: Instead of blood, when this character's flesh is torn asunder, horrific insects, worms, or flitting creatures spill forth. Whenever he suffers a wound, this character gains the Fear (Flee, Mania) trait for 1d5 rounds. Stacking: signature malignancy.
29	Warp Gaze: Whatever this character looks upon burns with the fire of the Warp, and all who see his eyes despair. This character gains a ranged attack with the following profile: 20 metres, 1d10+Cb energy, spray. Each time he uses this attack, he gains 1d5 Corruption points. Characters struck with this attack must make a +0 Fear (Warp Shock) test. Stacking: Increase the damage of this attack by 2.
30	The Warp Made Manifest: This character becomes a Daemon-like creature, capable of reshaping reality itself at his whim. This character gains the Daemonic, Fear (2) (Fleeing), From Beyond, and Instability traits. He can use his Willpower characteristic in place of any other characteristic for any test it makes. Stacking: signature malignancy.

THE ROLE OF FATE

"Surely the Emperor was watching over me that day."

—Juaquein Ditco, survivor of the Hive Perditio Massacre

Amongst the teeming billions of the Imperium, the Acolytes are amongst those rare few destined for something better. Whether a refined noble, an intractable Arbitrator, or a gutter-born scoundrel, Acolytes possess a special quality that sets them apart. Perhaps they are blessed by the Emperor, or born under auspicious stars. Acolytes are a cut above; they triumph where others would be doomed to failure, and they live where others would die. This is the role of Fate.

FATE POINTS

All Acolytes begin play with one or more fate points, determined during character creation. Fate points separate the Acolytes from the countless citizens of the Imperium, granting them the edge needed to fulfil their destinies, perhaps signifying the favour of the Emperor. At the beginning of each game session, an Acolyte receives his full complement of fate points, as determined by his Fate Threshold. During the game, he can spend his fate points to receive beneficial effects, helping him to succeed where an ordinary person could not.

SPENDING FATE POINTS

Acolytes begin each session with a number of Fate Points equal to their Fate Threshold. During the game, Acolytes can spend fate points to obtain several different benefits. When an Acolyte spends a Fate Point, he reduces his total number of fate points by 1. Spending a Fate Point is a Free Action.

When a player spends a fate point, he chooses one of the following effects to apply:

- Add a +20 bonus to any one test. The player must make this choice before rolling the dice for the test.
- Re-roll all the dice in a single roll. The second result must be used. For instance, a player could re-roll a failed skill test, or re-roll the dice for damage from an attack.
- Remove one non-critical wound he is currently suffering from.
- Remove the Stunned condition from his character.

GAINING FATE POINTS

There are two primary ways by which an Acolyte can regain spent fate points. First, at the beginning of each game session, all characters restore fate points up to their Fate Threshold; in other words, Acolytes begin each session with a number of fate points equal to their Fate Threshold.

Second, the GM can grant fate points during game sessions as rewards for excellent roleplaying or achieving a major goal in the adventure. Examples include entertaining in-character dialogue, taking actions appropriate for the Acolyte that are not necessarily in the player's "best" interests,

drawing successful conclusions based on the facts of a case, or an Acolyte risking his life for the sake of the mission or his companions. Such "bonus" fate points are never guaranteed, and are always solely at the discretion of the GM. An Acolyte cannot gain fate points in excess of his Fate Threshold.

FATE THRESHOLD

Fate Threshold represents the maximum number of fate points that an Acolyte can have at any one time. Threshold both limits the number of fate points available at any time to an Acolyte, as well as guaranteeing a number of fate points at the beginning of each game session. An Acolyte's total number of fate points can never exceed his Threshold; any fate points gained in excess of his Fate Threshold are lost. For this reason, it is a good idea for players to not be too stingy with their fate points. By the same token, though, a player who spends fate points too freely could find himself without one when he really needs it.

BURNING FATE THRESHOLD

When an Acolyte faces certain death, he can choose to burn Fate Threshold in order to survive. This is most often a result of suffering a critical wound in combat, but could also be to survive a fall from a great height, the effects of disease or poison, or even the destruction of a void-ship which the Acolyte is aboard. Burning fate permanently reduces the Acolyte's Fate Threshold by 1, and he immediately loses any Fate Points in excess of his new Threshold. The Acolyte survives whatever it was that would have killed him, but only just. It is up to the GM and the player to work out exactly how the character survives the incident. In the case of an injury sustained in combat, perhaps a holy icon worn on the Acolyte's breast deflects a blow, or a bullet passes directly through his chest, miraculously missing organs. Generally, the Acolyte should be left incapacitated and out of the fight, precluding him from taking any further part in the fight, but also ensuring that his enemies overlook him, perhaps believing him to be dead. Other situations, such as a Warp drive implosion, or being on the surface of a world during Exterminatus, require a greater degree of creativity to explain, and should seldom be without some consequence.

A player can burn Fate Threshold regardless of the number of fate points his Acolyte currently possesses. Even a player who has spent all of his Acolyte's fate points during that session can burn Fate Threshold; the Acolyte begins the next session with one less fate point.

INCREASING FATE THRESHOLD

It is possible, but rare, for an Acolyte's Fate Threshold to increase. The GM can bestow an increase in Fate Threshold as a reward for a monumental accomplishment, to represent the unfolding of a great destiny, or perhaps in recognition of a selfless sacrifice on the part of the Acolyte. The GM should never grant such a reward lightly; fate points are a powerful resource for players, and Fate Threshold ensures a character's survival even when facing certain death.



CHAPTER XI: THE GAME MASTER

In every game of **DARK HERESY**, one of the players must take on the responsibility of being the Game Master, or GM. It is the GM's role to bring the *Warhammer 40,000* setting to life with additional characters and new events. In this chapter, players can find a detailed explanation of what it means to be a GM, as well as advice and an assortment of tools to assist in taking on that role.

HOW TO BE A GM

"We are all but a weapon in the right hand of the Emperor."

—Anon

The GM's job is one part narrator, one part referee, and one part cast member. It is his responsibility to create and maintain the living world of the game. He must establish and portray all the various NPCs that populate this world, and work with the players to set the events of a game's narrative in motion. This involves both preparing such material before the game and working within a given session to adapt and develop it, and to respond to any changes the players' actions might cause.

The GM has a great amount of creative control and leeway in this task, but role-playing games are ultimately a collaborative effort. While the GM may create characters like an author or set scenes like a film director, he must also work with his players to create an experience that is enjoyable to the whole group. In this way, the GM can also participate as a mediator of sorts, working to ensure that everyone receives a chance to participate and have fun, while arbitrating any conflicts over interpretations of the rules. A good GM makes sure that his game runs smoothly and that all the players are engaged with the events of the game and having fun.

THE GROUP

Any game of **DARK HERESY** is going to be shaped by its participants. Both the GM and the players inevitably place a unique stamp on the events. In order to make sure the result is as much fun as possible for all involved, it is best to put some thought into the group's dynamic and how best to accommodate the interests of all participants.

CHOOSING THE GM

The first thing a group needs to do when organising a game of **DARK HERESY** is to select a GM to run it. This is an important responsibility, and can be a lot of work, but it can also be very rewarding. Obviously, the GM's position is best handed to someone who is interested in taking it on, but it is also important to select a GM with a solid knowledge of the rules and a good grasp of the *Warhammer 40,000* setting. If the group is sharing a copy of the **DARK HERESY** Core Rulebook, it might also be advisable to make sure the GM is also the one who holds onto it, so that he can consult it when preparing material between sessions.

PLAYER STYLES

In addition to selecting the GM, it can be useful to discuss what each of the players is interested in seeing out of the game before it begins. There is a wide range of possible themes or events that can be covered in the course of a **DARK HERESY** game, and it is unlikely that a group has time to cover all of them. Some players might prefer a focus on social intrigue in the Imperium's highest courts, while another might want to face down hive scum, guns blazing. Some details on a few of the more common approaches to games can be found below.

CHARACTER-FOCUSED GAMES

Many players want to see their characters as the focus of the game. They may come up with ideas for NPCs their character knows, or obligations and grudges their character holds unresolved. The GM can tie these ideas into their plot to make things more exciting. Perhaps an Acolyte in debt to a Faceless Trader must smuggle illicit relics, or arrange an accident for the Trader's rival. Such personal touches can go a long way towards getting a player invested in the game, but the GM must be careful not to place too much attention on any one character over the others.

Some GMs find it best to alternate focus, giving each player a turn in the spotlight, while others find ways to tie multiple such elements together. A GM who knows his players and their PCs well can work with a player to introduce new elements; these can add a personal stake to the story, such as strangers claiming to be long-lost family or a dark secret from a close associate's past.

COMBAT-FOCUSED GAMES

Some players find a thrill in taking on tough enemies in mortal combat, and defeating their opposition in the most visceral way possible. GMs looking to accommodate this desire should make sure to include such foes in their plans, and to develop new tactical challenges in combats. An Acolyte who has mastered close combat can be challenged by elusive and mobile enemies, while a master marksman might be interested by foes who make good use of defensible positions in cover. If this type of challenge does not appeal to the entire group, the GM must be sure that the tougher enemies do not simply destroy less-specialised PCs on the way to the best fighter, as well as balancing the session between combat and narrative encounters.

INVESTIGATION-FOCUSED GAMES

Some players enjoy the thrill of discovery and ferreting out secrets to solve a mystery. Fortunately, this is a style to which **DARK HERESY** lends itself extremely well. Many of the enemies that players encounter as servants of the Inquisition prefer to shroud themselves and their machinations in secrecy, and so it can be easy to develop a cunning adversary or devious plot from the existing threats. The GM must take extra care taken to engage mystery-loving players who are familiar with the *Warhammer 40,000* setting, so as not to make things too obvious. On the other hand, not everyone enjoys guesswork or investigation, so the GM needs to ensure there are always a few clear leads to keep other players from getting frustrated, or to move the plot along if they are passing over subtler clues.

INTRIGUE-FOCUSED GAMES

It is not always necessary to present players with an obvious threat in the form of slaving beasts or shrouded cultists. Sometimes the best challenge is one that cannot be met head on, so that the players can match wits with their adversary in a subtler arena. Within the tenuous balance of Imperial politics, even close allies must sometimes be carefully enticed to help. Some players thrive on this sort of challenge, preferring to talk their way out of—or into—trouble. Their foe of choice may be the obstructive bureaucrat, the pompous noble, or the brazen demagogue, as enemies who must be defeated with sharp thinking or persuasive rhetoric. Powerful figures such as planetary governors can also make good social challenges, as their influence is extensive enough to make direct opposition difficult. However, it is important to make sure that such challenges do not simply engage the most talkative player and leave the others bored.

THE ROLE OF THE GM

The primary function of the GM's job is to create a story (more commonly referred to as an adventure or narrative), in which the players participate. Everything within the story that is not the PCs is under the control of the GM. He needs to provide information about locations and characters, set scenes for the PCs' actions, and drive the plot forward with new occurrences and conflicts. When the PCs encounter other characters, the GM takes on their roles.

Over the course of a **DARK HERESY** game, the GM should try and link past and future scenarios together to create a sense of continuity and verisimilitude. This kind of extended narrative, commonly called a campaign, can allow the players feel they are participating in a living world that responds to their actions and influence, and can make for games of greater durations.

THE BASICS

Given the importance of the GM's role, it is vital that he prepare for the game accordingly. Before accepting the role, as well as prior to each session, the GM should make sure he is comfortable with these important elements of the job.

KNOW THE RULES

The GM should try to familiarise himself as much as possible with all the rules for the situations that might come up in play. Ideally, they should know the rules as well or better than any of the players. If conflicts arise during play as to the interpretation of a rule, the GM should be able to make an informed ruling that gets the game back on track. Some GMs might rely on a knowledgeable player to assist him with this task, but this can sometimes cause concerns about bias in their decisions.

KNOW THE PLOT

In **DARK HERESY**, the players are the agents in the service of an Inquisitor who must defend the Imperium against hidden threats. However, it can be difficult to do this without any such plots or foes. It is up to the Game Master to provide such objectives to drive the plot of the game. He must develop broad settings and specific locales, as well as characters to be antagonists, allies, and bystanders. These are the tools with which he portrays the events of the narrative.

Because the narrative of a roleplaying game is a group effort, the GM should always leave room for the PCs to influence the development of the plot. This means that putting too much detail into some parts of the preparation or relying too heavily on a specific element may cause problems if the PCs never encounter it. The GM must do his preparation as a broad overview of events, and make sure any specific details such as NPCs can be used flexibly, as the game demands.

BE PREPARED

In many groups, the GM is the one who must make sure the game runs smoothly in other respects, providing scratch paper, pencils, dice, or any other useful tools for keeping the game moving. Some GMs might also prefer to hold on to any materials such as characters sheets between game sessions. Keeping track of little details such as these helps free attention for the important task of progressing the game. A list of basic roleplaying supplies can be found on page 11.

RUNNING THE GAME

"The Emperor is our Father and our Guardian, but we must also guard the Emperor."

—Sebastian Thor

In addition to having a general understanding of a Game Master's duties, he should go over specific situations and systems within the rules to make sure he has a thorough understanding of how to run a game. The GM must be prepared for everything from assisting in character generation to transitioning from a secretive investigation in its final confrontation.

PREPARING

Much of the GM's work is done outside of actual game sessions. While it is often possible for an experienced GM to improvise a scenario from start to finish, most GMs

prefer to have at least some material prepared ahead of time. This makes it easier to focus on the matters at hand during a session, instead of dividing attention between the current events and what needs to happen next. This is especially true at the start of the campaign, before the players have a chance to develop their own momentum in driving events.

HELPING WITH CHARACTER CREATION

The creation of the PCs is first and foremost for the job of the players who use them. Some players might even take offence at a GM "meddling" on the wrong side of the table. However, this does not mean that the GM cannot, or even should not, offer help where it is needed in this process. The GM can assist players in a number of ways without compromising their control over the character creation process.

One of the simplest ways to do so is to guide the players through any rules they might not understand. For a group playing **DARK HERESY** for the first time, this can be especially important, as the players might not have had a chance to go over the rules at all. Similarly, if the GM is more knowledgeable about the *Warhammer 40,000* setting than his players, he can help in explaining the details of the galaxy the PCs inhabit. The GM can also work to tie the PCs together as a more cohesive group, by instigating discussions over possible pre-existing ties between characters or noting possible adventure seeds in the decisions during character creation.

PRE-SESSION PREPARATIONS

Preparation does not stop once the campaign has started. It is useful to take time before every new session to review past events, go over plans, and come up with new ideas. There is no definitive guideline on how much time to spend on this kind of work, so it is best to start with the basics of preparation and expand outwards as long as this remains interesting and useful.

Players often venture into areas the GM had not anticipated, or take an investigation into unexpected areas, so some preparation to cover these instances is essential. The GM should have some new NPCs and locations at the ready, so he can use them to flesh out these situations. Often simply having a list of names for these can aid the GM in populating environments as the players move into them. Along with these, some pre-made clues and leads are useful to also make unexpected travels rewarding for the players. The GM should be flexible on such unplanned diversions; some can be kept isolated from the main plot he has in mind, or they could offer extra layers to an existing conspiracy. Some side encounters could even become the launch of entire new adventures, should the players find them interesting enough. The GM needs to always keep track of what each NPC knows of the many dark secrets in the adventure, especially in these cases with unplanned NPCs.

NARRATION

As with any narrative work, the tone of a **DARK HERESY** game is heavily influenced by its structure and pacing. To assist in setting the flow of events, the rules include two different ways of tracking time and actions. Mastering the

use of these different modes can keep player interest at a peak, and prevent scenes from going by too quickly or from dragging on.

GAME MODES

The events of the game can be portrayed in either structured time or narrative time, as detailed in **Chapter VII: Combat** and **Chapter VIII: Narrative Tools**. Details on when to use each mode and when to change between them are discussed below.

NARRATIVE TIME

All situations outside of structured time occur in narrative time, the default game mode. Narrative time does not place special obligations on the GM or PCs to have actions occur in any specific order or proportion. It is possible for a limited number of the players or NPCs to take a more prominent role in a given encounter or scene in narrative time, or for players to take actions as often or infrequently as they wish to (within reason). The GM must be careful that all players remain engaged with the events even in narrative time, and avoid a fraction of the group receiving an unfair amount of attention. The advantage of narrative time is its fluidity, which allows the GM to respond to the players more naturally. However, it can be difficult to handle some types of events in narrative time precisely because of this loose format.

STRUCTURED TIME

Structured Time occurs in regular increments of rounds, or approximately five seconds of in-game time. During each round, every PC and relevant NPC receives a chance to take actions. Although the primary use of structured time is to handle combat encounters, it can be used for other purposes where events require careful tracking of time passed, a regular cycle of actions from all involved characters, repeated occurrences of an environmental effect, or some combination of the above. Examples of scenes that might use structured time include an aerial chase through the spires of a hive city, the appeasement of the machine-spirit in a timed explosive, or escaping a burning building. Structured time allows the GM to control the inherent chaos of dangerous scenes while maintaining tension through the limited economy of actions.

PACING

Successful pacing of a game session requires the GM to understand how to use both structured time and narrative time. Since most events occur in narrative time, he must know how to keep events moving forward without enforcing a definitive clock. He must also be able to keep the attention of every player, and prevent the scene from focusing too heavily on any one part of the group. Finally, he must know when it is appropriate to shift into or out of structured time, and to handle these transitions without disrupting gameplay.

USING TESTS

Most actions during a session are resolved through tests of characteristics or skills. However, not every action needs to be rolled to determine its outcome. In some cases, using a test

makes the game less interesting, or allow a chance of failure at a task that should obviously succeed. The GM should only call for a test when the results should be interesting regardless of success or failure, and never for routine tasks performed without pressure. There would be no point to making an Athletics test to walk down a long hallway, but a test might be appropriate if running away from pursuing enemies. Tests are often appropriate when under pressure from an outside circumstance, such as trying to quickly decipher a data-grimoire before enemies can breach its storage vault.

Some tasks are simple, such as performing basic maintenance rituals on a sturdy vehicle like a Rhino APC. Others require the utmost skill to attempt, like climbing the outer walls of a high hive spire. In general, a task that is performed in the absence of some external pressure should rarely be more difficult than +0 (Challenging), and should more often be +10 (Ordinary) or easier. Exceptionally difficult tasks or particularly trying circumstances may call for the GM to make tests more difficult.

The results of a test may be simple to determine in some cases, but there is often room for additional nuance based on degrees of success or failure. Some tests have obvious possibilities for how an overwhelmingly positive or negative result might play out—for example, failing the repairs on a volatile plasma reactor could cause a dangerous energy build-up and subsequent explosion. In other cases, such results might be more subtle—a door being forced open might be burst from its frame, or some additional details might be recalled about an important topic that would otherwise have been left unknown. If the test's results are easily quantifiable, such as the speed at which a room is searched, consider scaling the results with the degrees of success or failure. If they are not, the GM should consider adding more detail to the results of tests that succeed or fail by at least three degrees.

SKILL TESTS

Although tests can be made with either a raw characteristic or a skill, most tests in **DARK HERESY** use the latter. Characteristics represent a character's basic potential for a task, but in most cases, the actions a character undertakes are dependent on learned specialisation as much as natural aptitude. The GM should only use characteristic tests when it would be impossible to apply training from a skill. An example of such a case might be surviving a dose of poison—the natural Toughness of a character might save him, but there is little his training can do once the poison is already in his system.

Each skill comes with certain recommended characteristics that it can use for most tests. Typically, it is advisable to use one of these characteristics for tests with that skill, and a single characteristic may stand out as the obvious choice in some situations. However, some unusual circumstances or ideas might allow for or even require the use of a different characteristic. A case could be made that a Deceive test to pass oneself off as an Apex noble could be made using Willpower to represent an unchallengeable air of arrogance that deters close inspection, or it could be made with Agility to imitate a specific individual's body language and gait. Although this kind of clever thinking can make

the game more interesting, the GM should be careful about allowing a character to simply use his best characteristic for everything. After all, there is no way a suave character could talk a heavy boulder out of his path.

Most tests should allow for the use one or two possible characteristics. The GM should choose at least one of these as a default option, as it would be very unfair to create a test for the PCs to which the GM lacks a solution. If the test requires a specific action to be undertaken, it can be appropriate to limit it to a single characteristic. Tests with more open possibilities might have three options, with some leeway on the GM's part towards suggestions for additional choices.

TROUBLESHOOTING

It can sometimes occur that, despite the best efforts and plans of the GM, a game runs into issues that impede or halt a session or entire campaign. Sometimes the PCs' actions take the game down a road the GM did not anticipate, which can cause the plot to stall. At other times, the group dynamic can be soured over conflicts in-game. These issues are not cause to give up on the game, as most problems within a group can be worked out as long as people are willing to communicate.

IMPROVISING

While the GM should do his best to plan variations and contingencies, there is no way that he can be ready for every eventuality. Sometimes unlikely dice rolls or unexpected actions by the PCs bring about results the GM had not imagined. It is often possible to salvage these situations with some quick thinking, but sometimes the GM finds himself at loose ends after these surprise upsets.

There are several simple ways to handle this sort of problem. One of the easiest is simply for the GM to tell the players that he needs some time to adjust things, and call a break while he works out a new plan. Depending on how much time is needed, this might mean anything from sending the players out to grab snacks to ending the session early. Obviously, this is not ideal, especially in the latter case, but most players find that keeping the game running smoothly is well worth the delay.

Alternatively, it is possible to buy time for planning without stopping the session through redirecting the progress of the game. Cutting away to another aspect of the plot or a player not involved in the problem can help, as can throwing in a sudden ambush from the Acolytes' enemies. Many books and movies keep the plot moving with a sudden action scene or dramatic revelation, and it works just as well for roleplaying games.

Finally, the GM might delegate some of the creative work to the players. If the PCs' actions threw the scenario out of alignment, then it might be that they had specific expectations for what would happen next. Even if they did not, they might be able to provide some prompt or seed for an idea to keep things going. Even if their ideas do not mesh with what plans the GM has left, asking around the table is unlikely to cause harm, and can inspire new ways of looking at the situation.

RESOLVING CONFLICT

Although roleplaying games are intended as a fun activity and hobby, matters within a gaming group can sometimes become a little heated. Players may find disagreements over a course of action turning into arguments with a life of their own. An encounter that turns out to be more trying than expected can lead to bad feelings towards the GM. The important thing in these situations is to keep communicating clearly and calmly. If the conflict is minor, it might be best to put off dealing with it until the session is over, but never let such issues sit unresolved altogether.

The GM can serve as an impartial mediator in the case of disputes between players, or can open himself to comment and critique if the players have concerns about the direction of his plot. Airing out such problems is better than leaving them to sour the players' fun, and it is entirely possible that someone might be unaware of the problems another perceives them as to have caused. Both the players and the GM should strive to take responsibility and to avoid laying blame, as it is easier to reach an effective compromise when no one feels like they are being ostracised or held at sole fault for a problem.

Sometimes fixing an issue might be purely external to the events in game, but at other times, it can mean changes to the GM's plans, or even past events. The GM should not hesitate to make alterations if they are important to keeping the game fun for all involved, although the players should not take the GM's work for granted, either. Understanding where everyone is coming from is key to keeping a group friendly and the game fun.

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

"Peace? There cannot be peace in these times."

– Lord Commander Solar Macharius

It is a regrettable truth of the 41st Millennium that Mankind is beset by foes on all sides. Part of the GM's job is to bring these threats into the game and manage the desperate confrontations against them. The primary rules for handling such battles are found in **Chapter VII: Combat**, but some additional guidelines specific to the GM's role can be found below.

START OF THE ENCOUNTER

Since all combat encounters occur in structured time, the GM must resolve any hanging narrative actions for the Acolytes before the beginning of combat. Drawing a clear dividing line between combat and non-combat actions is important, as some players may take this opportunity as an invitation to ready or even fire weapons outside combat. This is better handled as an attempt to surprise the opponent, and should not be allowed. In most cases, any action that was not declared before the outbreak of combat (and some longer actions that were declared) are superseded by the imminent violence.

SETTING THE SCENE

In addition to narrating the essential details of the scene, such as the number and type of enemies, or their relative positions, the GM should take some time to note any unusual or important aspects of the local scenery. Pointing out objects that could be used for improvised cover or weaponry can make a combat encounter much more interesting, as can potential hazards such as ledges or live wires. If such features can be spotted on the battlefield, the GM should ensure the players are properly aware of them. Some things of this sort are best left for the players to puzzle out, but they should never be left entirely ignorant of their surroundings.

Although it is best for the GM to be clear and informative, a little bit of mystery can go a long way in setting the tone for the encounter. A purely factual and rules-based description of foes or battlefield features can make them seem bland and unthreatening. Emphasise the descriptive details as much as the mechanical ones—point out the chainsword of the lead cultist by the grinding roar of its blood-caked teeth, or emphasise the blistering heat coming off the molten metal of the factory rather than detailing the exact damage total for touching it.

READINESS AND SURPRISE

Combats in **DARK HERESY** rarely involve cut-and-dry engagements like the front lines of a war. Direct confrontation can involve as much skulduggery and lurking as any other nefarious deed from the enemies of the Imperium, and the GM should feel free to reflect that with enemies who plan ambushes or otherwise attempt to catch the Acolytes off guard. However, this can quickly become unfair for the players if some thought is not put into the enemy's tactics.

For adversaries to have a reasonable chance of ambushing the Acolytes, they must have certain advantages in place. They must be aware of the warband's presence or travelling route, as they cannot sneak up on an unknown location. They must have also some means of concealment, whether through dense local terrain, sorcerous occlusion, or advanced technology. If the GM has the Acolytes ambushed in an open field in which the enemy could not have anticipated their presence, the game can quickly devolve into feeling forced and unreasonable. For the same reason, ambushes should not be foolproof. The Acolytes should always be given a chance to detect or react to hidden enemies. Allowing the Acolytes to make Observe tests before an ambush is typical, although enemies using more esoteric means might be opposed in other ways—perhaps the Deny use of the Evasion skill could warn of an impending teleportal field.

The GM should also remember that the Acolytes can make use of surprise as well. Just as with their foes, they must plan appropriately in order to succeed. The GM should not make such planning unduly difficult, however. The GM may be aware of the Acolytes' plans, but that is not reason for their targets to gain unreasonable foreknowledge. NPCs should have access to the same means of detecting an ambush as the Acolytes, but not more than that.

INITIATIVE

Keeping track of the Initiative order is key to making sure a combat encounter runs smoothly. Fortunately, the mechanics for Initiative are simple in most respects. Things can get a little more complicated in larger combats, when there are a large number of participants to track. If any of the GM-controlled participants in the combat (whether friendly or enemy) are similar to other such NPCs, it can be a good idea to track these groups with a single Initiative roll. Therefore there might be one roll for a group of allied Adeptus Arbites Arbitrators, one roll for a group of underhive gangers, and one roll for the gang leader driving the enemies onwards, in addition to each of the Acolytes. The GM can generally rely on players to help track Initiative for their PC once a few combat rounds have gone by. At this point, they should be familiar with the combatants acting before and after them, and should be able to help keep things in order.

RUNNING ENCOUNTERS

Planning and running a combat encounter can be a difficult experience, but it is also a rewarding one. Combat in **DARK HERESY** should be exciting, so it is important for the GM to handle it well. It is not only necessary for the GM to track details such as the initiative order, the health of NPC combatants, and any ongoing status effects, but also to drive the opposition so as to present a tactical challenge without leaving the PCs with no chance of victory. The GM must be able to strike a balance between a fight that is challenging enough to be interesting and one that is too challenging to overcome. This does not mean he should avoid crafting battles where the PCs easily defeat their foes or are faced with overwhelming force, for either can help establish a stronger component to the overall adventure. The motley thugs who were decimated in a single volley of autogun fire might have been an expendable ruse to lure the warband into an ambush. A hail of fire from hidden Eldar Rangers could force the Acolytes to withdraw from their planned frontal attack. This might allow them to discover hidden weapon caches or Faceless Trade operatives lurking nearby.

MANAGING ADVERSARIES

Tracking the status of each combatant generally requires some scratch paper, index cards, or other means of taking notes, as there can be many details that need updating over the course of the encounter. Essential details to note include the fatigue and wounds each combatant suffers, as well as any status effects such as Blood Loss or changes in their equipment such as an overheating weapon. It can be helpful to include the initiative order among these notes as well.

It is crucial to organise any notes being kept during the combat, in order to avoid confusion. Players often find it extremely frustrating when their attack meant to finish off an injured foe turns out to land on a healthy one due to the GM's confusion. Making a table or chart before a combat can help keep details in the right place, and the GM should take care to cross off or otherwise denote when a status effect (or enemy) expires.

TRACKING CONDITIONS AND DAMAGE

In addition to noting and tracking the general status of combatants, the GM must make sure to apply the results of any ongoing conditions or Wounds that have been suffered. Some conditions (such as Blood Loss) require regular attention and updating. Others have an impact on how new effects are applied, such as the “stacking” of different types of wounds. The GM should check for any effects that need to be updated at each Initiative step, as well as whenever a new result is applied. PC conditions and wounds for are a special case, as the players can generally be responsible for updating these details. The GM should make sure the players do not forget them, and that they keep him updated of any important status changes, but should generally rely on them to track these details. This may vary in groups where the players are less comfortable with the rules or prone to forgetting such details, in which case the GM may wish to take more active notes on the subject.

TACTICS AND STRATEGY

Effective use of tactics (or the lack thereof) can serve two positive roles for a GM. First, by playing enemies as especially cunning or foolish, the GM can adjust the difficulty of an encounter on the fly if it plays out differently than anticipated. If the PCs are easily routing an important enemy, the GM should consider whether he is ignoring opportunities that could make the fight more dramatic. Similarly, if weak foes are making mincemeat of the PCs, he might have them overextend themselves by not saving action points for defence or by splitting up into more vulnerable groupings after being made overconfident.

The relative tactical prowess of an enemy can also serve as a sort of narrative device in itself. Apparently brutish thugs making clever use of ambushes and covering fire may be more than they seem. Some tactics might even be inherent traits of a particular type of enemy. Bestial foes tend to flee after receiving any significant wounds, and particularly zealous ones keep fighting no matter how desperate the circumstance. Of course, this does not mean that characterful tactics of this sort and flexible options as described above are mutually exclusive. The GM may be able to turn seeming incongruities into hooks for the players to become even more engaged, if the portrayal is convincing. By establishing that most beasts typically flee a losing fight, the one alpha predator which does not takes on a particularly fearsome aspect, and is likely to be remembered by the players long after it is defeated.

USING COMBAT CIRCUMSTANCES

There are a number of variations in combat that can change how a battle plays out. Fights in zero gravity, complete darkness, or obscuring fog can present an intriguing and dramatic scene. The local terrain might offer advantages to those who can seize the high ground or push their foes off of it, or it might slow the pace of any who try to close over the rough ground. Collectively, these features are called

combat circumstances, as described on page 203; the GM should familiarise himself with these, but also be ready to introduce new ones as desired for his combats.

Some combat circumstances are common variations on a fight that can occur frequently throughout a session, such as when a foe or PC is outnumbered in melee, or a combatant with a ranged weapon wishes to fire on a target engaged with one of his allies. Being familiar with these rules helps the GM develop more effective tactics for NPCs. Other combat circumstances relate to special battlefield conditions, such as variations on the local gravity, lighting, or terrain. The GM can select one or more of these combat circumstances to play a role in an encounter when setting the scene. Used well, they can add a whole new level of depth to combat encounters. Adding heavy cover throughout a battlefield can serve to emphasise melee combat or simply make a firefight less lethal, while a perilous drop might caution PCs and NPCs alike about approaching a certain area. If the players seem to be losing interest with combat encounters, it can be worth making them more complex in this way. Similarly, climactic confrontations deserve some extra consideration in their layout.

FINISHING ENCOUNTERS

At some point, it becomes necessary to move on from the confines of a combat encounter and continue the session in another way. Often, but not always, this is when all the combatants on one side have been defeated or driven off. The GM must then take a hand in wrapping things up so that the game can continue. This can include speeding the foregone conclusion of a now one-sided struggle, or narrating the aftermath of the combat once it has concluded.

WHEN IS AN ENCOUNTER OVER?

Although some groups may prefer to roll out every combat until the last foe has been slain, it can often be more expedient to recognise when a conflict has progressed into a clean-up action, and move on from there. If the PCs are soundly defeating their enemies without taking serious consequences in return, and all serious threats have been quashed, it can often be more satisfying to narrate their triumph than to let the warband slug it out with their foundering competition.

It is also generally a poor idea to wrap things up in this manner so that events favour the NPCs. Even if the battle is clearly slanted in the favour of their foes (which might be a grievance in its own right), the players are most likely to be upset at being denied a chance to turn the tides. If the GM is concerned that a stubborn stand against the NPC combatants might turn into a last stand and end the game, he can suggest to the players that a narrated surrender or capture might be preferable to this, but should never force the issue.

ENCOUNTER CONSEQUENCES

In addition to the obvious results of any wounds, fatigue or deaths among those who fought in a combat encounter, the GM should take note of any other results from the conflict that occurred. Some of these might be appropriate to note to

the players, such as the arrival of local law enforcement or torch-wielding mob. Others might be less obvious, such as the hidden mastermind behind the enemies learning of his opposition, or a nearby target being alerted to the Acolytes by the noise of the fight. **Table 5-3: Weapon Volume** on page 133 can be especially useful for this. If the fight was especially noticeable, it might be appropriate for the Acolytes to lose subtlety.

Not all the results of a combat encounter should be negative. If any enemies were incapacitated without being slain, the Acolytes might now have useful sources of information or even bargaining chips. Foes with powerful weaponry who are defeated may serve to expand the Acolytes' own armoury (a factor which should always be considered when planning encounters), and any other opponents alerted by the combat might be intimidated as much or more as they are informed, possibly granting bonuses to appropriate tests made against them. Defeating enemies that natives particularly hate could grant increased Influence for the Acolytes in that locale.

The GM should also consider that a battle fought with no survivors or notice given can have consequences as well, if the foes ought to have reported in or been found but were not able to do so due to their deaths. Whether this works out for or against the Acolytes can vary greatly depending on circumstances, but it might serve to raise the Acolytes' Subtlety just as an overt encounter reduces it. After all, there are no longer living witnesses to their presence, and other enemies might spend resources chasing down phantom leads or lay low in fear of an unknown slayer.

NARRATIVE ENCOUNTERS

"Contact with alien races always renews one's faith in humanity. It is my belief that foreign travel narrows the mind wonderfully."

– Helem Boesch

The majority of encounters in a typical Dark Heresy game are handled in narrative time. It serves as the standard method for running most types of encounters, from negotiation to research to travel. A number of resources for use in managing such encounters can be found in **Chapter VIII: Narrative Tools**. Additional guidelines for applying these methods from the GM's perspective can be found below.

NARRATIVE RESOURCES

The paired resources of Influence and Subtlety available to Inquisitorial agents are excellent tools for setting up scenarios. In addition to their individual utility, they can serve as a guide for the overall tone of an investigation or other task. Groups operating with low Influence and low Subtlety may be in over their heads, or serving as expendable cat's-paws to disguise a less obvious purpose. Those with both high Influence and high Subtlety are likely playing deadly games of hunter and hunted by pulling strings across the sector. Low Influence and high Subtlety might indicate of rising stars wise enough to play it safe, or

a group of desperate survivors. There is little more fearsome in the Imperium than the righteous wrath of an indignant Inquisitor whose great Influence is unchecked by the need to keep a low profile. All these possibilities and more can be used to draw inspiration for a campaign's ongoing narrative, especially as events cause changes in the group's methods and resources, transforming one style into another.

INFLUENCE

A character's Influence score is more than just a resource to be used in accomplishing their goal. It represents his standing in Imperial society at large, and his pull within major organisations and power blocs throughout the sector (or potentially, even beyond). A character with a high Influence score is a major mover and shaker that the informed, the cautious, and the powerful recognise whenever he does not take steps to conceal his presence. Conversely, those who see themselves as operating on a higher level might dismiss those with low Influence scores as insignificant pawns.

This can colour the reaction an Acolyte receives from NPCs, possibly influencing their initial disposition, or even making the NPC more or less likely to interact with them in the first place. The naturally sycophantic may gravitate towards high-Influence characters just as the independently-minded avoid them as they jealously guard the little freedom they are allowed. Similarly, low-Influence characters may find the rich and powerful have shut many doors to them, or haughty nobles and elite marshals might not take them seriously.

The GM can represent this phenomenon either actively or reactively, by having NPCs recognise and respond to the Acolyte's Influence, or by allowing the players to dictate when they draw on their reputation to awe and impress. In most cases, it is best to use a combination of these methods. The GM should allow the Acolytes to use their Influence as a tool, usually by using it as a test in social or investigative encounters to influence others, but should also play it up as a factor when not in direct use. The Acolytes do not stop being important figures though simply because it would not be convenient at a given moment, often disrupting their planned efforts. Power-hungry nobles, for example, might eagerly seek them out to increase their own local authority and upset undercover operations, or a Faceless Trade operative might decide to make a name for himself through arranging the deaths of well-feared the Acolytes.

SUBTLETY

The level of Subtlety at which a group operates should have a strong influence on the GM's presentation of the scenario. Players concerned with keeping their characters hidden from their enemies respond very differently to encounters than those with a more brazen and straightforward approach. As such, the GM could find that certain leads might not be followed by a group concerned with exposure, but another that operates loudly might pounce upon. Other scenario aspects can also draw differing levels of player interest based on how their characters conduct themselves. The GM can control this to a degree by choosing to apply modifiers to

the group's Subtlety score with more or less frequency. In allowing more leeway with what qualifies as an overt action, the GM can encourage the players to step forward and face threats directly—or he can caution them about a course of action's advisability with a stiff hit to the group's Subtlety.

By default, the GM should use Subtlety as a prominent but not dominating element. Major actions taken to raise or lower the group's profile should affect their Subtlety score, but changing it too often might prove confusing or difficult to keep straight. Barring extreme changes in the Acolytes' fortune or methodology, it might be best to limit changes in Subtlety to no more than three or so shifts per session, or no more than 10 points from the score at the session's start.

The results of Subtlety can also be more widespread than the bonuses to subtle or overt actions described on page 235. The GM should feel free to alter the Disposition of NPCs who respond especially poorly or well to the skulduggery or audacity with which a given group operates. Subtlety can even be linked to Influence. High Subtlety can aid in Influence tests for tasks such as acquiring black market goods or forbidden grimoires, while low Subtlety could make it easier to brandish the authority of the Inquisition to rile up a mob.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Any scene in which the primary focus is on interaction between the PCs and one or more NPCs can be termed a social encounter. These encounters can range widely in tone and style, from the interrogation of a captured heretic to subtle political games at a ball hosted by Imperial nobles. They are generally simpler mechanically than combat encounters or other overtly hazardous situations, but the need to maintain an interesting and consistent portrayal of the NPCs involved makes the GM's careful attention just as crucial.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS IN THE NARRATIVE

As with any kind of scene in the game, the plot of a social encounter should hinge on someone wanting something. However, while it can be quite obvious what the opposition wants in a combat encounter (usually the Acolytes' heads on a platter), social encounters are not always as direct. The more important and lengthy the GM wants a social encounter to be, the more he should control such information and its delivery.

For a encounter of little narrative significance, the GM should be fine keeping things simple. Buying a lasgun rarely involves complex negotiations or ulterior motives. However, the central conflict of a social encounter can often involve a degree of manipulation or deception if some of the parties involved have opposing desires. If the goals of the PCs are in accord with the NPCs with whom they interaction, the scene can instead serve to further their solidarity and mutual trust, or to set-up a different conflict down the road. However, it is generally not worth giving a great amount of time or attention to a scene where everyone involved spends all their time agreeing on a course of action when they could be pursuing it actively.

PLAYING NPCs

A given social encounter is usually only as interesting as the characters involved in it. While the PCs can and should hold up some of this load, the GM must be able to keep each encounter fresh and engaging with his portrayal of new or recurring characters. Those NPCs with temporary or minor roles can usually be portrayed with only a bit of additional colour or detail to distinguish them, such as an unusual mannerism or distinctive appearance. For such characters, something as minor as a memorable catchphrase or article of clothing can serve to make them unique enough to serve their purpose. However, NPCs who are intended for extended or repeated interaction with the Acolytes deserve more consideration in their design.

One of the most important things to consider when designing a major NPC is their goal, both in general and with regards to the Acolytes. Knowing an NPC's agenda in a given encounter makes a convincing and realistic portrayal considerably easier, and may lend itself to defining other details. Knowing the goals and values of an NPC can be an excellent leaping-off point for developing more obvious and colourful details. A devout follower of the Emperor might invoke the names of saints at every opportunity or bear a holy relic for luck and protection, while a greedy merchant-prince is likely to dress in opulent fabrics and care little for anything that does not ensure a profit. Keeping these details consistent with each other makes an NPC feel alive and real, just as a carefully used out of place element can be a useful clue to perceptive players about a hidden agenda.

USING PERSONALITY

The personality rules on page 241 can serve several different functions, depending on the NPC in question and the inclinations of the GM. Perhaps the simplest use can be to take the example personalities presented on page 241 to flesh out interactions with minor NPCs. This can serve as a variation on the purely narrative details used to differentiate such characters, or it can be used as an additional level of nuance in depicting them. If the GM makes a habit of doing this, he may find it useful to create additional personality profiles to cover more archetypes or situations. For example, switching up some of the modifiers in the Submissive personality could create a Nervous profile for fearful witnesses or cowardly captives. Alternately, the GM could simply apply the Submissive profile and some judicious situational modifiers for such an NPC.

Personalities can also serve to add mechanical depth to a more detailed NPC. After spending extensive time preparing a major figure, the last thing the GM wants is to stumble over the presentation of the NPC during the session. Some NPCs might be natural fits for the existing personalities, while more unusual characters, such as aliens or maddened cultists, might merit building a new one from the ground up. Most major NPCs fall somewhere in between, using an existing set of modifiers alongside additional custom tools to represent their particular predilections. Possibilities for further details include modifiers for the social standing of the speaker or even a tie-in to subtlety with different responses to subtle or overt approaches.

The GM should always strive to keep the mechanical results from an NPC's personality aligned with their narrative portrayal. If the GM has previously established that an Aggressive NPC is susceptible to flattery, he should not apply penalties to Charm tests made for that purpose simply because of the guidelines in that profile. Developing custom personalities or modifier sets can help with this, but the foremost thing that should be remembered is that the personalities are a tool used to assist in an NPC's portrayal, rather than ironclad laws governing their reactions. They work best when the mechanics are woven in with the narrative. When an Acolyte successfully interrogates a Clever NPC, the GM can represent the bonus gained through having the NPC's response be coloured with a fascination with his own genius, or present it as an outright monologue of admission to the obvious simpletons who dare to question such wisdom. Simply applying modifiers without accounting for them in the narrative can lead to players feeling like their actions are irrelevant or even nonsensical, and severely damage their engagement with the game.

USING DISPOSITION

An NPC's disposition allows the GM to measure the degree to which an NPC might be favourably or unfavourably disposed towards the Acolytes. In this respect, the initial Disposition of the NPC can set the opening tone of any social interaction, and any changes in Disposition caused by the use of social skills by the Acolytes can help the GM determine the degree to which their arguments are having an effect. If the GM has set the NPC's initial disposition at an indifferent 50, then raising it to 75 over the course of a scene is very clearly a significant change in the NPC's reaction to or judgment of the Acolytes, while lowering it to 40 could represent setting a minor but noticeably poor impression. As with Personalities, these reactions should be integrated into the narrative of the social encounter, so that a particularly successful test might mean something was said that struck a chord with the NPC, while a disastrous failure should have a good explanation for their suddenly fouled mood.

Disposition can be tested like any other characteristic in order to determine an NPC's reaction to a particular suggestion, request, or other prompt. Using it in this way can give value to the Acolytes' use of social skills, as they ply the NPC's favour until their chances are better. However, sometimes a direct approach to the decision can be more appropriate. Asking an NPC to do something absurd or dangerous at no benefit to himself should usually be rejected out of hand regardless of his Disposition (and could even merit lowering it), while suggesting that the NPC do something they are already inclined towards doing is unlikely to fail. In such situations, the GM may find that using their judgment to deliver a definite "yes" or "no" response is more reasonable than rolling a Disposition test. Such a result could also be used as a reward for particularly clever arguments that have an effect not easily measurable with a simple change in Disposition. In less certain cases, a Disposition test can be used to finalise the results of the Acolytes' persuasive efforts.

USING SOCIAL SKILLS

While it is possible to carry out a social encounter without resorting to tests, it is usually useful to rely on certain skills to help direct the flow of the encounter. In particular, the Charm, Command, Deceive, Intimidate, and Observe skills form a group of social skills, as detailed on page 243. Testing these skills serves several purposes. Firstly, it allows a player who is not inherently eloquent or persuasive to play a character who possesses those qualities, just as a small player can have a large PC, or a clever player can choose to play a foolish PC. Secondly, it can help ease the GM's burden of decision, if he is unsure of how to portray a particular NPC's reaction. And finally, the impartiality of the dice can make sure the players feel their arguments are being judged fairly if there are concerns that the GM might be biased or unresponsive.

Although all of these factors make skill tests a useful part of the framework for social encounters, they should not be used as the sole method of resolution. It is not very engaging to simply roll dice and move on from an encounter without any narrative structure. Therefore, the GM should restrain from calling for tests of social skills except where it changes an element of the conversation. If an Acolyte is simply trying to be friendly in a conversation, this does not require a Charm test, and can be represented by roleplaying the conversation normally. However, an Acolyte who is hoping that his charming manner could distract attention from a matter jeopardising negotiations might be called upon to make such a test. The difference is in both the goal and the potential results. In the first case, success is simple to assume and does not significantly impact the overall narrative. The second case is instead one where success or failure could lead to very different outcomes.

The GM should generally not allow the use of social skills to bypass an NPC's Disposition. It is usually more appropriate for a persuasive effort to be tested as an attempt to modify Disposition, followed by a Disposition test using the new score. This allows decisions to be affected by an in-depth discussion or debate over multiple skill tests, and can give more of the Acolytes an opportunity to have an impact on the results. Simply cutting through to the final outcome can save time for minor issues, but decisive topics should be treated with the appropriate weight.

While social skills can be used to change certain elements of a conversation, there are certain things a given skill cannot do, or that cannot be achieved with persuasion alone. As a general rule, social skills cannot do anything an extremely perceptive and persuasive individual could not accomplish with the same methods in the real world. Some more detailed guidelines on what is and is not possible for each of the social skills can be found below.

CHARM

Charm can make NPCs view a character more favourably, but it generally cannot influence an NPC without at least some foundation of regard to build upon. While it can defuse a hostile situation, it cannot typically change the minds of those

already set on a character's destruction. Charm is of little to no use against a character's sworn enemies, the insane, or the inhuman. In such situations, Charm tests should be made at severe penalties, if they are possible at all.

COMMAND

As a skill, Command can inspire or direct those with a cause to view the speaker's words as authoritative. The source or nature of this authority does not need to be formalised in an official chain of command, but it must be one that exists prior to the attempted use of this skill. Furthermore, effective use of Command requires that the NPCs being commanded consider the orders or speaker to be worth obeying. Command is of little to no use when used on those with no respect, regard, or fear for the testing character, or when used on NPCs who lack a reason to consider them an authority. In such situations, Command tests should be made at severe penalties, if they are possible at all.

DECEIVE

Deceive can misdirect or confuse the attention or understanding of others. Deceive works best when the target lacks a means of challenging the misleading message. It is not typically possible to use this skill to make someone believe something while they are being presented with direct evidence to the contrary, or for the effects of a Deceive test to survive such a presentation after the fact. For this reason, it is extremely difficult to use Deceive to change someone's mind on topics with significant opposing evidence or on which they have considerable experience. In such situations, Deceive tests should be made at severe penalties, if they are possible at all.

INTIMIDATE

This skill serves to gain information from others through duress or threats. Using Intimidate is dependent on the target being vulnerable to coercion through fear or pain, and cannot function against those who disregard such concerns. It also cannot be used when the testing character lacks the ability to cause such an effect, such as if they are in a weaker position than the NPC who they are attempting to alarm. In such situations, Intimidate tests should be made at severe penalties, if they are possible at all.

It should also be noted that Intimidate cannot provide information a target does not know, although it can yield false leads from someone without any better information to provide. In such cases, a successful Intimidate test simply frightens the individual into providing whatever information they believe might placate the testing character.

OBSERVE

Observe allows a character to discern the subtleties of an exchange that are not directly spoken. It can note conspicuously avoided topics, unease, mistrust, fear, and similar cues. However, no Observe test can determine what another character is thinking, only how they seem to think

or feel based on available evidence. Observe tests cannot provide proof that someone is or is not lying, or definitively pin down the reason behind a given argument or behaviour. Such a test can only provide actual evidence for things that can be perceived with the senses, although the GM may offer conjecture as to possible causes at his discretion.

EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS

Not all scenarios should involve the Acolytes facing off against NPC opposition. The GM can also make use of unknown and uncatalogued environments to challenge his group. Encounters involving plumbing ancient ruins, searching decaying underhive hab-domes, or even examining the scene of a foul ritual can serve to advance the plot and engage the players. Exploration encounters are not limited to areas of unmapped wilderness, but can be made out of any situation in which the environment or the unknown is the primary obstacle to the Acolytes.

EXPLORATION

Running exploration encounters is very different from running social or combat encounters. The latter pit the warband against an NPC cast, who are able to take actions and respond to them, as directed by the GM. In an exploration encounter, the Acolytes must take the lead and direct the actions taken. The GM's role in an exploration encounter is largely one of response and reaction, as he evaluates plans, adjudicates test difficulties, and narrates the results of whatever is attempted.

In order for an exploration encounter to engage and challenge the players as much as tactical combat or delicate social intrigue, the GM must learn to use indirect tools such as environmental hazards or limited resources. One of the easiest resources to limit in an environmental encounter is time. The GM can provide a challenge that must be overcome in a certain amount of time in order to prevent a negative consequence. This can work as well for a search for evidence before a trial as it can for the need to escape an unstable ruin before it collapses on a valuable piece of archeotech (or the Acolytes). This sort of limit can be enforced by switching to structured time, although the GM may wish to extend the effective length of a round and the effects of action points if the time provided is beyond a few minutes. Alternately, the GM can remain in narrative time by tracking plans and attempted actions and adding them up in less formal manner. This fluid approach allows the Acolytes to work together or split up more readily.

In addition to time, many other resources can be limited in an exploration encounter. The Acolytes might have to contend with the power supplies of tools, or gaining access to useful tools of any kind. Limits on breathable air and food mostly serve as a variation on a time limit, but could be used to encourage alternate solutions that extend the time granted (such as rigging an air filter or hunting any local fauna).

Environmental hazards are another useful tool in exploration encounters. These can be passive threats, like toxic gas in the local atmosphere, or active ones, such as a fire that must be put out, or unstable footing to be noticed and avoided. Passive threats work well with time limits, and a gradually deadly threat can even be a reason for enforcing the limit. Other dangers can be consequences to failed tests or poorly planned courses of action. Dangerous power fields could inflict damage on those who fail a Security or Commune test in a protected vault, as well as those who simply attempt to enter without taking the proper precautions.

Although the primary focus of an exploration encounter is the Acolytes' struggle with their environment, this does not mean the GM cannot use NPCs at all. In fact, doing so can serve to keep things from getting monotonous if exploring a particularly vast area. Local guides or experts can provide the players with a sounding board for their ideas, or with additional information about their endeavours. At the GM's discretion, such advice and assistance could qualify for a bonus to any tests made. However, it is important that the GM not allow the encounter to be bypassed as the result of NPC aid. The Acolytes should have the burden of success on their shoulders, first and foremost. If there is an NPC whose aid could trivialise the whole endeavour, the GM may wish to substitute in a social encounter to enlist their help, but should not allow them to simply do the Acolytes' job.

NAVIGATION

Since the foes of the Imperium rarely hide themselves within easy reach of its institutions, the GM may find it necessary to bring the Acolytes to untracked reaches of wilderness or even planets lost to the Imperium in the pursuit of heresy. In such situations, exploration often becomes a crucial element of the story, not to achieve grand goals or unearth secrets, but simply for the Acolytes to survey the lay of the land. Seeking out the border of an open plain may not require any more attention from the GM than words to the effect of, "After days of travel, you find the plains coming to an end," but most areas more commonly merit tests from the Acolytes to find their way to any objectives they might have. The Navigate and Survival skills should be the mainstay in such situations, but the GM should allow the use of other skills where appropriate to allow an Acolyte to act on his strengths.

In addition to skill tests, the GM should also consider the rules for such extended travels. **Table 8-5: Narrative Time Movement** on page 245 can give a sense for how much ground it is possible to cover in a given amount of time. It is important the GM not forget to track any fatigue suffered over the course of exploration, as this can influence any plans made, as well as any encounters at the eventual destination.

TRAVEL

Sometimes, the GM might wish to have the Acolytes traverse a huge or even hostile region without it being the focus of the narrative. Any journey aboard a void-ship, especially one travelling through the Warp to another system, can be an example of this, as can more limited forms of travelling between important points. While such travel is fully capable

of being made into separate adventures, it is more often used as a tool to advance other goals. Avoiding use of long-distance travel limits the scope and kind of stories that can be told, and giving it full attention whenever it is used can disrupt the flow of an ongoing plot or scenario.

The most commonly used technique for resolving a trip of much distance but little narrative significance is to summarise it. The GM can detail the time and method used to travel, and perhaps through in an anecdote from the trip to add colour, before moving on to the destination at which the Acolytes have now arrived. It is also possible for the GM to give the players a chance to detail what each of their characters did over the trip. This allows for a little extra roleplaying depth and serves as an even better method for adding colour to the journey. Travel in **DARK HERESY** should rarely be trivialised, however; even the least of Warp voyages can be a perilous event, and a journey across a hive world wasteland can easily become a major adventure.

Furthermore, some activities the players may wish to pursue are best done during periods of downtime, such as gathering rumours or acquiring goods. Most void-ships are large enough to pass for towns or cities, but even smaller transport options such as ocean-going vessels, primitive caravans, or grav-rails may offer some kind of useful amenities. It is possible that such a trip can be focused entirely on this purpose. In such cases, travel serves as a useful lull in the action. The GM should give as much or as little time for such activities when travelling as he feels is appropriate to maintain the pacing of the campaign.

ADVENTURES

"The Emperor will not judge you by your medals and diplomas, but by your scars."

– Anon

The GM has many tools at his disposal, as detailed earlier in this chapter and elsewhere throughout the book. However, the single most important tool the GM must possess and use is the ability to combine his understanding of characters, encounters, and other narrative tools into a complete adventure scenario in order to run an effective session of **DARK HERESY**. This skill is the backbone of the GM's role at the table, and finding or developing material for adventures is his most significant duty.

TYPES OF ADVENTURES

There are three primary sources for new adventures the GM can use in his campaign. The GM can acquire adventures produced by other GMs or find them in **DARK HERESY** products, develop new adventures from an existing seed or premise, or create a new and wholly bespoke scenario. Each offers unique benefits, and a long campaign may eventually see material drawn from all of the different sources.

PRE-MADE ADVENTURES

If the GM is having difficulty developing his own adventures, whether due to a lack of time, warning, or inspiration, it is possible to find fully constructed examples to use instead. One such adventure is presented in **Chapter XIII: Seeds of Heresy**, which is intended to serve as an introductory experience to **DARK HERESY**, and can serve to launch a new campaign. Internet, up to and including full-fledged adventures.

The advantage of using pre-made adventures is that most or all of the preparatory work has already been done. While some adventures may require the GM to adjust them for the specifics of his group, or at least benefit from this sort of consideration, they inevitably possess a ready-made premise and structural elements that allow the GM to limit his work to the gaming table. Once a pre-made adventure is complete, it is often easier to create a succeeding adventure to follow up on any hanging threads or openings left from play than it is to develop a new adventure from whole cloth. Similarly, pre-made adventures can be useful even if the GM feels confident in his ability to create adventures of his own, as they can be the source of new ideas, locations, or NPCs to be placed within his own work.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

New adventures can also be built around a core of existing material from another source. Sometimes the presentation of a location or character hints at a potential plot in which it could be used. Pre-made adventures such as the one included in this book, often contain seeds offering a brief premise taken from the possible results of the adventure, that the GM can develop further into new storylines. These adventure seeds provide an effective balance between creative freedom and external inspiration.

The purpose of adventure seeds is to provide a foundation from which a new adventure can grow. A given seed usually focuses on providing answers to the basic story-writing questions such as “Who?,” “What?,” “Where?,” or “How?,” through the introduction of new or rumoured characters, locations, and events. The GM still needs to do the bulk of the preparatory work when using these, but they can help to take the first step in the process by launching the storyline.

HOMEMADE ADVENTURES

Finally, the GM can create a new adventure from scratch using the advice in this chapter. Such an adventure might draw on characters from **Chapter XII: NPCs and Adversaries**, or the GM could create all the relevant materials from the ground up. Producing a homemade adventure can be a great deal of work, but it can also be an extremely rewarding experience.

Using homemade adventures provides two chief advantages. Firstly, the GM is not beholden to an outside source for his material. If the players want to do something outside the scope of published material, or to progress the shared narrative faster than the GM can find new adventures, he can turn to a homemade adventure to fill the gap. Secondly, the GM has complete creative freedom in handling the adventure. While this comes with increased responsibility and accountability, it allows for the GM to direct events to whatever end he and his players find most entertaining. If the GM wishes to explore a given facet of the *Warhammer 40,000* setting in great depth, introduce new characters and locations, develop his own sector, or push the boundaries of the expected and assumed within **DARK HERESY**, homemade adventures are his best tool.

LINKING ENCOUNTERS

Encounters are the building blocks of adventure design. This is as true for a GM running a pre-made adventure as it is for a GM designing a new adventure on his own. During the course of a game session, the GM needs to present all of an adventure’s information, from its initial premise to the cast of relevant characters, using encounters as the medium of delivery. Some encounters can be short, consisting of a brief exchange of words between a PC and an NPC, while others can be extended dramatic episodes that dominate a session. However, all encounters must be tied together in an unbroken whole. Successfully linked encounters become more than the sum of their parts, while disjointed encounters end up weakening the impact of each individual element.

A good way to make sure everything fits together is to always think about two key concepts: framework and transitions. Thinking about an adventure’s framework means taking a look at an adventure for its most essential elements, such as its beginning, all potential concluding points, and the most important people, places, and things. Identifying a unifying theme such as “the unknown,” “isolation,” or “knowing who to trust” also helps at this stage. Once the GM has identified an adventure’s framework, he should try and make sure that all encounters serve some element of the framework, such as introducing an important character or providing information that leads towards a final showdown. Spotting the elements of an adventure’s framework also helps the GM remove or alter any encounters that would undermine its theme. If the adventure is one of survival horror, an encounter where the Acolytes meet up with a helpful and trusted ally might make it more difficult to express that theme.

While identifying the framework addresses the question of the adventure as a whole, with what should be included, left out, or altered to fit, understanding transitions helps the GM deal with individual encounters. A transition is essentially the space between two encounters, and serves to explain the choice of the encounter to follow. If the GM cannot satisfactorily provide this reason, then the next encounter is rarely going to make much sense to the players. Furthermore, the GM cannot guarantee that the players are going to follow a given trail from beginning to end, the way that the author of a book would be able to do. To help

with this, the GM should build encounters with elements at the beginning and the end suggesting how they might fit together with other events, allowing them to fit together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Each encounter should be built with an eye towards why the Acolytes would find it desirable or necessary to participate, and should include one or more prompts or suggestions for future activities.

For example, an ambush provides an obvious motivation to fight (namely, survival), and suggests several future activities, such as fleeing what appears to be hostile territory or investigating the origin of the would-be killers involved in the attack. In this way, a combat encounter can lead to different exploration encounters (escaping the area or seeking signs of other hidden foes) or social encounters (interrogating prisoners or shaking down the locals for information). It could then lead back to combat when the secret backer of the ambush is found, or to a social encounter with the enemy in question, or with the Acolytes' own disappointed superiors. All of this naturally depends on the choices of the players, but the GM can direct these choices and their outcomes through effective transitions.

ENCOUNTER RATIOS

An effective game alternates between every kind of encounter. Focusing too much on any of the individual encounter types can become tiresome over time. However, a constant rotation causes a similar problem, creating either a predictable rotation of encounters or a chaotic, churning mess. While leaving one type of encounter out altogether denies the GM a valuable part of his toolkit, sparing use of an encounter type can allow it greater impact on the occasions when it is brought to bear. With all this in mind, the GM should seek to develop a sense for how often to use each of combat, social, and exploration encounters.

The GM may wish to choose one sort of encounter as the kind he plans to use most frequently or as a default. This choice can be made as a general one, based on his style and the preferences of his group, or it can be varied depending on the theme and focus of the current adventure. While doing this is not necessary, establishing this sort of baseline can help manage the expectations of the players and give the GM stable ground from which to work. Whether the GM establishes this choice in advance or leaves such matters to be determined in play, it is likely that a given session or adventure can develop some sort of focus in this respect, although not always to any great degree. Similarly, one type of encounter may end up being marginalised to an extent by the inclinations of the players or the specific nature of the current events in the game.

In order to keep things fresh and interesting, the GM should generally avoid a specific type of encounter repeating more than a few times in a row, and should try and fit in at least one of each type of encounter over any two sessions. Even a primarily social plotline like a grand ball for Imperial nobility can benefit from being shaken up with a duel of honour or chasing an audacious thief, just as a brutally combative warzone can include social interaction with allied forces or even the less bloodthirsty foes available. Sometimes it can be appropriate to focus primarily on one

or two aspects of the game for a full session (such as the aforementioned ball with only a single duel, chase, or other action sequence), but leaving major game elements out of play for too long can lead to monotony. Keeping a good mix of encounter types not only keeps play exciting, but also keeps players from predicting (or worse, dreading) their next encounter.

MANAGING INVESTIGATIONS

A common occurrence in many adventures and plots within **DARK HERESY** is the investigation. In order to combat the shrouded foes and secret corruption that plagues the Imperium, Inquisitors and their Acolytes must first find the hiding places in which these dangers lurk. GMs who wish to make use of investigation as a theme or focus for their adventures should begin by examining the guidelines on page 246 of **Chapter VIII: Narrative Tools**. Additional information on the topic specific to the GM's role in investigation-themed adventures can be found below.

LINKING CLUES AND LEADS

The core elements of any investigation in a **DARK HERESY** game are clues and leads. The GM generally provides clues, although he may require the Acolytes to engage in encounters or success at certain tests to discover them. Leads are drawn from work both the GM and the players perform. The GM can provide information about a clue that could qualify as a lead to follow, either as part of the clue's description or after successful tests to discern details. The players can also find leads by taking the initiative in drawing connections and correlations, or spotting details that stand out from the information as it is presented. A bloody knife can be a clue. If the knife was last seen in the possession of a certain NPC, that is a lead, and one that could be offered by the GM freely or after a successful Remembrance test from one of the Acolytes. The Acolytes might be able to draw on their recollections of the NPC, such as his gambling habit, to surmise that the knife no longer belongs to him. This information could be an additional lead, thanks to their initiative. All of this information, or none of it, could be useful in tracking down the perpetrator of a murder during an adventure, depending on how the GM has set things up.

IN COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Clues: While it might seem that a deadly battle would be an inappropriate place to gather information, combat encounters can deliver just as much information as less lethal avenues of investigation. In fact, simply engaging in an unexpected combat encounter can be a clue that indicates the presence of an unknown enemy. The very foes involved in the encounter can also be a great source of clues. Common clues found in combat encounters include:

- The presence or absence of specific enemies (or allies) in the fighting, whether as individual NPCs or as groups. Such involvement can be an extremely direct clue in some cases, and should be used sparingly.

- Tokens of allegiance to a particular group, individual, or cause. Examples include badges or other insignias, as well as uniforms, tattoos, brands, or even specific battle cries.

- Unusual weaponry or other armaments. This can include items beyond the normal means of the combatants due to the expense or rarity of the gear, forbidden armaments, or even specific pieces of gear with a known source, manufacturer, or owner.

- Atypical tactics or coordination from foes known for a particular fighting style. Presentation of this sort of clue relies heavily on the GM's tactical knowledge, as detailed in the Tactics and Strategy section on page 265.

Leads: The most common lead that can be drawn from combat encounters is that of association. Some of the common clues even have associations inherently attached, such as an enemy uniform. For this reason, authentication becomes another important lead in following up on combat encounters, to ensure that the source of the association is genuine, and to avoid being deceived by a false insignia or similarly faked clue. Tactical clues can sometimes suggest the necessity of authentication, such as when a supposedly foolish foe displays a ruthless cunning they should not possess. Knowing or discovering the motivation behind an attack is also a crucial form of lead, not least because it can help guard against further attacks in the future. Every single combat encounter should be approachable from the avenue of understanding its motivation, as no one, from a soldier of the Imperial Guard to a xenos corsair, risks their life in combat without a reason (even if that reason seems incomprehensible to right-thinking servants of the Emperor). The last of the common leads from combat encounters is tracking, as the flight of surviving enemies or the path the enemy took into battle can sometimes indicate the foe's origin. Note that interrogations of captured foes can reveal many of these leads as well.

It is less common to direct the investigation of combat-related clues towards their history, but this can prove useful when directed at specific elements of the encounter. Further clues can sometimes be dredged from the past of a particular combatant, or the previous owners or uses of a given weapon. Finally, few of the clues from combat encounters lend themselves to a detailed examination of their method, as the preceding struggle usually provides any relevant information on that front.

IN SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Clues: The clues from social encounters are often subtle and easily missed. They are most commonly drawn from a conversation or message, which can often make them difficult to prove or track. However, it is also possible to draw more concrete clues from the locations and objects that are present in such an encounter. Common clues found in social encounters include:

- The conspicuous or frequent mention of a specific topic, or the avoidance on a topic that might be expected.

- The names of people or places mentioned in relation to an important topic, such as the known associates of a victim or suspect, or anyone who might have had access to a known clue.

- The choice of venue for a meeting or other social encounter planned in advance. This is most likely to be considered a clue if the venue is out of the ordinary in some way, such as being closer or more distant to the NPC's usual haunts than might be expected, or if the venue is unusually public or private for the expected discussion.

- Any clothing or trappings worn or carried by an NPC that are odd or inappropriate for the situation at hand. This can include items that defy social convention (such as a lack of mourning garb after a death) or local conditions (such as weather).

- The involvement of characters without a reason to be present. This can include associates of an expected NPC (such as a formidable bodyguard in a location known to be safe) or entirely unanticipated arrivals.

Leads: Social encounters are unique in that it is possible to immediately follow discovering a clue or developing a lead with further information when discussing matters with a knowledgeable NPC. It can be possible for a clever player willing to ask a lot of direct questions to gain a disproportionate amount of information in this way. While this can be an effective tool at the latter end of an investigation to allow the pieces to fit into place, the GM should keep such encounters from eliminating a need for the investigation in the first place. The GM should remember that if characters with the motivation to complete the investigation had the knowledge they needed to do so, it would have been finished before the Acolytes arrived. Therefore, knowledgeable NPCs should generally be disinclined to provide answers without something to gain, if they can be found at all. The GM can limit information to manageable levels by attaching a cost in favours or goods, by having an NPC refuse to address certain topics, or simply through letting the NPC lie about any incriminating or inconvenient matters.

Assuming that this hurdle can be overcome, the GM can use social encounters to present a number of different leads. Social encounters serve as perhaps the best way of discerning an individual's motivation, whether through conversing with the individual in question or with his associates. NPCs are also a useful source of information on details that are unlikely to be recorded outside living memory, such as matters of little-discussed history or associations that would be viewed as inconsequential outside of local gossip. Such discussions can also offer insight into the method of a crime or heresy if previous instances of the offence have been known.

The primary difficulty with clues from social encounters is the one of authentication. Often, using these clues relies on trusting the word of the NPC who provided them. Trust is a rare commodity in the Inquisition's work, where it can be found at all, which makes finding corroborating evidence for most such clues a necessity. Furthermore, it can be difficult to track down the source of information gained through word-of-mouth for this same reason. Rumour and gossip can be useful tools, but can take on a life of their own once they begin circulation. Finding the originator of a particular social clue may be necessary to clear up contradictions.

IN EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS

Clues: Exploration encounters can be an excellent source of clues. After all, many classic investigative scenes, from the examination of a crime scene to tracking mysterious footprints through the wild, can be considered exploration encounters. The key to investigative success in an exploration encounter is often a matter of looking in the right place, so the GM may find these encounters most useful when following another encounter in which a lead was drawn from one or more clues. Exploration encounters can include a staggering variety of clues, but some of the most iconic examples include:

- Tracks, footprints, or other signs of recent activity, especially in isolated or rarely travelled areas.
- Items or objects with an origin clearly alien to the local environment, such as a manufactured tool in the jungle or a chip of marble far from any natural deposits of the stone.
- Discarded or hidden examples of clues from other types of encounters, left in out-of-the-way locations.

Leads: Tracking is the lead most commonly tied to exploration encounters. Entire exploration encounters can be formed from investigating a lead through tracking its origin or previous locations it has occupied. Furthermore, the question of tracking is intimately tied to specific locations, which can involve challenges of exploration both tied to the investigation and arising from local conditions. Exploration encounters focused on searching an area are also frequently to investigate associations and to authenticate. Searches can often turn up clues that were lost or hidden by an NPC, including evidence that could contradict false testimony or tie an individual to an offence under investigation. In some cases, this hidden evidence can also provide insight in to the methods involved in the crime or heresy being pursued.

It is considerably less common to find the history of a clue through an exploration encounter. Clues found by exploring the environment are often out of the appropriate place to discover such information, if they were not deliberately removed from it. However, this very reason means that an exploration encounter to a specific location can sometimes lead to information on the history of a clue discovered elsewhere. And given that exploration encounters are primarily defined by limited contact with other characters, it is exceedingly rare that they can assist in discovering leads on a motive. It is possible that the discovery of a hidden clue can shed light on this sort of lead, but even this is rarely enough to suffice without further corroboration.

GUIDING THE PLAYERS

A good investigation relies on carefully provided information. The GM must provide enough detail to pique the interest of the players while leaving out any hidden information upon which the story hinges. When introducing a particular encounter or clue, descriptions that imply or suggest further features rather than revealing them outright work particularly well for this, especially if the insinuated details are open to interpretation. If the GM has specific avenues along which he intends for the Acolytes to conduct their investigation, this can be the point at which he introduces them.

However, investigation-focused adventures do not function well without player input. In order to truly evoke the feeling of exploration, the Acolytes should be able to blaze their own paths to at least some extent. The GM should focus his attention on the end goal and clues or encounters, but leave the means of reaching the goal and traversing the encounters largely in the hands of the Acolytes. If the players find coming up with ideas difficult, the GM can allow them to discover prompts for potential courses of actions, although he should avoid forcing the issue. If the Acolytes are puzzled about where to begin searching for the dealer for a proscribed text, they could find a note in the margins, or scrawled on paper in the next room. Such a note should not proclaim the dealer's name and address, but could hint at a meeting place or common associate who might know more.

If the players are particularly proactive, the GM might wish to do the opposite and allow their theories to inform the results of the investigation. This technique should be used carefully, as the players may not like the idea that there was not an answer to begin with. However, sometimes an idea passed around among the Acolytes is simply too good to leave unused, and the GM may find it better to improvise a way to include it.

DEALING WITH SNAGS

Sometimes investigation-focused adventures run into problems that hold matters up and prevent forward progress. Some of these can be avoided when planning the adventure. One such preventative measure to keep in mind is to avoid pinning the success of an investigation purely on the success of a test. Although clues and leads can be tied to the results of tests, the GM should make sure the players can receive any absolutely vital information without them, such as through an initial briefing. If the GM cannot find a way to provide such information, then the adventure should be restructured to avoid the possibility that the players become stuck due to poor luck with their dice.

At other times, the problem arises during the session. Sometimes the players repeatedly miss the information inherent in an important clue, regardless of any subtle prompting, or they become fixated on a theory of events completely different from what was intended. If more careful guidance does not get matters moving again, it can be necessary to include more drastic measures. For example, a time-honoured tradition in investigative fiction is to resolve any such slumps through a sudden attack or ambush, during which the attackers can give away crucial information. Using this method or some variation on it can usually start the investigation up again, or redirect attention from any falsely-drawn leads.

Alternatively, the GM can let the Acolytes act on incorrect assumptions until they realise their error, but this can lead to the wasting valuable time in a game session. It is possible to mitigate this by having the error lead to additional encounters of a different sort, where the path takes the warband into a beast's lair, or the victim's diary leads them to seek information from his close associates. This allows the players to feel vindicated and the GM to keep events consistent without compromising either goal.

REWARDS

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

– Anon

Over the course of a **DARK HERESY** campaign, the Acolytes are called upon to accomplish great and terrible things in defence of the Imperium. The GM should see that they are appropriately rewarded for their efforts in the game, whether with knowledge, power, or resources. Such rewards serve to create a feeling of progress and mobility throughout the campaign, as well as to give the players a feeling of accomplishment for their characters' actions.

TANGIBLE REWARDS

There are many types of rewards that can be measured or tracked concretely. These types of rewards can vary greatly, but are useful milestones of accomplishment thanks to their easily noticeable effects. Rewards of this type include increases to characteristics or other mechanical values of the character, or additional capabilities and resources.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The most common sort of reward the GM should grant is experience points (xp). Increases in xp represent a character learning from their encounters and growing stronger as their mettle is tested and their resolve hardened while defending Mankind. A character with more xp is better able to acquire increased characteristics or skills and new talents than a character with less xp, leading to significantly increased personal power. Because xp ties directly into a character's capabilities in this way, the rate at which the GM grants it can impact the overall tone and pacing of the campaign. Granting more xp at a greater rate leads to much more powerful characters and the need for significantly greater challenges, just as granting xp slowly or in small amounts leaves the PCs weaker and less capable of opposing mightier enemies.

There are two main ways for the GM to award xp to the Acolytes: the abstract method and the detailed method. These should be considered the default pace for a **DARK HERESY** campaign, but by varying the recommended amounts, the GM can alter the capabilities and potential of his group of PCs.

ABSTRACT METHOD

This is the easiest method of awarding xp, and the one recommended for beginning GMs or if the GM prefers a straightforward system. Under the abstract method, xp is awarded for time spent gaming, ensuring a steady and even progression for all characters. For each game session, every PC should receive 400 xp. This should allow them to purchase a minor increase in their capabilities approximately every session, or a more significant one every few sessions. This method assumes a game session lasts approximately four hours of active play time. For longer or shorter sessions, the GM can adjust the rewards accordingly.

DETAILED METHOD

It is also possible to award xp in a more careful and detailed manner, in which every reward is tied to a specific difficulty or challenge overcome. This can allow the GM to match the PCs' progression in power to the progression of events more closely, or to increase the players' sense of accomplishment. However, it requires that the GM be able to evaluate each encounter and challenge and assign an appropriate amount of xp. This can usually be done ahead of time, such as when planning the session and the encounters within it, which can save time and effort. Some GMs might prefer to hold off on determining the value of an encounter until it has played out, in order to make sure that their judgment of difficulty is accurate to the in-game events.

Table 11-1: Encounter Difficulty offers examples of xp values for encounters of varying difficulties. The difficulty of an encounter can be judged based on the degree to which it taxes and challenges the PCs in resources, equipment, injury, or time. A simple encounter might be one that has little real threat to the PCs, but costs them time or resources, while a very hard encounter might have a serious chance of PCs dying or burning fate threshold.

GMs using the detailed method should be careful to only award xp for meaningful encounters that advance the plot or the goals of the PCs. Awarding xp simply for defeating enemies can incentivise behaviour that disrupts the game, such as unnecessary battles fought simply "for the experience." Similarly, more experienced and powerful characters may find certain obstacles and foes to pose no appreciable threat, in which case they should not be awarded xp for defeating them.

TABLE 11-1: ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY

DIFFICULTY	XP AWARD
Easy	50
Routine	70
Ordinary	100
Challenging	130
Difficult	170
Hard	200
Very Hard	250

ROLEPLAYING AWARDS

The GM can also offer xp to players for demonstrating excellent roleplaying during a session. The amount of these awards is up to the GM's discretion, but should generally be between 100 and 500 xp, and should not exceed the amount earned over the course of the session where it occurred. The GM should be careful to only award these bonuses for particularly exceptional levels of performance, such as when a player risks his character's death because "it's what my character would do" or invents a distinctly evocative narrative for his character's behaviour. For the sake of

fairness, judgment should be handled per player rather than over the whole group, so that players who typically do more in-depth roleplaying should be held to a higher standard than their less outgoing comrades. Similarly, roleplaying awards should never be granted to a player whose actions caused the session to be less fun for others, no matter how appropriate it was for their character.

INFLUENCE

While characters may gain in experience simply by the trials presented to them by their duties, an increase in Influence should generally correspond to a notable success. A character's Influence can be increased as a reward for a number of actions, from drawing the attention of a powerful patron or ally, to claiming a particularly potent weapon or resource that can intimidate others into line. Most commonly, Influence is increased when a character assists in unravelling a sinister conspiracy, unmasking a hidden mastermind, or taking down a fearsome enemy of the Imperium—in other words, when the main objectives of adventures are successfully achieved. These increases represent the growing recognition of the character as a force to be reckoned with, as well as the assorted grateful allies and contacts who benefit from their deeds.

The GM should usually grant a modest increase in Influence to all characters who participate in completing an adventure. If the tasks involved were minor or had little impact on outside affairs, the increase might be as small as a single point of Influence. For major accomplishments that shake the foundations of the sector or culminate from many previous threads coming together, an increase of as many as 10 points or more might be appropriate. In most cases, the reward should end up somewhere between these two extremes, with a typical adventure lasting several sessions granting 3 to 5 points of Influence to all participants. Characters with a particularly significant role in the adventure, or who went above and beyond the call of duty might be awarded an additional few points, up to half again the regular reward. Rewards for a character's independent goals or actions should be about the same size as a reward for exceptional performance within an adventure.

INCREASED FATE THRESHOLD

An increase in a character's fate threshold is perhaps the most significant reward the GM can grant. Even possessing a fate threshold sets a character apart from the majority of the teeming masses of humanity in the 41st Millennium. Increasing it represents a character stepping into a greater destiny that could change the countless lives. In game terms, each increase in fate threshold not only grants a character increased versatility and power through fate points, but also effectively grants him an additional life, or at least a respite from death, through the possibility of "burning" the increased threshold as described on page 258.

Awarding fate threshold should generally be reserved for the most momentous of deeds done in a campaign. It should never happen more than every few adventures, and should generally acknowledge superlative achievements.

Of course, if a GM is too reluctant to provide this sort of reward, it can cause the PCs to become much less effective, as well as more vulnerable to random death, as they burn away the points they have. It can be particularly appropriate to award fate threshold to a character or to the PCs as a group if they took on a challenge knowing that it was likely to mortally challenge them (and therefore potentially require them to burn fate threshold to survive).

EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

Some rewards can serve to increase a character's power indirectly. The GM can grant the PCs access to or possession of new weapons, gear, or other material resources as a reward in addition to increased capabilities through xp, Influence, or fate threshold. Such rewards make the most sense when a character has impressed an NPC patron or ally with access to such resources, although seeking these rewards out can sometimes serve as an adventure in its own right.

Generally, resources provided as rewards should be different in some way than those that the PCs can acquire using Influence. They could be rarer or of better make than the PCs could currently acquire, or possess histories and associations that make them status symbols. Items such as the sword wielded by a famous Lord Marshal of the Imperial Guard or a flamer blessed by an ancient Ecclesiarch makes the players care more about the reward than simply another blade or gun. The GM can take this opportunity to create unique pieces of equipment beyond those presented in **Chapter V: Armoury**, such as rare masterpieces, unusual patterns or marks of equipment, or even unheard of devices from the vaults of the Inquisition.

The Acolytes can also gain material items from the corpses of their defeated foes. GMs should take care to limit such looting though, and step in where necessary if the Acolytes perhaps take more time stripping bodies than pursuing investigations or crushing heresies. Armour might be destroyed, weapons damaged, and devices rendered useless if the GM feels their possession would hamper the campaign plans. Certain items such as xenos relics or Chaos weapons should impose other penalties to an eager Acolyte who claims one as well, which might become the basis for new adventures.

Of course, not all rewards of resources must take the form of gear. Servants or armsmen may be seconded to the PCs' command, or they might find themselves in possession of a fortified base of operations on a given world. Having a cunningly concealed hideout or palatial spire as a home base can provide options that no equipment can offer.

NARRATIVE REWARDS

Some rewards do not fit easily onto a character sheet. In addition to increased Characteristics or new gear, the GM can grant resources, powers, and privileges that exist in a purely narrative sense, but that are no less interesting or valuable than the other possibilities.

INFORMATION

Knowledge is power, and Inquisitors understand this better than almost anyone. Within the course of an adventure, the success or failure for the Acolytes may hinge upon their ability to acquire information. Some information they find has value for its ability to solve the problems at hand, such as the location of a suspect's hideout. Other information can provide a value entirely beyond such simple applications. The terrible secrets of powerful individuals, the True Names of Daemons, or secrets from the Dark Age of Technology can be more valuable than the entire estates of wealthy nobles. Allowing the PCs to track down or stumble across valuable secrets gives them access to a resource only limited by their ingenuity. A similar effect can be granted by providing them with access to the secret data-vaults and archives of prominent Inquisitors or powerful Imperial institutions.

FAVOUR AND POWER

A PC's Influence is not simply a characteristic. It can be a powerful narrative resource, representing all manner of alliances, patronage, and favours owed. Representing a character's impact on the game can be done through the gratitude of NPCs as much as through the gifts they might give. When a hardened criminal trembles as a character announces their name, or a prominent noble grants him a title as an honorary member of his household, this can provide an effect more "real" than any measurable bonus.

To some extent, this sort of reward can be simply a change in the narrative to reflect the status of the PCs. Acknowledging their prowess and past accomplishments can provide a subtle form of reward that works as a backdrop to more overt gains. When the GM wants to make sure the players take notice, he can provide more specific, grand gestures. Honorary titles or medals for meritorious service or promises of future aid and repayment can work wonders after a job well done. A canny GM can draw on this to enrich future events, allowing Acolytes to untangle a sticky situation by calling in a debt or favour promised to them.

PUNISHMENT

In order for the game world to hold up to scrutiny, all actions must have appropriate consequences. Just as success should see the PCs granted further power and favour, failing to achieve their objectives or neglecting their duties can have dire effects. The GM should always apply punishments carefully, as the players may still be smarting from their failure or perceive the loss of what should have been rightfully theirs as a disproportionate sanction.

REMOVING REWARDS

Sometimes, it can be appropriate to take away what was previously granted. Obviously such benefits as experience points or increases in Fate Threshold cannot be revoked in this way, but the possessions, favours, or titles granted to the PCs are often subject to the continued approval of the individual

who granted them. A character who fails to live up to his reputation may find that he is no longer welcome in the circles in which he formerly moved, or an angered associate might refuse to pay his debts to the PCs after a failure to honour their alliance. Equipment can sometimes be trickier to recall, as the PCs may be reluctant to let it leave their possession. However, holding on to the property of another without their consent may lead to a greater retribution than simply revoking favour.

ENEMIES

Just as success can draw the attention of allies and the patronage of the powerful or influential, it is possible for a dramatic failure to sour alliances or mark a character as an undesirable element. In its most mild form, this is essentially removing a previous reward, when an ally no longer trusts the PCs with whatever aid he previously provided. More extreme examples can see the PCs hunted by those they have failed, as they seek to exact restitution out of the offenders' flesh. The GM should be careful, though, about making powerful or vital authorities into enemies. If the PCs truly find themselves on the bad side of certain figures, evading the NPC's wrath may take more of the game's focus than executing their duties. In such cases, the GM should give the PCs an avenue with which to redeem themselves and restore their tarnished reputations (although it is rarely a bad idea to offer this opportunity with any NPC who the PCs have disappointed). Note that success can also create enemies as well, from jealous rivals to henchmen out for vengeance against those who killed their masters.

CAMPAIGNS

"Reason begets doubt; doubt begets heresy."

— Anon

Over the course of a group's adventures, the GM should strive to keep a larger picture in mind. While unlinked, episodic adventures can keep a group entertained for many sessions, the longest-running and longest-remembered series of adventures are those linked together in an ongoing campaign. Linking adventures in this way requires a great deal of care and attention to detail, both with regard to the adventures being tied together, and to the *Warhammer 40,000* setting as a whole. A skilfully-run campaign can last for months or even years, and be fondly remembered by the participants long after its final conclusion.

THEMES OF DARK HERESY

When planning for a game of **DARK HERESY**, whether for a brief adventure or a lengthy campaign, the GM should keep in mind certain important themes. These concepts serve as guidelines for presenting the feeling of being present in the *Warhammer 40,000* setting in general, and the Askellon Sector in particular.

TREACHERY IS EVERYWHERE

A mythic betrayal marked the birth of the Imperium and laid low its architect, and countless more have followed over the millennia. Treacherous acts litter its history, be they from individuals sincerely believing they were acting in the best interests of humanity, or those brutally acting only for their own benefit. Factional strife plagues all levels of the Imperium and its agencies, each certain of their correctness and holding others as suspect. Inquisitors, the final defenders of Mankind, trust no one—especially each other.

GMs who wish to emphasise this theme can do so by playing up previous allegiances and rivalries from the Acolytes' backgrounds. An Ecclesiarchy Deacon and a Mechanicum Tech-Priest, for example, might constantly clash over religious matters with increasing tension whenever the warband deals with either organisation. NPCs might appeal to an Acolyte's loyalty to those from their earlier lives, or an Acolyte might seek to gain control over an NPC through displaying devotion to their shared service. All these and more can not only develop strife within the warband, but also open up areas for betrayal and treachery as the players delve deeper into Imperial factions. A player might find his respected ex-commander is hiding a cabal of xenos-worshippers, or that his birth world is now concealing psykers from the Black Ships. Other unrelated NPCs might profess to loyalty, but actually serve as alien thralls, profane cultists, or simply servants of their own ruthless ambitions. These NPCs should be difficult to spot, with their malice perhaps indistinguishable on the surface from the petty rivalry and obstruction the Acolytes find enclosing them on all sides. By the same token, the Acolytes should be lucky enough to occasionally find an NPC who is worthy of their respect. Without other characters they can value, the players may find themselves questioning the worthiness of their task. Including characters of integrity amidst the sea of self-interest and treachery goes a long way to keeping the Acolytes on task, but the GM must take care not to undermine the more general themes of the campaign. After all, treachery is most reviled and devastating when it comes from an unexpected quarter.

This theme works in plots focused around the Enemy Within, where the opponent works inside the Imperium and undermines it using its own tools. Such plots do not even need to focus on outright treason, but can revolve around internal rivalry or obstruction grown to an unmanageable scale.

A LIGHT AMIDST INFINITE DARKNESS

The Imperium is bloated edifice, stretching over countless stars and worlds across the galaxy. It is also the desperately besieged bastion of a near-doomed species, assaulted on all sides by every manner of enemy imaginable. Even the strongest Imperial holdings are surrounded by countless light-years of wilderness space containing an unknowable number of threats and perils, while at the same time being undermined from within by treachery, corruption, and the shirking of duty. It is this hostile, uncaring galaxy against which the players pit themselves. Every Inquisitorial Acolyte is a candle lit against this tide of darkness, every Inquisitor a

burning brand pushing back the endless shadows. The PCs are the Imperium's last, best line of defence against the final death of Mankind, but they can only do so much, and their fire can only burn for so long.

GMs who wish to emphasise this theme should remember that the Imperium is always in dire straits, and that what would be an apocalypse for a lesser civilisation is simply another day under the grinding gears of galactic survival. For every crisis the PCs seek out and thwart, the GM should make them aware of several others that were barely staved off or that breached the Imperium's crumbling defences. It is important to strike a balance between emphasising the desperate, doomed struggle of the Imperium's defenders, and making the actions of the PCs feel meaningful. Their efforts may buy the Imperium nothing more than a single day of respite, but the PCs should still feel like avoiding the monstrous alternative was something worth fighting for.

This theme works well with campaigns concerning the Enemy Without, such as infiltration or assault from xenos forces. Contrasting the Imperium against the inhuman prowess and hungers of its foes serves both to emphasise its dire straits and its value. Such threats are not only concerning physical conquest, for the xenos also taints souls and flesh. A man who begins to think as a xenos is no longer a man, and thus his soul is befouled and lost. Alien races can also taint human bodies into twisted mockeries, and contaminate entire populations without the need for overt battle.

INNOCENCE PROVES NOTHING

The citizens of the Imperium are largely ignorant of anything that might resemble the truth of the galaxy. Their only instruction on such matters comes from their local preachers, shamans, and other leaders. If the general populace truly understood their precarious position in the galaxy, or the brutal necessities that are required to secure even that much for Mankind, the stability of the Imperium would collapse. However, this same ignorance that protects the Imperium makes it vulnerable. The safe falsehoods that comfort its citizens are easily supplanted with traitorous or heretical lies. Populations could be schooled that xenos are a mythical threat leaving them ill-prepared for the reality of invasion. Such threats may draw the attention of Inquisitors, but once they are dealt with, the next foe becomes the civilians whose only crime was to bear witness to truths men are not ready to face. Death is a welcome comfort for many, their minds forever destroyed from the sight of a daemonic summoning, though an Inquisitor might obtain a new Acolyte from a soldier who managed to defeat such a foe.

GMs who wish to emphasise this theme should strive to include consequences for all the Acolytes' actions. This is not the same as punishing the Acolytes for making certain decisions, and it most definitely should not involve punishing the players for playing the game in a certain way. Instead, the GM should show that choices are not made in a vacuum. He should consider the alliances built and broken and the methods used and avoided over the course of each adventure, and incorporate the effects of these choices into future sessions. The consequences the GM provides should follow logically

from their causes and engage the players in the game, but they do not need to be the ones the Acolytes intended to come about. Intentions do not defend the Imperium, where only resolve and action can win the day.

This theme matches plots focused around the Enemy Beyond, as Daemons and Warpcraft represent the ultimate in deception. With the power of the Warp, even the stable laws of reality can cease to be true, and perception cannot be trusted. Daemons also find it an easy matter to deceive and bewitch the ignorant, building a profane and blasphemous cult out of the most innocuous components and unwitting accomplices. The Acolytes must oppose such efforts armed only with the truth and their own will, and hope that both can withstand the unrelenting power of the Chaos.

THE INQUISITION

To be an Inquisitor is both a terrible burden and a mighty privilege. To those outside its shadowy ranks, from common labourers to the governors of whole systems, an Inquisitor's power is absolute and unquestionable. In theory, the mere presence of an Inquisitor or his chosen Acolytes commands immediate attention and obedience from all loyal citizens of the Imperium, and inspires terror and confusion amongst its foes. In practice, matters can be considerably more complicated.

First and foremost is the question of subtlety. For an Inquisitor or his Acolytes to claim the privileges of their station, they must announce their presence and status to those they wish to influence. Their investigations often require a lighter step than this sort of proclamation allows. Whatever could be gained through the obedience of the local authorities must be weighed against that which is lost by operating openly. For this reason, many Acolytes might find it advantageous not to reveal their presence or allegiance.

Even once an Inquisitor or Acolyte has revealed himself, the question of his relative power must be considered. Few arrive on a world with entire battlefleets and armies at their disposal, especially warbands of Acolytes. They must use the respect and authority of their Inquisitor, which has both less and more power than massive brute force. While Inquisitorial power is infinite and unquestionable, an Acolyte who acts irresponsibly or recklessly might find resources drying up and local authorities lacking in enthusiastic cooperation. He might also cause embarrassment to his Inquisitor, and find his own Influence lessened, as well as possible punishments from his master. While an Inquisitor has the power to burn a world, one who does this too often might find himself the target of other Inquisitors. Power is a tool, and those who use it improperly find they and it diminished no matter their station.

However, an Inquisitor or Acolyte cunning enough to bring the power of his office to bear successfully can find no better tool in all the Imperium. Those he calls upon are driven by fear and awe in equal measure, and he finds no gate unbarred to him. This sort of authority can be a nightmare for the GM if he does not impose subtle limits on such power. For example, a GM must always take the possibility of the Acolytes dragooning up a planet's worth of aid into account when designing an adventure. Such approaches are rarely effective except when facing equally

blunt foes, and these cases are more suited to the Imperial Guard or Adeptus Astartes. Inquisitors and their Acolytes investigate and determine guilt; they might call on greater forces to defeat the foe unrevealed but this is more the capstone to an adventure than the basis for one. Calling on such forces each time the Acolytes face a foe can result in desultory responses and lessened respect (and Influence). Matching enemies with appropriate force, or ideally using less force to cleverly defeat puissant enemies is the mark of the truly powerful and a successful Inquisitorial warband.

USING INQUISITORS

Chapter II: Character Creation reveals there is no "Inquisitor" character role. This is entirely intentional, as Inquisitors can come from any world, background, or profession without concern for any factor but their ruthless determination and indomitable will. In theory, any Player Character can become an Inquisitor. However, it is generally a good idea for the GM to talk this matter over with the players and determine which, if any, characters should operate in this capacity. Guidelines for handling the most common arrangements are detailed below.

NO PLAYERS AS INQUISITORS

Sometimes, no players wish to take on the role of an Inquisitor, or they may not be able to agree as to who should serve in the role. A new GM may also be uncomfortable with placing such unchecked power in the hands of the players. In such circumstances, the players can all create Acolytes serving an NPC Inquisitor. This approach gives the GM more direct control over how adventures are chosen, as the Acolytes can be sent to investigate or engage threats at the will of their master.

Such warbands do not wield the same sort of power and authority as those that are led directly by an Inquisitor, and may not inspire the same fear and awe in NPCs. However, their limited authority should also allow them to keep a lower profile. Adventures for groups without an Inquisitor often focus on investigation or political manoeuvring, as they may lack the clout to go after their enemies directly.

ONE PLAYER AS INQUISITOR

While it may seem like a natural fit for one player to take on the role of Inquisitor and the others to play the Acolytes of his warrior band, the GM should be careful about setting up a game of this style. This format can provide great narrative potential, but it can also be disruptive to the group if the Inquisitor's player receives too much attention or assumes his authority translates to dictatorial control over the other PCs. The GM should take care to give every player a chance to hold the spotlight, no matter his role in the game. It is also important for the GM to impress the importance of cooperation upon the player of the Inquisitor, so that his authority does not become an issue for others. It cannot be stated enough that **Dark Heresy**, for all the horror of its settings and insane nature, is a game where the players are united to have an enjoyable time, and it is foremost on the GM to ensure this occurs.

If the GM can manage the group dynamic for this sort of game, though, he should be able to run almost any sort

of adventure with ease. The lone Inquisitor and his loyal warband is a powerful icon of *Warhammer 40,000*, and can be brought into all manner of stories and scenarios.

MULTIPLE PLAYERS AS INQUISITORS

An all-Inquisitor game is perhaps the most unusual way to run **DARK HERESY**, but it is far from unmanageable. Like the no-Inquisitor game, all players are given characters of equal status. The biggest concern for this sort of group dynamic is one of motivation. The GM must be able to provide reasons for so many normally solitary individuals to work together, and to remain together over time. This can also hold true for multiple Inquisitors in a warband, especially in the allegiances each Acolyte owes to which Inquisitor.

Typically, such groups are placed in direct, dire conflicts. One of the easiest ways to justify a large gathering of Inquisitors is to provide threats of such magnitude that they could not be otherwise opposed. A campaign for multiple Inquisitors is likely to end up shaking the foundations of the sector and beyond.

ALONE AMONGST THE STARS

While the Inquisition is incredibly powerful, its reach is sorely limited by the availability of Inquisitors. Many threats to the Imperium rise up and devour worlds without ever being opposed, and many more are barely turned aside by the desperate actions of an outnumbered and outmatched warband of Acolytes. If there are even a handful of Inquisitors or Acolytes in a given sector then it is well-protected indeed. That there could be enough Inquisitors in an area that they would unwittingly cross paths is highly unlikely.

What this means for the GM is that the PCs are almost always going to be the only available servants of the Inquisition involved in a given threat. It is fully possible that the Acolytes may not even be aware of an Inquisitor outside their master, and they should certainly not be able to call freely on such individuals for backup. Entire campaigns can be completed without involving other Inquisitors, and if such encounters do occur, they should be rare and significant. Meetings between Inquisitors do not occur by luck or coincidence, but because some dire need has forced them to seek each other out, or because their different philosophies lead them into conflict. In most cases, those NPC Inquisitors who may be known would prefer to deal with such threats without sharing their authority, and may view Acolytes who need to call on their aid as unworthy of serving them.

LINKING ADVENTURES

Many different elements can be used to tie adventures together. Common links including recurring allies or enemies, or return visits to the sites of previous adventures. Effective use of such repeating elements relies on keeping them familiar, but also on having them change and grow in response to the Acolytes' actions and the events of the campaign. When the Acolytes return to the site where they confronted a terrible threat to a hive city, the GM could include a monument to their battle, if not to them

personally. They might have new allies from the NPCs who fought with them as well. This sort of detail adds both realism and a personal stake, making them very valuable tools. After all, few things motivate player investment in a campaign as much as a threat to a favourite character or location, making these elements excellent catalysts for adventures. It also allows the GM to introduce new areas for the location, or deepen the details; even the least of hab blocks has enough detail for several encounters, and a hive city could easily sustain multiple campaigns with the billions of possible heretics, conspiracies and dire threats that populate its endless levels.

It can also help to have less obvious links tie a campaign together. A single, shadowy menace can be the source of the lesser villains of several adventures, such as a particular Daemon cult, highly-placed traitor, or even a rival Inquisitor and his warband. A campaign could be devoted to unmasking a single such enemy, or to standing between two warring menaces and protecting the Imperium from the fallout of their battles. Shadowy figures need not always be enemies, either—a hidden patron can be an excellent source of adventures and information, even if never wholly trusted. Giving signs of a hidden link between adventures can be as subtle as a common architectural motif on all the major buildings of the affected worlds that indicates a shared builder, or it can be somewhat more plain, such as coded missives from an anonymous source.

ENDING A CAMPAIGN

It can be tempting to continue a campaign of **DARK HERESY** indefinitely, perhaps adding new Acolytes to replace losses as the make-up of a group changes. Such efforts are vulnerable, though, to slowly flagging interest or the demands of life outside the group. It is often better for the Game Master to plan an eventual ending point for a campaign, to tie things off and provide a feeling of closure. This ending can be planned from the start of the campaign and tied in with the events of the very first adventure, or it can arise from circumstances during later sessions. Even if the GM has no plans for an ending, he may wish to create some if it looks likely that the campaign might end for other reasons, such as a key player moving away.

Creating the ending to a campaign is a chance to pull out all of the stops, and make something truly grand and memorable. The final adventure for a warband should draw on their most important past missions and memories, and have them face consequences from their past actions. It should pit them against a past nemesis or a new one created by a past failure that they are now able to right. Acolytes are rarely granted a chance to retire, and so the ending of a campaign can be a chance for a heroic death against unstoppable odds without needing to worry about integrating a replacement Acolyte into the group afterwards. It might climax with stunning victory, and the players all becoming Inquisitors themselves, certainly an epic ending and a perfect place for them to retire their existing characters and create new ones. Above all else, the ending of a campaign should be something the players are going to remember and relate in stories long after the campaign is done.



CHAPTER XII: NPCs AND ADVERSARIES

In the course of a **DARK HERESY** game, the Acolytes are sure to encounter all manner of non-player characters (NPCs), from lowly hab-scum to powerful planetary rulers. The responsibility for portraying these multitudes falls to the Game Master. Breathing life into the various NPCs that populate the 41st Millennium can be a difficult task, but also quite satisfying. The NPCs presented in this chapter include full game profiles as well as background information, to give the GM an idea of how he can include them in his own games. While many of the abilities and gear NPCs possess are primarily relevant during combat, many of these NPCs can and should be encountered on friendly, or at least non-hostile, terms. In particular, the NPCs detailed in the Imperial Servants and Citizens section can be potential informants, allies, or rivals for the Acolytes, or simply bystanders and incidental characters there to help immerse the players in the world of **DARK HERESY**. Of course, as all Acolytes soon learn, no one can be trusted, and each scribe or furnace worker is a potential traitor and foe.

Here the GM can find an assortment of NPCs based around Hive Desoleum, one of the main settings in **DARK HERESY**. This chapter is only a starting point, and GMs are encouraged to create new and unique NPCs for their games. GMs should feel free to modify the NPCs presented here,

or use them as a starting point for their own creatures and characters. The equipment and weapons listed in an NPC's profile are typical for such individuals, but certainly not exclusive; NPCs can carry whatever equipment the GM deems appropriate for the situation and the needs of his game.

BUILDING AND BALANCING ENCOUNTERS

"If a man can be judged by the quality and number of his foes, then I am indeed a great man."

—Imperial Commander Throm Percevus

Combat is an important and exciting component of **DARK HERESY**, but it is not always easy to ensure encounters are challenging for the players, without overwhelming their characters. This section covers the rules for NPCs and adversaries including combat encounter building, so that GMs can build appropriately exciting confrontations for his players.

USING NPCs

NPCs are the characters in the game that the players do not control. The GM instead controls all NPCs, determining their actions and making their rolls for them. Much like PCs, each NPC possesses characteristics, skills, talents, weapon, armour, and gear. Each NPC also has a type; this determines the importance of the NPC, and alters his rules slightly in the game. Note that NPCs are always assumed to have whatever weapon training is needed to use the weapons they possess; if the GM changes their weapon selections, this still holds true. If, however, an NPC gains another new weapon (perhaps one of the Acolytes gifted a valued aide with a new sniper rifle), the GM should determine if the NPC knows how to use it properly or suffers the untrained weapon penalty.

NPC TYPES

NPCs in **DARK HERESY** are divided into three broad types. An NPC's type is specified alongside its name in its profile.

NOVICE

Novices are the lowly characters and minor combatants encountered throughout a campaign. Alone, they are unlikely to be a large threat to the PCs, and are usually simple pawns in a larger, more sinister plan. Novices operate under the following special rules:

Reduced Action Points: Novice characters only receive 3 action points in a turn, instead of the normal 4.

Single Hit Location: Novice characters do not have multiple hit locations, they have a single body hit location. When a novice character is hit by an attack, the attacker does not roll to determine hit location, and the single body hit location is hit by all hits made by the attack.

Unimportant: Novice characters do not roll on wound effect tables and do not receive wound effects; once a novice character has received two wounds, the character dies. Novice characters also cannot benefit from Righteous Fury in their attacks.

Spectacular Demise: Novice characters are instantly kill or incapacitate upon receiving a critical wound.

ELITE

Elites are characters who are nearly an even match to a Player Character, whether it be on the battlefield or in a duel of wits. Elite characters operate under the following special rule:

Spectacular Demise: Elite characters are instantly kill or incapacitate upon receiving a critical wound.

MASTER

Masters are incredibly dangerous individuals. They are formidable combatants, consummate leaders, and brilliant planners. Masters operate under the following special rules:

Extraordinary Characteristics: Master characters can have characteristics that exceed 100. These behave like regular characteristics; however, when determining the characteristic bonus of a characteristic over 100, both the tens and hundreds digit are used. For example, a character with Strength 113 would have a Strength bonus of 11.

Well Trained: Master characters count as having rank 3 in all skills not listed in their profile, instead of rank 1.

NPC PROFILES

NPC statistics are presented in condensed profiles that make them easy to use and reference for GMs. Each profile contains the following elements:

NAME AND TYPE

Each NPC profile has a unique name that describes the NPC the profile represents. The NPC's type is listed after its name in parenthesis.

THREAT LEVEL

The threat level of an NPC represents how powerful a combatant it is. Each threat level is given as a number in the upper-right hand corner of the NPC's profile. For more information on using NPC rank, see Building Combat Encounters on page 284.

CHARACTERISTICS

NPCs use the same characteristics as Player Characters, though only exceptional and powerful NPCs also have the Influence characteristic.

HIT LOCATIONS AND ARMOUR

Every NPC has a hit location chart that shows that NPC's hit locations. Each hit location is represented by a box that shows several pieces of information:

- **Hit Location Type:** Each hit location is either a head, body, or limb. This is specified on the left side of the hit location box.

- **Armour Value:** The amount of armour protecting a hit location is specified in a small box in the upper left corner of each hit location box. This is already factored into the total defence bonus, but is present for GM reference.

- **Additional Defence bonuses:** If the NPC gains additional bonuses to his defence from sources other than armour, this total number of extra defence is printed to the right of the box containing the armour value. This is already factored into the total defence bonus, but is present for GM reference.

SAMPLE HIT LOCATION BOX

LOCATION (HEAD, LIMB, BODY)	Armour Value	Total Defence Value
	Hit Location Roll (0-9)	

CREATIVE WOUND INTERPRETATION

With some particularly alien creatures, the configuration of their hit locations can differ greatly than those of a normal, human Player Character. Because of this, certain effects rolled on the wound effect charts may not seem quite as thematically appropriate for that particular NPC. When this happens, the GM has two choices:

- Increase the severity of the wound effect (increase the roll result) until the effect is something thematically appropriate for the hit location receiving the wound.
- Create an imaginative description for how the seemingly inappropriate wound effect result affects the strange character.

- **Total Defence:** The total defence value of each hit location is given in that hit location box. This value includes the NPC's Toughness bonus, armour, and any other bonuses to defence on that location.

- **Hit Location Value:** Use the value on the 1s digit of an attack roll to determine the hit location (see page 202).

The majority of NPCs are humanoid, and use the same hit locations as PCs. However, some NPCs may have hit locations in their profiles that differ from the normal hit locations of humanoid characters. When determining hit locations on these NPCs, the attacker compares the 1s digit of his attack roll to the values presented under that NPC's hit location boxes.

SKILLS

This entry shows any skills the NPC has training in, along with the numerical modifier indicating his rank. The character is assumed to have a rank of 1 (indicating -10) in all skills not listed in the profile.

TALENTS AND TRAITS

These entries contain any talents or traits possessed by the NPC. Note that NPCs can have talents and traits without having the normal prerequisites a player character would require to possess one.

WEAPONS

This lists any weapons the NPC normally carries, along with weapon profile. Any entries that depend on the user's characteristics, such as a rate of fire, which varies with Agility bonus, are completed using that NPC's characteristics. The entry notes the characteristic used to derive the number as well, so that a PC who takes that weapon can determine how well it works for him.

For ease of use, NPC weapon profiles integrate the NPC's characteristic bonuses into the weapon's stats where applicable, completing any calculations that need to be done and collapsing the value into one number. Each

weapon stat that has bonuses integrated in this way includes the weapon's original equation to determine that value in a superscript after the number. The GM can use this equation in the superscript to determine if a change in characteristic bonus affects the weapon in any way, or to allow a different character to use the weapon.

EXAMPLE

A Dusk Viper Corsair's Eldar sword has a damage entry of $1d10+7^{3+Sb}$ (R). When attacking with the Corsair, the GM ignores the superscript "3+Sb," rolling 1d10 and adding 7 to determine the damage total. However, if the Corsair dies and a PC takes the eldar sword, that PC uses the superscript section of the entry to determine the damage. The PC ignores the number underneath the superscript, rolling 1d10 and adding that roll to 3+Sb to determine the damage total.

It is assumed that all NPCs have adequate ammunition for any weapons they are carrying, and the GM is not required to track ammunition used by each NPC. However, if a GM wishes to track ammunition on his NPCs, it is assumed that they possess two clips of ammo for each weapon they are carrying.

GEAR

Any specific gear or equipment that the NPC is carrying is listed here, as well as his armour type. Like weapons, gear and armour can be looted from slain enemies, though the GM has final say on any efforts to salvage efforts for any items NPCs might have left behind after combat. He might rule that a suit of armour is too destroyed to be worn again (or simply not fit any of the PCs), or a device was struck in combat and ruined.

NPC WEAPONS AND GEAR

The entries for an NPC contains the basic armaments, armour, and gear he would normally use. All NPCs, unless stated otherwise (or is a creature that does not use artificial weapons), are assumed to also have a knife or some other basic combat blade. GMs should not feel limited to just these items though, and add or exchange other weapons and gear as desired to best fit his adventure and current setting. A Rogue Trader who recently completed a trade with Eldar Corsairs could arrive at Hive Desoleum sporting twin shuriken pistols, for example, or a Preceptor Obsolete might be wielding a plaguesword gifted to him after a successful daemonic ritual. Other items from armouries in future supplements can also be used as well, and thus the GM can create unique versions of each NPC type.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

The last entries in an NPC's profile are any special abilities unique to that NPC. The full rules for these special abilities are outlined in the profile.

BUILDING COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Each combat encounter should feel like a unique experience that challenges the player characters, but doesn't overwhelm them. This can be a difficult goal for the GM to meet, and many campaigns have been ended with boring, easy encounters (or one far-too-challenging encounter). When preparing and building encounters for a game session, there are many factors for a GM to keep in mind to maintain this careful balance and sense of variety: the encounter's raw difficulty, the mix of NPCs involved, the environment surrounding the encounter, and the pacing of all of the encounters the warband has engaged in throughout the session.

ENCOUNTER RANK

Just as player characters have a rank that measures how powerful they are, each combat encounter has a rank that determines its difficulty and danger to a group of Player Characters. When a GM starts to build an encounter, it is easiest for him to choose the rank of the encounter. This rank then provides him with a threat threshold that he can use to determine which NPCs to include in the encounter to provide the optimal challenge to his players.

An encounter that is the same rank as the average Acolyte in a group will usually offer the best balance between challenge and difficulty. However, it is recommended that the GM occasionally use encounters that are either one rank above or below the PCs to add some variety to the game.

THREAT THRESHOLD

The threat threshold is a number that limits the maximum number and strength of NPCs that should be included in an encounter. To determine the threat threshold for an encounter, use the encounter rank on **Table 12-1: Threat Threshold** on page 284 to determine the multiplier for the total number of PCs in the warband. The result is the threat threshold, which should be modified as needed should the Acolytes have NPC allies aiding them or other factors.

USING THREAT THRESHOLD

Once the threat threshold has been determined for an encounter, the GM can start creating the encounter by adding NPCs. As the GM adds NPCs to an encounter he adds together all of their threat values. Ideally, the combined total of all threat values in the encounter should equal the threat threshold. However, this is often difficult to accomplish. If the total threat value of an encounter exceeds the determined threat threshold, the GM should recalculate the rank of the encounter.

TABLE 12-1: THREAT THRESHOLD

ENCOUNTER RANK	THREAT THRESHOLD
0	5 x Number of PCs in warband
1	6 x Number of PCs in warband
2	7 x Number of PCs in warband
3	8 x Number of PCs in warband
4	10 x Number of PCs in warband
5	12 x Number of PCs in warband
6	14 x Number of PCs in warband
7	17 x Number of PCs in warband
8	20 x Number of PCs in warband
9	23 x Number of PCs in warband
10	27 x Number of PCs in warband
11	31 x Number of PCs in warband
12	35 x Number of PCs in warband

BALANCING ENCOUNTERS

Creating entertaining, balanced encounters goes far beyond simply choosing NPCs that will be an equal match for the PCs on the battlefield. The variety of NPCs in the combat encounter, the hazards of the surrounding environment, and the number of combat encounters the PCs have already participated in all contribute to a memorable encounter.

COMPOSITION

The rank of an encounter gives a good abstraction of its power level, but what NPCs are chosen in what quantities is what truly determines an encounter's potency. Additionally, the adversaries chosen can have a large effect on how long it takes the encounter to resolve. Following are several elements GMs should keep in mind when choosing NPCs for an encounter:

- **Variety:** Each encounter should have a mix of the different types of NPCs. An encounter with all novices can result in a short and unsatisfying fight, while an encounter with only elites and masters can be incredibly challenging for the players and tedious for the GM to keep track of. Each encounter should have 1-3 elites and masters, with the rest of the threat threshold being filled in with novices.

- **Appropriate Adversaries:** When choosing NPCs for an encounter, the GM should try to use NPCs appropriate for the PCs' current rank. Pitting a high-threat novice against a low-ranking group or many low-threat masters against a high-ranking group can result in frustrating encounters for both the PCs and GM, with neither enjoying the game.

- **Changing Pace:** When creating an encounter, the GM should consider the encounters the party has already faced, as well as the encounters they will face in the future. Each encounter should be comprised a bit differently to change the pace of the adventures and keep the PCs on their toes.

COMBAT CIRCUMSTANCES

Fighting in sterile, featureless environments can become boring and should be avoided unless it is intrinsic to the setting. An excellent way for GMs to create memorable encounters is to use the combat circumstances (see page 203) to create interesting tactical situations that stand out from other encounters. Describing a richly varied combat setting also serves as an excellent way to get players ready for the fight. Following are several examples of how to integrate combat circumstances into encounters to create more variety:

- **Cover:** This can be anything from clumps of flora and overturned crates to tank wreckage and rockcrete barricades, and is always an excellent way add a challenge to a fight. These provide tactical strongpoints for the characters, and each item can make for a major turning point in the combat's narrative.

- **Darkness and Shadow:** Dim lighting can allow all manner of creatures to slither or creep about undetected. It can also make for difficulty in identifying friend from foe when the lasbolts start flying.

- **Difficult Terrain:** This can be large regions of swampland and snowfields, or limited areas from an overturned grain silo or fresh crater. Such terrain slows down characters who rely on speed, and forces them to plan out their attack, or risk becoming an easy target.

- **Fog, Mist, and Smoke:** These can be tactically interesting, as they can shift during the combat, possibly changing to alter the temp of the fight when needed. A character cannot rely on them to provide constant obscurity, as a rising wind can suddenly leave him exposed.

- **Higher Ground:** Charging up or down a hill provides for exciting combat scenes, but clever players can also exploit gravity to roll heavy objects down on their foes for example. This can also include cliffs, pits, and other areas where one false step can result in a terrible fall.

- **Weather:** Fierce winds, acid rains, and other intense types of weather can befoul all combatants with persistent or sudden effects and can turn a simple fight into a dangerous survival situation. These could also include showers of ash from a volcanic eruption, or radioactive dust after a nearby reactor explodes.

Most combat circumstances apply evenly to both the PCs and the NPCs in an encounter. However, when a combat circumstance hinders one group while benefiting the other, the GM may want to adjust the threat threshold of the encounter to account for the imbalance. Adding or subtracting the equivalent of half a PC from the threat threshold usually adequately compensates for an advantage from combat circumstances.

PACING

Most characters can only take so much punishment before they are too injured or exhausted to keep fighting. The GM should carefully consider the number and difficulty of the combat encounters the PCs will face before they get a chance to rest and heal. Ideally, the PCs should feel pushed to the edge of their capabilities, challenged but not overwhelmed. Much like encounter building itself, pacing encounters throughout a session or adventure is more of an art than a science.

Usually, a group of PCs can handle the following number of encounters before needing to rest:

- Three encounters 1 rank below the warband's average rank.
- Two encounters 1 rank below the group's average rank and one encounter equal to the group's rank.
- Two encounters equal to the group's rank.
- One encounter 1 rank below the group's average rank and one encounter 1 rank above the group's average rank.

USING FATIGUE TO MEASURE PACING

The guidelines for pacing given above are very rough estimates, and can vary greatly from group to group. The best way for a GM to measure how much more punishment his group can take in a day is by observing the PCs' fatigue values. Since fatigue values are difficult to reduce, they are a good indicator of how much more the PCs can handle before they collapse. If fatigue values are starting to approach or surpass certain characteristics, the group should not be pitted against any truly threatening adversaries, and certain planned encounters may need to be weakened or skipped. However, if their fatigue values are still low after multiple combats, upcoming encounters may need to be strengthened to provide more of a challenge.

GROUP VARIANCE

Each player group is different. One warband may focus on making skilled investigators, negotiators, and thinkers, while another might be comprised entirely of deadly fighters. Because of this great variance between parties, there is no sure way to tell what encounters will be a true challenge to what group. Because of this, the rules for creating encounters should act as guidelines to Game Masters, not hard-and-fast rules.

It is up to the GM to observe his group and determine how strong he feels they are in combat encounters. He can then adjust the encounter rank or threat threshold based on his observations. This can change as characters grow in experience and acquire new abilities, so the GM must be constantly aware of how much he is challenging his players, and keep an entertaining balance.

DENIZENS OF THE IMPERIUM

The Imperium's population is a mix of the law abiding and corrupt, of the devout and heretic. Its is impossible to accurately quantify, given the sheer galactic scale. Hive Desoleum, a single edifice within the Askellon Sector, alone is home to many billions. Its untamed depths host officials, lords, and hive law enforcers, but also countless mutants, criminals, and cultists.

THE LAW

Across the Imperium the rule of law is of paramount importance, and justice must be harsh and unforgiving.

ADEPTUS ARBITES ARBITRATOR

The Adeptus Arbites are the unflinching arm of Imperial justice, meting out the Emperor's final judgment.

ARBITRATOR (ELITE)				
8				
H ³ ₁ 7	WS	BS	S	
B ³ ₄₋₆ 8	44	34	33	
L ³ ₂ 7	T	A	I	
L ³ ₃ 7	48	25	30	
L ³ ₇₋₈ 7	P	WP	F	
L ³ ₉₋₀ 7	38	33	28	
SHOTGUN				
BASIC	30M	RoF 1/2	1D10+2 (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP 6	RLD 6AP	WT 5KG	AVL -10
SPECIAL: SPRAY				
SHOCK MAUL				
BASIC	—	RoF 1/2	1D10+3 ^{Sb} (E)	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 5KG	AVL -10
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (I), SAPPING (I)				

Skills: Athletics +0, Evade +0, Intimidate +10, Observe +10.

Talents: Combat Master, Nerves of Steel, True Grit.

Gear: Respirator, 3 Stun Grenades, manacles, helmet with integral photo-visior and micro-bead, enforcer armour.

Pursuit of Justice: The Arbitrator counts his Agility bonus as 2 higher for the purpose of determining movement distance when he is chasing or moving towards a character who he views as a criminal.



BOUNTY HUNTER

Feared by criminals and often despised by the authorities who fund them, bounty hunters across Hive Desoleum track and detain men the way a hunter does animals.

DESOLEUM BOUNTY HUNTER (ELITE)				
8				
H ¹ ₁ 4	WS	BS	S	
B ² ₄₋₆ 5	32	47	32	
L ³ ₂ 6	T	A	I	
L ³ ₃ 6	38	51	30	
L ³ ₇₋₈ 6	P	WP	F	
L ³ ₉₋₀ 6	35	31	26	
HANDCANNON				
BASIC	60M	RoF 1/2	1D10+6 (I)	
PEN 1	CLIP 3	RLD 4AP	WT 3KG	AVL -10
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS				
CHAINWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 2 ^{AB-3}	1D10+3 ^{Sb} (R)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL +0
SPECIAL: BALANCED, TEARING				

Skills: Athletics +0, Evade +10, Investigate +0, Observe +10, Subterfuge +10, Survival +0.

Talents: Overwatch, Quick Draw, Takedown.

Gear: Respirator, 1 clip of manstopper bullets, bounty hunter license, manacles, 3 doses of stimm, combat armour, stylish overcoat.

Ruthless: The bounty hunter adds +2 damage to all attacks made against characters with the Dazed or Stunned conditions.

SANCTIONED BONDSMAN OF THE OATHS INVOLUTE

The Sanctioned Bondsmen of the Oaths Involute, or more simply the Sanctionaries, enforce the laws of Hive Desoleum.

SANCTIONARY (NOVICE)				
5				
H ² ₁ 6	WS	BS	S	
B ² ₄₋₆ 6	27	33	25	
L ² ₂ 6	T	A	I	
L ² ₃ 6	34	31	35	
L ² ₇₋₈ 6	P	WP	F	
L ² ₉₋₀ 6	50	29	47	
AUTOPISTOL				
LIGHT	60M	RoF 2	1D10 (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP 18	RLD 3AP	WT 2KG	AVL +0
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS				

Skills: Investigate +10, Navigate +0, Observe +20, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: Contact Network, Keen Intuition.

Gear: Manacles, micro-bead, respirator, Sanctionary uniform.

Dispassionate: All skill tests made to socially interact with the Sanctionary suffer a -20 penalty.

THE LAWLESS

From petty thugs and cutpurses to powerful crime barons who command legions of lesser recidivists, criminals infest the underbelly of the Imperial order as it exists in the hive.

CRIME LORD

Organised crime in Hive Desoleum is a brutal process of natural selection, ensuring that crime lords are savvy and capable of keeping business running despite interference from rival groups and the Sanctionaries.

CRIME LORD (MASTER) 17				
H 3 1 6	WS 32	BS 46	S 26	
B 3 4-6 7	T 34	A 22	I 49	
L 3 2 6	P 34	WP 30	F 35	
L 3 7-8 6				
L 3 9-0 6				
BOLT PISTOL				
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1/2	1d10+4 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 8	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -30
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, TEARING				
POWER SWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 1/3 ^{Ab-3}	1d10+9 (E)	
PEN 2	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL -30
SPECIAL: BALANCED, POWER FIELD				

Skills: Charm +10, Command +10, Commerce +0, Deceive +20, Subterfuge +10.

Talents: Charming, Crippling Shot, Deceptive.

Gear: Stylish and expensive clothing, mesh armour.

Battlefield Coordination: The Crime Lord can use the following action:

BATTLEFIELD COORDINATION

Type: Utility

Action Points: 2

Use: The character makes a +10 Command (I) test to coordinate the efforts of his allies around him. If the test succeeds, a number of allies in line of sight and earshot of the character (up to the character's Intelligence bonus) can immediately make a Move action without spending AP.

DESOLEUM BONDLESS DEALER

Chems, weapons, and proscribed tech are all within the reach of a Hive Desoleum bondless dealer who operates outside the normal system, so long as the customer can pay and conduct business discreetly.

DESOLEUM BONDLESS DEALER (NOVICE) 5				
H 3 1 5	WS 30	BS 30	S 30	
B 3 4-6 5	T 35	A 30	I 35	
L 3 2 5	P 38	WP 30	F 45	
L 3 7-8 5				
L 3 9-0 5				
LASPISTOL				
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1	1d10 (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP 12	RLD 1AP	WT 2KG	AVL +20
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE				

Skills: Commerce +20, Deceive +0, Subterfuge +0, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: Cold Hearted, Unremarkable.

Gear: Subtle clothing over light flak armour, 2 laspistol charge packs, assorted merchandise.

Shady Deals: The Dealer can use his illicit connections to acquire hard to find items for PCs. If a PC uses this, he gains a +10 bonus to his next requisition test. If the test fails, however, the warband's subtlety value decreases by 2d10.

THUG

Though some thugs may possess ambitions of power, their lack of imagination and intellect ensures a career of following orders, and an early "retirement" should their ambition exceed their abilities.

THUG (NOVICE) 4				
H 3 1 6	WS 42	BS 38	S 34	
B 3 4-6 6	T 31	A 33	I 26	
L 3 2 6	P 28	WP 24	F 28	
L 3 7-8 6				
L 3 9-0 6				
STUB REVOLVER				
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1/2	1d10+2 (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP 6	RLD 4AP	WT 2KG	AVL -10
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, RELIABLE				

Skills: Athletics +10, Evade +0, Intimidate +0.

Talents: None.

Gear: Hive leathers.

HEAVY

Even by the standards to which thugs are held, there are some who truly epitomise the idea of dumb muscle.

HEAVY(ELITE)																						
7																						
<div>H<div>3</div><div>1</div>7</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>28</td><td>44</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>47</td><td>33</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>30</td><td>29</td><td>32</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	34	28	44	T	A	I	47	33	25	P	WP	F	30	29	32
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T	A	I																				
47	33	25																				
P	WP	F																				
30	29	32																				
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<div>L<div>4</div><div>2</div>8</div>	<div>L<div>4</div><div>3</div>8</div>																					
<div>L<div>4</div><div>7-8</div>8</div>	<div>L<div>4</div><div>9-0</div>8</div>																					
CHAINAXE																						
BASIC	—	RoF 1/2	1D10+8 ^{4+Sb} (R)																			
PEN 2	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 8KG	AVL -10																		
SPECIAL: <i>TEARING, UNBALANCED</i>																						

Skills: Athletics +10, Intimidate +10.

Talents: Crushing Blow.

Gear: Flak armour.

Shove: When the Heavy successfully inflicts a wound with a melee attack, he can choose to shove his target away instead of inflicting a wound effect. If he does so, the target does not suffer a wound effect from the wound. Instead, he is moved directly away from the target a number of metres equal to half the damage the attack deals in excess of defence.

SKULKER

Skulkers are thieves, assassins, and other thugs with a knack for moving stealthily through the hive.

SKULKER (ELITE)					7																	
<div>H²₁4</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>28</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>48</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>42</td><td>31</td><td>28</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	34	28	26	T	A	I	25	48	28	P	WP	F	42	31	28
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P	WP	F																				
42	31	28																				
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<div>L³₂5</div>	<div>L³₃5</div>																					
<div>L³₇₋₈5</div>	<div>L³₉₋₀5</div>																					
AUTOPISTOL																						
LIGHT	60M	RoF 2	1D10 (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP 18	RLD 3AP	WT 2KG	AVL +0																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS																						
CHAINBLADE																						
LIGHT	—	RoF 3 ^{Ab-1}	1D10 (R)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 3KG	AVL +10																		
SPECIAL: TEARING																						

Skills: Acrobatics +0, Stealth +10, Subterfuge +10.

Talents: Nimble.

Gear: Multi-key, stummer, hive leathers.

Single Out: The Skulker gains a +20 bonus to all attack tests made against targets who are not engaged with any other characters.

INSURRATI OILER

Oiler is a catch-all term, generally used by Sanctionaries to describe any number of recidivists, outlaws, and lowlives who “oil” the wheels of Desoleum life to get them moving.

INSURRATI OILER (NOVICE)																						
5																						
<div>H²₁5</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>23</td><td>32</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>30</td><td>32</td><td>47</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>37</td><td>30</td><td>51</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	23	32	28	T	A	I	30	32	47	P	WP	F	37	30	51
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T	A	I																				
30	32	47																				
P	WP	F																				
37	30	51																				
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<div>L²₂5</div>	<div>L²₃5</div>																					
<div>L²₇₋₈5</div>	<div>L²₉₋₀5</div>																					
LASPISTOL																						
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1	1d10 (E)																			
PEN 0	CLIP 12	RLD 1AP	WT 2KG	AVL +20																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE																						

Skills: Charm +10, Commerce +0, Deceive +10, Subterfuge +0, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: Light Sleeper.

Gear: Concealed holster, chrono, robes.

Smooth Talker: Once per conversation, the Oiler can re-roll one Charm or Deceive test. The second result must be used.

THE FAITHFUL

Religion is a fact of life for the citizens of the Imperium, who all pay fealty to the living god who is the master of Mankind.

PILGRIM

Pilgrims flock in the millions to the many holy places within the hive, each ready to finish their lives in their holy quests.

PILGRIM (NOVICE)																						
				3																		
<div>H²₁5</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>26</td><td>24</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>32</td><td>33</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>28</td><td>42</td><td>31</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	26	24	30	T	A	I	32	33	28	P	WP	F	28	42	31
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28	42	31																				
<div>B²₄₋₆5</div>																						
<div>L²₂5</div>	<div>L²₃5</div>																					
<div>L²₇₋₈5</div>	<div>L²₉₋₀5</div>																					
STAFF																						
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10 (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL +20																		
SPECIAL: —																						

Skills: Navigate +10, Observe +0, Survival +0.
Talents: None.
Gear: Well-worn robes, assorted religious trinkets.

DEVOUT

For most hivers, faith is inseparable from the rest of their life, but there are some for whom it is the entirety of their existence. These devout dedicate their lives to fulfilling what they perceive as the will of the Emperor.

DEVOUT(NOVICE)					4																	
<div>H²₁5</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>36</td><td>26</td><td>31</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>35</td><td>30</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>28</td><td>38</td><td>33</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	36	26	31	T	A	I	35	30	24	P	WP	F	28	38	33
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P	WP	F																				
28	38	33																				
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<div>L²₇₋₈5</div>		<div>L²₉₋₀5</div>																				
FLAIL																						
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/2	1D10+3 ^{Sb} (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 8KG	AVL -20																		
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (I), FLEXIBLE																						

Skills: Remembrance +10, Survival +0.
Talents: Meditation, Resistance (Fear).
Gear: Sackcloth robe.

Devotion: A devout gains an extra degree of success on all opposed tests against a character he perceives as interfering in his religious observances.

BURDENER OF THE TRUE OATH

These fanatics take it upon themselves to deliver the Emperor's judgment to the faithless and unclean across Hive Desoleum, from mutants and criminals to simple hivers unfortunate enough to cross paths.

BURDENER (NOVICE)				5																		
<div>H³₁6</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>42</td><td>32</td><td>48</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>32</td><td>34</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>24</td><td>38</td><td>25</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	42	32	48	T	A	I	32	34	30	P	WP	F	24	38	25
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42	32	48																				
T	A	I																				
32	34	30																				
P	WP	F																				
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<div>L³₃6</div>																						
<div>L³₇₋₈6</div>																						
<div>L³₉₋₀6</div>																						
HEAVY CHAINWORD																						
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10+4 (R)																			
PEN 3	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 13KG	AVL -30																		
SPECIAL: CRIPPLING, TEARING																						

Skills: Athletics +0, Intimidate +10
Talents: Hatred (Everyone), Iron Jaw.
Gear: 3 fire bombs, leather scrap armour.

Zealous Speed: The Burdener counts his Agility bonus as 2 higher for the purpose of determining movement distance when performing the Charge action.

Fire Bombs: These home-made incendiaries operate as smoke grenades, but have the Flame quality instead of Smoke. Their Rate of Fire is 3, and they cannot be used with grenade launchers or any other mechanical device.

TEMPLE REVELATIONIST

The Revelationists of the Temple of the Sacramentum Sacrosanctus seek to carry the word of the Emperor to each man, woman, and child of Hive Desoleum.

TEMPLE REVELATIONIST (ELITE)					7																		
<div><div>H¹₁5</div><div>B⁴₄₋₆8</div><div>L²₂6</div><div>L²₃6</div><div>L⁴₇₋₈8</div><div>L⁴₉₋₀8</div></div>					<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>28</td><td>42</td><td>31</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>45</td><td>24</td><td>32</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>36</td><td>35</td><td>30</td></tr></table>	WS	BS	S	28	42	31	T	A	I	45	24	32	P	WP	F	36	35	30
WS	BS	S																					
28	42	31																					
T	A	I																					
45	24	32																					
P	WP	F																					
36	35	30																					
FLAMER																							
BASIC		20M	RoF 1/2	1D10+3 (E)																			
PEN 0		CLIP 6	RLD 6AP	WT 6KG	AVL -10																		
SPECIAL: FLAME (2), SPRAY																							

Skills: Charm +10, Evade +0, Linguistics +10, Remembrance +0.

Talents: Charming, Hatred (Heretics), Target Selection.

Gear: Respirator, several large holy books, sacred incense, partial flak armour.

Divine Protection: When the Revelationist performs an attack with a weapon with the Spray quality, the attack only strikes the character's enemies inside the affected area. All of the character's allies are unaffected.



PREACHER

On a million worlds, the Preachers of the Adeptus Ministorum speak the Emperor's word to the people of the Imperium.

PREACHER (ELITE)					6
H ¹ ₁ 4	B ³ ₄₋₆ 6	L ² ₂ 5	L ² ₃ 5	L ² ₇₋₈ 5	L ² ₉₋₀ 5
WS	BS	S			
28	22	25			
T	A	I			
30	31	29			
P	WP	F			
35	42	45			
CHAINSWORD					
LIGHT	—	RoF 1/2 ^{Ab-3}	1D10+2 ^{Sb} (R)		
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL +0	
SPECIAL: BALANCED, TEARING					

Skills: Charm +10, Command +0, Intimidate +0, Linguistics +10, Remembrance +0.

Talents: Charming, Commanding, Into the Jaws of Hell.

Gear: Decorated flak robes, religious icons.

Holy Oration: The character can use the following action:

HOLY ORATION

Type: Utility

Action Points: 3

Use: The Preacher makes a +10 Command (F) test to inspire his allies. If the test succeeds, a number of allies in line of sight and earshot of the character up to the character's Fellowship bonus immediately gain one temporary fate point. These points last until the end of the current encounter, and can be spent in the same way as a normal fate point (see page 258). Characters who normally cannot have fate points, and those who already have fate points equal to their thresholds, can be gain fate points from this action.

THE SERVANTS OF THE EMPEROR

Each citizen, from the mysterious Astropaths to the lowly manufactory workers, has a role to fulfil, small though it may be, in the functioning of the Imperium.

ASTROPATH

The Imperium of Mankind is a dark and scattered realm. Within a single star system, interplanetary communication might be possible by technology, albeit with considerable time delay, but interstellar communication is only possible by messages carried by voidships, or through the Astropaths of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica.

ASTROPATH (ELITE)					6
H ¹ ₁ 3	B ³ ₄₋₆ 5	L ² ₂ 4	L ² ₃ 4	L ² ₇₋₈ 4	L ² ₉₋₀ 4
WS	BS	S			
22	25	28			
T	A	I			
25	30	38			
P	WP	F			
42	45	30			
STAFF					
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10 (I)		
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL +20	
SPECIAL: —					

Skills: Linguistics +0, Logic +0, Observe +0, Psyniscience +10.

Talents: Resistance (Psychic Powers).

Traits: Psy Rating (3), Sanctioned, Unnatural Senses (50).

Psychic Powers: Psychic Shriek.

Gear: Psy-focus, robes.

CITIZEN

The innumerable citizens of Hive Desoleum fulfil a wide array of roles that all ensure its continued existence.

CITIZEN (NOVICE)					3
H ¹ ₁ 4	B ¹ ₄₋₆ 4	L ¹ ₂ 4	L ¹ ₃ 4	L ¹ ₇₋₈ 4	L ¹ ₉₋₀ 4
WS	BS	S			
25	25	30			
T	A	I			
30	25	25			
P	WP	F			
25	25	30			
KNIFE					
LIGHT	—	RoF 1 ^{Ab-1}	1D10-2 (R)		
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 1KG	AVL +20	
SPECIAL: —					

Skills: Any one +0.

Talents: Unremarkable.

Gear: Civilian garb, oath-cog.

GILDED PERFORMANCER

A rare few operate outside of the Hive Desoleum oath-bond system, whether due to being released from service—an almost unheard of occurrence—or fleeing the life of servitude. Many of these individuals find their way to the underhive, but others remain in plain sight, serving as performancers such as acrobats, musicians, dancers, and artists, all disguising themselves with elaborate facepaint and outlandish clothing.

GILDED PERFORMANCER (NOVICE) 4																					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">H</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4-6</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7-8</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">9-0</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</div> </div> </div>		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">BS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">33</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">24</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">T</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">I</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">31</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">42</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">WP</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">F</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">35</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">29</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">46</td> </tr> </table>		WS	BS	S	33	28	24	T	A	I	31	42	28	P	WP	F	35	29	46
WS	BS	S																			
33	28	24																			
T	A	I																			
31	42	28																			
P	WP	F																			
35	29	46																			
LASPISTOL																					
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1	1d10 (E)																		
PEN 0	CLIP 12	RLD 1AP	WT 2KG AVL +20																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE																					

Skills: Acrobatics +0, Charm +10.

Talents: Leap Up, Mimic.

Gear: Colourful outfit, 1 dose of obscura.

Entertaining: A performer can re-attempt Charm tests multiple times against the same target with no penalty (other than lost time).

MERCHANT

From underhive slave dens to the specialised emporiums frequented by Apex nobility, merchants can be found at every strata of Hive Desoleum.

MERCHANT (NOVICE) 4																					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">H</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4-6</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7-8</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">9-0</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7</div> </div> </div>		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">BS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">33</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">24</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">T</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">I</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">31</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">42</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">WP</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">F</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">35</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">29</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">46</td> </tr> </table>		WS	BS	S	33	28	24	T	A	I	31	42	28	P	WP	F	35	29	46
WS	BS	S																			
33	28	24																			
T	A	I																			
31	42	28																			
P	WP	F																			
35	29	46																			
LASPISTOL																					
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1	1d10 (E)																		
PEN 0	CLIP 12	RLD 1AP	WT 2KG AVL +20																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE																					

Skills: Charm +0, Commerce +10, Deceive +0.

Talents: Public Speaking.

Gear: Good clothes, merchandise, concealed mesh armour vest, and the day's earnings.

Haggle: When making an opposed Commerce test, a merchant increases the degrees of success he scores by 1 or reduces his degrees of failure by 1.

MANUFACURUM WORKER

By the billions, the manufactory workers and labourers attend to their daily work, backbreaking and gruelling labour in some of the cruellest conditions imaginable.

MANUFACURUM WORKER (NOVICE) 5																					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">H</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4-6</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7-8</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">9-0</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6</div> </div> </div>		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">BS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">38</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">31</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">44</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">T</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">I</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">46</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">30</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">25</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">WP</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">F</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">29</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> </tr> </table>		WS	BS	S	38	31	44	T	A	I	46	30	25	P	WP	F	29	28	28
WS	BS	S																			
38	31	44																			
T	A	I																			
46	30	25																			
P	WP	F																			
29	28	28																			
WELDER TORCH†																					
LIGHT	3M	RoF 1	1d10+3 (E)																		
PEN 1	CLIP 8	RLD 3AP	WT 3KG AVL +10																		
SPECIAL: —																					
HEAVY WRENCH†																					
BASIC	—	RoF 1/2	1d10+4 ^{Sb} (I)																		
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 10KG AVL +10																		
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (0)																					
†SELECT ONE																					

Skills: Athletics +10, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: Resistance (Heat).

Gear: Goggles, respirator, manufactory coverall.

RATING

Most ratings are born to life in the void, never setting foot on a planet's surface. In fact, to them, the idea of leaving their ship is as terrifying as the thought of void travel is for those born to a terrestrial existence.

RATING (NOVICE) 4																					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">H</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4-6</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">7-8</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">L</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">9-0</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</div> </div> </div>		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">BS</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">30</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">40</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">25</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">T</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">A</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">I</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">28</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">45</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">26</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">WP</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">F</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">38</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">30</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">22</td> </tr> </table>		WS	BS	S	30	40	25	T	A	I	28	45	26	P	WP	F	38	30	22
WS	BS	S																			
30	40	25																			
T	A	I																			
28	45	26																			
P	WP	F																			
38	30	22																			
AUTOPISTOL																					
LIGHT	60M	RoF 2	1d10 (I)																		
PEN 0	CLIP 18	RLD 3AP	WT 2KG AVL +0																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS																					

Skills: Observe +0, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: None.

Gear: Crew uniform.

DREG

Dregs are the refuse of society, often mad and hooked on a variety of illegal chems.

DREG (NOVICE) 3				
H 1 2	B 4-6 2	L 2 2	L 3 2	L 7-8 2
L 9-0 2				
WS 30	BS 25	S 26		
T 24	A 42	I 26		
P 46	WP 28	F 20		
THROWING KNIFE				
LIGHT	24M ^{20+Ab}	RoF 1	1D5+2 ^{Ss} (R)	
PEN 0	CLIP 3	RLD 1AP	WT 1KG	AVL +10
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, RELIABLE				

Skills: Survival +10.

Talents: None.

Gear: Rags, lice, 1d5 human teeth, one bag of cheap lho sticks.

Desperate and a Bit Mad: Whenever a character attempts a skill test to socially interact with the Dreg, roll 1d10. On a 1-5 the test gains a +20 bonus, on a 6-10 the test suffers a -20 penalty.

DESOLEUM INVOLUTE CADRE TROOPER

The Desoleum Involute Cadres are the military arm that sees to the defence of the world of Desoleum. The Cadres are armed and equipped well for a planetary force, thanks to the manufacturing capacities of the hives of Desoleum.

INVOLUTE CADRE TROOPER (NOVICE) 7				
H 1 8	B 4-6 8	L 2 8	L 3 8	L 7-8 8
L 9-0 8				
WS 44	BS 56	S 38		
T 42	A 35	I 28		
P 50	WP 32	F 36		
LASGUN				
BASIC	160M	RoF 2	1D10+2 (E)	
PEN 0	CLIP 24	RLD 2AP	WT 4KG	AVL +10
SPECIAL: OVERCHARGE				

Skills: Athletics +0, Evade +0, Medicae +10, Pilot +20, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: Rapid Reload, Rite of Clearing.

Gear: 3 frag grenades, 2 krak grenades, uniform, flak armour.

DESOLEUM INVOLUTE CADRE OFFICER

The generals, lieutenants, and other officers of the Desoleum Involute Cadre primarily hail from the world's noble families.

INVOLUTE CADRE OFFICER (ELITE) 10				
H 1 6	B 4-6 7	L 2 7	L 3 7	L 7-8 7
L 9-0 7				
WS 54	BS 41	S 46		
T 38	A 30	I 48		
P 38	WP 35	F 50		
LASPISTOL				
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1	1D10 (E)	
PEN 0	CLIP 12	RLD 1AP	WT 2KG	AVL +20
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE				
CHAINWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 1/2 ^{Ab-3}	1D10+4 ^{Ss} (R)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL +0
SPECIAL: BALANCED, TEARING				

Skills: Athletics +0, Command +20, Evade +10, Navigate +0.

Talents: Blade Dancer, Commanding.

Gear: Micro-bead, impressive uniform, medals, smoking pipe, flak armour.

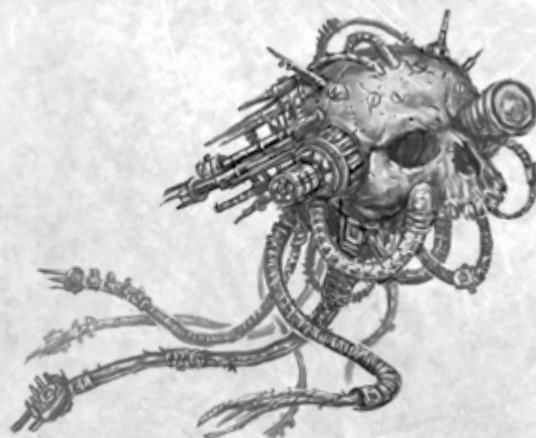
Dig In: The Officer can use the following action:

DIG IN

Type: Utility

Action Points: 2

Use: The character makes a +10 Command (I) test to instruct his allies around him to take cover. If the test succeeds, a number of allies in line of sight and earshot of the character, up to his Intelligence bonus, increase the armour granted to them by their current cover by 2. This bonus lasts until those characters leave their current cover, and does not stack with multiple uses.



REPAIR SERVITOR

Repair servitors are a common sight, and are vital to the continued functioning of the hive's innumerable systems.

REPAIR SERVITOR (NOVICE)																						
3																						
<div>H³₁ 8</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>20</td><td>45</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>50</td><td>25</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>20</td><td>05</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	25	20	45	T	A	I	50	25	20	P	WP	F	25	20	05
WS	BS	S																				
25	20	45																				
T	A	I																				
50	25	20																				
P	WP	F																				
25	20	05																				
<div>B³₄₋₆ 8</div>																						
<div>L³₂ 8</div>	<div>L³₃ 8</div>																					
<div>L³₇₋₈ 8</div>	<div>L³₉₋₀ 8</div>																					
SERVO-FIST																						
MOUNTED	—	RoF 1/2	1D10+7 ^{3+5b} (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 10KG	AVL -20																		
SPECIAL: —																						
LASCUTTER																						
MOUNTED	3M	RoF 1	2D10 (E)																			
PEN 3	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 15KG	AVL -40																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, MELTA, SINGLE-SHOT																						

Skills: Tech-Use.

Talents: None.

Gear: Integral micro-bead, cybernetic physiology, multi-tool.

THE LORDS

Whether engaged in ruling, or interested only in their intrigues, these lords lead lives common people cannot begin to fathom.

APEX NOBLE

The Apex is the lofty spire of Hive Desoleum, and home to many noble houses. Many of those within can trace their ancestry back for millennia.

APEX NOBLE (ELITE)					8																	
H ¹ ₁ 4		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>31</td><td>40</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>36</td><td>49</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>41</td><td>46</td><td>35</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	31	40	28	T	A	I	34	36	49	P	WP	F	41	46	35
WS	BS	S																				
31	40	28																				
T	A	I																				
34	36	49																				
P	WP	F																				
41	46	35																				
B ¹ ₄₋₆ 4																						
L ¹ ₂ 4	L ¹ ₃ 4																					
L ¹ ₇₋₈ 4	L ¹ ₉₋₀ 4																					
BOLT PISTOL																						
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1/2	1D10+4 (R)																			
PEN 2	CLIP 8	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -30																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, TEARING																						

Skills: Charm +10, Commerce +0, Logic +0, Medicae +0, Observe +0.

Talents: Duelist, Public Speaking.

Gear: Elaborate and expensive clothing and jewellery, ornate oath-cog.

Do You Know Who I Am?: The Noble can use the following action:

Do You Know Who I Am?

Type: Utility

Action Points: 3

Use: The character makes a +10 Charm (F) test. If the test succeeds, a number of characters in line of sight and earshot up to the character's Fellowship bonus gain the Weakened (X) condition, where X is equal to half the character's degrees of success on the test (rounded up). This condition lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Fellowship bonus and does not stack with multiple uses. When used in narrative time, this action can be taken as part of conversation.

APEX PRINCE

Apex Princes and Princesses wield immense power and influence, even by the standards of the grand nobility of Hive Desoleum.

APEX PRINCE (MASTER)																						
				24																		
<div>H³₁6</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>29</td><td>32</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>35</td><td>41</td><td>45</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>57</td><td>40</td><td>50</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	34	29	32	T	A	I	35	41	45	P	WP	F	57	40	50
WS	BS	S																				
34	29	32																				
T	A	I																				
35	41	45																				
P	WP	F																				
57	40	50																				
<div>B⁴₄₋₆7</div>																						
<div>L³₂6</div>	<div>L³₃6</div>																					
<div>L³₇₋₈6</div>	<div>L³₉₋₀6</div>																					
PLASMA PISTOL																						
LIGHT	60M	RoF 1/2	1d10+10 (E)																			
PEN 2	CLIP 6	RLD 6AP	WT 4KG	AVL -30																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE, OVERHEATS																						
POWER SWORD																						
LIGHT	—	RoF 1 ^{4b-1}	1D10+5 ^{2+Sb} (E)																			
PEN 3	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL -30																		
SPECIAL: BALANCED, POWER FIELD																						

Skills: Charm +20, Command +0, Evade +10, Linguistics +0, Deceive +10, Observe +0, Remembrance +10.

Talents: Charming, Light Sleeper.

Gear: Refractor field, elaborate and expensive clothing and jewellery, ornate oath-cog, mesh armour concealed beneath elaborate finery.

DISSOLUTE NOBLE

Those who live at the top of the world have a long way to fall. These dissolute nobles indulge in every vice available. The worst find it but a simple manner to cross the line from the merely illegal to the forbidden and damning.

DISSOLUTE NOBLE (ELITE)				8																		
<div>H⁰₁3</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>53</td><td>48</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>32</td><td>45</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>31</td><td>28</td><td>33</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	53	48	38	T	A	I	32	45	35	P	WP	F	31	28	33
WS	BS	S																				
53	48	38																				
T	A	I																				
32	45	35																				
P	WP	F																				
31	28	33																				
<div>B¹₄₋₆4</div>																						
<div>L¹₂4</div>	<div>L¹₃4</div>																					
<div>L¹₇₋₈4</div>	<div>L¹₉₋₀4</div>																					
HANDCANNON																						
BASIC	60M	RoF 1/2	1D10+6 (I)																			
PEN 1	CLIP 3	RLD 4AP	WT 3KG	AVL -10																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS																						
SWORD																						
LIGHT	—	RoF 1 ^{Ab-3}	1D10+3 ^{Sb} (R)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL +10																		
SPECIAL: BALANCED																						

Skills: Acrobatics +0, Deceive +20, Evade +0, Subterfuge +10.

Talents: Deceptive, Mimic.

Gear: Hallucinogen grenade, 3 doses of obscura, expensive but worn clothing and jewellery, ornate oath-cog.

Do You Know Who I Was?: The character can use the following action:

Do You Know Who I Was?

Type: Utility

Action Points: 3

Use: The Noble makes a +10 Deceive (F) test. If the test succeeds, a number of characters in line of sight and earshot up to the character's Fellowship bonus gain the Weakened (X) condition, where X is equal to half the character's degrees of success on the test (rounded up). This condition lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Fellowship bonus and does not stack with multiple uses. When used in narrative time, this action can be taken as part of conversation.

CONSORTIUM MERCHANT MAGNATE

Though Hive Desoleum's nobility would never admit it, at least not openly, the merchant magnates of the Consortium wield power comparable to, or in excess of, their own.

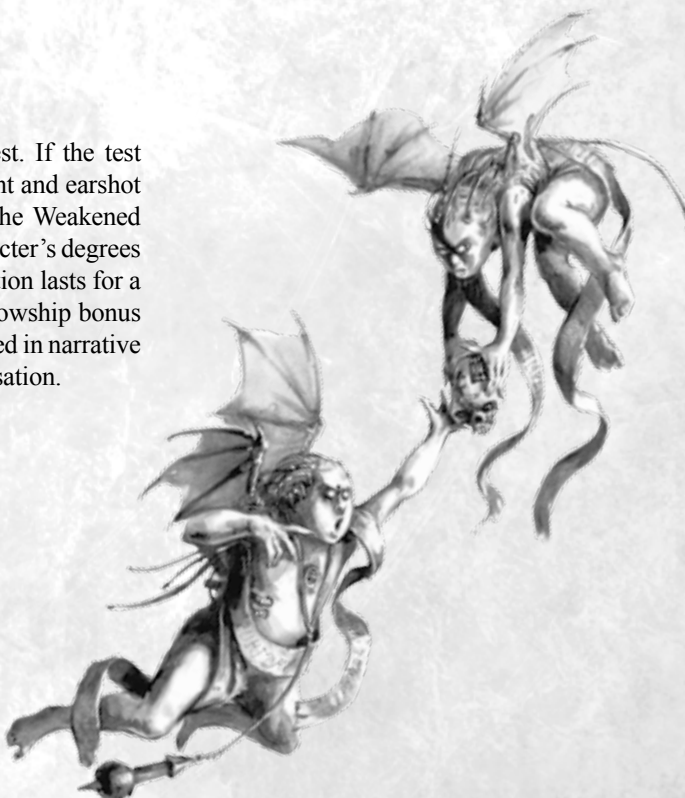
MERCHANT MAGNATE (ELITE)				8																		
<div>H⁰₁3</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>37</td><td>29</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>35</td><td>36</td><td>53</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>46</td><td>40</td><td>58</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	34	37	29	T	A	I	35	36	53	P	WP	F	46	40	58
WS	BS	S																				
34	37	29																				
T	A	I																				
35	36	53																				
P	WP	F																				
46	40	58																				
<div>B¹₄₋₆4</div>																						
<div>L¹₂4</div>	<div>L¹₃4</div>																					
<div>L¹₇₋₈4</div>	<div>L¹₉₋₀4</div>																					
BOLT PISTOL																						
LIGHT	80M	RoF 1/2	1D10+4 (R)																			
PEN 2	CLIP 8	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -30																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, TEARING																						

Skills: Charm +0, Commerce +20, Deceive +10, Logic +0, Observe +0, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: None.

Gear: Fine clothing, concealed mesh armour vest.

Socially Resilient: Once per conversation, the Magnate can make another character in the conversation re-roll one successful skill test which targeted the character. The second result must be used.



ROGUE TRADER

Rogue Traders possess a degree of power and influence almost inconceivable within the Imperium. A Rogue Trader owes this power and authority to his Warrant of Trade, a document bestowing the right to travel beyond the bounds of the Imperium, and claim what resources can be found in the name of the Emperor.

ROGUE TRADER (MASTER) 25				
H 1 7	WS	BS	S	
B 4-6 8	58	45	37	
L 2 7	T	A	I	
L 3 7	33	46	42	
L 7-8 7	P	WP	F	
L 9-0 7	48	50	61	
PLASMA PISTOL				
LIGHT	60M	RoF 1/2	1D10+10 (E)	
PEN 2	CLIP 6	RLD 6AP	WT 4KG	AVL -30
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE, OVERHEATS				
POWER SWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 1 ^{Ab-I}	1D10+5 ^{2+Sb} (E)	
PEN 3	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL -30
SPECIAL: BALANCED, POWER FIELD				

Skills: Charm +30, Commerce +20, Deceive +20, Evade +20.

Talents: Blade Dancer, Charming, Combat Master, Commanding, Gunslinger, Master of all Trades, Quick Draw, Run and Gun.

Gear: Refractor field, flamboyant and expensive clothing, rare trinkets and jewellery, carapace armour.

Leverage: The Rogue Trader has an Influence of 75, and can suffer 1 fatigue at any time to replace any one characteristic with this Influence value for the rest of the turn. If used in narrative time, the effects of this last for one test.

CREATURES OF THE IMPERIUM

A variety of native animals, indigens, and plants can be found across the worlds of the Imperium, alongside many species humanity itself introduced.

CORPSE-CRAWLER

As disgusting as they are horrifying, Corpse-crawlers are large, worm-like parasites found on the cemetery world of Thaur. Corpse-crawlers make their way into dead bodies, wrapping their grotesque forms throughout the corpse's innards and around its spine. Crawlers are able to motivate a host corpse's limbs using bio-electric jolts delivered to the corpse's nervous system, animating it like a decaying puppet of flesh and bone.

CORPSE CRAWLER (NOVICE) 5				
H 1 7	WS	BS	S	
B 4-6 8	36	30	31	
L 2 7	T	A	I	
L 3 7	25	52	27	
L 7-8 7	P	WP	F	
L 9-0 7	48	32	—	
FANGS				
MOUNTED	—	RoF 3	1D10+3 ^{Sb} (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: —				
ACID SPRAY				
MOUNTED	10M	RoF 1	1D10+3 (E)	
PEN 2	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: SPRAY, TOXIC (2)				

Skills: Evade +10.

Talents: Resistance (Poison).

Traits: Blind, Burrower (3), Crawler, Deaf, Size (-3), Unnatural Senses (30).

Gear: None.

Animate Corpse: The creature can use the following action:

ANIMATE CORPSE

Type: Extended

Action Points: 8

Use: The corpse-crawler animates and controls a dead body by entering it and attaching to its nervous system. The corpse-crawler becomes an Elite NPC with the same profile as the corpse-crawler, but with the Strength, Toughness, Agility, traits, and weapons of its host. The corpse-crawler can still use its acid spray, usually through the host's mouth.

While inhabiting a host body, the corpse-crawler cannot be targeted directly. If its host is killed, the corpse crawler is also killed. The corpse-crawler can exit its host as a utility action for 2 APs. This destroys the host, removing all wounds from the corpse-crawler and returning it to the normal profile above.



GROX

Grox are huge and aggressive beasts found across the galaxy, raised for food and leather.

GROX (NOVICE)					5																	
H ² ₁ 9		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>—</td><td>56</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>70</td><td>37</td><td>04</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>40</td><td>21</td><td>—</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	34	—	56	T	A	I	70	37	04	P	WP	F	40	21	—
WS	BS	S																				
34	—	56																				
T	A	I																				
70	37	04																				
P	WP	F																				
40	21	—																				
B ² ₄₋₆ 9																						
L ² ₂ 9	L ² ₃ 9																					
L ² ₇₋₈ 9	L ² ₉₋₀ 9																					
HORNS AND CLAWS																						
MOUNTED	—	RoF 1/2	2d10+5 (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —																		
SPECIAL: <i>TEARING</i>																						

Skills: None.

Talents: Thunder Charge.

Traits: Extra Legs (2), Size (2).

Gear: None.

SKARGAUL

Vicious predators, Skargauls are the stuff of nightmares for voidfarers. A Skargaul is a winged creature with a tough outer carapace, usually a flecked grey colour. Skargauls have no eyes, and even their maw of razor-sharp teeth is hidden behind their shell until they attack. Due in part to its exoskeleton, a Skargaul can survive extended periods of time exposed to hard void by entering a state of hibernation. These carnivores often to hitch a ride on the exterior of voidships. After a journey, Skargauls are ravenously hungry and attack anything they can find. They leave nothing behind of their prey, even devouring the bones and clothing.

SKARGAUL (ELITE)					8																	
<div>H¹₁5</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>31</td><td>—</td><td>39</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>44</td><td>54</td><td>23</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>40</td><td>35</td><td>—</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	31	—	39	T	A	I	44	54	23	P	WP	F	40	35	—
WS	BS	S																				
31	—	39																				
T	A	I																				
44	54	23																				
P	WP	F																				
40	35	—																				
<div>B³₄₋₆7</div>																						
<div>L⁰₂4</div>	<div>L⁰₃4</div>																					
<div>L²₇₋₈6</div>	<div>L²₉₋₀6</div>																					
CLAWS AND FANGS																						
MOUNTED	—	RoF 2	1d10+2 (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —																		
SPECIAL: —																						
TAIL WHIP																						
MOUNTED	—	RoF 1/2	1d10+7 (E)																			
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —																		
SPECIAL: FLEXIBLE																						

Skills: Evade +0, Survival +10.

Talents: Assassin Strike, Hard Target, Step Aside.

Traits: Blind, Deaf, Flyer (High Altitude), Size (−1), Unnatural Senses (150).

Gear: None.

Void Predator: Skargauls are immune to the effects of vacuum and can, for all practical purposes, survive indefinitely without oxygen.

SMELT-RAT SWARM

These skeletal vermin infesting Hive Desoleum are marked out by the cybernetic components featured by each, from bionic eyes to mono-edged claws. A wide range and degree of augmentation is exhibited, with some specimens sporting a single bionic organ or limb, and others almost entirely shod in steel. Invariably, the bionics are in poor shape, corroded and sullied to match their verminous hosts. Unsubstantiated rumours persist of so-called Smelt-rat kings, composite creatures formed of numerous Smelt-rats fused together in hideous and unnatural ways. Some sources claim that Smelt-rat kings display a kind of gestalt intelligence, of the entwined creatures moving with single-minded purpose in the presence of metallic prey.

SMELT-RAT SWARM (NOVICE)																						
5																						
H ⁰ ₁ 3		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>34</td><td>—</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>35</td><td>55</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>47</td><td>20</td><td>—</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	34	—	28	T	A	I	35	55	14	P	WP	F	47	20	—
WS	BS	S																				
34	—	28																				
T	A	I																				
35	55	14																				
P	WP	F																				
47	20	—																				
B ⁰ ₄₋₆ 3																						
L ⁰ ₂ 3	L ⁰ ₃ 3																					
L ⁰ ₇₋₈ 3	L ⁰ ₉₋₀ 3																					
MECHANISED CLAWS																						
MOUNTED	—	RoF 3	1d10 (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —																		
SPECIAL: <i>TEARING</i>																						

Skills: None.

Talents: Furious Assault, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell), Resistance (Poison).

Traits: Amorphous, Crawler, Dark Sight, Extra Arms (4), Extra Legs (4), Size (−1).

Gear: None.

Swarm: The character adds +2 to its defence against damage taken from weapons without either the Blast or Spray qualities.

Merge: The swarm can use the following action:

MERGE

Type: Utility

Action Points: 3

Use: If the Smelt-rat Swarm is engaged with 2 other Smelt-rat Swarms, it can merge with them to form a single Smelt-rat King. All three Swarms are destroyed, and in the place of this Swarm, a Smelt-rat King is created. The King operates on this Swarm's initiative.

SMELT-RAT KING (ELITE)					8
H ² ₁ 6		WS	BS	S	
B ² ₄₋₆ 6		48	28	53	
L ² ₂ 6		T	A	I	
	L ² ₃ 6	43	36	22	
		P	WP	F	
		35	33	02	
L ² ₇₋₈ 6					
	L ² ₉₋₀ 6				
AMALGAM WEAPONS					
MOUNTED	—	RoF 1	2d10+2 (1)		
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —	
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (0)					

Skills: Observe +0, Survival +0.

Talents: Crushing Blow, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell), Luminen Arc, Resistance (Poison).

Traits: Dark Sight, Extra Arms (2), Size (1).

Gear: None.

Tech-Eater: Smelt-rat Kings and all Smelt-rat swarms within 5m add +3 to the wound effect value of wounds inflicted when hitting locations with bionic parts and largely cybernetic creatures (such as servitors).

Split: The King can use the following action:

SPLIT

Type: Utility

Action Points: 4

Use: The Smelt-rat King splits into multiple Smelt-rat Swarms. This King is destroyed, and in its place, three Smelt-rat Swarms are created. For each wound the King was suffering, one less swarm is created. The new Swarms operate on this King's initiative.

BONEWEED

The vine takes root alongside other plants, coiling around them as it grows. In addition to blocking out the sunlight and competing for resources, Boneweed is characterised by vicious barbs that pierce the victim plant, siphoning away nutrients. More disturbing is the effect Boneweed has on animal life. Through means that are still unknown, humans and livestock that come into contact, or even close proximity to the plant, succumb to a violent psychosis, becoming mindless homicidal maniacs.

Banemind: Every 3 rounds a character spends within 15 metres of Boneweed, he must make a +10 Willpower test. On a failure, the character flies into a murderous frenzy and attacks the nearest character with whatever melee weapon is closest to hand. The frenzy lasts for 1d10 minutes after leaving the Boneweed's presence.

Plant physiology: Boneweed does not have hit locations and does not suffer from wound effects. Each metre length of Boneweed is treated as a separate target (although once severed from the root, it dies in a matter of hours). Most growths are from two to five metres, although longer is possible. A Boneweed's roots descend from one to three metres underground, and unless removed, the plant begins to regrow in days.

BONEWEED (NOVICE)					8
H ⁰ ₁ 2		WS	BS	S	
B ⁰ ₄₋₆ 2		—	—	—	
L ⁰ ₂ 2		T	A	I	
	L ⁰ ₃ 2	20	—	—	
		P	WP	F	
		—	—	—	
L ⁰ ₇₋₈ 2					
	L ⁰ ₉₋₀ 2				

MIND-MOULD

Of the innumerable hazards to be found on the frontier world of Temperance, few are as insidious as the strain of parasitic fungus simply known as Mind-mould. The mould infects a person when they inhale its spores. Aside from some minor respiratory irritation, the first sign of infection is a terrible rash, which presages the appearance of tuber-like growths that slowly and painfully tear their way through the skin. As painful and grotesque as that is, the real horror of this stage of the infection is that it almost surely means the fungus has reached the victim's brain, and the person is beyond treatment. Soon, the infected individual begins to exhibit increasingly erratic behaviour, before their body shuts down. Though it may take seconds or hours, eventually the Mind-mould completes its life cycle when a build-up of gasses causes the victim's head to burst, scattering spores throughout the area.

The most bizarre quality of Mind-mould, known only to a few, is its effect on psykers. Mind-mould displays a Warp presence entirely unlike other flora, shining brightly to Navigators, certain psykers—and Daemons. Psykers seem especially susceptible to Mind-mould, which progresses through the stages of infection much more rapidly than in ordinary humans. As the infection progresses, the psyker's powers become ever more unpredictable and dangerous, increasing the risk of psychic phenomena. When the psyker's brain explodes, it disperses the Warp-presence of the mould much further than the physical spores. This Warp spore can infect a psyker far out of range of the physical spores, even aboard orbiting vessels.

A character exposed to mind-mould spores must make a +10 Toughness test to withstand infection. Over the next day, the infected develops a painful rash over his body. After a further 2d10 hours, fungal growth begin to emerge agonisingly from the character's skin. From this point, the character must make a Toughness test every hour, with a cumulative -10 penalty on each attempt. If he succeeds on any of the tests with three or more degrees of success, he

has fought off the fungus and fully recovers. Those with the *Medicae* skill can assist with this test, as per page 14.

Once a test is failed, the character gains the *Toughness Decay* (10) and *Intelligence Decay* (5) conditions, and must roll on **Table 5-4 Hallucinations** on page 135. He continues to test as above every 1d5 hours, but once his *Toughness* reaches 0, his head detonates, killing him instantly. This scatters a spore cloud over a 5 metre radius.

Psykers suffer a -20 penalty to the initial *Toughness* test to withstand infection. An infected psyker always counts as pushing for purposes of causing psychic phenomena, and automatically causes phenomena should he push. Psykers who perish from mind-mould infection not only emit a spore cloud, but also generates a psychic eruption. All psykers within a number of kilometres equal to 1d10 times the dead psyker's *Willpower* bonus must also pass a +10 *Willpower* test to avoid infection.

THE ENEMY WITHIN

Of all the threats to humanity's survival, none are so insidious as that from heretical cults. One of the most profane cults of Hive Desoleum is the Callers of Sorrow, devoted to the Chaos God Nurgle. Its members roam the lower depths, a wide range of insane humans and foul mutants.

THE PROFANE AND HERETICAL

These humans have forsaken the Emperor's Light in the worship of the Pestilent Lord, and exist only to see Hive Desoleum brought low with decay and death.

PRECEPTOR

It takes an individual of strong will and personality to lead a cult, for he must inspire great devotion and loyalty from his followers. Such cult leaders must be capable of twisting the minds of others, turning them against all that a good citizen of the Imperium believes.

PRECEPTOR (MASTER)				
25				
H ³ ₁ 9	B ⁴ ₄₋₆ 10	L ⁴ ₂ 10	L ⁴ ₃ 10	L ⁴ ₇₋₈ 10
L ⁴ ₉₋₀ 10				
WS	BS	S		
37	41	45		
T	A	I		
62	27	56		
P	WP	F		
43	36	33		
BOLTGUN				
BASIC	160M	RoF 1	1d10+6 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 16	RLD 3AP	WT 7KG	AVL -30
SPECIAL: <i>TEARING</i>				

Skills: Command +20, Deceive +10, Evade +0, Observe +0, Remembrance +10.

Talents: Cold Hearted, Commanding, True Grit.

Traits: Touched by the Fates (2).

Gear: Flak robes, ceremonial talismans.

Look Out Sir!: The Preceptor can use the following action:

Look Out Sir!

Type: Reaction

Action Points: 1

Use: After a successful attack test is made against the character, but before hit locations are determined, the character nominates one other allied character within 5 metres. That character becomes the new target of the attack, and the attack proceeds as normal.

POX MAGISTER

Whether through the emergence of psychic abilities or pacts with daemonic entities, many Preceptors are practitioners of the dark arts of sorcery. Displays of such unnatural power further cement their sway over the cult, providing clear and tangible proof of the power of Chaos.

POX MAGISTER (MASTER)				
30				
H ³ ₁ 9	B ⁴ ₄₋₆ 9	L ⁴ ₂ 9	L ⁴ ₃ 9	L ⁴ ₇₋₈ 9
L ⁴ ₉₋₀ 9				
WS	BS	S		
48	38	35		
T	A	I		
55	34	44		
P	WP	F		
52	66	30		
FORCESWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 1/2 ^{Ab-3}	1d10+3 ^{Sb} (R)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL -50
SPECIAL: <i>BALANCED, FORCE</i>				

Skills: Command +10, Deceive +10, Evade +0, Observe +10, Psyniscience +10.

Talents: Bastion of Iron Will, Deceptive, Resistance (Disease, Psychic Powers).

Traits: Psy Rating (3).

Psychic Powers: Endurance, Enfeeble, Life Leech, Nurgle's Rot (see below).

Gear: Tomes and scrolls of arcane lore, flak robes.

NURGLE'S ROT

Type: Utility

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: -10 Willpower test

Range: 2m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The psyker focuses his mind on the generosity of Grandfather Nurgle, drawing forth from the Warp a great gift of disease to share with those around him. A noxious and unnatural slime splashes across all those nearby, infecting them with the galaxy's most perfect disease. All characters within range (excluding Daemons of Nurgle and those sufficiently devoted to Father Nurgle) must make a *Toughness* test. Each target that fails the test immediately suffers *Strength Decay* (2 x PL), *Toughness Decay* (2 x PL).

PESTILENTANT

These zealots show little regard for their own lives. They are steeped in the corruption of Chaos, their bodies marked in reflection of their impure souls. Though less affected than Mutants, the touch of the Warp is evident on them, with bloated bodies featuring festering wounds, pus-filled boils, and numerous pox-scars.

PESTILENTANT (NOVICE)				6																		
<div>H³₁6</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>54</td><td>21</td><td>61</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>27</td><td>46</td><td>32</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>43</td><td>52</td><td>35</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	54	21	61	T	A	I	27	46	32	P	WP	F	43	52	35
WS	BS	S																				
54	21	61																				
T	A	I																				
27	46	32																				
P	WP	F																				
43	52	35																				
<div>B³₄₋₆6</div>																						
<div>L³₂6</div>	<div>L³₃6</div>																					
<div>L³₇₋₈6</div>	<div>L³₉₋₀6</div>																					
SWORD																						
LIGHT	—	RoF 1 ^{Ab-3}	1D10+6 ^{Sb} (I)																			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL +10																		
SPECIAL: BALANCED																						

Skills: Acrobatics +10, Intimidate +20.

Talents: Thunder Charge.

Gear: Leather scrap armour.

Exploit Weakness: When attacking a target with the Weakened condition, the characters gains a bonus equal to 10 times the X value of Weakened on the target.

THE TWISTED AND MONSTROUS

For those afflicted by mutation, hope is a luxury long since cast aside. The Callers of Sorrow incorporate many of these mutants into the cult, using their diseased strength against the hive that has rejected them.

FLESHBENT

As cult members partake further in the worship of the Ruinous Powers and the rituals of the Warp, their flesh rebels at the unnatural influence of the Immaterium. They view these mutations as blessings from the Gods of Chaos, and these gifts can reflect writhing tentacles, jointed eyestalks, extra heads, bestial features, or crowns of flickering balefire.

FLESHBENT (NOVICE)					7																		
<div><div>H³₁7</div><div>B³₄₋₆7</div><div>L³₂7</div><div>L³₃7</div><div>L³₇₋₈7</div><div>L³₉₋₀7</div></div>					<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>46</td><td>60</td><td>43</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>47</td><td>35</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>54</td><td>44</td><td>25</td></tr></table>	WS	BS	S	46	60	43	T	A	I	47	35	35	P	WP	F	54	44	25
WS	BS	S																					
46	60	43																					
T	A	I																					
47	35	35																					
P	WP	F																					
54	44	25																					
SHOTGUN																							
BASIC		30M	RoF 1/2	1D10+2 (I)																			
PEN 0		CLIP 6	RLD 6AP	WT 5KG	AVL -10																		
SPECIAL: SPRAY																							

Skills: Survival +10.

Talents: None.

Gear: Assorted broken trinkets and mementos, scavenged leather armour.

Fleshbent: These lowly mutants exhibit a wide array of strange and terrible alterations from the blessed form of humanity, and the GM should apply items from **Table 8–7 Malignancies** on page 256 to create unique mutants to face the PCs.

MALATANT

Some mutants grow to inhuman size, their profane nature marked by impossible masses of muscle and dense flesh.

MALATANT (ELITE)					10																		
<div><div>H³₁9</div><div>B⁴₄₋₆10</div><div>L⁴₂10</div><div>L⁴₃10</div><div>L⁴₇₋₈10</div><div>L⁴₉₋₀10</div></div>					<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>41</td><td>27</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>61</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>44</td><td>36</td><td>28</td></tr></table>	WS	BS	S	41	27	55	T	A	I	61	30	31	P	WP	F	44	36	28
WS	BS	S																					
41	27	55																					
T	A	I																					
61	30	31																					
P	WP	F																					
44	36	28																					
GREAT WEAPON																							
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10 (I)																				
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 7KG	AVL -10																			
SPECIAL: UNBALANCED																							

Skills: Athletics +20, Survival +10.

Talents: Crushing Blow, Iron Jaw.

Traits: Size (1).

Gear: Gruesome trophies, scavenged flak armour.

Pinning: All enemies engaged in melee with the Malatant gain the Immobilised condition until they become unengaged.

NECROPHAGE

These hideous mutants have taken diseased or even necrotic appearances, and in the most extreme cases, must feed on human flesh to sustain their own decaying forms.

NECROPHAGE(ELITE)					12	
<div>H²₁5</div>		<div>WS64</div> <div>T39</div> <div>P47</div>			<div>BS36</div> <div>A50</div> <div>WP45</div>	<div>S44</div> <div>I28</div> <div>F33</div>
<div>B³₄₋₆6</div>						
<div>L³₂6</div>	<div>L³₃6</div>					
<div>L³₇₋₈6</div>	<div>L³₉₋₀6</div>					
CLEAVER						
LIGHT	—	RoF 2 ^{4B-3}	1D10+4 ^{Sb} (R)			
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	Wt 3KG	AVL +10		
SPECIAL: UNWIELDY						

Skills: Acrobatics +10, Evade +10, Survival +10.

Talents: Assassin Strike, Lightning Reflexes.

Traits: Fear (Cowering), Regeneration (1).

Gear: Scavenged leather armour.

Leaching: Whenever the Necrophage successfully inflicts a wound with a melee attack, he can immediately remove one non-critical wound from which he is currently suffering.

TOXER

These impossible creatures' twisted forms exude chemicals and toxins fatal to normal humans, and often house hideous nests of unnatural vermin in place of internal organs.

TOXER (ELITE)					12																		
<div><div>H²₁6</div><div>B³₄₋₆7</div><div>L³₂7</div><div>L³₃7</div><div>L³₇₋₈7</div><div>L³₉₋₀7</div></div>					<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>56</td><td>26</td><td>51</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>46</td><td>35</td><td>40</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>51</td><td>38</td><td>19</td></tr></table>	WS	BS	S	56	26	51	T	A	I	46	35	40	P	WP	F	51	38	19
WS	BS	S																					
56	26	51																					
T	A	I																					
46	35	40																					
P	WP	F																					
51	38	19																					
CLAWS AND TEETH																							
MOUNTED	—	RoF 2	1D5+3 (I)																				
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —																			
SPECIAL: <i>TEARING, TOXIC</i> (2)																							

Skills: Survival +20.

Talents: True Grit.

Traits: Amphibious.

Gear: Scavenged leather armour.

Toxic Cloud: Whenever the Toxer receives a wound, he immediately creates a toxic cloud centred at his location with a radius of 3 metres that lasts for 5 rounds. All enemy characters gain the Weakened (2) condition until they leave.

PSYKERS

Psykers who do not submit to the Black Ships are universally dangerous, for even the least of them can doom of an entire world. The Callers actively seek them out to act as Warp-Callers and Warp-Priests in the service of Father Nurgle.

WARP-CALLER (NOVICE)					7																		
<div><div>H²₁ 4</div><div>B²₄₋₆ 4</div><div>L²₂ 4</div><div>L²₃ 4</div><div>L²₇₋₈ 4</div><div>L²₉₋₀ 4</div></div>					<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>38</td><td>29</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>28</td><td>43</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>45</td><td>57</td><td>46</td></tr></table>	WS	BS	S	38	29	38	T	A	I	28	43	50	P	WP	F	45	57	46
WS	BS	S																					
38	29	38																					
T	A	I																					
28	43	50																					
P	WP	F																					
45	57	46																					
STAFF																							
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10 (I)																				
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL +20																			
SPECIAL: —																							

Skills: Psyniscience +20.

Talents: None.

Traits: Psy Rating (2).

Psychic Powers: Enfeeble, Hallucination, Misfortune.

Gear: Malefic text, assorted talismans and fetishes, robes.

WARP-PRIEST (ELITE)				12																		
<div>H¹₁5</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>44</td><td>26</td><td>46</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>41</td><td>47</td><td>46</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>58</td><td>66</td><td>38</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	44	26	46	T	A	I	41	47	46	P	WP	F	58	66	38
WS	BS	S																				
44	26	46																				
T	A	I																				
41	47	46																				
P	WP	F																				
58	66	38																				
<div>B³₄₋₆7</div>																						
<div>L²₂6</div>	<div>L²₃6</div>																					
<div>L²₇₋₈6</div>	<div>L²₉₋₀6</div>																					
FORCESTAFF																						
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10 (I)																			
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 6KG	AVL -40																		
SPECIAL: FORCE																						

Skills: Evade +10, Psyniscience +30.

Talents: Combat Senses, Warp Sense.

Traits: Psy Rating (4).

Psychic Powers: Assail, Fiery Form, Iron Arm, Life Leech, Smite.

Gear: False oath-cog, robes.

Psy Drain: The Warp-Priest can use the following action:

Type: Utility**Action Points:** 1

Use: The character targets an ally within 10 metres who possesses a psy-rating lower than the character. The target immediately suffers a wound without any wound effect, and the character then increases his psy rating by one for one round.

SPAWN OF CHAOS

A Spawn is a frightful sight, each a unique, a gibbering monstrous mass of tissue powered through the unholy energy of the Dark Gods. Some might have multitudes of oily tentacles, or have grown insectoid eyes, or even sprouted new faces along their body that scream their pain with each motion.

CHAOS SPAWN (ELITE)				
<div> <div> <div>H⁰₁Tb</div> <div>B⁰₄₋₆Tb</div> <div>L⁰₂Tb</div> <div>L⁰₃Tb</div> <div>L⁰₇₋₈Tb</div> <div>L⁰₉₋₀Tb</div> </div> <div> <div>WS</div> <div>BS</div> <div>S</div> <div>T</div> <div>A</div> <div>I</div> <div>P</div> <div>WP</div> <div>F</div> </div> </div>				
TENTACLES				
MOUNTED	—	RoF 2	1D10+S _B (I)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: FLEXIBLE, TOXIC (I), SNARE (I)				
†Roll 30+2d10 to determine each of the Chaos Spawn's characteristic at the start of each new encounter.				

Skills: None.**Talents:** None.**Traits:** Fear (Flee), From Beyond, Instability, Regeneration (2).**Gear:** None.

Constant Mutation: Chaos Spawn are endlessly mutating, and their characteristics should be rolled at the start of each encounter. GMs should also freely apply items from **Table 8-7 Malignancies** on page 256 to fashion even greater variety for these monstrous creatures.

THE ENEMY WITHOUT

Since Mankind first travelled to the stars, he has faced the threat of the alien. The Eldar are amongst the most ancient and deadly of xenos races, forever a bane to the Imperium.

ELDAR GUARDIAN

All Eldar must be prepared to take up the mantle of Guardian in the defence of their craftworld. Though their abilities are far less than those who tread the Path of the Warrior, Eldar Guardians are nonetheless a deadly force, capable of defeating many times their own number even when facing the elite soldiers of the lesser races.

ELDAR GUARDIAN (NOVICE)				
<div> <div> <div>H⁴₁7</div> <div>B⁴₄₋₆7</div> <div>L⁴₂7</div> <div>L⁴₃7</div> <div>L⁴₇₋₈7</div> <div>L⁴₉₋₀7</div> </div> <div> <div>WS</div> <div>BS</div> <div>S</div> <div>T</div> <div>A</div> <div>I</div> <div>P</div> <div>WP</div> <div>F</div> </div> </div>				
SHURIKEN CATAPULT				
BASIC	120M	RoF 3	1D10+4 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 30	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -60
SPECIAL: RELIABLE, SILENT (I), STORM				

Skills: Acrobatics +30, Evade +10, Observe +0, Pilot +0, Stealth +20.

Talents: Independent Targeting, Lightning Reflexes, Run and Gun.

Gear: Eldar mesh armour, spirit stone.

Battle Focus: Each turn, the Guardian receives 1 extra AP which he can only spend to perform the Move action.

DUSK VIPER CORSAIR

Whether out of need, spite, or the mere thrill, the Dusk Vipers corsairs leap from one raid to another, ever eager for spoils and glory.

DUSK VIPER CORSAIR (ELITE)				
<div> <div> <div>H⁴₁8</div> <div>B⁴₄₋₆8</div> <div>L⁴₂8</div> <div>L⁴₃8</div> <div>L⁴₇₋₈8</div> <div>L⁴₉₋₀8</div> </div> <div> <div>WS</div> <div>BS</div> <div>S</div> <div>T</div> <div>A</div> <div>I</div> <div>P</div> <div>WP</div> <div>F</div> </div> </div>				
SHURIKEN CATAPULT				
BASIC	120M	RoF 3	1D10+4 (R)	
PEN 2	CLIP 30	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -60
SPECIAL: RELIABLE, SILENT (I), STORM				
ELDAR SWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 3 ^{Ab-3}	1D10+7 ^{3+S_B} (R)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 3KG	AVL -40
SPECIAL: BALANCED				

Skills: Acrobatics +30, Evade +10, Observe +10, Pilot +10, Stealth +0.

Talents: Duelist, Responsive, Whirlwind.

Gear: Eldar mesh armour, spirit stone.

Elusive: After performing a successful Evade test, the Corsair imposes a -10 penalty on all attacks which target him until the beginning of his next turn.

ELDAR RANGER

For some Eldar, the structured life of the craftworld is too much to shoulder. They undertake the Path of the Outcast—leaving their home for the full range of experiences the galaxy has to offer. Known as Rangers, these Eldar wander the forgotten paths of the webway, travelling from planet to planet and even visiting distant craftworlds.

ELDAR RANGER (ELITE)				14
<div>H³₁6</div>		<div>WS48BS69S37</div>		
<div>B⁴₄₋₆7</div>		<div>T34A67I47</div>		
<div>L³₂6</div>	<div>L³₃6</div>	<div>P59WP42F44</div>		
<div>L⁴₇₋₈7</div>	<div>L⁴₉₋₀7</div>			
ELDAR LONG RIFLE				
BASIC	420M	RoF 1/2	1D10+12 (E)	
PEN 2	CLIP 18	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -60
SPECIAL: ACCURATE, RELIABLE, SILENT (3)				

Skills: Acrobatics +0, Evade +10, Observe +0, Stealth +30, Survival +10.

Talents: Constant Vigilance, Overwatch.

Gear: Cameleoline cloak, Eldar mesh armour, spirit stone.

Living Ghost: The Ranger gains two extra degrees of success on successful Stealth tests.

PATHFINDER

Over many human lifetimes, Pathfinders perfect the skills that keep them alive on their journeys, becoming unparalleled marksmen and masters of stealth.

ELDAR PATHFINDER (ELITE)					17																		
<div><div>H³₁6</div><div>B⁴₄₋₆7</div><div>L³₂6</div><div>L³₃6</div><div>L⁴₇₋₈7</div><div>L⁴₉₋₀7</div></div>					<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>40</td><td>74</td><td>43</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>38</td><td>69</td><td>46</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>64</td><td>47</td><td>37</td></tr></table>	WS	BS	S	40	74	43	T	A	I	38	69	46	P	WP	F	64	47	37
WS	BS	S																					
40	74	43																					
T	A	I																					
38	69	46																					
P	WP	F																					
64	47	37																					
ELDAR LONG RIFLE																							
BASIC	420M	RoF 1/2	1D10+12 (E)																				
PEN 2	CLIP 18	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -60																			
SPECIAL: ACCURATE, RELIABLE, SILENT (3)																							

Skills: Acrobatics +0, Evade +20, Observe +10, Stealth +30, Survival +10.

Talents: Eye of Vengeance, Target Selection.

Gear: Chameleoline cloak, Eldar mesh armour, spirit stone.

Living Ghost: The Pathfinder gains two extra degrees of success on successful Stealth tests.

Uncanny Aim: Each turn, the Pathfinder receives 1 extra AP which he can only spend to perform the Aim action.

DIRE AVENGER

Dire Avengers hold a particular place of honour amongst those Eldar who follow the Path of the Warrior, representing as they do the ideal of the noble warrior. Clad in stronger armour and armed with specialised shuriken catapults, they are many times over more deadly than Guardians.

DIRE AVENGER (ELITE)					12																	
<div><div><div>H⁴₁8</div><div>B⁵₄₋₆9</div><div>L⁴₂8</div><div>L⁴₃8</div><div>L⁵₇₋₈9</div><div>L⁵₉₋₀9</div></div><div><table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>58</td><td>66</td><td>37</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>42</td><td>60</td><td>40</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>51</td><td>42</td><td>34</td></tr></table></div></div>					WS	BS	S	58	66	37	T	A	I	42	60	40	P	WP	F	51	42	34
WS	BS	S																				
58	66	37																				
T	A	I																				
42	60	40																				
P	WP	F																				
51	42	34																				
AVENGER SHURIKEN CATAPULT																						
BASIC	180M	RoF 3	1D10+6 (R)																			
PEN 2	CLIP 30	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -60																		
SPECIAL: RELIABLE, SILENT (1), STORM																						
ELDAR SWORD																						
LIGHT	—	RoF 3 ^{Ab-3}	1D10+6 ^{3+Sb} (R)																			
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 3KG	AVL -40																		
SPECIAL: BALANCED																						

Skills: Athletics +20, Evade +10, Tech-Use +0.

Talents: Barrage, Crippling Shot, Snap Fire.

Gear: Aspect Armour, spirit stone.

Bladestorm: The character can use the following action:

BLADESTORM

Type: Utility

Action Points: 1

Use: The next attack the Dire Avenger makes this turn with an Avenger shuriken catapult gains the Spray quality.

WARLOCK

The Eldar battle-mystics known as Warlocks are both powerful psykers and fearsome warriors. Before pursuing the Path of the Seer, they tread the Path of the Warrior, and he carries that knowledge and experience with him. In battle, Warlocks combine martial skill and potent

psychic ability. Warlocks are deadly swordsmen, and carry a powerful weapons known as a Witchblade. Warlocks exhibit a variety of strange and terrible psychic powers, capable of annihilating their foes with blasts of Warp energy, or quickening the already-superhuman reflexes of their comrades.

ELDAR WARLOCK (MASTER)					35
<div> <div>H⁴₁9</div> <div>B⁵₄₋₆10</div> <div>L⁴₂9</div> <div>L⁴₃9</div> <div>L⁵₇₋₈10</div> <div>L⁵₉₋₀10</div> </div> <div> <div>WS67BS46S41</div> <div>T52A68I43</div> <div>P55WP74F48</div> </div>					
SHURIKEN PISTOL					
LIGHT	60M	RoF 2	1d10+3 (R)		
PEN 2	CLIP 24	RLD 3AP	WT 4KG	AVL -50	
SPECIAL: RELIABLE, SILENT (2), STORM					
WITCHBLADE					
LIGHT	—	RoF 3 ^{Ab-3}	1d10+9 ^{5+Sb} (R)		
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 3KG	AVL -60	
SPECIAL: BALANCED, FORCE					

Skills: Evade +20, Psyniscience +30, Remembrance +20.
Talents: Bastion of Iron Will, Blade Dancer, Strong Minded, Warp Lock, Warp Sense.
Traits: Psy-rating 5, Touched by the Fates (2).
Gear: Runic charms, rune armour, spirit stone.
Psychic Powers: Destructor, Forewarning, Invisibility, Mental Fortitude, Misfortune, Psychic Shriek.
Unnatural Speed: At the start of combat the character rolls initiative twice. He gets two separate turns, one at each initiative rolled. Both turns count as separate turns for the character. His action points reset, and he can perform new attack actions. All effects that would count down on the character's turn only count down on his first turn each round.

DESTRUCTOR

Type: Attack

Time: 2 AP

Focus Power: +10 Willpower Attack Test

Range: 10m x PL

Sustained: No

Effect: The Eldar psyker draws forth his anger and inner desire for destruction, focussing it as a roiling wave of devastating energy. The psyker makes an attack with a rate of attack of 1 that uses the following weapon profile:

DESTRUCTOR				
MOUNTED	10M x PL	RoF —	1d10+5+PL (E)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —
SPECIAL: SPRAY				

THE ENEMY BEYOND

Within the Warp exist Daemons, one of the Imperium's most desperately guarded secrets. The Lord of Decay, Nurgle, leads hordes of pestilent Daemons, all eager to share their diseases with Mankind.

PLAGUEBEARER

The foul foot-soldiers of Nurgle are the Plaguebearers, Warp-spawned embodiments of disease and decay.

PLAGUEBEARER (ELITE)					17
<div> <div>H³₁11</div> <div>B³₄₋₆11</div> <div>L⁴₂12</div> <div>L⁴₃12</div> <div>L³₇₋₈12</div> <div>L³₉₋₀12</div> </div> <div> <div>WS61BS32S71</div> <div>T82A49I37</div> <div>P47WP64F01</div> </div>					
VOMIT ATTACK					
MOUNTED	5M	RoF 1/2	1d10+2 (E)		
PEN 2	CLIP —	RLD —	WT —	AVL —	
SPECIAL: SPRAY, TOXIC (1)					
PLAGUESWORD					
LIGHT	—	RoF 1 ^{Ab-3}	1d10+14 ^{7+Sb} (R)		
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 7KG	AVL -60	
SPECIAL: SAPPING (2), TOXIC (2)					

Skills: Athletics +30.

Talents: Unrelenting.

Traits: Daemonic (2), Fear -10 (Nausea†), From Beyond.

Gear: Rot armour.

†**Nausea:** A character who fails the Fear test is Stunned for one round per degree of failure, as he doubles over and retches uncontrollably. If the character succeeds, he is Dazed for 1d10 Rounds minus his Toughness bonus, to a minimum of 1 Round, as he contends with the bile rising in his throat.





CHAPTER XIII: SEEDS OF HERESY

In this adventure, the players are sent on the orders of their Inquisitor to a seemingly forgotten Adeptus Ministorum world that has been without Imperial contact for many years. A recently uncovered Astropathic message caused it to be rediscovered, and also expressed concerns of foul heresies within. Corruption has indeed taken root there and the players discover rival factions seeking greater power, possibly with the aid of the Ruinous Powers. On a world that has been without the Emperor's Light for so long, can the players unravel the truth and prevent a world from falling to Chaos?

THE GM'S BRIEF

"Let the Emperor's Blessing fall upon this world, and in turn let our bounty return to His Peoples a thousand-fold."

—Albertine Kathrinkas, upon the founding of Novabella

Archbishop Zedikiah, one of the most important Ecclesiarchy figures within the sector, passed away several months ago. After many weeks spent in prayer, the regional Adeptus Ministorum superiors allowed his designated successor to take office, and his servants began the onerous process of clearing the former Archbishop's

quarters and offices. Within his chambers at the Great Cathedral, the servitors discovered an alarming note. One of the servants, operating as a secret informer to the Inquisitor, quickly passed word of its contents to his master.

The note was a formal request for an investigation on the world of Novabella. Harvester-Prelate Felissimo, head of the Ecclesiarchy on the remote colony world, originally penned it just over twenty-five years previously. A routine inquiry with the Administratum revealed that it has been more than twenty years since there has been any contact with Novabella. There are no records of any Imperial vessels visiting the world in the past twenty-five years, including vessels sent to gather tithes. None understand how the world was so utterly forgotten or why the missive was ignored.

The scenario begins with the Acolytes aboard the Imperial Navy Destroyer *His Enduring Light*, which has been diverted to provide them transport to Novabella. After they decide how to approach the investigation, they can descend to the planet. The characters discover that the governing Kathrinkas family, the Agriharvest Sodality, and the local branch of the Ecclesiarchy are the most powerful organisations on the devout agri-world. One of these groups is certainly behind whatever heresy frightened Harvester-Prelate Felissimo.

A moment of laxity spawns a lifetime of heresy.

BETA TESTING WITH SEEDS OF HERESY

Seeds of Heresy is an open-ended adventure, with a variety of paths a GM can take in creating the storyline for what is really happening on Novabella. It can run as a multi-session campaign over many nights, with the Acolytes carefully examining each of the factions, or could be a short, single-session game where they tackle their foes in a more direct fashion.

As such, it offers the GM a variety of options for how to run it, and a wide range of difficulty levels and play styles. This can provide a great way to test out many of the rules for **DARK HERESY**. Parts of it can also be extracted for fast quick scenarios to test specific rules. A bandit attack using autocarriages against a mechanised caravan could test the vehicle rules, or interrogations of Titheguard might be used to try out the social interaction rules.

Game Masters are encouraged to try out this adventure using different NPCs picked from Chapter 12. He could introduce a Rogue Trader, xenos invaders, or even a daemonic incursion to additionally bedevil the warband. Including Combat Servitors or other powerful henchmen to strengthen the existing factions and add additional tensions. Altering the NPC Threat Levels is an excellent way to test the **DARK HERESY** rule mechanics out as much as possible, and the GM should not shy away from changing the ones used in the adventure to others of his choosing, as long as this is noted in any test reports sent in.

GMs should also encourage players to try out not only the sample characters in Chapter 2, but newly created characters as well. Players might even create new ones each game or deliberately try the adventure with character groups they might not normally form. The more data the games can gather concerning how characters in the new system operate together, and how well they function against different NPCs, the better for the

DARK HERESY Beta development.

Characters must deduce the nature of the heresy and eliminate the responsible party. In the process, they are certain to acquire allies that could be a critical resource in their efforts. Alternatively, with a misstep, they could easily ally with the wrong faction, dooming themselves and the planet to failure and corruption at the hands of heretics.

STARTING DISPOSITIONS

The members of the three power groups on Novabella start with Dispositions of 50. These should be modified as per the Determining Starting Dispositions on page 241 in **Chapter VIII: Narrative Tools**, depending if the Acolytes' true identities have been revealed and the aspect of the group that the GM has decided for the adventure.

As noted below, some might be eager to see the warband even if they are acting in a criminal manner. In these cases, the GM should modify their Disposition accordingly both up and down, depending on what has been discovered concerning their machinations and their new views on the troublesome newcomers.

NOVABELLA GAZETTEER

"Even a short period of isolation is enough for heresy to breed. The call for vigilance is unending."

—Reputed words of Ezzarth Felissimo

A relatively unsophisticated agri-world, Novabella is an isolated but loyal provider for a significant portion of the local sub-sector's foodstuffs. Its productive seas and endless plains have proven receptive to crops and domesticated animals. Were it not for a near complete lack of materials required for manufacturing, the planet might even be self-sustaining. That limitation has led to a world that depends entirely upon imported goods for all of its tools and technology.

The settlement of the planet began more than four centuries ago, and has become a Ministorum bastion devoted to tending crops and faith alike. From its start, it had been designated to support the Imperial war machine through food, not men, given the relatively low population. The vast majority of its people live in small, isolated communities, where they can work the fields and seas. Population growth has been steady, but never explosive. Even as their farms and fisheries yield bountiful harvests, the bulk of those goods have been sent off-world. Foodstuffs that could have been used to nurture the world's inhabitants have instead been devoted to feed the insatiable Imperial demands.

Due to its small size and relative youth, the Adeptus Arbites have not yet established a presence on the colony. Similarly, the Adeptus Mechanicus only maintain a single Tech-Priest to minister to the agri-world's technology. Requests for supplies or equipment spend decades in review under the sub-sector government before they are sent or, more commonly, denied.

ALTERNATIVE PATHS

This adventure presents the Imperial colony of Novabella along with three powerful factions ensconced upon it. At least one of these factions is heretical, while one or more may be criminal. Prior to presenting it, the Game Master should review the adventure and decide which of the groups are heretics, criminals, or loyalists. New GMs and players are suggested to go with one faction (especially the Faithful) as heretical and the other two loyal for their first adventure in order to keep the game play relatively linear. Multiple heretical or even criminal groups can make the scenario far more difficult for the Acolytes to successfully complete, but can turn it into a longer campaign with greater rewards. If the Game Master wishes to run this adventure an additional time, the selections for guilty parties can be altered. With such changes, the adventure can play out very differently, offering players the chance to be surprised in subsequent games.

Most of the population is scarcely able to live at a subsistence level. Their individual poverty is a sharp contrast with the ample harvests that they struggle to reap as each season comes to a close. With the limited machinery available, the agricultural work depends on the citizens committing to exhausting manual labour. As the population is disproportionately small relative to the size of the harvests, every moment of daylight must be spent tending to the crops. An influx of agricultural machines or new colonists could make the task far more manageable for the populace. Of course, if that were to take place, the Imperium would certainly increase the world's tithe with each harvest.

For the last eleven generations, crops have been seeded based on divine inspiration from the Harvest-Father, the name by which the Emperor is known in the local variant of the Imperial Creed. Each season, seeds of each type are cast into the air. Ancient gerministers then study the patterns as the hundreds of seeds fall onto the blessed rock that the world's founder first stepped upon. The more auspicious the patterns, the more of that crop that is planted that season across the planet. No concessions are made to lesser concerns such as need, terrain, or local climate.

The direct influence of the Imperial Creed plays a major role in the difficulties that the population faces. The Agriharvest Sodality determines which crops are grown annually in each field based upon directives from Novabella's Ecclesiarchy, known as the Faithful of the Harvest-Father or simply the Harvest-Faithful. These decisions are made based upon scripture, astrological signs, and unusual environmental effects.

Each field must be sculpted into a pattern of religious significance, and crops are often interwoven so that the contrasting colours at harvest time form scripture passages. Generations of fieldsmen follow in their familial tasks of maintaining the shape of each field, often burning entire areas of crops to ensure the holy patterns remain constant.

Oar and sail drive many of Novabella's fleets. Aquatic life is captured in huge nets kilometres across, which are trawled behind dozens of small vessels. Crews of labourers haul the nets onto immense wooden barges. There, menials who live out their lives on the waters crush the sea life by hand into fish-paste. Transports haul endless supplies of kilolitre drums filled with this paste to tithe storage every year. Most is combined with the grain harvests to make a common pattern of ration bars found across the sector. What little excess that is allowed to accrue is redistributed to the world's citizens, forming a staple of their diets.

The city of Recompense was the first location settled when the world was colonised. Because of the planet's lack of indigenous threats, most of the colonists swiftly expanded outward, establishing communities where land was freely available. Those that remained established a city devoted to overseeing the planet's domestic government, in addition to handling the collection and delivery of Imperial tithes. Hardly a large community by the standards of other worlds, it remains the largest population centre on the planet. Most of its inhabitants are directly involved in government, religion, food distribution, or serve as part of the Novabella's security forces.

Since the time of arrival, the Kathrinkas family has maintained planetary rule. Initially, this was by right of the fact that they were the leaders of the colonisation effort. In time, the regional Administratum offices confirmed the lineage as planetary governors. Over the centuries, the heirs have been a mixed lot. Some were more devoted to the Ecclesiarchy or their own personal gain, but only one earned the Imperial notice. When Marduk Kathrinkas failed to deliver the tithes roughly 200 years ago, the sub-sector directed a purge that eliminated him along with seventeen percent of the population. Since that time, all were successfully collected.

With the increasing isolation, the planet's donations to the Imperial tithes has continued to expand. The designated storage areas have overflowed, and new structures are under constant construction and guard. Building materials, manpower, and land that might go towards the planet's well-being are instead devoted to storing the rotting paste and gruel, awaiting vessels that are decades overdue.

The Kathrinkas family has relied upon Novabella's security forces, the Strictionists, to keep the population controlled. These serve as the domestic overseers, and it is their primary responsibility to make certain that proportionate tithes are obtained from all agricultural efforts. Their secondary role is to see to the prosecution of any crimes—especially those that might interfere with productivity. In addition, the Novabella Sworn Protectors exist as the planet's defence force against any external threats or major disturbances. While this military unit attempts to maintain a high level of preparedness and a tradition of competency within the officer cadres, their resources and training are

limited. Within the past century, the Sworn Protectors have only ever been called to duty to quell dissidence and assist with recovery from environmental disasters. It is doubtful that they could defend against a serious external attack, should one occur.

THE KATHRINKAS

Since the planet's initial colonisation, Novabella has known only a single, unbroken line of rulers. The Kathrinkas have maintained strict oversight over all of the planet's assets, consistently keeping the population stable and providing the required Imperial tithes. Up until the isolation began twenty years ago, the world consistently returned the appropriate tithes. Though their merciless tactics have hardly endeared them to the world's citizens, their continued success has ensured a modicum of support from the sub-sector Administratum officials.

The title of ruling Planetary Governor, also known locally as the Bountiful Lord, has been passed down to the family's oldest child from a parent—or to next eldest surviving sibling—without military action nineteen times. This level of stability has led to a remarkable degree of consistent ruling philosophies within Novabella's highest-ranking noble family. In part, this is because the family's lesser heirs have always been offered supporting roles within the planet's government. Over the centuries, increasingly distant relatives have assumed stewardship of many of the world's small agriculture communities. Loyalty to the family has been a powerful motivation to keep these towns productive and working in accordance with expectations.

With the family's continued growth and expansion, entrance to the community of nobles has become increasingly rare. In the majority of instances, any time a village grows large enough that a leader must be appointed, a younger member of the family is available for assignment. This is reinforced by the Kathrinkas' strict tradition of only intermingling their bloodline with that of other noble families. Though it was seldom the case at the time of Novabella's founding, for the past two centuries all of the governors—and many of the lesser nobles—have included partners who were at least distantly related.

GOVERNOR EVERFAST KATHRINKAS

As the current planetary leader, the Governor is responsible for his citizens, the stability of his planet, and—most importantly—the delivery of his Imperial tithes. Governor Kathrinkas is in his late fifties, having assumed the title twenty-three years previously, and commonly wears thick robes of animal hides woven with carefully treated bundles of tree bark. According to legend, the ornate metallic medallion on his chest was crafted from the melted-down remains of the landing pad that first touched the planet ages ago. He maintains a public front as a gruff but patient, parental overlord of the planet. The world's citizens believe his primary drive is to deliver the Imperial tithe on time, regardless of the local costs.

The Governor knows that the planet's only Astropath passed away roughly twenty years ago, and the world has

waited patiently for a replacement ever since. He finds it odd that the Imperium has failed to send a vessel to collect the tithes—or a replacement Astropath—since then. As a world without the capability to travel the void, the lack of communications has left him unable to make any requests for Imperial assistance. He knows nothing else but to continue to collect the tithes and to expand the storage facilities, so that earlier tithes remain ready to turn over to Imperial authorities. No one ever thought the Imperium would ever stop coming, and none dare be unready for when they arrive.

LADY CELLIA KATHRINKAS

Cellia is the Governor's third cousin, as well as his spouse. She is a strongly driven woman, who believes that her husband is poorly suited to ruling the planet. Consequently, she serves as his primary counsellor in all matters, and wears similar clothing to reinforce her joint power. Her greatest limitation is a tendency to disregard the advice of anyone who disagrees with her. She believes strongly in her convictions and feelings, and any evidence that counters those is most commonly ignored.

Cellia, known formerly as the Lady Bountiful, shares her husband's strong faith in Harvest-Father, but she feels that he places too much importance on the continued collection of the tithes. After twenty years without contact, she has become convinced it is more important for the planet to become self-sufficient, for it has become clear that the Imperium has abandoned the world. She would prefer that the population be focused in other directions and that the stockpiles of food be used locally. Her hope is that this could trigger significant population growth, allowing the planet to grow and become a power in its own right. Without support from the Adeptus Mechanicus, however, the world's ability to become more technologically developed is sharply limited.

VICEROY MARTEIN KATHRINKAS

As the Governor's younger brother, and heir for the first few years of his rule, Martein assumed the title of Novabella's Viceroy of the Harvest. He harbours some resentment towards his brother, but the Viceroy is a far more pragmatic man and as such wears clothing that resembles his brother's, but is less ostentatious. He recognises that he holds tremendous authority through his title and is careful to apply his power discretely. Martein knows that he can continue in this role only as long as his brother continues to trust in his expertise and professionalism. Because of this, the Viceroy tries to keep any issues that might distress the Governor carefully secret from him, and only allows information that reinforces his own good deeds to pass upwards.

On Novabella, the Viceroy is expected to monitor domestic issues, particularly identifying any that might have otherwise escaped the Governor's notice. Because Governor Kathrinkas remains so focused upon the Imperial tithe, this leaves Martein with a constant backlog of different domestic challenges to resolve. Frequently, the Governor directs him to resolve issues at his own discretion. This has often left Martein as the functional leader of the planet, as he manages any assets that are not directly related to the tithe.

OPTIONS FOR THE KATHRINKAS

The rulers of Novabella, at least in name, have much to answer for once the Acolytes begin to investigate their world. Depending on the GM's decision, they might be merely incompetent, actively engaging in murder and skimming tithed offerings for their own gain, or worse, are active worshippers of the Ruinous Powers.

LOYAL KATHRINKAS

The noble family are fiercely devoted to the Harvest-Father and the Imperium, which exists to serve Him. They also recognise that Novabella could not exist without the support of the Imperium, and are proud to be part of this greater whole. They are concerned that the planet has been out of contact with the Imperium for so many years, but they have faith that the lack of communication is part of some grander plan on the part of the Administratum and possibly a test of their faith. In the absence of communication, their primary focus has been to continue to fulfil their responsibilities to maintain the agri-world's production and stability. Their main concern is to ready their tithes for the eventual appearance of the tribute vessels, so large according to old tales that they can be seen as bloated marks in the daytime sky.

If they become aware of the Inquisition's presence on Novabella, they are not alarmed, but grateful for the assistance. Their devotion is such that it never occurs to them they might be found guilty of any crimes, as they know that they have continued to act in accordance with the standards of the Imperium. They cooperate to the best of their abilities with any investigation, but they ultimately prove that they are often blissfully unaware of any criminal actions that might be taking place. Their assistance is often limited to issuing commands for others to follow.

CRIMINAL KATHRINKAS

In this approach, the currently ruling members of the Kathrinkas clan have come to recognise the amount of power they hold in the absence of any Imperium presence. The Governor had the Astropath murdered, in order to ensure their state of relative isolation. The governor's opulently appointed private quarters were constructed using funds created by stealing the best food supplies from the Imperial tithe and selling it to off-world smugglers. He dwells within them in a state of utter luxury, as he wildly abuses his authority to maintain his family's lifestyle. Any precious commodity that might be used to improve the planet's well being is instead reserved for the governor's household.

If using this approach, the Viceroy might be presented as the only member of the family willing to support the Inquisition's investigation. This is because he has been forced to keep the world stable, while Everfast and Cellia blissfully ignore the planet's ongoing collapse. Martein is willing to aid the Acolytes, because he believes that with their intervention he might eventually be appointed governor. In this situation, he could be in their debt, granting them substantial influence upon Novabella.

HERETICAL KATHRINKAS

The corrupted Kathrinkas are secretly worshippers of the Chaos God Slaanesh. Never actually devoted to the Imperium, the family's founder only led the expedition to Novabella so that he might better evade the Inquisition's attention. Over the centuries, his heirs have focused upon using inbreeding to transform themselves into an idealised human form that might be more pleasing to their dark god. Given the world's size and relatively small population, the senior nobles were able to keep their heresy hidden for hundreds of years. Now pleasure cults permeate the capital, and the Dark Prince holds sway over many within. The troubles only began when a member of the Faithful discovered their actions; at that point, the governor arranged for his death and had his underlings slay the planet's Astropath, so that they might maintain their secret.

The governor and his wife are both fiercely devoted to the Dark Prince, and have maintained the secrecy of their unholy devotion and begun to spread their corruption to their heirs. The Viceroy has the least to lose of any of the family members, but even he recognises that his very existence bears the mark of Slaanesh and fears that the Inquisition is most likely to completely eliminate the family. The heretical Kathrinkas attempt to redirect any formal investigation away from themselves. If this fails, they use every asset available to eliminate the Acolytes, ideally in a manner most pleasing to Slaanesh.

THE AGRIHARVEST SODALITY

Novabella is hardly a well-known planet, even amongst those Chartist Captains and Rogue Traders who travel the area. Even within the sub-sector, citizens of other worlds may only have seen the name stamped upon crates of barely palatable ration bars and other foodstuffs that the colony has exported. The seal on each of these boxes bears the logo of the Agriharvest Sodality, the body responsible for the organisation of all agricultural labour and production on the colony world. This includes small farms and massive water harvester fleets alike, a total that numbers in the hundreds of thousands. The Sodality's existence is dependent upon the tolerance of the Kathrinkas family, but after centuries of control they know far more about the world's production capacity than its nobles. This grants the Sodality's leader the right to sit on the governor's council, making them privy to all of the world's plans.

Novabella's citizens praise the Ecclesiarchy and respect the Kathrinkas family, but they fear the Agriharvest Sodality. Far more intrusive than the world's defence organisations, it is the Sodality that supplies them with the necessities of life and food production. Requests for seed, fertiliser, or breeding stock go through the Sodality. These are tempered by review from the nobility and the Ecclesiarchy. In spite of the Sodality's responsibility for providing the tithe, it is often the clergy who decides what crops must be grown. This includes many fields the Ministorum insists be devoted solely for ornamentations, such as floral crops to adorn local fane-halls used for gatherings and ossuaries containing the

SLAANESH, THE DARK PRINCE

Brought into life through the fall of the decadent and prideful xenos race known as the Eldar, Slaanesh is the Lord of Excess, and the pursuit of perfection and sensory gratifications in all things. His own appearance is beyond limits, existing as both male and female, always the epitome of impossible beauty and desire no matter who gazes upon his form. He offers the limitless bliss of endless passions and insatiable appetites to his legions of depraved followers. For his debauched adherents there are no boundaries in experience, and their eagerness to draw others into his worship is equally limitless. In his name, rapacious hordes degrade entire worlds with unspeakable rites and warlords seduce systems with honeyed promises of unimaginable essences. Wherever there is desire, he exists. Desire for power, for knowledge, for conquest, for life eternal—all these and more drive morals, but once the drive becomes the goal itself, then their lives belong to Slaanesh. Once desire is fully embraced, it becomes enflamed until there is nothing but overwhelming cravings, and thus does Slaanesh seduce another to his insatiable cause.

bones of blessed clergy. When this occurs, the Sodality still takes the requisite tithe levels, often leaving the populace in a state of near starvation.

In an effort to improve Novabella's crop yield, the Sodality has continuously pushed for a greater Adeptus Mechanicus presence on Novabella. It is their belief that additional technological assistance could dramatically increase the amount of land used each season. However, over the centuries of the planet's habitation, no change has occurred. Higher-ranking members of the Sodality continuously blame the Ecclesiarchy for this stricture, believing it be linked to their rituals concerning crop selection. This has created an air of resentment between the two organisations, though members of the Sodality continue to profess their reverence for the Harvest-Father.

With each harvest, the Sodality collects all of the crops produced from every farm. The total harvest is transported to Recompense where it can be inspected, sorted, and blessed, a process that often takes many weeks and results in much spoilage. At this point, much of the harvest is refined into ration bars and other processed formats using primitive but sanctified means. Large amounts are left unprocessed and allocated directly into the tithe storage

units, all as dictated by rites established at the time of the planet's colonisation. Once the annual tithe is filled with processed and unprocessed goods, a procedure filled with ancient rituals to bless the harvests that takes months, what little remains is redistributed to the Novabella's many small communities. More is lost en route back to the local villages from rot, burrowing insects, and starving roadside bandits.

Often, deceptive farmers attempt to withhold a portion of the harvest for their own use, rather than delivering their entire harvest to the Sodality. This is considered one of the most serious crimes possible on Novabella. Whenever such offenders are discovered, their entire community is razed and the inhabitants spend the rest of their lives as slaves, though such a fate is often not greatly different than their previous lives.

Currently, the largest force within the Sodality is the Titheguard. Overseer Drachenstein has recruited many labourers to protect the many storage complexes located across Recompense, and as the need for more and more storage facilities has grown, so has the power of the Titheguard raised to watch over them. Though they are poorly armed when compared to Novabella's Sworn Protectors, they are certainly capable of overpowering any menial who might try and steal from the Imperial Tithe.

OVERSEER EVAINE DRACHENSTEIN

As a member of the governor's advisory council, the Overseer is privy to all of Novabella's plans. It is her responsibility to ensure that the world's agricultural communities can fulfil the governor's expectations, as well as exhibit appropriate disaster preparedness. Overseer Drachenstein has maintained this position for more than forty years. Throughout her tenure, she has ceaselessly worked to make sure that the planet's nobility is satisfied with her productivity, but also made certain that they never investigate her role too closely.

Drachenstein attempts to maintain an air of mystery and unpredictability. She is reluctant to share any detailed information, and often refers to any issues that outsiders might have with her organisation as internal matters that are only for the Sodality's purview. Due to her relationships with both the nobles and the planet's Strictionists, plus the massing power of the Titheguard and the Sodality's own influence, her role has grown even more powerful. If faced with an authority that supersedes these entities—such as the Inquisition—the Overseer is left in a position of tremendous uncertainty. Normally, she expects the utmost respect and deference from all those around her. When she does not receive it, she reacts with hostility and a thirst for vengeance. It is rumoured that the Overseer's sacred cloak, a thick off-white cloth lined with green trim in the shapes of leaves, is woven from the hairs of all those who have dared to offend her.

OPTIONS FOR THE SODALITY

The Agriharvest Sodality is, in many ways, the true power on Novabella. As on many agri-worlds, the organisation that controls the harvests controls the planet, and the Sodality wields enormous power in all aspects of life. The Acolytes may find they have used this power in service to the rightful rulers of Novabella, their own selfish quest for greater power, or the Dark Gods of Chaos.

LOYAL SODALITY

The Sodality is driven to toil ceaselessly to accrue the necessary tithes for the Imperium, and recognise that their world only exists through the Harvest-Father's intercession. It is their duty to repay His servants for their generosity by providing the maximum tithe that they can sustain. Consequently, the Agriharvest Sodality struggles to make certain that every person under their employ works in the most effective way possible to ensure a bountiful harvest for the citizens of the wider Imperium.

Unfortunately, the tithe has continued to accrue for over twenty years without an Imperial vessel collecting it. Storage and degradation have both become major issues, as many of the crops have rotted in their containment units. At the same time, resources that might have been devoted towards a harvest have instead been used to expand the storage capacity—generating capacity that might not otherwise be needed until the colony significantly grew in size. With a reduced manpower, transfers of harvests from local communities to Recompense, food processing time, and deliveries to the communities all take longer than previously. This has led to increased levels of rot and additional starvation as labourers must wait ever longer for food.

At the same time, the leaders of the Sodality, including Overseer Drachenstein, are poorly versed in agricultural matters. Even as they stress discipline and provide direction, they have little understanding of the most effective means to grow food or reap the seas. Instead, they follow the local scriptural-commandments in all manners, from net sizes to seeding arrangements to even harvest times. This is all in keeping with directives that were brought to Novabella at the time the colony was founded, though few knew they were better suited to other climates. Often, these directions result in substandard harvests and poor quality control, but these practices are considered a divine command from the Harvest-Father and cannot be altered, under penalty of death. Unless something is done in soon, production may drop below what is needed just to feed itself.

CRIMINAL SODALITY

Overseer Drachenstein and her inner circle lead lives of relative luxury compared to Novabella's worker population, but command power impossible for them to image. The Agriharvest Sodality has deliberately worked to limit the planet's productivity, and makes certain that there are adequate levels of production to pay the Imperial tithe and

to maintain their own pleasures. They do not, however, want an excessive harvest level, as this might pull the peasantry out of their subsistence-level lifestyle. If the peasantry had ample time on their hands, then they might begin to pay greater attention to the lives that their lords and masters lead. In addition, if they show they can provide more, the tithe might be increased—something the Sodality seeks to avoid at all costs.

To ensure that the peasantry remains repressed, they take measures to ensure that no farms or seaport centres have unusual levels of success. Extra goods are invariably “lost in transport.” Farms that have consistent levels of unacceptable success are sabotaged with infestations of grub-rats. Workers who dare to grow crops other than the ones directed are regularly prosecuted for insurrection and treason. Some rumours even suggest that the Sodality might interfere with the planting and harvest schedules. The Imperium and the nobility would both be concerned were they to learn that the harvests were deliberately reduced in this manner.

HERETICAL SODALITY

The Sodality's manipulation of the populace only begins with its control of food production. In fact, they seek to transform Novabella—and the sub-sector—in a far more insidious fashion. Many of the seeds and stock sealife that the Sodality provides back after the tithes are gathered are contaminated at the direction of the Ruinous Powers it serves through countless unholy sacrifices. The Sodality is devoted to the pantheon of the Chaos Gods, spreading their worship across all four of the Dark Gods in divined rhythms based on the tides and cloud formations. Over the centuries these corrupted materials have begun to transform the planet's inhabitants. As they consume and grow these products, a series of mutations have been introduced within all who dwell here. Though currently subtle, in the years to come, the manifestations are certain to become more overt. With time, the planet's population would be transformed and their devotion to the Harvest-Father twisted, like their bodies, into a fervent faith in the unholy.

The Sodality's ultimate goal is to produce more bountiful harvests that they might corrupt the entire sub-sector with their produce. They hail the arrival of the Acolytes with fervour. It is their hope that export efforts can soon resume, so that their corrupted materials can be introduced to dozens of additional worlds. They had nothing to do with the Astropath's death but are eager to discover the culprits. Some suspect their own in the murder, either a reckless act against an Imperial lackey or worse, from a Sodality official not part of the heretical efforts. Rounds of internal recriminations and accusations have been common since Drachenstein revealed word of the death to others within the organisation, and show no signs of lessening. The manipulative servants of the Agriharvest Sodality are anxious to see the tithe distribution resume so that the influence of Chaos can spread, and their unity be restored.

THE FAITHFUL OF THE HARVEST-FATHER

The most unifying aspect of life on Novabella is faith in the Harvest-Father. Even as the world's inhabitants struggle to meet their tithe-goals, they must find the time and energy to worship. Many farmers who have given almost all of their harvest to the Imperium's tithe still find ways to make a significant contribution to local parishes as well. In some cases, this comes in the form of goods that were intended to keep a household healthy between harvests. In other instances, families work through the nights on craft projects to create intricate works of art that demonstrate their planet's devotion.

For the citizens of Novabella, the Faithful of the Harvest-Father plays a central role in forming their communities. Not every village is large enough to have a distribution centre for the Agriharvest Sodality, but all have at least one temple. After farm work is completed, citizens spend their evenings in devotion at the temple. Their form of worship involves retelling of ancient legends and a sharing of recent experiences of faith and divine intervention. The regular interactions between the members of each religious community ensure that the workers form strong bonds of faith with one another. Personal conflicts are resolved through sessions of shared prayer and devotion. For many communities without a Strictionist presence, a local Seed-Scribe serves as the magistrate for disputes between individuals. In most instances, these prayer sessions are enough to prevent dissent and the necessity for martial enforcers.

The call to prayer at the temple begins every day, sounding an hour before first light. Within minutes, all of the community's members are expected to be in attendance. During the working day, on every hour, a bell on the local temple chimes loudly enough to be heard in even the most distant fields. With its chime, all labourers immediately drop to their knees to recite their devotions to the Harvest-Father. During the brief midday break, labourers in the fields gather to share the devotions inscribed upon their meal wrappers. After sunset, the bell does not chime, as Novabella's citizens are expected to already be worshipping at the temple. During the night, many citizens interrupt their rest each hour to continue their devotions, a practice many fanatical Seed-Scribes favour should the level of faith ever waver.

Families often gather after the last service to construct artwork that exemplifies their devotion and to demonstrate the interconnection between their faith in the Harvest-Father and their daily lives. Remembrances are created from the colourful discarded plant matter saved after a harvest, while some use rock and wood to create visual displays of famous stories they hear each day in service or chanted as they work. Others construct wattle and daub sculptures to recount the journey of the Harvest-Father's servants to their remote world. A few create scent-sculptures from a variety of different herbs and flowers, crafted to evoke religious memories that change as the statues slowly burn to multicoloured cinders.

Seed-Scribes play a critical role on Novabella, making certain that the faith is followed appropriately. These individuals are not official members of the Ministorum,

but instead are those who have demonstrated a very strong faith—and often a hunger for additional power. They are trained under the authority of a senior Garden-Predicant or regional Harvest-Scribe, and are then granted permission to assume a leadership role within an isolated community. A community's members typically select candidates prior to beginning their Seed-Scribe training, but it is rare for a candidate to begin training without the approval of the local fane-hall.

A Harvest-Scribe must approve any marriages that occur in each community. Generally, these officials defer to the judgment of a local Seed-Scribe. Most commonly, the Seed-Scribes arrange the marriages, as citizens of separate communities have little opportunity to interact with one another.

The planet's few formal Garden-Predicants maintain a rigorous pattern of travel between the hundreds of small temples within their jurisdiction. Because of this, they seldom have an opportunity to regularly interact with any of the faithful. Instead, they rely on their Harvest-Scribes, who in turn rely on local Seed-Scribes, for any questions of faith.

This relationship has two direct consequences for the Ecclesiarchy's interactions with the populace on Novabella. The first is that the average citizens hold official Garden-Predicants in an aura of the utmost respect. Many view Garden-Predicants as physical manifestations of the Harvest-Father's divine judgment, and that all of the clergy's words are divinely inspired. This degree of respect and awe grants the Garden-Predicants far more control over the faithful than might otherwise be expected. The second consequence is that, due to the relationships with the Seed-Scribes, the Faithful of the Harvest-Father has an impressive level of insight into the daily lives of many of the world's citizens. The Seed-Scribes are responsible for taking extensive notes on every member of the community, which are then delivered to Novabella's Ministorum archives. Throughout the planet's history, these serve as the primary records of marriages, births, deaths, and even many crimes. In many instances, the official government has used the Ministorum record to verify data about the population size and make up. The temple at Recompense has a massive and ever-growing subterranean vault, where these records are stored. Some believe that the life stories of every inhabitant can be compiled from the notes of their local Seed-Scribes.

Because of this constant interaction, the Faithful is also well established to find out about any acts of heresy very soon after they might begin. A Harvest-Scribe regularly interacts with his Seed-Scribes and is often wary of any out-of-character interactions, and in turn reports to the Garden-Predicant above him. If a Harvest-Scribe was to notice anomalies that were inconsistent with the Seed-Scribe's reports, he would be able to quickly send his concerns upwards. In many instances, a quick Strictionist investigation might resolve a matter. In cases where the complexities were more insidious, the Novabella Sworn Protectors might be called in to purge the unholy with massed autoguns and flamers should the Harvester-Prelate and the Lord of the Bounty agree on the severity.

HARVESTER-PRELATE MANUS BARAHONA

The Harvester-Prelate has been the leader of the faithful on Novabella for fifteen years. Because of the loss of contact with the outside world, his superiors in the sub-sector have never officially confirmed his appointment. Consequently, Barahona is officially the interim Harvest-Faithful authority. In spite of this fact, he has largely kept the planet's faithful acting in a manner that is consistent with what had been in place before he came into power. The many Harvest-Scribes and Garden-Predicants who serve under him deliver the Harvester-Prelate the same respect that would be accorded to anyone who officially held that position, as do the local Seed-Scribes.

The Harvester-Prelate appears far too young to have attained his position. By all appearances, he is a very fit thirty year old man—which suggests he assumed his role at age fifteen—and wears a long tunic of tanned hides cut to show off his physique (others of the Faithful wear similar but lesser tunics, none as well fitted as his). All of the leaders within the Faithful sport wreaths or other headgear made from newly harvested plants, replacing them as needed in private weaving rituals; Barahona's is a wreath of crisp leaves that his servants renew each morning. Common gossip has that he works in Novabella's fields on a daily basis, though none of the citizens can recall actually seeing him do so. Barahona's sermons invariably reference his daily regimen and his brotherhood with the labourers who toil.

In conversations, he maintains a friendly front, but jealously guards information and attempts to avoid answering direct questions, either changing the topic or explaining that the answer is withheld due to a sacred trust with the faithful. Oddly, this seems to be a rote answer that comes up with every question, including banal civilities.

OPTIONS FOR THE HARVEST-FAITHFUL

The Faithful of the Harvest-Father is the bedrock upon which the entire planet's spiritual faith rests, but this rock is cracked with decay. Investigating the Ministorum's servants on Novabella can reveal a passionate but reckless faith, power-hungry madness, or the terrors of uncontrolled psykers, any one of which might doom the planet.

LOYAL HARVEST-FAITHFUL

With the very best of intentions, Harvester-Prelate Barahona has asked his Garden-Predicants and Harvest-Scribes to increase the levels of tithing across all of the faithful—far beyond what the Agriharvest Sodality collects. He believes that an increased level of self-sacrifice should be instrumental in building the overall character of the world's community of faith. The Harvester-Prelate has never fully come to appreciate the extreme level of hunger that his faithful encounter on a daily basis. While many have already committed to these tithes, many more have not. Ultimately, were the world to fully commit to these tithes, it is likely that starvation would swiftly collapse Novabellan society. Worse yet, the Faithful of the Harvest-Father has no use for the additional food tithed. As they have only finite storage, most of the additional donations are placed with the

uncollected Imperial tithe rotting across Recompense. As labourers starve in the fields and in religious services, the excess food rots in overflowing storage facilities.

He has also begun an initiative to increase the duration of the hourly prayer rituals conducted in the fields. He believes that the five minutes devoted each hour are insufficient to fully express one's debt to the Harvest-Father. Currently, he is engaged in a battle with the Agriharvest Sodality to increase these devotions to twenty minutes per hour of labour.

Harvester-Prelate Barahona is unaware of the full complexity of the situation concerning the isolation and the death of the Astropath. He is also unaware about the request that his predecessor sent to the Archbishop. He is happy to cooperate to the best of his understanding, but his limited knowledge severely curtails the assistance he can offer. It is obvious to any who question him that he actively avoids any knowledge of the extreme conditions under which his faithful struggle, or views these as minor matters when compared to the horrors of insufficient devotion.

CRIMINAL HARVEST-FAITHFUL

Harvester-Prelate Barahona's devotion to his faithful is little more than a sham. In fact, he assumed the position of leadership only after he successfully assassinated the prior leader. His work among the people of Novabella is only enough to make certain that he can maintain his physical conditioning, which is enhanced through illegal combat drugs. His public façade is entirely self-serving, for as long as Novabella's community of the faithful believe that he is a devoted spiritual leader, they continue to follow his wishes.

Otherwise, Barahona devotes all of the Harvest-Faithful's resources towards achieving his grand dream. He plans to build a grand cathedral to the Harvest Father, exploiting every possible resource he can from the world's population. Alms that were intended for charity have gone to bribe officials so that building materials can be secured. This drive has placed the Harvester-Prelate in sharp conflict with the Agriharvest Sodality, for he lusts after the same construction specialists and building materials that the Sodality demands for the ever-growing storage facilities.

In the event of an investigation, the Harvester-Prelate is unwilling to share any records with the Acolytes. Instead, he insists that they take him at his word on all matters—citing his spiritual authority as ample evidence of his honesty. His only concern with any heretical matters would be as far as they might affect his great dream. If an insurrection were to interfere with his plans for the grand cathedral, he would be willing to resources to fight it. Otherwise, he is perfectly willing to let his followers commit any number of heresies.

HERETICAL HARVEST-FAITHFUL

The years of isolation have meant no Imperial visitation to gather the tithed food, but also it has meant the other major tithe has been ignored: that of suspected psykers. The Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica have not visited Novabella in a generation and during this time a community of rogue psykers has emerged. In times past, the servants of the ships conducted purges to gather those who were

suspected of Warp-taint, and no one has dared usurp their holy work to gather them during in the isolation. By the time the Acolytes arrive to begin their investigation, there are several dozen unsanctioned psykers within Recompense alone. Fortunately, the majority of these individuals have extremely limited powers but with each use the attention within the Warp of predatory Daemons is ever gathered.

The group's leadership does include four members who have become adept with their unholy abilities. These individuals have managed to gain control over the Faithful of the Harvest-Father's leadership elements, including Harvester-Prelate Barahona. They have corrupted and destroyed his mind, to the extent that he is now little more than a puppet for their wishes, and placed him in control of the Harvest-Faithful after executing his predecessor. Now, this cabal effectively has complete control over the planet's faithful. Under their authority, they have begun to introduce new preachings that they and their psychic brethren are Living Saints, and to be recognised as living manifestations of the Harvest-Father's will.

CATCHING THE CULPRITS

"The one who is most concerned with innocence is always the one who harbours the greatest guilt."

—Inquisitorial aphorism

The investigation of Novabella can be a straightforward matter with direct resolutions for the Acolytes, or it can be a treacherous challenge where they face heresy at every turn. The overall difficulty is entirely subject to the Game Master's judgment, as he considers the nature of the opposition. Because of this, each scene varies with the different challenges that the characters might face and the different allies that they might exploit.

The inherent challenges are also highly variable based upon the approach that the warband choose to take. The reception that they receive is entirely different if they work incognito than it is if they openly act as members of the Inquisition. Each NPC reacts to the characters' actions based upon the information that they have about that character as well as the respective NPC's degree of guilt (as assigned by the Game Master). This could make the experience dramatically different for scenes with comparable characters but different approaches.

INITIAL RECEPTION

The adventure begins after the characters have already arranged transport to Novabella, or ideally just as they make their final preparations to depart the Imperial Destroyer *His Enduring Light*. If the Game Master wishes to have the Player Characters indebted to the commander of the transport craft, it may be appropriate to play through the act of securing transit prior to beginning the scenes that follow. As they prepare to depart, read or paraphrase the following:

Shortly after exiting the Warp into the Novabella system, a senior Lieutenant to His Enduring Light's captain contacted you to let you know that the bridge had received no hails from the planet. Preliminary scans indicate that life seems to be proceeding apace, but the natives have not acknowledged your arrival. He is preparing to move silently into orbit but can adapt his plans if you request differently. Under orders from your Inquisitor, the investigation into Harvester-Prelate Felissimo's long lost mis-sive is certain to begin soon.

Unless the characters attempt to make contact with the planet on their own, they can reach orbit and land their unarmed Arvus shuttle without making contact (if none of the Acolytes are suitably trained as pilots, a Naval rating pilots the squat lander for them). After so many years of isolation, the world has become negligent in watching for visiting craft. Efforts to establish contact are interminably slow, as the monitoring stations are undermanned. The current workers have never actually made contact with an approaching vessel, so are unfamiliar with the procedures involved.

Before the Acolytes depart their transport craft, it is essential that they decide upon a strategy for initial contact with Novabella's inhabitants. If they choose a direct approach, hoping to make initial contact with the world's nobility, then their strategy should be very different from one that begins by investigating the populace. Not only would this require dramatically different styles of dress and equipment, they would also need to choose their landing location differently.

The Acolytes can review a replication of the message Harvester-Prelate Felissimo sent, as intercepted by the Inquisitor's contact on the Adeptus Ministorum shrine world (see page 328). Players can also gain information on Novabella and its customs through a **+10 Remembrance (I) test**, representing research conducted in route to the planet or from contacts the Acolytes have developed on the ship; Acolytes with Peer (Adeptus Ministorum) gain +10 to their test due to the nature of the world. Each degree of success revealing one item below (in order):

- Novabella is an agri-world founded approximately 400 years ago.
- It is a devout world under the control of the Adeptus Ministorum.
- Throughout its history it has been compliant with few disturbances of note.
- The ruling Kathrinkas family has governed since the colony was established.
- Its ration bars, a product of the Agriharvest Sodality, are used across the sub-sector.

GM NOTES: STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Before the players have landed, the GM should have already determined which of the factions is the true threat. While experienced GMs might want to allow the players to explore the surroundings and let them choose which areas to investigate, newer GMs should also have a rough structure set for the encounters. If the Faithful is acting as the heretics for the adventure, for example, the GM might want the warband to find a temple near their landing area, or run across flocks of devout citizens chanting praises of the Living Saints early in their investigations (the latter can work well should the warband land inside the capital). Clues can come in from a variety of sources, especially via tithe-caravans or bandits; these latter can actively encounter the Acolytes to provide direction should the Acolytes become stumped or are unsure about their next steps.

As each faction's NPCs might have differing responses to the warband depending on their true nature, the GM also needs to have an opening ready for when the Acolytes first encounter them. This should draw on the selected nature, and offer the first slight hints as to their true motivations perhaps through mannerisms and clothing styles.

After twenty years without contact, any craft visiting Recompense's decrepit spaceport is certain to attract official attention. The nobles, as well as the Agriharvest Sodality and the Faithful are all certainly interested in any visitors from off world. All would assume that the arrival of an unannounced shuttle would precede a collection of Novabella's entire tithe. As much of that continues to rot in the overloaded storage units, all are excited to finally see the transfer take place—even those who have been surreptitiously stealing from it.

As a colony world, an arrival elsewhere is unlikely to be problematic—especially if the characters use a shuttle that is capable of landing

on rough terrain. Novabella's technological infrastructure is extremely limited. They have no good resources for recognising a visiting craft, unless that craft deliberately broadcasts its presence. Consequently, the only observers of a discrete landing are likely to be locals peering up from their prayer sessions. Even the most suspicious of authorities are unlikely to take such observers at their word, unless there is compelling evidence. The easiest cover story might be to simply pose as labourers moving on from a failed village, as such individuals are relatively common.

A direct approach is likely to cut the investigation time much shorter, but it is also certain to cost them both Influence and Subtlety. Landing their shuttle in a public centre in Recompense and proclaiming their authority via its laud-hailers can certainly work, but their Subtlety should plummet and many investigative opportunities that could be more fruitful are now eliminated. Similarly, direct interaction with the planet's leadership amongst the three major power groups can allow the characters to quickly interrogate the parties most likely to blame for the difficulties. However, by beginning their investigation among the world's commoners, they may be able to better understand the planet's environs, garner hints of foul plots, and gradually decipher the heresies present.

During this portion of the adventure, the Acolytes should be able to develop their leads (see page 248) as regards the planet's major organisations. The difficulty for these tests are entirely subject to the strategies that they have used and the roles they play. If the Acolytes are friendly and approach their targets in an affable manner, accurate leads should be attained with a +20 to +40 bonus on the appropriate Interaction test. However, aggressive approaches, particularly those that are made without any apparent authority are more difficult (+0 to -20). Failures of two or more degrees for such approaches should draw the unwelcome attention of the Strictionists.

COMMONERS

A subtle insertion is almost certain to begin with the characters interacting at any of the countless rural farming communities. In many instances, these towns are little more than the homes of the region's farmers, the local fane-hall, and the Agriharvest Sodality depot. Most wear thick weavings of homespun materials, with heavy boots and wide poncho-like coverings adorned with icons to the Harvest-Father over their clothing. The citizens are

largely friendly, but they are suspicious of outsiders. Any reception is certain to be based upon the cover story that the Acolytes use. Common citizens would be aware of the Kathrinkas family's inbreeding, the heresy of the Living Saints, and might bear the signs of disease from the Agriharvest Sodality. At this early stage, false leads and basic background information are the key offering from the common citizens, who start with a Disposition of 60 and a Submissive personality.

THE FAITHFUL OF THE HARVEST-FATHER

Because the Acolytes have arrived at the bequest of the Ecclesiarchy, some teams of Acolytes might choose to begin their investigation by contacting Harvester-Prelate Barahona directly. As that is not the contact name they have (the previous Harvester-Prelate is now dead), there may be some initial confusion. The characters might discretely pose as Ministorum clergy from a distant settlement to begin the discussion—which would leave the local Harvest-Faithful officials receptive but confused. The Acolytes must present a coherent cover in order to get full cooperation from the Garden-Predicants and Harvest-Scribes, or the local Seed-Scribes. In the case of a more direct approach, the Harvest-Faithful's degree of assistance is largely dependent upon the crimes that the organisation may have committed. Members of the Faithful generally start with a Disposition of 50 and a Submissive personality, but this changes to Confident and then Aggressive the higher in rank they are.

NOBLES

The Kathrinkas family is immediately uncomfortable with an Inquisition presence but offers the appearance of cooperation. Direct interaction with the governor—at least initially—would require the Acolytes to virtually ignore any effort of subtlety. Commoners have no direct access to the planet's nobility. The difficulty of establishing contact through other means is entirely dependent upon the cover story that the characters choose. The most effective options might be under the auspice of a visiting Chartist Captain, representative of the sub-sector government, a Rogue Trader seeking resupply and crew, or as Adepts from the Administratum. Nobles of the Kathrinkas family start with a Disposition of 50 and a personality ranging from Confident to Aggressive depending on their rank.

AGRIHARVEST SODALITY

The Acolytes are unlikely to target the leaders of the Agriharvest Sodality for their initial contact. However, the Sodality's depots in each agricultural community do represent a source of authority, as well as a striking inconsistency. These large facilities are heavily secured with Titheguard forces and filled with decomposing foodstuffs. At Recompense, the only active construction in the city is the additional storage facilities, adjacent those overflowing with decaying ration bars and unprocessed grains and meat.

If the Player Characters choose to interact with one of these figures, their reception is proportionate to their presentation. The Sodality would immediately fear an Inquisitorial presence but might be more amenable to a routine Subsector or Administratum inspection. The heads of each depot are largely familiar with the local communities, but are unlikely to be knowledgeable about hidden crimes or heresies at higher levels within the organisation. Members of the Sodality start with a Disposition of 50 and a Confident personality, especially when masses of Titheguard surround them. If threatened, this can quickly shift to Submissive.

SECURITY FORCES

If the Acolytes immediately resort to violence, they may interact with the local Strictionists directly. Though most labourers have limited access to communications equipment, the depots and fane-halls do maintain primitive vox systems to transmit the latest sermons and tithe-gathering schedules. In the event that the PCs are particularly disruptive, a squad of four Strictionists (use Desoleum Sanctionary, page 286) may step in to deal with these troublemakers. The lawmen would first attempt to incarcerate and interrogate the characters, and start with a Disposition of 40 and a personality of Aggressive. Garnering their support and cooperation would be challenging in this situation but could be easier if the Acolytes attempt a more surreptitious approach.

TRAVEL ON NOVABELLA

A world with few technological advances, travel here is mostly on foot, which the Faithful hold as the spiritually uplifting. Most townships are many kilometres apart, though there are several dozen within easy walking distance of the central capital of Recompense. Tithe-gathering is the main form of advanced transport, commonly with scores of brightly adorned footmen pulling enormous caravans carrying tonnes of foodstuffs to Recompense. Masses often walk along the caravans, both to cheer the footmen but also to deter bandits as tithes that fail to reach the Sodality result in punishment for their village. Some of the transports are mechanised, using ancient engines to haul even larger loads in linked carriages that roar across the landscape like enormous beasts, and Titheguard watch for outlaws from baskets hung along the carriage sidings.

Within the city, litters are frequent conveyances, especially for senior members of the Sodality as they travel between the tithe containers. The harvest-fleets are usually out to sea, only returning after long months with their catches and thus not commonly used for transportation. There are local riding-beasts as well, though these are very rare and only the nobility are permitted to use them.

Depending on the degree of Subtlety the Acolytes decide to attempt, they can hitch rides on tithe-caravans, join the footmen to help pull the massive sleds and carriages (a sign of piety and faith amongst the citizenry), or even conscript them for their own use. Travelling via their shuttle is also an option, though this would greatly impact their Subtlety, as none have seen such a craft in a generation.

Travelling on their own can lead to a more subtle arrival, but also has the risk of attracting bandits along the rough roadways. Treat these ruffians as Titheguard should combat occur, and the GM can even have some operate using run-down and illicit autocarriages (see page 168). Bandits can also make for useful henchmen for the warband, should the Acolytes wish to recruit them.

Travel allows the GM an excellent way to offer clues and leads to the warband, as both tithe-gathering flocks and the bandits that prey on them operate widely and hear much of what lies hidden on Novabella. The GM can also use

them to steer the players towards a next planned encounter; a bandit attack might drive the PCs towards another town as they chase the outlaws down, or a tithe-gathering might conveniently stop at the GM's next desired destination.

Table 13–1: Travel Encounters can be used to introduce events during air or ground travel, which can introduce clues to the Acolytes. If desired, these can be determined via random roll, though the GM should alter them as needed to match the desired enemies for the adventure.

INVESTIGATION

Harvester-Prelate Felissimo's letter offered little clue regarding the nature of the heresy that the Acolytes seek. With his passing, they have no initial leads, though they might have uncovered some during their arrival. At this stage, the characters must decide what to investigate and how to go about the process. Their first step should include agreeing on how subtly they would like their investigation to proceed. They might at this point have thoughts as to which individuals and organisations might be useful allies, and which are possibly the heretics.

The earliest stages of their investigation—probably acquired through rumours gathered at local Faithful services—can reveal leads about each of the potentially

guilty party. If the Acolytes decide to attend a service, paraphrase or read aloud the following:

The interior of the fane-hall smells strongly of incense made from local flowers, which is almost strong enough to overpower the stench of body odour from the exhausted labourers packed into the cramped space. The flickering light of candles reveals the simple craftsmanship exhibited in a statue of the Harvest-Father behind the high altar. The local Seed-Scribe begins the service with a lengthy retelling of how the Harvest-Father chose to share Terra's bounty with the greater galaxy, and how it now falls to Novabella to share its bounty with His Imperium. With his story complete, he launches a sermon that recounts the many difficulties the community has recently faced, and how faith and duty can overcome these challenges as they have all others. After the sermon, other members of the faithful begin to take turns presenting their own witnesses of the Harvest-Father's guidance.

Depending upon the degree of complexity desired, Game Masters may choose to introduce false leads at this stage. If doing so, the GM must be prepared for the warband to confront an innocent party or ally with a guilty party. Either of these circumstances could go very poorly for the PCs.

TABLE 13-1: TRAVEL ENCOUNTERS

d10 ROLL	AIR MOVEMENT	LAND MOVEMENT
1	The Acolytes notice a village that is starting to be cleansed by fire, with villagers running in panic from the flames. Who or what set the flames might offer clues as to a faction's heretical or criminal nature.	The Acolytes come across a group of Strictionists attacking local farmers, after either illegal crops or tithe withholdings or just robbing of whatever meagre possessions they might have.
2-3	A violent storm wracks a wide lake, and the Acolytes can see a fishing boat slowly sinking with desperate crewmen struggling to keep it afloat. Saving them can gain influence with the common folk of Novabella, should the tale of the rescue spread.	The loud ringing of bells call the citizens to worship, and the Acolytes can follow to learn more of the state of religious affairs if desired.
4-5	One of the many fields planted with ornate patterns seems different from the rest, with patterns that could be heretical in nature.	The Acolytes come across a group of Faithful going to the local fane-hall, which could be a source of local gossip and rumours.
6-7	There is smoke coming from a wooded area, the hidden camp of one of the bandit groups. The Acolytes might attack them, or seek them out for information or as possible hired muscle.	Bandits attack! A group of 2d10 or other appropriate size leap from cover to strike the caravan or the Acolytes on foot. If the caravan is mechanised, the bandits can use autocarriages to launch the attack.
8-9	A huge caravan taking harvest to town lumbers along underneath the shuttle. The Acolytes can land and join it, or covertly shadow it to see where it leads and to whom it delivers its cargo.	The Acolytes come across a Seed Scribe hiding away some harvest goods; they can either capture him and offer him to the Strictionists as a method to gain favour with the local authorities, or blackmail him to gain information.
0	An unusual tithe storage facility is under construction, far from any major roads or towns, and is in fact a secret cache a criminal or heretical faction is developing for their own ends.	Their destination town is overrun with mobs rioting due to lack of food. Quelling the riot can increase the warband's favour with the rulers, but abetting it could gain influence with the masses.

Alternatively, the Game Master can simply stay true to the decisions made when setting up the scenario. In this case, the investigation can be fairly straightforward. The first few rumours of heresy can be proven true with only a modicum of investigation. The challenge becomes one of obtaining the necessary confirmation and the support to eliminate the threat to Novabella and the Imperium of Man.

A visit to Recompense is certain to reveal the massive storage facilities for the Imperial tithe. Thousands of enormous grain crypts, fish-paste tanks, and bloated storehouses are bursting with the foodstuffs collected over the past twenty years. All but the most recently filled produce a rotting stench that is detectable for quite some distance. This state may lead the Acolytes to meet with the Agriharvest Sodality or the Kathrinkas family to discover the cause for the situation.

When the Acolytes finally begin to investigate the guilty party's base of operations, they can discover the bodies of other investigative teams who preceded them. The corpses might be at the bottom of a secretive pit within the Governor's fortress, or buried under an especially odiferous tithe offering, or bricked up under a fane-hall lectern. This revelation should only come after intensive investigation, and require successes not only in determining the guilty but also to uncover word of the murder of the other investigators. The final search can start with successful Intimidate or Command tests to force lackeys to reveal the location, or Awareness tests to detect the remains. They are clearly not native, given the style of items and equipment that were buried with their corpses. Searching can reveal secretive dataslates indicating who sent them as well (the GM should choose a suitable source for the dead team of investigators). This represents one of the most compelling clues as to the heretic's guilt.

Proving guilt—to the extent that is necessary—and finding the allies to enforce their judgment are the critical challenges through this portion of the adventure. The difficulties that the Acolytes face vary largely based upon the degrees of guilt that the Game Master selected when setting up the adventure. This section briefly presents the challenges inherent in investigating each of the three different organisations. It also discusses how the characters might be able to garner allies from those factions, which could be useful when later eliminating the guilty party. In all instances, the characters must first travel to Recompense before their investigation can truly commence. The residents of the small communities are simply uninformed of current events and isolated from the world's leadership.

INVESTIGATING THE KATHRINKAS

As a noble family, finding a means to directly interact with the Kathrinkas is challenging. Their palace-fortress has security that is deliberately designed to keep them isolated from the common rabble. If the Acolytes seek to infiltrate the fortress, they need to overcome the guards and surveillance measures that are accorded the planet's leaders. Novabella does not have extensive technology, so the Governor keeps pairs of Strictionist guards on constant watch at every entrance to his residence.

Once the initial barrier to entry is overcome, investigating the palace is relatively easy. There are hundreds of menial workers constantly labouring within the facility. Many are devoted to routine maintenance and food preparation roles. Others are employed with managing the planet's records—all of which are kept within the palace. Acolytes can easily assume the identity of one of these workers and blend into their surroundings. A few locations do have additional security—the family's private quarters, offices, and the armoury—but even these rooms must be routinely cleaned. Ultimately, if the characters act like they belong, they are unlikely to encounter additional challenges after they successfully enter the palace.

Loyal: The Acolytes can quickly deduce with a **+20 Observe (P) test** that there are few signs of corruption. The Kathrinkas are clearly an odd lot, but not guilty of heresy. The largest limitation seems to be that they are not particularly intelligent or aware. Journal entries from all of the noble family members indicate concern about the Astropath's death and the absence of any Imperium support. Beyond that, they are at a loss as to how to proceed. The Acolytes might quickly surmise that the nobles simply need firm direction as a catalyst towards finding and eliminating the guilty party.

Criminal: The luxury that Lord and Lady Kathrinkas enjoy is immediately apparent. If the characters have previously interacted with any of the farming communities, the contrast should be stark. In the course of their investigations, the Acolytes may discover with a **+20 Investigate (P) test** that the tithe storage facilities contain only the dregs of each harvest. Any delicacies and the best of each crop, including almost all of the finest cuts of meat, have been sold to fund the Kathrinkas' opulence. A review of the records kept by the Viceroy as opposed to those kept by the Governor requiring a **+10 Logic (I) test** should soon reveal the inconsistency between the official and personal journals. The Lord and Lady are paranoid about any investigation, while the Viceroy is anxious to cooperate in the hopes that his assistance against heretics might also eliminate his criminal sibling, and thus put him in power.

Heretical: Idols, symbols, and signs of Slaanesh are immediately apparent within the private quarters of any members of the noble family if the Acolytes succeed at a **+30 Remembrance (I) test**. Any direct observation or interaction with the nobles reveals an overwhelming degree of haughty pride, and a **+10 Observe (P) test** shows remarkable similarity in their appearance. With three degrees of success or more, this also reveals unnatural resemblances, such as a common limp, specific patterns of moles on cheeks, and other details that should lead to further investigation in their lineage. These heretics are clearly proud of their accomplishments and believe that they are far too powerful to face any consequences for their obscene acts. If the investigation comes to light, they attempt to redirect the Acolytes towards one of the less guilty organisations on Novabella, using **Opposed -10 Charm (F) tests**. As soon as the PCs' attention is diverted, the Kathrinkas set squads of indoctrinated Strictionists upon them, insisting that the Acolytes are heretics posing as Inquisition Acolytes.

INVESTIGATING THE AGRIHARVEST SODALITY

If the characters decide to make contact with the Agriharvest Sodality, this is initially very easy. Any of the depots are readily accessible, and the workers are relatively open, though the Titheguard are ready to prevent any access to the storage containers. The first issue may be devising a cover story that is adequate to establish communications. On Novabella, only the legal enforcement organisations and direct Acolytes of the nobility have authority over the Sodality. While they are ostensibly answerable to the Adeptus Administratum, there are no members of that organisation active on the planet. Acolytes recognise this issue with a **+40 Remembrance (I) test**.

Discussions at this level, unfortunately, are unlikely to offer any deep insights into the organisation. Even if the Sodality is guilty of heresy, the field hands are largely unaware of their crimes. The only way to detect the corrupted nature of the seeds would be to actually conduct a thorough analysis of them to identify any anomalies. This likely means overcoming a 5-strong unit of Titheguard protecting a depot through force, command, or intimidation. If the Acolytes hunt around, they can find an unguarded unit or one with mouldy grain overflowing a cracked bin with a **+0 Observe (P) test**.

Testing could be completed with a few hours time and a successful analysis using Commerce (Int) to evaluate the materials, Observe (Per) to scrutinise them, Psyniscience (WP) to check for the taint of Chaos, or other tests as the GM should allow. This assumes the characters have the tools necessary to closely examine biological characteristics, and the difficulty on these tests should be set accordingly. If the acting character lacks any tools or familiarity with agriculture, Game Masters might wish to increase the difficulty at their discretion.

Beyond that, the Sodality's members can only espouse the official company dictates. It is their responsibility to make certain that Novabella's agricultural interests are more than adequate to keep the world's population fed as well as collecting the Imperial tithe. Tithing is, of course, the higher priority. Once received, the tithes are stored at Recompense, near the Governor's Palace. An examination of the food storage facilities may be the most expedient way to reveal the full extent of the Sodality's crimes.

Loyal: A meeting with Overseer Drachenstein is difficult to arrange, requiring a **-20 Charm (F) test**, unless the characters reveal some sort of authority. She is most receptive to dealing with individuals in the direct employ of the Kathrinkas family or Acolytes of the Adeptus Administratum. Anyone else is a very low priority—after all, she is responsible for overseeing the agricultural products of an entire world. She maintains the proper rules of etiquette and courtesy but expects deferential treatment. Unless the Acolytes deliberately alienate her, the Overseer cooperates, offering the Titheguard if military force is required.

Criminal: Discovering Overseer Drachenstein's treachery requires the Adepts to actively investigate the Sodality's membership. With a **+10 Intimidate (WP) test**, any of the organisation's members reluctantly reveal the destructive crimes they have committed against Novabella's farms. Drachenstein, of course, offers to cease these practices as well as increase production levels if it would help to clear her name. Evidence of her crimes could also be used to persuade her to offer the assistance of Titheguard to overthrow a heretical organisation. If no one else is responsible for his death, this investigation can also reveal with a successful **+0 Investigate (P) test** that she had the Astropath assassinated, as part of the effort to avoid an increase in the planet's expected tithe level.

Heretical: If the Sodality is providing corrupted foodstuffs, then the decomposition is unnatural. Some vats might decay faster, others much slower, and there could be smells not normally associated with grain or meat. With a **+10 Investigate (P)** or **+0 Psyniscience (P) test**, an Acolyte recognises that the foodstuffs have begun to twist into unnatural textures, not into simply decayed matter. If the characters meet with Overseer Drachenstein, a **+10 Observe (P) test** reveals the unnatural features spreading across her body, and a **-10 Psyniscience (P) test** can detect the foul taint of the Warp upon her. She blames the issue on tainted foods, which, while true, hardly reveals the full story.

INVESTIGATING THE FAITHFUL OF THE HARVEST-FATHER

At any of the thousands of small towns, the Acolytes can easily interact with Seed-Scribes. These individuals are largely community leaders and farmers. They run the local fane-halls as a sign of their devotion and responsibility to their communities, but they are not official Ministorum clergy. Consequently, their insights into any crimes or heresies are limited. As they are all indoctrinated from above, any heresies they espouse are certain to be a consequence of their masters and a clear sign that the heresy is rampant upon Novabella's higher offices.

Questioning anyone about Harvester-Prelate Felissimo quickly reveals that he died fifteen years ago. This is common knowledge, as is the name of his replacement—Harvester-Prelate Barahona. While all of the Faithful held a deep respect for his predecessor, the religious community views Barahona as a devout and sincere leader.

In spite of his supposedly humble demeanour, arranging a formal meeting with Harvester-Prelate Barahona is challenging. There are hundreds of clergy whose very lives are devoted to interceding between the Faithful and the Harvester-Prelate. As Novabella's spiritual leader, there are countless daily requests for an audience. The Acolytes must have a compelling cover story that includes an indisputable air of authority in order to quickly bypass the years-long waiting list.

ACTIONS AND SUBTLETY

The GM should follow the guidelines for Subtlety (see page 235) when the Acolytes interact with the natives of Novabella. Overt actions to intimidate the locals, or references to the power of the orbiting Naval vessel, should depress the warband's Subtlety value accordingly, usually 1d5 for interactions with commoners and 1d10 for dealings with the rulers of the three main power factions. Combats using advanced weaponry or displays of psychic powers might lead to faster and more successful resolutions, but can also impact this value; the latter can also perhaps influence possible attempts to disguise themselves as Living Saints to those not within the heretical Faithful.

Conversely, a stealthy approach or attempts to blend into the populace can increase their Subtlety, and increase their chances of investigating clerical records or temple scrolls without notice; if the rulers are unaware there are others looking into their deeds, their guard is lowered and tests to infiltrate their defences are easier.

Loyal: The characters learn with a **+20 Investigate (F) test** that Harvester-Prelate Felissimo was believed delusional in his latter years. It is possible that his madness was the basis of his bequest for an investigation. Any investigation reveals astounding levels of devotion, but no signs of heresy or criminal activity within the Ecclesiarchy upon Novabella. It is immediately clear that the population has sustained endless self-sacrifice in the service of the Harvest-Father. In general, their lives are so hopeless through endless labour and starvation that they have no perspective to realise what a miserable existence they live. Employing some of these selfless assets for Inquisitorial purposes could certainly be possible.

Criminal: In any meetings with Harvester-Prelate Barahona, he is reluctant to share any information and attempts to use his own authority against the Acolytes. He expects them to treat him with deference and respect. A search of his quarters and a **+30 Investigate (P) test** reveals the massive warehouse where he has materials stored for the construction of his grand cathedral. This is space that is ostensibly used for keeping the Ministorum's records. While he is very concerned about any potential heresies, this concern stems more from the personal consequences he might face rather than a true sign of his devotion to the Harvest-Father. Novabella's Ecclesiarchy is willing to commit assets to eliminate a heretical threat, but only if the threat is presented as a clear danger to the construction of the grand cathedral.

Heretical: Any psykers among the Acolytes can immediately recognise the signs of mental tampering in Harvester-Prelate Barahona and many of his assistants with a **+40 Psyniscience (P) test**. The tales of Living Saints among the populace are also clear signs of the heresy that has taken root on Novabella. Tracking this back to its origins requires the characters to actively identify and interact with the rogue psykers, who maintain the pretence of being Living Saints. Finding these individuals is trivial, but interactions with corrupted souls always creates the risks becoming corrupted in turn if the Acolytes do not steel their will.

CONFRONTATION

Any of the three organisations that could be criminal or heretical have substantial resources available. In the event they become fully aware of an active Inquisitorial investigation, they are certain to turn all of these resources against the Acolytes. Even this backwater world, with a limited technology base, could be enough to overwhelm the Player Characters through the sheer weight of numbers available. Only the Kathrinkas have direct authority over military resources, but both the Faithful of the Harvest-Father and the Agriharvest Sodality can easily assemble hostile mobs and trigger violence. Unless the Acolytes are subtle about their investigation, they are likely to discover that additional assets are necessary in order to overcome their foes.

If the characters have chosen to investigate multiple organisations prior to confronting their ultimate opponents, they may have already identified potential allies. Loyal groups are willing to cooperate with the characters to eliminate the taint of heresy—though such assistance is certain to come at a price and at the very least, an Influence test is required. The difficulty for the test should be proportionate to the assets requested, along with any relationship that the PCs have established with the potential ally in question. If they have worked with labourers, and perhaps shared their own advanced rations with the poor, commoners might be eager to aid the Acolytes. Should they immediately reveal themselves and demand assistance with a haughty demeanour, the test should be more difficult.

Alternatively, in the course of their investigation, the characters might have uncovered the signs of taint in multiple organisations. In this instance, they may need to go to a different organisation in order to obtain assistance. The Novabella Sworn Protectors are the planet's defenders against major threats and answer directly to Governor Kathrinkas. If the characters are adequately persuasive and have ample evidence, they can persuade the defenders to work with them to overthrow any heretical deviance. Though the Sworn Protectors are not to the standards of the Imperial Guard, they do represent the only standing military force on the planet. These are the most potent force on hand to assist with eliminating heretical forces, short of drawing upon armsmen from the orbiting Imperial Navy vessel.

THE WRONG TARGET

Through misdirection or outright failed investigation attempts, it is very possible that the Acolytes could be attempting to confront the wrong foe, or view merely criminal acts as heretical and more deserving of their attention. The Inquisition cares little for crime, as it is concerned with the safety of Mankind, not local law enforcement. The Acolytes may act to suppress groups acting against the better interests of Novabella and the Imperium, but their aim should be against true dangers such as dealings with the Ruinous Powers, or dabbling with the Warp.

In some instances, they might even be doing so with actual heretics as their allies. Game Masters are encouraged to play up such situations through social cues, possibly having the players casually observe the depths of corruption that their supposed allies exhibit during the efforts to bring an innocent foe to justice.

If the Player Characters remain oblivious, the GM can have their allies turn upon them, possibly after the Acolytes have eliminated any threats against that group, or continue to feed clues that all is not as it seems to guide them towards the truly guilty parties. Titheguard can offer remarks they have overheard in the course of their duties, commoners can pass along local rumours to the Acolytes during journeys with a tithe-harvest, captured bandits can offer up information on secretive masters who might have

hired them to conduct nefarious deeds; these can all work as ways to push the warband back onto the desired path.

The characters could also attempt to appeal to the planet's Strictionists. They are not military units, but are better equipped to deal with any matters of legal enforcement. The Strictionists are directly answerable to Governor Kathrinkas, but are free to act on their own to eradicate criminal acts. If the Acolytes need their assistance to overpower the noble family, they must have evidence and authority to make a compelling argument. Otherwise, the Strictionists are likely to turn against the Acolytes, imprisoning them on charges of treason and heresy.

Beyond that, overpowering any of three potentially heretical groups requires very different approaches. A move to topple the leadership could work against some of the threats, but others might require a far more rigorous cleansing. In these instances, the Acolytes would need to have a longer term plan in place, including a means to transfer power from the heretical group to another organisation that remained loyal to the true path of the Imperium. Recruiting allies from one or more of the other organisations to act against the heretics is certainly a useful strategy.

CONFRONTING THE KATHRINKAS

As heretics since the time of the Novabella's initial colonisation, the corruption within the family line is exhaustive. Even the most distant of relatives—and all who are close to the family—join in their worship of the Prince of Chaos. If the characters are to cleanse the taint of heresy, they must completely eliminate all members of the Kathrinkas family and many noble lines that are closely associated with it. This essentially requires a complete overthrow of Novabella's central government, and many of the local rulers.

Their pride may be their undoing, for they have taken little precaution against Imperial investigation. The time of isolation has only strengthened this, and they are likely to underestimate the Acolytes and the threat the family now faces.

Unless they are capable of undertaking numerous assassinations against well-defended targets, the Acolytes are certain to need some assistance to overthrow and eliminate the nobles. The most expedient situation would be to recruit the Novabella Sworn Protectors, as their numbers are sufficient for the task. Unfortunately, many officers are nobles; some with direct ties to the Kathrinkas family. Successfully recruiting them is certain to be difficult and requires a limited purge of the membership. The Acolytes might need to call upon the orbiting might of the *His Enduring Light* overhead, or at least threaten its power to add to any Intimidate tests.

CONFRONTING OVERSEER DRACHENSTEIN

The Agriharvest Sodality's heresy is relatively limited in personnel, as only the Overseer and her most loyal followers are fully aware of the taint that they have introduced to Novabella's harvests. In addition, the Overseer does not have any armed forces to call upon other than the Titheguard. If the PCs directly confront the Sodality hierarchy—especially if they have recruited allies—the Sodality is incapable of defending itself against the accusations of heresy.

A significant concern, however, is that some of Novabella's seed stock and many harvested types of fish are now contaminated with the insidious taint of Warp corruption. Much of the food stored in the tithe containers must be destroyed with holy fire. Only after much inspection and purging on both land and sea have been accomplished can new seed and breeding stock be re-introduced. Of course, in the interim, the population would have little in the way of agricultural resources, barely enough to feed themselves. Their tithes might switch to manpower while their normal industry recovers, potentially birthing a powerful new Imperial Guard regiment in future adventures.

Confronting and eliminating the responsible heretics in this situation is a relatively straightforward task. The fallout from their work, however, is an enormous undertaking. For the Acolytes to succeed, they must use any assets they can from off-world, possibly beginning with the Imperial Navy vessel that brought them to Novabella.

CONFRONTING HARVESTER-PRELATE BARAHONA

Any direct interaction with Harvester-Prelate Barahona does little to stop the rogue psykers who have worked to seize control of the Ecclesiarchy upon Novabella. In fact, with their current level of influence and designation as Living Saints, the Harvester-Prelate—or a replacement—has little hope of regaining control over the Adeptus Ministorum presence upon the colony world.

Instead, the characters need to track down and overcome any rogue psykers. Simply eliminating the leaders might not be enough, however. If the existing leaders were to fall, others who have already surrendered their minds and souls to the Ruinous Powers might soon rise to replace them. Examining many of the Harvester-Prelate's followers would be prudent to verify none are already under control, or psykers themselves.

Tracking down these duplicitous traitors is not difficult, as the many legends that surround them have led to a tremendous level of popularity. This could be done via Psyniscience tests to detect the foul Warp-taint permeating the area. Many of the world's citizens openly worship before these dangerous heretics, so following the crowds can also act as an easier method for location. Overcoming them, however, requires a conflict with talented rogue psykers in the company of fanatical followers. The characters must have an effective strategy or a powerful contingent of allies to eliminate these creatures. Once they are overcome, the Acolytes should develop a strategy for purifying and replacing surviving members of the Harvest-Faithful, though hopefully the resumption of Black Ship visitations can aid in this effort.

PLOT SUGGESTIONS

The following are some plot suggestions for running **Seeds of Heresy** in a shorter, more linear fashion. Novice Game Masters are encouraged to try these out for the first time they run the adventure.

In this version, both the Kathrinkas and the Sodality are loyal, but the Faithful of the Harvest Father are heretical, with the Living Saints controlling the latter group. These powerful psykers have ingrained themselves throughout the hierarchy, and much of the populace surrounding Recompense are openly worshipful towards these "avatars of the Harvest-Father." They learned the previous Harvest-Prelate had sent the message about his worries, so arranged for both his death and the Astropath's as well. Having been alerted to the warband's arrival from a network of bandits they control, the Living Saints know they must eliminate this danger to their growing power across Novabella.

1. LANDING

In the event that the Acolytes are unsure as to how to approach the planet, the Game Master can give them this plot hook to help guide them towards a good starting location. As their shuttle enters the lower atmosphere, the pilot picks up a faint homing beacon that guides them to a neglected landing pad. The field is now overrun with grass and rocks, and has clearly been unused for several decades.

As they descend, they can see the surrounding fields are all arranged in huge Imperial symbols of the Aquila and Adeptus Ministorum icons, plus several unfamiliar images that resemble huge eyes. These shapes can be used later in the adventure to present evidence of the growing power of the Living Saints in this region. They can also see several tithe-caravans carrying huge loads along wide roads, some towed by throngs of labourers, some pulled by primitive mechanical contraptions, towards a dense collection of buildings several kilometres away. Their landing puts them some distance from the main city, but near a smaller village.

Depending on how subtle the Acolytes chose to be, they can loudly roar in for a landing, or attempt a quiet approach. If they have not established any sort of cover story to conceal their true purposes yet, the GM should also prompt them about what they intend to say to the locals (if anything).

The people they meet in this area are farmers and Sodality overseers, all gathering harvested crops and loading them into a tithe-caravan for delivery to the capitol. They welcome any who would travel along with the caravan, especially if the Acolytes are displaying weaponry as there are increasing tales of bandits along the roads.

Before they depart, the workers are called to prayers in a nearby temple. Here, the Acolytes can learn about the local surroundings, especially Recompense, the ruling family, the Sodality, and of course the Faithful of the Harvest-Father. They can also find out more on the odd crop symbols, which they can also see displayed inside the temple. Questioning of the local Seed-Scribes can allow them to gain information on the rise of the blessed Living Saints, should the Acolytes notice the common symbols in the crops and in the temple. The Sodality has been highly encouraged to incorporate these symbols into the fields, and thus their presence. The locals know little about the Living Saints, other than they are the avatars of the Harvest-Father and they guard the flocks of Novabella. The more they ask, the clearer it should be that the capitol is the best place to gain answers about the late Harvest-Prelate.

After a prayer session, the caravan is ready to depart. Unless the Acolytes have behaved in a disrespectful manner, the invitation to accompany the procession stands. From here, they can travel along with it, or use their shuttle to travel, but their destination should be Recompense.

2. TRAVEL

The Acolytes make their way to the city, either travelling with the caravan or using their shuttle. Along the way, they encounter bandits (either on the roads or as they fly over in their vessel), and have an opportunity to gain favour with the local powers through rescuing and protecting a caravan under attack.

If travelling by air, they can see a tithe-caravan under attack from a small group of bandits. After landing to aid them, however, more bandits attack the warband from nearby cover. If they travel with a tithe-caravan, bandits attack in an ambush when the caravan enters a wooded area. The caravan drivers are ill-equipped for combat, and unless the Acolytes come to their aid, are sure to be slaughtered. Each group of bandits is composed of a number of Thugs,

plus one Heavy (adjusting these numbers as needed to provide an appropriate Threat Level for the warband). The GM should call upon combat conditions such as dense fog or rough terrain (apart from the road, though this could be muddy and wet as well) to make the combat more dynamic and tense.

Should the Acolytes capture any of the bandits alive, they can learn these marauders had been tipped off to attack caravans in this area, and told they would be paid extra to kill any unusual folk they encountered. They have no idea who their true masters are, but are willing to work for whoever pays them. The Acolytes can possibly bribe them to come to their side, and this extra muscle could be very useful later in the adventure. The rescued caravaners praise the Acolytes for their aid, and sing the praises of the Harvest-Father and the Living Saints for watching over them.

The remainder of the travel should switch to narrative time, unless the GM wishes to have additional bandits launch ambushes against the warband. Along the way, the Acolytes should notice remote tithe-storage vaults, all bulging with slowly decaying food and surrounded with Titheguard. An attack on one such depot, with the players aiding the Titheguard, can help cement the warband's reputation with the Sodality.

3. AT RECOMPENSE

The capitol allows the Acolytes to actively investigate the three major powers on the planet, and they should actively seek out representatives of these organisations on arrival. To help prompt the Acolytes, the GM can have the Kathrinkas come to them, to greet the Acolytes for rescuing the tithe-caravan. The Sodality can do the same if the Acolytes do not make an effort to meet Overseer Drachenstein on their own. These interviews use the guidelines for these three factions, especially for the heretical Faithful and the links to the Living Saints (see page 315).

The GM can also add in some combat encounters to go along with the investigations in the capitol:

- The Acolytes come across catacombs below the main temple, filled with Warp-tainted native artefacts and tomes filled with notes on how these Living Saints are growing to use their powers. Searching these areas reveals plans for spreading their influence beyond the city's surroundings.

- They can find this from following a trail of Warp energies, possibly detected when interviewing the Harvest-Prelate, or from following up rumours of secret gathering halls the Living Saints use for their grand ceremonies.

- During their searches, a group of Strictionists attack the warband. This combat takes place in one of the larger rooms, filled with chests, tables, and other obstacles that provide light cover (10). Once defeated, the Strictionists babble that they serve the Living Saints, who shine with the Harvest-Father's light.

- A riot at one of the main tithe-storage facilities can bring in the Acolytes to bolster the Titheguards defending it. The GM can have some of the rioters displaying icons of the Living Saints, to give the Acolytes a hint as to their allegiance.

- As part of a mass protest or riot (possibly included with the one above), assassins use the riot as cover to attack the warband (use Skulkers on page 288 for their profile). Their goal is to use the confusion to disguise the deaths, so that their masters are not blamed. If the Acolytes manage to capture and interrogate one of these assassins, the would-be killer reveals that he is a fanatic in service of the Living Saints.

- If the Acolytes did not aid any caravans while travelling to the capitol, or were overly violent in repelling any riots, commoners upset with these strangers might form to attack them on the streets.

After investigations are finished, the Acolytes should have everything they need to challenge the Living Saints (or at least to know that they should scrutinise this group very, very closely).

4. THE LIVING SAINTS

These rogue psykers are not willing to go quietly, and are ready for combat. Their numbers include at least one Warp-Priest and a cadre of lesser Warp-Callers, plus mobs of followers. The Acolytes can hopefully call upon Strictionists and Titheguard to aid in the battle, especially if they have made allies of the Kathrinkas and the Sodality.

If the Acolytes openly confront the Faithful in their main temple, they find it abandoned. Once they make their way back outside, the Living Saints and their forces attack. This confrontation should occur in a wide courtyard or other suitable area. Combat conditions should include high buildings around the area to allow for snipers and plenty of carts or other cover items. If the Acolytes decide to make for their shuttle, feeling outmatched without allies, the confrontation can become a running battle that moves outside of the city. Here, the Acolytes might call upon bandits if they managed to bribe any to their side (these bandits can also serve as allies should the Acolytes ever revisit Novabella).

If the warband has superior firepower, the GM can introduce fog or darkness to even odds, or allow the Faithful additional Warp-Callers or even multiple Warp-Priests. If the warband includes one or more Untouchables, the Faithful should be upgraded with non-psyhic threats such as Heavies. It should be a hard-fought battle, with psychic powers blasting the air, the Acolytes tested to their limits in defeating these unholy foes.

RESOLUTION

The mission to Novabella need not be over after the Acolytes have eliminated the primary heretics. Under some approaches, the heresy is so deeply ingrained that cleansing the world of its taint could take years. In these instances, the follow up portions of the adventure might take a significant period of time. Alternatively, the Acolytes could elect to appoint that responsibility to a group of the world's native inhabitants. Ideally, the Player Characters might want to verify their allies success at a later date.

Even in the most ideal of circumstance, the Acolytes are likely to create a significant power vacuum when they eliminate the world's heretics. Because of their actions, the

characters may wish to select the entity that assumes the newly available power. This could serve as a means for the characters to earn additional Influence upon Novabella. However, the selection might need to be made based upon additional factors—including any loyalties that the Player Characters could have to organisations that exist beyond the scope of this colony world.

REWARDS

All Acolytes who survive the adventure should earn 50 experience points for each session of play. Each heretical organisation overcome should provide a bonus of 100 to 250 experience points, at the Game Master's discretion, based upon the degree of cunning exhibited and the overall challenge that represented by the foes.

If the characters successfully cleanse Novabella of all heretical influence, each Acolyte gains 5 Influence. If the characters establish a relationship with an organisation that has seized power, they gain an additional 2 Influence based upon the debt that group owes to the Acolytes. If the characters were particularly heavy-handed in gaining control of the Imperial Navy vessel used to reach Novabella, GMs might choose to reduce the Influence award, at their discretion.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Depending upon the approaches the Acolytes used and the strategies of the heretical organisations, there may be a number of different issues that remain partially unresolved at the end of this scenario. For some groups, it may be more appealing to follow these leads through to resolution than to play through the Novabella adventure with a different set of characters and villains. GMs are encouraged to let their players choose which paths to investigate at this stage. If the players are hesitant, then a great strategy could be to subtly introduce different clues or NPC requests that might drive the Acolytes to take action.

Filling the Vacuum: In any instance where the heretics were overcome, the PCs had to displace an organisation from power. If the Acolytes relied upon the assistance of an allied group, then that organisation is most likely to have expanded their authority into new areas, as they assume additional control. Alternatively, the warband might feel that some other group is better suited to this role. Attempting to find the individuals who can truly serve the Imperium in a loyal and effective fashion is no small challenge, if the Acolytes choose to take on that burden. Investigating the backgrounds of possible incumbents for taints of heresy—could be a compelling series of adventures. This is particularly true if there are clear-cut signs of heretical contamination among those who had previously seemed to be loyal.

The Criminals: At the GM's discretion, one or more of the powerful groups might have been criminals, but not heretics. Depending upon the Acolytes' attitudes, they might comfortably ignore this, or recruit the loathsome scum as allies. They may feel a responsibility to eliminate this from Novabella once the heresy has been cleansed—particularly if they could garner additional Influence. If this is the case, a follow-up adventure where the characters

confront their former allies could create intriguing play. Depending on their available resources, this could play very differently from a confrontation with heretics. While the Acolytes are less likely to have to fear confrontation from hideous entities contaminated by the Ruinous Powers, they still must risk their lives against overwhelming—though mundane—opposition.

The Lost Note: Acolytes who are in a hurry to depart Novabella might wish to further investigate the note that initially led them to the world. Archbishop Zedikiah ignored a message hinting at heresy for twenty years. Could there be other planets endangered? Might the shrine world that plays host to the Ecclesiarchy in the sub-sector be infected with heresy? And how did the world avoid scrutiny for avoiding tithes to the Imperial Guard, or from the Black Ships? Acolytes who suspect such a threat could feel strongly compelled to act upon their concerns as soon as possible—likely alerting their Inquisitor to the dangers the sub-sector could face.

A Matter of Trust: If the Acolytes encountered rogue psykers, they may wonder why their Inquisitor chose to not warn them of this possibility, or stress that the isolation also meant no Black Ships had visited the planet. Perhaps he saw this as a test for the Acolytes, and considered their success or failure as a measure of their competency. In this case, the Acolytes might wonder what other tests the Inquisitor could have in store.

NPCs

The profiles below largely represent Loyal aspects. Should the GM wish an NPC to be part of a heresy, add the following characteristics and abilities as desired:

Skills: Deceive.

Talents: Hatred (Inquisition), Specialist (Heretical Cults).

Traits: Favoured by the Fates (3).

GOVERNOR EVERFAST KATHRINKAS

Everfast Kathrinkas rules Novabella, as his family has done for generations. See page 310 for his full background.

GOVERNOR KATHRINKAS(MASTER)				20																		
<div>H¹₁ 4</div>		<table><tr><td>WS</td><td>BS</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>37</td><td>38</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td>T</td><td>A</td><td>I</td></tr><tr><td>30</td><td>39</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>WP</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>40</td><td>37</td><td>42</td></tr></table>			WS	BS	S	37	38	30	T	A	I	30	39	38	P	WP	F	40	37	42
WS	BS	S																				
37	38	30																				
T	A	I																				
30	39	38																				
P	WP	F																				
40	37	42																				
<div>B²₄₋₆ 5</div>																						
<div>L³₂ 6</div>	<div>L³₃ 6</div>																					
<div>L³₇₋₈ 6</div>	<div>L³₉₋₀ 6</div>																					
HOT-SHOT LASPISTOL																						
LIGHT	60M	RoF 1	1D10+5 (E)																			
PEN 1	CLIP 18	RLD 1AP	WT 4KG	AVL -20																		
SPECIAL: CLOSE QUARTERS, OVERCHARGE																						

Skills: Charm +10, Command +20, Remembrance +10.

Talents: Jack of all Trades, Public Speaking, Specialist (Adeptus Administratum).

Gear: Expensive robes of office, medals, sceptre of authority, woven finery armour.

Planetary Governor: Once per conversation, Governor Kathrinkas can re-roll any one social interaction test targeted at him.

LADY KATHRINKAS

Use Apex Noble from page 294.

VICEROY KATHRINKAS

Use Apex Prince from page 294.

OVERSEER EVAINE DRACHENSTEIN

The Agriharvest Sodality is perhaps the true power on Novabella, and Evaine Drachenstein rules the Sodality, making her one of the most powerful people on the planet. See page 312 for her full background.

OVERSEER DRACHENSTEIN (MASTER)				18
H ² ₁ 5	WS	BS	S	
B ⁴ ₄₋₆ 7	48	28	35	
L ² ₂ 5	T	A	I	
L ² ₃ 5	33	37	26	
L ² ₇₋₈ 5	P	WP	F	
L ² ₉₋₀ 5	49	34	32	
POWER SWORD				
LIGHT	—	RoF 2 (Ab-1)	1D10+9 (E)	
PEN 2	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 4KG	AVL -30
SPECIAL: BALANCED, POWER FIELD				

Skills: Commerce +0, Deceive +20, Intimidate +10, Remembrance +10.

Talents: Deceptive, Intimidating, Specialist (Adeptus Administratum).

Gear: Ornate but professional clothing, dataslate, concealed flak vest.

Sodality Authority: Once per conversation, Overseer Drachenstein can re-roll one Deceive test targeted at her.

TITHEGUARD

Initially recruited to protect the growing amounts of uncollected tithe-harvests, the power of the Titheguard has grown over time. With each year, the industry needed to construct more storage facilities has increased, and the ranks of Titheguard has become so great that they are a powerful force rivalling the Strictionists in numbers. Though poorly armed and unorganised (each squad fervently cares only for protecting their own assigned storage depot, and knows nothing beyond the orders they follow), they could become a major factor in quelling any heretical outbreaks.

TITHEGUARD (NOVICE)				4
H ³ ₁ 6	WS	BS	S	
B ³ ₄₋₆ 6	32	37	38	
L ³ ₂ 6	T	A	I	
L ³ ₃ 6	41	36	23	
L ³ ₇₋₈ 6	P	WP	F	
L ³ ₉₋₀ 6	25	30	33	
SHOCK MAUL				
BASIC	—	RoF 1/2	1D10+S _B (3) (E)	
PEN 1	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 5KG	AVL -20
SPECIAL: CONCUSSIVE (1), SAPPING				
BOLAS				
LIGHT	13M (10+S _B)	RoF 1/2	—	
PEN —	CLIP 1	RLD 2AP	WT 2KG	AVL +0
SPECIAL: INACCURATE, SINGLE-SHOT, SNARE (1)				

Skills: Athletics +10, Evade +0.

Talents: Iron Jaw.

Gear: Poorly-made flak armour.

HARVESTER-PRELATE MANUS BARAHONA

Barahona leads the devout of Novabella, a fit man seemingly too young for such responsibilities. See page 315 for his full background.

HARVESTER-PRELATE BARAHONA (MASTER)				18
H ² ₁ 6	WS	BS	S	
B ⁴ ₄₋₆ 8	34	35	31	
L ² ₂ 6	T	A	I	
L ² ₃ 6	47	23	37	
L ² ₇₋₈ 7	P	WP	F	
L ² ₉₋₀ 7	33	42	30	
CEREMONIAL SCYTHE				
HEAVY	—	RoF 1/3	2D10+4 (I)	
PEN 0	CLIP —	RLD —	WT 8KG	AVL -20
SPECIAL: UNBALANCED				

Skills: Charm +20, Intimidate +10, Remembrance +10.

Talents: Radiant Presence, Specialist (Adeptus Ministrorum).

Gear: Monastic robe, heavily embroidered with agricultural iconography, mesh combat cloak.

Faithful Authority: Once per conversation, Overseer Drachenstein can re-roll one Charm test targeted at him.

STRICTIONIST

Use the profile for the Sanctioned Bondsman of the Oaths Involute (Sanctionary) from page 286.

NOVABELLA SWORN PROTECTORS

Use Desoleum Involute Cadre Trooper from page 292.

LIVING SAINT

Use Warp-Caller or Warp-Priest from page 302.

FOLLOWER OF THE LIVING SAINTS

Use Strain Initiate from page 300.

COMMONER

Use Devout (page 289) or Dreg (page 292).

TITHE-BANDIT

Use Thug (page 287) or Heavy (page 288).



HANDOUT: THE LOST MESSAGE

To My Most August Archbishop Zedikiah:

I can only beseech your lordship for aid, as I am surrounded with souls bereft of the Harvest-Emperor's spirit. None can be trusted, for I cannot be certain who remains loyal and who has fallen.

Foul things are stirring underneath the placid spirits of my people. Their smiles are false, and I know their hearts have become corrupted. Our world lives to provide its bounty to others, and should its offerings become tainted so would countless souls fall from the Emperor's Grace.

I have served you and my world for many years, and know my people. My lord, you must trust me when I say action is needed immediately. Only sanctified forces from your own orders can prevent the spread of that which I dare not name, even under encryption to our Astropath, for even he I grow suspicious of. Darkness is growing ever greater around me. These are not the ramblings of the paranoid, these are the warnings of the vigilant against the Dark Forces we strive against each day.

Heed them and save my planet, I beg you. Novabella is a good world and deserving of the Emperor's protection, and I eagerly await His forces to come to our side.

Yours in Devotion to the Harvest-Emperor, Blessed be His Light
Ezzarth Felissimo
Harvester-Prelate

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CHARACTERISTICS

SKILLS



THRESHOLD ()

CURRENT ()



MALIGNANCIES

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	-10	-5	0	+5	+10
Medicæ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psyniscience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remembrance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stealth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subterfuge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survival	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tech-Use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TALENTS & TRAITS

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WEAPON SKILL (WS)

BALLISTIC SKILL (BS)

STRENGTH (S)

TOUGHNESS (T)

AGILITY (A)

INTELLIGENCE (I)

PERCEPTION (P)

WILLPOWER (WP)

FELLOWSHIP (F)

INFLUENCE (IF)

WEAPON

NAME				
CLS	RNG	RoF	DMG	
PEN	CLIP	RLD	WT	AVL
SPECIAL:				

WEAPON

NAME				
CLS	RNG	RoF	DMG	
PEN	CLIP	RLD	WT	AVL
SPECIAL:				

WEAPON

NAME				
CLS	RNG	RoF	DMG	
PEN	CLIP	RLD	WT	AVL
SPECIAL:				

ARMOUR AND DEFENCE

H

1

L

2

L

3

B

4-6

L

7-8

L

9-0

GEAR

PSYCHIC POWERS

PSY RATING: []

Wounds (+5)

Critical Wounds (+10)

FATIGUE: []

CONDITIONS

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